

RUSSIAN BORDER POLICIES AND BORDER REGIONS.¹

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Preface

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We have decided to publish it as a COPRI Working Paper as it gives a broad review of a theme related closely COPRI's own work on Security in the Baltic area. Furthermore, it covers material not well-known outside Russia. The responsibility for the study rests solely with the author.

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Tarja Cronberg

Introduction

This paper is devoted to Russian border policies and border regions. Border regions are both the referent object and the agent of border policies. In the Russian legislation the regions are entitled to work together with Moscow to perform the border policy. There are also several ways how border regions influence Moscow's decisions on border matters when the issue is out of regions' prerogatives. It means that regions partake in the shaping of the Russian border policy. Although, there have not been always unanimity between Moscow and border regions. Some disagreements were rather strong. Meanwhile, border regions themselves are affected by the center's border policy. Whereas sometimes the implications are positive, in some cases they could be devastating.

In this paper I have a two-fold task. First, I intend to observe different borders of Russia and show some peculiarities of them. Russia has a very long border (about 61 thousand kilometers). The practices related to the border have a lot in common, yet they differ to a certain extent in the spatial as well as in the temporal terms.

Borders face different challenges, have different meanings and are treated differently. These features will be reflected while various border related issues will be depicted in general.

Second, as I have already mentioned there will be a set of issues or prisms through which the Russian border will be studied. The logic to do it will be to see what the border is now, what do Russian authorities (national and regional), scholars and public make of borders. Definitely, it will be compared to the Cold War times. Besides, the feature of Russia is that there are some 'new' borders that emerged after the Soviet Union collapse. Whereas most countries experience only how the border has been changing from what was perceived as the border in the past to its current state, Russia is also influenced by constructing new borders.

In the first chapter, I will show the discourses of the border and border regions in Russia. First, some specific discourses of the border and border regions in which Russian authorities are embedded will be given. These unique discourses have been developed by authorities. Surprisingly, these discourses merely rest on a two-term dichotomy (like 'outpost'/'link') widely used by authorities. Besides, they are hardly conceptualized and the meaning of the terms could be rather unclear. Nonetheless, they help understand authorities' perceptions of the border. Even the fact, that these discourses are poorly conceptualized is important as it proves that Russian authorities have expressed little interest in borders. Second, some other discourses will be given. Authorities are embedded in these discourses, but the framework of each discourse has been developed not by authorities, but were taken from the academic circles. Third, the difference between the center and regions that shape the discourses of the border will be shown.

In the second chapter, the border in its traditional meaning as a line separating two states will be approached. Territorial demarcations and control are supposed to be an attribute of the Cold War or even the Westphalian system in general. However, the present-day de-territorialization of the border in the world is also the case on the Russian borders. At the same time, re-territorialization occurs in different corners of the world including Russia. The questions what of them dominates and why among Russian central and regional officials will be answered here. After the Soviet Union collapse Russia became engaged in defining the border with new as well as

some old neighbors. This has re-territorialized the border. But could de-territorialization occur as well? Besides, during the Cold War the border control was tough. However, it seems to us that the very border control does not exclude cooperation across the border. In fact it was the meaning of the border as a barrier that hampered cooperation in the past. Even though on some borders the control is the same as during the Cold War, the interrelation between cooperation and control has changed. They are no longer the binary oppositions. A well-controlled border does not exclude cooperation; vice versa, it contributes to cooperation and even necessitates cooperation.

The third chapter is about border regions in the federative relationships. First, I will compare border and inland regions as seen from the legislation and Moscow's policies. Yet, as the Russian federative system is characterized by a distinction between republics and other regions, the features of border republics compared to both inland republics and other border regions will be given. Second, some peculiarities of the border regions, the challenges they face and their messages to the center could be discerned. Finally, the relationships between border regions and the center will be described. These relationships have been evolving for more than a decade but whether it has been a one-way move away from peripherality or the reverse trend could be discerned?

The fourth chapter deals with the issue of cross-border cooperation. Curiously, some regional authorities neglect the benefits of the geographical proximity. However, on the whole, territorial closeness is an important factor of border regions development. Russian regions experiences show several ways of taking advantage from their location. There is also a relatively big enclosure of the Russian legislation and perceptions of cross-border cooperation. Moreover, bottom-up and top-down approaches to cooperation will be compared.

BORDER AND BORDER REGIONS DISCOURSES

BORDER DISCOURSES DEVELOPED BY AUTHORITIES

BORDER AS A BARRIER OR A SITE FOR MEETING.

Russian authorities tend to see the border through the dichotomy of *barrierness/contactness* which refers to the ability of the border to be open for the outside-inside contacts.

The border is considered to perform two functions:

1. barrier – designed to separate, in this meaning the border is exclusive
2. site for meeting – border is conceived as inclusive.

Authorities eager to approach the border as a place to meet when it shall bring opportunities and make of it as a barrier when challenges from the outside are anticipated.

The Security Council of the RF has decided to shape a new image of border. Border should be open for ‘friends and partners’ and closed for ‘enemies, law offenders and terrorists’.ⁱ Regional authorities have rather similar perceptions. Some of them argue that state border is sort of a filter which does not exclude and separate border regions of adjacent countries from each other but cleans up cooperation, makes it pure preventing harmful stuff to be spread over the border.ⁱⁱ The Saratov Oblast authorities compare border with gates open for everything friendly and closed for harmful and threatening.ⁱⁱⁱ

However, the nature of the border seems rather unclear and ambiguous in this dichotomy. It is hard to predict what the border looks like in each case. The declared by regional authorities statement that border is closed for bad and open for good brings no understanding of the border for the reason that it is not clear what is good and bad *per se*, it can vary from time to time, from region to region. For example, the movement of people across the border, the economic penetration from the outside could be treated differently in both temporal and spatial terms.

‘Shuttle trading’ could be a good example here. Let’s take two border regions located in the opposite corners of Russia. Shuttle trading is wide spread in both of them, but the discourses within which these regions prefer to perceive shuttle trading are different. For Kaliningraders shuttle trading is more likely a way to survive, whereas for the Primorskii Krai the same kind of trade but carried out mainly by Chinese is a challenge. In the same way immigration in the Primorskii Krai could be treated differently. Migration could be

welcome from the economic view-point (cheaper labor-force, Chinese nationals do the jobs Russians refuse to, no funding to bring Russians from the European part of the country is necessary). However, migration could be opposed if it is perceived as a force undermining regional authorities legitimacy and leading to social, cultural and economic cleavages in the region.

OUTPOST/LINK

The dichotomy of the border as a barrier or a site for meeting is projected to border regions. Curiously, those who claim that border is not a good barrier seek to turn a border region into an outpost, while those who appreciate the contactness function of the border call for a border region as a link.

Outpost model.

Saratov Oblast authorities argue that, 'Our mission...could be defined as an outpost and a springboard of Russia in the south and south-east'^{iv}, the Dagestan Republic is named a 'Russian southern outpost'^v, the Irkutsk Oblast is also seen as a Russian outpost on the southeastern Siberian border,^{vi} etc.

Link model.

The Tuva Republic is perceived by its authorities as a link between Siberia and Mongolia.^{vii} There are a lot of similar perceptions: 'St.Petersburg a window onto Europe', 'the Kaliningrad Oblast – a bridge between Russia and Europe', the Primorskii Krai – the place where different cultures meet^{viii} as well as a link between Russia and the Asia-Pacific Region.^{ix} The Karelian Republic authorities imagined the border region as a Russian gateway to Europe.^x The Orenburg Oblast authorities claim that 'border territories on the Russian-Kazakhstan border serve as sort of regions-crossroads, and they should provide a new pattern of relationships between Russia and Asian CIS countries'.^{xi}

The mentioned above ambiguity of viewing the border in unclear contactness/barrierness terms is also reflected in the outpost/link dichotomy. It is difficult to say, what is good and what is bad for the region. It depends on the perspective from which one approaches a situation. As a result, it is complicated to distinguish when the border is open (a place to meet) and when it is closed (barrier), when a border region is a link and when it is an outpost, respectively. This

particularly is evident when region is called both an outpost and a link. The Orenburg Oblast authorities call their region as a vital link between Europe and Asia^{xii} as well as a Russian south-eastern outpost^{xiii}.

Moreover, the very terms 'outpost' and 'link' are rather contextual. Each of them has some other characteristics, and while the narrator omits them as not important and reduces the meaning of the words to only 'closed'/'open', the audience could draw a picture in connection with its perceptions of the outpost and link. Curiously, these pictures could be different. The outpost in empires is about territorial expansion. The outpost used to be founded either to discover nearby territories or to be a springboard for further extension of one's control. It means that borders were flexible. On the contrary, in nation-states an outpost serves to protect a concrete, clearly defined border. Scarcely more clearness offers a term 'link'. A border region could be either an actor of its own (like postmodern actor with multiple identities) or just a territory where a dominant Russian identity meets a foreign identity, a site of interaction of Russia and an adjacent country.

BORDER LOCATION: AN OPPORTUNITY OR A CHALLENGE.

One more classification is based on the approach of the regional authorities to border location. The border is supposed to bring opportunities as well as challenges. To quote Grigory Olekh^{xiv}:

Suddenly, NSO (the Novosibirsk Oblast - VV) was a border territory. On the one hand, its new proximity to the national boundary created favorable conditions for immediate and frequent contacts with former Soviet Union republics and other foreign countries, and NSO made use of this. On the other hand, however, the border position turned out to be fraught with a whole complex of acute and painful problems.

Most authorities of new border regions accentuate the negative attributes of the border. The Krasnodar Krai authorities claim that its new geopolitical positioning caused by its border location has lead to serious problems like illegal migration and uncontrolled movements of migrants within the region.^{xv} The Altay Republic authorities claim that Russia and Kazakhstan have a common historical legacy, had a single and economic cultural spaces. However, cooperation between the Altay Republic and neighboring Kazakhstan territories has difficulty resuming whereas problems related to border are growing.^{xvi} The Southern-Ossetya – Alanya Republic authorities argue that the cross-border cooperation experience they have had is a negative one.^{xvii} There are some reasons to explain these negative perceptions:

- border regions have found themselves deprived of any previous gains: most economic ties with adjacent countries (former Soviet republics) are disrupted due to duties, cultural and humanitarian contacts are also hampered by emerging border regulations
- border regions have found themselves exposed to new challenges: illegal migration, drugs trafficking, etc. Beside these illegal activities border regions are afraid of even new legal activities. Most regional authorities are scared of even legal migration. (see below)
- there is no longer state support to border regions. Moreover, state is reluctant to solve even problems that are under federal prerogatives. Regions partly carry out the burden of border infrastructure and guarding, deportation of illegal migrants.
- One more constraint for border regions to reap benefits from their border location is an underdeveloped Russian legislation (no advantages to border regions within Russia, lack of international agreements on cross-border cooperation, etc. See Chapter 3 for more detail)

While most *new* border regions have suffered from the Soviet Union dismissal, *old* border regions have benefited from the end of the Cold War that coincided with the collapse of the USSR. First, old border regions are much better accustomed to challenges derived from their border location. Second, they make use of changes in their relationships with Moscow. They are no longer periphery, they could become epicenters of new cross-border communities.

While old borders tend to get more permeable, on new borders the opposite trend could be discerned. For example, the end of the Cold War provided an enormous impetus for the Russian-Finish border opening up. On the contrary, new border regions which were parts of a single state faced emerging 'fences' between them.

However, it seems that the generalization that old border regions are more enthusiastic about their border status and have more benefited from their border location could be questioned to a certain extent. Some old border regions failed to develop cross-border cooperation in spite of the changed meaning of the border. It is the case for Russian regions bordering on China. Some new border regions, on the contrary, succeeded in reintegrating their economies with neighboring countries. Besides, time flies and the positive effects from the events of the late 1980-early 1990-s have been minimizing. The state of affairs of the border infrastructure and cross-border development is more and more similar for old and new border

regions. What we have now could be taken as normal and the same for all types of the border. Old border regions can no longer rely on the changed meaning of the border impetus to boost cross-border cooperation. New border regions should finally accept the disruption of old ties and start shaping the new ones.

OTHER BORDER REGIONS DISCOURSES (developed in the academic circles)

TERRITORIAL/SPATIAL DICHOTOMY:

Territorial approach

There is a state-based fragmentation of the globe and territorially defined communities. The feature of the territorial approach is that there is a kind of a single-fixed view (fixed images of the bordered world of nation-states and identities). Territory is the object of analysis, the major attention is paid to territorial divides whereas spatial ones are neglected. In this sense, the borders are clear, fixed and absolute. They also serve to isolate those on the one side from those on the other side of the border. Border regions are nothing but part of such a territorial community where national identity is supreme and the only. This approach could be discerned in regional authorities' perceptions.

1. Border region is embedded in this territorial politics as part of a territorially defined community with national identity and interests as supreme. Some Orenburg Oblast officials argue that the fact that the Orenburg Oblast has again become a border territory necessitates that the region be playing an outstanding role in ensuring territorial integrity, as well as political, economic, and defense interests of Russia.^{xviii} The Irkutsk Oblast is called an outpost of Russia and is considered to perform this function because for a long time the Asian part of Russia has been an object of territorial claims of some circles in adjacent countries.^{xix}
2. Border regions seek to protect territorial integrity and sovereignty of Russia. Grigorii Kosach^{xx} argues that the Orenburg Oblast authorities envisaged a role of the region as a keeper of Russian stateness in the Southern Urals and Volga river basin. The Orenburg Oblast became a border territory after the Soviet Union dismissal. The region is surrounded by entities which are mainly Turkish and Muslim in contrast to traditionally Orthodox Russia. Besides, most of its neighbors gained some independence. The adjacent Kazakhstan turned into a sovereign state, two Russian neighboring regions – Tatarstan and Bashkortostan - are

forerunners among other regions in seeking sovereignty and are no more inside not yet outside, but alongside Russia.^{xxi} As a result, Orenburg elite saw its Orthodox and pro-federal region as the only barrier for Russia to lose its sovereignty over ethnic republics and the territorial limits of Russia to be changed. There are also regional activities while demarcating the border with adjacent countries. Some regional authorities have been incomparably more than the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reluctant to make any territorial concessions to an adjacent country. (see Chapter2)

Spatial approach

Contrary to a single-fixed perspective, there could be multiplicity of spatial communities. A region operates in different spaces and doing so it has multiple identities and belongs to different communities. This is a multiple-perspective view. It means that on both sides of a state border there could be those who belong to the same community in a non-territorial space. If we take territorial lens, they are different, but from some non-territorial perspectives they constitute the whole. Spatial community transcends the border. This discourse blurs territorial inside-outside division.

The basis for a trans-border community is commonness/closeness in history, ethnicity, language and etc. For example, the Russian border region Buryatia Republic and the adjacent country Mongolia are very close culturally. Some scholars argue that they shape a 'Buddhism-Kon Fu Tsio civilization'.^{xxii} Buddhism is also wide-spread in the Tuva Republic. Interestingly, it is popular not only at the grass-root level, but also at the level of regional authorities. For example, there was an Agreement on Cultural and Religious Cooperation concluded by the Tuva Republic and Dalai Lama Government. As Mongolia is also Buddhism oriented, the confessional commonness of Tuva and Mongolia enables close ties to be developed between them. Olga Homushku^{xxiii} notes that in the post-Soviet world there are trends for spatial communities to emerge. Some of them are confessional entities. Buddhism popular in the Central Asia spreads over the Russian border and includes Russian border regions as part of its community. Besides, Tuva and Mongolia have similar customs, culture, household activities and style of living. Regional authorities note that this closeness is a driving force of cross-border cooperation between them.^{xxiv} The same is the case in the Russian North-West. For example, the significance of the historical closeness

was shown by the fact that the Russian Republic of Karelia has received approximately one-third of the Finish funding for the near-region cooperation with Russia 1990-96, and that proportion is considerably higher than its relative population or economic potential among Finland's neighboring regions.^{xxv}

There has never been a border between Russia and some former Soviet republics (Belarus, Ukraine, etc.). The border between them was devoid of any meaning. Nowadays, these countries have the common cultural heritage. According to the recent research only 39.1 per cent of Ukrainians speak only Ukrainian on all matters, 36 – only Russian language, 24.8 – both Russian and Ukrainian languages depending on circumstances. Besides, it is argued that most of those who use both languages speak Ukrainian at school, at work, i.e. places where the state language should be employed. Whereas Ukrainian is introduced as the language some official documents to be written in, Russian remains the real language of official duties. Only in Western Ukraine Ukrainian language became the main language of public life, but in Eastern Ukraine, especially border regions, the situation is unlike.^{xxvi} Finally, the border regions of former Soviet republics have a rather mixed population. In northern Kazakhstan a number of ethnic Russians is rather huge. According to the latest census in 1989 (except not yet ready results of that of 2002) Russians constituted 23 per cent in the Guryev region and 34 percent in the Ural region of Northern Kazakhstan. Kazakhs made up 66 and 56 per cent, respectively.^{xxvii}

This closeness in culture and religion provides a foundation for cooperation in other spaces as well. Georgia's province South Ossetia has ethnic ties with the neighboring Russian Republic of North Ossetia. North Ossetia provided assistance to South Ossetia in its conflict with Georgia. South Ossetia became closely bound to Russia's economy.^{xxviii} In the Russian Republic of Dagestan the Lezgin independence movement has called for unification with the Lezgin population in the adjacent parts of Azerbaijan.^{xxix}

Territorial/spatial and new/old classifications of border regions.

The territorial and spatial discourses are manifest for each border region, the proportion varies though. For example in some new border regions there remains a rather strong potential for maintaining cooperation across the border due to closeness in economic development, culture and etc. All of this is because of the historic legacy of living in a single state. It means, that former close

ties turned out to be a cross-border spatial community which spreads over the state border. However, at the same time some new border regions are getting highly concerned about demarcations. This ambiguity is also the case for 'old' border regions. On the one hand, the meaning of the border has changed. This paves the way for contacts over the border to intensify and spatial identities to emerge. On the other hand, new (soft security) challenges instead of the old ones (hard security) are at the top of agenda and sometimes the way chosen to meet them or to lessen their effect is to increase the barrieriness of the border while (and even specially for) disrupting spatial ties. Whereas border was opened up, regional authorities closed it and tried to exert stricter control over it. As a result territorial community was developed at the expense of a spatial community. To quote David Kerr^{xxx}:

Further development of Sino-Russian cooperation as the motor for regional development has been hampered by growing Russian concerns about Chinese economic penetration. The contention surrounding barter, and the related 'shuttle trade', came to symbolise on the Russian side of the border not the potential for future transregional cooperation but the need to secure the boundaries of the state.

Martin Nicholson adds that refusing immigration from Asia will '*also perpetuate the ethnic divide between the Russian Far East and its neighbors, making its acceptance into the Asia-Pacific community more difficult*'.^{xxx1}

Ingmar Oldberg argues, that the Kaliningrad Oblast has evolved from a solidly Soviet, closed and militarized region to the open to the West one. However, this was weakened by the defense of Russianness.^{xxxii} (Sovietness is a better term). The old, military, communists and nationals opposed to the increase in West's presence and influence in the region. This deteriorates the chances for spatial communities across the border to emerge. Besides, due to these phobias on the Russian side no German consular office was established. This also does not make border crossing more comfortable and hinders Western penetration into the region.

Delineation within both 'new' and 'old' border regions on the matter of spatial or territorial politics is rather strong and sometimes a 'new' border region has much more in common with an 'old' border region than with another new border region.

PRE-MODERN, MODERN AND POST-MODERN THINKING^{xxxiii}

Pre-modern	Rather flexible borders, no strict need of homogeneity, considerable plurality and the fading out of centrality and “we”-ness towards the outer spheres, concentric rings.
Modern	emphasis on homogeneity, centrality and clear external borders and statist security, distinct self-other relationship.
Post-modern	a considerable degree of decentralization, flexible borders, regionality, ‘Olympic rings’.

Too often, these modes of thinking co-exist and it is possible to discern the tracks of different types of thinking in regard to a particular region.

Towards pre-modern and then back to modern thinking:

The collapse of the USSR drastically changed the essence of some regions. Most found themselves in a new situation – they became border territories. The majority of them looked back in their history and found out that had been in the similar position a long time before. In the past they carried the function of an outpost and decided to employ these images in the 1990-s. They got historically tramped. Most narratives regional authorities use are connected to the history of the region. Some officials state that ‘Orenburg border region mirrored Russia’s prevalence in power and strength vis-a-vis Middle Asia rulers...Orenburg played an exceptional military and strategic importance ... The history comes back...Orenburg due to its new geopolitical position (as a border region V.V.) after the Soviet Union collapse have gained even greater role on the security issues’.^{xxxiv} Besides, the very term ‘outpost’ in Russia goes back to Russia’s empire period. It means that regions got anchored in pre-modern politics. In pre-modern times they were characterized by close contacts with other cultures, rather heterogeneous population (conquered lands), flexible border. They were designated to show Russia’s power and arrogance, to spread Russia’s influence onto the neighboring territories.

However, these regions were deprived of their border location far ago, they were developed within the modernizing Soviet Union. That is why most regions seek to ‘modernize’ their revived identity so that it matches their current perceptions. Still driven by their historic legacy of Russia’s springboards, border regions are highly concerned about border demarcation and migration from the outside

which diversifies local population. In other words the issues at stake are two attributes of modern politics – fixed clear borders and homogeneity.

Captive to the modern thinking:

Migration issue is very exemplary. Most arguments of regional elites' concern about immigration are about modernist thinking. Lets take them in greater detail.

First, the 'othering' of migrants is wide-spread.

- In the Russian Far East Chinese are said not to be culturally integrated into regional communities, therefore there is a clear distinction 'we-they'.^{xxxv}
- Migrants are often associated with crime. Every fifth crime in the Astrakhan Oblast is claimed to be committed by migrants and 90 per cent of them are illegal migrants.^{xxxvi} Some scholars argue that Chinese nationals became the major law-breakers in the Russian Far East.^{xxxvii}
- Migration is considered as a threat because it changes regional identity. Astrakhan governor, Anatoliy Guzhvin, is concerned about the fact that the region is getting more Muslim as there is an inflow of migrants from the place where Islam is popular and under the pressure of newcomers people who have been living in the region for a long time have to leave it.^{xxxviii} Besides, migration is believed to provoke clashes or at least tensions between various social groups in a region. Astrakhan authorities argue that immigration leads to ethnic tensions,^{xxxix} while their Orenburg counterparts argue that migrants change the balance of cultural groups in the region.^{xi}
- Migration is supposed to lead to social and economic hardship and decline in the regional average standard of living. Krasnodar authorities use this argument quite often. Besides, migration could provoke the deterioration of competitiveness of local workers and enterprises. The Khabarovsk branch of the Tax Ministry reported that foreign-owned retailers paid 10 percent less in taxes on average than their Russian counterparts.^{xli}

Second, migration is believed to threaten national security. Border regions authorities claim that migrants seek to reside in strategically important districts and get jobs in strategically important fields. Krasnodar Krai authorities argue that migrants prefer to live along the Black Sea coast and major communications like highways and railroads.^{xlii} The Astrakhan Oblast authorities are worried that most

servants of the main railroad connecting the Astrakhan Oblast and Chechnya are migrants.^{xliii}

Third, migrants are perceived to challenge strict fixed borders, territorial integrity and sovereignty. Migrants are considered to seek economic and political power in a region. The Orenburg Oblast authorities are rather watchful of any candidates from newcomers for electoral races at any level.^{xliv} Moreover, some scholars warn that most border districts of Russian border regions are inhabited by Kazakhs who constitute the local political elite and any rigorous measures to control migration are likely to fail.^{xlv} In the Russian Far East border territories people are afraid that Chinese will infiltrate local political and business elites. As a result there will be 'quiet expansion' or Chinification, etc.

Towards a post-modern pattern:

Border regions are involved in trans-border communities. Regional authorities are eager to operate in non-nation-state-fragmented spaces. They develop identities apart from the national one. The Orenburg Oblast authorities while analyzing the prospects of cross-border relations argue that the basis for these communities could be the commonness in culture, language, single economic space, and historical legacy.^{xlvi} The border under cross-border cooperation is getting porous. Besides, the increased immigration diversifies regional population, the difference between the inside and the outside is blurring. The Krasnodar Krai authorities argue that every fifth resident is a migrant.^{xlvii} Other border regions' authorities note that migrants constitute an enormous part of population.

The attitudes towards the outside undergo changes. During tensions between the Soviet Union and China border regions of the Baikal basin were developed into territories with huge military presence. Nowadays, Buryatia and Chita are considered to host trans-border contacts between Russia and China and to turn into a link to connect China and the Russian Trans-Sib Railway Road via which goods could be delivered to Europe.^{xlviii}

The xenophobic campaigning by then Primorskii Krai governor Nazdratenko in the 1990-s was replaced by a more tolerant attitude of Sergei Darkin. Sergei Darkin's gubernatorial election platform in part of international economic relations was written by Viktor Larin, who had been a consistent proponent of intense and constructive multilateral economic engagement of the Russian Far Eastern regions with the Pacific Rim nations. In Mikhail Alexseev words^{xlix},

'The 2001 gubernatorial election campaign signaled the ascent of new incentives among the regional elites for taking advantage of proximity to external economic actors.' The present day Primorskii Krai governor, Sergei Darkin, was shown in its campaign brochure as signing contracts with foreign companies, whereas a former governor, Yevgenii Nazdratenko, was pictured in his 1999 campaign brochure as 'shaking hands with the Cossacks, the veterans of the 1969 Damanskii Island border battle with China, and World War II veterans ... visiting border territories to protest transfer to China under the 1991 demarcation treaty'. It is not for sure that the issue of region's positioning in the outside environment was a decisive one for voters in the Primorskii Krai, however, these changes in regional authorities perceptions and attitudes towards the outside world are rather indicative. There is a change from the territorial thinking to a spatial one, the region is going to put aside its territorial concerns and to develop multiple spatial identities.

Pre-modern or post-modern interpretations?

There is a lot of ambiguity as there is always some room for interpretations of actions.

The Orenburg Oblast authorities have appealed to the neighboring former Soviet republic – Kazakhstan – in attempt to convince the latter to accept that ethnic Russians in this country have great difficulty integrating into the public life of Kazakhstan.ⁱ The Altay region legislature and executive have shaped a special committee on ties with compatriots abroad.ⁱⁱ However, as Olszanskiⁱⁱⁱ notes '*Many Russian politicians believe all Russian-speaking inhabitants of Ukraine (and other CIS countries) to be ethnic Russians and a national minority, whom Russia ought to provide not only with care but also protection from discrimination and "nationalistic tendencies" of the authorities of the countries they live in*'. It is worth noting that these gestures of Russia are always perceived as a way to revive an empire or the manifest of the habits of an ex-empire. In these regard, the mentioned above activities of the Orenburg and Altay regions authorities could be interpreted ambiguously. On the one hand, ethnic Russians belong to sort of a community which spreads over the borders and a regional initiative is an attempt to help members of the same community. On the other hand, this can be interpreted as Russia's attempt to interfere into domestic matters of Kazakhstan, the revival of the Russian empire' ambitions. For the outside actors it makes little sense that these were the regional

initiatives. First, regions could be driven by Moscow. Second, regions could voluntarily get embedded in pre-modern thinking and serve Moscow's interests. However, if these regions' moves are thought of as Russia's empire activities, any initiatives of the Russian side to launch common cross-border projects are likely to fail.

Something similar is about Russian-Chinese border. Far Easterners are very concerned about Chinese demographic and economic penetration. It hampers cross-border cooperation between the Russians and Chinese. It seems to me that the major reason why a rather cautious attitude towards the Chinese in Russia is popular on the Russian side is that a Chinese in Russia is not seen as an individual, but as a part of a densely populated expansionist Chinese empire. In all phobias China is behind Chinese nationals in Russia. Every Chinese is perceived as a tentacle of a China-octopus^{liii}.

- While China is overpopulated, the population of the Russian Far East is leaving these territories for the 'Great Land'. The demographic balance is in favor of China. A well-known example applied to prove it is that the current population of the five regions bordering China is less than seven million, whereas the three neighboring Chinese provinces (Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning) are home to more than 90 million people.^{liv}
- China traditionally uses diaspora to influence other governments
- China is doing economically well and could 'swallow' Russian territories which are in decline and etc.

In both cases of Russia-Kazakhstan and China-Russia there could be alternative perceptions. One of them hints at empires the major goal of which is to spread their influence and expand their borders. Initiatives to shape spatial communities are tramped into the territorial rhetoric and visions.

CENTER-REGIONS DIFFERENCE IN BORDER PERCEPTIONS.

Both center and border regions shape border and border regions discourses. While above I focused on the very existing discourses of border and border regions, below I show the difference between center and regions' perceptions of the border. Curiously, neither of them has fixed attitudes. Both center and regions change easily discourse within which they speak about the border and border regions.

HIGH VS. LOW POLITICS

Center still anchored in high politics vs. Regions concerned about low politics.

Regions and center have different visions of degree of priority to be given to issues. To show it, let's take a Moscow-Chinese relationship on the one hand, and relationship between Russian border regions and China on the other hand. In both cases, Moscow and border regions deal with China, but the issues they distinguish as vital are different.

Center remains mainly concerned about high politics (strategic relationships). To quote Kerr^{iv}:

Whilst the El'tsin administration has pursued a policy of developing a strategic partnership with China motivated by a wide-ranging agenda that stretches from East Asia and Central Asia to relations with the West and with regard to international forums such as GATT, provincial leaders in the Far East ... have raised the spectre of Chinese colonisation.

Russian government sees China as a strategic partner and was preoccupied with high politics issues while neglecting everyday non-strategic challenges. In Kerr words^{vi}: *'Neither Moscow nor Beijing was prepared to allow the question of migration to destabilise their relationship, which, in their view, rested upon much more significant issues'*. This was one more time shown by deputy prime minister of Russia Iliya Klebanov who during the recent Baikal Economic Forum (2002) noted that this forum had nothing to do with any particular, concrete issue.

Border regions are unlike center with its emphasis on strategic partnerships and the neglecting of present-day challenges. Demographic challenge and the economic penetration are issues which concern Far Easterners most.

The difference between Moscow and regions' relationships with adjacent countries is also the case for other borders. Whereas Kaliningraders stand for negotiations on particular issues, Moscow is embedded in strategic partnership rhetoric and tends to move away from concrete issues to the more general ones.² For example, the urgent issue of a special procedure for movement of Kaliningraders has been replaced by Russia-suggested debates on a far future visa-free regime for Russia as a whole.

² I am indebted to Andrey Makarychev for this argument.

Center's slight move to low politics vs. Some regions' turn to high politics issues.

Changes in the center's attitude towards the border could be discerned. According to Director of the Federal Border Service Konstantin Totskii, whereas the FBS used to be concerned primarily about spies and saboteurs, now the service is considered to become a multifunctional bureau with multiple tasks. Crime, terrorism and illegal trafficking of drugs is called as the major threats.^{lvii} The Russian Law on the Border speaks that it is Federal Border Service and Federal Security Service that are responsible for defining the challenges to the border. In this regard, the changes in the way these governmental bodies see the border are rather important. Center is becoming more concerned about low politics issues than it used to be.

Meanwhile some border regions grow more concerned about high politics issues like sovereignty, border delimitation and demarcation. It is characteristic of most new border regions which are involved in defining the border and became exposed to challenges (like migration) they had never before (see Chapter 2 on demarcation and above on migration). Some old border regions have the same attitudes. Steven L. Solnick has characterized the Russo-Japanese relations after 1993 Tokyo Declaration as 'two steps forward, one step back'. He argues that 'the federal government in Moscow takes "two steps" forward, only to have the regional governments in Russia's Far East demand "one step" back.'^{lviii}

Curiously, the Japanese side is reluctant to boost cross-border cooperation unless the resolution towards the territorial issue has been reached. In this regard, Russian border regions promoting nationalistic sentiments also contribute to dragging out of cooperation. Regions are embedded in high politics issues rhetoric at the expense of shaping a common front to tackle most low politics issues. It is the case in the Russian North-West as well. In the case of Estonia and Latvia border regions opposed any territorial claims and used Estonian and Latvian 'threats' to generate nationalistic sentiments to replace discussions of the border residents on day-to-day needs.^{lix}

Migration: between high and low politics perceptions.

The difference between the center and border regions rests on the fact that different issues are given different priority. It means that attitudes towards the same issue could be different (it could be

securitized, or not). The difference in the way migration is perceived could be indicative. For the federal center migration remains a low politics issue and it is non-military and is viewed as nothing to do with Russia's territorial integrity. However, from the regional perspective the problem is seen in other terms. Migration (even the legal one) is perceived as a threat towards Russian borders.

From the Far Eastern border regions perspective, the very demographic penetration of Chinese is perceived as a prerequisite for further extending of Chinese borders. The logic is that through both converting seasonal labor into permanent settlers and marrying Russians as well as through illegal migration Chinese colonies in Russian border regions will be established. Chinese nationals will infiltrate local government institutions and business and this will result in 'Chinification'. These views are widely backed up by public. According to a public opinion survey conducted in September 2001 by the Center for the Study of Public Opinion at the Vladivostok Institute of History, Ethnography and Archeology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, most respondents agreed that Chinese population will increase. 41 per cent believes it will amount to 20-40 per cent of the Primorskii Krai population, 20 per cent expect it to be 40-60).^{lx} 74 per cent of respondents feel that China will annex the Primorskii Krai or parts of it. However, most believe that military clashes are unlikely to happen and, more than a half from among 57 per cent of those who see Chinese takeover as imminent revealed that the main threat comes from seemingly mundane, routine activities of Chinese nationals in the Primorskii Krai, such as work, trade, tourism, and marriages.^{lxi} The term 'expansion' is very popular to define Chinese migration and activities in Russia. The committee of the State Duma on the Federation and Regional Policy uses the term 'hidden expansion' to speak about Chinese nationals in the Amour region.^{lxii} The other popular terms are 'peaceful expansion',^{lxiii} or 'quiet expansion'.^{lxiv} Some call it a 'hidden discovery/development' of the Russian territory.^{lxv} In border regions' opinion, migration is a high politics issue: it remains non-military, but already challenging territorial integrity and sovereignty.

The same division between regional and central authorities could be discerned in other territories. The othering of immigrants and perceptions of them as a threat towards existing borders are widespread in new border regions (like Astrakhan, Krasnodar, Orenburg).

BORDER AS A BARRIER TO ENTRY.

Center's closeness vs. Regional openness.

In some cases center seems to be more closed to the outside in border issues than regions. Center finds itself more comfortable in the environment with a clear distinction between the inside and outside. Center tends to refer to the exclusive border discourse. Border is conceived by Russian government as a line separating two countries. All other boundaries like the one in the economic space are perceived to be congruent with the territorial boundary. On the contrary, most Russian border regions tend to perceive the border as only a territorial divide, not necessarily the economic one as well. In the Soviet Union the economies of regions were very complementary and as a result there are some cross-border economic communities nowadays. Yet, the revenues brought by customs duties constitute an important source of federal budget incomes. In this regard, center stands for a clear strict divide in the economic space. High customs duties have disrupted most economic ties with former Soviet republics, hamper development of cross-border cooperation and economic boom in border regions. Border regions seek to lessen customs duties. As head of the Orenburg Oblast Customs Office, Stanislav Litvinov noted, that the state border could be a donor of the state's budget. However, this function of the border is far hyper-increased in Russia. Whereas taxes within the country are not collected in a proper way, the border has to carry out the major burden of fiscal revenues.^{lxvi} Nonetheless, central authorities seem to be unsure of revenues from intensified cross-border cooperation. They are eager to receive swift customs revenues instead.

The appropriate way to boost cross-border cooperation is to grant some territories with special economic zones. Most border regions seek a SEZ³ status. However, the legislation on SEZ which is the domain of Moscow is poor. In the Kaliningrad Oblast apart from the lack of stability in the legislation on SEZ, the continual attempts to deprive the region of the SEZ status were an obstacle. On the contrary, border regions perceive themselves pitched into the nearby environment with permeable border. For example, the FEZ⁴ in Kaliningrad was conceived as a means to make Kaliningrad a

³ Special Economic Zone is abbreviated to SEZ.

⁴ FEZ is an abbreviation for a Free Economic Zone. A FEZ refers to the SEZ established in the Kaliningrad Oblast in 1996. The Presidential decree was on 'a Free Economic Zone in the Kaliningrad Oblast', and since then, this title has been used to define a SEZ in the Kaliningrad Oblast.

'Baltic Hong Kong'. In this regard, it is meaningful that polls show not only that Kaliningraders' opinions about the SEZ are mainly positive, but also that the SEZ belongs to the economic culture of the region.^{lxvii}

However, as I have noted, there are no consistent approaches of both center and regions to border matters. As a result, there could be a lot of ambiguity. The opposite model could be discerned too.

Regional closeness vs. Center's openness

There have been some examples of protectionism by regional authorities. Some Russian regions bordering on Ukraine and Belarus have undertaken some rigorous measure to protect regional agricultural market. The imports inside and exports outside were forbidden. That negatively affected cross-border cooperation. In September 1998 the Kaliningrad Oblast authorities introduced import quotas on over 30 product categories that had been imported free of duty and charges.^{lxviii} In this regard, it was regional authorities rather than central government that were protective.

On the contrary, center shows that borders should be more open and permeable. First, center's arguments are no longer of the exclusive border discourse. For example, in the case of Kaliningrad, the SEZ was questioned a few times and it was motivated by saying that the efficiency of the SEZ in Kaliningrad is unclear because of tax loss and little success in attracting high-quality production for export. The many loopholes in the SEZ have led to smuggling and other crimes.

Second, in the Far East in the relationship with China center's amity contrasts with enmity of regions which are concerned about 'Chinification'. Regions have even rejected some initiatives to foster cross-border cooperation. Besides, there are a few interstate agreements on crossing the border that make it more porous like agreements on non-visa regimes (see chapter 2). Meanwhile, Far Eastern regions have introduced some restrictions on entries.

Third, even in the case of CIS countries Moscow seeks to make border porous and maintain its influence on these republics through cross-border activities. In this regard, that Moscow has at the same time high customs duties that put constraints on new border regions operations could be explained by the fact that now Moscow sees no other way to make money but customs revenues. To grant some border regions with some advantages like a SEZ threatens

Moscow's vision of border regions as peripheries. Finally, Moscow easily manipulates customs tariffs as an instrument against an adjacent country. For example, it has been vividly the case of the Baltic countries.

INVISIBLE BORDERS.

There is border erosion due to the increase in transborder flows. The difference between the inside and outside gets blurred. As a result, a response to the permeability of territorial borders could be to reinforce 'the *invisible* or *conceptual* borders held in place by cultural particularity, by collective identity, and by the common understandings that underpin a distinctive political community'.^{lxix}

Center is lacking in comprehension of invisible borders whereas some regions are concerned about national and regional communities borders erosion.

For example, in the early 1990-s the issue of necessity to attract settlers to Siberia and Far East (especially to border regions) was highly discussed. In 1994 the Irkutsk Oblast administration even applied to central authorities on this matter. However, these territories are not favorable for residents of Russian European regions to go there voluntarily. If in Soviet times people went there to make money (funded by central authorities), now there is little support from the federal center. This raises the issue to attract foreigners. Here the difference between Moscow and regions starts. Central authorities tend to see the problem in legal/illegal terms. If migration is legal and does not harm Russians it is considered to be a good thing. Valentin Zorin, Russian minister on national policy, argues that the population is declining by 500-600 thousand people per year.^{lxx} So does the labor force. It means that Russia is interested in migration economically and demographically. Konstantin Pulikovskii, presidential envoy in the Far East federal district, argues that legal migration is beneficial for Russia indeed. First, the country gets cheaper labor. Second, migrants mainly do the job Russians refuse to. Third, there is no need to raise salaries in the Far East to make jobs there attractive for Russians from the European part of the country and there is no need to bring them to the Far East.

Nevertheless, from the regional perspective the problem is seen in other terms. There are many migrants from the Caucasus and Central Asia. Most of them got easily assimilated and there is almost

no cultural gap between these newcomers from abroad and those who have been living there for ages. However, migrants from China are said not to be culturally integrated into local communities. They keep staying apart.^{lxxi} Besides, Chinese emerged suddenly and in a relatively great number, and their difference is still unusual for local residents. This leads to fears and phobias.^{lxxii}

Some Kaliningrad Oblast officials are also concerned about the influence from the outside. However, whereas in most Russian southern border regions the reason of the concerns is the spread of people (migrants), the North-West authorities are anxious about the changes in identity. Young people are mostly West-oriented, most of them have traveled a lot to the West and surrounding countries but have never been to Russia. Valery Ustyugov, then speaker of the Kaliningrad Oblast legislature, stated that they are hardly Russian.^{lxxiii} This opinion is strengthened by the separation from the Russian mainland by 3 borders which creates a psychological distance to Russia; and 'a trip to Russia' sounds a long trip to the non-citizenship country.

So, it means that there is almost no 'othering' at the state level and Moscow even does not approach migration in these terms. On the contrary, some regions look concerned about regional and national communities borders and 'othering' towards the outside is distinct.

BORDER: DEMARCATION, CONTROL AND PERMEABILITY.

In this chapter I will first deal with border in its traditional terms. This logic teaches that the globe is fragmented by nation-states and a border is a line marked on the map and in the terrain. This line shows the limits of a state and separates the territory of one state from that of the others.

However, my argument is that there could be different approaches even to traditional border practices such as border delimitation and demarcation, the guarding of the border. As a result, the border could be exclusive (well-shown by the Russian-Finish, Russian-Chinese borders during the Cold War) and inclusive. In spite of the fact, that Russia is engaged in defining new borders (with former Soviet republics) and some old borders (with China and Japan), the way it is done in some cases says about a relative de-territorialization of the border. Besides, border control does not exclude cooperation. A well-patrolled border could even contribute to cooperation across the border. Finally, the increasing number of openings of the static border enables intensification of flows and cross-border activities.

Apart from Moscow's policy towards the border, we will see border regions involved in these issues. In some cases border regions are driven by obligations under legislation on the border, in some cases voluntarily by regional interests. In any case, border regions could influence Russian border policy. Curiously, it is even reflected in the Russian Law on Border which speaks that Russian border policy consists of coordinated activities of federal and regional authorities.⁵

BORDER REGIONS IN BRIEF.

As the topic in this chapter is primarily about border in its traditional sense, this meaning will be used to define the criterion for border regions to be classified. After the SU dismissal 45 Russian regions out of 89 are border regions. It means that 51 per cent of Russian constituent entities deal with issues related to border. Some of them had already been border territories and just received a new neighbor (Soviet republics turned into sovereign states). Meanwhile 24 regions have become border territories for the first time.⁶ It means

⁵ There could be also involved municipal authorities, NGOs and individuals.

⁶ They could have been border territories in the Russian empire though.

that border regions could be divided into 3 groups (this classification is rather general and will be nuanced):

- 'old' border regions with 'old' neighbors like Russian regions bordering on Finland, China, Mongolia and etc. The collapse of the SU made no changes in their geopolitical location. There are some changes in the meaning of the border though. Border which used to separate and exclude is now to unite and include. The contacts and cooperation across the border is intensifying, the border is no longer a dividing line. It is getting more permeable. This in turn necessitates border control points (BCPs) be developed. On the one hand, 'old' border regions are accustomed to their border location, most problems like border delimitation and demarcation are far behind. In terms of border infrastructure and border guarding these border regions also do much better than 'new' border regions. The border was a 'wall' during the Cold War and remains well equipped. However, the major challenge is to adjust to new circumstances. No longer is huge military presence necessary. More border control points are required.
- 'new' border regions with 'new' neighbors. They have not been border territories either never or in the Soviet times or even longer. These regions border on the former Soviet Republics. They are facing new challenges (immigration, drugs trafficking, smuggling and etc). They have to deal with such issues as border delimitation and border demarcation. New borders require border facilities be developed from scratch. These border regions are not quite well prepared to reap the benefits of the border location. Meanwhile, due to the historical legacy and the lack of any divides in the past between people who live now on the opposite sides of the border, there are rather strong cross-border communities.

Whereas Russian border policy towards 'old' border regions is to make border more friendly and open, policy towards 'new' border regions could be defined as to 'close' the border. The term 'to close' the border is rather popular among Russian officials while speaking about emerging borders with former Soviet Republics. The term does not necessarily mean to transform the appearing border into sort of a dividing line or Iron Curtain, but to provide the necessary attributes of the border like border guards, stretches, and border control points. If border lacks these attributes, people cross it whenever and wherever they want. The latter is the case on Russian borders with most former Soviet republics nowadays.

- 'old' border regions with 'new' neighbors. These regions had already been border territories. The dismissal of the Soviet Union only brought some new neighbors. They are a mix of the previous two types (the Leningrad Oblast, the Krasnodar Krai, etc).

BORDER DELIMITATION AND DEMARCATION.

The issue here from the beginning seems to be about territorialization. To be engaged in border delimitation and demarcation means that territory is the issue. However, while in some cases (Russia and Japan) it could be really like that, in some cases (Russia and China, Kazakhstan and etc.) territoriality at the interstate level while delimitating and demarcating the border has lost its significance. At least, the way it was done and the numerous protests on the Russian side prove that Moscow was driven by some other (than territoriality) considerations.

NEW BORDERS:

The Decree of the Supreme Council which goes back to 1 April 1993 speaks that before Russia reaches treaties with adjacent former Soviet Republics, the administrative border between them that existed in the Soviet times will perform this function. The very fact that Russian border with former Soviet republics will get the meaning of international borders means re-territorialization of the border, if to compare with the Soviet times. Yet, the way authorities envisage the border delimitation could be different. They may see it as a vital issue or as a non-high- priority issue.

For Russia's new neighbors the issue of the border was very important indeed. Nation-state building in under the way there, and state borders are vital attributes, since they signify the territoriality of an independent state.

Besides, for CIS countries there is whole set of obstacles due to the Soviet Union legacy that make the process of border delimitation and demarcation rather complicated:

- Borders between republics within the SU were changed a few times. It was done by Union authorities and rather often regardless ethnic and cultural divides.
- Borders between Russia and some former Soviet Republics have existed mainly virtually and unclearly for ages, approximately marked in terrain.
- The bulwark of communications in the former Soviet Republics was built during the Soviet period. The networks of railways and

roads have not been consistent with the borders of republics. There are examples, when a railway station is on the Russian side of the border, and a station of technical assistance and control is located on the other side. While Iletska railway station is located in Orenburg region of Russia, it is part of Western Kazakhstan Railway Road. Lokot railway station situated in Russian Altay region belongs to Kazakhstan. In the Omsk Oblast bordering Kazakhstan a 12-km-long road between two Russian border towns crosses Russian-Kazakhstan border several times and needs that a few BCPs be established.

- There are close contacts between people, the border areas on former Soviet Republics are densely populated. Russian-Ukrainian border under its delimitation is supposed to divide towns, streets and even buildings. There are some curious cases when the border in one town is drawn straight along Friendship of Peoples Street.

These obstacles could have dragged out border delimitation and lead to territorial disputes. In fact, there have been some territorial disagreements rested on economic gains and losses. During border delimitation between the Astrakhan Oblast of Russia and Atyrausk region of Kazakhstan, a small island Ukatnyi on the Kigach river was the subject of disagreements. The matter was that it was connected to oil deposits. The same reason is for the Caspian sea.^{lxxiv} However, Moscow has not been very concerned about border delimitation and demarcation. That border with most CIS countries has not yet been defined, could be explained by the fact that negotiations started rather recently (with Kazakhstan, for example, in the far late 1990-s).

In some cases, there has been a relative de-territorialization. The territorial disputes were not given much attention. Konstantin Totskii, director of the Federal Border Service, has stated, that Russia has no official territorial claims.^{lxxv} Besides, the Astrakhan region administration argued that central authorities were reluctant to pursue Russian interests and did many concessions to Kazakhstan while delimitating the border. Some scholars argue that it was done so because Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs envisages Kazakhstan as a strategic partner and seeks to solve all disputes as soon as possible even at the Russian expense.^{lxxvi} It means that border was not a high priority issue for Moscow, it was marginalized to cater to Moscow's geopolitical ambitions.

Baltic countries stay apart of this logic. The reason is that they are far more (than any other former Soviet republic) embedded into the geopolitical rivalry with Russia on the West's side. This discourse dominates the relationship between Russia and Baltic countries. However, surprisingly the border delimitation and demarcation as such have not been given much attention. Border issues are at the top of agenda, but they seem to be not territorial, but geopolitical issues. For the Baltic countries border and territorial claims became not vital for two reasons. First, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania's territorial claims turned out to touch other countries as well. 'Pushing such claims would have buried a number of European treaties premised on a territorial *status quo* and an acceptance of the borders resulting from the Second World War'.^{lxxvii} Besides, it became clear that any territorial claims could backfire. Second, a requirement for joining the EU and NATO is that candidates resolve border and national minority problems. Alexander Sergounin notes that this was a reason why Estonia was eager to settle its territorial disputes with Moscow.^{lxxviii} So was Poland and Lithuania. On the Russian side the border issue has been raised, but not in terms of territorial gains/losses. Russia sought to exploit the border issue in its geopolitical game. Russia refused to ratify the border agreement with Lithuania in attempt to prevent its NATO membership, since no border problems of a candidate country is in requirements for the membership laid by the alliance. It was a futile attempt though.

Russian-Georgian negotiations on delimitation are very complicated and are also a very interesting case. Russian authorities claim that unsettled conflicts in Georgia where some regions seek independence or more autonomy hampers the process of border delimitation.^{lxxix} On the one hand, Russia has an interest in resolving these conflicts in favor of Tbilisi, supporting territorial integrity throughout the North Caucasus and, thus, is embedded in territorial thinking. On the other hand, the imperial thinking is evident. Russia has contributed to demands of separatist provinces in Georgia. Abkhazia was allowed to attend a Russian regional economic cooperation meeting in early 1999, drawing protests from Georgia.^{lxxx} North Ossetia provided assistance to South Ossetia in its conflict with Georgia.^{lxxxi} That enabled Russia to keep its influence in Georgia.

OLD BORDERS

Three major patterns of old borders could be discerned.

First, Russia and a neighboring country are not concerned about border delimitation and demarcation. Treaties between Russia and its 'old' neighbors on the issues pertaining to the border like border demarcation and the border regime were concluded in the Soviet times (Finland, Mongolia). In this regard, countries were mainly to confirm these arrangements. No territorial claims were made officially. This means that the two countries were rid of painful negotiations on the border and there was no irritating factor between them. That enabled to shape new friendly relationships, increase cross-border flows, thus, to de-territorialize the border.

Second, there are some disagreements derived from the past but there is as well a strong intention to resolve them or at least to mitigate border disagreements. On 16 May 1991 Russia and China reached an agreement on the eastern part of the border, and on 3 September 1994 – on its western part. However, two plots were called 'unsettled' and need further negotiating. These are islands on the Amour River near Khabarovsk and Bolshoi Island on the Argoun River. Till there is no resolution on them, they remain under Russian sovereignty. Both countries proved to be devoted to overcome disagreements and to foster cooperation between them. The Russian-Chinese treaty dated from 16 July 2001 speaks that there are no territorial claims on Russian-Chinese border. Both countries seek to downplay the territorial disagreements. There is sort of an interim settlement over disputed islands. In 1994 Russia and China signed a Protocol that allows Chinese ships to enter Russian waters in the unsettled part of the border while going from the Amour River to the Ussury River and back. In 1997 Russia and China reached an agreement on cooperation in unsettled islands development. In this regard, Russia and China have managed to overcome territorial disputes and pave the way for cooperation across the border.

Third, countries are deeply rooted in the border disagreements which are unlikely to fade away. Russia and Japan are still negatively affected by the territorial disputes which seems to flare up from time to time. In 1956 Russia and Japan restored diplomatic relations, however no peace treaty has been signed. Tokyo insists on four islands('Northern Territories'): Shikotan, Habomai, Kunashiri and Etorofu. These islands in Russia are labeled 'Southern Kurils' and are part of the Sakhalin Oblast. There remains a lot of

uncertainty on both sides of the border over these disputed islands. In Japan after Vladimir Putin came to power, Suzuki Muneo, a leading LDP politician, succeeded in achieving a compromise with Russia to treat only two islands first. However, critics in Japan viewed this as a step backward. Koizumi Junichiro and Foreign Minister Tanaka Makiko reversed Japan's Russia policy. In Russia Vladimir Putin recognized that the 1956 treaty, in which Moscow pledged to return Shikotan and Habomai islands, is still in effect.^{lxxxii} However, there is a lot of critics of any territorial concessions. Besides, some changes in the Russian official attitude could be discerned. During the Parliamentary Hearings on the Southern Kuriles Dmitrii Rogozin, chairperson of the International Relations Committee of State Duma, called USSR-Japanese Declaration of 1956 a mistake. Besides, from the viewpoint of most participants of these hearings, that USSR committed itself to return two islands as soon as a peace treaty was concluded is no longer in effect. They called Russian President to redefine Japanese Russia's policy of the 1990-s and assert that there is no more territorial disputes between Russia and Japan.^{lxxxiii} Thus, both Russia and Japan have territorialized the border. Besides, before the territorial issue is resolved, the economic cooperation development is bleak.

BORDER REGIONS' CONTRIBUTION TO BORDER DELIMITATION AND DEMARCATION

First, border regions are involved in border delimitation and demarcation. Regions bordering on Ukraine are part of Russian – Ukrainian commission on the border. Representatives of border regions are included in the Russian-Chinese demarcation commissions to resolve border problems.^{lxxxiv} Negotiations on border between Russian and Kazakhstan commissions are hosted in border regions. Every either round is convened in a Russian border region and the region whose border is being negotiated is selected. For example, the eleventh round on border delimitation was held on March, 25-29 in 2002 in the Omsk region, the ninth round (on September 10-13, 2001) in Chelyabinsk, the seventh (26-30 March, 2001) in Orenburg and etc.

Second, regions could be used to downplay territorial claims and disputes. In some cases, cooperation across the border enables to 'forget' about territorial claims. For example, Germany has kept a low political profile in Kaliningrad, but has been active

commercially.^{lxxxv} Russia itself approves of such a scenario. Alexander Sergounin notes that Russia prefers to develop direct ties between Karelia and Finland as Moscow hopes that cross-border cooperation will ease tensions and any official territorial claims in the future.^{lxxxvi}

Third, border regions attempt to influence Russia's relationships with an adjacent country on border. The way regional authorities have behaved while delimitating and demarcating the border teaches that they are more reluctant to do any concessions because of territorial and economic interests. The well-known example is Primorskii Krai governor Evgenii Nazdratenko's opposition to the Russian-Chinese border treaty ratification. However, some other cases could be mentioned. The Astrakhan authorities argued that Russian central authorities are rather reluctant in pursuing Russian interests. They claimed that it was evident in the way the Caspian sea was supposed to be divided into national sectors.^{lxxxvii} The Sakhalin Oblast authorities claim that Russian-Japanese agreement on fisheries brings harm to Russian interests. In the first place, while Japanese are allowed to go fishing in Russian territorial waters, it is not mentioned that they do it in the Russian territorial waters and do not comply with Russian regulations. Moreover, Japanese fishery ships do not need to ask permission to enter Russian territorial waters, they should only notify that they have entered. Russia can hardly control them.^{lxxxviii} Border regions are highly worried about foreigners' activities in border areas. According to the Analytical Note to the Volgograd governor made by the Volgograd branches of the federal Ministries and Agencies in March 2001, citizens of Kazakhstan bought land in a border district of the region and this could bring difficulty defining Russian-Kazakhstan border in the long run.^{lxxxix} Pskov Oblast governor Yevgenii Mikhailov have stated that foreigners should be forbidden to purchase land in border territories.^{xc} The reason why regions are more nationalistic than the center could be explained by the fact that Moscow could agree on some territorial losses to gain strategically. There are some economic considerations under the Primorskii Krai governor opposition to the way Russian-Chinese border was delimited.^{xci} However, China is a strategic partner for Moscow. If Moscow relies on China's support, it could gain somewhere in the world and compensate its losses in the Far East.

BORDER UNDER CONTROL

My argument here is that control and cooperation are not the binary oppositions.

First, even if there remains tough border control, it does not necessarily mean that cross-border cooperation is in decline. The Russian-Finish border could be illustrative. While it is still well-guarded, the meaning has changed and cooperation flourishes. Besides, while during the Cold War cooperation was on a bilateral centralized footing, now the operations at the grass-root level are wide-spread. Border control as such is not a decisive factor to stop cross-border cooperation, it is rather the meaning given to the border and border control that determine the degree of cooperation and its level. It means that control does not hamper de-territorialization of the border which takes place through cross-border activities.

Second, border control necessitates cooperation. During the Cold War the major threat was a military invasion and a well-patrolled border was manifest of alienation and hostility on the both sides of the border and border services perceived each other as an enemy. Nowadays challenges are different (e.g. criminal flows). To stop them one needs a well-patrolled border as well, but now a well-patrolled border means cooperation between two states (information exchange, mutual operations, raids and etc). Whereas adjacent countries were a threat to each other, now they should shape a common front to meet common challenges. Now the criterion to perceive the neighbor is not how good his border surveillance is (the military presence), but what his commitment to bring together stability and prosperity is. In this regard, border control is de-territorialized as such.

Third, border control contributes to cross-border cooperation. Nowadays a well-patrolled border is designated to stop illegal flows (illegal migration, narcotics, weapons and etc.). A well-patrolled border, if it really successfully prevents illegal activities across the border, contributes to the overcoming of the 'othering' in border territories. For example, when a border territory is full of illegal foreign labor force or illegal (thus cheaper as no duties) goods, it leads to the resentment of the local population, border residents grow angry about the newcomers and illegal goods, and they are blamed for all misfortunes of the local population. In this respect, even though the border for illegal entry is open, border becomes a very strict boundary separating two communities across the border, and the 'othering' strengthens. On the contrary, a really good border

control that stops illegal activities could be very useful to create a cross-border community and, thus, to de-territorialize the border.

NEW BORDERS.

As in the previous chapter I should note that as Russian borders with former Soviet republics were not controlled, the introduction of any control at the border is about re-territorialization of the border, as border like a line in terrain is given much attention. Yet, first, there could be different perceptions of the border control. Authorities could seek heavy control and see it an important issue, or could be reluctant to pose any control at the border. Second, there could be different forms of control. Control, as it is mentioned above, could contribute to cooperation and necessitate cooperation. In this regard, border is de-territorialized.

A. BORDER CONTROL INFRASTRUCTURE.

Border infrastructure to control border is rather poor in new borderlands.

There are some reasons which pose obstacles for a more effective control.

First, the border control points are established rather far from the border. In the Astrakhan Oblast Aksarayaskay² Railway station where border controls exist is located 30 km away from the Russian-Kazakhstan border. In the Orenburg Oblast the railway station Iletsk¹ is situated about 110 kilometers away from the border. The first border and customs controls for trains from Kazakhstan are on this station. As a result, trains from Kazakhstan to Russia could make unscheduled stops on the Russian territory before they have passed Russian border controls. In case of Aksarayaskay² there are even scheduled stops. People and cargoes could be unloaded and spread over the Russian territory. While being in Russia beyond the border, one could easily bypass BCPs by using roundabouts. To solve this problem, as Saltykova notes^{x^{Cii}}, in 1999 Russia and Kazakhstan reached an agreement according to which the military troops are allowed to cross the border till the nearest border control if they follow the train. In the Altay region since March 2002 the Russian military have been following trains from the Russian-Kazakhstan border to the railway stations on the Russian territory where border controls are set up.

Second, most automobile BCPs on the Russian-Ukrainian border are located 4-9 km away from the border. Compared to the example

above, it is not too far away. However, there is hardly any border patrolling and stretches, and one could easily enter the territory wherever and whenever they like and then bypass border controls.

Third, while Iletsk railway station is located in Russia, it is part of Western Kazakhstan Railway Road. Lokot railway station situated in the Russian Altay region belongs to Kazakhstan, so does Aksarayaskay² railway station in the Astrakhan Oblast. Russia is considering asking Kazakhstan for purchasing its part of railroad that goes on the Russian territory. Should it happen, to found new BCPs straight on the border will be possible.

Forth, most railway stations are hubs, and many trains with coaches and goods-trucks pass it a day. The infrastructure of the railway border crossings is poor. The time to perform border and customs control is too short to do it properly.

Fifth, BCPs on new borders are not equipped in a proper way. BCPs are located in old buildings. Some of them on the Russian-Kazakhstan border are situated in abandoned buildings and disused kindergardens, the frontier post Novgorodskaya in the Pskov Oblast on the Russian-Estonian border is in a former pioneer camp. A special complex of buildings should be constructed for border, migration, customs and veterinarian control services, for people to live, car parks and etc. There are about 450 BCPs in Russia, but the number of migration control points hardly exceeds 100. In 2003 300points are expected to be built. Besides, even those migration control points that exist in border areas maintain control locally and their databases are not connected with each other. A single system of migration control is supposed to be developed in the framework of the Federal Target Program 'Electronic Russia'.^{xciiii}

Sixth, most BCPs still exist virtually. There are governmental decrees to establish BCPs in the Astrakhan Oblast, but there are hardly any of them. This is the case on the Russian-Ukrainian border as well. So is the border guarding. The border could be crossed in any place by car.

These facts about Russia's ability to control its borders drive me to make two conclusions. First, the mentioned above problems about border control infrastructure (rather topical and that are most covered by media, officials, scholars) have nothing to do with border in its military meaning. The 'holes' in the Russian new border are of concern as they pave the way for illegal activities. For smugglers it is really important where a BCP lies, for spies and the military it makes no difference.

Second, due to the lack of any border control infrastructure, one could easily cross the border. On the one hand, border residents enjoy it and contacts across the border are strong. On the other hand, border regions suffer from illegal activities and this strengthens the resentments of the population about the outsiders. As a result, the idea of border as a padlock gets more voices in favor (see Chapter 1 on migration, for example).

B. BORDER GUARDING

At first, Moscow was rather reluctant to exercise any border control at all on its borders with CIS countries. The mutual patrolling of external borders of the CIS was suggested. It meant that borders inside the CIS would be free to pass. Moscow did not territorialize those borders and was mainly driven by geopolitical ambitions. The idea of non-patrolled borders with CIS countries was put aside later. Yet, there is neither border guarding nor border controls on the Russian-Belarusian border. Border services guard the borders of the Russian-Belarusian entity with any third country. However, they do it themselves and the Russian military do not patrol the border between Belarus and any third country and vice versa.

On 19 June 1996 Russian president, Boris Yeltsin, issued a special decree on an experiment of non-military guarding of the border in some places. Four regions were originally involved in this initiative: Saratov, Orenburg, Chelyabinsk and Omsk. However, the project failed due to the lack of any border guarding on the Kazakhstan side as some Russian official argued.^{xciv}

Since 1998 there has been a military guarding of the border. At first, it was a paramilitary Border Guard. Border Guard was necessary on some parts of the border where due to political or economic reasons the military presence was pointless. Border Guard was far cheaper. Border Guard was on Russian borders with Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Mongolia. It rested on retired military men, Cossacks, and local farmers, who were recruited to patrol the border voluntarily. Definitely, the border guarding in such a way was not aimed at protecting the border against any military threat but could protect against illegal activities.

However, the Border Guard servants patrolled the border only during their free time when their working day was over.^{xcv} They had hardly any weapons, employed their own transport, had small powers constrained to direct traffic to customs controls and border offenders to the police offices.^{xcvi} Later Border Guard was replaced

by permanent military border servants. They could perform border control better.

The Russian federal Law on Border dated by 1 April 1993 (with a few subsequent amendments) allows municipal authorities, enterprises and organizations, public entities and citizens to protect the Russian border. Russians may voluntarily perform border guarding within border territories.

A good border control requires cooperation. In September 2002 the international training of border guards was held in Russia for the first time. Officers from Russia and Kazakhstan were involved. The major goal was to develop understanding and cooperation on the search for and arrest of criminals, fighting against migration and drugs trafficking. Special operations in border areas are held. In the Novosibirsk Oblast the Russian Federal Border Service in cooperation with security services from Kazakhstan shape joint mobile search groups that perform round-the-clock control over freight movement across the Russian-Kazakhstan frontier.^{xcvii} The Russian Federal Border Service has also concluded agreements on cooperation with border guarding agencies of Georgia and Azerbaijan. Curiously, whereas the border between Russia and Baltic countries is not defined in full, there are agreements on border cooperation between them and meetings between both territorial departments and central headquarters have occurred.^{xcviii}

OLD BORDERS

While on new borders Moscow's goal is to get some border control, on old borders the aim is to lessen and transform border control and guarding. During the Cold War these border regions were outposts of Russia. They were heavily militarized both in terms of equipment and personnel. The border was well guarded. That's why, these regions are doing much better compared to new border regions on border control infrastructure and border patrolling. However, most old border regions are likely to reduce their military importance.

The strategic importance of Kaliningrad has decreased in the 1990-s. For example, the number of military personnel and equipment in the region has fallen since 1991. The Russian relationships with Poland were much less negatively affected after NATO enlargement to Poland than it had been expected. Besides, steps for transparency and dialogue could be discerned. During its presidency in the CBSS Russia called for 'developing contacts among military authorities, which constitute an important element of confidence

building in the interests of security and stability of the whole Baltic Sea region' and made it one of its presidency tasks.^{xcix} Such contacts occurred on bilateral footing. In April 2001 the delegation of Russian Defense Ministry visited Vilnius.^c At the session of the BSCC in March 2002 Vladimir Yegorov, Kaliningrad Oblast governor, launched an idea to form a Center of Information Exchange among the fleets of the Baltic Sea countries.^{ci}

In 1996 and 1997 Russia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia and Tadjikistan on the one side and China on the other signed Agreements on measures to strengthen confidence in the military field and on the reduction in the military presence in a 100-km-wide border area. Since 1999, there has been a special commission to do inspections.^{cii} China and Russia cut military expenditures along their border sharply.

Nowadays, there is certain de-territorialization of the border control. Unlike the Cold War period, most challenges are transnational. Whereas earlier a country needed to control the borderline to prevent many threats from penetrating into its territory, and an adjacent country was perceived as an alien, now there is no Cold War alienation and cooperation between countries to meet transnational challenges together is much more beneficial.

There is cooperation on the matters of the border controlling. In September 2002 experts of Russia and China checked the efficiency of BCPs on the Chinese-Russian border. Russian territorial departments of the Federal Border Service cooperate with border services of neighboring regions. Russian and Chinese officers perform joint raids and inspections in border areas. Besides, readiness to reply to the neighbor's concerns could be discerned. China is rather quick to respond to Russia's suggestions to increase the presence of border guards where illegal crossings of border occur.^{ciii} On the Russian-Finish border there is cooperation as well. Anssi Paasi notes that President Yeltsin even suggested in 1997 that both states undertake 'common border control'. Ahtisaari replied that sovereign states take care of border control independently. However, the border is characterized by increasing cooperation between Finland and Russia (e.g. on criminal activities).^{civ} Finland is called by the Russian Federal Border Service as an example to follow for all other Russian neighboring countries in terms of cooperation on border issues.^{cv}

BORDER REGIONS' CONTRIBUTION TO BORDER CONTROLLING

Beforehand, we should notice that the Federal Border Service seeks closer cooperation with regional authorities. The reason is that the FBS is no longer aimed at controlling the border as a line. Linear concept of border guarding should be replaced by the spatial one. In 1997 then Head of the FBS said that control should be taken in border territories. Not borders but borderlands became the issue.^{cvi} In our opinion, this seems to fit into realities. The major threat earlier was the military one, and the thinking was pitched into the territorial terms. The major goal was not to allow the shift of the borderline to the inside so that to keep limits of the border stable. In essence, it was the borderline and its fixed location that was protected. Nowadays most threats are transnational and the border for these threats seems to be incomparably more porous than for the previous ones. The significance of the borderline is in decline. First, there should be cooperation externally (with Border Services of other countries) to affect the threat shaping/origins. Second, internal cooperation (with other Russian governmental bodies and regional authorities) could minimize the threat that has already passed the border. In this regard, border regions' authorities are about to play an important role.

Regions influence the border controlling in the following way:

- legislatively. Border regions authorities define the border zone in their territory and the regime⁷ of the border zone. The width of the border zone is about 5 km of land borders or 5 km of the coast.

⁷ Some explanations on terms in the Russian legislation and in this paper should be made.

Under Russian Law on the Border the *regime of the state border* ('border regime' in this paper) defines the way border is equipped and passed. The former means border stretches and engineering, border signs and etc, the later is about procedures and regulations for people, vehicles, cargoes while crossing the border.

The *border regime* ('border zone regime' in this paper) defines regulations on :

- entrance, temporary staying and movement of people and vehicles in the border zone as well as any activities there;
- the state and movement of ships and any means of communication on the icy surface in Russian border rivers, internal waters, and the territorial sea as well as some activities there.

While the *regime of the state border* is defined by central authorities (in federal laws and treaties of Russia), the border regime is mainly the domain of regional authorities. Beforehand, we should notice that regions could influence the *regime of the state border* as well (regions are entitled to initiate new BCPs, provide funding to found a BCP lies partly or sometimes even solely on regions, regions could lobby for a particular BCP regime and etc.).

- institutionally. To implement the 'Basics of Border Policy', Coordinating Councils have been set up. These councils exist in the Bryansk, Kursk, Belgorod, Rostov, Amour regions, Jewish Autonomous Republic, etc. The councils are chaired by the head of regional administration. Representatives of regional/territorial departments of different federal governmental bodies that are responsible for some border issues are included in these councils. The councils are in charge of security in border districts, cooperation on border issues between all bodies involved, etc. For example, Coordinating Councils in the Amour region and Jewish autonomous republic and an inter-ministerial commission in the Khabarovsk Krai were established in the Far East Federal District. The councils are headed by vice-governors and the commission is chaired by regional governor. Besides, in the Khabarovsk Krai there is one more council under the auspices of governor to perform border policy.
- financially. First, regional authorities establish special funds to support the Border Service Units. To quote Olekh^{cvii}, 'Funding from the federal budget remains insufficient, and therefore there is none of the necessary engineering equipment for the border stretch, and no customs stations, checkpoints, or second-line border crossings have been built. The level of technical equipment of at the existing frontier and customs units is exceedingly low'. Border guards in regions could receive 'aid' from local companies to repair border facilities. Regional officials simply turn a blind eye to such practices. Instead of it, Primorskii Krai governor Darkin suggested establishing an off-budget fund which could solve these problems legally.^{cviii} Second, regional authorities are responsible for housing. They define the buildings allocated to border controls and guards to stay in. Besides, regional authorities suspend cutting off power to debt-ridden military units located in their territory. Third, regional authorities back border services up granting them some privileges. Karelian Prime Minister Sergei Katanandov, given the difficulties in provisioning border troops in the republic, has given them free licenses to shoot elk.^{cix} Forth, regional authorities provide border services with what they need to meet their needs. Some frontier posts are named after towns like Great Luki frontier post (the city in the Pskov Oblast), Novgorodskaya frontier post (Novgorod-city), Ekaterinburg, etc. Municipal authorities patronize these frontier posts: provide petrol, help border guards repair the

buildings they work and live in, send products. There are even special agreements between cities and patronized frontier posts.^{cx}

In their financial support regions are driven by their own interests. There are two suggestions to explain it. First, authorities understand that the negative challenges border territories are facing could be met only if border guard performs well. However, the latter lacking in equipment and funding is unlikely to do the job properly. Primorskii Krai governor Darkin offered to provide aid to underfunded federal agencies that have *a direct impact on the krai economy*.^{cx}

Second, (and this is particularly to answer why authorities support frontier posts) there is a compulsory military service in Russia. However, municipal/regional authorities could make arrangements on the place the recruited in a town/region are sent to. The Yamalo-Nenetsk Autonomous Okrug has an agreement on cooperation with the Arctic Territorial Branch of the Federal Border Service. This agreement regulates where residents of this region will serve in the Federal Border Service troops.^{cxii} In this regard, the aid to frontier posts means investments in prospective voters.

PERMEABILITY OF THE BORDER

Permeability of the border is about de-territorialization of the border. The increasing permeability of the border leads to the rise in cross-border flows and activities, therefore the border is de-territorialized. However, border is disappearing as such. Border is being 'erased'. There are more and more legal places and special simplified procedures to cross the border.

A. BORDER CROSSING FACILITIES

Yet, on the Russian border its de-territorialization in terms of establishing facilities for crossing the border is rather low. While during the Cold War the major obstacle for cross-border cooperation was about military concerns, the nowadays challenge is mainly the lack of networks of communications. In most cases there have been no roads or their quality was very poor. One more problem is that a number of BCPs⁸ is low indeed. These problems are spread

⁸ In the Russian legislation BCPs vary regarding several criteria. In terms of a means of communication they could be for automobiles, pedestrians, trains, airplanes. They are permanent, temporal (interim), and seasonal by the border regime. BCPs could be multilateral and bilateral as well. The latter are only for residents of Russia and an adjacent country. There could also be BCPs of a simplified procedure. In the Russian-

throughout Russia and hardly any specific cases could be discerned.⁹

BCPs provide border with more openings. The more BCPs and the more effectively they work, the greater the volume of goods and people cross the border per day. Besides, the more BCPs means the less distance border residents have to travel to reach the nearest BCP.

The density of border crossings on Russian border is one of the lowest in the world.¹⁰ Russia continues to develop border facilities. According to the data from the State Customs Committee dated from 4 October 2001 there were 426 BCPs.

There is a growing comprehension among authorities that the more permeable the border the better economic development of the region will be. In the Kurgan Oblast the Urals Customs Department came to conclusion that the faster and more fruitful the border control is the bigger cross-border cooperation and the more border territories could benefit. Border regions on the Russian-Finish border seek to preserve the interim BCPs (with simplified procedure).^{cxiii} In the Karelia Republic there are 19 BCPs, 15 of them are interim. Alexander Krivyakov, vice-president of Karelia Republic Federal Security Service branch, argues that should they be closed, economic situation in border areas will deteriorate and this will negatively affect the foreign economic ties of the republic.^{cxiv} In Karelia there exists a special inter-ministerial commission on border infrastructure. Interim BCPs are checked and since 2000 a special Program to equip and develop automobile BCPs has been underway. To refer to Russian Prime-Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, to establish new BCPs is not to strengthen the guarding of the border, its excluding function, but to make it more comfortable for people on both sides of the border to cooperate.^{cxv}

However, the funding is scarce. About 30-50 million Rubles is required to build and equip an automobile BCP, for a rail BCP the

Finish agreement on BCPs (11 March 1994) this type of BCPs is defined as a BCP well equipped, but interim.

⁹ Of course, the Russian border with most former Soviet republics is still not guarded well, and there is no point in any BCPs as one could easily cross the border wherever they want. But these practices could be treated as illegal.

¹⁰ Russia has concluded agreements with neighboring countries on BCPs. Most of them were signed in 1990-s. Besides, Russia and some adjacent countries have agreed to increase the number of BCPs or to make changes in their status. This has lead to new agreements. On 25 June 2002 Russia and Estonia reached an agreement on BCPs. According to it new BCPs should be built. In some cases such agreements are reached by the exchange of diplomatic notes.

sum increases to 100-200 million Rubles. To compare, in the 2002 federal budget only 18 milliard Rubles was allocated to the Federal Border Service.^{cxvi} In this regard, Russia seeks funds for border infrastructure. 2 BCPs Svetogorsk (Russian-Finish border) and Salla-Kelloselka (Murmansk-Lapland) were funded under TACIS special project. Two border crossings in Kaliningrad received priority funding under the Tacis Cross Border Co-operation Programs: Chernyshevskoe/Kybartai-Nesterov (road/rail on the Russian-Lithuanian border) and Bagrationovsk/Bezledy (road – Russian-Polish border). Yet the very fact that there are respectively small funds allocated in the Russian national budget for BCPs construction means that permeability of the border is not in fact perceived by Moscow as a high priority issue.

Meanwhile some BCPs are about to be closed. In the Far East Federal District there are 82 BCPs. Inter-ministerial Commission on Border Policy in the Far East Federal District stated in February 2002 that some BCPs had been founded regardless whether they were needed and they hardly worked. These BCPs are not equipped enough. At first 19 BCPs were supposed to be closed, 12 of them in the Sakhalin Oblast only. Yet, by 30 May 2002 only one BCP in the Primorskii Krai had been closed. Authorities of some regions like Amur, Chukotka and Jewish Autonomous Republic simply ignored to discuss this issue. However, the Inter-ministerial Commission on Border Policy in the Far East Federal District once again recommended that regions enhance closing ineffective BCPs. In the Rostov Oblast there are 22 BCPs and the necessity of 3 of them is also called into question.

There are some examples when the functioning of BCPs was suspended by border control agencies due to the lack of the necessary infrastructure and equipment. In April 2002 2 BCPs were temporally closed in the Primorskii Krai. This negatively affected tourist agencies (tours to Russia and China). Still, the attitude of state officials is rather specific and state (not people)-oriented. In March 2002 the federal inspector in the Tiumen Oblast, Sergei Smetanuk, argued that the BCPs he had inspected had hardly any infrastructure for travelers: no telephone, toilet, cafes and hotels. This as he noted negatively affects the image of Russia and its prestige.^{cxvii}

Poor infrastructure hampers cross-border contacts. The autobus route Berduje-Petropavlovsk used to connect the Tiumen Oblast of Russia and the North-Kazakhstan region. However, due to the lack

of asphalt on some plots of the road autobus communication may not be resumed. The neighboring Orenburg and Kostanaisk border regions, located respectively in Russia and Kazakhstan, have 3 customs control points. However, the roads have no asphalt, and the trade route between these two regions goes through another Russian border region – the Chelyabinsk Oblast. The Tuva Republic bordering on Mongolia has only 2 temporary automobile BCPs and they do not match the international standards. The lack of communications between the Altay Republic and China hampers cross-border cooperation. Nowadays the major flows between them go through Kazakhstan and Mongolia. However, the problem when transit lies through the third country is that some BCPs are only bilateral (for the two neighboring countries only) and transit through them is not allowed. It means that cooperation between the Altay region and China lacking in communications with each other is constrained. The deficient transport and communication infrastructure of the border territories on the Russian-Finish border is treated as a major practical obstacle to connections across the border nowadays.^{cxviii} Here again like on the issue of Moscow's scarce funding, its commitment to foster cooperation across the border could be questioned. Beijing compared to Russia is doing much better in terms of communications. To boost cross-border trade China has unilaterally established good networks of communications that go straight to the border on its side. One more example, that the efficiency of improvements on the one side could be undermined by the other side is the Russian-Lithuanian border. The utility of constructed six lanes on the Lithuanian side of the border was reduced by only a two-lane road on the Russian side at Kybartai/Chernyshevskoe crossing point.^{cxix} There should be more coordination among all the parts involved on the issues of upgrading physical infrastructure and in processing.

REGIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO BORDER CROSSING FACILITIES

Regions are involved in border crossing infrastructure and regulations development. First, regions carry the financial burden of BCP building and may initiate it, yet regional authorities, that have initiated a new BCP, should get the authorization of national authorities to set up a BCP. When BCPs are initiated by the federal authorities, they are established and equipped with the funds both from the center and regions as well as from other sources. Should a BCP be initiated by a region, regional budget carries the burden of

BCP building costs.

Second, border regions could influence the way BCPs work. The practices could vary and be opening up as well as protecting. In the early 2002 the State Customs Committee banned wood exports through interim BCPs in Karelia. However, as most companies failed to adapt to new regulations, regional authorities lobbied to suspend the ban and succeeded in doing this. On the contrary, in the Khabarovsk Krai authorities addressed central authorities to reduce a number of BCPs through which export of scraps of metal is allowed. Authorities were driven by intention to reduce the volume of metal which goes abroad and to revive Russian metallurgical factories. This was supposed to lead to the rise in employment in Russian regions.

B. BORDER CROSSING REGULATIONS

In this section some practices of border crossing regulations are mentioned. We sorted them on the country basis (except Kaliningrad as a unique case) and showed the major trend of border crossing regulations between Russia and a neighboring country development. Most these practices have something in common, some of them have offered solutions other practices are still looking for.

Curiously, there is still a visa-free regime on the Russian border with most Former Soviet Republics, but it will turn into a visa regime sooner or later. The interesting thing is that there emerge some non-visa crossings for border residents. These practices could prove useful in the long run on other borders as well.

Captive to the Soviet times nostalgia

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia and some former Soviet republics still retain some attributes of their former belongingness to a single state.

In August 2001 Vladimir Putin signed a federal law on ratification of an Agreement between Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Russia and Tadjikistan on a non-visa regime for citizens of these countries. There is a non-visa regime on the Russian border with Ukraine and Azerbaijan. Russians are allowed to possess any kind of passport to cross the border.

Some innovative measures are under consideration as well. For example, the territorial department of the Federal Border Service and authorities of the Rostov region initiated a project to foster

cross-border ties. 11 new BCPs are supposed to be built on the Russian-Ukrainian border. The residents of border areas will be able to cross freely without exposing to customs or border controls. It is still unclear whether residents should have any special notification of their residence. In Russian 'domestic' passports a place one lives in is indicated. Some argue that any other notification will be nothing but duplication. However, in this case it is unclear how one could cross the border with an 'international' passport, in which no residence is mentioned.

A black sheep among Russia's CIS neighbors?

The Russian government issued on 19 December 1994 a special decree which stipulated that some restrictions on crossing the Russian-Georgian border be introduced. It was caused by the start of war in Chechnya. Male adults aged between 16 and 65 were not allowed to cross the border. On 9 September 1999 Vladimir Putin decided to abolish this practice since 21 September, however on 2 October these restrictions were resumed. The reason was new clashes in Chechnya.

Russia introduced a visa-regime on the Russian-Georgian border on 5 December 2000. To cross the border one should have a passport and a Russian visa. However, Russia sought to iron out the effect of these measures. Those who had already entered Russia were allowed to leave Russia for any CIS country with no visa by 1 March 2001. Those who intended to stay in Russia and were permanent residents were supposed to have obtained a Russian visa by the same date. These rigorous measures were motivated by the fact that most of those whom Russian forces had fought in Chechnya moved to Georgia and the track of them was lost. Russian authorities were concerned that due to a non-visa regime those fighters could easily get from Georgia to any region of Russia. Russian authorities required that Georgia should start cooperation on the struggle against terrorism as a prerequisite for abolishing a visa-regime.

In spite of introduction of a visa regime to cross the Russian-Georgian border, a non-visa regime is maintained for Russian border with self-proclaimed Georgian republics Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia. It was explained by the fact that if any visa regime had been introduced on the Russian border with these republics, they would have found themselves in blockade as the only way for

them to deal with the outside world is through the Russian border. Russia motivated these exceptions by humanitarian reasons. Russia and Georgia agreed to introduce on 23 August 2001 a non-visa regime at Verkhni Lars-Kazbegi BCP. This regime is kept for permanent residents of the Northern Ossetia-Alania Republic of Russia and the Kazbeg region of Georgia. Residents are allowed to enter the adjacent country for up to 10 days with no visa. Russians may have any kind of passport. However, residents should provide a special enclosure where the Ministry of Internal Affairs confirms their residency.

Fostering cross-border cooperation

Russian-Latvian Interim Agreement on a Simplified Procedure for Border Territories Residents to Cross the Border (14 December 1994) introduced a simplified procedure to cross the border. One should have a pass and a passport (or any other document to prove who you are). Whereas on the Latvian side this pass was given by territorial departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, on the Russian side it was administration of border districts.

From opening up the border to its partial closing and promoting cooperation across the border

On 18 December 1992 Russia and China agreed on a non-visa regime for tourists. There were also agreements (8 November 1995 and 9 February 1996) which gave some privileges on visa procedures to drivers, expeditors and interpreters who were involved in cross-border trade.

However, the Agreement of 29 February 2000 on a non-visa regime for tourists abolished these privileges for drivers, expeditors and interpreters and introduced more rigorous control over tourists. The group of them should at least include 5 people and a period for them to stay in the foreign country shouldn't exceed 30 days. Besides, tourists are not allowed to be involved in any profit making activities. The Primorskii Krai and the Heilongjiang province of China agreed in 2002 to develop Heihe-Blagoveshchensk and Suifenhe-Pogranichnyi border centers. Chinese officials believe that they could evolve into Russian-Chinese free trade zones or duty-free zones. In March 2002 two sides signed a cooperation agreement, making the Suifenhe-Pogranichnyi center one of their priorities. China and Russia are creating the border trade and economic center with similar rules for citizens of both countries. The complex

will have inspection posts allowing movement across the border. Citizens can enter the complex without visas, but Chinese citizens must enter through Chinese posts and Russian citizens must enter through Russian posts.^{cxx} In June 1999 Russia and China reached a special agreement on a simplified procedure for Russians to visit Heihe and Suifenhe complexes on the Chinese side. Russians are allowed to cross the border with no visa. Besides, under this agreement the similar procedures are supposed to be introduced for Chinese to visit trade complexes in Russian border territories as soon as they have been constructed.

Making procedures easier

On 22 February 2002 Russia launched a one-year experimental project on issuing short-term visas (72 hours) at border-crossings. This new service is available for citizens of the Schengen countries, Great Britain, Switzerland and Japan. There are some restrictions though. Visas are only for tourists and could be obtained only through tourist agencies. The project is administered by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Department on Tourism of the Russian Ministry of Economic Development. The circle of destinations for tourists is too wide and includes even an inland territories like Moscow. The efficiency of this project is still dubious.

The Kaliningrad Oblast: the fading away peculiarities

Whereas Kaliningraders may travel freely to Lithuania and Poland, Russians from other regions need 'a visa for Lithuania unless they are in transit by train. Russians from 'big' Russia have a visa free access to Poland at present if they have diplomatic (green) or so-called 'business' (or 'official') (blue) passports'.^{cxxi} Russians with the standard national passport also have a visa free access for 48 hours and need an invitation and a voucher bought at a tourist agency.^{cxxii} Poland and Lithuania are going to adopt the Schengen acquis. It means that Kaliningraders will need visas going to Poland or Lithuania. However, first of all, EU rules will not be applied at once. In January 2002 Vilnius handed over to Russia its suggestions on revision of the Interim Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Lithuanian Republic on Mutual trips of Citizens as well as a Protocol to it of 24 February 1995. According to these suggestions a visa-regime will be introduced since 1 January 2003 for Russians moving across Poland, and only since 1 July 2003 for Kaliningrad region

residents.^{cxiii} Besides, the issuance of long-term national and multiple-entry visas, and lower visa fees is under consideration.

Finally, Russia and the European Union have agreed that from 1 January 2003 the Republic of Lithuania will, according to its agreement with the EU, implement national regulations for border control. The European Union will introduce the necessary legislation to establish by 1 July 2003 a Facilitated Transit Document (FTD) scheme to apply for the transit of Russian citizens only between Kaliningrad and other parts of Russia by land. The FTD will be valid for direct transit by land from one third country to the same third country within a limited period of time and will be issued free of charge or at a very low cost.

Two types of FTD will be issued to Russian citizens. For multiple entry direct transit via all forms of transport by land to and from Kaliningrad, a FTD would be obtainable on the basis of an application to a Lithuanian consulate, and subject to necessary checks and controls. In addition, for those Russian citizens intending to make single return trips by train through the territory of the Republic of Lithuania, a Facilitated Rail Travel Document (FRTD) would be obtainable on the basis of personal data submitted at the time of ticket purchase.

However, this is an interim resolution. The parties noted that the Republic of Lithuania has agreed to accept Russian internal passports as a basis for issuing both types of FTD only until 31 December 2004. The Russian Federation took note of the European Union's intention to review the operation of the FTD scheme no later than 2005.

Discussions on a long-term goal of visa-free travel between the EU and Russia have been launched. Yet, there is no intergovernmental readmission agreement between Russia and the CIS countries. Russia is used as a transit area. Even if there was any, border between Russia and CIS countries is slightly controlled. In this regard, migrants would still bombard the Lithuanian-Russian border. When the EU is highly concerned about trans-border crime and illegal migration and Russia is unable to ensure border security and prevent free movement of criminal and terrorist elements, Russia is unlikely to join the Schengen acquis. There could be drastic improvements on the Russian side, but only in the long time perspective. That the Kaliningrad Oblast will be granted some privileges for this long period is very unlikely.

BORDER REGIONS IN RUSSIAN FEDERATIVE LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

BORDER REGIONS AMONG OTHER REGIONS.

First of all, the component of ethnic federalism is rather strong in Russia. For some constituent entities there is a link between a titular group and its administrative territory, although the titular group could be a minority (as it is the case in most republics) and its real role is marginal. However, republics seek to stand apart even in legal terms. That's why a comparison between border republics and other border regions¹¹ should be given. Besides, although the difference between border and inland regions will be observed, the difference between border and inland republics is taken partly separately. It is done intentionally to point to the detail that is vague if to compare just border and inland regions in general.

INLAND AND BORDER REPUBLICS

What powers and duties an inland or border republic has depends on the way it positions itself. However, when a region is both a republic and a border region it could be rather dangerous for Moscow as a border republics is more likely than an inland republic to seek secession. It was the case in Chechnya. On the contrary two republics Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, forerunners in sovereignty asserting, are surrounded by other Russian regions and are highly integrated into interregional ties which makes their independence rather questionable. Even their own authorities accept this statement.

BORDER REPUBLICS - BORDER NON-REPUBLIC REGIONS

The difference between border republics and border non-republic regions could be rather strong and rests on the gap between republics and other regions in general. Republics assert more powers compared to Oblasts, Krai, etc. It was their status of republics they employed to wring concessions out of center. First, they had more powers than other constituent entities in the SU. Second, they may appeal to their right for national autonomy. In this regard, border republics are different from other border regions in legal terms. In the Russian Constitution there still remains a reference to republics as states, republican constitutions contain

¹¹ A term 'region' refers to any constituent entity or member of federation in Russia (including republics).

such provisions as precedence of republican laws over the federal ones, property rights over land, minerals, water, flora and fauna in their territory, etc. Tuva's constitution explicitly allowed the republic to secede from Russia. Republics asserted more powers to conduct their para-diplomacy. Tatarstan (inland republic) is the most illustrative, however it was the case for border republics as well. The large number of republics in the Caucasus region demanded specific privileges for them to develop their own external relations independent of Moscow's foreign policy goals.^{CXXIV} In May 1995 the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic of Russia and a separatist Georgian republic Abkhazia signed a treaty of friendship. In a few months they concluded a series of agreements in the spheres of trade, science, transport, agreed to exchange diplomatic missions.

However, this distinction between border republics and border non-republic regions is often exaggerated:

First, some non-republic regions are more powerful and influential than some republics. I must accept that in almost all cases it was republics that started bargaining with Moscow on more powers. All other regions appear to follow the way of republics. However, while different ethnic republics declared themselves sovereign states in the early 1990-s, adopted constitutions and announced that they have some powers of the center, demands for greater autonomy also spread to regions. Not only republics signed power-sharing treaties with Moscow. Oblasts did it as well.^{CXXV}

Second, some border regions require special policies. Kaliningrad with its unique location could be illustrative. In the case of Kaliningrad it seems not easy to draw a distinction for the «internal» and «external» for both the EU and Russia. The EU enlargement to Poland and Lithuania will make Kaliningrad an enclave within the EU and from the perspective of location Kaliningrad is inside the EU. At the same time from the perspective of belonging to a particular state Kaliningrad is outside the EU. For Russia it appears to be outside and inside, respectively. Some scholars argue that 'Russia's own decrees and the setting of a regional policy agenda have to be sufficiently in concert with the *acquis* of the European Union. Russia is under pressure – at a more general level – to embark upon a kind of a post-sovereign route'^{CXXVI}. It means that Moscow should give away some its sovereignty. Among Russian republics only Tatarstan

is known for its idea of a 'divisive' sovereignty.¹²

Third, there is a unification of legislation:

- federal laws are adopted like that on International and Foreign Economic Ties of Russian Regions. Curiously, signed in January 1999 it was the first law that laid out the framework for regions' external policies. The point interesting for us is that there is no difference in powers among constituent entities.
- regional laws should no longer contradict federal laws. Since spring 2000 there have been attempts by presidential envoys to bring regional laws in line with the federal ones. It means that many provisions of republican constitutions like those declaring republics sovereign, subjects to international law and others will be abolished. Republics' status is supposed to be downgraded to the regions' one.

However, the interesting point is that while center is not interested that republics have more powers than other regions (otherwise Russia could be torn into pieces), Moscow cares more about republics in its policies to maintain ethnic stability within republics. Ingushetia and Dagestan, located close to Chechnya, were given much care not to disturb ethnic relations in their territory. This is evident in budget transfers and state's expenditures in a region. In 2002 Dagestan was the largest recipient of the Federal Fund for the Financial Support of the Regions.

Besides, to compare border and ethnicity factors, the latter is much stronger for center than the former in terms of national interests. In the federal budget-2002 12.3 billion rubles of the regional development fund was allocated for the social and economic development of Tatarstan till 2006. During the State Duma's budget debates it was mentioned that the 13 regions of the Far East together would receive only 681 million rubles in 2002 for federal development programs. The explanation was that President Putin personally had made the decision to give Tatarstan so much money.^{cxxvii} It is worth mentioning that Tatarstan was a forerunner among Russian regions in sovereignty seeking and always pretended to be treated as a unique case.

¹² Tatarstani officials stress that there is no single sovereignty in a federative state as it is shared between the center and each constituent entity. Both of them have supremacy and are sovereign on the issues of their powers.

BORDER REGIONS – INLAND REGIONS

Border has not been an issue in the federative relationships. The Presidential Decree on the regional policy (3 June 1996) suggested that a policy towards border regions be elaborated. However, there is still a lot of vacuum on border regions in the federal legislation. None concept has emerged. Neither has any consistent approach to border regions.

Yet, some differences between border and inland regions could be discerned.

First, border regions are distinctive among other constituent entities due to the fact that they are engaged in the domain other regions are not.

- Border regions have some powers and duties related to border in its traditional sense (border delimitation, demarcation, border controlling – see Chapter 2). Regional authorities define the limits of the border zone (up to 5 km), Russian internal waters where the border zone regime is in effect, and the border zone regime. Yamalo-Nenetsk autonomous region governor issued a decree on a border regime in the region. So have Astrakhan authorities. In general these regulations define the width of a border zone and the regime of entering and staying in the border zone. All permanent residents of the border zone area have to carry documents identifying them as permanent residents of the zone. Entering, crossing, or temporarily staying in the zone requires individual or collective permits issued by the border service.
- There are intergovernmental agreements between Russia and adjacent countries that affect border regions. Some agreements and programs to boost cross-border cooperation have been reached. There are Russian-Kazakhstan Intergovernmental agreement on cross-border cooperation, and Russian-Ukrainian and Russian-Chinese Intergovernmental agreements on interregional and cross-border cooperation. In 1998 a Russian-Chinese Coordinating Council on interregional and cross-border cooperation was set up. In May 2000 this Council admitted a Program of Russian-Chinese trade and economic cooperation development.
- There are some regional concepts of Cross-Border Cooperation Development like that of the Karelia Republic. However, on the whole regional legislation hardly reflects border location. Curiously, in charters and constitutions of border regions their border location is mentioned rather unclearly and regions seem

not to make any profit of it legally.

Second, regions seek to gain from their border location and to bargain with Moscow on this issue.

- Border regions need border crossing facilities. The burden of border facilities building rests on both center and regions. Most regions seek to share the duties collected in the region between the federal and regional budgets. The duties allocated to the regions are supposed to be used to improve border facilities. However, center is rather reluctant to grant border regions with any privileges.
- SEZ are considered to provide an impetus for cross-border cooperation and regional development. Most border regions seek to set up a SEZ but acknowledge that the legislation on SEZs in Russia needs developing. The national law on SEZ has not been adopted. This is perceived as the major obstacle. Nakhodka SEZ in the Primorskii Krai was founded in 1990. However, there are hardly any tax exemptions and privileges. The case of Kaliningrad teaches that the regime of SEZ is easily changeable and very unclear in the long term.
- The head of the Orenburg Oblast Chernychev claims that border regions should have preferential treatment.^{cxxviii} Sergei Gorshenin (the minister of International and Foreign Economic Ties of the Orenburg Oblast) adds that in the 18-19 centuries there were some privileges like low duties or even a free trade regime to do business with Asian countries which enabled border regions to develop border facilities and boosted economy in border territories.^{cxxix}
- Border regions have sought more powers to develop relations with neighboring territories over a range of issues that have an effect on border regions themselves. Faced by the new border regime, Russian North-West regions have sought to internationalize their economies and have demanded increased rights to engage in relationships with the Baltic countries.^{cxxx}

Third, compared to inland regions, border regions are facing common border related challenges. They possess more regional legislation on these issues as well as messages sent to the center in order to meet the challenges. Migration is a good example (see below in regional peculiarities for other challenges). In December 1994 the Novosibirsk Oblast adopted a law on the procedure for the

consideration of applications of foreigners and stateless people who intend to reside in the region permanently. In 2002 the Astrakhan Oblast adopted a regulation on procedures for foreigners to enter and stay in the region.

However, that border regions are facing specific challenges should not be overestimated. Some inland regions which are rather attractive to migrants also enact acts on migrants (Moscow-city's legislation lays down some restrictions on migrants). Besides, border regions have no powers to address most transnational issues stemming from their border location. They could appeal to the center with an initiative, but it is still the center to decide whether to introduce new border crossings or not, to grant some privileges for border territory residents to cross the border, etc. Under the Russian legislation regions have the same powers regardless their location. For example, in the Concept of Cross-Border Cooperation border regions' authorities are given no specific powers.

Forth, center cares about the borderlands. The Federal Fund for the Financial Support of the Regions 2002 comprises 147.5 billion rubles. The largest recipients are Dagestan (9.5 billion rubles) and Sakha (8.0 billion). Besides, 8 billion rubles was allocated for the federal program to develop the Russian South, 490 million rubles - to develop the special economic zone in the Kaliningrad Oblast, 221 million rubles - to the development of the Kuril Islands.^{cxxxi} There are special Federal Target Programs on regions. 6 out of 7 programs for regional development touch border regions.¹³ On the one hand, while the federal government has reduced the number of programs to spur regional development from 50, it seems that relatively many federal programs aimed at border regions and rather huge federal expenditures on border regions is about to say that center is more attentive to border regions compared to inland regions. On the other hand, the reasons why each of these regions was selected have too little in common. There seems to be no consistent approach to border regions.

¹³ The programs are: on the Kaliningrad Oblast development up to 2010, on the resurgence of the economy and social welfare in Chechnya (since 2002 and later), on the social and economic development of the Kuril Islands of the Sakhalin Oblast (1994-2005), on the South of Russia, on the development of Far East and Baikal regions (1996-2005), on the decrease in development gaps among regions, on Tatarstan development.

Fifth, border territories are supposed to be granted some privileges and support from the center.

A federal law on the status of border territories has been under the State Duma considerations since 1996. There is also a bill-draft on state support of social and economic development of border territories. Border territories are believed to benefit from these laws. Most regional authorities lobby to adopt these regulations.

However, the interesting point is that it is not clear whether a 'border territory' term refers to a border region or only to part of it. Under the Russian Law on the Border, border territory includes border zone, Russian part of border rivers, lakes and internal waters, territorial sea, where border zone regime is introduced, border passing points, territories of districts and rural areas, resorts, objects and territories which are adjacent to the state border, border zone, shores of border rivers, lakes, sea coast or border passing points. The Concept of Cross-Border Cooperation defines border territories in the same way.

On the one hand, most Russian scholars use terms 'border region' and 'border territory' interchangeably to define Russian constituent entities that have border location. So do we. Orenburg authorities held a conference on border territories. The referent object was not border districts of border regions, but border regions themselves.^{cxxxii}

On the other hand, some border regions' laws define a few border territories on their territory. It means that border territory could be only part of a border region. Besides, in the Russian-Latvian Interim Agreement on a Simplified Procedure for Border Territories Residents to Cross the Border (14 December 1994) border territory on the Russian side is defined as part of a border region (border districts of the Pskov Oblast). That a 'border territory' term is heavily used in the Concept of Cross-Border Cooperation, adopted rather recently, means that there could be a trend to define areas involved in cross-border cooperation in stricter terms. It really makes sense for regions where an international border constitutes only a very small part of regional boundaries. They can not be called inland regions, but the effect of their border location is negligible.

On the whole, regardless whether laws on the status of border territories and on state support of social and economic development of border territories refer to parts of border regions or border regions themselves, border regions benefit in any case. Yet, if these laws are about border regions (border territories) distinction between border and inland regions will be sharp.

BORDER REGIONS PECULIARITIES

Border regions have border-related challenges compared to inland regions, but there are also some differences between the challenges border regions face which is reflected in their legislation and messages sent to the center in order to meet the challenges.

- 'New' border regions suffer from the decline of economic cross-border ties. Most present-day border regions of former Soviet republics used to exist within the Soviet Union. There was no divide between them. The economy of the USSR was run from Moscow and regions did what the center said. From the part of the center, it developed a region as a part of production chains. There was no point in producing the same commodities in two adjacent territories. On the contrary, they were highly complementary and interdependent. Therefore, the introduction of border regulations (duties) resulted in the disruption of economic ties and economic hardship in border regions. Curiously, even now border territories make up a significant share of Russian foreign trade with adjacent countries. Among the 4 lead regions in terms of trade with Ukraine two are border regions – Belgorod and Rostov regions. They constitute 7.74 per cent and 4.32 of the Russian turnover with Ukraine respectively. The other two are Tiumen (12.33) and Moscow (33.28). The former possesses oil and gas deposits, which is the major Ukrainian import from Russia. The latter is facing the decline of its own industrial production and has no raw materials, but serves as a mediator between Russian inland regions and the outside world. But if to take regions' turnover with Ukraine per capita, the Belgorod Oblast is the greatest indicator (448 USD), whereas even Moscow is only 333 USD.^{cxxxiii} Border regions have sought to introduce a free trade regime between Russia and Ukraine, to establish a single agricultural market, etc. The problem of disrupted by duties chains is also acute on the borders with Kazakhstan and Baltic countries.
- After the SU dismissal and the start of reforms in Russia, Russian authorities turned away from the regions. This negatively affected intra-national ties. Costs for communications increased too much. On the one hand, it made border regions look for cooperation abroad. But on the other hand, most of them found that they were seen as a way to enter Russia. Border regions come to conclusion that they could benefit from international flows as

transit areas if they manage to accumulate them on their territory. However, high costs for freight transport hampers border regions to perform this function successfully. First of all, it is about the Far Eastern border regions.

- North-West of Russia was a bastion during the Cold War. The military concerns remain alive. Moscow keeps envisaging these regions through the lens of geopolitical struggle. This lays down constraints on border regions activities.
- There is no immigration challenge for Russian North-West. On the contrary, southern border region are facing migration challenges. Migration within the Soviet Union was domestic, but after the collapse of the USSR residents of former Soviet republics became non-Russian citizens and that migration is international now. Besides, globalization leads to the increase in the movement of people, hampered however by political borders of nation-states. Russia's borders with former Soviet republics are not equipped enough and are very permeable for legal and illegal migrants. There is also a non-visa regime with most CIS countries. Russia is either a destination or a transit area to the West for an enormous number of people which come from the outside of the USSR. For some 'old' border regions this problem is topical as well. On the Russian-Chinese border the liberalization of border crossing regulations paved the way for a huge influx of Chinese and caused serious concerns among Russian regional elites.

Two most vivid examples of regions concerned about immigration are Krasnodar and Far East border regions. They have something in common, yet their practices differ to a certain extent.

	Krasnodar region	Far East regions
Regional legislation	On 20 February 2002 the Krasnodar Krai legislature pushed through resolution No. 1363 on Meskhetian Turkish groups in the region. The resolution required the governor to demand that the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry start negotiations with Georgia to return the Meskhetian Turks. Additionally, the legislature	In 1997 Khabarovsk Krai authorities introduced quotas for foreign workers in the region. Besides, in 1993 they issued a decree on the regime of foreigners staying and living in the region.

	<p>called for revising Krasnodar's power-sharing treaty with Moscow to take into account the ethnic tensions in the region. Until these changes are made, the resolution forbids the authorities from granting individuals who have no citizenship with temporary or permanent right to stay in Krasnodar.^{cxxxiv}</p> <p>The next step was that on 27 March 2002 the Krasnodar Krai legislature adopted a regulation that limits the rights of foreigners and individuals without citizenship to buy property. Only permanent residents or those who receive permission from the Regional Migration Commission can buy real estate in the border zone.^{cxxxv}</p>	
Regional attempts to change federal laws	<p>In 2001, the Krasnodar region authorities made an attempt to solve the problem of uncontrolled immigration by proposing to the State Duma a new federal law on migration. This legislative initiative failed as the Russian government rejected the bill and sent it back for further elaboration.</p>	<p>The Khabarovsk Krai council suggested several changes to the current federal law on migration policy. One amendment calls for increasing the penalty for hiring more foreign workers than the legal number is.^{cxxxvi}</p>
Regional concerns reflected in the Russian	<p>Concerning the issue of migration to the Krasnodar region, the Federation Council of Russia (the Upper Chamber of Russian Parliament) offers^{cxxxvii}:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to adopt a law on regulation of migration in Russia and to 	<p>While observing the situation in the Russian Far East border regions in general and in the Amour region particularly, the Committee on Federation and Regional</p>

<p>an Parlia ment state ment s</p>	<p>allow regions to introduce quotas on migrants to reside in a region, to relocate migrants who live in regions where the threat of conflicts or ecological disasters is eminent to other regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to relocate migrants from the Krasnodar Krai to other regions of the Russian Central and North-West federal districts - to foster Russian-Georgian cooperation on relocation of Meskhetian Turkish groups back to Georgia. <p>The explanation is that Russian South-Eastern regions are multinational and authorities are always concerned about ethnic stability. Migrants are perceived as destabilizing the situation. Besides, migrants prefer to settle on the coast of the Black Sea, thus under the argument of posing an ecological threat they could be forced to resettle.</p>	<p>Policy of the State Duma suggested that the following measures be undertaken^{CXXXVIII}:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to increase the volume of capitals for non-Russia residents to found a company - to forbid foreign tourists to do business in Russia - to provide region with more powers on cross-border cooperation issues. <p>The explanation of these measures is that in the Russian Far East some legal measures provide too much room for foreigners' activities most of which cause worries of regional authorities. For example, there is a non-visa regime for tourists on the Russian-Chinese border. However, most Chinese use it not for tourist trips in Russia but to do business there.</p> <p>The rise in the volume of capitals for non-Russia residents to found a company is because joint ventures are used to allow Chinese nationals to reside in border regions. Most of these companies do not work or even have been</p>
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		closed.
Deportation funding	<p>On 27 March 2002, the Krasnodar Krai assembly adopted resolution No. 1381-P requiring the governor to take additional measures to evict individuals illegally living in the region. Funds were supposed to be taken from the regional budget. Besides, the resolution spoke about a variety of innovative fund-raising measures. In particular, the resolution suggested developing a way to raise money from social organizations and commercial entities to cover deportation costs. The reason for these new measures was that deportations were believed to be widespread and exceed the funds available in the regional budget. The local branch of the Ministry of Internal Affairs was asked to prepare recommendations for improving procedures for deporting illegal immigrants, taking into account the expenses associated with creating temporary holding centers and police units for dealing with convoys of deportees.^{cxxxix}</p>	<p>The way to deport tourist-offenders had been elaborated for the first time in the Russian-Chinese agreement of 29 February 2000 on a non-visa regime for tourists. While organizing a tourist trip, there are two sides: an agency that sends and an agency that receives them in a foreign country. At first, all expenditures to deport an offender are covered by the agency that receives tourists, then these costs are reimbursed to it within a month by the agency that has sent tourists and finally this agency in turn takes this money back from the offender. Tourist agencies which are allowed to organize tourist trips across the border visa-freely are defined by regional authorities.</p>

CENTER – BORDER REGIONS RELATIONSHIPS
FADING AWAY PERIPHERALITY

Border regions' qualities used to be remoteness and peripherality. In the Soviet times Russia was like concentric rings emanating from the center and actorness decreased the further one is from Moscow. After the collapse of the Soviet Union that picture was totally

replaced. The new one draw a few regional centers (like those which Andrey Makarychev called 'islands of globalization' in Russia^{cxl}) and regions had vast opportunities to get rid of their peripherality connotations.

In the 1990-s center did some moves intentionally or spontaneously that drove regions to seek actorness of their own.

First, it left regions alone to meet the challenges they faced. While regions were directed from Moscow under the command-administrative system, they were required to manage their affairs themselves after the SU dismissal.

Second, the center launched its liberal reforms at the macroeconomic level without any regard to regional peculiarities. The regional aspect of the economic policy was even perceived as a burden.^{cxli} Yet, to adapt country-wide reforms to particular region circumstances was allotted to regional authorities. The regional authorities were conceived to be responsible for the socioeconomic situation and chose the way of regional development.

Third, the economic and communications sinews that provided cohesion in the Soviet times were dislocated in the 1990s. As a result, traditional supply chains were no longer economically rational. The increase in transport costs disrupted the ties between geographically distant enterprises. This pushed border regions to reorient their trading partners.

However, the important factor is that the collapse of the Soviet Union was paralleled with the end of the Cold War. The dismissal of the Soviet Union meant the transformation of Russia. Yet regions could have restricted their aspirations just to enjoy greater autonomy within Russia. Only the collapse of the bipolar world and the decline of military threats enabled regions to address the outside world, to expand their operations beyond the national borders. As a result, to do well most regions may not only apply to national resources, but also to develop relationships with the outside environment.

Foreign economic ties were conceived to replace the disrupted intra-national relationships. In the Soviet times, for instance, the Russian Far East heavily depended on the Russian internal market through the heavily subsidized Trans-Siberian Railway. At the end of the 1980s, this part of the country faced severe reduction of the internal market, which had constituted nearly 80 percent of the Far East Gross Regional Product. In this case, the involvement of the region in the global economy was an attempt to overcome negative consequences of the Russian market disruption. Similarly, the

Kaliningrad Oblast is considered to be one of the regions most dependent on food imports. Purchases of imported food make up about 50–70 percent of the local population's expenditures.^{cxlii}

The Komi Republic is suffering from an energy deficit within the region. Parallel to the development of new transmission lines to neighboring regions (Arkhangelsk and Karelia), Komi authorities are interested in the construction of portable power stations, which are very popular in Finland. This country is supposed to share its experience with the Komi Republic through the Northern Dimension project.^{cxliii}

As the meaning of the border has changed, cross-border cooperation grew intensively.

Therefore, there have been drastic changes which affected center-regions relationships. Unlike the constituent entities of the Soviet times, nowadays regions to a greater extent determine themselves the way they will develop. Border regions due to their location are outstanding. During the Cold War because of the military concerns border regions meant more center's control over them than over any other region. It is different now.

First, border regions may be even more outside Moscow's realm than inland regions if they capitalize on their border location well:

- border regions are engaged in cross-border cooperation and the level of interdependence transcending the border is high enough.
- border regions represent themselves in various regional organizations and are involved in transborder-region-building processes.

They became no longer periphery of Moscow but the epicenters of new emerging communities.

Second, border regions aspire to be more outside than inside Russia:

- I could mention the idea that Kaliningrad might be the first European region of Russia, and all liberal reforms should be tested there. Following a trial period, all approved innovations should be implemented in the other territories of Russia. Should it be so, the difference between the Kaliningrad Oblast and the Russian mainland will be greater than between Kaliningrad and the outside environment.
- The Orenburg Oblast authorities provided the CIS Secretariat with a project under which Orenburg was expected to be a lab of cross-border cooperation within the CIS. The feature here is that

regional authorities do not enjoy the Russian-wide scale and pretend to be a unique case within the greater space.

NEW PERIPHERALITY AT THE HORIZON

Regions willingly embedded in Moscow-defined priorities.

First, the discourse of a Russia's 'outpost' was rather strong among regional elites. No matter whether we take the term outpost in the meaning of pre-modern or modern times, it is mainly to contribute to Moscow's achieving its interests. The feature of Russia is that regions became actors regardless their wills and some of them still think in periphery terms and rely mainly on the center in decisions and funding.

Second, some regions have accepted that they failed to integrate into the outside environment. Prior to the 1990s trade from the Russian Far East Region was oriented primarily to the intra-national (other Russian territories) market - 75 percent of its trade turnover, the Far Eastern and international markets made up 19 and 6 percent, respectively. The disruption of intra-Russian ties made Far Eastern regions shift their trade towards the Pacific Rim. The Far East dropped out of the Russian economic space. However, these regions are developing in autarchy nowadays. Approximately 75 percent of all production in the Russian Far East is determined by the Far East demand. The share of the international market makes up 15 percent of exports, whereas only 10 percent is exported to other Russian regions.^{cxliv} It was reflected in changes of regional authorities attitudes. Vice-governor of the Primorskii Krai Alexander Kuzich stated that the creation of a single economic space of the Russian Far East and European Russia is a high priority issue.^{cxlv} It was a response to the fact that region had not succeeded in integrating into the outside economy.

Other border regions have also made little progress. Some scholars question that North-West regions of Russia will become 'gateway' regions in the long term.^{cxlvi}

The reasons of these failure stories could be different:

- regions themselves. They did little to adjust to new circumstances, to compete successfully in the world. The Kaliningrad Oblast and the Primorskii Krai – the two prospective Russia's gateways in the west and east, respectively, - fell into corruption. Besides, in the Far East regional authorities alarmed against Chinese and the 'othering' is a barrier for cooperation. The North-West regions are depicted as rather passive in

cooperation development. Heikki Eskelinen and Merja Kokkonen note that from a Finnish perspective a weak commitment of Russian partners is presented as one of the most serious problems.^{cxlvii}

- the outside actors. There are different examples mentioned. One of them is that the EU 'curbs' regional actorness and peculiarities to be developed. For example, Anais Marin argues that 'the bureaucratic character of relations with the European Commission has not allowed to regional actors from North-West Russia to feel they could play a role of full-right partners', 'contrary to the assumptions of the Finish initiators of cooperation and their Russian counterparts on the field, the EU works on a too centralized basis to allow Russian border regions the enjoying of an international subjectivity or a special role as intermediate partners between Moscow and Brussels'.^{cxlviii} In the Far East regional authorities are afraid of any Chinese colonies in Russian border regions. However, some scholars argue that Chinese officials only strengthen these fears. For example, Chinese officials almost at every negotiations with authorities of the Jewish Autonomous Republic raise the issue of a long term (30 years) land rent by Chinese for permanent residence.^{cxlix}
- Moscow. Moscow is reluctant to give border regions freedom to develop their own activities and limits their role to peripheral areas.

Moscow's imperial ambitions.

First, whereas in the early 1990-s center turned away from regions, Moscow seems to use border regions in its geopolitical 'games' in the world nowadays. Border regions could be viewed as 'springboards' of Russia to the macroregions like the EU and Asia Pacific Region. Kaliningrad was called a bridge between Russia and Europe. Russian Far East was to pave the way for Russia as a whole in APEC. Moscow's move to promote cross-border cooperation in the CIS was conceived to achieve reintegration. Neil Melvin argues that most Russia's proposals at the interstate level on integration in the CIS are thought of as a threat to the sovereignty of the former Soviet republics. However, the contacts of Russian regions with the 'near abroad' are positively perceived by the latter.^{ci} In the case of the Kaliningrad Oblast, Russian authorities also tend to deal with the EU strategically rather than to solve particular problems. In the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs the issue of

Kaliningraders in the enlarged EU was almost marginalized and replaced by the issue of a non-visa regime for Russia as a whole in Europe.

Second, policy-makers in Moscow neglect regional interests. For example, in the Pskov Oblast the Free Economic Zone 'Pleskau' which Yeltsin promised during the 1996 presidential campaign was soon forgotten. In the Murmansk Oblast a project of a FEZ was ignored by federal authorities.^{cli}

Moscow is driven only by what is good for center. It would not be important if it did not touch regional well-being. Operations of Moscow could contradict regional interests. Primorskii Krai governor Yevgenii Nazdratenko opposed the ratification by the Russian parliament of the 1991 agreement between Russia and China on border demarcation. There were some economic considerations:

China, on acquiring the left bank of the river, would be in strong position to construct a port on the river and therefore gain direct access to the Sea of Japan. Not only would this allow the trade of northeastern China and Mongolia to bypass ports of Maritime Province, but it would also make the proposed trade route from Central Asia and across China more attractive to Beijing, thereby undermining the Trans-Siberian route.^{clii}

In 1996 regions bordering Ukraine opposed the introduction by Russia of new regulations on VAT: whereas Ukraine as most countries employed levying VAT on the principle of 'the country of destination', Russia decided to choose 'the country of production'. The fact that Russian exports were levied VAT twice has negatively affected most border regions.

The federal authorities turned the Baltic economic dependence on Russia and the probable introduction of restrictions on trade with it as a political instrument against Baltic states. As a result throughout the 1990-s Russia applied double customs tariff on imports from Estonia. It was border regions like Pskov to suffer.^{cliii} In Spring 1998 Moscow considered the introduction of economic sanctions against Latvia to protest against the way the Russian-speaking population was treated in the republic. These considerations were taken regardless the fact that economic sanctions could be harmful for Russian border regions as well.^{cliv}

Thus, from Moscow's perspective, borderlands are still peripheries.

CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN THE RUSSIAN LEGISLATION.

WHAT CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IS

Cross-border cooperation in Russia is understood as coordinated activities of governmental bodies of federal, regional and municipal levels. Yet, the range of actors involved in cross-border cooperation is wider and includes individuals as well as organizations. Territory where cross-border cooperation is developed is defined in international treaties of Russia and agreements of Russian regions with the outside actors. There are agreements on cooperation between districts of border territories as well. The range of issues reflected in these agreements is wide enough.

The concept of Cross-Border Cooperation conceives cross-border cooperation as the following activities:

- the meeting of governmental bodies representatives on cross-border cooperation
- the establishing by governmental bodies of coordinating bodies (institutions) on cross-border cooperation and working groups in their framework
- signing agreements on cross-border cooperation
- the establishing of working groups on cross-border cooperation in the framework of interstate commissions on economic, commercial, scientific and technical cooperation.

THE POWERS OF AUTHORITIES ENGAGED IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION:

Powers and duties of center and regions in the cross-border cooperation field are similar to the general distribution of powers between them and are just adopted to the border circumstances.

Center:

- concludes treaties and international agreements on cross-border cooperation (for example, in 1992 Russia and Finland reached a 'Near area cooperation' agreement. There is a Russian-Kazakhstan Intergovernmental agreement on cross-border cooperation between the regions of both countries for the period 1999-2007 and a special program annexed to this agreement. On 10 November 1997 Russia and China signed an agreement on principles of cooperation between Russian and Chinese sub-state units);

- represents Russia's interests on cross-border cooperation in international organizations (for example, Russia is involved in BSSC, BEAC);
- establishes the Customs Tariff (Russia does it unilaterally as well as in line with its international obligations. Russia, for example, is a member of the Customs Union with some CIS countries and this affects its customs regulations on borders with these countries. Finally, central authorities establish FEZs in regions and some border regions or parts of them could get freedom from some duties).

Center and regions together:

- coordinate international and foreign economic ties of regions, implement treaties conducted by Moscow;
- coordinate regions' regulation of cross-border cooperation and etc.

The interesting point is that center and regions together perform federal programs on cross-border cooperation. For example, there was a federal target program (1998-2001) on the development of border town Zabaikalsk in the Chita Oblast. Up to 60 per cent of the Russian-Chinese freight transport passes through this town. There were 3 subprograms: on the development of the town itself, of its border crossing facilities and of a special trade complex in the town to boost Russian-Chinese cross-border cooperation.

Regions:

- negotiate with sub-state authorities of adjacent countries, with national authorities (with the consent of the Government of Russia only), conclude agreements with them and etc.

Russian border regions have lots of agreements on economic, cultural, scientific cooperation with adjacent territories of other countries. Some of them provide a general framework for sub-regional actors cooperation. There is also a trend to reach not just agreements, but agreements with special programs of how to implement these agreements and working groups to supervise the way agreements are carried out.

Russian border regions have concluded agreements with central authorities of neighboring countries as well (for example, a program on trade, economic and cultural cooperation between the Russian Republic of Tuva and Mongolia). In this case the approval of Moscow is required.

Municipal authorities:

- establish foreign economic ties with municipal authorities, sub-state authorities, organizations and citizens of adjacent countries;
- reach agreements on cross-border cooperation.

CENTER AND REGIONS: TOP-DOWN AND BOTTOM-UP
APPROACHES

Hans Mouritzen distinguishes between the 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' approaches to shaping trans-border communities.^{clv} 'Bottom-up' means that mutual sympathies and transnational ties develop spontaneously over a long time-span at the popular level; under the 'top-down' model it is done from above, through a common project and common institutions and later encompasses the popular level.

BOTTOM-UP APPROACH.

SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITIES OF TERRITORIAL CLOSENESS.

Transit areas between the inside and outside:

- Some border regions, due to their geographic location, may become centers of interaction between Russia and the outside world in export-import flows. The free economic zone of Nakhodka in the Primorskii Krai serves as the most intensive transport junction in the Far East economic region. Thanks to the 'North-South' international transport corridor, the Astrakhan Oblast may play a major role in freight moving between Russia and the Middle East and South Asia. In the long run, the Kaliningrad Oblast is supposed to perform a bridge-building function and specialize in advanced service functions.^{clvi} It means that due to their border location some Russian regions benefit from accumulating flows between two countries. In the Belgorod Oblast in 1999 only 10 per cent of its export was produced within the region.^{clvii}
- These regions may become centers of attraction for foreign partners and a springboard for their networking with surrounding territories and further penetration into provincial Russia. For example, 40 percent of the foreign companies in the Russian Far East are located in the Primorskii Krai due to its image as a gateway to eastern Russia.^{clviii} The greatest part of the foreign investment attracted to the Primorskii Krai is connected to trade, the hotel business, and the service sector.^{clix} Most joint-ventures

registered in the Belgorod Oblast are those between Russians and Ukrainians (by 1 January 2001 431 of them out of 682 or 74 per cent), and do their business in the foreign trade like mediators.

Maintaining economic ties

Most Russian regions highly depend on foreign economic relationships. For most border regions their major trade partner is an adjacent country. The Orenburg Oblast authorities note that the prosperity of the region is based on its foreign economic ties. The foreign trade turnover constitutes more than 20% of the Gross Regional Product^{clx}. The share of the adjacent country (Kazakhstan) in the foreign trade is the greatest (in 2000 - 28%), and in the trade with CIS - 87,4%.^{clxi} The Omsk Oblast depends on coal supplies from the neighboring Kazakhstan. The Kaliningrad Oblast is heavily dependent on the neighboring countries for energy and transport links. Besides, it imports 90 per cent of its foodstuffs and consumer goods.

Shaping new ties

During the Soviet Union the interactions across the border were strictly controlled. For instance, economic relations between Finland and the USSR were arranged through centralized bilateral agreements, and cross-border contacts based on the geographical proximity of individual partners were not allowed. The opening up of the border paved the way for cross-border cooperation at the grass-root level. Besides, in the 1990-s the Karelia Republic became dependent on its timber and wood products export to Finland.^{clxii} In the Far Eastern border regions it is accepted that although the Chinese are a menace, these Russian regions survived in the 1990-s due to the start of Chinese exports.^{clxiii} Even though it is of a very poor quality, there remains a demand for it.

Shuttle-trade

The city of Vyborg is located on the Finnish border and local business generates considerable profits from cross-border trade. Since gasoline is cheaper in Russia than it is abroad, there is a big business in selling domestic gasoline to customers outside of Russia.^{clxiv}

Cross-border shuttle trading is wide spread. In 2000 the border of the slightly-less-than-a-million-inhabited Kaliningrad region was

crossed 8.5 millions times in passenger traffic. Crossings on the Lithuanian side made up 3.6 millions and on the Polish side – 4.4 millions. In these figures crossings related to the shuttle trading are estimated to be about 80 and 90 per cent, respectively.^{clxv} People involved in it are mainly living in border areas. In the Kaliningrad Oblast wages are the highest in the capital of the region, whereas in the rest areas they are incomparably lower, and the selling of alcohol, cigarettes and petrol abroad is the only way for people to make ends meet. The shuttle trading is a profitable business due to the price gaps on the sides of the border. For example, the number of shuttle traders fell off after the equalization of petrol prices in Lithuania and Russia, but the restrictions on the volume of cigarettes, alcohol and fuel introduced by Poland made little decrease in the number of such traders in queues at the frontier points.^{clxvi}

In the city of Kingisepp (the Leningrad Oblast), near the Estonian border, the local fertilizer factory was closed in the 1990-s and many people went into the business of importing and selling cars. The city now ranks third in the country for car sales. Interestingly, most successful businessmen invest in other local businesses, including restaurants and agriculture.^{clxvii}

Reviving old ties

Finland is interested in the Karelia Republic because of its Finish-related population and the fact that parts of it earlier belonged to Finland.^{clxviii} It was the case in the Kaliningrad Oblast as well. Ingmar Oldberg notes^{clxix}:

Western tourists began to visit the region, particularly Germans, usually former East Prussians who wanted to see their old homes.

These reviving ties enable wide cooperation. Heikki Eskelinen and Merja Kokkonen argue that

Persons who had been compelled to leave their homeland in the aftermath of the Second World War especially went to see it as soon as this became at all possible, and they soon initiated collaboration in various grass-root level projects.^{clxx}

Numerous Chinese in the Far East were forced to leave Russia in the Soviet times, however, the cultural ties across the Russian-Chinese border are not about reviving the old links, but shaping the new ones. Russians remain very concerned about Chinese nationals. Curiously, cross-border cooperation develops between the Chinese that have settled down in Russia and those in China.

Benefiting from 'good' neighbors

Russian regions bordering on Finland benefit as it is the only EU border with Russia. It was the Finnish government that initiated Northern Dimension and in its presentation by Paavo Lipponen it was a rather ambitious plan. Karelia has been the champion in the establishment of Euroregions across Russian external borders with Interreg 3A/Tacis funding thanks to Finnish active lobbying within the Commission General Directorates.^{clxxi}

Vladimir Yegorov, governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast, stated at the second ministerial conference on the 'Northern Dimension' in Luxembourg (9 April, 2001), that the gap in social and economic development between the region and its neighbors has been increasing since 2000 when accession countries received access to special EU programs SAPARD and ISPA.^{clxxii} The inclusion of Lithuania and Poland into the EU 'internal' policies will serve to sharpen the disparities. The Russian side has suggested that the EU should use on the Kaliningrad Oblast borders all programs which are in use on Finland-Russian border.

However, too often the Russia's attitude has been consumer-oriented. Engagement in cross-border cooperation was perceived by the Russian side not as an *end* but as a *means* to wring more funds from the EU. However, there are some signs of changes in regional thinking. Some border regions authorities note that to overcome the economic hardship in a region, one should do it not at the expense of an adjacent country and the EU, but through harmonizing the interests of Russia, a region and the EU.^{clxxiii} Cross-border cooperation as such is said to be a remedy and all the parts involved should contribute to it.

Meeting together common challenges

Border regions of adjacent countries may have more in common with each other than with inland regions of the same country. They are facing common challenges and are building a common front to meet them. The 'soft security' risks involve environmental pollution, illegal immigration, crime and etc. They could hardly be tackled alone and stopped at the border. This is the most evident while speaking about pollution. The sewage discharge into the sea afflicts all the countries of the Baltic sea basin. Russian southern regions bordering on Kazakhstan suffer from locust which spreads over their territories from Kazakhstan.^{clxxiv} It is pointless to fight locust only within Russian border regions. Some measures in Kazakhstan are

required. Besides, transnational cooperation to tackle trans-border problems is needed. The Altay Krai authorities believe that a special Russian-Kazakhstan commission should deal with the issue.

Forming a common economic front

It is easier to protect economic interests together. In March 1995 the Council of border regions heads addressed to Russian and Ukrainian governments to sign up a treaty on the economic Union. In October 1995 Council pressured on central authorities to foster bilateral cooperation and set up a free trade regime. In December 1996 the Council appealed to Russian, Ukrainian and Belarussian authorities to establish a common agricultural market.^{clxxv}

RUSSIAN BORDERS IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION.

Among Russian borders the North-West and new border regions appear to be most involved in cross-border cooperation. Nowhere cross-border communities are as strong as here. For example, on the Russian-Mongolian border there is a lack of infrastructure to cross border. On the Russian-Chinese border the 'othering' is very strong. Russians are very anxious about Chinese nationals. This lack of trust makes all bridges and roads futile to develop cross-border activities.

North-West:

Whereas during the Cold War one witnessed only a centralized cooperation across the border, nowadays, there are numerous cross-border flows and activities under the 'bottom-up' approach. During the Cold War there was no direct cooperation between individual partners across the Russian-Finish border. Heikki Eskelinen and Merja Kokkonen describe the beginning of the Russian-Finish cross-border cooperation 'from below' in the following way:

The first direct contacts between partners across the Finnish-Russian border were created spontaneously as soon as travel restrictions were relaxed in the late 1980s. Persons who had been compelled to leave their homeland in the aftermath of the Second World War especially went to see it as soon as this became at all possible, and they soon initiated collaboration in various grassroot-level projects. Also, several civic associations and local organisations, such as municipalities and schools in the border region, created links across the divide, and the central governments had to react to this activity as fait accompli.^{clxxvi}

Later this border witnessed the establishment of the Euroregion Karelia which was the first cross-border regional formation on the EU-external border.^{clxxvii}

While the Kaliningrad Oblast's external ties are well-known and there are different assessments of the region's engagement in cross-border cooperation, to evaluate the drastic changes that have taken place I should remind that in the Soviet times the region 'was separated from Poland by an international, well-guarded border, no Western visitors were allowed, and even Soviet citizens had limited access',^{clxxviii}

New border regions:

The bottom-up approach is very strong especially on the Russian borders with Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. The factors that contribute to it are the mix of population in border regions, the fact that these countries made up the core of the single state for a long time (the USSR, Russian empire) and administrative borders between them were void of any particular significance. The cooperation at the grass-root level is not initiated here now, but continues from the Soviet times. Nowhere it is clearer than on CIS borders how the bottom-up cross-border cooperation is constructed by social practices emanating from the routines of everyday life.

People in regions bordering on former Soviet republics do not 'feel' the border. First, the border is emerging in the place people used to cross many times a day. People from one town visited their friends in the nearest town. However, it has turned out that these people live on the opposite sides of the border. People do not come to understanding that a lot of practices they are used to are restricted nowadays. People in border areas still prefer to go for mushrooms, berries, to a shop and etc. on the other side of the border by the roads and paths they are accustomed to rather than by those they are allowed to. Memories and habits of the past unity contrast with the present border separating. All this means that people hardly feel responsible for crossing the border illegally, they keep crossing it whenever and wherever they want. Second, the border infrastructure in most border areas paves the way for this practice. Adjacent countries developed in the framework of a single state for a long time, so there is a network of roads and paths connecting dwelling points on both sides of the border. Most of them have no asphalt but are quite good for cars. While these roads exist and border is poorly equipped and patrolled, most border residents

prefer to cross the border by a direct road bypassing BCPs. The Finish border is unlike. Although cross-border activities have intensified, this border remains well guarded with an effective patrolling system, and border surveillance increasingly technical in nature.^{clxxix}

Within the CIS there are some informal factors that contribute to cross-border cooperation at the grass-root level. The governor of the Russian border region Omsk, Leonid Polezhaev, originally pursued his career in Russian-populated North Kazakhstan cities Petropavlovsk and Karaganda. Due to his close personal relationship to northern Kazakhstan regions he was very active in promoting cross-border cooperation.^{clxxx}

Russian North-West and new border regions have the greatest potential to develop cross-border cooperation and they are most engaged in it. However, there is difference between them. North-West cross-border cooperation is 'forward-looking', whereas on CIS borders cooperation is mainly 'backward-oriented'. In the North-West (Russian-Finish border) cross-border cooperation in the bottom-up manner has boosted since the collapse of the Soviet Union. On the contrary, on CIS borders cooperation is the legacy of the Soviet times. In the North-West there emerge new forms of cooperation, it is sort of an experimental site, a laboratory of innovative ways of cross-border cooperation. It is mainly the case thanks to the EU and regional organizations. In contrast, on CIS borders there are cross-border initiatives but most of them are about to revive old (Soviet times) ties and practices. It is especially vivid in the case of economy: enterprises seek not to develop new ties with new partners for new production but to revive the production chains of the Soviet Union.

To sum up, cross-border cooperation is intensifying in the North-West because of new ideas how to do it better. This cooperation is about the future. In contrast, cooperation on CIS borders is about the past and won't succeed unless new forms are brought. Even now there are some examples when the practices developed in the North-West are imitated on the CIS borders: the idea of euroregions is considered to be put into practice on the Russian-Ukrainian border. Besides, North-West gives practices for other Russian regions as well to take off. A FEZ in Kaliningrad was the first FEZ in Russia and remains in the limelight of other border regions authorities.

OBSTACLES FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION.

Here I should call attention to the cases when geographical proximity makes little sense for border regions, they just neglect this opportunity. The reason why I do it is not to downgrade the significance of territorial closeness but to point out what hampers cross-border cooperation. The goal is to come closer to understanding why geographical proximity is disregarded by regional authorities. I should warn that I will accentuate the negative phenomena to make them more visible. Besides, the reader should keep in mind that they are nothing but some extractions from border realm and do not characterize the whole border.

First, the border status of regions is not reflected in the mind of regional authorities as well as at the grass-root level. However, it is the case in new border regions that turned into borderlands recently and only in a few of them, as most new border regions have already positioned themselves either as 'outposts' or 'links'.

- Some border regions pay little attention to their border location. The Belgorod Oblast governor in its program of region's development refers to its border location only while speaking about the past of the region when it was the southern outpost of Russia a few centuries ago.^{clxxxii} The Belgorod Oblast governor avoids mentioning its present-day border location as a factor that affects region's development.
- Authorities of the Belgorod Oblast which was an inland region in the Soviet Union still adhere to the Soviet times thinking. They still position the region within their own state only. In the Strategy of the Belgorod Oblast Development all the comparisons of this border region economic and social welfare development refer to other Russian regions. Curiously, the region is compared not with other Russian *border* regions but with Russian regions regardless their location.^{clxxxii} These perceptions are wide-spread in other regions as well. The Kaliningrad Oblast sharply stands apart, although it is mainly due to its unique location. The major goal of the Federal Program of the Kaliningrad Oblast's development till 2010, adopted on 7 December 2001, is to create conditions for the Kaliningrad Oblast's development comparable with the economic development level of the adjacent countries rather than other Russian regions.^{clxxxiii}
- New border regions authorities tend to say that they have found

themselves in a new situation (inland regions turned into border regions) but they hardly understand that they can seize the opportunity of their border location. The lack of comprehension by regional authorities of their new location prevents them from defining new goals to achieve. The Saratov Oblast was part of the Great Silk Way, the trade route between Europe and Asia, and could benefit from its transition location on this way. But barely has this opportunity been discussed by regional authorities.^{clxxxiv}

- In some cases there is a 'perverted' understanding of cross-border cooperation. This is the case of the Voronezh Oblast which borders on Ukraine. The authors of Concept of Voronezh-City International Cooperation Development argue that the city could easily reap benefits of its border location. However, the authors suggest that Voronezh should develop its airport, and the major transnational communications should be by air.^{clxxxv} It seems a bit confusing and pointless as the major means of communications in Russia is by rail. Most Russians prefer to travel from the Russian Far East to the European part of Russia by train. So do the cargoes. Another option is by road. It takes far more time, but it is incomparably cheaper. Even if at such great distances rail or automobile communications are more beneficial, to develop cross-border cooperation by air looks disputable.

Second, border regions' authorities keep in mind their border location but sometimes they do not develop cross-border cooperation because it is not in their interests:

- some cross-border cooperation initiatives have been rejected by the Russian side as they failed to match its interests. In October 1991 Northern Korea, Southern Korea, China, Russia and Mongolia reached a multilateral agreement on the development of industrial and communicational zone on the Tumangan river. However, the Primorskii Krai administration decided to put this idea aside as authorities conceived the project as a threat to regional interests (to existing communications, ecology, etc.). Besides, the concept of FEZ 'Great Vladivostok' elaborated by Japanese scholars under the auspices of UNIDO was treated on the Russian side as a concept for Japan to reach its interests. Russian scholars worked out an alternative concept.^{clxxxvi} Because of difference in interests of neighboring border regions, the Kaliningrad Oblast is not part of Neman euroregion.

- In some new border regions it is less profitable for enterprises to do business across the border because of the increased customs duties and a lot of red tape. As a result, most economic ties established during the Soviet Union era have been disrupted or are weakening. A new supplier located thousands km away but in the same country seems closer than a well-known partner situated in a few km but abroad.
- Some Russian regions' economies are endowed with the logic of the past. Because of the Soviet planning system Russian regions were connected with other former Soviet republics, and the major criterion was not territorial proximity, but the complementation of production. In spite of the Soviet Union collapse, there remains the same structure of production in some regions and economic chains with enterprises in distance. For the Novosibirsk Oblast the major trade partner is not the adjacent country, former Soviet Republic Kazakhstan, but another CIS country located far away – Ukraine.^{clxxxvii} The Volgograd Oblast authorities accord far less importance to neighboring Kazakhstan than to Belarus. In January 1999 Volgograd governor rejected invitation to attend the Kazakhstan President inauguration and the meeting of Russian regions bordering on Kazakhstan, and made a trip to Minsk.^{clxxxviii}
- Some scholars argue that Russian-Finish border areas (unlike the Russian border with Ukraine and Belarus) are 'thinly populated, and part of it practically uninhabited. For instance, along the 1200 kilometer long border, there is only one point where towns on both sides are located next to each other, thus making the formation of a cross-border urban region possible'.^{clxxxix}

Third, on both sides of the border there are some phobias and fears, the lack of trust, prejudices and suspicions.

- Russian official circles think that should any Ukrainian-Russian euroregion emerge, there will be suspicion in Ukrainian national authorities that Russia seeks to divide Ukraine and strengthen its influence in its eastern part. This would be strengthened by Western Ukraine alarmists. This suspicion derives from the fact that while Western Ukraine is more pro-Western and anti-Russian sentiments are popular there, Eastern Ukraine keeps close cultural ties with Russia (Russian, not Ukrainian language is wide spread in Ukrainian regions bordering Russia). It should be mentioned that governors in Ukraine are appointed by president.

As a result, Russian-Ukrainian euroregions are unlikely to succeed due to this suspicion. Yet, the idea of Russian-Ukrainian euroregions remains attractive.

- North Kazakhstan is inhabited by ethnic Russians. The authorities in Almaty are anxious about the possibility of separatism and are reluctant to closer links between adjacent territories of Russia and Kazakhstan.
- The Baltic states switched their foreign trade from Russia to the West in the 1990s, partly because they sought to decrease their dependence on Russia.^{cxc} As a result, border regions like the Pskov Oblast could hardly be a center for economic exchange and cooperation across the border.
- Anssi Paasi notes that some surveys show that the Finns have a less favorable opinion of Russians than the Russians do of the Finns. Only one-third of the Finns see cross-border cooperation as a good thing, whereas two thirds of Russians are in favor of it. The Finish media have tended to stress the problems in Russia, painting a negative image.^{cxc} At the same time local attitudes towards Russian tourists have become more favorable and it is now becoming increasingly popular to study the Russian language.^{cxcii}
- Phobias and fears are rather strong on the Russian side. Population of border regions is concerned whether the goal of an adjacent country is 'neo-colonization' in an economic sense and exploitation of their natural resources. It was partly the case in the Russian Karelia.^{cxciii} Far Eastern regions are highly concerned about 'Chinification'. The strategic importance of the Kola Peninsula (one of the most militarized in the world area) hampers the Murmansk Oblast to develop foreign relations.^{cxciv} The same proves to be true for the Kaliningrad Oblast.

Forth, there are structural differences between the sides of the border.

- David Kerr distinguishes Russian and Chinese decentralizations. In China '*system has undergone a process of gradual and controlled decentralization based on the capacity of the regions to augment domestic development with an externally oriented economic sector* and in Russia *the system has undergone the collapse of the centralized system, the attempt to substitute external relations for disintegrating domestic ties, and subsequent contention over the rights and obligations of centre and*

regions'.^{CXCV} This means that when Moscow takes its powers back, it could bring regional chieftains under its control and many external ties of regions could be questioned. Besides, while China and Russia develop a strategic partnership, they try to boost interregional cooperation. However, due to contention between Moscow and regions, the latter could pursue their own interests and could have different perceptions. For example, China is perceived as a threat by the Russian Far Eastern border territories.

- Russian regions involved in Euroregions could count on TACIS funding. Unlike their counterparts on the EU side of the border, which get INTERREG funding and take some part in decision-making, Russian local authorities are marginalized as TACIS provides no regionalized decision-making structures and is managed directly from Brussels and Moscow.^{CXCVI} However, there are impetuses from below to bring the Russians in decision-making rather than to leave them out. Tarja Cronberg, the former Finish chairman of the Euregio Karelia management committee, notes that^{CXCVII}:

I tried to work for permission to pay for some Russian participation by Interreg funds in Interreg projects on the Finnish side. This was not possible. The arguments were differences in legal basis the type of policy (internal/external) and finally comments such as "Russians should not decide over EU-money". The most that could be achieved was to have a Russian observer on the Interreg Karelia management committee in order to at least have an exchange of information between "partners".

On the Russian side this decision was conceived as a great breakthrough. The authorities of the Russian Republic of Karelia have noted that this contributed to cross-border cooperation and Euregio development.^{CXCVIII}

- There are some invisible borders as well. Some sharp lines between Kaliningrad and its neighborhood are the case. In 2000 the GRP per capita in the Kaliningrad Oblast was US\$4400 –65% of the average Baltic level, 2 times lower than in Poland and 5-8 times than in other European countries.^{CXCIX} Whereas average monthly income per capita in Kaliningrad is US\$78, it reaches US\$268 and US\$437, respectively, in Lithuania and Poland.^{CC} The Russian-Finish border looks one of the deepest social and economic fault-lines in Europe. Anssi Paasi argues that this means that most Russians are not 'happy border-crossing consumers', nor will they become such for a long time. As a result, an 'integrated borderland' is very unlikely to emerge in the

area with sharp divides.^{cci} These divides hamper cross-border communities building. However, should both sides manage to start cross-border cooperation, these gaps could be overcome. Tarja Cronberg notes that the digital divide is probably the greatest of all the gaps on the Finish-Russian border. However, to do away with this gap is through bringing two parts to cooperate. There is a Northern eDimension for the Northern Information Society. The Euregio Karelia Management Committee has developed a program for eKarelia.^{ccii}

TOP-DOWN APPROACH.

TOP-DOWN INITIATIVES.

Bilateral agreements at the state level.

There are intergovernmental agreements on cross-border cooperation between Russia and adjacent countries. Some agreements and programs to boost cross-border cooperation have been reached. There are Russian-Kazakhstan Intergovernmental agreement on cross-border cooperation, and Russian-Ukrainian and Russian-Chinese Intergovernmental agreements on interregional and cross-border cooperation.

The problem with these agreements is that too often they are not implemented in full or are just general arrangements with no concrete projects mentioned. In this regard, there is a growing understanding that to launch cross-border cooperation 'from above', countries should reach not only agreements, but sort of action plans (packages of measures) to follow later.

Initiatives within the CIS

The Inter-parliamentary Assembly of the CIS state-members has decided to set up a working group to elaborate a Convention of cross-border cooperation.

Most CIS countries have started developing their own legislation just recently. Most of them have not yet worked out their national approach towards border regions. This paves the way for countries to reach a single concept. In 1998 the Inter-parliamentary Committee of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Russia and Tadjikistan (they shape the Customs Union¹⁴) has adopted the law

¹⁴ This Union goes back to the Treaty of Enhancing Integration in Economic and Humanitarian Fields of 29 March 1996. There is uneven pace of governments in the CIS and some countries in the core of this entity have advanced compared to the others.

on regions of cross-border cooperation. According to this law, countries under national legislation could provide a whole border region or part of it with a special status of a 'region of cross-border cooperation' that gives border areas special powers to develop cross-border cooperation. However, this law is a model law and is nothing but recommendation. Countries that approved it should incorporate its provisions in their national legislation. However, it takes a lot of time.^{cciii}

The Integration Committee of the Customs Union worked out a Draft Agreement on Principles of Cross-Border Cooperation. After the remarks from border regions had been incorporated in that draft, the agreement was signed by the Council of Heads of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Russia and Tadjikistan on 26 February 1999. On 17 February 2000 these countries approved of a special project of measures to implement the Agreement. Nowadays, the countries signed the Agreement are fulfilling all necessary national procedures so that the Agreement comes into force.

Russia-EU partnership

Russia and the EU seek to develop strategic partnership and have pledged to be committed to 'Europe without divides'.^{cciv} In this regard, Russia has benefited much from the EU neighborhood and its activities to overcome divides.

The Union supports cross-border cooperation. There is TACIS program, and TACIS Cross Border Cooperation in particular, to promote cross-border activities. TACIS could be viewed as an attempt to affect the degree of cooperation across the border in a top-down manner. The EU provides funding and national programs for Russia, which the TACIS program is based on, are negotiated with Moscow.

Besides, Russian border regions have benefited from the EU-inspired euroregions idea. Euregios are wide-spread inside the EU (across the EU internal borders). Euregio Karelia was the first cross-border regional formation on the EU external border. Besides, nowadays the idea to set up euroregions is popular on other Russian borders.

One more instrument is the EU's Northern Dimension which is designed to develop effective horizontal regional cooperation between EU members, candidates and other states. First, the Northern European region is the only geographical direct link between Russia and the EU. The EU has some initiatives that cover

a particular region like a Southern Dimension, the Central European Initiative. In this regard, the Northern Dimension focused on the European North means that Russia is invited to cooperate and the interdependence between the EU and Russia (as well as with other countries in the region) is in focus. Second, Pertti Joenniemi argues that the EU's ND signals that northerness has acquired some space at the expense of the East and West markers and has become a new signifier. Northerness does not mean isolation, peripherality, remoteness, exceptionalism and a frontier mentality to the same extent as before. It develops subjectivity of its own. In this regard, the Northern Dimension implies the multilayered, fragmented and regionalist nature of the EU. It is not worth viewing it as homogeneous. More importantly for Russia, Europe is not fixed and strictly bordered. It means that northerness opens new channels for dialogue with non-EU members and turns into a site that mediates between the internal and the external.^{CCV}

For Russia the Northern Dimension means that whereas Russia is unlikely to enter the EU in any foreseeable future, it has the opportunity to become through its North-West regions part of Europe, in particular, part of an integrated entity called the European North.

To sum up, the EU-Russian partnership contributes to Russian border regions' engagement in cross-border cooperation in terms of funds (TACIS), innovative practices (euroregions), conceptual basis (Northern Dimension).

MOSCOW'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION.

Center's attitude towards cross-border cooperation is mainly the positive one. First, cross-border cooperation maintains the traditional ties with former Soviet Republics which were severed with the Soviet Union collapse. Most regions survived during reforms in Russia due to foreign economic ties that replaced the disrupted intra-national relationships. Second, Moscow has assigned a special role to cross-border cooperation. It was designated to create a 'good neighborhood belt' around its perimeter. Third, border regions are used to achieve Moscow's geopolitical interests. Russian-Belarusian state building was supported by fostering cooperation between regions of Russia and Belarus. Russian-Ukrainian euroregions idea was raised to improve Russian-Ukrainian relationships and bind them together.

However, the difference between the way Moscow envisages bottom-up cross-border cooperation in the North-West and with CIS countries could be discerned. Center seems to be more watchful of the North-West regions. The reason could be, first, the stereotype of the 'near abroad'. CIS adjacent countries are 'closer' in the mind of Russians and when cooperation with them flourishes it is taken as normal, but when border with 'far abroad' is opening up, it is perceived as something unordinary. Second, whereas in its relations with CIS countries it is Russia to 'swallow' them up, in case of the North-West or the Far East it is Russian border territories to be 'swallowed up' (not necessarily militarily, but economically or culturally).

Yet the difference between the North-West and Far East could be discerned. It rests on border regions' attitudes towards the outside environment. North-West regions seem to be more adherent to cooperation compared with the center. That's why Moscow is rather watchful of regions' external contacts. Moscow seems to be rather sensitive to any direct contacts between Kaliningrad and the outside world. Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov warned that it is necessary to stop any attempts to deal with Kaliningrad bypassing the federal center.^{ccvi} On the contrary, Far Eastern border regions authorities have positioned themselves more protective than the center. They opposed border demarcation, some initiatives to boost cross-border cooperation, launched an anti-Chinese campaign, etc.

THE INFLUENCE 'FROM BELOW' ON CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN A TOP-DOWN MANNER.

Russian border regions could influence on decision-making on top-down cross-border cooperation.

In the framework of the Russian-Mongolian Intergovernmental commission on commercial, economic, scientific and technical cooperation there is a special sub-commission on interregional and cross-border cooperation. There is a special Russian-Chinese working group on interregional and cross-border cooperation. Regional authorities attend these meetings.

However, the degree regions could influence on decisions of different commissions and working groups on interregional and cross-border cooperation is unclear. There is no legal framework and the influence is informal. Besides, the Altay Republic authorities, for example, argue that the region is not involved in working groups

(sub-commission) of Intergovernmental commissions between Russia and adjacent countries (China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia).^{ccvii} Yet, as foreign policy was the domain exclusively of states, it is important to evaluate not only the present capabilities of border regions, but also the trend of regional powers development. Nowadays, this trend is about the expansion of border regions presence in the outside environment and influence on the decisions that go beyond national borders. In this regard, even that Russian border regions are allowed to attend meetings of intergovernmental working groups (at the level of state representatives) on cross-border cooperation is a good sign. In the same way, that heads of both sides of Euregio Karelia gained a voice for the first time at a meeting of the Near Area Co-operation Committee (Finland and Russia) at the state level in 1999 in Moscow^{ccviii} should be treated as a positive move.

HARMONIZING BOTTOM-UP AND TOP-DOWN INITIATIVES.

Cross-border cooperation is a mix of high and low politics realms. On the one hand, border regions are dependent on national authorities for a general framework to develop cross-border cooperation. The Orenburg Oblast authorities argue that in most cases border regions do not have enough powers, and a regional initiative to be carried out needs that central authorities of both countries and ministries of Russia establish a general framework.^{ccix} Heikki Eskelinen and Merja Kokkonen argue that the extent to which border regions 'are able to link their mutual cooperation to structures and lines of action at different spatial levels, from the local to the multinational' is really important. 'In Russia, the Republic of Karelia might strive for a role as a kind of free economic zone next to the border. However, [...] it would need coherent policy support from the Federation'.^{ccx}

Interestingly, even to some minor decisions the authorization of central authorities is necessary. For example, to build a bridge over the Amour river so that to foster cross-border cooperation some international agreements on a simplified procedure for workers to cross the border were concluded between Russia and China.

On the other hand, bottom-up approaches complement top-down initiatives. For example, the Karelia Republic authorities argue that regional initiative to set up a Euregio was a local response and contribution to the EU's Northern Dimension.^{ccxi} The Euregio Karelia Management Committee developed a program eKarelia as a local

follow-up to reflect the Northern eDimension on the territory of Euregio Karelia.^{ccxii}

In fact, the top-down and bottom-up approaches towards cooperation are tied up making a network of governmental (central, regional, municipal), economic and cultural actors.

CROSS-BORDER REGIONALIZATION.

Some scholars have described the degrees of region-ness and stages of region-building. My goal is more modest. I will point out some facts of the region-building processes on Russia's borders.

Cross-border (or transcending the border) regionalization refers in this subchapter to the increase in economic, social and cultural cohesion, the rise in cross-border community's 'we-ness' and actorness. This cross-border formation could cover border areas of two or more adjacent countries involved. This sort of regionalization stems from cross-border activities and its evolution is dependent on the forms of cross-border cooperation. The logic here is similar to the Euregio development in the way it was described by Tarja Cronberg^{ccxiii}:

On the lowest level it is an information process where the regional representatives inform each other of important cross-border topics. In the maximum case an Euregio may have a common decision-making body elected directly by the local government representatives and with authority over common finances.

First, there is more understanding on both sides of the border that alienation should be replaced by partnership.

There is more comprehension that *it is better to cooperate rather than to confront*. Russia moves from unilateral decisions to the cooperative approach to solve its problems in the Baltic Sea region. Russia proposed to enhance the loading up of Russian ports through reaching arrangements with Lithuania on specialization of ports in Kaliningrad and Baltiisk, on the one hand, and Klaipeda, on the other. It is worth mentioning that the core of goods moving through the Baltic sea ports are Russian and certain attempts to reroute the flows are under way. The arrangements will make Russia and Lithuania not to compete, but to develop the ports hand in hand. Russian minister of transport, Sergey Frank, noted that there is no way to full the Kaliningrad Oblast's ports up to their capacities unless the interests of Lithuania in loading Klaipeda are taken into account. This in turn may help Moscow succeed in persuading the Lithuanian side to reduce railroad tariffs.^{ccxiv}

There is *more respect for the other side's interests and perceptions*. In some cases Russian regional authorities are prepared to put aside a chosen means to meet a challenge if it infringes upon the interests or strengthens phobias and fears of an adjacent country. For example, the Orenburg Oblast authorities are highly concerned about migration from Kazakhstan and wanted Cossacks to patrol the border. This decision was opposed in Kazakhstan and there was even a special note by the Kazakhstan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a result, regional authorities put this idea aside and called for a common solution of border problems.^{CCXV}

Neither roads nor economic interdependence could be as important as trust to foster cross-border cooperation. Even more, the lack of trust makes these roads and interdependence be challenges. For example, the Baltic countries have sought to reorient their foreign trade dependence on Russia as they hardly perceive it as a friend. Some Russian officials both in the Far East and in the North-West are rather suspicious about cross-border initiatives and perceive them as an attempt to turn Russian border territories into 'raw-appendixes' of adjacent countries. *Trust building* is really important.

Second, there have been some cooperative arrangements and joint paradiplomatic activities that resulted in different patterns of action to increase economic, informational and cultural interdependence within cross-border communities.

- Euroregions phenomenon is a very interesting example of cross-border cooperation at the grass-root level. Euroregion Karelia was created on 24 February 2000 under the auspices of the European Commission to develop a mechanism for regional cooperation. Tarja Cronberg, former Executive Director of the Regional Council of North Karelia, notes that euroregion is a cross-border formation to promote co-operation 'in the field of economy, infra-structure, social activities, cultural cooperation and administrative practices'. 'The authority of an Euregio stems from the regional administration's will to co-operate with a neighbor and from a recognition that the future of two adjacent areas is not independent from each other'.^{CCXVI} The authorities of the Russian republic of Karelia define the Euregio Karelia as a set of cooperative cross-border projects on environment, transport, tourism, etc.^{CCXVII} Kaliningrad is involved in Euroregions like 'Baltic' and 'Saule'. Besides, most other border regions are tempted to develop euroregions. The Pskov and Leningrad

Oblasts have considered to establish Euroregions on the border with Latvia, Estonia, and Belarus.^{ccxviii} The idea was rather popular on the Russian-Ukrainian border as well.

- The feature of the Russian-Chinese border is trade centers. There are some trade centers on the Chinese side and Russian border residents are allowed to visit them visa-free. The same procedure will be spread onto the Chinese as soon as centers on the Russian side are open. The Primorskii Krai and the Heilongjiang province decided to develop Heihe-Blagoveshchensk and Suifenhe-Pogranichnyi border centers to boost cross-border cooperation. These centers are believed to evolve into Russian-Chinese free trade zones or duty-free zones. In March 2002, the Primorskii Krai administration and the Heilongjiang authorities proclaimed the Suifenhe-Pogranichnyi center as one of their priorities. There are a few stages to build these border trade complexes. During the first stage, which should take about 2-3 years, the Russians will build a business center with exhibition halls for trade shows, customs warehouses, administrative offices, basic infrastructure, and a parking lot. The second stage of construction will consist of an automobile and passenger entry point, hotels, campgrounds, restaurants, sports centers for kids, and winter recreation facilities. During the third stage, Russian and foreign investors will be invited to build various types of production facilities, including food processing, lumber mills, textile manufactures, electronic goods, and any other type of industry.^{ccxix} There is supposed to be a simplified regime to cross the border to these complexes.
- Belgorod and Kharkov regions have established a Russian-Ukrainian trade corporation; in the similar way, an association to promote Russian-Kazakhstan cooperation has been established.
- Regional Commercial-Industrial Chambers cooperate to provide border regions of adjacent countries with adequate and updated information about the state of affairs in the economic and political fields, data on enterprises and production in neighboring regions. This is the case of almost all border regions.
- In 1995 border regions of Russia and Ukraine set up a newspaper for these regions. However, this initiative failed economically as most residents were primarily interested to read about what had happened in their territories or in their country.^{ccxx}
- Tarja Cronberg argues that 'for Euregio Karelia the cultural heritage is a bridge enabling mental border crossings such as the

promotion of a common musical instrument, common songs and common habits and customs for example in food'.^{ccxxi} There is the revival of the Russian language in Finish border areas. The Finish language is more popular on the Russian side of the border. The official site of the Karelia republic is not only in Russian and English, but in Finish as well. Cross-border activities are carried out in Russian and Finish, never in English.^{ccxxii}

Third, state border within community is fading away.

- A. it is reached by the increase in transcending the border flows. Border is not discerned under the increase in the volume of trade, migration, financial transactions, etc.
- B. Border is getting more permeable. More and more border crossing facilities are established and they are conceived not to strengthen the border control, but to pave the way for cooperation. Curiously, whereas on the Russian border a number of multilateral BCPs is low indeed, there are a lot of bilateral interim BCPs to boost cooperation with neighboring territories. Besides, there are some openings only for cross-border cooperation like special regimes for border residents to cross the border.

Forth, there is a trend of the raising of a specific awareness of 'us' and the shaping of the 'we-hood' within cross-border entities.

- Close kinship relations between Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians have cultivated local identities that straddle the new borders and bind together regions on both sides of the border.^{ccxxiii}
- Some border regions perceive themselves as part of a cross-border communities rather than firmly pitched into statist landscape entities. They pursue their own interests which are in line with those of this transnational community rather than those of state. For example, in 1996 regions bordering Ukraine opposed the introduction by Russia of new regulations on VAT. Besides, the Russian-Ukrainian-Belarusian Council of border regions heads addressed to central governments to sign up a treaty on the economic Union, set up a free trade regime.
- The Finish chairman for the Euregio Karelia Management Committee tried to bring Russian counterparts in decision-making on not-for-Russians funds. In this regard, we can speak about a very strong feeling of belongingness to the cross-border formation.

Yet the shaping of the we-ness is hardly the case of the Russian-Chinese border where the 'othering' is rather strong.

Fifth, the horizontal spill-over leads to the vertical one. There appear regional organizations like:

- The Republic of Karelia and the regions of Murmansk and Arkhangelsk are members of the *Regional Council of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region*. The *Council of Baltic Sea States* works at the inter-ministerial level, but national delegations involve regional representatives though. They could present their own point of view. *BSSSC* includes regional administrations.
- In Tarja Cronberg words, 'the *Euregio Karelia Management Committee* is a new subject of foreign policy'.^{ccxxiv}
- The Pskov Oblast is involved in the *Council on border territories of Latvia, Russia and Estonia*. It covers 9 districts of these states.
- In January 1994 the *Council of Border Regions Heads* was established. Initially there were 5 Russian and 5 Ukrainian regions. Later in 1996 3 Belarusian regions bordering on Russia joined it. Besides, new members from Russia and Ukraine emerged, although these newcomers are inland regions. However, the problems is that Council's decisions are nothing but recommendations. Members could follow them, but decisions are not compulsory.

Conclusions

The Russian border policy is a mix of Moscow and border regions' policies.

First of all, there is difference between center and regions' prioritization of border issues.

Surprisingly, central authorities seem to be rather uninterested in borders:

- the discourses developed by authorities are rather poorly conceptualized. Authorities prove to be even inconsistent in their approach towards the border and border discourses: in some cases they stand for an open entry border, in some cases they are rather protective.
- the defining and tackling of borders was very often negligible for Moscow.
- that central authorities have expressed little interest in borders is proved by the fact that border is not the issue in federative relationships. It seems that since more than a half Russian regions have border location, this feature is to be reflected in special privileges, legislation, policies, etc. However, for a long time there have been neither the negative nor the positive emphasis of central authorities on border regions.
- even to the cross-border cooperation in the bottom-up manner Moscow had to react to as *fait accompli*.

Partly, it could be explained by the fact that center was preoccupied with other (more essential for it) problems. There was a strong political strife within the country for power. The very political regime in Russia was at stake: whether the Democrats would manage to have the upper hand or not. All other issues were neglected. Besides, Moscow's reluctance to approach some border issues is underpinned by its empire's thinking. That's why border as a line that demarcates and encloses the territory of the state was marginalized for other goals and priorities. In the federative relations border regions were given no essential powers as from Moscow's perspective they remain peripheries.

Border regions in contrast to Moscow seem to be more concerned about the border. However, due to the variety of border regions there are different practices of managing the plethora of arising challenges and cross-border cooperation patterns.

Second, the way border regions and center deal with various border issues could be presented in the following way.

	Moscow	Border regions
Discourses	<p>Central authorities seem inconsistent in their approach towards borders and border regions. However, some arguments could be discerned. First, Moscow is embedded in strategic partnerships rhetoric and neglects low politics challenges. Second, Moscow is ambiguous over the issue whether border is a barrier. On the one hand, Moscow prefers to solve its economic problems through raising customs duties. On the other hand, Moscow stands for cross-border activities. In any case, Moscow is eager to use border tariffs as its geopolitical instruments vis-a-vis adjacent countries.</p>	<p>There is multiplicity of discourses. First, region might develop different discourses. It could be protective and open simultaneously. Besides, there are many regions with different perceptions. A few new border regions conceptualize the border in pre-modern terms. Some southern border regions are anxious about migration and perceive it as a territorial challenge. They and those concerned about border demarcation are embedded in the modern thinking. There are also some intentions to get out of the territorial trap and to develop spatial identities. It has been most vividly the case in the Russian North-West and in some new border regions.</p>
Border demarcation, cooperation and control	<p>A certain re-territorialization occurs as Russia is engaged in defining borders with former Soviet republics and some 'old' neighbors. However, de-territorialization of the border could be discerned as well.</p> <p>1. The border demarcation</p>	<p>Most border regions have sought to influence border demarcation. Regional authorities have been more reluctant to do any concessions. The reason is that center driven by geopolitical considerations agreed on some territorial losses to gain strategically. On the contrary, most</p>

	<p>has been deprived of its territorial meaning to be exploited to reach other goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moscow has sought to solve border problems as soon as possible or at least to downgrade border problems to make a neighboring country a strategic partner (China, Kazakhstan). - The issue of defining the border is at the top of agenda, though not as a territorial but as a geopolitical issue. The issue of the Russian border with Baltic countries was used by Moscow to hamper their accession to other entities. - For a long time Moscow refused to pay attention to borders within the CIS. Russia was reluctant to have any border guarding with CIS countries. The reason was that some policy-makers in Moscow were captive to the idea of reviving a new state in the post-Soviet space. <p>2. Border control and cooperation are not the binary oppositions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A tough border control does not exclude 	<p>regions were pitched into the territorial thinking. It has been the case of all borders, the degree is different though. In the North-West cross-border cooperation between Russian border regions and neighboring countries enabled to de-territorialize the border. Territorial claims were left behind in favor of cooperation. However, the Far Eastern border regions remain cautious about cross-border cooperation and tend to perceive it as threatening the territorial integrity.</p> <p>A certain de-territorialization in terms of control is as well underway. There remains a border as a line in terrain. There is a growing comprehension that present-day challenges (e.g. illegal migration, smuggling, environmental risks) can not be stopped straight at the border. Cooperation on control should be developed with the external and internal milieus. Cooperation externally means contacts with adjacent countries on the matters of border control. Cooperation internally requires Moscow to work hand-in-hand with border regions. Border</p>
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	<p>cooperation across the border. As the meaning of the border has changed, cross-border activities flourish regardless the control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - De-territorialization of the border occurs in terms of control. Countries need cooperation to meet new challenges that transcend the border. A border shall be well-controlled so that to stop illegal activities. But it means not alienation, but cooperation between the adjacent countries. - Border fades away not only under the rise in transborder activities but as such – it is being ‘erased’. 	<p>regions are involved in such border issues as border guarding, meeting the transnational challenges, etc.</p> <p>Besides, a well-controlled border hampers illegal activities and thus there is no ground for border residents’ phobias and fears about the outsiders. This in turn fosters cross-border flows and activities.</p> <p>Finally, there is de-territorialization as border fades away. It takes place not only in the sense that there is a rise in cross-border activities but border really disappears. There are more and more openings like BCPs and visa-free regimes or regimes with a simplified procedure. The comprehension of regional authorities that they could benefit from opening up the border is growing. Border regions initiate BCPs and lobby for non-visa regimes for border residents to foster cross-border cooperation.</p>
<p>Russian federative legislation and policies.</p>	<p>In the federative relationships border regions have made little success to get more powers. The difference between the border and inland regions remains rather vague. It means that there is little room for border regions’</p>	<p>Border regions face specific challenges and call for additional powers. They have specific opportunities and seek more freedom to realize them. However, the border status is not the issue in the federative relationships. Yet, the</p>

	<p>subjectivity <i>de jure</i>. Moreover, center is rather watchful of regions' activities beyond national borders and, thus, hampers regional actorness development <i>de facto</i>. Regions' needs are neglected. Border regions are still regarded as peripheries.</p> <p>I accept that some border regions have been called by Russia as 'bridges' and 'windows'. At a quick glance these regions have drawn more Moscow's attention than the rest regions and are even given some advantages. However, they remind of outposts of the Russian empire. They are allowed to be partly pitched into the outside environment. But, first, their greater freedom in relationships with the external actors is rather illusory. Regions' interests are easily neglected, when they contradict Moscow's goals. Second, these border regions are supposed to be springboards for Moscow in the outside. They are exploited by Moscow for its geopolitical goals</p>	<p>border republics are treated with more care than inland republics.</p> <p>However, border regions in general differ from other regions <i>de jure</i> to a certain extent. They are engaged in the domains other regions are not: border regions have some powers and duties related to border demarcation and guarding; they are exposed to the specific outside challenges and possess more regional legislation on these issues as well as messages sent to the center in order to meet the challenges.</p> <p>On the whole, regions have more autonomy compared to the Soviet times. Border regions may be even more outside Moscow's realm than inland regions if they capitalize on their border location well.</p> <p>Some border regions aspire to be more outside than inside Russia and quite succeed doing it. However, there are as well those that did not change their state-oriented thinking and those that failed to integrate into the outside environment.</p>
Cross-border cooper	The cross-border cooperation which transcends the fixed border	Although, some new border regions hardly come to understanding the

<p>ation.</p>	<p>and blurs the distinction between the internal and external is treated differently. Moscow's approach to cross-border cooperation is based on the geopolitical considerations. Moscow has approved of cross-border cooperation in the post-Soviet space where in terms of imperial thinking it is Russia to 'swallow' up the adjacent territories. On the contrary, Moscow has been rather concerned about the North-West where it is Russian border territories to be 'swallowed up' (not militarily, but economically or culturally).</p>	<p>opportunities of their border location, most other obstacles are about different interest or structural differences. Most regions seek closer relationships with the outside partners. There are several ways for border regions to capitalize on the border location. Cross-border cooperation has boosted across the old borders. The North-West border regions seem to be most advanced in terms of innovative practices. However, there are some features of cross-border cooperation patterns on the Russian-Chinese border as well. The new borders are witnessing the deepest engagement in the bottom-up cross-border cooperation constructed by social practices emanating from the routines of everyday life. However, as sooner or later the 'illusory' borders between Russia and former Soviet republics will evolve into the real ones, the successful experience of the old borders will be addressed.</p>
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Appendix. RESEARCH ON RUSSIAN BORDER REGIONS.

Papers and books on border regions and border are relatively scarce in Russia.

Borders and border regions are covered unevenly. Some borders have received much attention whereas the others have been out of researchers' sight.

In terms of the most elaborated regions I can distinguish:

1. the Russian North-West
2. the Far East
3. regions bordering on Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan
4. regions in the North Caucasus and those bordering on Mongolia.

The North-West regions are interested due to a few reasons:

- 1) its closeness to the EU and consequences of the EU enlargement

First of all, the Kaliningrad Oblast has been an object of many papers, articles, books, etc. The region is going to be inside the enlarged EU. Many existing practices will be changed. Researchers have had the opportunity to deal with the 'Kaliningrad puzzle' in different ways and to offer various solutions.

- 2) in terms of northerness and baltitudes, europeanness;

These works are on the emerging identities of Russian regions (Joenniemi; Oldberg; Oldberg and Hendesken; Morozov).

- 3) NATO and other security issues;

Russian North-West was a bastion during the Cold War. However, now the threats are no longer only military and state-based. Works in this section mainly reflect the changes in security issues. Often the hard and soft security challenges are compared, the strategic importance of Russian border regions is evaluated (Oldberg and Hendesken; Segounin).

- 4) practices to follow:

– These border regions are more advanced in the development of relations with the external environment than other regions. Kaliningrad is a classic case: there is rather difficult to draw lines between the internal and external. That's why there are many works on this region. However, other regions like Karelia also call attention. The historical commonness with Finland enables cooperation to be

developed. Finally, there are EU's programs to develop cross-border cooperation.

- different innovative policies that could be later spread onto the other regions. Euroregions is a good example. Karelia, in this regard, is very interesting. Besides, the SEZ in the Kaliningrad region (as well as in the Primorskii Krai bordering on China) are often referred to by authorities of other regions.

Some works are devoted specially to identity and discourse issues: Morozov (St.Petersburg), Joenniemi (St.Petersburg), Oldberg (Kaliningrad), Marin (Karelia); on Russian center-regions relationships Sergounin, Makarychev, Anisimov and Karmanov; on border practices: Fairlie (Kaliningrad), Cronberg, Paasi, Eskelinen and Kokkonen (Finish-Russian border). There are some works on particular regions: Cronberg, Reut and Alexandrov (Karelia), Tkachenko (St.Petersburg), Hendeskog and Oldberg (some North-West regions), Marin (a few North-West regions and Karelia particularly).

Russian Far East border regions are also reflected in works of some scholars. The bulk of works is on migration. The major issues are illegal and legal migrations, whether migration is beneficial or not for Russia as a whole and border regions particularly. These works could draw readers' attention to discourses in the Far Eastern border regions and those who shape them. For example, migration could be approached differently by actors. Some works include the attitudes to migration of local residents, regional authorities, experts, Moscow authorities and etc. Thus, readers could learn about different discourses and their producers. Besides, as some scholars prefer to study the influence of migration on a particular region, it is possible to distinguish some regional peculiarities (see Dyatlov, Filonov, Khodakov).

There are some works on cooperation across the border. The Primorskii Krai has been the most interested case. Alexseev partly touches this issue. Larin focuses on the external relations of the Primorskii Krai and the cross-border initiatives the region has been involved. Border demarcation, and difference in center and regions's approaches to China are covered by David Kerr, Olga Romanova.

There are some papers on the Russian regions bordering on Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus. However, the Russian North-

West and Far East are widely discussed themes, there are some topical issues to attract attention. The regions bordering on Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus face some specific problems. But they have not been politicized and are rarely discussed in Russia.

Kazakhstan has attracted the most attention among the three countries. The reason is that the Russian-Kazakhstan border lacks any control. It is the worst equipped border. There are some publications devoted to border delimitation and guarding (Chebotarev; Kurtov).

Besides, Russian border regions as the Far Eastern regions are exposed to migration from the outside. Therefore, there are many works on the consequences of migration. As in the case of the Far East we could distinguish different discourses, arguments (Amelin, Gorshenin, Kosach). There are some works on the cross-border cooperation initiatives (Gorshenin).

Most authors prefer to focus on a particular region and describe a wide array of issue relevant to this region: the Belgorod Oblast (Kolossova), the Volgograd Oblast (Golunov), the Novosibirsk Oblast (Olekhnich), the Kursk Oblast (Sarychev).

North Caucasus is poorly reflected in research on borders, although this region seems to be very interesting. For example, the Russian-Georgian border crossing regulations are really diverse. There are many multiethnic republics and loyalties across the border. However, most attention is given, first, to Chechnya (not in terms of border, but through Moscow-Chechnya relationships prism); second, to multiethnic regions (again the ethnic factor is reflected like ethnic tensions within republics, whereas border is neglected).

Scarcely is covered the Russian-Mongolian border. This border is an old one but in terms of the border meaning and border guarding it is closer to new borders. Although the Russian-Mongolian border is a unique case as it belongs neither to new nor to old regions in full, it is peripheralized in Russia. Little research has been conducted (Homushku, Huruma).

The issue of border and border regions discourses is an interesting one. However, most scholars write only about discourses. Much fewer works speak about those who shape the discourses within regions: the North-West (Makarychev; Joenniemi, Oldberg), Far Eastern regions (Romanova; Alexseev), the Volgograd Oblast

(Golunov). Besides, most works could be characterized by the fact, that as researchers seek to reflect all discourses, a dominant discourse is given equal attention to a non-popular discourse. As a result, readers could be confused to understand what discourse dominates.

There are as well works that give a whole picture of Russian regions. Nicholson and Melvin describe all Russian regions in general and rather evenly. However, in Russia and abroad a lot of scholars have studied the Russian North-West. There is a lot of material, both facts and theoretical insights. In this regard, Nicholson and Melvin's works seem rather simplistic while describing the Russian North-West. Yet, as there is little research, say, on the North-Caucasus, their works look very elaborated. At least, they could help draw a general picture of the Russian border regions.

Treisman is good at the federalism development in Russia. Besides, Nizhniy Novgorod in Russia boast its regionalism school. Many books have been published. There have been 3 national congresses on federalism and regionalism development in Russia.

Who conducts research on Russian border regions :

First, authorities.

There are two reasons why authorities are interesting. First, they express official opinions, give official perceptions, arguments, demonstrate fears and phobias. In this regard, one can describe their identities and discourses. Second, whereas borders have been studied unevenly, regional authorities could provide necessary information about a border region. In the North-West researchers actively look for solutions to the problems regions face, point to different challenges and offer scenarios to meet them. However, peculiarities of some borders are not reflected in the academic circles. On these borders regional authorities are the only who know about the problems. There might be also those who conduct some research there, but their names and works are unknown. However, one should not be very enthusiastic about Russian authorities. They mainly possess only factual material and are very short of any conceptual understanding.

Authorities' engagement:

a. various concepts, strategies. There is a Russian-wide Concept of cross-border cooperation. However, rarely are there regional concepts on cross-border cooperation like Concept of Cross-

Border Cooperation written in the Karelia Republic. Even if some regional authorities conceptualize the way region will develop, most of these strategies are on a wide range of issues that concern region's development in all fields: Strategy of the Belgorod Oblast Development, Strategic Plan of the Saratov Oblast Development, etc. Besides, as it has been mentioned in previous chapters, the issue of border location could be even omitted or treated in a too general way.

- b. publications. Some public servants who are in charge of cross-border cooperation (or regional external relations or even authorities in general) have expressed their views in some books, conference proceedings, newspapers, magazines, etc: Sergei Gorshenin (deputy of the head and then head of the Orenburg Oblast Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations); Islam Berkmuzaev (Consultant of Dagestan Government Head); Venaliy Amelin (head of Committee on Nationalities of the Orenburg Oblast administration); Gukov, V.; Davydenkov, P. and Smirnov N. (the Irkutsk Oblast administration); Alexander Kuzich (Vice-governor of the Primorskii Krai), Valerii Shljamin (the Karelia Republic authorities)
- c. conferences. The Orenburg authorities have conducted several conferences on issues related to border like on cross-border cooperation, customs office, etc. So has the Kaliningrad Oblast. As officials from other regions attend these conferences they provide information about the border regions authorities discourses within which they prefer to speak on a wide range of issues, about the problems and initiatives (see, for example, Prigranichnye territorii: opyt i perspektiva. Orenburg: Orenburgskoe knizhnoe izdatelstvo).

Second, scholars (see above for the names).

Third, organizations, institutes.

- Monitoring: East-West Institute issues a Russian Regional Report. There are some contributions on border issues in its weekly reports. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty also provides a weekly review of news and analysis of Russian domestic politics. Sometimes one may come across border issues if they have been raised in Russia. A good thing is that reports of both the East-West Institute and RFE/RL are in English and are written by special correspondents in regions.

- Research. Some Russian think tanks have conducted research in which issues related to border have been observed (see, for example, SVOP <http://www.svop.ru> – Council on Foreign and Defense Policy; Center for Strategic Research – <http://www.csr.ru> and particularly its North-West branch – <http://www.csr-nw.ru>). In most cases some Russian scholars cooperate to do a concrete project on borders. It is nothing but a combination *ad hoc*. However, in Russia most papers on border areas are occasional. There is hardly any long-term project.
- Research. Non-Russian centers have expressed their interest in Russian border regions (Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University; Peipsi Center in Tartu, etc). For example, Zurich-based Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research has published a series ‘Regionalization of Russian Foreign and Security policies’ where some border regions are described. The Japan Institute of International Affairs has conducted some research on Russian border regions. Among COPRI publications there are many works on border regions. These publications offer a good theoretical background and insights with a very tidy argumentation. However, most centers have a very limited geographical area of Russia covered in their research (like only North-West or Far East).
- Research: Centers at Russian Universities. Since 2001 there has been a special program to establish Inter-regional Institutes of Social Sciences in Russian universities. This program provides funding. Curiously, more than half of the grant-recipients are located in border regions. Although none of them have made their border location the major topic of their center’s research, some border issues are reflected in projects and publications made by these centers.
- There are some hybrid projects where there is monitoring on a particular issue with some theoretical insights. The Center for Security Studies at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), the Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC) at American University in Washington, DC, and the East-West Institute have agreed to jointly produce the Russian Regional Report (RRR) once every two weeks.

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