

# Globalization and the Geopolitical Dynamics in the Baltic Region

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The main result of the previous social development – both in global aspect and in the aspect of the 20<sup>th</sup> century completion – is the formation of the global mankind as an integrated system of material and technical, social and political, spiritual and cultural interaction. The dynamics of the preglobal world was determined by the existence of free social ties and free geographical and social space, of geographical and social fragmentation.

The notion of globalization is a social notion which means the expansion of some phenomenon's sphere up to the scale of universality of human life. Until recently the problem was limited by the globalization of human impact on the environment which lead to its exhaustion and pollution in the process of material production or in some other kind of impact – in military purposes, for example. Now we can speak of globalization in technics, economics, politics, social and spiritual spheres, i.e. of globalization of social life as a whole, but, first of all, of economics. In all of its indices the society is transformed into the integrated system, the elements of which are connected with each other.

The notion of globalization means that the society reaches some utmost condition which is possible in the existing mode of reproduction of its vital functions. First, it is the exhaustion of the material production, the disclosure of its limits in resources and technology without the alternative in the material and technical development. Second, in the process of social interaction, of the struggle for the vital space the communities have nowhere to spread or to retreat without colliding with other communities – the human kind has closed up in the limited space.

Accelerated growth of the material and technical activity manifests itself in the constant increase in the amount of transportation – in the growing amount and distances of transfer of solid, dry, liquid and gaseous materials, electric energy and information. It seems that the globalization of economy, interpreted as a formation of the integrated economic system of the world, and scientific and technical achievements will optimize the material and technical activity and help to avoid unnecessary expenditures of transporting different elements of production in opposite

directions. That is, economy must locate itself on the basis of using the resources which are the closest to the production and in this way achieve the highest possible effectiveness. But the global economy implies the global interdependence and interaction but doesn't mean the united economy. In other words, the globalization of world economy doesn't lead to its total rationalization because of the surviving great number of counteracting economic centers. In this respect the main parameter of material and technical development still is the preservation and growth of the transportation in opposite directions, when the raw materials move in one direction and the consumer goods – in opposite direction, and this fact demonstrates the division of the world into the dominant and subordinated parts.

In the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries the strategic idea of creating the great transcontinental transport corridor from Saint-Petersburg to the Pacific Ocean (Far East, Chukotka) became rather widely spread. This corridor was meant to unite several railroads and highways, oil and gas pipelines, power and information transmission lines all of which would be united in one plait with many branches and would form one global transport network, connecting Europe, Asia and America. The implementation of such project will allow Russia the full-scale involvement of the Siberian resources into the world economic circulation. The wide line of the civilization can be built across the country, which would function as the civilizing pivot, the backbone of Russia's integrity.

It is important to mention here, that Siberia should not be regarded only as a source of natural resources or transit territory, although its development purely as a supplier of resources has a promising perspective taking into account the involvement into the economic circulation some new natural elements of strategic importance (fresh water, for example). Siberia will inevitably acquire all of the production elements that are necessary to support the typical standards of life. It is possible for Siberia to be transformed into another civilized region, comparable in its scale with Europe and America and at the same time producing the image of future civilization, the potential "Siberian wonder". The major technological condition of implementing this possibility into reality is the transport connection of Siberia with the world economy. As for the demographic, social, economic and political factors of Siberia's development – the optimal variant of its transformation should be regarded within the framework of transforming Russia as a whole.

Certainly, in historical retrospective we can speculatively assume a scenario according to which the geopolitical formation of Euroasia would take place on the basis of state integration within the entire North-West of Europe from Scandinavia to

the southern borders of the present day Leningrad region with the domination of Sweden. What is important here is the fact that the assimilation of the lands in the East - up to the Pacific Ocean including even the part on the American continent – was predetermined by geopolitical configuration of Europe in the 17<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> centuries. More civilized Western Europe was beyond reach for the appearing new empire, only the way to the East was open. Therefore, independently from the diversity of forms and results of the historical processes in the Baltic region one fact was always invariable – in any case the Baltic region was the starting point of spreading the European civilization in eastern direction up to the meeting point with its western wing. Furthermore, the formation of new empire in Russia's execution turned out to be objectively inevitable.

Thus, it is the modern geopolitical dynamics of the Baltic region that the tendencies and the perspectives of the development of Siberia are formed, and at the same time the possible future for Russia is determined. The Baltic region as a leading element of the new global transport system is able to become the gigantic connecting sluice, which brings Europe and Asia into one technological unity. The wider this intercontinental corridor, the higher its carrying capacity – the closer the integration of the Baltic countries within the united production and transportation complex must be and the greater degree of economic and political integrity Russia must have. Accordingly, there is an inverse relationship between the Baltic region development and its participation in this Euroasian project. In the long run this problem means a certain technological vision of the future.

In the end, I must note that the ecological aspect of this project, connected with the division of Eurasian continent into two parts, is very important and demands special consideration. Unpredictable problems of violating the permafrost mode, melting of the Arctic ice, pollution of lake Baikal, reduction of the forest land and many other man-caused problems correlate in their contents and scale with the geopolitical dynamics in the Baltic region. In its turn, the ecological burden on this region is in direct proportion with the transport and economic burden from the eastern side. But the ecological problems are not the direct subject of discussion in this report.

*The general theoretical conclusion:*

Geohistorical communities (states) are formed in accordance with the material and technical development, which determines the territory's resources, the infrastructure of its production and the level of the community's development in its ability to provide for its life, maintain and expand its territory. Due to the scientific and technical progress there is a contradiction between the geopolitical configuration of the

communities in one region and technical and economical expediency of its development as a whole. Globalization leads to the solution of this contradiction, creates possibilities to optimize the material and technical development. The Baltic region gives a good example of the tendency to form a new geopolitical configuration, which allows us to use its resources more effectively. But the implementation of this tendency necessarily leads either to the redistribution of the geopolitical roles of the countries in the region including the redistribution of the territories, or to the formation of the new geopolitical structure on the basis of the existing community. For Russia this process makes a part in its integration into Europe, and at the same time both ways are connected with the problem of its economic and political integrity.