



FROM 'ANCIENT SLAVIALAND' TO 'PARADISE LOST': THE REHABILITATION OF THE HISTORICAL HERITAGE IN KALININGRAD (LATE 1940S TO EARLY 1980S)

Ilya Dementyev

Abstract

The paper characterises the several-decades-long process of rehabilitation of the prewar cultural heritage in the Kaliningrad. After the northern part of the former East Prussia (Königsberg, and since 1946, the Kaliningrad Oblast) had been annexed by the USSR, and after basically a total change of the population had taken place, the authorities started to Sovietise the region. Knowledge of the prewar past was prohibited from the very beginning, and Stalin-era propaganda formed the founding myth of the Kaliningrad region with reference to the notion of 'a Slavic land from time immemorial'. Despite the significant shifts that took place in the process of research into the history of the Kaliningrad Oblast during the Soviet period, carried out by historians from Russia and other countries, the adaptation by the postwar settlers to the socio-cultural landscape remains a poorly researched theme. The paper argues that the rehabilitation of the prewar (and primarily German) cultural heritage took place all through the Soviet era, by gradually converting the initially alien environment into their own. Ultimately, a fundamental shift took place in the cultural memory of Kaliningrad's inhabitants; from the fear of staying 'in an empty land', they moved to the compatibility of 'memory and desire': the understanding that the metaphor of 'paradise lost', which revealed the nostalgia of the former inhabitants of East Prussia, also defined the feelings of Kaliningrad residents for the land that had become their home.

Key words: Kaliningrad Oblast, cultural heritage, cultural memory, space appropriation.

Anotacija

Straipsnyje apibūdinamas kelis dešimtmečius tęsėsis ikikarinio kultūros palikimo reabilitacijos procesas Kaliningrade. Šiaurinę buvusios Rytų Prūsijos dalį (Königsbergo (nuo 1946 m. Kaliningrado) sritį) prijungus prie TSRS ir įvykus iš esmės totaliai gyventojų kaitai, valdžia ėmėsi regioną sovietizuoti. Iš pradžių buvo draudžiama pažinti ikikarinę krašto praeitį, o Stalino laikų propaganda Kaliningrado srities kilmės mitą formavo besiremdama samprata, kad tai esanti „nuo seniausių laikų slavų žemė“. Nepaisant reikšmingų postūmių, įvykusių Rusijos ir kitų šalių istorikams tyrinėjant tarybinį periodą Kaliningrado srities istorijoje, pokario persikėlėlių adaptavimasis prie sociokultūrinio landšafto tebelieka menkai iširta tema. Straipsnyje teigiama, kad ikikarinio (visų pirma vokiečių) kultūrinio palikimo reabilitacija vyko per visą tarybinę epochą, pamažu paverčiant iš pradžių svetimą aplinką sava. Galiausiai kaliningradiečių kultūrinėje atmintyje įvyko esminė permaina – nuo baimės dėl buvimo „tuščioje žemėje“ pereita prie „atminties ir troškimo“ suderinamumo – suvokimo, kad „prarastojo rojaus“ metafora, atskleidžianti buvusių Rytų Prūsijos gyventojų nostalgiją, apibūdina ir pačių kaliningradiečių jausmus gimtinei jiems tapusiai žemei. Pagrindiniai žodžiai: Kaliningrado sritis, kultūrinis palikimas, kultūrinė atmintis, erdvės pasisavinimas.

Ilya Dementyev (Илья Деметьев), dr. (кандидат исторических наук), associated professor (доцент), Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, Institute of Humanities, Department of History, ul. A. Nevskogo 14, Kaliningrad, 236041, Russia. Email: idementi@mail.ru

This is the dead land
 This is cactus land
 Here the stone images
 Are raised, here they receive
 The supplication of a dead man's hand
 Under the twinkle of a fading star.
 Is it like this
 In death's other kingdom
 Waking alone
 At the hour when we are
 Trembling with tenderness
 Lips that would kiss
 Form prayers to broken stone.
T. S. Eliot. The Hollow Men, III

Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch...
T.S. Eliot. The Waste Land, I

After the end of the Second World War, the most radical plan for the de-germanisation of the cultural landscape of the former northern part of East Prussia was carried out in Kaliningrad. The total change of toponyms, the destruction of many prewar buildings mainly associated with German culture, and the loss of objects of the cultural heritage took place in this new Soviet region as a consequence of the war and the preliminary postwar reconstruction.

The former East Prussia became a new home for migrants from the western regions of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. The migration process did not end during the Soviet period (1945 to 1991), but due to the absence of Germans in the region (since 1948), immigrants were faced with a new challenge, to familiarise themselves with an unknown symbolic space. The settlers saw signs with Gothic inscriptions, Lutheran churches and other buildings with unusual architecture; they used unfamiliar houseware, and had to know how the infrastructure in the cities and the drainage systems in rural areas worked. In general, their new way of life contrasted sharply with the one they used to know. The unique experience of the everyday coexistence of people with different cultural backgrounds is a subject to be explored. After the deportation of the Germans, the area was closed to foreigners until 1991. Then, however, it suddenly became clear that the banned prewar history was an object for reflection and a source of special feeling for many Soviet people who lived in the Kaliningrad region. The process of the formation and development of the historical consciousness of Kaliningrad residents is, without doubt, an important object of stu-

dy for understanding the main vectors of the history of this area during the Soviet period (1945 to 1991).

In recent years, the early history of the Kaliningrad region (sometimes scholars define this period as late Stalinism, 1945 to 1953) has become a subject of research for a wide range of authors from different countries.¹ The post-Stalin Soviet history of the Kaliningrad region (late 1950s to the late 1980s) has been less popular as a subject for professional research in Russia and abroad; however, there are a few works on this period as well.²

In this paper, I offer a general description of the gradual rehabilitation of the historic and cultural heritage in the Kaliningrad region during the ‘classic’ Soviet period, until the beginning of Perestroika. The sources for this analysis are not only officially published materials, including the press and oral history projects, but also literary sources (especially regional fiction) which still reflect many of the features of the dominant discourse. In this article, I argue that, despite the implicit official ban on the study of prewar history, residents of the Kaliningrad region used a variety of strategies to adapt to another people’s symbolic space, and to gradually integrate foreign images into their cultural memory. This transition from the image of ‘Ancient Slavialand’ to ‘Paradise Lost’ is one of the most curious phenomena in 20th-century European history.

In general, the official attitude to the past of East Prussia remained unchanged throughout the Soviet period. It was disseminated through various state institutions, including the media, schools, universities, museums, libraries, archives, and quasi-NGOs (in Soviet parlance *obshchestvennyye organizatsii*). The official discourse also determined the tone and themes for art, particularly regional fiction, drama and painting. Control over publicly expressed ideas was carried out by using both self-censorship and external institutions (the KGB and Obllit, the Department for the Protection of State Secrets in the Press). We should not underestimate the role of censorship, but a careful examination of the sources reveals that government

¹ See some recent works (here and below, I indicate only monographs and dissertations, not articles): КОСТЯШОВ, Ю. *Секретная история Калининградской области*. Калининград, 2009; McIVOR, M. C. *Soviet Policy towards the New Territories of the RSFSR, circa 1939 to 1953*. Ph.D. thesis. Cambridge, 2012.

² See some works covering the period 1945 to 1970: HOPPE, B. *Auf den Trümmern von Königsberg. Kaliningrad 1946–1970*. München, 2000; BRIDGES, D. K. *In Moscow’s Image? Creating Soviet State and Society in Kaliningrad Province, 1945–1970*. Ph. D. thesis. Charlottesville, VA, 2008; BRODERSEN, P. *Die Stadt im Westen. Wie Königsberg Kaliningrad wurde*. Göttingen, 2008. See also the comparative study on regional history: SAKSON, A. *Od Kłajpedy do Olsztyna. Współcześni mieszkańcy byłych Prus Wschodnich: Kraj Kłajpedzki, Obwód Kaliningradzki, Warmia i Mazury*. Poznań, 2011. Very important research also includes: МАТТЕС, Э. *Запрещённое воспоминание: Возвращение истории Восточной Пруссии и региональное сознание жителей Калининградской области 1945–2001* / КОСТЯШОВ, Ю. *Изгнание прусского духа: Как формировалось историческое сознание населения Калининградской области в послевоенные годы*. Калининград, 2003. Last but not least, see the thesis dedicated to the historical consciousness of Kaliningraders in the 1960s–1970s: SEZNEVA, O. *Tenacious Place, Contingent Homeland: Making History and Community in the Repopulated City of Kaliningrad*. Ph.D. thesis. New York, NY, 2005.

control was not and could not be total. The subject of the German past gradually gained legitimacy in the public discourse during the Soviet era.

The Soviet period can be retrospectively described as two simultaneous and interconnected processes. One was a gradual weakening of the *official* discourse about regional history, the other can be seen as the strengthening of an *alternative* discourse.

I suggest three stages in the formation of these two discourses about the past in the Kaliningrad region:

1. The Sovietisation of the region and the dominance of the official discourse on the past (the late 1940s to the late 1960s).
2. Limited competition of discourses on the past (late 1960s to the early 1980s).
3. Strengthening of the alternative discourse and rehabilitation of the prewar past (late 1980s).

Traditionally, the first two stages are described as times when an official ban on interest in the prewar past of the region was applied. In contrast, the last stage has numerous examples of how great the interest of inhabitants of the Kaliningrad region was to know more about Königsberg and Prussian history. So my purpose in this paper is to present the struggle of discourses in the first two stages. The touching story of the triumphal image of 'Paradise Lost' in the years of Perestroika requires an additional study as an example of social revival in the context of political liberalisation.

'Death's other kingdom': from 'Ancient Slavialand' to the *Rencontre d'autrui*

The economic bedrock for the process of the Sovietisation of the Kaliningrad region was the socialist planned economy, at the level of discourse dominated by official atheism, Socialist Realism and the idea of 'Ancient Slavialand'. Although Joseph Stalin had already formulated the thesis in 1941,³ the policy received its final legitimacy at the Tehran Conference in 1943. The official discourse was mobilised by Party propaganda, the Soviet education system and literature. Writers and lecturers referred to a fictional Slavic past that legitimised the Soviet presence and determined a bright future.

The official discourse was a bizarre combination of understatements (taboo on research into the history of the city of Königsberg, and the region as a whole) and distortions (in order to describe this, the metaphorical language included stamps like

³ As shown by Per Brodersen, it was first on 8 September 1941 when Georgi Dimitrov quoted in his diary Stalin's joke that after the victory East Prussia would be returned to the Slavs, to whom the region had previously belonged. See: BRODERSEN, P. Op. cit., S. 93.

'a nest of bandits', 'bandit stronghold of German militarism and reaction', 'a hornet's nest of fascism', 'darkest citadel of Fascist reaction', 'lair of the enemy').⁴

An opinion of the low value of the German cultural heritage spread in the postwar chaos that reigned in the city after the British bombing of 1944 and the capture of the city by the Red Army in April 1945. Initially, while the fate of the region was still undecided, the looting of property continued, and a significant amount of cultural values was lost. Leonid Arinshtein, a philologist, who participated in the storm, recalled later:

'We went to the cathedral nearby; the cathedral was completely intact, and not yet burned; then to the tomb of Kant, and for some reason I really wanted to go into the university, so we went there. The university was intact, not yet burned, and in the courtyard someone had thrown a number of books, and they (paper!) had not been burnt, and just lay in heaps. And I began to look at these books, and I thought how nice it would be to take them. One book was Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, for some reason I remember it very well. And I even kept it, but then I was not able to take it with me, so I threw it away.'⁵

In the early postwar years, the totally nihilistic attitude to German (moreover, pre-war) cultural values remained, despite the natural curiosity of people seeing the unusual architectural forms around them.

The few attempts to study the past from another point of view in the late 1940s and early 1950s are described in the 'Secret Story of the Kaliningrad Region' by Yuri Kostyashov. He showed that these attempts were either quickly suppressed or had a limited impact on public opinion.⁶ 'Admiration for the German' was strongly condemned, especially in the context of the campaign against cosmopolitanism in the late 1940s.

However, it would be incorrect to identify the official discourse as totally nihilistic. The possible limits in the representation of the past were much wider than it might seem. Even the literature of Socialist Realism, in which the problem of interaction with the inconvenient past was posed, and in a way solved, confirms this.

Writers such as Fyodor Vedin and Nadezhda Gryazeva described how Soviet archaeological science strongly supported the famous thesis of Stalin about 'Ancient Slavia-

⁴ Quoted in: КОСТЯШОВ, Ю. *Секретная история Калининградской области...*, с. 10–11.

⁵ АРИНШТЕЙН, Л. *Петух в аквариуме. Новеллы и воспоминания*. Москва, 2008, с. 81–82. This episode is a good illustration to the words of the old man in Nietzsche's book: "Damals trugst du deine Asche zu Berge: willst du heute dein Feuer in die Thäler tragen? Fürchtest du nicht des Brandstifters Strafen?" (NIETZSCHE, F. *Also sprach Zarathustra. Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen*. 4. Aufl. Leipzig, 1895, S. 10); in English translation by Thomas Common: "Then thou carriedst thine ashes into the mountains: wilt thou now carry the fire into the valleys? Fearest thou not the incendiary's doom?" (NIETZSCHE, F. *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. New York, NY, 1917, p. 4).

⁶ See: КОСТЯШОВ, Ю. *Секретная история Калининградской области...*, с. 29–45.

land'. Their works are typical examples of the emerging Soviet discourse about the past of this land.

The writer Fyodor Vedin (1918–1956), a demobilised Second World War soldier, lived in Kaliningrad for only a few years (1946 to 1951), but those years were marked by his intense literary work, culminating in the novel 'Goldmine' (the first version was in 1951; the final 1953 version was entitled 'Let the City be!').⁷ The novel covers events in the former East Prussia. One of the main characters, Alexei Hazov, is also a demobilised soldier who participated in the battles for the area, and has come to restore the city. Alexei's apprenticeship shapes the storyline of the novel. The main image that appears to the characters in the novel in the former East Prussia is the image of the cemetery, *the dead land*. The Soviet people will rebuild the region from ruins, but the prospect always contains a retrospective: new residents will be forced to define their attitude towards the past. They live and work *mixing memory and desire*, as Eliot said, but the problem was that the memory gradually bifurcated, forming a strange pair, the memory of people in other countries and the memory about the country with other people. The postwar fiction shows how the official discourse, eliminating the memory of other people in a foreign land, took shape.

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In one episode, two characters talk about the landscape⁸ outside the train window:

Somebody: 'This morning I expected to wake up in Russian territory, but it is still German [...] Where are we going?'

Alexei: 'It is Russian territory; in ancient times Slavs lived here. According to all laws, this land belongs to us [...] Look at the cemetery. Do you see the crosses there? Perhaps eight centuries ago some of your great-great-grandfathers were buried there.'

Somebody: 'And what about his city of Ryazan, was there not enough room there?''⁹

Certainly, this chronology is completely unreal, because in the mid-12th century there were no Christian burials there. It is clear that the advocates of the idea of 'Ancient Slavialand' reproduced the structure of the argumentation used by their opponents, and the imagined opponents, the German Nazis. At the centre of Nazi ideology, we can find concepts such as *Volk* (people), *Blut* (blood) and *Boden* (land), and all (the first two implicitly) are present in this dialogue marked by a pseudo-Socratic manner.

⁷ ВЕДИН, Ф. Золотая жила. In *Калининград: литературно-художественный и общественно-политический сборник*. [Ред. А. ЗАХАРОВА]. Калининград, 1951, с. 15–144. This book was published in an edition of 10,000 copies. Another edition of the novel was published in Riga in 1953, and contained significant changes that reflect the transformation of the discourse. See: ВЕДИН, Ф. *Город – будет!* Рига, 1953.

⁸ Although the city in the novel is given the assumed name Pribaltiysk, the name of East Prussia is kept.

⁹ ВЕДИН, Ф. Золотая жила..., с. 16. Hereinafter, the translation from Russian is mine. It is quite distinctive that in the second edition of the novel this chronology disappears, giving way to a misty reference to 'ancient times'. 'Where are we going?' – 'It is the Russian land.' – 'Really?' – 'Really,' Alexei laughed, 'Slavs lived here in ancient times. According to all the laws, this land belongs to us.' ВЕДИН, Ф. *Город – будет...*, с. 6.

The Soviet regime used not only the physical infrastructure that it inherited from the Germans, but also the conceptual apparatus of Nazi ideology as well.¹⁰ This example shows once again that despite its internationalist rhetoric, the Soviet regime *de facto* developed a system of argumentation that was relevant to the nationalist discourse, though lacking in explicit references to *sacred spaces*. It is also important that the radical renaming of cities, towns and streets in the former East Prussia was undertaken by the same two regimes that were antagonists in the war, but found a surprising similarity in techniques transforming the social reality.¹¹ From this point of view, the plan to resettle the former East Prussia can be metaphorically described as inheriting both the nationalist 'Third Reich' and the Imperial 'Third Rome'. The Khrushchev Thaw, however, changed the rhetoric, and therefore the project remained just a project.

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During the war, Alexei heard a narrative about East Prussia from a Party official: 'Our task is to storm the castle [Königsberg] and return to the Slavs their ancestral lands,'¹² which they had been deprived of for eight centuries. The theme of *return* is accompanied by the theme of *liberation*. In a lecture to workers, one lecturer says: 'As you know, after the liberation Pribaltiysk [Königsberg] was pure debris.' It is quite important that this terminological ambiguity is still relevant to the contemporary historical discourse, as well as to everyday narratives.¹³

Archaeology was invited to confirm Stalin's thesis. Frida Gurevich (1912–1988), a scholar from the Leningrad Institute of History of Material Culture, was working in Kaliningrad from 1946. Despite the ideological attitudes, her article on the results of excavations published in the newspaper *Kaliningradskaya pravda* contained an objective conclusion, which was reproduced in her official report in 1950: in the third to the fifth centuries, a kind of culture emerged in this region, 'the development of which was in close contact with the Slavic world'.¹⁴ However, fiction continued to

¹⁰ In some measure, the reference to concepts of *blood* and *soil* may be explained by the frontier nature of the area. It is no coincidence that in Königsberg in the 1930s and 1940s a circle of scholars appeared who developed the ideas of *Volksgeschichte* (in the first instance Werner Conze) and theoretically prepared the future *Drang nach Osten* in the framework of their *Ostforschung*. See more: DUNKHASE, J. E. *Werner Conze. Ein deutscher Historiker im 20. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen, 2010.

¹¹ Scholars even write about 'two waves' of renaming settlements (comparing strategies applied in the late 1930s and in the late 1940s). ПЕТЕШОВА, О. О двух волнах переименования региональных населенных пунктов. *Калининградские архивы*, 2014, вып. 11, с. 110–115.

¹² ВЕДИН, Ф. Золотая жила..., с. 18.

¹³ With the strengthening of the local identity of the residents of the Kaliningrad region, this ambivalence of memory began to increase. In a recent article, I presented various examples of the everyday discourse about the past, such as the tour guide's commentary 'Starting from our aerodrome the Nazi planes went to bomb Soviet cities' (from whose position is this story told?), or a little monument in Kaliningrad zoo dedicated to setting this place free at the end of the storm (who did the Red Army soldiers liberate in the zoo, and from whom?). See more: DEMENTIEV, I. Bridges to nowhere? Identity of the Residents of the Kaliningrad Region in the 21st Century. In *Facets of Identity – the Baltic Sea Region and beyond*. Ed. by B. HENNINGSEN. Copenhagen, 2013, pp. 60–65.

¹⁴ ГУРЕВИЧ, Ф. О чём говорят археологические раскопки. *Калининградская правда*, 5.10.1949; See also: КОСТЯШОВ, Ю. *Секретная история Калининградской области...*, с. 23.

develop the idea about *Slavialand* until the end of Stalinism.¹⁵ The story 'Smithers',¹⁶ written by Nadezhda Gryazeva and published in 1951, is typical in this respect.

When storming the fortress of Königsberg, Vyacheslav Sabinin, the main character in this story, finds a piece of a plate. Addressing his brothers-in-arms, his speech about it reproduces the pathos of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, holding Yorick's skull:

'You say: a German piece of plate? No, comrades, it is a Slavic one, a real ancient Slavic piece. And we are the first Soviet people to hold irrefutable material evidence that this land belonged to our Slavic ancestors.'¹⁷

Vyacheslav Sabinin came back after the war in 1949, and continued to research and advocate the idea of 'Ancient Slavialand'. Soviet archaeologists finished the affair of Soviet soldiers justifying ownership of this land by rigorous scientific data. This Socialist Realism frame provided readers with important arguments reinforcing the authorities' position, which stimulated enthusiasm and work among Soviet people.

However, by the late 1940s and early 1950s, the first tendencies towards preventing drawing a monochromatic picture of the Sovietisation of the region emerged. Along with official toponyms, informal German names became firmly established: some settlements have kept their German names to the present day, such as Spandin near Kaliningrad, and Sprindt near Chernyakhovsk, and some German names of streets have been translated into Russian and used in everyday life instead of official ones.

The reasons for 'Ancient Slavialand' faded away in the scientific discourse just after Stalin's death.¹⁸ Atheistic advocacy applied to the level of everyday life, especially in rural areas. Soviet people in the Kaliningrad region had no chance to baptise their children, because there was no religion there.¹⁹ Despite this, people, including Party members, went to Lithuania or to regions of Russia and participated in various re-

¹⁵ According to Y. Kostyashov, the thesis about the Slavic population (over time it has been modified, and the population 'was designated as Slavic-Lithuanian') was first publicly questioned after Stalin's death, but not earlier than April 1954, when a local history section of the regional bureau of lecturers discussed a lecture. Then some 'revisionists' (Y. Kostyashov's term) emphasised that the ancient population of the area was erroneously defined as Slavic, while indeed 'there lived the Prussians, tribes of Lithuanian nationality' (КОСТЯШОВ, Ю. *Секретная история Калининградской области...*, с. 25). However, one can see that already in an editorial in the almanac *Kaliningrad* (1951), the ethnic identification of old Prussians contradicted Stalin's thesis: "East Prussia had long been inhabited by Lithuanian tribes of Prussians." See: На западе нет больше Восточной Пруссии! In *Калининград: литературно-художественный и общественно-политический сборник*. Калининград, 1951, с. 3.

¹⁶ ГРЯЗЕВА, Н. Черепки. In *Калининград: литературно-художественный и общественно-политический сборник*. Калининград, 1951, с. 222–233.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, с. 225.

¹⁸ See: КОСТЯШОВ, Ю. *Секретная история Калининградской области...*

¹⁹ See more: МАСЛОВ, Е. *На пути к религиозному подполью. Власть и верующие в Калининградской области конца 1940-х годов*. Калининград, 2006. See also about the religious situation in the Kaliningrad region some interviews here: *Восточная Пруссия глазами советских переселенцев. Первые годы Калининградской области в воспоминаниях и документах*. Санкт-Петербург, 2002, с. 179–182.

ligious ceremonies. Moreover, some old women (*babki*) went from village to village and baptised children there. Paradoxically, the legitimacy of this ceremony was later confirmed by the Orthodox Church.²⁰

Last but not least, the German *Other* was persistently on the mental map of Kaliningrad residents as an object of comparison. Even in the fiction of late Stalinism (such as 'Goldmine' by Fyodor Vedin), we can see the idea of two Königsbergs existing together, the bourgeois and the proletarian. One character describes the German plan of Königsberg:

'At first glance, it seems to be one city; but in fact there are two. Look at the green semi-circle which borders the central part. Gardens and parks. They make the air clean, and drown the noise of the factories in the suburbs beyond the green part. If you were in the central part of the city before the war, you could say: how beautiful it is, how comfortable and rich people's lives are here. The apartments are light and spacious. They have all facilities: water, gas, electricity and sewerage. Nearly every home has a garden [...] Outside this semi-circle we see plants, and the adjacent so-called working-class suburbs. There are no asphalt streets, only cobbled ones. Instead of bright and beautiful cottages, there are barracks like prisons. Inside there is not only no gas stove, but even a smell of sewerage. Dirt, closeness, smoke from factory chimneys and no trees around. The workers lived here, and those for whom they worked lived within the green semi-circle.'²¹

The plan of Soviet architects was to save the green parts, and rebuild all the city according to socialist standards, for the people. It is also important that, as Germans were still absent in the imaginary world of Soviet immigrants represented in fiction, the Soviet people tried to domesticate this symbolic and physical space. No single German character is present in these stories. It was probably too dangerous to include a real *Other* in the narrative, based on the idea of returning.

The picture of the regional historical consciousness gradually began to lose its monochrome aspect during the Thaw. Compliments towards German culture became possible in the context of denouncing the crimes of Fascism. Let us take the essay by Veniamin Dmitriev (1960). There are the usual metaphors in it ('springboard for bandit raids'),²² and a typical description of the revitalisation of the area: 'The land was deserted'²³ after the war; but 'at an appeal from the Party and the government',

²⁰ Based on unpublished materials from a project on oral history in the Gusev district in the Kaliningrad region, 2012. Archive of the author.

²¹ ВЕДИН, Ф. Золотая жила..., с. 44.

²² ДМИТРИЕВ, В. *Дело о янтарной комнате: очерк*. Калининград, 1960, с. 10.

²³ In the Russian language, this formula «Пустынна была эта земля», in particular its vocabulary and syntax, looks like an allusion to a verse in the Russian translation of the Bible: «Земля же была безвидна и пуста» ("And the earth was without form, and void," Gen. 1:2), although the image of the city, even though largely destroyed, scarcely evokes the image of a desert.

hundreds of thousands of workers came to the devastated region. Unmasking Nazi historians, the author refers to the achievements of Soviet archaeologists between 1948 and 1952, who proved 'conclusively' that the ancient population of this land were not Goths, but '*baltoslavjanskie plemena*'²⁴ (Baltic-Slav tribes).

However, after a narrative which was completely loyal to the Soviet government, the author reveals to readers some facts from prewar history: the old street names, and information about Königsberg University and the city as a whole. The narrative even allows some explicit praise of the prewar culture: 'Königsberg University, burned down through the British bombing in September 1944, represented one of the most valuable monuments of German national culture.'²⁵ Dmitriev mentions its most famous lecturers, such as Immanuel Kant, Kristijonas Donelaitis, Johann Gottfried Herder and Friedrich Wilhelm Bessel (this was wrong in the case of Donelaitis and Herder, who had just studied there). Dmitriev also names some Russian writers who visited Königsberg in the past. Thus, the 'good' German past in the narrative is associated with a 'progressive' national culture and revolutionary traditions, the 'bad' one mainly with Nazism.

The idea that there were two German 'pasts', born in the literature of the 1950s, finally became acceptable. However, the meeting with the *Other*, some kind of *Rencontre d'autrui* (by Emmanuel Lévinas who, by the way, *stamm' aus Litauen*), was inevitable, so in the 1960s a serious challenge finally appeared for people asking questions about the past.

In the shadow of the Royal Castle: Kaliningrad in search of lost time

According to Bert Hoppe, by the late 1950s and 1960s, a new identification of Kaliningrad residents with their city was forming: objects of German culture shaped a regional specificity.²⁶ Originally, some individuals had opposed the official discourse. Most scholars agree that the turning point in the history of the development of the historical consciousness of Kaliningrad residents was the debates around the ruins of Königsberg Castle between 1965 and 1968.²⁷

²⁴ ДМИТРИЕВ, В. *Дело о янтарной комнате...*, с. 32.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, с. 54.

²⁶ See: ХОППЕ, Б. «Злой город» или часть собственной истории? Об отношении к немецкой архитектуре в Калининграде после 1945 г. In *Кёнигсберг – Калининград: город, история*. Ред. В. МАСЛОВ. Калининград, 2005, с. 85. See also: НОРПЕ, В. Op. cit.; ХОППЕ, Б. Борьба против вражеского прошлого: Кёнигсберг / Калининград как место памяти в послевоенном СССР. *Ab imperio*, 2004, № 2, с. 237–268.

²⁷ See more: КЛЕМЕШЕВА, М. О судьбе Королевского замка (из документов Облгосархива). *Калининградские архивы*, 2000, вып. 2, с. 179–191.

The debate on the fate of the ruins of the castle unexpectedly involved a wide range of stakeholders, such as local and regional authorities, architects and the intelligentsia. Some architects promoted the idea of reconstructing the castle and including it in the urban landscape. The issue quickly went beyond the professional community. Suddenly, the authorities received protests from various people. 'Three letters on the same subject' appeared in the national newspaper *Literaturnaya Gazeta* on 30 September 1965, signed by the architect V. Eremeev, the writer V. Erashov, and G. Zuev, who had participated in the siege of the city in April 1945. 'For the past five years, the public [*obshchestvennost'*] in Kaliningrad has been fighting for the preservation of a historical and architectural monument, the former Royal Castle,' wrote the writers of the letter.²⁸ Indeed, it was a precedent-setting public articulation of an alternative vision of the German heritage. This vision, shaped by the intelligentsia, did not coincide with the official point of view. That debate went beyond the region, and involved some influential people.

The writer Valentin Erashov (1927–1999), in a conversation with Nikolai Konovalov (1907–1993), the first secretary of the Communist Party's regional committee (from 1961 to 1984), directly contrasted the power and the public (and the people).

'Konovalov: All the building plans for the city are accepted collectively [...]

Erashov: [...] but without the participation of the public. If the people were asked, it would not be such a disgrace'²⁹

The culmination of these events was a meeting of the Club of the intelligentsia at the end of 1965, where the writer Sergei Snegov (1910–1994) proclaimed the slogan 'Art belongs to the people' (and not to the Party).³⁰ Unfortunately, regional and city authorities had already taken another decision, and in 1968, after careful preparations, demolition started.

The strategies applied by the intelligentsia in the 1960s included articles in the press (regional and national), collective letters and open meetings: first, the alternative discourse began to struggle with the official one in the public arena.³¹ Of course, the forces of the parts were initially unequal, but the fact of the gradual institutionalisation of the public around the theme of the cultural heritage is undeniable. The decision of the authorities concerning the castle's fate was a Pyrrhic victory. The event started a kind of competition between two discourses, which ended in the years of Perestroika with the triumph of nostalgia for an unfamiliar but at the same time native past. The

²⁸ Quoted in *Ibid.*, c. 186.

²⁹ СУХОВА, С. «Бой после победы». *Калининградский комсомолец*, 4.7.1990, с. 7.

³⁰ See: HOPPE, B. *Op. cit.*, S. 143.

³¹ Per Brodersen indicates that the respect for the German heritage was controversial, and depended on the political climate in the Soviet Union. The canon which was an alternative to the official 'frozen' one shaped gradually, through publications in the press, museum activities and the efforts of individuals. BRODERSEN, P. *Op. cit.*, S. 241.

image of the Royal Castle remained attractive to Kaliningrad residents and to visitors to the city. It achieved immortality in poems by Joseph Brodsky. Ten years after the castle was destroyed, the author of a tourist guide published in Moscow invited guests to see the sights, and described the history of the castle in detail. The book even provided readers with a photograph of the Royal Castle,³² which was actually an image of another castle (Georgenburg, now Maevka in the Chernyakhovsk district).

The discussion also showed that the authorities, and the public, were not of the same opinion. Heritage advocates were not typical dissidents, but their vision was based on the idea of a high cultural level and humanistic spirit in Soviet society. As Jan Assmann emphasises, the cultural memory as an experience of the Other is a form of struggle not only against totalitarianism, but also against one-dimensionality.³³ It is very important that no one, neither the authorities nor their opponents, mentioned seriously the mythical 'Ancient Slavialand'. Ways to legitimate presence in the conquered land changed and diversified.

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But the motif of 'ancient land' started to penetrate the discourse about the area's past. The historical consciousness of the people had awakened, but in another context: the reality of the ancient German land and its legacy was finally recognised. This process took quite a long time, in fact, until Perestroika in the mid-1980s. Thus, the appeal of an 'ancient land', regardless of the ethnic nature of its population, became an important component of the regional identity.

The role of censorship, which prohibited mentioning the German past, was crucial in ensuring the dominance of the official discourse. Nevertheless, in the 1970s and the early 1980s, the authorities began to lose their total control over the cultural memory of Kaliningrad residents.³⁴ The traditional strategies (museum activities, educational work in schools, bans on studying prewar history and on the publication of pictures that represented German objects) betrayed their inefficiency. For instance, the system of military patriotic upbringing was saved, in order to develop in young learners a genuine respect for Soviet soldiers who had served at the time of the East Prussian operation. However, it allowed young people to create their own mental map of East Prussia, and to learn about German toponyms.

Olga Sezneva, who became one of the first scholars to explore the late Soviet history of the 'Amber Region', assumed initially an absolute difference between the official and unofficial historical narratives in Soviet Kaliningrad, which made it possible to

³² КИРИЛЛОВА, Ю. *Прибалтика и Белоруссия* (Библиотека туриста). Москва, 1978, с. 17.

³³ See: АССМАН, Я. *Культурная память. Письмо, память о прошлом и политическая идентичность в высоких культурах древности*. Москва, 2004, с. 91; See also: ASSMANN, J. *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*. München, 1992.

³⁴ See more: ДЕМЕНТЬЕВ, И. «Рябинка у бойницы»: реабилитация довоенного прошлого в памяти калининградцев (1970-е -1980-е гг.). In: *Erdvių pasisavinimas Rytų Prūsijoje XX amžiuje* (Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis, t. XXIV). Sud. V. SAFRONOVAS. Klaipėda, 2012, p. 92–118; SEZNEVA, O. Op. cit.

describe the relationship between them in terms of repression and resistance. However, the study of the evidence collected during her interviews in Kaliningrad in the early 2000s showed that the boundaries between these narratives were not completely impassable. Respondents recalled how at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s they went to the museum for rare data, and secretly used equipment in design offices, or even in the photographic darkroom of the party newspaper *Kaliningradskaya Pravda*, to copy photographs and maps of old Königsberg. Thus, she concludes, paradoxically, 'state-owned and controlled resources (a museum, an archive, a photocopying machine) were central to the production of a "counter" narrative; this narrative's ultimate dependency on the state.'³⁵

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By the 1970s in Kaliningrad, some prerequisites had emerged to rehabilitate the image of the East Prussian past that had an effusively humanist message. David Keith Bridges, another American scholar, emphasises the self-contradictory strategies of the local authorities. He shows that at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, the authorities tried to present Soviet citizens as 'more civilised' people in comparison with people in capitalist countries; nevertheless, the discrepancy between these high cultural standards in theory and the destruction of monuments in real life was evident. Later, in the 1970s, the lack of unity among the authorities themselves became clear: some 'enlightened bureaucrats' (such as the chairman of the Kaliningrad Executive Committee Vladimir Denisov) rescued German monuments in various ways. Therefore, the everyday efforts to preserve the remnants of the German heritage became 'a low-level form of dissidence in the Brezhnev years.'³⁶

Architects argued for the restoration of old German buildings in order to house cultural institutions, and their ideas were often implemented at risk to their professional careers. Memoir sources reveal some examples of disloyalty expressed by officials. One such instance was the case of the puppet theatre in a former church in memory of Queen Louise in Kaliningrad. The architect Yuri Vaganov recalls the tricks in the early 1970s when the director of the builders' institute I. Grabov received an order from the central authorities to restore the church building instead of the planned demolition. Grabov underestimated the cost of the restoration, and conversely overestimated the cost of demolition.³⁷ Many similar cases show the limits of the influence of the official discourse in comparison with the 1940s.

Kaliningrad State University became another centre for the prewar rehabilitation of the cultural heritage. Mathematicians, philosophers and geographers (unfortunately no historians) at the university brought up the subject of Königsberg. This example

³⁵ SEZNEVA, O. Op. cit., pp. 199–200.

³⁶ BRIDGES, D. K. Op. cit., p. 299.

³⁷ About this see: PODEHL, M. *Architektura Kaliningrada. 1917–1991. Wie aus Königsberg Kaliningrad wurde*. Dissertation. Zürich, 2010, S. 454.

is very helpful in order to identify the strategies used by people to avoid censorship. Mathematicians organised 'a modest exhibition'³⁸ devoted to their predecessors at Königsberg University. The instigator of this was Kasimir Lavrinovich (1941–2002), who had worked in the Physics and Mathematics Department of Kaliningrad State University since 1970. Lavrinovich had collected material over many years on the history of the region; he then published the first Russian biography of Friedrich Wilhelm Bessel. That book included not only biographical material, but also a brief outline of the history of Königsberg (illustrated with images of the old town) and the university.³⁹

Another front line in the *combats pour l'histoire* emerged in the domain of philosophy. Philosophers talked about the German city in the context of the 250th anniversary of the birth of Immanuel Kant.⁴⁰ In 1974, they organised a conference dedicated to Kant's philosophy. Leading Soviet philosophers from Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Tbilisi and other cities in the Soviet Union came to discuss Kant's work in his home town. Participants in the conference laid flowers at his tomb. An important act of commemoration was the opening of the university's Kant Museum, which immediately became a centre providing people with information on the history of Königsberg University and the activities of its professors.

Thanks to its director Olga Krupina, the museum kept and exhibited portraits of Herder, Helmholtz, Bessel, Hamann and other scholars, as well as books and other items. A detailed description was given in an essay on Kant, published in Leningrad. The first words in the book sounded unusual to Kaliningrad residents: 'On 22 April 1724 in Königsberg, in a small house, hidden among the greenery and flowers of spring gardens, the fourth son of the saddler Johann Kant was born [...] By the middle of the 18th century, Königsberg had become equal to cultural centres such as Leipzig, Dresden and Hamburg.'⁴¹ Despite the objective limitations of the audience of the book, the very possibility to talk about 'good Königsberg' was a serious break with the official discourse.

Geographers researched the city, quoting from books and journals published in Königsberg. This was forbidden, and archive documents show how complicated it was to deceive the censors. Interest in the history of the formation of landscapes in the Kaliningrad region inevitably led researchers to study the German context. In 1970, an

³⁸ ЛАВРИНОВИЧ, К. В память об Алексее Николаевиче Хованском. In *Князь Алексей Николаевич Хованский. Воспоминания*. Сост. Т. КОКАРЕВА. Москва, 1999, с. 8–9. Materials for this exhibition were provided by the lecturer Alexei Khovanskii (1916–1996), who was a descendant of an ancient aristocratic family.

³⁹ ЛАВРИНОВИЧ, К. *Фридрих Вильгельм Бессель*. Москва, 1989, с. 43–105.

⁴⁰ *Kant in Königsberg seit 1945. Eine Dokumentation*. Bearb. von R. MALTER, E. STAFFA. Wiesbaden, 1983. It is interesting that the authors do not accept the new name of Kant's native city: one chapter is entitled "Kant in «Kaliningrad»".

⁴¹ ГРИНИШИН, Д.; МИХАЙЛОВ, М.; ПРОКОПЬЕВ, В. *Иммануил Кант: Краткий очерк жизни и научной деятельности*. Ленинград, 1976, с. 5.

innocent activity by scholars attracted the attention of the authorities: Valeria Vaulina (1930–2002) and Inessa Kozlovich (1936–2012), associate professors in the Geography Department, submitted the article ‘On the Landscape Characteristics of Kaliningrad’ for publication in the book ‘Issues of Geography’, dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Vladimir Lenin. The censor from Oblit returned a collection of articles to the university for correction. He stated: ‘In some articles, the activities of Germans constructing Königsberg are characterised positively, and, on the contrary, the grandiose role of the Soviet people who restored and developed the city of Kaliningrad and other cities in the region is hushed up or distorted.’⁴² Thanks to archival sources, it is possible to reconstruct the official discursive strategy for language to describe the past.

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The censor objected: ‘The authors write about Königsberg: “By the early 20th century, the city had developed in its present territorial borders. From an economic point of view, it emerged as a major trading port in the Baltic Sea, a centre for the paper, food and marine industries.” But according to the authors, modern Kaliningrad is as follows: “The city has a radial-circular planning. Its characteristic feature is the chaotic disposal of industrial enterprises, a lack of functional zoning, an irregular density of building and planting of greenery, and ‘empty land’ in the centre (traces of war damage)”.’⁴³ At the end, Vaulina and Kozlovich cited R. Weber, a West German geographer, and the censor also pointed this out.

The authors were forced to revise the text: they dwelt in detail on the formation of the relief of the city in the pre-alluvial and glacial periods, and they used euphemisms to describe the German period. ‘The last (current) stage in the formation of the relief of the city started from the human settlements in the city. Due to its economic activities, the relief has undergone significant changes [...] The relief in the old city centre (near the Upper Pond, near the Oblsovprof building) has changed a lot.’⁴⁴ Instead of ‘German’, the authors used words such as ‘old’. All references to foreign publications were removed from the bibliography. However, the authors kept silent about the ‘grandiose role of the Soviet people’. The geographers also developed a good command of cryptic language during the confrontation with the official discourse about the past.

Finally, it should be admitted that the changes also affected fiction. In the 1970s, Soviet writers continued to create an imaginary world of postwar Königsberg/Kaliningrad. A new phenomenon was the emergence of the Germans in this world.

⁴² Управление по охране государственных тайн в печати Калининградского облисполкома, 1970 г. *Государственный архив Калининградской области (далее ГАКО)*, ф. 232, оп. 6, д. 45, л. 26.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, л. 57.

⁴⁴ I quote the published article: ВАУЛИНА, В; КОЗЛОВИЧ, И. К ландшафтной характеристике города Калининграда. In *Вопросы географии*. Калининград, 1970, с. 127, 131.

Without doubt, their appearance would have been unthinkable in early works by Kaliningrad writers.

In 1971, Pyotr Vorobyev (1900–1975) published the story 'My Okolomorye' (this invented toponym means 'area near the sea').⁴⁵ In the story, along with the Soviet people, there was a German farmhand called Agnes among the characters. Her son was shot by SS troops, her husband died under the bombs, and only the Soviet people helped this 'good' German woman to recover and go back to Denmark. Agnes is filled with love and respect for the Russians, whom she had previously feared. One reviewer reproduced all the pathos in an article: 'The Soviet people took care of and encouraged this farmhand, treated her back pain, organised the documents for her to travel to Denmark, her homeland. And the former German farmhand is imbued with love and respect for "those terrible Russians". The image of Agnes is shrouded in a soft light.'⁴⁶ The German population was now present in a new narrative, although deprived of subjectivity, while being presented as an object of violence from internal and external enemies, or care from the 'Soviet people'. Subjectivity was to be given to the Germans in works by writers of the next generation.

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Another writer, Yuri Ivanov (1928–1994), published the story 'In the Besieged City' in 1973 in the newspaper of the regional Komsomol committee.⁴⁷ In this story, there is almost no trace of censorship: the author lovingly describes Königsberg at the end of the war; the hero's initial hatred of the Germans changes to sympathy for a wounded German girl. Censorship played a sinister role in the article mentioned about Kaliningrad, but the censor was kinder to fiction. 'They were standing in a small, tight area, surrounded by old chestnut trees. From there, like the tentacles of sea snakes, five streets started, and a ruined church building stood on the edge [...] The beautiful carved wooden altar; bronze candlesticks on the walls, and a large wooden cross, on which a wooden Jesus Christ was nailed.' Similarly, the poetry of the 1970s and early 1980s opened up prospects for rhapsodising about red roofs and even Gothic forms.

By the beginning of Perestroika, Kaliningrad residents had been prepared for the rehabilitation of the full value and the adoption of the German heritage. In spite of the popular opinion that the process involved only intellectuals, it was important to different social groups. During Perestroika, the Soviet authorities had already lost control over the cultural memory of Kaliningrad residents, and at the same time alternative strategies to adopt the historic heritage and shape the regional identity came into existence.

The image of Königsberg as a 'Paradise Lost' quickly conquered the minds of Kaliningrad residents. The emergence of this image seemed to be quite a new phenome-

⁴⁵ ВОРОБЬЁВ, П. *Околomorье мое*. Калининград, 1971.

⁴⁶ КОЛПАКОВ, А. «Околomorье мое». *Калининградский комсомолец*, 6.10.1971.

⁴⁷ ИВАНОВ, Ю. В осажденном городе. *Калининградский комсомолец*, 1973, № 114–127, 129, 131–132, 135, 137, 139, 141–153.

non in the life of the 'model' Soviet region. A convincing example of the new discourse was 'Open Letter to the Metropolis', written by the artist (he is now also known as a writer) Vadim Khrappa. Extracts from this *samizdat* letter were published in 1988 in the newspaper *Kaliningradski Komsomolets*. The author draws attention to the fact that the main source of pride felt by citizens are German cultural objects that did not fit into the 'official history', starting in 1946. Khrappa postulates the emergence of a new historical subject, an 'imagined community':

'But we exist! We, the descendants of immigrants who were born under the tile roofs, who took their first steps under the Gothic arches, who climbed in their childhood on all the surviving forts and castles around. We, who keep dishes as relics of a vanished civilisation, and prewar pictures of romantic quarters [...] We were punished because of the coat of arms of Königsberg which was found in our school desks, because of the gothic letter K with a crown scrawled on a tram glass. But we exist! And no one can amputate or ban our memory.'⁴⁸

The letter written by Vadim Khrappa was the first public statement of the fact that the cultural memory of Kaliningrad residents was based not only on the experience of ancestors from different regions of the country, but also on the historical experience of the area itself. Moreover, the achievements of a foreign culture were declared a reason for pride among Kaliningrad residents, and even a source of regional identity. This letter had resonance. There were various responses, from offensive condemnation ('the delirium of a person suffering from a superiority complex') to timid support ('How long can we remain silent?' 'Few people know the history of our land'). However, it was impossible to stop the process of emancipation. Thus, the changes in the late 1980s were prepared for by several generations of Kaliningrad residents.

Conclusion

Despite the work of David Keith Bridges, Per Brodersen, Bert Hoppe, Yuri Kostyashov, Olga Sezneva and some other scholars, a monochrome vision of the entire Soviet period remains widespread. Contrary to this vision, it is clear that over the Soviet years, the movement towards dialogue with the foreign culture in Kaliningrad was gradual and ultimately successful. The year 1945 was never perceived as 'year zero' for the history of this land. At first, the official discourse tried to find roots in an imagined ancient Slav history of the region. In fact, that was a version of the 'Paradise Lost' motif in the framework of Soviet ideology. Later, the idea of an 'ancient

⁴⁸ ХРАППА, В. Мы – народ. *Калининградский комсомолец*, 23.4.1988, с. 4, 9. This letter was also published in FRG in 1989. Per Brodersen quotes it in his book, with a mistake in the name of the author (Vladimir instead of Vadim). BRODERSEN, P. Op. cit., S. 241.

German city' replaced this early Soviet myth. Perestroika came, and the minds of Kaliningrad residents were already prepared to articulate this idea in the new context. We can say that during the last two decades, we have been living under the guidance of the same cognitive processes as just after the war. This idea of returning to our own former land in a physical as well as a mental sense has gradually transformed into an idea of eternal recurrence, when we live more in dreams about the glorious past than in rationally designed projects of the future.

In the course of less than half a century, the cultural memory of many people in Kaliningrad has experienced a cautionary metamorphosis: from an almost primitive horror of the dead and *waste land* to a mixture of *memory and desire*, nostalgia for and pride in the fact that the Paradise Lost is, in a way, both their paradise and their loss.

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TARP „NUO SENIAUSIŲ LAIKŲ SLAVIŠKOS ŽEMĖS“ IR „PRARASTOJO ROJAUS“:
KULTŪRINIO PALIKIMO REABILITAVIMAS KALININGRADE XX A. 5-OJO DEŠIMTMEČIO
PABAIGOJE – 9-OJO DEŠIMTMEČIO PRADŽIOJE

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Ilya Dementyev

Santrauka

Pasibaigus Antrajam pasauliniam karui, šiaurinėje buvusios Rytų Prūsijos dalyje buvo įgyvendintas radikalus teritorijos kultūrinio landšafto degermanizacijos planas. Totalus vietovardžių keitimas, ikikarinė pastatų, siejamų su vokiečių kultūra, griovimas, kultūrinio palikimo objektų praradimas naujajame TSRS regione tapo karo ir pirminio pokarinio atstatymo pasekmėmis.

Šiuolaikinėje istoriografijoje gana gerai išanalizuotas vėlyvojo stalinizmo laikotarpis (1945–1953 m.) Kaliningrado srityje, tačiau 6-ojo dešimtmečio antroji pusė – 9-ojo dešimtmečio pabaiga iki šiol sulaukė gerokai menkesnio tyrinėtojų dėmesio. Straipsnyje bendriausiais bruožais atskleidžiamas laipsniškas kultūrinio palikimo reabilitavimas Kaliningrado srityje, vykęs tarybiniu laikotarpiu iki *Perestroikos* laikų. Nepaisant implicitiško ir ideologinių reikalavimų lemiamo oficialaus draudimo tyrinėti ikikarinę regiono praeitį, Kaliningrado srities gyventojai taikė daugybę strategijų, siekdami adaptuotis prie kitos tautos simbolinės erdvės ir galiausiai toli pasistūmėjo pamažu integruodami svetimus vaizdinius savon atmintin. Šis perėjimas, kurį galima įvardyti tranzitu vaizdinio „nuo seniausių laikų slaviškos žemės“ iki „prarastojo rojaus“, yra vienas įdomiausių XX a. Europos istorijos reiškinių.

Visas tarybinis laikotarpis regione retrospektyviai gali būti apibūdintas kaip laipsniškas oficialiojo diskurso silpnėjimas ir alternatyvaus diskurso apie regioninę istoriją stiprėjimas. Šis procesas skaidytinas į tris fazes: 1) regiono sovietizacija ir oficialaus diskurso apie praeitį vyravimas 5-ojo dešimtmečio pab. – 7-ojo dešimtmečio pab.; 2) ribota dviejų diskursų konkurencija 7-ojo dešimtmečio pab. – 9-ojo dešimtmečio pirmojoje pusėje; 3) alternatyvaus diskurso sustiprėjimas ir ikikarinės praeities reabilitavimas 9-ojo dešimtmečio antrojoje pusėje. Tradiciškai pirmosios dvi fazės apibūdinamos kaip oficialaus draudimo domėtis šio regiono praeitimi iki Antrojo pasaulinio karo laikotarpis. Tačiau

paskutinėje fazėje ryškėja daugybė pavyzdžių to, koks didelis buvo kaliningradiečių susidomėjimas Kenigsbergo ir – platesne prasme – Prūsijos praeitimi. Straipsnyje siekiama parodyti, kaip minėtų dviejų diskursų kova vyko pirmosiose dviejose stadijose. Įspūdinga „prarastojo rojus“ vaizdinio triuškinančio įsitvirtinimo *Perestroikos* metais istorija kaip plataus socialinio pagyvėjimo politinės liberalizacijos kontekste pavyzdys reikalauja papildomo tyrinėjimo.

Remiantis daugybe šaltinių, įskaitant grožinę literatūrą, straipsnyje parodoma, kaip, nepaisant oficialių draudimų, buvo įtvirtinamas alternatyvus požiūris į ikikarinę praeitį. Stalininio laikotarpio propaganda pajungė įvairias priemones, įskaitant socialistinio realizmo literatūrą (Fiodoras Vedinas, Nadežda Griazeva). Tačiau tuo pačiu metu vokiškasis „kitas“ dalyvavo kaliningradiečių mentaliniame žemėlapyje kaip objektas, su kuriuo buvo galima lyginti. Tokį lyginimą įgalino dviejų „vokiškų praeičių“ akistata, kai „blogajam“ (buržuazijos, dvarininkų, fašistų) Kenigsbergo vaizdiniai buvo galima priešpriešinti „gerąjį“, „darbo žmonių“ Kenigsbergo vaizdinį. Nuo 7-ojo dešimtmečio pabaigos ikikarinio palikimo reabilitavimo procesas gavo naują vystymosi impulsą visuomeninių debatų dėl Kenigsbergo pilies griuvėsių kontekste. Straipsnyje parodomi strategijų, kurias taikė praeities tyrinėjimu suinteresuoti kaliningradiečiai (visų pirma inteligentijos atstovai), siekdami apeiti cenzūros apribojimus, pavyzdžiai. 8-ojo dešimtmečio lokalinės grožinės literatūros (Piotro Vorobjovo, Jurijaus Ivanovo kūriniai) pavyzdžiai akivaizdžiai rodo, kaip keitėsi pasakojimo apie ikikarinę praeitį tonacija.

Galiausiai *Perestroikos* laikotarpio pradžioje kaliningradiečiai jau buvo paruošti visaverčiam vokiškojo palikimo reabilitavimui. Šis procesas įtraukė ne tik intelektualus, bet ir skirtingų socialinių grupių atstovus. *Perestroikos* metais valdžia prarado kaliningradiečių atminties kontrolę. Tuo pačiu metu išplito alternatyvios kultūrinio palikimo pasisavinimo ir regioninės tapatybės formavimosi strategijos. 9-ojo dešimtmečio antrosios pusės permainos buvo parengtos kelių ankstesnių kaliningradiečių kartų.

Priešingai paplitusiam monochrominiam požiūriui į tarybinę epochą, galima konstatuoti, kad judėjimas dialogo su svetima kultūra linkme Kaliningrade buvo nuoseklus ir galiausiai sėkmingas visos šios epochos bruožas. 1945-ieji niekuomet nebuvo suvokiami kaip „nuliniai metai“ šios teritorijos istorijoje. Oficialusis diskursas apie praeitį iš pradžių buvo orientuotas į šaknų įsivaizduojamoje slaviškoje šio regiono praeityje paiešką. Faktiškai tai buvo „prarastojo rojus“ motyvo variantas tarybinės ideologijos rėmuose. Vėliau šio ankstyvosios tarybinės epochos Kaliningrade mito vieton stojo „senovinio vokiško miesto“ idėja. *Perestroikos* pradžioje kaliningradiečių sąmonė jau buvo parengta tam, kad ši idėja artikuliuotųsi naujame kontekste. Per pastaruosius du dešimtmečius kaliningradiečių atmintyje įsitvirtino naujas „vokiškojo miesto“ kaip „savosios žemės“ supratimas, tačiau, kaip ir anksčiau, mitologizuotas šlovingos praeities vaizdinys nugali racionaliai apipavidalintos ateities projektavimą.

Per daugiau kaip pusę amžiaus daugelio kaliningradiečių atmintis patyrė esminę metamorfozę: nuo kone pirmapradės mirties ir „tuščios žemės“ baimės prie „atminties ir troškimo“, nostalgijos bei pasididžiavimo faktų, kad „prarastasis rojus“ – tam tikra prasme ir jų rojus, ir jų netektis, mišinio.