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INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY AND SPATIAL ORGANIZATION
POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

CONFERENCE PAPERS 22

POLISH EASTERN BORDER.
PAST AND PRESENT PROBLEMS

Redakcja
Edited by

Marcin Rościszewski
Maciej Jakubowski



WARSAW

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Introduction

Research work on the Polish Eastern and Western Borders is carried out at the Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization of the Polish Academy of Sciences, by the Department of Spatial Organization, run by Professor Andrzej Stasiak. The research is partly funded by the Committee for Scientific Research at the Council of Ministers of the Polish Republic, under a special grant, and partly from the Institute's own funds.

This volume includes findings of research carried out by the Department of Spatial Organization, and presents a selection of papers on the Polish Eastern Frontier. Only one paper was prepared by someone from outside of the Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The paper, written by an outstanding historian, Professor Piotr Łossowski, is dealing with territorial claims put forward by the Lithuanians during 20th century, and being put forward still by some few of them, in relation to Poland and also to Belarus. The remaining papers, as mentioned above, were selected from those written by academic workers of the Department of Spatial Organization. They were presented during international and national conferences, among others, during the Ukrainian-Polish Seminar (Lviv, April, 1993), Polish-Russian Seminar (Stare Jabłonki, April, 1994), All-Polish Conference on Issues Relating to the Eastern Borderland (Supraśl, December, 1992), National Congress of the Polish Geographical Society (Lublin, May, 1994).

A. Stasiak is discussing problems concerning transborder cooperation in the most general paper of all, referring to the discussion on the strategy for the development and spatial organization of Poland.

P. Eberhardt is discussing the history of the Polish Eastern Frontier after 1939, international negotiations concerning its postwar course and its final shape after World War II. M. Rościszewski presents contemporary geopolitical problems concerning Polish Eastern Frontier, as compared with the historic background of Polish relations with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania.

On the other hand, T. Komornicki and H. Powęska present the dynamics of contemporary transition in trade, services and transport, occurring on the eastern border. Both papers provide testimony that the change of the economic and political system, together with the market economy, private ownership and entrepreneurship mechanisms being set in motion, as well as the change of international situation, make Polish eastern borderland quickly transform from a typical region of secondary importance into that characterized by a high level of activity and development, despite many difficulties and obstacles being still present there.

By having made such a selection of papers, the editors of this volume do hope that it will make the reader more familiar with problems connected with the Polish Eastern Frontier — a very important one to contemporary Europe, since Polish Eastern Frontier is becoming in some way the Eastern Frontier of the European Union.

Marcin Rościszewski

December 1994

TRANSBORDER COOPERATION UNDER THE CONCEPT OF THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF POLAND

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Abstract. Research of border regions has become one of the most important fields of interdisciplinary research in Poland today, as both development of border zones and cooperation with the neighbours have become an important element of the development and spatial organization strategy for Poland since 1989; this is also important for European cooperation and integration. The marking and construction of strategic transport routes crossing Poland is becoming especially important. This involves extension of the existing checkpoints and their base. Research of border regions has been carried out by many institutions in Poland, including the Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization of the Polish Academy of Sciences (since 1991). According to the author, time has come to summarize this first stage of research and to define main directions for future research.

Key words: transborder cooperation, research of border regions, development strategy, spatial organization (management), strategic transport routes, checkpoints.

Awareness of a necessity to develop a new, long-term concept for the spatial organization of the country has been growing over the last few years in Poland. This relates both to far-reaching processes of social and economic structures, taking place since 1989, and to the fundamental change of Poland's geopolitical position in Europe.

A conviction that no concept to manage the development of the country and that of individual regions is necessary, has become more popular, being a reaction to the former over-centralized social, economic and spatial policy. The "invisible hand of the market" was expected to solve all the problems. It was reflected, among other things, in the Spatial Organization Act draft, the authors of which tried to divert from any obligatory spatial organization plans.

Broad discussion on the subject that followed, demonstrated how destructive such an approach could be. The discussion used the experience of the developed countries, including first of all the long-term development concept from countries — members of the present European Union, designed in Brussels. This has made the governing circles in Poland realize the need to develop a vision — a concept for the long-term social, economic and spatial development of the country.

The discussion was reflected in the final, developed and approved draft of the law on spatial organization of the country. It is becoming effective on January 1st, 1995¹.

At the same time, the Minister, Head of the Central Office of Planning, appointed in May, 1994 a team to coordinate the work on the draft concept of the spatial organization of the country. The team will conclude its work by the end of 1996. The results of it will be submitted to a broad public discussion. They will become a foundation to implement this policy.

Interest in border and transborder regions has become obvious during the discussion and the work on the policy for the spatial organization of the country. These regions have begun to play more active role, beginning with the German border, including then the southern, and finally the eastern border of Poland. The dynamics of economic and social relations along these borders have become of political nature. For that reason, problems relating to that have become an important element, while developing strategy for the spatial organization of the country. This is precisely why the Office in Charge with Transborder Cooperation was established at the Office of the Council of Ministers in 1993/94. Its task is to coordinate current activity of public administration (central and local government ones) in relation to cooperation in border regions. Many research activities have been also taken up after 1990. They will be discussed more broadly below.

The problem matter relating to this cooperation is becoming more and more important. Changes taking place in Eastern and Central Europe and Russia after 1989 resulted in that all the regions along the Polish frontiers have become not only those of dynamic development, but also of a significant functional differentiation. Polish western border is not only that between Germany and Poland. It is at the same time the border between the European Union and a country — associate of the said Union, since Poland signed an Association Agreement with the European Communities on December 16, 1991. It has become then a country with a prospect to become a full member of the Union. Using the same criteria, Polish eastern border can be also treated as an “external border” of the Union. The southern border — with the Czech Republic and Slovakia — is also that with associate members of the European Union. It is at the same time an internal border between countries — members of the Vyšehrad Group and one within the Free Trade Zone (CEFTA) established by this Group. Therefore, while examining the problem matter relating to Polish western and southern border, European integration processes occurring at the moment should be taken into account. The processes are of a multi-layer nature. They are a reflection of a more general process, however, the process of Europe becoming united in a natural way, within Western European civilization circle.

One of great chances for Poland, which have to be taken into the consideration as soon as possible, is its geopolitical situation — on a major transport

¹ Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, No. 89/1994, item 415, Spatial Management Act of July 7, 1994.

and communication axis joining Western Europe with Eastern Europe and Russia. Our country is a specific bridge between the territory of Western Europe in a narrower meaning of the word (without Iberian Peninsula, Apennines Peninsula and Greece), with the population of slightly over 200 million, and countries of Eastern Europe (Baltic States, Belarus and Ukraine) and Russia, with the population of also slightly over 200 million. It is necessary to quickly develop and extend checkpoints and the construction of two motorways and two railways here. This requires decisions of a strategic nature, as it involves not only the Polish, but also the main European transport network. Table 1 presents the scale of passenger traffic, and traffic of cars and lorries.

It relates first of all to the so called A2 motorway, beginning in Holland (with exits to Paris and London), and running through Hannover, Berlin, Frankfurt am Oder/Świecko, Słubice, Poznań, Warszawa, Terespol/Brest on Bug, Minsk, Moscow*. One of the most important investment projects in relation to traffic fluency is the construction (the first stage completed in 1994) of a large cargo terminal for customs clearance on the Polish side of the border in Świecko and the initiated construction of the second bridge on Odra river. Over 2/3rds of the passenger traffic, 3/4ths of that of cars and c. 2/3rds of goods traffic crossing Polish borders is going through the western one. Ca. 18% of passenger traffic, ca. 20% of cars and ca. 18% of lorries crossed checkpoints of the Słubice-Kunowice-Świecko complex in 1994 (see Table 1).

It is equally important to extend the Terespol-Małaszewicze checkpoint on the Belarussian border. Ca. 10% of lorries traffic crosses the Terespol-Kukuryki checkpoint complex. A railway for fast trains (of the French TGV type) is planned to be more or less parallel to this motorway. The existing railway is being modernized in order to be able to take trains of the "intercity" and "eurocity" type.

Another equally important motorway is the so called A4. It reaches the regions of the Upper and Middle Rhine in the West. It runs through Dresden, Görlitz/Zgorzelec, Wrocław, Katowice, Kraków, Przemyśl, Lviv, Kyiv, Odessa. The opening of a new checkpoint for goods traffic at Jerzmanowice near Zgorzelec in 1994 is very important in this respect. It is very important to carry the motorway through industrial agglomeration of Upper Silesia and to make it bypass Kraków. The extension of the existing checkpoint between Poland and Ukraine, near Medyka is an equally important matter.

While maintaining transportation pattern running evenly with a parallel of latitude, one should use the broad-gauge railway (the so called sulphur-mining railway), running from Ukraine to the area of Olkusz, to a maximum degree. An important reloading zone for goods coming from Ukraine and Russia can be created here, under new political conditions. Thanks to the

* In this study the following principle has been adopted. Geographical names related to the Past and occurring on the territories of the former Poland — are spelled in Polish. In brackets are to be found the contemporary names in the national languages or in the form widespread in English. At present time the formula is opposite. Geographical names are given in their actual native form, and occasionally also, in brackets, their Polish or internationally known anglo-phone version.

Table 1. Changes of the intensity of transborder traffic of people and vehicles on the East-West axis in 1992-1993

Checkpoints	Persons*		Car traffic		Lorry traffic	
	1992	1993	1992	1993	1992	1993
POLAND IN TOTAL	157437627	185552514	33188931	47786365	1860652	2186103
%	100.00	100.00	100.0	100.00	100.00	100.00
Western border in total	84047692	118767710	22303930	36042729	1169879	1427291
%	53.38	64.01	67.20	75.42	62.87	65.29
out of which:						
Kostrzyn, road checkpoint	-	5260391	207311	923867	-	340
Kostrzyn, rail checkpoint	649505	4000474	-	-	-	-
Ślubice, road checkpoint	14113575	16998634	4321167	4114180	-	-
Świecko, road checkpoint	14113575	16998634	4321167	4114180	-	-
Kunowice, rail checkpoint	9272209	14627815	3043436	5057146	373316	392513
The Ślubice-Kunowice-Świecko complex in total	25432211	32939266	7364603	9171762	373316	392804
%	16.50	17.75	22.19	19.19	20.06	17.97
Eastern border in total	18390757	19163133	2133498	3204573	366843	450468
%	11.68	10.33	6.43	6.71	19.72	20.61
out of which:						
Braniewo, rail checkpoint	132582	152609	-	-	-	-
Gronowo, rail checkpoint	164349	103814	37446	38932	1774	2338
Bezledy, road checkpoint	613640	868307	85670	251922	16924	17753
Kuźnica, road checkpoint	807255	1253165	295102	402635	9801	23033
Kuźnica, rail checkpoint	1909616	175842	-	-	-	-
Bobrowniki, road checkpoint	5984	67082	913	4540	2704	31571
Kukuryki, road checkpoint	267230	299212	-	-	193145	213504
Terespol, road checkpoint	2278719	2713596	544470	686987	-	-
Terespol, rail checkpoint	3639539	3013455	-	-	-	-
The Terespol-Kukuryki complex in total	6185588	6026263	544470	86987	193145	213504
%	3.93	3.25	1.64	1.44	10.38	9.87
Western and eastern border in total	102438449	137930843	24437428	39247302	1536722	1877759
%	65.06	74.34	73.63	83.13	82.93	86.00

* This includes, for Poland in total: passport traffic through all land, harbour and airport checkpoints, short-distance traffic to and from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Germany, simplified traffic to and from countries of the Commonwealth of the Independent Nations (79,155 persons in total), the so called other traffic (troops; 155,129 persons in total) and service for the means of transport (ships, barges, aircraft and trains; 1,830,930 persons in total); for the western border, this includes passport traffic and the short-distance one (operating since 1993); for the eastern border, this includes passport traffic only.

Elaboration: Tomasz Komornicki, based on materials of the Traffic Control Office, General Headquarters of the Border Guards (Biuro Kontroli Ruchu Granicznego, Komenda Główna Straży Granicznej).

Transport links and the increasing number of checkpoints is a very important, but not the only factor relating to transborder cooperation. The problem matter includes a very wide spectrum of issues, and only the most important ones can be quoted here as an example.

Issues relating to ecology should be broadly taken into account in transborder cooperation. Modern societies pay more and more attention to the quality of life and possibility to act in a possibly unpolluted environment. This relates to, e.g. joint activities in protected areas crossed by the border line, river catchment areas, etc. This involves joint actions combining environmental protection with tourism. Issues concerning environmental protection of special importance for Poland are the following: in Sudety mountains (among others, the chain of Karkonosze), in the lower Odra area, and in the area of the so called "Green Lungs of Poland", which can also become the "Green Lungs of Europe". This involves mainly the North-Eastern Poland, including the forest of Białowieża. In the South-East of Poland it is important to properly develop the Bieszczady mountains.

A common area of interest and agreements concerning decisions to be made under transborder cooperation, will be undoubtedly issues including settlement patterns and demographic processes, agriculture and food economy, trade exchange and services, cultural cooperation. Transborder cooperation of local governments of different levels becomes especially important here. It is reflected, among other things, in projects to establish several so called Euroregions in our border area.

Since the development of transborder cooperation is a process leading to far-reaching transformation of the arrangement of the social and economic space, one should pay special attention to it. Research carried out in this area should be continuous. One should stress on this occasion that, out of necessity, the research should be done on different levels: supra-national, national, regional and local. In many cases these levels overlap, and therefore should be examined both in the macro- and micro-scale.

While determining development strategy in relation to western and eastern border regions, it is very important to realize the existing asymmetries of the economic and organizational development, as compared to that of our neighbours. As far as our western neighbour is concerned, we may count on an incomparable difference of economic potentials emerging, as well as the fact that our economy is in a stage of structural transformation still. Hence the position of Germany is privileged. As far as our eastern neighbour is concerned, there is also asymmetry resulting from small progress of economic reforms introduced by our neighbours so far. More differentiated situation in this respect is on our southern border.

One should therefore try to reach a possibly ideal symmetry, while working on the concept of transborder cooperation. This requires and will require from the Polish party more intensive intellectual and organizational efforts rather than financial resources.

Already in 1990/1991 we did realize in Poland the need to undertake broad research of problems related to the border regions. Our new geopolitical situation is simply forcing this kind of research. A comprehensive research programme, called "The foundations for the development of Polish western

and eastern border regions”, was developed under the leadership of the author of this paper. It was granted univocal support of the administration of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The main assumptions of the programme were published in the “Polish Science” (Nauka Polska) journal². The Committee of Scientific Research approved of the program in the Summer of 1992, and provided a grant to the Department of Spatial Organization of the Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization of the Polish Academy of Sciences, being under my supervision, in order to carry out research in 1992-1994. Before the programme was designed, collaboration had been established with the Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung of Hannover and with Fr. Ebert Foundation. The result was a Polish-German seminar on “German-Polish Borderland as a regional policy problem”³.

Subsequently, we arranged for collaboration with the Belarussian Academy of Sciences of Minsk, the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences of Kyiv, State University of Kaliningrad (Russia); we have also established many contacts with Polish authorities of the central level, with regional ones from the borderland, with local governments, their associations, e.g. the Union of Western Gminas (communes) with the seat in Zielona Góra, with representatives of the so called Euroregions, and with many research centres. The collaboration has resulted in many scientific elaborations, presented during many international and national seminars, and in many publications. Our Department has published seven specialistic Bulletins so far, and we are planning to publish the next three. Beside, many publications appeared in other national and foreign publishing houses. Below is a list of the Bulletins published⁴.

Research of the borderland has been carried out by many academic centres over the last few years. One should mention here the Institute of Spatial and Municipal Management (Instytut Gospodarki Przestrzennej i Komunalnej) of Warsaw, University of Economy (Akademia Ekonomiczna) of Wrocław

² A. Stasiak — *Wybrane problemy zagospodarowania przestrzennego obszarów pogranicza zachodniego i wschodniego Polski (Selected problems relating to spatial management of the Polish western and eastern border regions)*, Nauka Polska, 1/2, p. 51-60.

³ *German-Polish borderland as a regional policy problem (Pogranicze niemiecko-polskie jako problem polityki regionalnej)*, Warsaw, May, 1992, Fr. Ebert Stiftung, IGI PAN.

⁴ Bulletins published under general title: *Podstawy Rozwoju Zachodnich i Wschodnich Obszarów Przygranicznych Polski (Foundations for the Development of Western and Eastern Border Regions of Poland)*: No. 1 — *Materials of the conference — Problem matters of the Western borderland. Zielona Góra, October 16-17, 1992*. Editors: A. Stasiak and K. Miros, Warsaw, May, 1993, p. 135; No. 2 — *“Problem matters of the Eastern borderland”. Materials of the conference held in Supraśl, Dec. 9-10, 1992*. Editors: P. Eberhardt and T. Komornicki, Warsaw, July, 1993, p. 240; No. 3 — *Problem matters of the Polish-Ukrainian transborder cooperation (texts in Ukrainian). Materials of the seminar held in Lviv, April 19-23, 1993*. Editors: P. Eberhardt, A. Józefowicz and T. Komornicki, Warsaw — Kiev, December, 1993, p. 244; No. 4 — *Agriculture of the Western and Eastern borderland of Poland*. Editors: R. Szczęśny and R. Kulikowski, Warsaw, December 1993, p. 109; No. 5 — *Crucial problems of transborder cooperation*. The Bulletin devoted to Professor Doctor A. Stasiak on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of his scientific research. Editors: P. Eberhardt and K. Miros, Warsaw, August, 1994, p. 172; No. 6 — *Cooperation with Kaliningrad — Problems of transborder cooperation between Poland and the Kaliningrad District of The Russian Federation (Russian texts in Russian)*. Editors: A. Stasiak and T. Komornicki, Warsaw, December, 1994; No. 7 — *The Nysa Euroregion — Three years of experience*. Editors: F. Adamczuk and Z. Przybyła, Warsaw, December, 1994.

together with its branch of Jelenia Góra, University of Wrocław, academic centres of Zielona Góra and Szczecin, the Western Institute (Instytut Zachodni) of Poznań, Silesian Institute (Instytut Śląski) of Opole, Jagellonian University (Uniwersytet Jagielloński) of Kraków and other Kraków academic centres, Marie Curie-Skłodowska University (UMCS) of Lublin and Lublin Catholic University (KUL), the Białystok branch of the University of Warsaw, the Institute of Rural Development and Agriculture of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Instytut Rozwoju Wsi i Rolnictwa PAN), the Gdańsk and Olsztyn centres, and many others I have not mentioned here.

I think that time has come to evaluate and recapitulate the research work carried out so far. The meeting of scientists investigating the Eastern borderland of a section of the National Meeting of the Polish Geographic Society in Lublin, held at the end of August and at the beginning of September 1994⁵, was in a way an effort to make such recapitulation. One should, however, organize a national seminar in 1995⁶, during which:

- present results of the research work on the Polish borderland would be presented in a synthetic way,
- blanks of the research programmes, i.e. issues not covered by the research yet would be defined,
- course of further research, stressing upon the necessity of its continuity and constant funding, would be determined.

Results of such a seminar should also have a practical value (apart from the learning one) — they could be very helpful to the Polish State, regional and local authorities, especially in regions of great importance for the entire transborder cooperation. They should also raise interest of our neighbours, with whom we are cooperating in research of the borderland, and also that of representatives of other European countries.

Research of the borderland has become one of the most important interdisciplinary research fields in Poland. The research is also important for European cooperation: important transport routes from the West to the East and from the North to the South are running through Poland and its borders. Polish eastern frontier is becoming already the eastern frontier of the European Union to some extent, but our cooperation with our neighbours goes beyond this border, marking prospects to extend European cooperation and integration further eastward. Therefore, I do hope that also this volume of the Conference Papers, including a selection of studies on the Eastern Frontier of Poland, will prove interesting and useful to readers from different countries.

⁵ *National Meeting of the Polish Geographic Society. Papers and posters.* Polish Geographic Society, the Lublin Branch, Marie Curie-Skłodowska University. (*Ogólnopolski Zjazd Polskiego Towarzystwa Geograficznego. Referaty i postery.* Polskie Towarzystwo Geograficzne, Oddział Lubelski, Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej). Lublin, 1994, see: *Problems of border regions of Eastern Poland (Problemy obszarów przygranicznych wschodniej Polski)*. Coordinator: Ryszard Jedut. *Papers and posters (Referaty i postery)*, p. 152-198. *Ibid.*: A. Stasiak, *Problems of border regions of Eastern Poland (Problemy obszarów przygranicznych wschodniej Polski)*.

⁶ The project of such a seminar is already far advanced, and I do hope that the Institute of geography and Spatial Management of the Polish Academy of Sciences will accomplish it, assuming the role of the main organizer of the seminar.

POLISH EASTERN BORDER. SOME GEOPOLITICAL PATTERNS

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Abstract. Main political and geopolitical issues related to the Polish eastern border and frontier, presented against the background of historic relations between Poland and Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania. Special attention was paid to the formation and to the significance of the new Russian geopolitical doctrine¹.

Key words: Polish eastern border, political geography, geopolitics.

INTRODUCTION

The problems concerning state borders is one of important research subjects in political geography. It is understandable, because of numerous and complex issues occurring the line of junction between different spatial and political organizations. The issue of borders is often focusing, as if in a lens, and reflects different issues of not exclusively political, but also economic, social or cultural nature. Problems of exceptional complexity are created on those frontiers, which are situated in zones of rapid changes, tensions, and profound transformations.

Problems connected with the border research is also a topic of interest in geopolitics. Its range can often be broader than that, as treated by political geography, and be complementary to it. Geopolitical approach is more flexible, what leaves room for reflection of a more individual nature. Both tendencies are therefore complementary, enriching therefore the picture of the studied reality of a given region.

STABILITY OF BORDERS AND CHANGEABILITY OF NEIGHBOURS

In the period of 1989-1993, the borders of Poland have remained unchanged, while all its neighbours have changed at the same time. The entire former

¹ The original version of this paper was written in 1993 and published in: *Węzłowe problemy współpracy przygranicznej (Key problems of transborder cooperation)*, series: *Podstawy Rozwoju Zachodnich i Wschodnich Obszarów Przygranicznych Polski (Foundations for the Development of the Western and Eastern Border Regions of Poland)*; Bull. 5, IGiPZ PAN, Warsaw, 1994, 35-54.

political system that included Poland, is changing, and new directions of gravity are becoming noticeable, resulting from, among other things, Poland's gradual joining the European integration processes.

Poland had three neighbours till 1989. These were: German Democratic Republic in the West, Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in the South, and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics in the East. The entire region of Central Europe was submitted to Soviet control as a result of the Second World War and decisions made by world powers during conferences in Tehran, Jalta and Potsdam. Poland was an exceptionally important element of that Soviet "external empire" in Europe. This was caused by the fact that the main geo-strategic communication axis of our continent is running across its territory, as well as by the size of its territory, and its demographic and economic potential. Submission of Poland to Russia (and later to the USSR) was one of the traditional and fundamental geopolitical rules of that country.

After 1989, all the above mentioned neighbours of Poland, the GDR, Czechoslovakia and the USSR ceased to exist as subjects of international law and elements of the political map of the world. Poland has got new neighbours along all its frontiers today.

Along the western border, Poland's neighbour is the Federal Republic of Germany which has absorbed the former GDR. Behind Poland's southern border Czechoslovakia has broken into two independent states — the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. Disintegration of the USSR has taken place behind the eastern frontier. Our neighbours there are four, formally independent states: the Republic of Ukraine, Republic of Belarus, Republic of Lithuania, and the Russian Federation-Russia, with its exclave of the Kaliningrad (Królewiec, Königsberg) District.

As a result of the disintegration of the Soviet "external empire", organizations being created for almost 45 years after the war in order to bind the so called "countries of the peoples' democracy" in Europe with the USSR, were abolished. These include the Council of Common Economic Cooperation (COMECON), the Warsaw Pact and many others, the task of which was to establish a socialist functional area, with all the strings meeting at the decision centre in Moscow. Vertical dependence and ideologizing of all political, economic and social relations were laying foundations of the establishment of a specific system (the diamat system), that seriously abstracted from the regularities of development mechanisms present in the world at that time. As a result, countries of Central Europe, including Poland, those belonging to the Soviet "external empire", must make up in an accelerated way an enormous gap, being in many cases even a civilisation one, during their transformation, in order to become closer to the contemporary world. Differences, occurring between individual countries in this respect, often additionally underline historic reasons of the existing state of affairs. It is impossible to carry out any sensible research without the knowledge of the region's history and its complexity.

Poland is an associate member of the European Union at the moment. In this way, its western border begins to acquire characteristics of an "internal border" within the Union. In the same way, our eastern border is in a sense the eastern "external border" of the Union now.

FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF THE POLISH EASTERN BORDER

Since the time of collapse of the USSR at the end of 1991, Poland has had frontiers in the East with the following four, new, and independent states: the Republic of Ukraine, Republic of Belarus, Republic of Lithuania, and the Kaliningrad (Królewiec, Königsberg) District, being the exclave of the Russian Federation-Russia. On the other hand, as it was mentioned above, this is not exclusively a state border with the above mentioned countries. Because of implementation of the process to include Poland in the structures of the European Union (as an associate member at the moment, with prospects to become a full member of European Union and NATO), Polish eastern border is becoming, at least to some extent, also an "external border" of the Union. This statement is important, because of the position held by our country in the new European political and economic arrangement being established now.

Situation emerging on the eastern border is a result of the explicit option to become connected with political, economic, cultural or civilization structures of Western Europe. Poland's credibility in relation to these structures, its participation in the process of the creation of "New Europe" will be verified, among other things, on this very border. It is not only that it has to be made more impenetrable, in order to prevent illegal migration, contraband or organized crime. Efforts should be made at the same time to make this border enable possibly broad contacts and cooperation between both Poland and Europe and our neighbours in the East. According to the opinion of some authors (Ungerer), Poland is becoming a "gate for Europe" in its contacts and cooperation with the East. Our country is eager to play this role. Geographical location of the main European transport [communication] axis between the East and the West is conducive to it. The shortest road and rail connections with the Baltic States and St. Petersburg, the regions of the north-eastern Russia, with Minsk, Moscow, Kiev and Odessa, run across the territory of Poland. Also a planned (and partly accomplished) motor-way, running from Gdańsk (with a connection with Scandinavian countries) to the South, through the Danube basin, and the Balkans to Turkey is crossing the territory of Poland. Poland is becoming an important European transport junction, integrating regions of Western and Central Europe with Eastern Europe and Russia. Quick and positive processes to adjust Polish economy to the market one are taking place here. Poland is being perceived as a significant element, stabilizing the situation in the region of Central Europe.

GEOSOPHIC² ASPECTS OF THE EASTERN FRONTIER OF POLAND

While considering issues relating to our eastern frontier, as well as relations of Poland with its eastern neighbours, one should constantly bear in mind the historic context. As a result of the union of Poland and Lithuania at the end of the 14th century, territories of the contemporary Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania, as well as that of the Kaliningrad District, were, in general terms, for 400 years (till the end of the 18th century) elements of the same state entity. Nations inhabiting the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom (named the 1st Republic) coexisted during all that long period of time, interacting with one another. At the same time, the “cultural asymmetry” occurring in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was prompting implantation of West European patterns and behaviours of that time, such as the idea of private property, estate system or that of municipal self-government (it did not relate to the regions of Prussia and Courland, where those institutions had been introduced earlier). The process was extended in time, and its intensity was different for individual regions, nevertheless, as a result of that West European culture was becoming disseminated, especially in the region of contemporary Ukraine and Belarus. We can also observe large part of local leadership elite groups becoming quickly Polonized, not exclusively in the eastern regions. Nowadays, this fact is often perceived by our neighbours in negative terms, becoming a reason for distrust, and even resentment by the Lithuanian, Belarussian or Ukrainian nation. Since the end of the 19th century they began to develop national consciousness and try to establish their own statehood. It is often forgotten on this occasion that this consciousness was becoming present almost a hundred years after Poland had been erased from the political map of Europe, after the partitions. It was also during that period, when societies of the discussed regions, including to some extent Poland itself, were subject to intense and brutal Russification, while institutions that had been developing in the times of the 1st Republic were being destroyed. Russia wanted to impose by force on those societies order and mentality, specific for the Byzantine-Turanian cultural circle. What is interesting, is that sometimes we can see that Polonization and Russification processes in those regions are discussed on the same plane. Meanwhile, differences of a qualitative nature are occurring here.

² The term used mainly in American geographical and historical literature. It relates to the considerations on the perception of the organization of geographic space and its changes caused by people and societies living in it. The author of the work quoted below characterizes it as, “...perceptions people have of the world in which they live...in historical geography such an interest is often called geosophy” — R. W. Chambers, 1982 — *Images, acts and consequences: a critical review of historical geosophy*, (in:) A.R.H. Baker, M. Billinge (eds) — *Period and space*, Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge 1982, 197-204; M. Rościszewski — *Kierunki badań w geografii politycznej. Posłowie (Research trends in political geography. Epilogue)*, (in:) J. Barbag (ed.) — *Geografia polityczna ogólna*, IV ed., PWN, Warszawa 1987, 297-310. The term used in this paper relates to the reflection on possible effects of the influence of four hundred years of the Polish history on the awareness of nations inhabiting the territory of Eastern Europe.

One can only suggest, that while shaping our relations with Ukraine, Belarus or Lithuania, considerations concerning the past can be left to the historians. Each of our nations should carry out by itself an objective analysis of that past, the balance of gains and losses. It should be also done together, as it can enable a selection of those elements from the common, secular past, that could enrich our present and future relations. In its policy, Poland is anticipating for permanent frontiers in the East, and for constancy of the present neighbourhood. New conditions, in which our countries are now, are a challenge of a truly historic dimension — a challenge to build a “New Europe” together. The understanding of these situations should also be present in Western countries. It is in their own interest that they fully join the transformation processes taking place in Eastern and Central Europe and support them in an effective way.

EASTERN FRONTIER OF POLAND IN RELATION TO THE TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN IMPERIAL DOCTRINE

It is impossible not to take into account the so called “Russian issue”, while considering political and economic relations between Poland and its neighbours on the eastern frontier. It has been inscribed in a permanent way in the history and geopolitics of this region for many centuries now. Beginning from the 15th century, the expansion of the Moscow, then the Russian, and then the Soviet State in the West was being executed mainly at the expense of territories belonging to Poland and Lithuania — i.e. the Republic of Both Nations. The expansion was always of a specific ideological nature, and it was carried out under alternating slogans. At the beginning it was the “uniting of Ruthenian territories”. The following stage was the issue concerning the access to the Baltic and to the Black Sea. The following one was the aspiration to get access to the “open seas”, being therefore an intention to seize the Danish straits, as well as the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Then it was the building of the “Great Russia”, and then uniting “Slavonic nations” in one state. One should put a special emphasis here, that possession or control over the territory of Poland has always been of key importance to Russia. It was not only the country’s demographic or economic potential that mattered, but mainly the importance of the country’s geographic location, “Polish space”; Poland is situated on the main European geostrategic and transport axis, providing a direct and the shortest access to the countries of Western Europe. The seizure of our territory enabled Russia to expand its influence, far to the West. These goals were inscribed in the Russian state political doctrine, and Russia was able to implement it very consistently.

The rebirth of Poland after the First World War, as well as independence regained by the three Baltic States and Finland, was a major defeat for those who implemented the above doctrine. It was causing not only a reduction of the “Russian state of possession”, acquired, among other things, as a result

of the partitions of Poland. First of all, a reduction of Russia's influence in the region of Central Europe (and not only) took place. The defeat of the Soviet army after the Battle of Warsaw in 1920 saved Europe from Soviet invasion and made it possible to postpone the introduction of the "Socialist order" in this part of Europe by 20 years. One should also remember that together with the communists seizing power in Russia, the Russian imperial doctrine was "enriched" by this new ideology. A relatively "limited" range of the doctrine before the revolution of 1917, and its specific pragmatism, caused by the European political system prevailing at that time, acquired a global dimension, thanks to its [the doctrine's] ideologization. The Soviet Union began to aspire to rule over the world.

Since the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, a series of specific geopolitical successes of the USSR began, involving direct territorial gains and the extension of the range of influence. The pact concluded by Hitler and Stalin in 1939, also called the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, led to yet another partition of Poland. As a result, its eastern territory was incorporated into the USSR. The annexation of the Baltic States also took place. After Germany attacked the USSR in 1941, the latter joined the anti-nazi coalition in turn. The war won by the coalition provided the USSR with a possibility (as a result of the Tehran, Jalta and Potsdam treaties) to subordinate the countries of Central Europe, including Poland. Within the area under its control, Moscow imposed the introduction of a political, economic and social system it had exercised in its own country. On that occasion, an extended and brutal elimination, often physical, of leadership elites not accepting the new system was carried out. It is not a purpose of this paper to describe the operation of the "diamat" system. One can only make it clear that by its definition, it was bound to collapse, as it led directly to economic and social entropy.

The Soviet Union lost its "external empire" in Central Europe in 1989, and disintegrated itself in 1991, thus disappearing from the map of the world as a political subject. As a result of that, all former Soviet republics obtained the formal status of political subjects, including the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation acknowledges itself to be the successor and "receiver in bankruptcy" of the former USSR. It takes its former positions in all international organizations, including the permanent membership in the Security Council of the U.N. It is accepted by international community, although the fact of Russia's taking over this succession is often treated selectively. It provides it with a comfortable position and ability to reject many revindications in relation to the already nonexistent USSR.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union has resulted in that the contemporary Russian Federation-Russia has formally returned to its ethnic western frontiers, similar to those of the 15th and 16th centuries, i.e. the border between the Duchy of Moscow and the Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom. Thus, by the end of the 20th century Russia has lost the Baltic States, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova. This means a real geopolitical disaster for a country with imperial ambitions still alive, with a defined doctrine relating to its own territory and the stretch of its own zone of influence. Therefore, one

should not wonder that the present managing centre of the Federation is striving after regaining a possibility to influence, first of all the above mentioned countries, and to introduce the situation of dependence, submission, and vassalage.

The Russian Federation-Russia has two important possibilities in this respect. One of them is of economic nature. Within the USSR there was a functional economic space created, together with a defined division of tasks in respect to production, division of labour and spatial arrangement. This functional space, apart from the period of the tsarist Russia, created after the revolution of 1917, had its own philosophy and dynamics. Not depreciating the importance of ideological issues which are a significant foundation for the directions and nature of the economic development, one should emphasize the establishment of a very close correlation in economy, binding together individual elements of the Soviet Union, i.e. its republics. Apart from the issue of rationality of these links, their very existence under the order of that time should be recognized as an objective fact. The liquidation of the USSR has broken these links. In fact a gap has emerged in relation to an independent operation of all the republics of the former USSR. At the same time, it is already difficult to imagine today, how to recreate the formerly existing links, while taking into account the rise of new needs and the necessity to adjust economies of the former republics to the requirements of the market system. One of the republics is, at least theoretically, in the best position, and this is the Russian Federation-Russia.

This involves, first of all, its practically monopolistic position in relation to the sources of energy, i.e. oil and natural gas. They are at the Federation's disposal, and it can and wants to use them to run its own policy, whether by reducing their supply, or manipulating with their prices. The fact of the Baltic States', Belarus' or Ukraine's being dependent from the energy point of view, enables Russia to impose its conditions on these new, formally independent countries. The Baltic States are the only ones having theoretically the greatest chances to become independent from this dictate at the moment.

The existence of a series of elements of the above mentioned functional economic space of the former Soviet Union is yet another element of pressure. This relates mainly to the industry. The disintegration of the USSR has revealed how big difficulties individual republics are facing, being often unable to develop economically in an independent way. Within the area discussed here, this concerns first of all Belarus, but it is also relevant for Ukraine. One should add here that this countries have been lacking skills to carry out any consistent economic reform so far. The three Baltic States are in a relatively better situation in this respect. Hence, any promises to reestablish at least some or to maintain other, of the still existing economic links, enable Russia to accomplish many of its political goals.

The second one of the above mentioned possibilities is a result of the fact that a part of the former communist elites, often an influential one, is having still responsible political and economic positions in the former Soviet republics. Many of their representatives do not identify themselves with the

newly acquired political independence of their own countries. They think that the disintegration of the USSR was a mistake, and would be very glad to witness its recreation, since they are used to acting in another spatial and functional scale and according to the rules of a centrally planned economy, and they cannot find their own place under new conditions. Hence their susceptibility, and even submission to the Russian influence. One need not add that Russia is trying to support such tendencies as much as possible.

One should, however, always bear in mind that it is only three years that have elapsed since the collapse of the USSR (the Baltic States declared their formal secession from the USSR in 1990). This is too short a period of time to form more stable political, and especially economic structures in countries neighbouring with Poland in the East. One can expect, or even assume that this unclear situation will prevail for a long time to come in these countries, and especially in Belarus and Ukraine. There will be growing confrontation between efforts to gain political independence (as the time goes by, it becomes more and more difficult to give up the ever increasing aspirations in this respect) and pressure exercised by Russia, in order to maintain maximum dependence or to subordinate these countries (statements by prominent members of the government of the Federation, like: "Russia is doomed to be great", or that it is "the guarantor of peace in the entire territory of the former USSR" — which display the direction of the presently designed policy).

The "West" is perceiving the position of the Russian Federation-Russia in the world in a still more and more differentiated way. Traditional perception — after the disintegration of the USSR — was and often still is relating to the former bipolar world system. The United States and the former USSR were a specific point of reference for any political or geopolitical considerations. It was a fundamental issue to provide balance of the possessed and developed arsenals of nuclear weapons. After the collapse of the USSR we have found ourselves in fact in a completely new circumstances. The nuclear potential of the former USSR (although formally divided into the Russian Federation-Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan — the countries where depots of these weapons are located) has remained intact, and contemporary Russia keeps them under total control. In reality these arsenals are subject to significant degradation and "erosion", although they are still significant from the technical and quantitative point of view, and in this sense still counting in the world political discussion. Nevertheless, the position of the contemporary Russia has significantly diminished, mainly from the economic perspective. One should add the ongoing social disintegration in that country, as well as increasing national and ethnic conflicts. It is difficult to foresee their range at the moment. It is in the interest of world society, and especially of the European one, not to marginalize Russia. What is important here is that the Russian Federation-Russia can become a normal, democratic country, participating in the international life, and in the building of a new world deal, based on the rules accepted by all those concerned. The Russian Federation-Russia is an eastern neighbour of Europe, but it is not a European

country in some sense, being not a part of the West European cultural circle. After all, in Russia itself discussion on “Eurasian character” of the country (Muradian, 1992) has developed over a long time. It points out the need to treat that country in a different way, because of, among other things, economic links (mainly the future ones at the moment) with East and South-East Asia, as well as political and geopolitical interests, what should be discussed separately.

The already mentioned differentiation of Russia’s perception by others is a result of the fact that problems created by that country go far too often beyond accepted standards which define the way European countries, or broadly speaking, democratic ones act. The differentiation tends to deepen. One can see a great chance here to establish a new European geopolitical order, in which today’s Russia (the Russian Federation) would acquire its appropriate position. European society is beginning to better realize the “one-dimension” international importance of Russia today, i.e. its military role. Hence new and developing interest in such countries as Ukraine and Belarus, concerning mainly the preservation and development of their political independence. One should agree with the opinion that “without Ukraine, Russia has a chance to become a democratic country, while together with Ukraine it will always be an imperial one” (Ash, 1994). Obviously, this statement should be extended to Belarus.

The above mentioned issues are still actual in the discussion about the Polish eastern frontier. Polish reasons of State make it impossible to forget them, as these are issues not only directly concerning Poland itself but also, to a growing extent, the uniting Europe our country is beginning to integrate with. It is more and more within European interest to define the position of the Russian Federation-Russia in front of the new emerging geopolitical arrangement in an explicit way. A renaissance of the traditional Russian imperial doctrine is definitely not in the European interest. Today, it is impossible to refuse the right to independent decisions concerning national issues and the right to develop their own statehood — to the nations of Belarus or Ukraine, to countries of Central Asia or Caucasus. All of these countries have already formally become full subjects of the international law, and they are waiting for the recognition of this fact by the international community. They do not want to be perceived as semi-colonial states of the Russian Empire.

SELECTED ISSUES CONCERNING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WITH COUNTRIES ON THE EASTERN FRONTIER OF POLAND

General remarks about the traditional Russian imperial doctrine do not exhaust more detailed issues, present between Poland and its eastern neighbours. Poland is trying to develop normal and mutually beneficial political, economic or cultural relations with them. The problem of the doctrine itself and problems resulting from the actual neighbourhood do not always

have to be the same. One can expect that the gap between interests of the discussed countries and those of Russia will be distinctly widening, what will be regarded in positive terms from the Polish perspective. Therefore, it seems necessary to at least briefly present the contemporary nature of bilateral relations with the eastern neighbours of our country, as well as problems existing in this field.

UKRAINE

Poland recognized the independence of Ukraine, declared by the Republic of Ukraine, as the first country in the world. A formal state agreement on many-sided economic and cultural cooperation has been concluded by our countries. There are no basic controversial issues between Poland and Ukraine at the moment. The government of Ukraine declares its openness and assistance in issues concerning the Polish minority in Ukraine. One can also observe quick development of economic collaboration and first attempts to establish Polish-Ukrainian businesses. Border cooperation is developing too, and larger transborder regions are being established, following bilateral agreements, with the purpose to solve local and regional problems. These relate, among other things, to the opening of new checkpoints, economic cooperation, actions taken to protect environment, etc.

The fact of the so called "Carpathian Euroregion" being established in 1993 deserves special attention. The Euroregion groups the south-eastern provinces of Poland, the district of Lviv, Trans-Carpathian Ruthenia, few districts of eastern Slovakia, and a few from Hungary. The initiator of this spatial organization was Hungary, but the criteria to delimit the region and its practical operational ability can raise doubts (Eberhardt, 1994).

Both Polish and Ukrainian party attach great importance to the operation of the existing checkpoints and to the opening of new ones. The main one at the moment is Medyka, which is serving the increasing rail and road traffic. One should bear in mind that the second most important transport corridor with secular tradition is running here. It links countries of Western Europe, going through Wrocław, Katowice, Kraków, Rzeszów — with Lviv, and further with Kyiv, and Odessa on the Black Sea. Several new checkpoints have been opened recently, with that at Hrebenne and Dorohusk providing direct link between Kyiv and Warsaw.

Economic situation of Ukraine is a serious limitation for the mutual economic cooperation. Ukraine used to be closely integrated with the Soviet economic space. The collapse and disintegration of the former functional economic connections is the reason for the country's being in the state of deep crisis, and the implementation of necessary reforms has not gone beyond the preliminary stage. Poland is nevertheless one of the more important trade partners of Ukraine at the moment. A new element in mutual economic cooperation is the development of small import of Polish consumer goods in Ukraine. Over 500 businesses with participation of Polish capital are active in Ukraine now (1994). Potential possibilities in this respect are still much

higher. The establishment of a joint Commercial and Clearing Bank is going to facilitate the development of these relations by creating financial conditions for settlement of accounts for companies, and by providing credit service for the mutual exchange of goods.

Russia perceives the fact of the establishment by Ukraine of its own state and its tendency to become independent from it as a "geopolitic disaster". Therefore, by introducing different economic (e.g. limiting supplies of oil, natural gas and other raw materials) or political mechanisms (e.g. submitting territorial claims in Crimea), Russia is trying to stop the processes leading to Ukraine's genuine independence. The establishment of a joint economic zone, proposed in July 1993 to Ukraine (and Belarus), sometimes already called "The Triangle of Slavonic States" (sic!), means Russia's new effort to recreate former dependencies and maintain Ukraine in its own zone of influence.

Independent Ukraine can choose between two directions of geopolitical gravity. The first one is to the West. The country is trying to have possibly broad connections with the regions of Western and Central Europe. It may become an important partner for those countries, for the size of its territory, population and economic potential, and finally for its transit location. The main axis of this gravity becomes the mentioned transport corridor running through southern Poland. The second direction of gravity is the Black Sea basin. Based upon the countries of that basin, those of Caucasus, and some countries of Central Asia, elements of broad regional cooperation begin to emerge by Turkey's initiative (the so called Black Sea Economic Cooperation — BSEC; Poland has an observer's status here). One should not forget, however, that it is in the interest of Ukraine to maintain good relations with Russia, with whom it is connected mainly by economic issues. It wants, however, that these relations, similarly as those with other countries, be based on the principles of a genuine partnership, respect for its newly gained sovereignty and national aspirations.

BELARUS

The Republic of Belarus and Poland have concluded agreement on the recognition of the border and broad mutual economic and cultural cooperation. Significant progress can be recorded, as far as this cooperation is concerned, despite difficult economic situation in Belarus, where the implementation of reforms has not gone beyond the preliminary stage. Many Polish companies are active in Belarus, and many of them establish capital cooperation with Belarussian enterprises. Decision was made to open a joint bank, with the task to facilitate the developing exchange of goods. Belarus has obtained privileges in the use of the Gdańsk and Gdynia harbours. Development of cooperation in border regions can be observed, as well as development of checkpoints. Possible joint activities in the National Park of Białowieża, spreading on both sides of the border, are being discussed. An initiative to rebuild the section of the Canal of Augustów, situated in Belarus, is also being discussed. This is a monument of the 19th century water engineering

art of great historical and touristic value, which used to connect the Vistula river-basin with that of the Neman river. It would make an exceptionally attractive water tourism route for its landscape value. Polish population inhabiting Belarus is gaining favourable conditions for the development of its identity.

The fact of Belarussian becoming independent is not regarded in a positive way in Russia. One should remember that the main transport corridor connecting Russia with Europe is running across this country. Hence, to maintain maximum dependence of Belarus is an important issue for Russia. The lack of economic independence of Belarus, especially in relation to energy supply, is being used to this end. Present Russian influence among important still local circles of administration and post-communist nomenclature is very significant (efforts to impose a military alliance, a monetary union with Russia, etc). Similarly to Ukraine, Belarus has been proposed to establish a common economic zone together with Russia. In real terms it is to be a reestablishment of the former dependence (it was formally realize in 1995). Moscow's often nervous reactions to any signs of possible rapprochement with Poland are also very characteristic in this situation. Fears of the reviving catholicism are artificially stimulated among Belarussian, mainly orthodox society, not limited exclusively to the Polish population living there. Meanwhile, it is in Belarussian interest to open into the countries of Western and Central Europe, where it can obtain assistance in the transformation of its economic and social relations. This does not contradict the necessity to develop good-neighbourly relations with Russia itself, but based on the principles of genuine partnership and acceptance of the emerging state and national sovereignty.

LITHUANIA

The struggle for political independence, fought by Lithuania (and other Baltic States) with the USSR in 1990, ended with the obtainment of real political independence. However, the country meets an obstacle in its present development, similarly to other countries discussed here. This concerns maintaining political independence, developing national economy and social system. From the very beginning, Poland fully accepted and is accepting still Lithuania's aspirations to obtain full independence, and has supported them internationally, as far as possible. On the other hand, our country was surprised by the attitude of the authorities of the already independent Lithuania towards the Poles who have been living there for centuries, with their main centres in the region of Vilnius (Wilno). This attitude is manifesting itself, among other things, by a policy of Lithuanization, difficulties made to the emerging Polish local self-administrations, by limiting, or even trying to deprive the Poles of the right to possess the land made collective under the Soviet regime, limiting the tuition of the Polish language and development of education, and many other, often even trivial difficulties made by political parties and the State administration. Sometimes it is even difficult to

understand the climate of hostility existing today, if you do not refer to the history, to the period when Lithuanian nationalism was born in the second half of the 19th century. That nationalism was founded on the assumption based on total negation of the history of both nations, who had been creating their common state for 400 years. Without trying to analyze the foundations and the very process of that nationalism here, one has nevertheless the right to present one's own evaluation of it. I think that the final victim of that nationalism, not approved even by all Lithuanians, is Lithuania itself. If we look from the spatial perspective, it has achieved practically all goals that were possible to attain, associating itself, beginning as early as in the time of the First World War, due to the existing state of affairs, both with Germany and Russia. Further territorial claims, based on mythology rather, must lead to a conflict of interests with Belarus, Poland and Russia (in the last case it concerns the region of Kaliningrad). Neighbourhood with Poland, while we take the entire historic past of both countries, gives Lithuania a genuine chance (in case if good-neighbourly relations are established) to participate in European integration processes. On the other hand, efforts made to find other options have not given expected results so far. Lithuania becomes subject of ever more visible pressure by Russia instead, as the latter is striving after a possibly broad access to the Baltic coast, and first of all to its Kaliningrad exclave. By its conduct, Lithuania also makes unfavourable impression on various European organizations, as it is contradictory to the provisions of, among others, CSCE, the European Parliament and others. The choice of an advantageous geopolitical option for the country depends on Lithuanian leadership elites today. Still, the choice is rather limited at the moment.

The ratification by parliaments of Poland and Lithuania of a bilateral treaty between both countries in October 1994 should be welcome. This means — one can hope — a significant step forward to shape good-neighbourly relations and to overcome the negative heritage of the past.

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION-RUSSIA

Poland is Russia's next neighbour across the border with an exclave of the latter — i.e. The Kaliningrad (Królewiec, Königsberg) District. The district was completely closed to foreign visitors till very recently for its strategic and military functions, and used to be in fact a military base of the USSR. It was established, following the vision of the country's confrontation with the democratic system of the West. The Kaliningrad District was formally a part of the former RSFSR (Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic) of the former Soviet Union, and it has become a part of the contemporary Russian Federation-Russia, according to the formal point of view. On the other hand, for its specific location, the District is in way to obtaining the status of a privileged economic zone. This can help it to attract foreign capital and to locate enterprises of different kinds there. The District also has a chance to take part independently and actively in all kinds of activities,

which are the result of collaboration developing among countries of the Baltic Sea basin. However, this development has been limited so far. Even though ca. 800 foreign firms are active in the District, out of which almost one-half are Polish companies (1994) — their officially declared capital involvement is very small, however, according to local information (USD ca. 7.5 million?). German assistance includes the construction of a motor-way running from Kaliningrad to the Polish border (Braniewo). As it has been assumed, it is to be a part of the “Via Hanseatica”, running along the southern and eastern part of the Baltic coast. It also involves the connection of Kaliningrad by a motorway running across Lithuanian territory with the main transport route, running across Belarus to Moscow. This is not a preferential direction for capital investment in the field of transportation for Poland. The basic direction for us is the so called “Via Baltica”, which will direct the stream of passenger and cargo traffic from the Baltic and Scandinavian countries, from the region of St. Petersburg and north-western Russia, across the Polish-Lithuanian border (Budziska-Szypliszki), to the main European transport corridor — Minsk–Warsaw–Berlin. Many checkpoints are being opened on the border between the Kaliningrad District and Poland. They will be facilitating mutual relations under fast-developing economic cooperation between the District and Polish north-eastern voivodships.

Relations between Poland and the Russian Federation-Russia do not mean, however, our being exclusively neighbours of the Kaliningrad District. State agreement on mutual relations and broad cooperation has been concluded between Poland and Russia. Inter-state relations seem to be developing in a normal way. Nevertheless, many vague hints are made by both the Russian and the Polish party, resulting from the memories of both older and recent history. As it was already mentioned above, contemporary Russia, by admitting its right to the heritage of the USSR (also the territorial one) or tsarist Russia, does not want (or may be cannot?) to resign itself to the loss of many territories and to the loss of its influence in territories being submitted to it till recent time, and situated west of its present State border. Hence, different attempts to exercise pressure, observed in relation to e.g. Ukraine or Belarus, efforts to recreate common economy under the so called Commonwealth of Independent States, etc. Russia (some part of its governing elites), even though not expressing it formally, is still treating the territory of Poland and Central Europe as a “natural” zone of its geopolitical influence and interests, and it often makes it clear during various negotiations with Western countries. The argument behind this reasoning is that one should not let destabilize the situation in Russia itself, and that Russia should influence other, former Soviet republics, and the final and the most important thing is the control over nuclear arsenals. Hence a tendency, represented by some of the political circles in the West, and especially in the United States, not to notice Russian proceedings which in fact mean the revival of the traditional Russian imperial doctrine. As far as the Polish party is concerned, these proceedings are treated very seriously, and they in fact deserve very special attention. It is in the interest of Poland that the new East

European countries among others, Ukraine and Belarus attain genuine state sovereignty soon, and that this sovereignty be respected by their eastern neighbour. Poland is interested in Russia's abandoning its traditional doctrine, which assumes its imperial domination over the territory of Eastern Europe and Central Europe. Conditions must be created for a normal, broad cooperation between countries of this region. This goal is a priority, as it involves the overcoming of exceptionally complex and difficult problems of economic and social development. A thought comes naturally to one's mind, that under new conditions for the development of the world, expressed by global connections of all kinds and integration processes, especially in economy, the old geopolitical doctrines are becoming obsolete, and any efforts to revive them can only disturb the development of the new relations and connections. Russia itself is facing an enormous number of problems involving necessary settlement of its internal political, economic, social and national relations — and a new territorial expansion will certainly not be a "palliative operation." This would mean a substitute to divert the people's attention from issues vital for the very existence of that country. Accelerated development of China's economic potential and the increasing importance of that country in South-East Asia is becoming a challenge for Russia.

CONCLUSION

I am fully aware of the influence of the time factor, while wording the above remarks, as this factor is often disadvantageous for any attempt to generalize the situation of our eastern state border. What I mean is the actual period of time, when all the analyzed situations have been taking place: 1989 — first Poland, then all the remaining countries of the so called "people's democracy" regain their political independence (GDR becomes incorporated in the FRG); 1990 — the three Baltic States regain independence; 1991 — a total collapse of the USSR, which disappears from the political map of the world. These remarks were written in 1994 — one should therefore realize the scale and the concentration of all the occurring events in the historic time. All this relates to very few years. If we take this exceptional concentration of epochal changes into account, an attempt to reflect upon geopolitical issues relevant to the Polish eastern frontier seems to be exceptionally justified. This also refers to the Polish reasons of the State, and therefore requires an open and broad discussion.

The time factor emphasized above makes any considerations about the Polish eastern frontier and its geopolitical implications verified practically each day. In Russia, but also in Belarus and Ukraine, the situation is very changeable and often unclear. Hence the problem, to what extent such considerations can be regarded as solid and credible, especially as by their very definition they are of evaluating nature, and therefore inevitably subjective to some extent. It seems, however, that any discussion in political geography should not avoid attempts to make an evaluation, even on the current basis, of individual phenomena that occur on our eastern frontier. This leads to some final remarks.

1. One of the foundations of the new political conditions in Europe is the fact of Russia's returning to his historic and ethnic situation of the 15th — 16th century, as far as its western state borders is concerned. Russia is facing a dramatic decision, how to determine and formulate its political doctrine and its own position in a dramatically changing world of today. The alternative is, speaking in general terms, whether to accept changes which have already occurred, and to find out some partner's principles of coexistence with its own western neighbours, or to try to recreate the former geopolitical situation. Decisions taken in this respect will be affecting the situation on the Polish eastern border, as well as the issue concerning the neighbourhood with all the countries who are established there now.

2. Geopolitical conditions determining the situation of the Polish eastern state border and Poland itself have become more dynamic since September 1993. Russia has officially disapproved of the Polish attempt, expressed in a very explicit way, to integrate with the structures of the Atlantic Alliance (NATO). This is not only an intervention regarding a decision made by a sovereign state, but also a clear warning, that the territory of our country is an object of interest of the Russian Federation-Russia, and the zone of its geopolitical interests. One can also perceive it as an attempt to reconstruct, at least to some extent, the Jalta order. This Russian activity in relation to Poland is accompanied by intensive efforts to consolidate the so called Commonwealth of Independent States. Within Russian Federation-Russia, one can observe attempts to return to the traditional Russian imperial doctrine today — to rebuild the "Russian Empire", including its zone of interests, covering at least some part of Central Europe. Proposals submitted by some decision and opinion-making circles in the United States and the Western Europe to give Russia full liberty to determine relations within the former USSR (except for the Baltic States), is only strengthening these imperial trends.

3. Poland's explicit opting to participate in European integration processes (its association with the European Union, the application to become a member of NATO), as those made by other countries of Central Europe, will lead to a significant (in a historic sense) change of the European geopolitical geometry, and that of the position of Poland in this arrangement. This is a logical result of the exhaustion of political foundations for the Tehran, Jalta and Potsdam treaties. It is not necessary to remind, that those treaties (including the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact) became the foundation for the division of Europe for almost 45 years.

4. Also our eastern neighbours are facing the choice of option. They can opt for a genuine political independence on the one hand, or on the other hand, to become submitted to Russia again. The first choice would mean a beginning of the creation of the East European space and a new geopolitical European order. The second one cannot but lead to a recreation of the former system of submission. These issues are of fundamental importance, both for Poland and for the entire Europe.

5. Poland is vitally interested in its eastern neighbours' (Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania) becoming independent subjects on the European and world political

scene. It is also interested in a broad cooperation with the new Russia — a democratic Russia. Poland perceives its interest in a transformation of the hitherto European geopolitical order. The awareness of these conditions and of the ongoing processes, together with the determination to transform its own political, economic and social structures, are our input in the construction of the new “European order”. A former vision was the foundation of the construction of the present European Union, and the implementation of that vision has brought well known results. A vision and the will to implement it are also necessary to build a new “European order” for the 21st century.

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POLISH EASTERN BORDER CHANGES IN 1939-1945

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Abstract. Presentation of the history of changes of the shape of the Polish eastern border during World War II, the history of the political and diplomatic struggle to determine the postwar shape of this border. Demographic, social and cultural losses and transformation relating to the shift of the border, and Poland's loss of large eastern territories (given up to the USSR) were evaluated here. It was acknowledged that the postwar shift of the eastern border, together with the concomitant shift of the western one was a turning point in Poland's history.

Key words: borders, Polish eastern border, international treaties, international conferences.

The borders of the eastern part of the Second Republic were finally established by the Riga Treaty, signed on March 18, 1921, and ratified by the Sejm (Parliament) of the Republic of Poland on April 15, 1921.

The 1,412 km-long Polish-Soviet border extended from the mouth of Zbrucz river at Dnestr river in the South till Dwina river in the North, meeting the Polish-Latvian border.

The Polish-Soviet border, defined and demarcated on the spot, was recognized and never questioned by the Soviets till September 17, 1939.

By invading Poland on September 17, 1939 and incorporating its eastern part into their state, Soviet troops not only violated the Riga Treaty, signed by both parties and recognized by the allied countries in the resolution by the conference of ambassadors of March 15, 1923, being the execution of article 87 of the Versailles Treaty, but violated also three following, voluntary obligations:

— The pact of non-aggression between Poland and the USSR, signed on July 25, 1932, and extended on May 5, 1934 till July 25, 1945.

— An obligation to renounce war in the Polish-Soviet relations, of 1929.
— A convention determining the definition of the aggressor, concluded in 1933.

Soviet invasion of Poland followed the pact of non-aggression between the German Reich and the USSR, concluded in Moscow on August 23, 1939, and signed by Ribbentrop and Molotov.

The Pact was supplemented with a secret protocol which decided to erase Poland from the map of Europe.

The implementation of that protocol was to lead to terminate the independence of five European countries. The USSR was taking Finland, Latvia, Estonia

and the larger part of Poland, while Germany was gaining Lithuania and the remaining part of Poland. Additionally, Germany recognized the right of the USSR to Bessarabia (presently Moldova).

In Poland, the line of demarcation ran along the San river to the Wisła (Vistula) river, then along Vistula to the Bug-Narew river, and then along the Narew river. Acting in a hurry, both parties made a mistake, and did not take into account the fact that Narew does not reach the East Prussian border, and therefore the boundary between Narew and the Border of the German Reich was not delimited exactly.

Molotov intervened at the German Embassy on the following day. As a result of that, German ambassador reported to Berlin on August 25, 1939 the following: "Molotov summoned me this evening and said that because of great hurry, in which the secret protocol was determined, there was an obscure passage in its text. The end of the first paragraph of item two should read as follows: "delimitation along the line of Pissa, Narew, Vistula and San rivers". Once the Pissa river was added in this supplement, the western border of the USSR (being within the Polish territory) was established with precision. As a result of the treaty of partition of August 23, 1939, the Soviet side of the new border included the entire provinces of Wilno (Vilnius), Nowogródek (Navagrudak), Polesie, Wołyń (Volyn'), Stanisławów (present Ivano-Frankivsk), Lublin, Białystok, major part of the Lwów (Lviv) province, and all administrative districts of the Warsaw province, situated east of the Vistula river and south of Narew. Warsaw was to be divided. Its part situated on the left bank of the river was to fall to the Germans, while that on the right bank of the river — to the Soviets.

As a result of military operations of both aggressors, the German and the Soviet army began to approach each other in the second half of September, although German troops moved farther eastward than it had been provided by the demarcation established on August 23, 1939. German troops surrounded Warsaw, seized Lublin, and approached Lwów, finally seized by the Soviets. Soviet troops conquered eastern Poland, took Grodno by storm, and crossed the Bug river in its middle run, seized Siedlce, and even approached Mińsk Mazowiecki.

At the same time further negotiations began. Having summoned ambassador Schulenburg, Stalin and Molotov proposed a completely new demarcation line. The Soviet party was of opinion that leaving any, even mutilated Polish state, was aimless, and it made a new proposal to the Germans, concerning delimitation of both zones of influence. The Soviet party decided to give up the territory situated on the left bank of the Bug river, i.e. the entire province of Lublin, and some part of the Warsaw one, situated on the right bank of the Vistula river. The German party in return, was to give up claims concerning Lithuania in favour of the USSR. A Polish ethnic territory with ca. 4 million inhabitants was to be under German guardianship, while the entire Lithuania would be within the Soviet zone of influence.

¹ The article was written based on a book by the same author, entitled *Polska granica wschodnia 1939-1945 (Polish eastern border in 1939-1945)*, Warszawa 1993.

The reasons for the Soviet proposal were complex. Had the border been on the Vistula river, it would have been very difficult then to incorporate part of central Poland (including part of Warsaw situated on the right bank of the river) to Ukraine or to Belarus. It would have also been difficult to establish some mutilated Poland with an odd border configuration, including Lublin and some part of Warsaw, but without Kraków, Kielce or Radom. The Polish issue might have resulted in a state of friction between Germany and the USSR. On the other hand, Stalin was anxious to get Lithuania.

A proposal of this kind was presented to Ribbentrop, when he arrived in Moscow on September 27, 1939. Negotiations on the border issue were complicated and lasted for the entire day of Sept. 28, 1939. Ribbentrop suggested at the beginning that the border ran from Brześć (Brest) through Grodno to the Niemen (Neman) river, and then to the Latvian border. He demanded additionally for the oil-field situated in the region of Drohobycz (Drohobyč) and Borysław (Borislav), without any change of the border in its section lying within central Poland. Those proposals were rejected by the Russian party, and it was the Soviet proposal which was accepted. It provided for a border going through the middle of Poland, from the Carpatians in the South to East Prussia in the North. Polish territory of 388 thousand km² was divided in such a way that USSR took almost 200 thousand km², and the German Reich — almost 190 thousand km².

In the south, it began on the upper San river, in the region of the Uzhock pass (Przełęcz Użocka), then along the San with Ustrzyki Górne on the German side, while enabling to leave a large meander of San with Bircza on the Soviet side. The river San flows further eastward to Przemyśl. Almost entire Przemyśl (except for its districts situated on the left bank of the river) remained under Soviet occupation. Then San changes the direction of its course again; this enabled the USSR to occupy the region north of Radymno and Jarosław. In the region of Sieniawa, the border deviated from San to reach Bełz (Belz) (running along a straight line) in the region of the mouth of Ruczycza (Rečica) to Sołokija, then along that river to Bug in the region of Krystynopol (present Červonohrad). From there it went along Bug. Following the changes of direction of the course of Bug, the border ran southward till Brześć (Brest), changing the direction there, going first north-westward, and then westward. The border section situated on the Bug river reached as far as the village of Nur. The Soviet zone included Siemiatycze, Drohiczyn, Ciechanowiec. Beginning from Nur, the border diverted from Bug, and going along straight line it reached Narew in the region of Ostrołęka. In that region, the border went between Zambrów, leaving it on the Soviet side, and Ostrów Maz., which was already on the German side. The border went further along Narew, to reach Pissa, then going along that river it reached (north of Kolno) the former border between Poland and East Prussia. In order to grant Ribbentrop's request (he very much enjoyed hunting), the USSR gave up the province of Suwałki with Suwałki and Sejny to Germany. In this region, the border ran evenly with a parallel of latitude, next to Augustów, leaving it on the Soviet side.

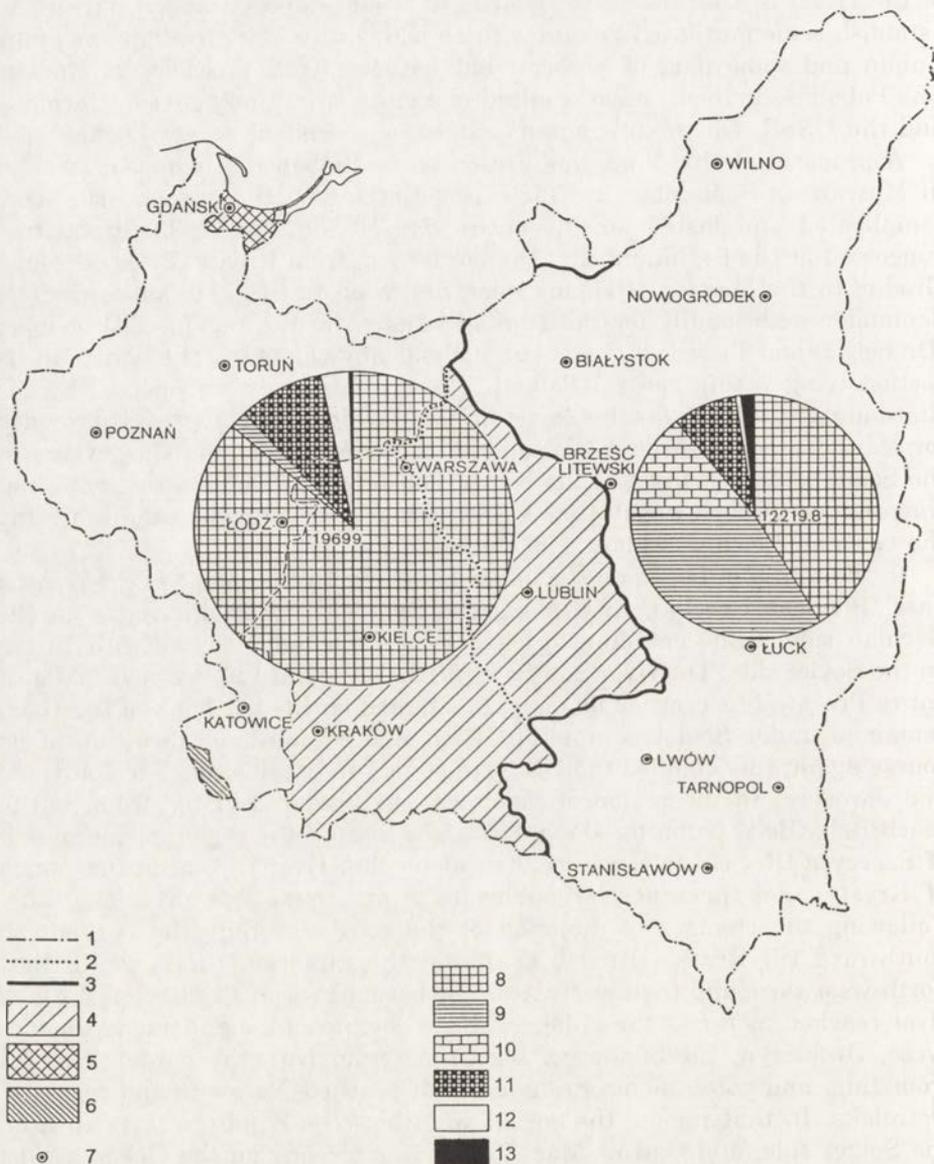


Fig. 1. Dismembering of Poland in result of Ribbentrop-Molotov pact 1939

1 — boundary of Poland, 2 — demarcation line as on 23 Aug. 1939, 3 — demarcation line as on 28 Sept. 1939; 4 — General Governement territory, 5 — Gdańsk Free Town territory, 6 — Zaolzie territory, 7 — voivodship administrative centre

Population in 1931:

8 — Polish, 9 — Ukrainian, 10 — Belarussian, 11 — Jewish, 12 — German, 13 — other

When all details concerning the border were set, Germany and the USSR concluded an agreement on borders and friendship, signed by Ribbentrop and Molotov on September 28, 1939.

The border, as established by the agreement, and running through the territory of Poland from the Carpathians in the region of the spring of the San river to the East Prussian border in the region of Kolno, is called in the literature as the border of the IV partition of Poland. Later historic events decided that the border delimited by the dictate of both partitioning powers did not last for too long. It existed in fact only from September 28, 1939 till June 22, 1941, therefore for 21 months altogether. However, the fact that the border was established, was of great political importance, as Soviet authorities kept relating to that border later during the war, treating it as a justified and equitable western border of their empire. It also brought serious consequences for the Polish population. The fate of those under Soviet occupation was different from that of those under the German one during the period that followed.

The border established between the USSR and the German Reich had no historic justification. Never in the earlier history it had had an equivalent. There was also no ethnologic justification for it. With an exception of a section running along Bug, between Krystynopol (Červonohrad) and Brześć (Brest), which in some way divided a region with dense Polish settlements on the left bank of Bug from dense Ukrainian settlements on the right bank of the river, it is difficult to find any ethnic reasons at other sections of the border. In its northern section, between Bug and the East Prussian border, the border line was dividing purely Polish areas. The enclave surrounding Suwałki was another geographic abnormality, being isolated from the remaining part of the German occupation zone. On the other hand, the border was running along the winding course of San in the South, leaving those parts of Sanok, Przemyśl and Jarosław, which were situated on the right bank of the river in the Soviet hands, and those on the left bank of the river in the German zone.

Neither the way the border was delimited was in accordance with the so called Curzon's line. Soviet authorities tried to identify it with that line later, what was not true.

While comparing the demarcation line of September 28, 1939 with the Curzon's line (the so called A line), one can also notice significant discrepancies. It is only the middle section of the border, running along the middle Bug between Brześć and Hrubieszów, which is the same in both cases. The northern section was very much different in each case. The demarcation border was moved much westward. The Curzon's line reached the Niemen (Neman) river near Grodno, while the demarcation line passed along Pissa and Narew. The distance between Ostrołęka and Grodno is 150 km, and the border of partition was moved westward by 150 km, too. In the southern section, between Bug and the Carpathians, the demarcation line was moved significantly westward, as compared to the Curzon's line. The discrepancies ranged between 10 and 60 km.

As a result of the pact, regions situated eastward of the delimited border of partition, were within the Ukrainian and Belarussian Republics. On the

other hand, the territory situated west of the demarcation line, was directly incorporated in the German Reich, or included in the so called General Gouvernement, established later.

In accordance with the Soviet-German pact, despite Lithuania's being neutral during the September campaign, Lithuanian government was forced to accept Soviet ultimatum, and having allowed for an extraterritorial railway to Lipawa and having admitted a 30,000 Soviet army into its territory, it obtained the region of Wilno (Vilnius). It was of no great importance, as the entire Lithuania was incorporated in the USSR already in the following year.

Soviet authorities had every confidence that their western border was stable and unalterable, and they did not anticipate any changes, nor even its smallest corrections in future. On the other hand, they began large scale defence works along the border. It was being carried out even at the expense of fortifications on the border established by the Riga Treaty, what affected later the course of military operations during the first weeks of the Soviet-German war. Those works were of a purely deterring nature, however, and the USSR perceived the new border as that of friendship between the two befriended powers.

This was in accordance with the Soviet-German agreement of friendship, concluded on September 28, 1939, item 2 of which established the following: "both parties recognize the border between the interests of both states, as established in item 1, as the final one".

Being in accordance with the German-Soviet pact, USSR invaded Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. It began by concluding the so called agreements of friendship, and afterwards (June 20, 1940) Soviet troops marched in the three mentioned Baltic States. The USSR tried to subordinate Finland on the turn of 1939. Because of a failure of Soviet military operations, however, the USSR was compelled to give up the idea to conquer Finland, although it acquired some territorial gains. On the other hand, the prestige of the USSR suffered significantly. The League of Nations condemned the act of aggression and removed the USSR from among its members. At the same time Rumania was forced to give back Bessarabia and North Bukowina (Bukovyna) to the USSR. In this way, jointly established zones of influence (with exception of Finland) were occupied by both parties. There was a distinct border between the zones of influence, clearly established by both parties and recognized. Its central section crossed the territory of Poland. Despite constant consultations, there began to occur clashes between both allied powers, however. Among other things, the German party expressed discontent because of the occupation of the Soviet army of North Bukowina (Bukovyna), which was not covered by territorial agreements.

The attitude of the Soviet authorities towards Poland and the Poles was unchanging during that entire period, and consistent with Molotov's speech delivered during the meeting of the Supreme Council of the USSR of October 31, 1939. The following of what he said is well known: "a short blow aimed against Poland, delivered first by the German, then by the Soviet army, was enough to leave nothing of that monstrous bastard of the Treaty of

Versailles” and further: “as everyone understands, there is no way former Poland could be restored. It is therefore absurd to continue this war under the slogan of the reconstruction of the former Polish state”.

It was evident from Molotov’s speech that there prevailed conviction about the permanence of the border *status quo* and about the final liquidation of the Polish statehood. The decision to exterminate Polish officers from the camps in Kozielsk (Kozelsk), Ostaszków (Ostaškov) and Starobielsk (Starobelsk) in March and April 1940 was a result of the assumption that the Polish issue was finally solved and new political elements relating to that issue had to be expected soon afterwards.

It is also proved by the reserve of the Soviet authorities towards Polish communists abiding in the USSR. Their efforts to establish some sort of organizational structures were postponed and treated with disregard.

The victory of the German Reich over France, and the very course of the French-German war stimulated a change of the situation in Europe. Stalin anticipated a long-lasting war, and the rapid defeat of France created a completely new situation in the Soviet-German relations. The pact of non-aggression Hitler had needed during the Polish-German and the French-German war, lost its importance. On July 27, 1940, the German Army Headquarters ordered 12 divisions to move to the General Gouvernement from the West, including two tank divisions, as during the invasion of France in May 1940, there had been only 7 incomplete German divisions left on the Soviet border.

The next fact affecting the Soviet-German relations was the so called Vienna arbitration. Rumania, mutilated by the USSR and Hungary, obtained German guarantees on July 30, 1940. German troops marched in Rumania.

By the end of 1940 crisis emerged in the Soviet-German relations. Molotov arrived in Berlin in November 1940, invited by Ribbentrop. The issue of Moscow’s eventual joining the Berlin–Rome–Tokyo axis was discussed, as well as a possibility of the USSR’s engaging into war with the British Empire. Molotov temporized and did not accept that proposal. He presented specific postulates of the Soviet party instead, in relation to Finland, Rumania and Bulgaria, and the Dardanelles. Both parties did not reach any agreement at that point. As a result of a total change of German military concepts, Hitler signed the directive to design the “Barbarossa” operation (December 18, 1940). The pact concluded on August 23, 1939 began to lose its importance. German troops began to take initial positions along the demarcation line of September 28, 1939. At the same time, Hitler began to create anti-Soviet coalition, with participation of Finland and Rumania.

Stalin did not believe there would be a war, despite the signs of the coming conflict. Many facts confirm this, including the well known announcement by the TASS of June 13, 1941.

The German-Soviet war broke out on June 22, 1941. German troops crossed the demarcation line, established on September 28, 1939, at its length, and it ceased to exist in practical terms. Within a dozen of days German troops invaded the entire Eastern Poland, occupied by the USSR since the invasion of September 1939.

The Soviet-German pact of August 23, 1939, and decisions established on September 28, 1939, which had made the partition of Poland possible, as well as the absorption of the three Baltic States by the USSR, lost grounds for further existence. The issue concerning the independence and the eastern border of Poland became an open question anew.

Hitler's invasion of the USSR was a very beneficial event for Great Britain, who immediately sided with the USSR. In relation to that, British Government exercised pressure on Sikorski, the Prime Minister of the Polish Government at that time, to normalize Polish-Soviet relations. Negotiations between the USSR ambassador in Great Britain, Majski, and Sikorski began, with active participation of English diplomats. The negotiations resulted in a Polish-Soviet agreement, signed by Sikorski and Majski on July 30, 1941, with Churchill and Eden being present, having not respected a proper procedure required by the Polish Constitution.

The most important item relating to the border issue went as follows: "The Government of the USSR approves that Soviet-German treaties of 1939, relating to territorial changes in Poland, have lost their validity". The agreement did not provide for a clear obligation on the part of the USSR to restore the *status quo ante* in relation to the borders. The agreement referred in further items to the establishment of diplomatic relations, to the mutual support to continue war against Germany, and to the establishment of a Polish Army in the USSR.

There was very little precision in the wording concerning the border issue, and immediately afterwards the issue was interpreted by both parties in different ways. Sikorski made the following statement in his speech to the Polish nation on the following day: "Present agreement... does not even admit a suggestion to question the borders existing before September 1939". On the other hand, the Moscow Izvestia of August 3, 1941 said that the issue concerning the Polish eastern border remained open, and that the Riga Treaty was not eternal, and that Polish eastern territories were Ukrainian and Belarussian ones, and not Polish.

Sikorski realized that the wording of the agreement was not explicit in relation to the border issue, and asked Eden, the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain, to support in public the Polish position. British Foreign Office made the following statement in its official note: "His Majesty's Government does not recognize any territorial changes that have occurred in Poland since August 1939". At the same time Eden withdrew from guaranteeing Polish eastern border at the House of Commons. Answering one of the questions asked, he said: "the exchange of notes between the Polish and the British government does not involve any guarantees for the Polish border. Moreover, according to Churchill's declaration of September 5, 1940, the future Polish-Soviet border would be established by mutual agreement". The American Undersecretary of State, Sumner Welles made a similar statement, and he did not confirm Poland's right to its prewar border.

The situation was unfavourable for Poland then. Sikorski's interpretation was that the consequence of the denunciation of treaties with Germany had

to be a return to the border established in Riga in 1921. Denunciation of treaties with Germans did not have to involve returning to the border from August 1939. The mentioned lack of precision in the wording of the agreement in relation to the most important issue, i.e. Polish eastern border, caused a cabinet crisis of the Polish Government in London. Among those who renounced their posts were Sosnkowski (from the Ministry of Defence) and Zaleski (from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Both their resignation and opposition against Sikorski were fully justified. One may assume that a more favourable wording of the agreement could have been achieved. On the other hand, however, USSR would interpret for its own advantage even the most favourable text of the document.

A positive result of the agreement was amnesty for imprisoned and deported Poles. Formation of the Polish Army in the USSR began, based on the military agreement, concluded on August 14, 1941. General Anders became the Army Commander.

Problems connected with the Polish-Soviet border came out during Sikorski's visit in Moscow. During the first day of his visit (December 1, 1941) Polish Embassy was informed that residents of eastern Poland, of Ukrainian, Belarussian and Jewish nationality would be regarded as Soviet citizens and be subject to conscription to the Soviet Army; only aboriginal Poles would be regarded as Polish citizens. The Soviet note explained the motives behind that decision, saying that: "the issue concerning the border between the USSR and Poland has not been agreed upon and will be subject of agreement in future". It was an indirect evidence for a certain withdrawal by the Soviets from the idea of the border of September 28, 1939, but also for their non-acceptance of the border established by the Riga Treaty.

During negotiations with Sikorski, Stalin suggested that the issue of the post-war boundary should be somehow agreed upon before the end of the war, and without intervention of the Western powers. He said to Sikorski: "We should establish between ourselves the line of our common border before the peace conference, as soon as the Polish Army joins in the military operations. Let us stop talking about it now. Do not worry, we shall not harm you"².

The above statement makes it clear that Stalin was interested in settling the line of the border with Sikorski, and without interference of the Western powers. That was the best opportunity, which was never repeated afterwards. Unfortunately, Sikorski refused, arguing that he could not "accept, even theoretically, any suggestion that the border of the Polish State could be regarded as unstable". The conversation took place in December 1941, after the repulse of Germans from Moscow. Long Winter was coming. Sikorski should have known that the USSR had already survived the most critical period. On the other hand, Stalin did realize that it was anticipated that the war would last yet for a long time, and therefore he was ready to make

² J. Karski — *Wielkie mocarstwa a Polska (Great powers and Poland)*, Wydawnictwo KOS, Warszawa 1987.

concessions. Stalin was ready to compromise in this contradictory issue. It would have been enough, if Sikorski had concluded an agreement with Stalin, stating that the territory of Poland would not be smaller than that of 1939, or at least agreed on the issue of the attachment of the Eastern Little Poland (Wschodnia Małopolska) with Lwów (Lviv) to Poland. During later negotiations, it would have been an argument of some importance. Sikorski avoided any further, concrete conversation.

The attitude of the Soviets was becoming more and more confident and stiff since then. Ambassador Bogomolov sharply protested in his note of January 23, 1942 against questioning of the attachment of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to the USSR. The fact of mentioning Lithuania, which had no common border with the USSR in August 1939, was a clear confirmation of the attitude of the USSR towards the Polish eastern borderland. Having presented the note, the issue concerning the Baltic States was decided according to Soviet postulates. On April 26, 1942, British Government accepted the eastern border of the USSR in the region of the Baltic States and Rumania. In this way the English approved changes of the border, resulting from the agreement between Molotov and Ribbentrop. It happened despite the fact that the British Government maintained during all the time between the wars diplomatic relations with Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. In this way, the end of their independence became the fact. Not mentioning the moral issue, the British diplomacy made a mistake, as it turned over without any discussion a territory USSR was very anxious to have, and for which it was ready to pay a high price in other controversial issues. It was also a menacing memento for Poland.

During 1942, the USSR more than once made it clear that it regarded the border of June 1941 as a legally binding one, not because of the agreement between Ribbentrop and Molotov, but as a result of a plebiscite carried out a month later, under supervision of the NKVD and the Soviet Army.

At the same time the USSR violently opposed the Polish-Czech agreement of January 23, 1942, providing for a confederation of the two countries. It was inconvenient from the point of view of imperial goals of the USSR, who intended to seize the Central Europe.

Being in Washington, D.C., on March 24, 1942, Sikorski tried to convince Roosevelt to defend the Polish eastern border. He obtained no more than a vague declaration that "the US Government does not abandon the principle that territorial issues should not be solved before the end of the war".

As far as declarations are concerned, the position of the British in relation to the Polish eastern border did not basically change for a while. In his answer to Raczyński, Eden wrote the following, among other things (April 17, 1942): "as far as Wilno and any other territory being within the Polish boundary on August 25, 1939 are concerned, His Majesty's Government has already assured the Polish Government, that it will not recognize any territorial change effected in Poland after August 1939, and it is going to respect this assurance in every agreement that can be concluded with the Soviet Government".

The Polish-Soviet relations kept worsening. Serious divergencies of opinions came out during the formation of the Polish Army in the USSR. Difficulties began in recruiting and forming new divisions of the Polish Army. Then, decisions were made to evacuate, at first in part, then the entire Polish Army to Persia. The issue concerning the evacuation, in which Great Britain and later also USSR were interested it, was rather a complex problem. Poland was losing a significant political trump card, in any case. One may assume that had that Army been fighting the Germans on the eastern front, it would have significantly influenced negotiations relating to the Polish eastern border.

By the end of 1942, Polish Government included the issue concerning the Polish-Soviet border in the agenda once again. The Soviet reaction was already much more aggressive and hostile. Soviet Government informed the Polish authorities in the note sent to the Polish Embassy on January 16, 1943, that it deprived Poles abiding in the USSR of Polish citizenship. It reminded at the same time of the "sovereign rights of the USSR to the said territories", meaning those seized in 1939.

The National Council of the Polish Government could not agree with such an interpretation. On February 20, 1943 it made a statement that the "territorial integrity of the Republic of Poland, within its boundaries of September 1, 1939, and its sovereignty are inviolable and indivisible". As time went by and the Soviet position was becoming stronger, Polish statements were playing a decreasingly less important role. Soviet declarations, on the other hand, were very firm and less conciliatory. In the TASS news agency statement of March 1, 1943, Soviet authorities were already clearly relating to the Curzon's line, while declaring the following: "Polish Government does not want to recognize historic rights of the Ukrainian and Belarussian nation to unite in their own national states... in this way, the Polish Government declares itself for a partition of Ukrainian and Belarussian territory, and for a continuation to divide the Ukrainian and the Belarussian nation".

Responding to the TASS statement, the Polish news agency, PAT, stated the following on March 5, 1943: "The Riga Treaty of 1921 and its decisions relating to the borders, approved in 1923 by the Conference of Ambassadors and by the United States, were not questioned by Russia till the moment when the USSR concluded agreements with the Third Reich to divide the Polish territory, and those agreements were annulled by the Polish-Soviet pact of July 30, 1941. The fact of relating to the German-Russian border line of that year needs no comment. The so called Curzon's line was designed during military operations of 1919-1920, only as an armistice line, and not a state border".

Relations between Polish Government in exile and the USSR were inevitably coming to a breach. The direct pretext was a statement by Sikorski's government and their appeal to the International Red Cross in relation to the newly discovered graves of Polish officers murdered by the NKVD in Katyń in the Spring of 1940. The Soviet Government, feeling offended to be suspected of that crime, unilaterally breached diplomatic relations

with the Polish Government on April 25, 1943, imputing collaboration with Hitler to it, and saying that "Polish Government entered upon this hostile campaign in order to use the slanderous Nazi counterfeit, and to exercise pressure on the Soviet Government in order to force it to make territorial concessions at the expense of the interests of Soviet Ukraine, Soviet Belarus and Soviet Lithuania".

Polish Government in London became isolated, and Polish problems worsened. Great Britain and the United States undertook mediation in order to avert the crisis in the Polish-Soviet relations. Stalin demanded for a reshuffle of Sikorski's Cabinet, and that the Polish Government recognized the "right to self-determination for the population of West Ukraine and West Belarus", i.e. approval to incorporate Polish eastern territories in the USSR.

International isolation of the Polish Government and the support Stalin obtained from Churchill and Roosevelt made Sikorski tend to make some eventual border concessions. He therefore considered a possibility to give up Polesie, Wołyń (Volyn') and some part of Podole to the Soviet Union, in exchange for territorial compensation at the expense of Germany. Because of that, he intended to go to Moscow and to talk directly to Stalin, but before he managed to do it, he died in a tragic accident on July 4, 1943. Mikołajczyk became the new Prime Minister of the Government in exile. Polish Government in exile in its new composition was of opinion that the border established by the Riga Treaty should be maintained.

During preparations to the Moscow Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the three main powers (October 19-30, 1943), the British party tried to impose on Mikołajczyk's Government the necessity to recognize the Curzon's line as the Polish-Soviet border. Minister Eden was confronted, however, with a firm position of Mikołajczyk in relation to the Polish eastern border.

In connection with the preparations to the meeting of the Big Three in Tehran, Polish Government sent a memorandum to Churchill and Roosevelt on November 16, 1943, with Polish desiderata, and rejecting possible alteration of the pre-war Polish-Soviet border. It had already no greater practical influence.

The decision concerning the eastern border of Poland was made during the conference in Tehran on December 1, 1943. Initially, the Soviet party proposed to make the border of June 22, 1941 the starting point. On this occasion Molotov pointed out that it was the border line called the Curzon's line. The British questioned his opinion by showing the map with a difference marked between the Curzon's line, which had left the region of Białystok and the city of Przemyśl on the Polish side, and the line of June 22, 1941, according to which those territories were within the USSR. Molotov realized that he could not deceive the opposing party. Then Stalin marked off on the map the difference between both border lines and admitted that those were regions inhabited by Polish population. Another controversial issue was that of Lwów (Lviv). Eden reminded that Curzon's line had not been established for Galicia, and the question concerning Lwów (Lviv) was still open. Molotov

read aloud the full text of Curzon's note to the Government of the Soviet Russia, where he mentioned two demarcation lines; one west and the other east of Lwów (Lviv). Controversy concerning the interpretation began. Eden was defending the interest of Poland. On the other hand, Churchill said to Molotov that he "will not make big fuss because of Lwów".

The discussion ended with specific decisions made, in relation to the Polish eastern border. It is worthwhile to quote some fragments of the conclusive discussion between Stalin and Churchill, because of the gravity of that decision.

Stalin: "It is being said that Ukrainian land should be given back to Ukraine, Belarussian to Belarus, i.e. there should exist the border of 1939, established by the Soviet Constitution, between ourselves and Poland". Having heard that, Churchill proposed the following motion: "It has been basically accepted that the focal point of the Polish state and nation should be situated between the so called Curzon's line and the Odra (Oder) river line, incorporating Eastern Prussia and the province of Opole (Oppeln) in Poland. Final delimitation of the borders requires, however, a thorough study and eventual re-settlement of the population in some areas". Stalin: "The Russians have no non-freezing over ports on the Baltic Sea. Therefore they would need non-freezing over ports of Królewiec (Königsberg, Kaliningrad) and Kłajpeda (Klajpeda) together with an appropriate part of the territory of East Prussia. The more so as from the historic point of view these are Slav territories since time immemorial. In case the English agree for the transference of the mentioned above territory, we shall then give our consent to the wording proposed by Mr. Churchill".

In this way the Polish eastern border was agreed upon. It was to be the Curzon's line. During a face-to-face discussion with Stalin, Churchill not only accepted the Curzon's line, but at the same time granted the northern East Prussia with Królewiec (Königsberg), and additionally Kłajpeda (Klajpeda) to the USSR. Poland was to lose not only its eastern part of the country, but was also to have a northern border with the USSR. All claims of the USSR concerning the Polish-Soviet border were satisfied. The only concession the USSR made was to agree for the Curzon's line instead of the demarcation line of June 1941. Talking of Curzon's line in general terms, the issue of Lwów (Lviv) was not mentioned in the final wording of the document, and the city could not be at the eastern — and at the western part of the border at the same time. There is not doubt that Stalin assumed that Lwów (Lviv) would be on the Soviet side. It provided, however, grounds to a different interpretation of the southern section of the Curzon's line.

Decisions made in Tehran were made secret and Polish Government was notified about them. The Government of Mikołajczyk was not aware that Polish eastern border was generally agreed upon without the Poles even knowing about it. Under the circumstances, Polish efforts, especially those to convince Roosevelt to support Poland to be able to maintain the border established by the Riga Treaty, had to be futile. Roosevelt's lip-language promises were misleading and made it difficult to run more realistic politics.

The eastern part of the Polish Republic was under German occupation from July 1941 till the first half of 1944. On January 3-4, 1944, Soviet Army

crossed the border established by the Riga Treaty in the region of Sarny, and because of that Polish Government published a declaration with the postulate to restore Polish administration in eastern part of Poland as quickly as possible. Responding to that, the TASS news agency made a declaration that "the Polish-Soviet border was established by the plebiscite carried out on broadly democratic terms in 1939". It was a clear reference to the demarcation line established by the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, without mentioning the very fact.

Between August 18 and Aug. 20, 1944, Soviet Army crossed the Bug river. By doing that, it crossed both the Curzon's line and the demarcation line of September 28, 1939, in this section of the border. On July 22, 1944 the Polish Committee of the National Liberation (Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego — PKWN) was created in Moscow. It proclaimed a Manifesto, under the date of July 22, 1944. It said it was published in Chełm, the first town situated west of the Curzon's line. The new centre of power was appointed by Stalin's initiative. Among its members were activists of the National Home Council (Krajowa Rada Narodowa), the Union of Polish Patriots (Związek Patriotów Polskich) and the Central Office of the Polish Communists (Centralne Biuro Komunistów Polskich). The PKWN Manifesto expressed the position relating to the eastern border in the following way: "The National Home Council and the appointed by it Polish Committee of the National Liberation are of opinion that the regulation of the Polish-Soviet border should be done by mutual agreement. The eastern border should be a line of a friendly neighbourhood, and not a barrier between us and our neighbours, and it should be regulated according to the following principle: The Polish land — for Poland, the Ukrainian, Belarussian and Lithuanian one — to the Soviet Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania".

This wording of very little precision was covering resignation of the former eastern territories of the Polish Republic. Vague rhetoric was meant for the Poles at home. It seemed evident while reading the text, that the border was not established yet. It was not true, as the Curzon's line was already accepted by the PKWN leadership. On the other hand, those events took place already after the Tehran Conference, when Stalin had obtained Churchill's and Roosevelt's consent for the Curzon's line. The formal agreement on the Curzon's line was signed in Moscow by the PKWN and the Soviet government on July 26, 1944.

Osóbka-Morawski has given the following account of the conversation with Stalin: "The conversation began in a very unpleasant way. Marshall Stalin entered into it with anger. 'What is the problem now? Is the region of Chełm to belong to them, or to us.' We entered into detailed discussion. The climate slowly began to become calm. We began arguing, that people in Poland generally counted on the entire East Prussia. You do not need to cut off from it as much as it is provided by the draft document in order to separate Królewiec (Königsberg) for the USSR. Marshall Stalin approved of the change in this region. He then agreed to make the change at the expense of territories separated from Lithuania in the region of Suwałki and Augustów. Here and there concessions were made on the eastern line; some small items.

We also indicated the railway junction at Chyrów (Chiriv), which remained on the Soviet side, by what two of our railways were cut in the middle. I cannot understand even now, why the Russians were so uncompromising in this point. Even President Bierut would be trying later to fight for Chyrów (Chiriv), to gain nothing and only to find himself personally in trouble because of that". Osóbka-Morawski wrote the following in a further passage: "When it seemed that the discussion about the border was coming to an end, I took the floor to talk about the promised amendments to the Curzon's line, in favour of Poland, arguing in the following way: the Polish nation is expecting some more serious amendment to the Curzon's line, and there are three amendments possible, with some more important undertone. I shall mention one of them, the most meagre one as it seems, and that is the forest of Białowieża (Puszcza Białowieska)".

In later passages of his argument, Osóbka-Morawski said, that thanks to his intervention, Stalin gave his consent to transfer to Poland one-half of the Forest of Białowieża.

The memoirs make it clear that the original Soviet plan significantly diverted from the Curzon's line, and it was to Poland's disadvantage. They show in addition, that the intimidated PKWN delegation had no courage to claim Lwów (Lviv) and the Oil Field. One should agree, however, that Stalin used his position of power and did not intend to compromise much more.

Second conference of the PKWN representatives on the border issue was held in Moscow on August 16, 1944. It brought no change in relation to the eastern issue, however.

The border agreed upon was not questioned or discussed by the Lublin government later. On the contrary, it was representatives of that government, who took the Soviet side during negotiations with the Polish Government of London, or with the Western powers.

One should not overestimate, however, agreements between the Lublin government and the USSR. The eastern border of Poland had been established during the Tehran Conference, and finally confirmed by the treaty of negotiations between the three powers in Jalta. The USSR knew that it would not maintain the border of September 28, 1939. The proof for that is Stalin's answer to Mikołajczyk's question during negotiations in Moscow on October 13, 1944: "Is the Curzon's line synonymous with the demarcation line established in 1939?" Stalin answered as follows: "No, by no means. Białystok, Łomża and Przemyśl are given to you, according to the Curzon's line".

Final decisions concerning Polish eastern border were made during the meeting of Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt in Jalta. Curzon's line was agreed to be the basis for that border, but with Lwów (Lviv) on the Soviet side. The decision caused practically no controversy. Indeed, at one moment Roosevelt appealed to Stalin to consider the issue of the incorporation of Lwów (Lviv) to Poland. He did not treat it as a postulate, however, but only as a suggestion for consideration, and he made it clear that he would not enter into any polemics. He was of opinion that Lwów (Lviv) could be treated as compensation for Königsberg. The USSR did not agree with his suggestion, and Roosevelt

did not raise the issue again. On the other hand, Churchill fully recognized the Soviet interpretation of the Curzon's line and made it clear that Lwów should be incorporated in the USSR. The following proposal in relation to the issue concerning the Polish eastern border was accepted: "it has been agreed that the Curzon's line should be the eastern border of Poland, with deviations in some regions, ranging between 5 and 8 km in Poland's favour".

The disclosure of those decisions was followed by a protest of the Polish Government in London, which made a statement on January 22, 1945, saying that "decisions made in Jalta were prepared and made without any participation, authorization, or even knowledge of the Polish Government, and the method used in Jalta is contradictory to the rules binding for the allies, and it means a renouncement of the Atlantic Charter, and violation of a right every nation has to stand in defence of its own interest, therefore decisions concerning Poland, and made in Jalta cannot be recognized by the Polish Government and cannot be binding for the Polish nation; separation from Poland of the eastern half of its territory will be regarded by the Polish nation as a new partition of Poland — executed by Poland's allies this time".

The new Polish border was delimited precisely in 1945. It is well known to all, hence there is no need to present it in detail. It is only worthwhile to compare its course with the so called demarcation line, delimited as a result of the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact.

In relation to the demarcation line, existing from September 28, 1939 till June 22, 1941, visible changes in Poland's favour took place. In order to demonstrate those changes, below there are mentioned the regions situated within in the Soviet occupation zone, while the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact was binding. One can say, with some approximation, that the following regions (according to the administrative division of 1939) were returned to Poland: three districts of the Warsaw province (with the population of 323,000 in 1931) and the province of Białystok, without two districts (of Grodno and Wołkowysk [Volkovysk]) and the district of Suwałki, being under German occupation in 1939-1941 (with the population of 622,000 in 1931). In the southern part of the border, the district of Lubaczów was regained, a large part of that of Jarosław, that of Przemyśl with the city of Przemyśl, and that of Dobromil, as well as small parts of those of Sokal, Rawa Ruska (Rava Rus'ka) and Jaworów (Javoriv) from the province of Lwów.

The last section of the border delimited between the USSR and Poland was the northern one, dividing East Prussia. At the moment the border runs from the Bay of Gdańsk (Zatoka Gdańska), dividing the Vistula Peninsula (Mierzeja Wiślana) and Bay (Zalew Wiślany), going further north of Braniewo, and reaching Wizajny in the region of Suwałki, going along a straight line, cutting roads, railways and villages and towns, leaving Braniewo, Bartoszyce and Gołdap on the Polish side, and Św. Siewierka (present Mamonowo), Frydland (Friedland — present Pravdinsk) and Darkiejny (present Ozersk) on the Soviet side.

As a result of World War II, Poland lost its entire eastern part, of ca. 179,000 km². It was a territory larger than present Austria and Hungary put together (176,800 km²). Poland lost 45% of its territory.

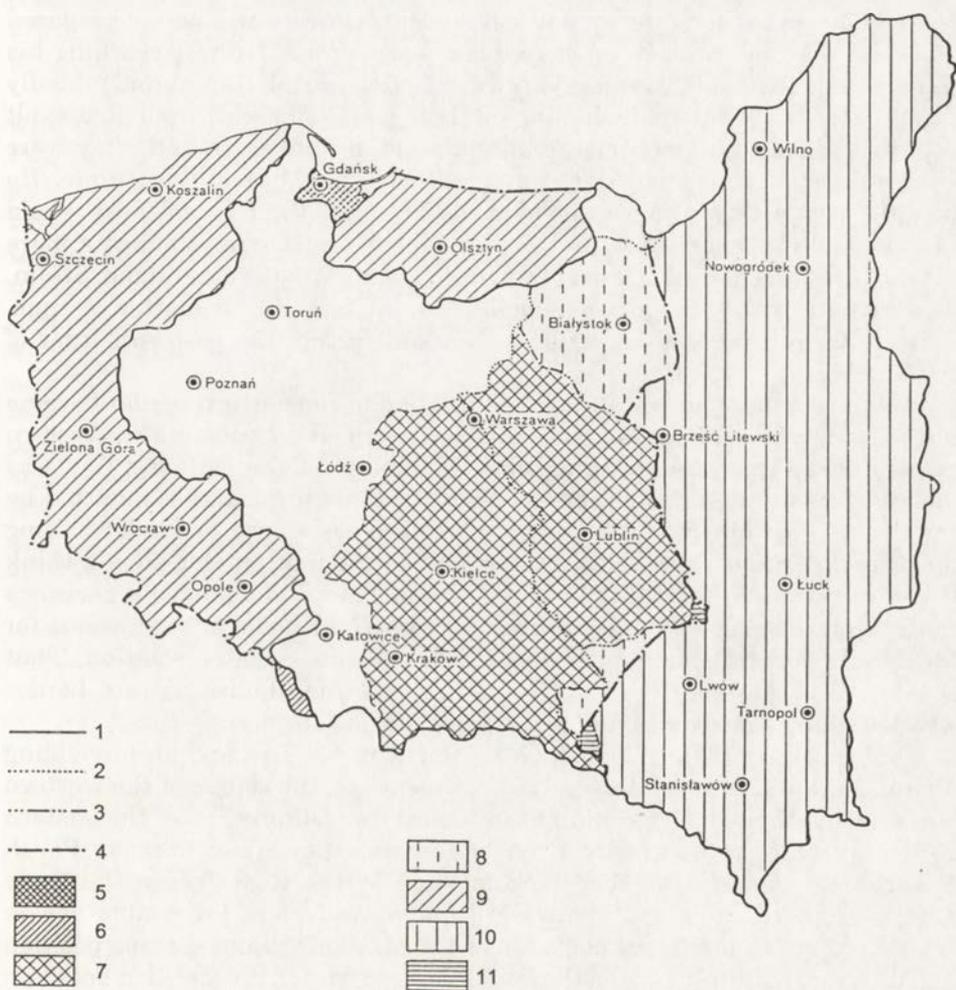


Fig. 2. Boundaries of conquered Poland 1939-1945 and boundaries change in 1950

1 — boundaries of Poland in 1939, 2 — demarcation line as on 23 Aug. 1939, 3 — demarcation line as on 28 Sept. 1939, 4 — boundaries of Poland in 1945, 5 — Gdańsk Free Town territory, 6 — Zaolzie territory, 7 — General Government territory, 8 — territories incorporated to USSR in 1939-1945, 9 — territories incorporated to Poland in 1945, 10 — territories incorporated to USSR in 1945, 11 — exchange of boundary sections in 1950

The loss was enormous then. It happened despite an unyielding attitude of the Polish Government in London, and despite univocal opinion of Polish society at home. It happened despite our being with the Allies from the very first till the very last day of the war, and our being members of the winning coalition.

Stalin's postulates concerning Eastern Europe were accepted by Churchill and Roosevelt. One can add, that it was true not only in relation to the eastern border of Poland. Königsberg was given up to Stalin without any objection, and no one claimed independence for Lithuania, Latvia or Estonia. During negotiations in Tehran and Jalta, Stalin held stronger position and was convinced of his power and of being right. He was also better prepared as far as the content of the negotiations is concerned. He was reaching his goals, being consistent, cunning, shrewd and often brutal. He was undoubtedly the greatest political individuality in that game. Churchill and Roosevelt usually yielded to his arguments. Standing on a weaker ground, they were often subject to illusions. A good example may be Churchill's attitude. He thought that a prompt agreement by the Poles for the Curzon's line would save Poland's independence, and would make it possible to establish a more independent and democratic government in Poland. On the other hand, Stalin, who knew that his conquering Poland was in fact only a matter of time, focused his entire energy on making the West accept the eastern border of the USSR.

Any other, more advantageous delimitation of the eastern border became unrealistic, while taking into account the described attitude of the Western powers. Finally, a less advantageous "A" variant of the Curzon's line was approved as the eastern border of Poland. The main mistake committed by the Polish Government was to count on Western assistance, and to be waiting for Churchill's and Roosevelt's intervention in the matter. One should think that direct negotiations with Stalin and winning more advantageous decisions concerning the eastern border in exchange for some political concessions for the USSR and the communists, would have been a better solution. That scenario was feasible till 1943. The issue concerning Polish eastern border was becoming more and more a foregone conclusion later.

Diplomatic struggle of Polish Government in London, and an unyielding attitude of Polish society, had positive influence on the course of the western border, even though they could not influence the delimitation of the eastern border. In order to neutralize strong Polish resistance and to make Polish Government give up the border established by the Riga Treaty, the three powers changed their attitude towards more and more favourable one in relation to Polish territorial claims in the west. While Stalin's strong position had unfavourable influence on the Polish eastern border, it decided in Potsdam about the delimitation of the western border on Odra (Oder) and Nysa Łużycka (Lausitzer Neisse).

The struggle for the eastern border was finally lost. Poland lost a territory, which had been its integral part for the previous 400 years (even 600 years in the case of Lwów [Lviv] and Podole [Podilia]). Even under partition, that

territory was regarded by Polish society as Polish (the so called annexed territories). It included two large centres of culture, with well known universities (Lwów, Wilno). It is true that Poles made only 1/3 of the population of the lost territories, but they were the leading stratum of society, as far as national tradition, education and culture are concerned. One should point out, that the major part of the land and improvements was a Polish property, created as a result of the work of generations. Ukrainian and Belarussian population prevailed on large parts of those territories (e.g. Wołyń [Volyn'], Polesie [Polisia, Palesie], the Carpathians), but there were also Polish ethnic regions (the regions of Grodno or Wilno), as well as many cities and towns were of Polish character (Lwów, Wilno, Tarnopol, Brześć, Drohobycz, Borysław — present Lviv, Vilnius, Ternopil, Brest, Drohobyč, Boryslav).

Border changes caused great demographic and social repercussions. Pre-war Poland was a country of many nations, many confessions and cultures. Poles made only 69% of the population. Ukrainians, Belarussians, Jews, Germans and others lived together with them in the same country. World War II and border changes caused mass displacements and migration of the population. Over 2 million Poles left the eastern territories, handed over to the USSR. About 8 million Germans moved westward. A 3-million Jewish minority ceased to exist as a result of the extermination by the Nazis. Poland became a single nation country (97% of the population are Poles). This eradicated national conflicts, but emasculated the culture, which always develops the best in an environment of different national groups. Mutual contacts among people of different national groups, representing different cultures, confessions and languages, stimulate development of new values and ideas. The change of the borders has therefore caused not only territorial changes, but also demographic, economic and social ones. Simultaneous change of both eastern and western border became a turning point in the history of the Polish nation and state.

LITHUANIAN TERRITORIAL CLAIMS

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Abstract. The Author is discussing the history of Lithuanian territorial claims during the formation process of the Lithuanian frontiers, especially the Polish-Lithuanian border, in the 20th century.

Key words: borders, territorial claims, international treaties.

Lithuanian territorial revindication, reaching far beyond territories inhabited by Lithuanian population has become a very important element to influence Polish-Lithuanian relations in the 20th century, have become. Political thought of the Lithuanian national renaissance has been dominated by the opinion neglecting all ethnic and cultural changes, which have occurred following spontaneous and voluntary processes, taking part in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, beginning from the 16th century. Lithuanian national activists were seized with a desire to “divert the history”, and to restore, or even exceed the Lithuanian zone that existed centuries ago, giving it at the same time a new, national meaning. There were also attempts to treat the local Polish and Belarussian population as “Slavified Lithuanians”, who should be “returned” to the bosom of Lithuanianism.

An entire theory was coined to this end, talking about the subjective nature of the nationality. Here is an exemplary statement by one of the leading Lithuanian activists, Mykolas Biržiška: “The issue concerning affiliation to a particular nation is not exclusively a question of a whim of everyone, and it is not an issue, which could be decided according to the rules of political liberalism, even if hiding behind democratic slogans. It is too closely connected, bonded to the secular past, too organically joined with ancient society of a given nation, that this bond could be broken by the will or passiveness of an individual”¹.

“Theories” of this kind are contradictory to the principle of self-determination and rights of the individual, and were quite clearly obsolete already at the beginning of the 20th century. Even though it was becoming more and more obvious that they were completely anachronic, they were used very consistently nevertheless.

¹ M. Biržiška — *Na posterunku wileńskim (On guard in Wilno), part III*, Wilno, 1921, p. 100.

In discussions led on the turn of the 19th century, Lithuanian activists were rejecting the idea to rebuild the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a **whole**.

But at the same time, they began to think even more intensely about territories adjacent to the Lithuanian ethnographic area, and dream of their incorporation and assimilation by the future Lithuania.

The issue came out in a more concrete way in 1905. A popular slogan became the claim of the "autonomy for the ethnographic Lithuania". The demand seemed to be fully justified. However, Lithuanian activists were filling it with an entirely different content than that which could appear according to the very definition. As it turned out, "ethnographic Lithuania", as mentioned by them, had little in common with the proper meaning of that term.

The most important thing done at that time was a memorial, designed in 1905 by a group of Lithuanian national activists under Jonas Basanavičius, and submitted to the Russian President of the Council of Ministers, Sergei Witte. We could read the following on the "ethnographic Lithuania" in the memorial: "Lithuanians, knowing that the territory inhabited by them since the beginning of the historic times, is covering the so called Lithuanian guberniyas (provinces) of the North-Western Country: of Wilno (Vilnius), Kowno (Kaunas) and Grodno, and a part of Coureland, and the province of Suwałki, incorporated in Poland since the Congress of Vienna, consider them as Lithuanian from the ethnographic point of view, while [they consider] the Poles, Jews, Russians and others living in those provinces among Lithuanians, to be later newcomers, and as to Belarussian — to be Slavified Lithuanians, living until now in villages with Lithuanian names and architecture"².

It was in that document where Lithuanian territorial program was worded in the most complete way for that time, together with a very characteristic justification. References were made to that document many a time over the following years. It would become the main axis, around which territorial claims, worded with smaller or greater deviations, would revolve.

Also for this reason, it is worthwhile to determine, what their claim to incorporate in the "ethnographic Lithuania" four provinces: of Kowno (Kaunas), Wilno (Vilnius), Grodno (Grodna) and Suwałki, meant. After all, they were composing a vast territory of the total area of 125,000 km², spreading from the Dźwina (Dvina, Daugava) river in the North to the swamps of Polesie (Palesië) in the South.

The population of that region was 5,850,000 people at the beginning of the 19th century. According to the official census, Lithuanians amounted to 1,659,000³, i.e. c. 28% of the population. Therefore, they made clearly a minority in that area. They significantly prevailed in the province of Kowno (Kaunas) only, amounting to (according to the Russian statistical data) 68% of the

² Quot. acc. to M. Romer — *Litwa. Studium o odrodzeniu narodu litewskiego (Lithuania. A study on the rebirth of the Lithuanian nation)*, Lwów, 1908, p. 428.

³ *Malyj enciklopedičeskij slovar'*, vol. III, Sankt Petersburg, 1908, under "Litwini" (Lithuanians), p. 365.

population. In the province of Suwałki, Lithuanians amounted to slightly over 50%, while Poles amounted to 24% of the population, inhabiting densely the southern part of that province — the districts of Suwałki, Augustów and partly that of Sejny. According to the Russian consensus, there were 306,000 Lithuanians and 134,000 Poles in the province of Suwałki. As far as the remaining two provinces are concerned, Lithuanians made only 17.5% of the population of the province of Wilno (Vilnius), inhabiting its western part, while Wilno (Vilnius) and its direct neighbourhood were clearly a Polish enclave, while there was practically no Lithuanian population in the province of Grodno. Lithuanians inhabited only a few villages on Niemen (Nemen, Nemunas)), in the region of Druskienniki (Druskininkai).

One had to have an aggressive thirst for conquest and to believe in one's own force to be able to believe, that Lithuanians would be able to gain supremacy on such a vast area, that they would be able to dominate, or even assimilate other nations who outnumbered them significantly. And after all, the Poles, for example, had a significant economic strength, and they were composing the upper, educated layer of society.

Still, under Russian domination, all of such plans and intentions were of theoretic importance for a while. It was something that was contemplated, approached and tried, something that was mobilizing the forces of the Lithuanian national movement, but it did was of no practical importance at that time.

The following years, and the outbreak of the First World War, brought fundamental changes, however. A so called Lithuanian Conference was convened in Wilno (Vilnius) in September, 1917, with the consent of the German occupying authorities. The issue of the frontier of the future State was presented to the audience by Petras Klimas. He said they had to be based on the ethnic principle. But he pointed out at the same time, that the principle of self-determination could not be applied, as it required the consciousness of the people⁴. It was his own secret, how one could talk about ethnographic frontiers, not taking into account the national pattern, the aspirations and the will of the inhabitants.

On September 21, 1917, Lithuanian Conference passed a resolution, which mentioned the necessity to establish an independent, democratic Lithuanian state, "within ethnographic boundaries", where "corrections necessary from the perspective of economic life" had to be made, however⁵. That was a new element — an ethnographic frontier, but with corrections, as required by economy. It was not specified what the "corrections" were to be, and how deep they would go. A salvo was left for different interpretations.

One could imagine that the mentioned "ethnographic frontiers" would go far beyond the area actually inhabited by Lithuanian population. The words of the above quoted Biržiška, who was writing on the subject, leave no doubt about it: "Ethnographic Lithuania is not ending where they still speak Lithuanian, but it extends to those regions, where they do not speak [that

⁴ *Lietuvos Valstybės Tarybos protokolai 1917-1918*, Vilnius, 1991, p. 73.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 76.

language], although they used to speak Lithuanian before, as it is composed by one Lithuanian nation, irrespective of the fact, whether it does speak Lithuanian, or whether it has forgotten Lithuanian, or whether it holds it in contempt”⁶.

The issue was not being specified for the time being. The Lithuanian Council (Taryba), established during the Conference of August, 1917, presented a rather unclear position concerning the frontiers. They were talking about ethnographic frontiers, about Lithuanian state with the capital in Wilno (Vilnius), but did not define precisely its frontiers. Similar conduct could be observed when Lithuanian government was established, after obtaining of independence in November, 1918.

Nevertheless, there are some indications that territorial claims were still defined quite broadly. Namely, during Polish-Lithuanian negotiations, conducted in December 1918 and in the beginning of January 1919, the Lithuanian party presented as a condition for the agreement, the recognition of the Lithuanian state with the capital in Wilno (Vilnius), and within “present boundaries”. It is interesting, what Lithuanian party meant by that. There were no stable borders in Lithuania at the beginning of 1919. Everything was constantly changing. One can only assume that Lithuanians were referring to the border of the former German occupation zone, to what Germans defined by “Lithuania”, connecting it under one occupation administrative unit. Namely, the so called Militärverwaltung Litauen included the regions of Suwałki, Kowno (Kaunas) and the western part of that of Wilno (Vilnius) with the city itself, as an administrative centre. It was an area of 63,200 km² with the population of up to 2 million people.

On the other hand, Lithuanian territorial claims were presented at length as late as during the Paris Peace Conference. Namely, on March 24, 1919 the Chairman of the Lithuanian delegation, Augustinas Voldemaras handed a note to the Chairman of the Conference, which defined Lithuanian claims. They included the provinces of Wilno (Vilnius), Kowno (Kaunas), Grodno and Suwałki, as well as not clearly defined parts of that of Courland and the East Prussia⁷.

A concurrence, or even identity of Voldemaras’ demands and claims included in the above mentioned memorial of 1905 by Lithuanian activists, and submitted to Prime Minister Witte, becomes striking at first sight. However, what could be regarded as no more than an initiative of several private individuals at that time, was returning now as an act done by a newly reborn state, as an official position of the Lithuanian government, for whom the sense of realism and the principle of responsibility had to be binding after all. It was not the case, when they claimed an area where those of the nation creating that state would make only 28% of the total population.

One can hardly understand, what were the reasons behind Voldemaras’ exaggerated claims, and how he could see the chances to have them met.

⁶ Birzyška, *ibidem*, p. 195.

⁷ *Documents diplomatiques. Conflict polono-lithuanien. Question de Vilna 1918-1924*, Kaunas, 1924, doc. 3, 3, p. 5-8.

He probably counted on a lack of understanding of national relations in Central and Eastern Europe on the part of the representatives of the Entente. It is indicated by many Lithuanian documents submitted to the powers of the Entente, and later to the League of Nations, but mainly by different publications and propaganda brochures, clearly counting on the ignorance of their readers. At the same time, Lithuanian delegates could not be unaware of the fact that Polish representatives to the Peace Conference were perfectly aware of the situation, and that they would strongly counteract.

The Lithuanian delegation came up shortly afterwards with a new argument. Namely, on April 5, 1919, it sent a note to George Clemenceau, which said that only recognition by the Entente and Poland of the independence of Lithuania within the limits of the mentioned provinces would create a possibility to collaborate against the Bolshevik threat⁸.

The result of all those attempts was mediocre, however. They did not obtain the recognition of the Lithuanian state. Lithuanian delegation was not even admitted as an official representation at the Conference. The issue of the Lithuanian frontier was not solved, too, and preliminary demarcation lines were delimited in contradiction with desiderata of the Lithuanian party. The Entente displayed clear attitude to avoid any final solutions in everything what concerned Lithuania. At the same time, the Lithuanian, and even the Polish government was ignored. What did matter, was the "white Russia", and the governments of the United Kingdom and France deeply believed it could be restored.

Lithuanian representatives in Paris did not become discouraged by all misfortunes, however. They kept repeating their demands. During a lecture delivered on March 29, 1919 at the Paris Geographic Society, Oskar Lubicz-Miłosz (Milašius), who was at the Lithuanian delegation's service, went as far as to put forward the claim to incorporate even the province of Mińsk (Minsk) in Lithuania⁹. That was a vast territory of over 80,000 km², with a population of 2,581,000, which included practically no Lithuanians at all.

During the months that followed, the Lithuanian party repeatedly presented far going territorial claims. For example, in April, 1919, Jurgis Šaulys arrived in Warsaw with a mission to establish diplomatic relations. During negotiations, he said that Lithuanian government conditioned the establishment of diplomatic relations by the recognition of independent Lithuania within the boundaries of the former provinces of: Kowno (Kaunas), Suwałki, Wilno (Vilnius), Grodno, and even some part of that of Mińsk (Minsk). On the other hand, according to his opinion, the eastern part of the region of Mińsk (Minsk) and of that of Witebsk (Vitebsk) should be transferred to Russia¹⁰. According to that concept, there was no room left to Belarus.

The mission of Šaulys failed. Nevertheless, the Polish party continued

⁸ H. Chambon — *La Lithuanie pendant la Conference de la Paix*, Paris-Lille 1931, p. 27-28.

⁹ P. Łossowski — *Stosunki polsko-litewskie 1918-1920 (Polish-Lithuanian relation, 1918-1920)*, Warszawa, 1966, p. 72, footnote 92.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 89.

attempts to reach agreement with the Lithuanians. This time it was a Polish delegation under Stanisław Staniszewski, which went to Kowno (Kaunas) in May, 1919, in order to continue negotiations. During debate, Lithuanian government prepared detailed answers to the questions of the Polish delegation. What is conspicuous there is the definition of the Lithuanian territorial claims. This time, instead of using the definition of provinces, or the German occupation borders, a quite precise line was presented. It was running from Dyneburg in the North, through Druja — the lake of Narocz (Narač)—Derewna (Derevnia) — to Niemen (Neman, Nemunas). Then along that river towards Grodno, leaving it on the Lithuanian side, then to Nowy Dwór—Dąbrowa Białostocka—Suchowola, then along the Brzozówka brook, to reach the western bank of Biebrza near Kopytkowo. It was the point where borders of former provinces of Suwałki, Łomża and Grodno used to meet. Here the border line proposed by Lithuanian government discontinued.

The entire territory west and north of that line would unconditionally belong to Lithuania. At the same time, Lithuanian government demanded that Lithuanian commissioners could also work south of that line, i.e. mainly in the former province of Grodno, and remain there till the final decision concerning the issue of the Polish-Lithuanian border by the Peace Conference.

In this way Lithuanian territorial claims, although still going far beyond the actual ethnographic boundaries of Lithuania, began to indicate some evolution in this matter. It was manifested mainly by the resignation of the eastern part of the province of Wilno (Vilnius) (the districts of Wilejka [Vileika] and Dżisna), and by the agreement to leave the future of the most part of the province of Grodno to later decisions to be made.

It was conspicuous that no delimitation was proposed in the territory of the former Polish Kingdom. The line that finished on Biebrza, left a ca. 25-30 km — gap between that river and the East Prussian border. It could mean that the Lithuanian party did not take final decision regarding their claims; whether to claim the entire former province of Suwałki, or to resign its southern part, inhabited by the Polish population.

Lithuanian proposals were unacceptable for the Polish party, who had already got Wilno (Vilnius), liberated from the Bolsheviks, and they played no major role at that time.

On the other hand, preliminary demarcation lines were determined through the mediation of the Entente, and they were to divide Polish and Lithuanian troops. The most important of them was that proposed by Marshall Ferdinand Foch on July 18, 1919, and approved by the Supreme Council of the Entente on July 26, 1919¹¹.

The line of Foch began south of Wisztyniec (Vištytis), at the East Prussian border. From there, it was running north of Wizajny, leaving Lubowo (Liubavas) on the Lithuanian side, then north of Puńsk, along the northern edge of the Gaładuś lake, east of Berzniki to the Marycha river, then along that river and the Igorka brook till its mouth at Niemen (Neman, Nemunas). Having crossed

¹¹ *Documents on British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. I*, p. 203-204, and the map on p. 216.

Niemen (Neman, Nemunas), it was to run 12 km north-west of the Grodno–Wilno–Dyneburg (Daugavpils) railway.

The line of Foch was confirmed in regard to its section of Suwałki, being at the same time defined more precisely, by the Supreme Council of the Entente on December 8, 1919, as the north-eastern section of the border of territories unquestionably conferred to Poland. It has resisted all the trials over the time. The border between Poland and the Lithuanian Republic in its section of ca. 100 km from the Wisztynieckie (Vištytis) lake to the Marycha river, is still there.

The Lithuanian party did not approve of the line of Foch. Later, they even claimed that they had not known the course of that line in the region of Suwałki at all. One can say that preliminary, military delimitations did not influence the range and the nature of Lithuanian territorial claims to a larger extent.

They came out into the open again on the occasion of Lithuanian-Soviet peace negotiations which began in Moscow on May 8, 1920. While preparing to the negotiations, the Lithuanian party defined its territorial program. It involved a claim to incorporate three entire provinces in Lithuania. These were the following: of Suwałki, of Kowno (Kaunas) and of Wilno (Vilnius). They were said to have claimed the “city of Grodno with its base” as well. What is even more striking, the District (Ziemia) of Słonim (Slonim) was to remain Lithuanian. What did they mean by that? — the most part of the province of Grodno, including the districts of Wołkowysk (Valkavysk, Volkovysk), Słonim (Slonim), Sokółka, Białystok, Bielsk Podlaski and Prużana (Prużany). On the other hand, they were ready to give up the southernmost district of Brześć (Brest) and Kobryń (Kobryn), insisting that the district of Nowogródek (Navagrudak, Novogrudok) of the province of Mińsk (Minsk), be incorporated in Lithuania instead.

In sum, claims were made again for a very large territory, a very small part of which was inhabited by Lithuanian population. The Lithuanian delegation did realize that. It did everything, however, to justify their claims in front of the Soviet partners in every possible way.

Therefore, the argument concerning the nations’ right to self-determination was put forward. They said that, for example in the province of Wilno (Vilnius), only Poles were against its belonging to the Lithuanian state. But they were a minority. What was more — they said — the majority of Poles in the Wilno (Vilnius) region was not of Polish origin, and they were no more than a product of assimilation processes. On the other hand, inhabitants representing other nations — not only Lithuanians, but Jews and Belarussians as well — were positively disposed to Lithuania. Resolutions by Jewish and Belarussians organizations from Wilno (Vilnius) and Grodno, which were to express solidarity with Lithuania, were also mentioned.

Confronted with such arguments, the Chairman of the Soviet delegation, Adolf Joffe made a remark that the issue in question was the right of self-determination for the Lithuanian nation, and not for the Jews and Belarussians. One must therefore determine the area inhabited by the Lithuanians. “The Jews — he continued — determine themselves not ex-

clusively in relation to Lithuania, but also to Palestine. On the other hand, self-determination of the Belarussians has not been accomplished yet”¹².

The Lithuanian party used the “social argument” then, which, as it seemed, could easier convince the Soviet delegates. After all, the majority of inhabitants of the province of Grodno — they said — were peasants who were class enemies of Poles — the landowners. In this situation, it would be more purposeful to join them with the peasant, democratic Lithuanian Republic¹³.

They did not forget about economic arguments, either. The industrial region of Białystok, for example — they stressed — needed access to the sea. And the easiest way to do it was through the Niemen (Neman). Besides, the new Lithuanian state, having no larger industrial centres, badly needed such cities as Białystok, Bielsk Podlaski or Grodno.

Soviet delegates were very well aware of the exaggerated nature of Lithuanian claims, and they did not forget to mention that peasants from the province of Grodno could find the best protection against the landowners in Russia, where workmen and peasants were at power. Joffe even pronounced a thought, whether it would not be simpler for Lithuania not to get separated from Russia at all.

The Soviet party was very well aware of the actual range of Lithuanian settlement. During negotiations, Soviet experts presented a map, where only the area of the provinces of Suwałki, Kowno (Kaunas) and the western part of that of Wilno (Vilnius), not including the city itself, were inhabited by Lithuanian population¹⁴.

Despite all that, Soviet delegates resigned and agreed to meet many of Lithuanian territorial demands. What was the reason for that?

One should be explicit, and admit that the entire negotiations were no more than pretending. Cleverly worded arguments were of no greater importance, as it was other reasons that determined the decisions. Soviet delegates were constantly aware that Lithuanian arguments had very fragile foundations and had no factual and substantive justification. Objective issues, like the nations’ right to self-determination, demarcation of frontiers being just from the national perspective, did not matter. They played the role of a smoke screen, and were not treated as very important.

The Soviet party had other motivations. Namely, it wanted to engage Lithuania in a war against Poland, at first trying to prompt an active move of Lithuanian divisions against Polish troops in May, 1920, during Soviet Spring offensive. They were trying to achieve the same even more eagerly at the beginning of July, when a massive Soviet offensive directed against Warsaw began. Joffe was explicit in saying that territorial concessions had to be compensated by military alliance against Poland.

The above claims seemed acceptable to the Lithuanian delegation. Numerous telegrams sent by it to Kowno (Kaunas) are witness to that. One

¹² Č. Laurinavičius — *Lietuvos-Sovietu Rusijos taikos sutartis*, Vilnius, 1992, p. 112.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 118-119.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 120-123.

of them said the following: "We shall take advantage of an opportune moment, but no sooner till real successes of the Bolsheviks become clear, when they reach the Lida-Baranowicze (Baranaviči) line. If the Poles retreat, Wilno (Vilnius) has to be seized before the Bolsheviks do it."¹⁵

The Lithuanian-Soviet treaty was signed in the most critical moment for the Polish party — on July 12, 1920, when Polish troops, pushed by predominant Soviet forces, were in full retreat. According to the Soviet demand, a secret clause was attached to the peace treaty, which said that Lithuanian government "under no circumstances will treat the fact of the Lithuanian border being crossed by the Soviet troops and their occupying of some part of the territory, which according to this treaty is composing the territory of the Lithuanian state, as an act, hostile to Lithuania"¹⁶.

Therefore, in other words, Lithuania agreed to use its territory by the Red Army during its action against Poland. In this way, it violated the principle of neutrality during ongoing war. It broke it also by an active involvement of Lithuanian units against Polish troops retreating from Wilno (Vilnius).

One cannot wonder then, that the Soviet party was satisfied, what was expressed by the commissar of foreign affairs, Georgij Chicherin in his cable to Moscow: "We greet with joy common action of the Lithuanian and Soviet army against Polish imperialists"¹⁷.

The territory accorded to Lithuania by the treaty of July 12, 1920, was a vast one. What is characteristic, it was roughly the same as territorial claims presented by the Lithuanian government to Stanisław Staniszewski, as early as during negotiations in Kowno (Kaunas) in May, 1919.

The border line of territories accorded to Lithuania was beginning, if we look from the North, at the Dźwina (Dvina, Daugava) river, near Druja, from there it was running southward to the place called Postawy (Pastavy), leaving it on the Lithuanian side. Then, it was passing east of the Narocz (Narač) lake and west of Wilejka (Vileika), reaching the Mołodeczno (Maladečna, Molodechno) railway junction, leaving it on the Soviet side. From there, it turned to the south-west, and ran along Wołożanka (Voložanka) brook and Berezyna (Biarezina, Berezina) river to reach Niemen (Neman). Then, it ran along that river, as far as to the place called Nowosiółki (Navasiulki). There, ca. 25 km from Grodno, it diverted from Niemen (Neman) going westward, bypassing it on the South, and leaving it in Lithuania. It went further westward through Sidra and Wesołowo, to reach Biebrza river between Sztabin and Czarny Las. Here it discontinued. Comment 1 to section II of the treaty clearly said that the border between Lithuania and Poland would be delimited according to the agreement between these countries.¹⁸

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 135.

¹⁶ *Dokumenty wnešnej polityki SSSR*, vol. III, Moskva, 1959, doc. 12, annex to art. II, p. 41.

¹⁷ *Pravda*, No. 157, July 18, 1920.

¹⁸ *Dokumenty wnešnej polityki SSSR*, as above, p. 30-31.

It is worthwhile to note in a comment to the border line, that it did not accord to Lithuania two eastern districts of the province of Wilno (Vilnius)—Wilejka (Vileika) and Dzisna, and it was also giving it only some part of the province of Grodno — a part of the district of Grodno and a fragment of the district of Sokółka. The Lithuanians did not receive the District (Ziemia) of Sluck (Sluck) and Białystok, which had been discussed so much.

Nevertheless, the Lithuanian party could feel satisfied. A vast territory was coming into its possession, with no Lithuanian population at all, or with it being a minority in some regions. The Lithuanians received such places as Braclaw (Braslau), Oszmiana (Ašmiany), Smorgonie (Smorgon'), Lida, Szczuczyn (Ščučin), Kuźnica Białostocka, Nowy Dwór, Lipsk, not mentioning Wilno (Vilnius) and Grodno.

What was very important, however, was that the Lithuanian-Soviet border line discontinued at Biebrza, and it was not delimited in the territory of the former Polish Kingdom. In this way, there was a gap left along a ca. 30 km-section of the demarcation line of Lithuania, in the south-west. It was the matter of an agreement between Lithuania and Poland to determine the frontier in that region. We can only remind that already the line of Foch, and later that delimited by the Supreme Council of the Entente on December 8, 1919, accorded the southern part of the region of Suwałki to Poland.

However, Lithuanian authorities occupied this region during Polish retreat in July, 1920. They began to establish their own institutions and power in Suwałki itself, as if they had intended to remain there forever. In August, 1920 however, the fortune of war changed, and after Polish victory at the battle of Warsaw Polish troops moved close to the border of the region of Suwałki again. Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a note to the Polish government with a proposal to determine a demarcation line between Lithuania and Poland, which would run from Grabowo near the East Prussian border, through Augustów to Sztabin¹⁹.

It was easy to guess that the suggested line was to be an extension of the Lithuanian-Soviet frontier, delimited by the treaty of July 12, 1920. It would fill the gap in the delimitation of the Lithuanian border in the south-west, leaving southern part of the Suwałki region on the Lithuanian side.

The Polish party did not agree to that Lithuanian proposal and did not even take it into consideration. In the note from August 31, 1920, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Eustachy Sapieha addressed Lithuanian government with demand to withdraw Lithuanian troops beyond the line of Foch in the Suwałki region²⁰.

Therefore, the Grabowo-Augustów-Sztabin line never came into actual being. Nevertheless, in the independent Lithuania it was drawn on the maps for many years as a part of the Lithuanian border, as determined in July 12, 1920. In other cases, the course of that border section was drawn differently, although

¹⁹ *Republique Polonaise, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères. Documents diplomatiques concernant les relations polono-lithuaniennes. Décembre 1918 — Septembre 1920, Warszawa 1920, doc. 33, p. 45.*

²⁰ *Ibidem, doc. 34, p. 45*

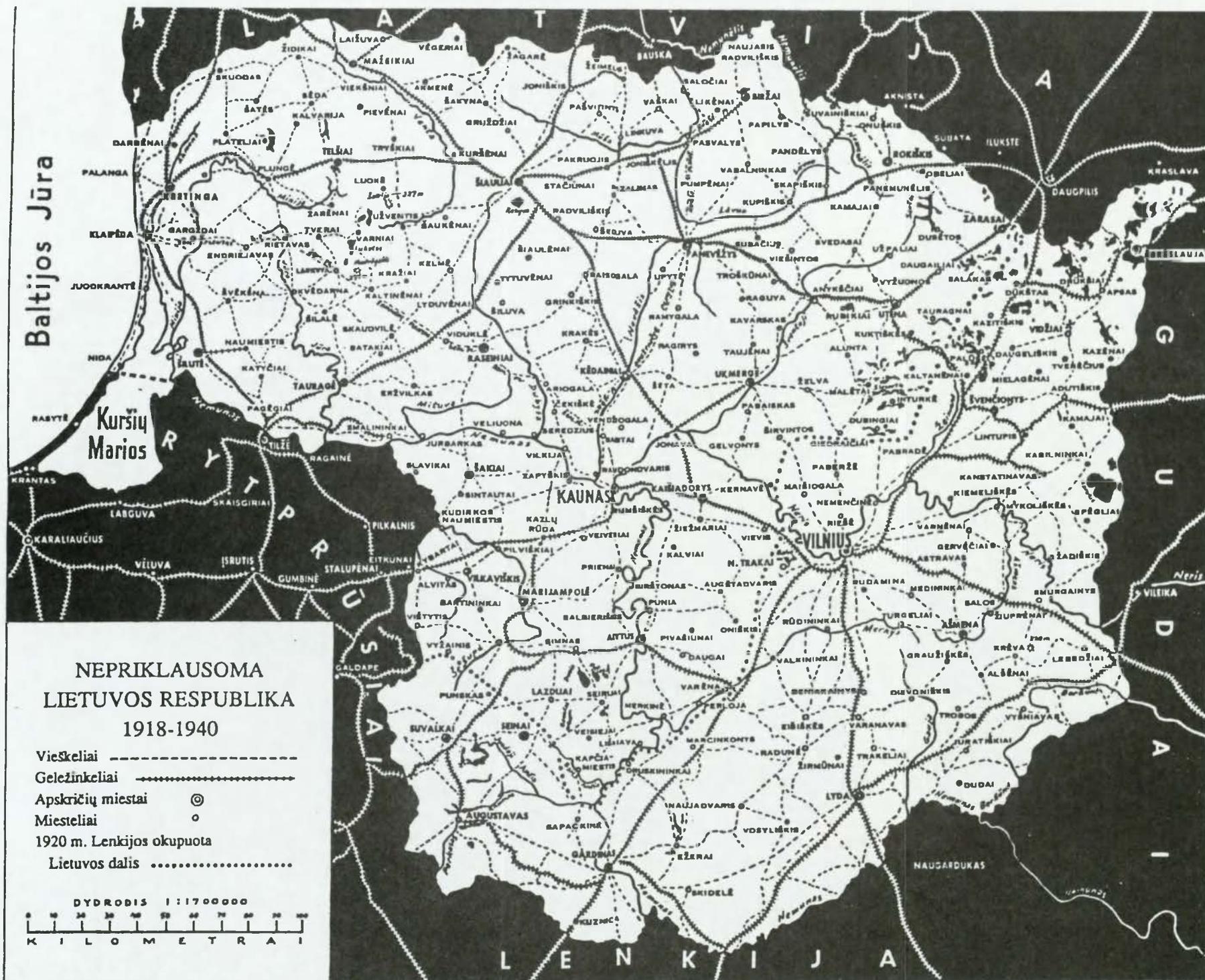


Fig. 1. The map of Lithuania, being in force during the pre-war period (in between the wars)

also at one's liking. Namely, further south of Augustów, and accordingly with the course of the border between the former provinces of Łomża and Suwałki. In sum, it was a clear abuse and deception. A line that was only proposed as a preliminary demarcation one, and not approved by the other side, and which never came into force, was presented as a State border.

One should add that Poland never recognized the treaty of July 12, 1920 as well, and the Lithuanian-Soviet border delimited in accordance with it. The Polish party brought arguments that impaired the right of the Soviet Russia to concede these territories to Lithuania. Also that border line never came into being.

On the other hand, as everyone knows, Lithuanian government did not recognize the incorporation of Wilno (Vilnius) to Poland, as a result of the elections carried out in Lithuania in January, 1922, and of the decision by the Wilno (Vilnius) Parliament, elected afterwards. It was proclaimed that only a provisional demarcation line (called the administrative line since 1928) existed between Lithuania and Poland. In reality, the actual frontier of Lithuania was running further in the East, according to the settlements of the treaty from July 12, 1920. That legal status was emphasized by the provision in the Constitution of the Lithuanian Republic, stating that Wilno (Vilnius) was the capital of Lithuania.

Later too, after the establishment of diplomatic relations in March, 1938, following Polish ultimatum, many things changed, as seen from the Polish point of view. Border with Poland was called still an administrative line, and Wilno (Vilnius) was still called by the Constitution the capital of Lithuania. Polish government did not insist on a change of those provisions, taking into account Lithuanian touchiness. On its part, it was treating the border with Lithuania as a normal and final State frontier, which had gained international recognition. Despite those divergencies of opinion, Polish-Lithuanian relations clearly improved in 1938-1939. There even came the moment when Lithuanian government suggested that Poland and Lithuania concluded a political and military alliance.

The outbreak of war, and the German — and later Soviet aggression in Poland, radically changed the situation. In accordance with the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, and at the price of the establishment of Soviet military bases in Lithuania, Soviet government proposed Wilno (Vilnius) with a small adjacent area to the Lithuanian government. The offered region was incomparably smaller than that provided for by the treaty of July 12, 1920.

Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Juozas Urbšys reported that Stalin had produced a map during negotiations in Moscow, on October 3, 1939. Urbšys says: "The line drawn on it [the map] indicated that Vilnius [Wilno] and some part of the territory east of it is going to be transferred to Lithuania. The line was running very close to our capital. The territory handed to us was far from the area accorded to us by the treaty of July 12, 1920"²¹. Nevertheless, Lithuanian Minister did not protest, and did not raise the issue, even though the text of

²¹ J. Urbšys — *Lietuva lemtingaisiais 1939-1940 metais*, Vilnius, 1988, p. 25.

the agreement signed on October 10, 1939 referred to the treaty of July 12, 1920, saying that it was the basis for mutual relations and obligations of Lithuania and the USSR²². In confrontation with a threat to lose political independence, one was giving up previous territorial claims, being satisfied with whatever the USSR was willing to accord.

Nevertheless, even in the time of submission, Lithuanians were contemplating some extension of the country's territory, as much as possible. Attempts were made to round off the eastern border of the Republic, while Lithuania was incorporated in the USSR and the Lithuanian Socialist Soviet Republic was established. Consent was obtained and therefore in August, 1940, three regions — Druskienniki (Druskininkai) and Marcinkańce (Marcinkonys) in the South, Dziewieniszki (Dieveniškės) in the centre, and Święciany (Švenčionys) and Houduciszki (Adutiškis) in the North, were transferred to the Lithuanian SSR²³.

In a similar way, the General Commissioners of Lithuania, established in 1941, was extended in April, 1942, by the regions of Świr (Svirkos), Oszmiana (Ašmiany) and Ejszyszki (Eišiškes), taken over from Belarus²⁴. The frontier of the Commissioners of Lithuania came closer to that determined by the treaty of July 12, 1920, in its northern and central section.

Under new occupation by the USSR, the Lithuanian SSR changed the border in the summer of 1944 to that from August, 1940, with one exception — the district of Klajpeda was returned to Lithuania. Under conditions of Soviet occupation, a frontier delimited in that way was unquestionable. Only among Lithuanians on exile, living mainly in the United States, the tradition of the borders contemplated in the independent Lithuania was maintained.

In recent years, having regained independence, the Lithuanian Republic was established within the boundaries of the former Lithuanian SSR. Many facts indicate, however, that an extension of the state territory has been contemplated again since freedom was regained. Even though all pronouncements of this kind are inofficial, or even made in private, they point at a characteristic trend present among certain circles in the independent Lithuania. The tradition path of revindication is being entered again.

Statements about Poles or Belarussian as Slavified Lithuanians have become conspicuous again. They are to justify claims pronounced in different ways.

Namely, since 1990 a map has been distributed in Lithuania, emphasizing the border line determined by the treaty of July 12, 1920, with a characteristic "supplement" in the region between Sztabin and the former East Prussian border, as the Lithuanian border in 1918-1940. The present eastern and southern border of Lithuania, including that with Poland, is defined as "administrative border determined for Lithuania by the occupant in 1945". Moreover, large

²² *Ibidem*, p. 99.

²³ Compare, P. Łossowski — *Litwa a sprawy polskie 1939-1940 (Lithuania and the Polish issues, 1939-1940)*, Warszawa, 1985, the map on p. 63.

²⁴ M. Wardzyńska — *Sytuacja ludności polskiej w Generalnym Komisariacie Litwy, czerwiec 1941 — lipiec 1944 (Situation of the Polish population in the General Commissioners of Lithuania, June 1941 — July 1944)*, Warszawa, 1993, p. 21 and the map on p. 24.

territories are marked with white on the map. Although it was not explained in the legend, both the arrangement of the map and topographic names in Lithuanian only indicate that areas marked in this way are also regarded as Lithuanian. They reach as far as Vistula, and in the north-west include Białystok and Białowieża. The area beyond the part in white is marked as "Poland"²⁵.

Similar maps have become inspiration and a foundation for many pronouncements of opinion. For example, a "Protest Memorial" was published in the Lithuanian press on February 12, 1992, signed by 82 persons, with a claim of no less than "that the state geodetic and cartographic services made and printed maps of Lithuania, including exclusively the Lithuanian borders as determined according to the Brześć (Brest) Treaty of March 3, 1918 and the Moscow Treaty of July 12, 1940". On the other hand, "the present south-eastern administrative line with south-eastern neighbours of Lithuania should be treated only as a provisional demarcation line"²⁶.

This is both a categoric and far going demand. What is more important, it has no substantive grounds, and displays ignorance of its authors, as how can one merge the frontier determined by the Brześć (Brest) Treaty with that determined by the Moscow Treaty? These are two completely different borders. The line, as in the Moscow Treaty of July 12, 1920 was already described above. On the other hand, the Brześć (Brest) Treaty delimited the German-Soviet border, beginning on the Baltic Sea, near Estonian islands. In the province of Wilno (Vilnius) it ran farther westward than that determined by the Treaty of July 12, 1920, except for a short section along the Berezyna (Biarezina, Berezina) river. Then it crossed Niemen and ran further southward, while the border determined by the Moscow Treaty turned westward, along the Niemen (Neman) river²⁷. Therefore, those were two different lines, and it is impossible to identify one with the other. What is most important, however, is the rapacious attitude expressed in the memorial, and the desire to include the largest territory possible within Lithuanian boundaries.

Similar claims are often heard in Lithuania. Let us take for example the meeting held on October 28, 1993, on the occasion of the 54th anniversary of "the returning of Wilno (Vilnius) to Lithuania by Soviet authorities". Taking the floor during the meeting, B. Genzelis, M.P. suggested that claims should be made that Poland returns the "Land of Sejny" to Lithuania. Other M.P., K. Dirgele was handing out albums during the meeting, with the map with Lithuanian border "after which we should strive". The border reached as far as to the region of Ostrołęka and Tczew²⁸.

Therefore, rapacious Lithuanian territorial claims are not only a long-lasting tradition. They have also quite a contemporary dimension.

²⁵ The map, under the title: *Lietuva — Lithuania*, drawn by J. Audrius in the USA, 1979, published in Kaunas, 1990.

²⁶ *Voruta*, No. 6 of February 12, 1992.

²⁷ *Dokumenty vnešnej politiki SSSR*, vol. I, Moskwa, 1959, the map on p. 124.

²⁸ *Nasza Gazeta*, No. 44, November 2, 1993.

One cannot help a reflection that an accomplishment of these and other similar demands would mean misfortune for Lithuania itself. If these claims, put forward without restraint, were to be met, they would bring to ruin the state where the autochthon, Lithuanian element would make a ca. 30% minority, and it would dilute in the foreign majority.

It is worthwhile to conclude our considerations by a more general statement. There is a conviction that unrestrained aspirations and unrestrained rapacity are characteristics typical only for great imperial countries. The example of Lithuania demonstrates clearly that this is not how the things are. Small countries, too, can have excessive, often grotesquely exaggerated — as compared to the scale of their abilities — rapacious aspirations.

POLISH EASTERN BORDER UNDER CONDITIONS OF DYNAMIC INCREASE OF INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER AND VEHICLE TRAFFIC

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Abstract. Only a few years ago Polish eastern border was one of the best guarded and most impenetrable ones in Europe. Transition of the system was followed by the border's opening and spontaneous increase of transborder traffic of people, vehicles and goods. All that resulted in an unprecedented in Europe overload of the few existing checkpoints and transborder transport infrastructure. The situation can be improved by the following, among other things: 1. better use of and better investment in the existing rail links, which are not fully used at the moment, 2. construction and extension of truck highways and high capacity checkpoints, 3. opening of a maximal number of local checkpoints, 4. organizational improvement of the operation of customs and passport control services.

Key words: Polish eastern border, transborder traffic, checkpoints, transborder transport infrastructure.

INTRODUCTION

Only a few years ago the Polish border was one of the best guarded and impenetrable ones in Europe. Such was the situation, despite the fact that it was an internal border between COMECON countries, theoretically becoming integrated with each other, and the USSR was the largest trade partner of Poland till the end of the eighties. However, transport of goods (to a large extent raw materials) was carried out through very few railways crossing the border line. Huge terminals were constructed on these railways (because of different track gauges), where reloading volumes were close to those at sea harbours. On both sides of the border foreign trade was the domain of the State. The recipients and senders of goods were usually enterprises located deep in the interior of Poland and of the USSR. It was therefore organizational centralism of trade and transport which was the cause of a significant spatial concentration of the border freight traffic.

Transborder passenger traffic was even more concentrated, and at the same time exceptionally limited. In spite of declarations of friendship and brotherhood, personal contacts and tourist exchange between Poland and the former USSR remained exceptionally formalized. Passport was a practically unattainable commodity in the Soviet Union. Moreover, invitations

were required to travel in both directions, and travel by private car inside the USSR was limited to very few, strictly determined routes. As late as in 1980 there were only two road checkpoints open to all along the entire 1246 km long border, and passenger trains used the only three existing transborder railways. Local (cross-border) traffic did not exist in practical terms.

The situation changed together with the transformation of the political system, which occurred in Poland and in the former USSR. Simplification of passport procedures in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as different prices of commodities at each side of the border (trade visits abroad), have led to an enormously rapid increase of transborder traffic of people and cars. On the other hand, the fact of privatizing and decentralizing foreign trade was the reason why motor transport took over large portion of goods carried in transborder traffic. This caused an enormous increase of lorry traffic, despite drastic decrease of the level of trade turnover between Poland and those countries. The increase of transit traffic from the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States to Western Europe is also an important factor.

Formal opening of the Polish eastern border has not been followed by its technical opening. The opening of new checkpoints comes very slowly. This causes exceptional overloading of the existing transborder transport infrastructure, unknown elsewhere in Europe.

The purpose of this paper is:

- to present potential capacity and the extent to which transport infrastructure that crosses the eastern border is being used,
- analysis of changes in the intensity of passenger and vehicle traffic across the eastern border in the period between 1980 and 1993,
- to indicate the most overloaded components of the transborder transport infrastructure,
- to demonstrate prospects for further development of border traffic and potential ability to improve the condition and the extent to which transborder transport infrastructure is being used.

TRANSBORDER TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Polish eastern border was almost entirely (except for its Lithuanian section) delimited as late as during, or immediately after World War II. In this way, it cut the existing transport systems. However, the level of development of those systems was different for individual areas. As a result of that, transborder transport infrastructure resources at borders with different countries are also very much differentiated (see Tab. 1). There is no doubt that the best conditions are on the border with the Kaliningrad District of the Russian Federation. Surfaced roads cross the border every 12.3 km on the average (the remains of a dense road network of the pre-war East Prussia). On the other hand, the fewest roads go from Poland to Ukraine (one per every 47.8 km of the border line). To a large extent this is due to natural reasons (the border line going along the Bug river, and partly along the Bieszczady mountains).

Table 1. Transborder transport infrastructure on the Polish eastern border in 1994.

Border with:	border length in km	number of surfaced roads crossing the border	length of border section (in km) per one surfaced road (in km)	number of road checkpoints		% of utilization of surfaced roads	number of railways crossing the border		% of utilization of railways
				total	open to all		total	with passenger transport	
Russia	209.73	17	12.3	2	2	11.8	3	1	33.3
Lithuania	102.41	3	34.1	2	1	33.3	1	1	100.0
Belarus	407.47	14	29.1	8	2	14.3	5	3	60.0
Ukraine	526.23	11	47.8	7	3	27.3	7	3	42.9
Total	125.84	45	27.7	19	8	17.8	16	8	50.0

Source: own elaboration, based on topographic maps

As many as 45 surfaced roads cross the eastern border. This potentially provides for rather good conditions to intensify the traffic of people and goods. In the reality, however, the existing routes are being used to a minimal degree. Only 17.8% of roads have checkpoints open to all (11.8% for the Kaliningrad District). There are as many as 19 checkpoints on the eastern border, but only 8 of this number are open to all. The majority of the remaining ones are designed for the so called simplified traffic (where only a pass is needed to cross the border). In most of the cases they are open for two days each week and are accessible exclusively for residents of border communes. Three checkpoints (Terespol-Kukuryki and Bobrowniki on the Belarussian border, and Budzisko on the Lithuanian one) serve exclusively to the freight traffic at the moment. Out of 8 checkpoints open to all, three are on the Ukrainian border (Medyka, Hrebenne and Dorohusk), two on the Belarussian one (Terespol and Kuźnica Białostocka), two on the Russian one (Gronowo and Bezledy), and one on the Lithuanian one (Ogrodniki). The location of all Polish checkpoints where passports were required in 1993 is shown in Map 1.

Technical state of the existing transborder roads is important if they are to be used to a larger degree. The degree is pretty low in most of the cases, however. Road sections crossing extremely developed post-Soviet border protection systems (the so called "sistema"), many roads (unused for 50 years) are overgrown with vegetation. There are virtually no buildings on the border itself, what would make the cost of development of checkpoints much higher.

Railways crossing the eastern border are used to a slightly higher degree. Theoretically, there is freight traffic almost on each of the existing railways.

TRANSBORDER PASSENGER TRAFFIC

It was in the late eighties and in the early nineties when the number of people crossing the eastern border was increasing most dynamically. 2.7 million people crossed the border in both directions (complying with passport requirements) in 1980 (which was the last year of a relatively non-restricted tourist traffic). The number for 1990 was 10.9 million, and for 1991 — 16.9 million. The increase of traffic intensity continued after 1991, but at a much smaller rate. According to the latest data by the Border Guard, 19.1 million people crossed the border with the countries of the former USSR in 1993. Changes in traffic intensity with a breakdown into individual borders and checkpoints are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Passenger border traffic crossing the Polish eastern

Checkpoints	Passenger border traffic going in both directions				
	1980	1990	1991	1992	1993
1	2	3	4	5	6
to Russia:					
Railway checkpoints:					
Braniewo	0	122	2,449	132,582	152,609
Bartoszyce	0	0	0	0	60
Skandawa	0	806	3,003	132,771	152,687
Railway checkpoints in total:					
Gronowo	2,940	39,548	112,213	164,349	103,814
Bezledy	2,132	42,578	117,563	613,640	868,307
Road checkpoints in total	5,072	82,126	229,776	777,989	972,121
to Lithuania:					
Railway checkpoints:					
Trakisзки	0	0	0	138,366	716,589
Road checkpoints in total	0	0	0	138,366	716,589
Road checkpoints:					
Budzisko	0	0	0	2,390	24,002
Ogrodniki	4,575	995,544	1643,504	2063,006	2808,339
Road checkpoints in total	4,575	995,544	1643,504	2063,006	2808,339
to Lithuania in total	4,575	995,544	1643,504	2203,762	5548,930
to Belarus:					
Railway checkpoints:					
Kuźnica Białostocka	430,003	1193,885	2061,818	1919,616	1475,842
Siemianówka	0	2	0	0	22
Czeremcha	4,896	5,576	2,558	9,627	93,482
Terespol	1037,831	1778,263	2355,800	3639,539	3013,455
Railway checkpoints in total	1472,730	2877,726	4420,176	5558,782	4582,801
Road checkpoints:					
Lipszczany	8	0	3	21	2
Kuźnica Białostocka	1,373	70,645	544,890	807,255	1253,165
Bobrowniki	0	1,056	1,224	5,984	67,082
Jałówka	0	0	116	2	0

1	2	3	4	5	6
Białowieża	0	0	5	234	18
Czeremcha	0	0	0	196	10,351
Kukuryki	0	204,701	243,754	267,230	299,212
Terespol	240,881	2313,083	2447,030	2278,719	2713,596
Road checkpoints in total	242,262	2589,485	3237,022	3359,641	4343,426
to Belarus in total	1714,992	5567,211	7657,198	8918,423	8926,227
to Ukraine:					
Railway checkpoints:					
Dorohusk	0	401,197	957,903	619,919	369,878
Hrubieszów	18	14,864	29,064	39,738	53,566
Lubczyca Królewska	0	56	0	0	0
Medyka	552,732	1110,467	2147,065	1850,607	1471,478
Hermanowice	0	938	0	0	0
Ustrzyki Dolne	0	360	0	0	0
Railway checkpoints in total	552,750	1527,882	3134,032	2510,264	1894,922
Road checkpoints:					
Dorohusk	724	75,299	638,766	573,439	888,070
Zosin	0	456	1,176	4,100	1,597
Hrebenne	0	589	15,883	683,815	841,974
Medyka	445,082	2668,084	3568,231	2585,697	1936,499
Road checkpoints in total	445,806	2744,428	4224,056	3847,548	3668,246
to Ukraine in total	998,556	4272,310	7358,088	6357,812	5563,168
Railway checkpoints in total	2025,480	4506,414	7557,211	8340,183	7346,999
Road checkpoints in total	6977,15	6411,583	9334,358	10050,574	11816,134
Eastern border	2723,195	10917,997	16891,569	18390,757	19163,133

* The list includes exclusively the "passport traffic", without the simplified one, or clearance of transport service employees (e.g. train crews) and the so called other traffic (movement of army units)

Source: own elaboration based on materials by the Border Guard

In the initial period, the increase of traffic concerned mainly the Belarussian and Ukrainian border. It related to the layout of road checkpoints open at that time. Another reason was the fact that citizens of these two countries and Russia (crossing Belarus as transit traffic) began to come in large numbers to Poland in order to resell goods bought for their roubles. The collapse of the Ukrainian economy and drastic increase of prices in that country resulted in a decrease of the number of people crossing the Polish-Ukrainian border from 7.4 million in 1991 to 6.4 million in 1992 and 5.6 million in 1993. The increase of the intensity of traffic also stopped, in relation to the Belarussian border after 1992. On the other hand, continuous passenger traffic on the Lithuanian border and on that with the Kaliningrad District of the Russian Federation has been increasing till the present day.

The structure of the transborder passenger traffic, too, has changed considerably. While in 1980 74% of travellers crossed eastern border by train, in 1991 it was only 45%, and 38% in 1993. There were several reasons for that:

- withdrawal of trains going from Poland to the Balkans from the Lviv and Černivci route (the decrease of number of transit passengers),
- rapid increase of railway ticket prices (after 1990 in Poland, and after 1992 in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States),
- dynamic development of the international bus transport (in 1994 Poland was linked with Belarus by 53 regular bus lines, with Ukraine by 57 ones, with Lithuania by 33, and with Russia by 10),
- very fast development of motor traffic in Poland, and recently also in the countries of the former USSR.

One should mention, however, that despite the described changes, railway traffic on the eastern border has remained much more important than on other Polish borders. For example, only 5% of travellers in the passenger traffic between Poland and Germany used trains in 1993.

The highest intensity of traffic was always that at the railway checkpoints of Terespol (the maximum for 1992 — 3.6 million people), Medyka (the maximum for 1991 — 2.1 million) and Kuźnica Białostocka (the maximum for 1991 — 2.1 million). Traffic through all major railway checkpoints with Belarus and Ukraine decreased in 1992/1993. On the other hand, the number of people going to Lithuania by train via Trakisзки, and to the Kaliningrad District via Braniewo, increased.

Till 1991, the largest passenger traffic was reported in Medyka, as compared with other checkpoints (transit to Rumania and Bulgaria played important role here). After the opening of new checkpoints at Dorohusk and Hrebenne, however, the traffic to and from Ukraine has become much more dispersed. The largest number of travellers undergo custom clearance at the following checkpoints at the moment: 2.8 million at Ogrodniki (to Lithuania) and 2.7 million at Terespol (to Belarus).

The so called simplified traffic mentioned above has been of marginal importance, as far as the entire eastern border is concerned. Only 79.1 thousand people underwent custom clearance using their special passes in 1993.

TRANSBORDER VEHICLE TRAFFIC

Passenger vehicle traffic through eastern border has been even more dynamic than that of people over the last years. The total of 3.2 million cars crossed the borders with our 4 eastern neighbours in 1993. The relevant number for 1980 was only 142 thousand. Therefore, sixfold increase in passenger traffic in 1980-1993 was accompanied by an over 22-times increase of the intensity of car traffic. Unlike with passenger traffic, the increase of number of cars crossing the border has not been restrained, even on the Ukrainian border. Data concerning passenger vehicle traffic is presented in Table 3. In 1993, the largest number of cars crossed the checkpoints at Ogrodniki (1.040 thousand), Terespol (690 thousand) and Kuźnica Białostocka (400 thousand).

Table 3. Traffic of passenger vehicles crossing Polish eastern border in 1992-1993

Checkpoints	1992			1993		
	to Poland	from Poland	% of vehicl. with PL reg. No. plates	to Poland	from Poland	% of vehicl. with PL reg. No. plates
to Russia:						
Gronowo	17,981	19,465	53,34	18,814	20,118	60,51
Bezledy	43,068	42,602	49,44	120,603	131,319	65,02
total	61,049	62,067	50,63	139,417	151,437	64,42
to Lithuania:						
Budzisko	10	12	50,00	47	69	52,59
Ogrodniki	244,416	258,207	65,32	494,163	544,344	32,71
total	244,426	258,219	65,32	494,210	544,413	32,71
to Belarus:						
Lipszczany	16	14	60,00	10	10	45,00
Kuźnica Białostocka	140,491	154,611	48,23	187,493	215,142	35,08
Bobrowniki	482	431	71,74	2,534	2,006	74,36
Białowieża	63	65	79,69	94	98	95,83
Czeremcha	5	4	22,22	1,559	2,849	43,22
Terespol	240,253	304,217	38,72	255,312	431,675	25,83
Sławatycze	9	8	70,59	0	0	-
total	381,319	459,350	42,10	447,002	651,780	29,50
to Ukraine:						
Dorohusk	61,672	80,146	65,41	106,930	140,830	57,49
Zosin	212	142	59,32	34	23	68,42
Hrebennie	36,518	26,344	46,72	101,924	84,936	48,59
Medyka	210,716	251,242	56,13	138,750	202,871	49,36
Krościenko	38	38	57,89	8	8	87,50
total	309,156	357,912	57,22	347,646	428,668	51,77
Eastern border	995,950	1137,548	52,79	1428,275	1776,298	39,11

Source: own elaboration based on materials by the Border Guard

While in 1980 there was one car undergoing custom clearance on the eastern border per every 4.9 persons crossing the border in the road traffic, in 1993 it was only one car per 3.7 persons. The above index illustrates in an indirect way a changing internal structure of the road traffic. Taking into account the fact that it is still practically forbidden to cross eastern border by foot, one can assume that the number of people per car indicates the decrease of the share of the bus traffic, and the increasing role of travel by private vehicles. This role seems to be especially important in relation to the Lithuanian border (2.7 persons per 1 car), and the least important in relation to the Ukrainian one (4.7 persons).

Import of used cars to the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and to the Baltic States, mainly from Germany, Belgium and Holland, has also increased very much. The import is compelled to go through Polish

territory. The scale of the phenomenon can be determined indirectly by comparing the numbers of cars entering and leaving the territory of Poland. Positive balance (in favour of those leaving Poland) was 142 thousand cars (for the entire eastern border) in 1992, and as many as 347 thousand in 1993. Similar balance measured for individual countries may include certain margin of error, resulting from possible transit passages (e.g. to Lithuania through Kaliningrad District). It is also difficult to determine what part of cars brought into Belarus goes further to Russia. Nevertheless, the surplus of cars leaving Poland in 1993 was: 204 thousand for Belarus, 81 thousand for Ukraine, 50 thousand for Lithuania and 12 thousand for the Kaliningrad District. The "port of exportation" for cars was Terespol (176 thousand of vehicles). On the other hand, the "port of importation" is the checkpoint at Świecko on the Polish-German border. The surplus of incoming cars (as compared with the leaving ones) was almost 250 thousand at that checkpoint.

Table 4. Traffic of goods vehicles crossing Polish eastern border in 1992-1993

Checkpoints	Border traffic		% of vehicl. with PL reg. No. plates	% share in traffic accros eastern border	% share in total traffic across Polish borders
	1992	1993	1993		
to Russia:					
Gronowo	1,774	2,338	45,2	0,52	0,11
Bezledy	16,924	17,753	46,6	3,94	0,81
total	18,698	20,091	46,5	4,46	0,92
to Lithuania:					
Budzisko	1,087	16,586	31,7	3,68	0,76
Ogrodniki	66,571	70,209	25,6	15,59	3,21
total	67,658	86,795	26,7	19,27	3,97
to Belarus:					
Lipszczany	0	4	50,0	0,00	0,00
Kuźnica Białostocka	9,801	23,033	42,3	5,11	1,05
Bobrowniki	2,704	31,571	53,8	7,00	1,44
Jałówka	4	0	-	0,00	0,00
Białowieża	21	114	2,6	0,03	0,01
Czeremcha	24	9	0,0	0,00	0,00
Kukuryki	193,145	213,504	13,0	47,40	9,77
total	205,699	268,235	20,3	59,54	12,27
to Ukraine:					
Dorohusk	5,978	15,156	25,3	3,36	0,69
Zosin	28	0	-	0,00	0,00
Hrebene	5,195	14,100	36,0	3,13	0,65
Medyka	63,565	46,091	10,0	10,24	2,11
Krościenko	22	0	-	0,00	0,00
total	74,788	75,347	17,9	16,73	3,45
Eastern border	366,843	450,486	22,3	100,00	20,61

Source: own elaboration based on materials by the Border Guard

As many as 77% of cars crossing the eastern border in 1980 had Polish registration number plates. As late as till the end of the eighties citizens of the former USSR only occasionally left their country by car. At the moment, semi-legal private entrepreneurs who deal with trade more and more often have cars. On the other hand, Polish citizens often avoid travelling by car eastward, in fear of thieves and queues of several days at the border. The biggest number of cars with Polish registration number plates in 1993 was recorded on the Kaliningrad District border (as much as 64%), the smallest on the Belarussian one (29.5%).

Constantly observed increase of goods vehicles' traffic can be a measure of the development of mutual economic contacts (see Table 4). The total of 59 thousand lorries crossed eastern border in 1980, 367 thousand in 1992, and as many as 450 thousand in 1993. The most rapid changes can be observed on the Belarussian border (increase by 63 thousand vehicles, as compared with 1992; including transit to Russia), the slowest on the Ukrainian one (by less than one thousand vehicles). Lorry traffic focuses mainly at one checkpoint — at Terespol-Kukuryki, clearing 47.4% of the entire freight traffic through the eastern border, and almost 10% of the entire traffic through the Polish border. It is related to the largest transit route (E-30), going from Moscow via Minsk, Warsaw to Berlin, and further on to Amsterdam.

Only 22.3% of lorries crossing the border have Polish registration number plates. It proves the prevailing role played by transit (mainly between Russia and Western Europe) in the entire volume of the road freight traffic. The largest share held by Polish carriers is observed on the Kaliningrad District border (46.5%), and the smallest on the Ukrainian one (17.9%). A slightly larger number of Polish vehicles is recorded at smaller (local) checkpoints, e.g. at Bobrowniki (the road between Białystok and Volkovysk) — 53.8%.

EXCESSIVE USE OF THE EXISTING CHECKPOINTS

The most tangible evidence for the existing infrastructure being overloaded are queues of several kilometres at the checkpoints. In 1992, a survey was carried out in collaboration with the Border Guard in order to measure the time necessary to wait for the custom clearance while leaving and entering Poland. It was done separately for cars, lorries and buses. The survey has proved that it is our eastern checkpoints to be the least penetrable, as compared with the rest of the country. Queues were made mainly on the way to Poland, and were present at all six checkpoints open to all in 1992. The main reasons for queues are:

- insufficient number of checkpoints,
- insufficient traffic flow capacity of the majority of the existing checkpoints,
- exceptionally meticulous system of passport and customs inspection carried out by customs services of our eastern neighbours,
- specific policy to protect the home market, introduced in Belarus and

Ukraine, based on limiting exports of consumer goods (what in a way extorts meticulous customs control).

The most difficult situation in 1992 was at the checkpoint complex of Terespol-Kukuryki. Cars were waiting there for 25 hours on the average in order to enter Poland, lorries 31 hours, and buses as much as 42 hours. At Medyka, Ogrodniki and Kuźnica Białostocka the waiting time was not much shorter. Average waiting times for individual categories of vehicles are presented in Table 5 and (in comparison with the situation at other Polish borders) on Map 2. The longest queues of cars and lorries waiting to enter Poland (see Table 6) were recorded on December 18, 1992 at Kuźnica Białostocka (160 hours, almost 7 days) and on December 17 at Terespol (140 hours). On April 4, 10, 11 and 12 buses were waiting at Terespol for 240 hours (10 days !). Queues of lorries waiting to leave Poland were also typical for Ogrodniki (the average waiting time was 5 hours).

Table 5. Average waiting time at eastern checkpoints in 1992 (in hours)

Checkpoints	Entrance			Exit		
	cars	buses	lorries	cars	buses	lorries
Ogrodniki	13,94	14,25	21,42	4,67	4,69	5,37
Kuźnica Białostocka	10,20	10,62	10,92	1,11	1,19	1,13
Terespol/Kukuryki	24,98	41,98	30,88	0,97	0,23	12,11
Dorohusk	12,30	6,90	1,23	0,12	0,00	0,05
Hrebenne	0,10	0,04	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Medyka	20,95	14,94	19,20	0,10	0,11	15,65

Table 6. Maximum waiting time at eastern checkpoints in 1992 (in hours)

Checkpoints	Entrance			Exit		
	cars	buses	lorries	cars	buses	lorries
Ogrodniki	75	84	130	40	40	40
Kuźnica Białostocka	160	160	160	18	18	18
Terespol/Kukuryki	140	240	120	24	10	105
Dorohusk	72	96	48	24	0	20
Hrebenne	12	13	0	0	0	0
Medyka	83	85	86	10	10	120

For the most part of the year there were queues at almost all checkpoints. One could observe some improvement of the situation only around Christmas time (January and the last days of December) and during Summer holidays (July, August). Breakdown of the waiting time for the remaining months seemed to be purely incidental. At the same time, a detailed analysis gives evidence of changes difficult to explain, e.g. the queue at Medyka shortened from 70 to 10 hours within one day. This proves to what extent efficient customs and passport control affects the length of the queue. On the days when it was simplified (e.g. while an official delegation was to cross the border), the waiting time shortened immediately.



Fig. 2. Average waiting time at checkpoints in 1992

I — Checkpoints: 1 — with queues, 2 — other open to all; II — Waiting time: 1 — cars, 2 — buses, 3 — lorries

Since the monitoring of the length of queues carried out in 1992, some sections of the eastern border have become slightly more penetrable. The halt in the increase of traffic intensity and the opening of two new checkpoints (at Dorohusk and Hrebenne) has led to a release of queues on the Polish-Ukrainian border. Private import of cars caused in turn queues while leaving Poland (the longest one at the moment is that at Ogrodniki). Many efforts to cross the border with stolen cars have also forced Polish customs offices to carry out more accurate check ups. Queues in both directions occurred also at the new checkpoint on the Russian border at Bezledy. The main reason for that is in this case insufficiently developed checkpoint infrastructure on the Russian side of the border.

One has to admit that the infrastructure of some of the railway checkpoints is overloaded, too. Such is for example the situation at Brest. The custom clearance for passengers of local border trains is carried out in the building of the railway station. It takes up to a dozen hours to wait before one can get into the rail car. The main reason for that is the already mentioned interdiction to cross the border by foot. As a result of that, many, very short transborder railway lines are being established (e.g. Brest-Terespol; the length — 2 km). The station customs office is not adjusted to such huge traffic, and it cannot carry out, obligatorily meticulous, check up of petty tradesmen leaving for Poland.

The existence of queues at checkpoints has negative influence, not only on mutual economic and tourist exchange, but also on mutual perception of both neighbouring countries by travellers crossing the border. It is only natural that negative experience at the moment of the first contact with

the neighbouring country influences later opinion about it. And this does not help to tone down mutual prejudices, and to erase stereotypes still present in the consciousness of societies.

PROSPECTS FOR THE BORDER TRAFFIC GROWTH

One should assume that we shall face further increase of both people and vehicles crossing the Polish eastern border within the next few years. The scale and direction of growth depend, however, on a series of political and economic factors, such as:

— general economic situation in individual countries created after the disintegration of the USSR, being a requisite of trade partners' solvency, and at the same time affecting the volume of foreign trade with Poland,

— the condition of mutual economic and social contacts between the countries — members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the European Union, conditioning the volume of freight and passenger transit transport through Poland,

— economic situation on both sides of the border, expressed by differentiation of prices of consumer goods and that of average salary of a workman converted into U.S. dollars (resulting in the masses travelling in order to resell or buy goods, as well as to find work in Poland),

— tariff policy of countries — members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, affecting both the volume of foreign trade in the macro scale, as well that of the small street market trade,

— development of genuine transborder economic contacts (including those of purely local nature),

— development of an almost non-existent, genuine transborder tourism (including tourists coming from the third countries),

The condition of the transborder transport infrastructure is also an important factor. It conditions the technical possibility for the increase of passenger and vehicle traffic. Therefore, the opening of the border from a purely technical point of view is in the best interest of Poland and of its eastern neighbours. Otherwise, it will be infrastructure deficiencies that will prove to be the main barrier to the development of mutual trade contacts, transborder cooperation and tourism.

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT OF THE CONDITION AND OF THE LEVEL OF UTILIZATION OF TRANSBORDER TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

To summarize the above analysis, we can state in a rather explicit way that the condition and the level of utilization of the existing transborder transport infrastructure is inadequate, as far as the volume of traffic on the eastern border of Poland is concerned. We can also try to indicate the most important tasks, of both investment and decision making nature,

accomplishment of which could improve the penetrability of the Polish eastern border in technical terms. These basic tasks include:

1. Better use of the existing railway connections

— to set working reloading “ports” (land transport), being not in operation at the moment (among others, those at Skandawa on the Russian border and at Siemianówka on the Belarussian border),

— to extend rail sections of European rail gauge to larger cities in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Lithuania (along the line to Lviv via Rawa Ruska, in the first place),

— to develop a system of the so called combined transport, providing for efficient transport (bypassing eventual queues) of trucks on railway lorries,

— to establish passenger connections through all railway checkpoints,

— to extend border railway stations,

— to lower international railway fares being too high at the moment, in order to restore the role railways used to play in the transborder passenger transport.

2. Construction of modern trunk highways and checkpoints of high flow capacity (with separate terminals for trucks), or modernization of those already existing at main transport routes — important for the rest of Europe:

— E-30 route (Amsterdam–Berlin–Warsaw–**Terespol/Brest**–Minsk–Moscow), the future A-2 motorway,

— E-40 route (Frankfurt–Dresden–Kraków–**Medyka/Šegyni**–Lviv–Kyiv), the future A-4 motorway,

— the Elbląg–**Grzechotki/Mamonowo**–Kaliningrad route,

— the Olsztyn–**Bezledy/Bagrationovsk**–Kaliningrad route,

— the Warsaw–Suwałki–**Budzisko/Kalvarija**–Kaunas–Tallinn route — the so called Via Baltica,

— the Białystok–**Kuźnica Białostocka/Grodno** route,

— the Warsaw–Lublin–**Hrebenne/Rawa Ruska**–Lviv route.

3. The opening of as many as possible local road checkpoints, to enable the development of economic contacts in the micro scale, and to provide a basis for transborder tourism. Drafts made by the Central Planning Office assume that 11 checkpoints of this kind will be open (3 with Russia, 4 with Belarus and 4 with Ukraine). Some local authorities from the border regions make efforts in order to have several other checkpoints opened.

4. The establishment of strictly tourist checkpoints for pedestrian and bicycle traffic (in the Bieszczady mounts, at Roztocze, in the region of the Białowieska, Augustowska and Romincka forests, and on the Mierzeja Wiślana peninsula), and for water traffic (on the Bug river, on the Augustowski canal). The issue of the waterway going through the Pilava Straits calls for a final solution, too (the entrance to the Vistula Lagoon from the Baltic Sea).

5. Abolition of the absurd interdiction to cross the border by foot.

6. The change of the customs clearance and passport control system in the countries — members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, requiring from customs officers to inspect in detail practically every suitcase carried across the border.

7. Improvement in the organization of work of the customs and passport services in all countries concerned (including Poland), by, among other things:

- introduction of joint customs clearance (carried out in one building),
- separation of freight traffic from the passenger one at checkpoints,
- extension of the number of officers working at individual checkpoints,
- abolishment of the requirement to stamp each passport.

8. It is also necessary to introduce some provisional measures, such as providing for the necessary sanitary conditions for those waiting in queues at the border (toilets, rubbish collection), providing supplies (water, grocer's shops) and safety (constant supervision of non-corrupted police).

Finally, one should stress that the accomplishment of some of the above mentioned tasks is entirely within the powers of the authorities of countries who are Poland's eastern neighbours, while in relation to almost all of the remaining ones mutual cooperation and coordination of actions is absolutely necessary. The hitherto practice shows that the coordination has not been sufficient. A disgraceful example of that is the post-German Elbląg–Kalinin-grad motorway. Its renovation is almost completed on the Russian side. On the Polish one works have not even begun. At the same time Poland has built a modern checkpoint at Bezledy on the Olsztyn–Kalinin-grad road, at the expense of almost PLZ 100 billion. On the Russian side, however, works to modernize their checkpoint, or to renovate a highly deteriorated road to Kalinin-grad from Bezledy, have not been initiated. Both mentioned routes and checkpoints were mentioned in the bilateral agreement signed by Presidents of Poland and Russia. In spite of that, it seems that it has been impossible to reach agreement concerning the sequence of the accomplishment of capital investment projects...

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DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE AND SERVICES IN THE EASTERN BORDERLAND OF POLAND — PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract. After 1989, together with privatisation of economy and the opening of the eastern border, economic activity in the Polish eastern borderland has increased considerably, including mainly spontaneous and only partly controlled development of trade and services and “trade tourism”, being partly responsible for the formation of the “grey”, and even black economy. New, emerging forms of petty trade are described in the paper, as well as organized international trade and new kinds of services. Checkpoints are classified from the perspective of their importance and their equipment — technological and service infrastructure.

Key words: border, checkpoints, border zone, Polish eastern border, trade, services.

INTRODUCTION

During the last few years, the territory of the eastern borderland of Poland became a region of intensive economic changes. Spontaneous development of trade, in different forms, has stimulating effect, thanks to which border areas cease to be regions of secondary importance for the country's economy. Among other things, this is the result of a broader opening of our borders to citizens of countries emerging after the collapse of the USSR, of the transborder “trade tourism” and the development of the open air market trade.

TRANSFORMATION OF TRADE AND SERVICES ON THE EASTERN BORDER OF POLAND IN 1989-1993. THE SCOPE AND NATURE OF RESEARCH

We can witness both qualitative and quantitative transformation in the eastern borderland. Qualitative transformation is the restructuring of the economic system from the command one to the market one. Privatizing is playing a major role in this process. Trade and services are the field where the process is going the quickest. Quantitative transformation concerns the number of trade and service establishments. During the previous period, i.e. before 1989, services, and especially trade and catering were monopolized by

Communal Cooperatives called the "Peasants' Mutual Aid", and often their number and size were irrelevant to the demand, and they were maintained in an artificial way.

An elementary principle in the process of adjustment of the economy and social and political structures to the market system, is to adjust the supply to the demand. This is why after 1989 we can observe rapid transformation processes and the restructuring of trade, services and other fields of economic activity in the eastern borderland of Poland. These are spontaneous processes to a large degree, and have practically escaped from the control by the State. The State mechanism cannot keep pace with the pace of the ongoing transformation, and there are no appropriate legal regulations ready which would adjust and enable economic activity under new circumstances. Similarly, in many cases there is no favourable political climate to launch new economic projects. One can also notice the social balance to have shaken: some part of local communities and numerous strangers, especially those coming from behind the eastern border, join the stream of present transformations, and make them themselves, while others remain passive and only with difficulty adjust to the changes.

A result of this spontaneous economic development, especially of trade and services, being insufficiently controlled by the State, are the "grey and black zones" of the economy, spreading all over the country.

By "grey zone" we define an activity to multiply the profit by small forgeries in financial documents and tax evasion. This is an "offence against economy", committed on a small scale in each individual case, but the total of such offenses amounts to large sums.

The "black zone" on the other hand, is a combination of an offence against economy with criminal activity. Some examples are smuggle of alcohol and its bottling under another label, smuggle of stolen cars, of drugs, actions against the economic State system and other similar offenses against economy, done on a large scale.

One can state with certitude that the share of both "grey" and "black" zone in economic and social activation in the Polish eastern borderland is very significant, although impossible to measure statistically in practical terms.

One can risk a conclusion that the "grey zone" can be helpful in the economic development of border regions, as long as the money due to the tax collecting office is invested to establish new service or trade businesses. Capital investment in housing, improvement of aesthetic looks of towns and villages, improved standard of living are also stimulating the development of a region, activate its inhabitants and make the area generally more attractive. On the other hand, the "black zone" is a univocally negative phenomenon, stimulating embezzlement of money, robbing the State Treasury, causing uncontrolled transfers abroad, etc.

There are only few attempts of scientific analysis of changes occurring in trade and services in the eastern borderland, including issues concerning the "grey and black economic zones." One meets different obstacles, while doing research work, which becomes impossible in some cases. Official statistical

data is incomplete, any survey activity on a larger scale is costly and difficult for formal reasons, as much of the discussed activity is semi-legal. People who come and ask questions concerning the scale and nature of business activity of individuals and firms raise suspicion; hence one can seldom get frank and credible answers to this kind of questions.

In this situation, those doing research on the transformation of the trade and service sector in the eastern borderland of Poland in 1989-1994, have been left with their own observation of the area, scarce statistical data and information gathered through conversations and interviews in public offices and other institutions, and with private individuals.

The material does not make it possible to draw far-reaching conclusions, and especially to properly arrange and classify phenomena and objects being the object of research. Several characteristic types of trade and service activity were singled out and described, with attention paid especially to the role played by the fact of the border becoming open, and to the rise and development of new functions and types of trade that have followed. Classification of checkpoints from the perspective of their importance and equipment was done, too.

DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE IN THE REGION OF THE EASTERN BORDERLAND OF POLAND IN 1989-1994; REASONS, TRENDS, EFFECTS

REASONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE

Trade activity has extremely intensified in the eastern borderland after 1989. A formal and legal reason of this phenomenon was the abolition of the State monopoly and privatizing of trade activity. The reaction of the trade sector to the privatization process has been faster than in other sectors of economy, mainly for low costs of privatization and smaller capital investment. Expenditures made to create new jobs in a trade business depend on the type and nature of such an establishment. However, even in large, modern enterprises with a large range of activity, they are much lower than in other sectors of the national economy, especially in industry. There also exist such kinds of trade activity, where capital investment expenditures are minimal: a stall rented in a market place, mobile, and especially hawking trade, which can also be called the "rucksack trade". Entrepreneurship and efficiency and ... resistance to hardships are decisive factors in this activity. At the same time large, often not taxed profits stimulate accumulation of capital, and not only can, but actually do cause fast changes in this field of economic activity. Changes occurring in the eastern borderland of Poland confirm this regularity.

A second important reason of the intensification of trade activity in the eastern borderland of Poland are political changes. These are related to the collapse of the USSR, establishment of new countries — Poland's neighbours — and to the opening of frontiers with these countries.

In a new situation of open frontiers, big differences of economic potentials,

living standards, differences between the supply and demand for goods and between the values of different currencies have been exposed. When borders became open, it was only natural that the cross-border flow of people, goods and currencies followed, and was increasing in a spontaneous way. That significantly stimulated the animation of the trade activity, as well as some services in the Polish border region. Insufficiently developed infrastructure of checkpoints, their limited capacity and equipment adjusted to much smaller numbers of travellers, tariff, financial and administrative barriers are limiting transborder traffic. Nevertheless, the increase of the number of crossings through the Polish eastern border, especially the so called trade tourism, has been very large after 1989. The number of those visiting Poland kept increasing till 1992, while later it became slightly more restrained.

TRANSBORDER TRADE. SMUGGLE AND "LEGAL SMUGGLE". CHANGING TRENDS IN THE TRADE TOURISM

Many larger and smaller foreign trade enterprises, wholesale warehouses and trade and transport enterprises operate in the eastern borderland, but this is not they who compose this very characteristic picture of the trade activity in that area. The prevailing phenomenon is the trade tourism and the activity of small firms, or rather family teams, legal or illegal, and individuals buying and selling goods or currencies transported across the border, acting as middlemen.

Both citizens of the neighbouring countries and Poles, mainly inhabitants of border regions and visitors from other parts of the country, carry out this kind of activity.

There is an opinion (impossible to verify) that at least half of the population of Sejny is engaged in the "trade tourism", a large part of that of Białystok and its province, of Biała Podlaska, of Chełm, and of the provinces of: Biała Podlaska and Chełm. The introduction of fiscal bands and price changes have reduced this form of foreign trade, but have not eradicated it completely.

Both trade tourism and profits it brings evade customs and fiscal control to a large extent. It is well known that citizens of the post-Soviet countries try to take goods they want to sell illegally across the border. On the other hand the Poles, especially those living close to the border, have established a kind of activity that can be called the "legal smuggling." Regulations allow to cross the border even several times a day. They allow to take a specified quantity of a particular commodity each time, as specified by the customs law. The offence is not paying the income tax, on the income obtained through the sale of the goods in Poland.

It is known from the collected, random data, that this phenomenon is largely present at the following checkpoints: Ogrodniki on the Lithuanian border, Kuźnica Białostocka and Terespol on the Belarussian border, and Dorohusk on the Ukrainian border.

Till 1993, our "importers" taking part in this "legal smuggling" used to buy mainly alcohol and American cigarettes while abroad, as their prices

were lower in Poland. The introduction of fiscal bands for cigarettes at the beginning of 1994, as well as price changes in the countries being our eastern neighbours, have reduced this form of transborder trade, but have not eradicated it completely.

The interest and preferences of citizens of the post-Soviet countries, active in this kind of trade also changed between 1990-1994. Initially, they were coming from the East with goods which were cheap there to resell them with profit in Poland, and to buy convertible currencies, especially US dollars, and goods lacking in their markets, as selling them at home was very profitable. The abolishment of low prices, subsidized by the post-Soviet countries, and high increase of prices of consumer goods in these countries has caused significant changes of the volume recorded by trade tourism. Beginning from 1993, the rate of profit has been achieved through buying goods in Poland and paying with US dollars brought from home. Hence, the import of foreign currencies, mainly US dollars and export of generally available goods from Poland, including products of Polish craft, has been prevailing since 1993. This also means a significant change of the direction of the foreign currency flow: the outflow of foreign currencies from the Polish market has been replaced by their inflow in the recent time.

Finally, it is worthwhile noting that the development of trade tourism is beginning to stimulate production, mainly craftsmanship, both in the Polish border zone and in other parts of the country, e.g. the regions of Warsaw and Łódź.

Dynamic development of trade tourism from the countries of the former USSR to Poland and to other parts of the world (India, China), has been conducive to a creation of a group of relatively rich people there. Demand for consumer goods of the "western kind" has emerged within that group of people. To meet those needs, many craft studios were established in Poland, making similar, but cheaper products. The products are bought by wealthy citizens of the neighbouring countries.

CHARACTERISTIC NEW FORMS OF PETTY TRADE IN THE BORDER REGION

SMALL, HAWKING TRADE

Animation of the trade activity, flow of people and goods, trade tourism, smuggling and "legal smuggling" — all these phenomena have created new or stimulated traditional forms of petty trade.

The fastest development of the small, hawking trade, also called the "rucksack trade" was recorded in 1989-1992. Small numbers of goods are sold, even directly from a rucksack, bag, polythene cover spread over the pavement, or from a camp-bed. The goods can be instantly collected and moved to another place or even to another town or village.

This kind of trade activity is usually taken up by indigent people, beginners in trade or only occasionally active in it. In some cases they are Polish, but in most of the cases they are visitors from the East.

The most intensive development of this kind of activity in 1989-1992 can be explained by the fact that citizens of the Commonwealth of Independent States who came to Poland, used to bring goods bought at retail prices in their markets, which were much lower than those in Poland. Present increase of prices in the countries established after the collapse of the USSR and the equalizing of prices on both sides of the border, as well as scarcity of goods in the markets of our eastern neighbours, have caused a decrease in that trade. In the above mentioned period mainly goods of the daily use were brought to Poland, not excluding food, clothing and domestic animals, however. On the other hand, US dollars were taken abroad. The import of goods to Poland and export of to the countries of the former USSR was securing the largest rate of profit at that time.

TRADE CARRIED OUT AT PERMANENT STANDS: TABLES, STALLS, UMBRELLA ROOFS AND KIOSKS

Selling goods at permanent stands — own, rented or leased tables, mobile stands, stalls, umbrella roofs, kiosks, and so called “jaws” [a kind of stall that can be closed and padlocked for the night; it reminds of a pair of vertical, gigantic jaws — hence the name] — is a more advanced form of petty trade. One can even notice some kind of hierarchy here. Tables without any roofs and mobile stalls are leased or brought in by visitors from the East and petty Polish tradesmen. On the other hand, local sellers are predominant in the group of users of permanent umbrella roofs, kiosks and “jaws.”

MOBILE TRADE

This kind of trade was present in the studied area already a long time ago, as it was giving a chance to reach and to supply seldom visited regions having scarce population, and where it was unprofitable to keep permanent business establishments. However, this form of trade became especially attractive after 1989. Both inhabitants of border regions and visitors from the midland areas are engaged in this trade. Quantitative analysis of the phenomenon is impossible, as well as an assessment of the financial volume of that trade, and the volume of profits. On the other hand, observation of the phenomenon in the border area is indicative of a relatively large share held by this kind of business establishments. They are present most often in bazaars. The reason for such a large scale of the phenomenon is that a large part of the profit is not taxed.

THE BAZAAR — A MEETING POINT FOR ALL FORMS OF PETTY TRADE

Petty trade is present in different places. Initially, i.e. right after 1989, it was a street selling, using any free area, especially in busy parts of towns and cities. However, in many places bans on trade in locations not assigned to that purpose were introduced, and people selling goods without licence were taken under very close supervision. In this way, the business began to concentrate mainly in bazaars. One can distinguish two kinds of bazaars

in the eastern borderland. The first one is formed by very developed peasant markets, being present here for centuries, surviving the communist time, and today becoming international bazaars, where everything is sold. The second kind are new bazaars, emerging spontaneously on free areas in cities, e.g. the tops of sports stadiums, which are already listed in registers of economic establishments at the State administration offices. In order to begin such economic activity, it is necessary to obtain permit from the local department [in charge] of economic activity. In some cases, municipal authorities assign separate market squares for salesmen from eastern countries. All mentioned forms of petty trade are present in bazaars of both kinds. Within bazaars one can notice a gradually developing hierarchy and specialization — better equipped owners of permanent stalls operate in separate sectors, while the rim areas are designated for occasional, often poorer salespersons. The zoning is also justified by the bazaar administrators' inclination to introduce some kind of spatial order. Services emerge on bazaars, especially small catering and kiosks. More and more often municipal authorities create partnerships or use other organizations, often already existing, to run and administer the bazaar. Market places managed by a partnership with the capital share of the municipal authorities is supervised by municipal services, while organizations not linked directly with the local authority establish special units to maintain order. Therefore, gradually, even this most primitive kind of trade is quitting this general state of chaos and randomness. It is becoming subject to specified regulations concerning order and taxes (market fee). Despite the introduction of supervising services, it is impossible to avoid some social, political and financial pathologies in the bazaar — the mafia, the trading of illegal goods, and criminal offenses.

During the last few years bazaars have become typical for the area and landscape of the borderland. 47 permanent bazaars have been ascertained in the eastern borderland of Poland. Białystok and Przemyśl are exceptionally large centres of bazaar trade. Lublin is also a large bazaar trade centre, lying beside the area adjacent to the border. The intensification of the phenomenon is high in Olsztyn and Chełm, Elbląg, Biała Podlaska, Łomża and Suwałki. Apart from trade establishments (over 90% of all stalls), also catering ones (ca. 4%) and exchange offices (c. 2%) are present in bazaars. It also worth noting that bazaars have developed not only in the border region, but also in those situated far from it as well, usually in towns and cities located along the main transport routes.

MORE SOPHISTICATED FORMS OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC TRADE

FOREIGN TRADE ENTERPRISES

Apart from spontaneous trade activity, like bazaar selling, mobile, hawking trade and other forms inspired by trade tourism, smuggling and "legal

smuggling”, and also more sophisticated and legal forms of international trade are developing in the eastern borderland of Poland.

After 1989, beside the already existing State foreign trade enterprises, like Rolimpex, Agroma or others, many private firms were established, active in wholesale trade and linked by trade contracts with eastern partners. What is characteristic, is that this is usually barter trade, arranged in the following way: Polish companies usually export specified range of goods, while the import changes depending on what can actually be purchased behind the eastern frontier. The largest foreign trade centre in the eastern borderland of Poland is Białystok. According to data published by the local authorities, there are approximately 2,500 foreign trade enterprises in Białystok (1993). Based upon this number, one can estimate that all these are small establishments. The second largest number of registered foreign trade companies is in Biała Podlaska. According to data by the local authorities, there were 49 small foreign trade companies operating there in 1993, dealing usually with industrial and alimentary products. There are also 10 large foreign trade companies operating from Biała Podlaska — among them are Tritikum, Polkres, Agroma, Rolimpex, Polnord. They are exporting food and grain, and importing coal and building materials. Apart from Białystok and Biała Podlaska, foreign trade enterprises are present also in Suwałki. These are Litpol and Amelis companies, exporting agriculture products, furniture, metal products, and occasionally other goods as well. The import depends on the availability of goods requested in Poland in the foreign market. Also Chełm and Przemyśl are very active in foreign trade. It is difficult to estimate in what branches local companies are active, as the range of traded goods keeps changing, and is often accidental. 16 companies were engaged in barter trade with Ukraine in Chełm in 1992. Foreign trade companies are also in Lipsk, Hrubieszów and Lidzbark Warmiński. The object of trade are food products, e.g. 25% of the entire export to the Kaliningrad District are refreshing soft drinks produced in Poland, and forestry products — forest fruits and timber.

NEW FORMS OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

INTERNATIONAL FAIRS

As trade with countries — eastern neighbours of Poland — has become a chance and a driving force of economic development and activation of the Polish borderland, it has also been noticed and approved by local authorities: administrative and economic ones. This fact is confirmed by attempts to arrange for an International Trade Fair, covering a larger area, and providing an opportunity to get to know each other and establish contacts by firms active on both sides of the border, to establish better flow of information, etc. Fairs of this kind have been already arranged in Bartoszyce, Chełm, Biała Podlaska and Przemyśl.

TAX FREE ZONES

There are 3 tax free zones in Poland at the moment, of which the following 1 is located in the eastern border region: in Terespol-Małaszewicze. As everyone knows, TFZs are economic organizations which are to support foreign trade, development of commercial, industrial and service activity, to attract serious investors and to link enterprises operating in these zones with the world economic system. None of the formally existing tax free zones in Poland meets these requirements. There are three kinds of reasons of this situation: lack of appropriate, precise legal regulations to define the status of the TFZs and other issues concerning their operation, lack of a precise development strategy, lack of appropriate legal regulations in spatial planning.

Present definition of the tax free zone and that of the customs warehouses, included in the customs law partly overlap each other. Issues concerning the scope of activity in the TFZ have not been solved, either. It would be desirable to define precisely mutual relation between TFZs and the rest of the country, as present regulations make it impossible to solve small problems, like the joint use of municipal services, etc. The lack of any existing, positive patterns for TFZs in Poland, and leaving the issue on the local government level (the person managing the tax free zone is the mayor at the moment) results in the lack of understanding of the essence of the undertaking. It seems therefore necessary to design and to define a long-term development strategy, with the main purpose to define the goals, the benefits and anticipated spatial links with other TFZs in Poland.

RETAIL SHOP TRADE

Talking about trade in the eastern border zone, one cannot leave out yet another of its forms, i.e. retail shop trade. However, research has demonstrated that economic and transport activity following the opening of checkpoints has had a rather insignificant influence on the shop trade in the entire border region. For obvious reasons, the influence is evident only in places situated in areas directly influenced by checkpoints, in the vicinity and along main transport routes leading to checkpoints. In other parts of the border region, shop trade has developed mainly in connection with domestic market and all national economic and political trends. According to official statistical data, the total of 4,385 shops were registered in the entire border zone in 1992, and the number was higher by 1,000 in comparison to 1986 (3,202 registered shops).

Based on the above, one could conclude that retail shop trade, too, has been developing dynamically during that period of time. Official numbers, however, are slightly misleading. In the eighties, under increasing depression of the State economy, the number of retail shops was dropping (between 1980 and 1986 1,000 shops were closed down in the examined area — in most of the cases these were State or cooperative ones). At the same time, already in that time, at least beginning from the mid eighties, private trade

in shops and bazaars was developing, what was not registered. Taking into account this falsified statistical data, one can make a conclusion that the actual process of the development of a network of retail shops was slightly longer, and therefore slower over the last few years, than it is suggested by the official statistical data.

MATERIAL AND IMMATERIAL SERVICES IN THE BORDER REGION

CATERING SERVICES

Similarly as retail trade, catering services were in practice monopolized by the State, by local administration and by Communal Cooperatives called the "Peasants' Mutual Aid" till the eighties. At the beginning of the economic transformation in Poland, non-functional and often too large for local needs, catering establishments were being closed down. In this way, catering in the border region, similarly to retail trade in the second half of the eighties, was in a state of deep crisis. The number of catering establishments dropped by half in the examined area between 1980 and 1990 (529 in 1980 and only 268 in 1990). At the same time, private businesses began to emerge in a spontaneous way. It concerned mainly the so called small catering, i.e. kiosks with snacks and soft drinks, roadside grill bars, small bars, etc. During the initial stage of privatization (the end of the eighties), private entrepreneurs were also buying out large catering establishments. This kind of capital investment was ineffective from the economic perspective, however, and premises were usually converted into wedding reception centres after a short period of time.

Small catering establishments emerge in very large numbers, especially near bazaars, railway stations, transport routes and checkpoints. Official statistics obviously cannot register this entire, to a large extent spontaneous, process. It is worth, noting however, that the number of catering establishments has increased by as much as 74% during only two years' time in communes and towns of the eastern borderland, where permanent checkpoints exist. The increase was smaller in other administrative districts, and it did not compensate for the decrease of the number of catering establishments, as compared with an earlier period.

SERVICES PROVIDING FOR THE EVERYDAY'S NECESSITIES

Development of services of this kind has had no correlation recently with the change of the social and economic situation of the border regions, being rather a reflection of the new economic conditions present in the country. A decrease of the number of establishments of this kind in the eastern border region from 3,648 in 1980 to 3,397 in 1992 was a result of a gradual reduction of the activity, and even disappearance of many traditional services,

like shoemakers', tailors', watchmakers' shops, etc. Recipients of this kind of services are almost exclusively Polish citizens, hence their location close to the border is insignificant. Former powiat (district) towns used to be the centres where these services developed.

TRANSPORT SERVICES

When free economic activity became admitted, the number of businesses providing transport services increased significantly. At least two factors played their role in this matter: the first one is the fact that till 1989, the number of these firms was regulated by provisions having one goal, i.e. hindering the development of the private sector and purchases of means of transportation by private individuals. The other factor is the economic activation of different regions, following the opening of the frontier and the new economic situation in the country. The number of transport service firms increased in the discussed region from 603 in 1990 to 761 in 1992, i.e. by 26%, and large increase was characteristic only for those areas where there were no checkpoints (ca. 40%). A possible reason was that people who lived and had businesses in places located far from one another, needed this kind of service. The increase of the number of professional transport businesses in administrative districts with checkpoints was small and amounted to 6.5%. In 1993 there was no transborder pedestrian traffic across the eastern frontier, hence there was no demand for transportation service for those coming to and going from the border.

THE TYPES OF CHECKPOINTS OPERATING ON THE POLISH EASTERN BORDER AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY THEM

The formal scope of activity determines to a large extent the location of and services provided by an individual checkpoint. One can distinguish road, rail and maritime checkpoints on the border with the countries of the former USSR. Each one of them can be fully open, or to serve restricted traffic only, i.e. to be available exclusively to people living in administrative districts (communes, provinces) neighbouring to the border. There are in total 30 checkpoints on the eastern border, of which 12 of local importance. A characteristic feature of checkpoints situated on the eastern border is the presence of two different zones: the open and the closed one. Incidents involving attempts to break through the checkpoint by force resulted in the introduction of the closed zone at checkpoints. In this way, the traveller has to go through two clearance procedures — the first, admitting him to the clearance — and the second, where typical customs and passport control procedures take place. The full opening of the border in 1989 resulted in different levels of organization and equipment of individual checkpoints. We can divide checkpoints on the eastern border of Poland into few categories:

1. Fully operational and equipped — such as Medyka or Terespol. The checkpoint complex of Terespol-Kukuryki includes four checkpoints: a rail one for freight traffic at Małaszewicze, a railway one for passenger traffic at Terespol, a road one for cars at Terespol, and a road one for lorries at Kukuryki. This is a good organizational and spatial solution, as it is releasing Terespol from burdens connected with the presence of the checkpoint, such as excessive traffic and jammed streets in the town, which is becoming a “cross-road”. The closed zone of the checkpoint includes exchange offices, forwarding offices, insurance agencies, a car park and shops and a bar run by “Baltona”. Outside the closed zone, there are catering establishments, drinking water intake points and toilets. The numbers of establishments of individual categories vary, depending on the demand.

2. Fully operational checkpoints with equipment being insufficient in relation to the new needs. This kind of checkpoints includes Ogrodniki, where customs clearance of traffic to and from Lithuania and other Baltic States takes place. First of all, border infrastructure is insufficient there, i.e. there are too few customs clearance posts and too little room to park vehicles. Lack of service infrastructure in the area of the checkpoint has resulted in its presence mainly on the access road.

3. Earlier, local checkpoints, being now developed, and serving as general access ones — e.g. Bezledy. The checkpoint, although classified as a medium size one, can be characterized by a large scale building complex. 11 lanes are made for the purpose of customs clearance. The number of service establishments seems to be meeting the demand. They are located in permanent buildings, and several forwarding offices and catering establishments in iron containers. Lack of appropriate infrastructure on the Russian side is the reason for long queues to the customs clearance. However, many citizens of the Baltic States, including Lithuanians, choose this route, as queues are much shorter here than those at Ogrodniki.

4. Former local checkpoints, serving to all users now, but of a limited functional range. An example of such checkpoint is Bobrowniki, where for limited room, only transit freight traffic is cleared. Beside insufficient border infrastructure, there are only few service establishments.

5. Local checkpoints, used during a specified part of the day, equipped with instruments necessary for the customs clearance of goods and people. Gronowo is one of checkpoints of this kind. It is open 12 hours a day, and accessible to inhabitants of the Kaliningrad District and of the Provinces of Gdańsk and Elbląg, both for passenger and freight traffic. The checkpoint is equipped with instruments for veterinary, phyto-sanitary and sanitary examinations. There are two forwarding agencies in the closed zone of the checkpoint, and an insurance agency and a catering kiosk on the access road. The number and scope of activity of the service establishments seems to be sufficient in relation to the needs.

6. Local checkpoints, used occasionally, without border and service infrastructure. Białowieża is an example of such checkpoints.

7. Railway checkpoints, without service establishments. Examples are Skandawa or Kuźnica.

8. Maritime checkpoints — like Frombork. Small numbers of people undergo customs clearance there. Services are very poorly developed, and the border infrastructure insufficient. Passport control and customs clearance are carried out on the pier or in the fishing harbour.

AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE A CONCLUSION: THE PROSPECTS AND THREATS FOR THE EASTERN BORDERLAND OF POLAND

To summarize, one can say that border areas have become a very fast developing area. Within few years, they have changed from being a clearly peripheral region of secondary importance, to one characterized by great economic activity, especially in trade and services. The process of ownership transformation has been of great importance: communal cooperatives called the "Peasants' Mutual Aid" and other State institutions, e.g. active in transport and foreign trade, have lost the status of the monopolist, and the majority of service and trade establishments are already in private hands. This is a major quality change, imparting energy in the development of the entire examined area. The development is not balanced and uniform, however, both in relation to different sectors and to the space. Although it creates serious and optimistic prospects, but at the same time it reveals many problems and threats.

Prospects for further development of the eastern borderland result from a simple comparison of the economic potentials and the existing stocks of machinery and the infrastructure, and the difference in prices and supply of goods on both sides of the border. The comparison shows clearly that prospects for the development are not limited entirely to trade, but can also include other forms of cooperation in many fields. An experiment done in the commune of Barciany is worth mentioning. Employees of the local, former State Farming Estates provide transport, maintenance and farming services on the other side of the border.

Nevertheless, research carried out there justifies a statement that many old and new problems do exist in the borderland, and threats appear, too, affecting the development process in that region, and distorting the very nature of that development.

The following can be recognized as direct threats being the result of the latest changes: 1) speculation and abuse of the law, contraband, crime, social pathologies, 2) threats to our business establishments, resulting from the abundance of goods and services of foreign origin, 3) domination of the trade by groups of people who are not interested in the general development of the region. Among other problems that hinder the development of the examined area, one can see the fact that the borderland regions, situated far away from the centre of the country, are areas with a small participation of highly qualified management staff. Former local elites, often consisting of the former PUWP (Polish United Workers' Party) officials, are not always

prepared to act under new economic conditions. It is necessary for the further development of the borderland regions that managers and entrepreneurs, open to new ideas, emerge there.

Limited ability to accept new pro-market social and economic factors by local communities is another serious problem. The eastern borderland regions are traditionally agricultural areas, with established norms of local coexistence. Hence, social tensions resulting from too a fast transformation can appear there.

Although recent years, as mentioned above, have led to activation of a part of the population, the transformation of the socio-economic system requires, however, appropriate information and education policy, in order to make local communities understand the ongoing changes. Observation of the Polish eastern area has shown minimal scope of such activity on the part of the authorities and economic organizations. The situation in larger towns is better in that automatic (to a large degree) changes of consciousness occur, as well as adjustment by people to new economic conditions, thanks to broad flow of information and exchange of experience. Smaller towns and villages will be assimilating the transformation process with some delay.

The lack of adjustment of the transport and road infrastructure can be a barrier for the development of borderland regions. For this reason, they can suffer losses, being unable to fully use the chance given by the trade with the East. Not taking advantage of this chance means a threat, that other transport routes, bypassing Poland, can take over the transport of commodities.

One should hope however, that despite all problems emerging in the eastern borderland, resulting from both economic and political situation of the country, being a reflection of local conditions, transformation processes initiated during the last four years will be continued, and their result will be further growth of the examined region, both in the economic and socio-political sense.

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