

AMBER BEAM OF PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION



He who walked along block pavements of Stockholm, admired Norwegian fjords, Hamburg bridges, gingerbread houses in Copenhagen and Tallinn, medieval castles in Latvia and Poland, magnificent snowy landscapes of Suomi will agree with the conclusion: Baltic countries possess specific tincture and inexplicable charm. They unite calm and beauty, regularity and dynamism, cozy coolness and unobtrusive warmth. It is an impressive phenomenon.

Until recently the Baltic countries – Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia – have been mostly perceived in public conscience as a kind of an artificial barrier on the Russian way to Europe. Although some people would still prefer to back the interpretation I believe today it is possible to say that independent states on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea – our historic neighbors – are on the contrary representing a certain «bridge» rather than a barrier on the path to mutually advantageous dialogue and cooperation of partnership.

Moreover, our humanitarian Amber Bridge project has been unanimously designed by the founders to unite us with the regions and countries of Nordic Europe, which are the most dynamically developing members of the European Union. They accumulate numerous economic and research centers and major financial resources, offer modern innovative designs, expand and form new categories of highly-skilled

manpower, and at the same time update the ancient traditions of Hansa trade. In a word, the «new Hansa» symbol is optimal for us as a cementing principle for the whole Baltic region as a multi-field center of cultural and business communities of ten countries. There is no doubt that modern politicians are responsible for developing the potential of mutual interests for the sake of enhanced international stability and security.

If we pragmatically work to achieve all of our common goals and drop political «hangnails» that accumulated in decades, and create cooperation instruments along the «public diplomacy – private enterprise» avenue we shall succeed jointly with our neighbors in the region in implementing numerous humanitarian and business programs. Cooperation of representatives of the ten countries in the backbone project of the Amber Bridge international association will offer a foretype of a new format of pan-European cultural and economic space. Provided goodwill of each party «the Baltic ten» can operate as a universal mechanism to adjust existing high EU standards and Russian historic experience and current economic capabilities. It is a unique political, economic and legal mission which any other region in the world can hardly cope with at present.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Valery P. Parfenov'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Valery P. Parfenov
Member of the Russian Federation Council,
Chairman of the Board of Guardians of Amber Bridge Fund

The word of Christ will always enliven the worldview of Europeans



The Christians have to find a new language and new creative avenues to preach Christian values in modern conditions of a constantly changing world for the preacher to be heard and properly perceived. First and foremost, I mean cooperation between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church which have common vision of vital modern problems of social and economic ethics, bioethics, family and individual morality, etc. Our common Christian tradition which is adherence to dialogue and readiness to interact can and shall develop into a mutual rapprochement driver.

Joint search for new possibilities to make Christian values again attractive for a modern European is of major significance. I cannot but welcome such a joint project as the series of documentary films Bells of Europe that reminds the European spectator of Christian roots of the European culture. Globalization and internationalization can yield a positive impact by expanding human capabilities to use constantly updated intellectual base, communicate and design forms of interaction with representatives of foreign cultural communities.

The joint mission of Christians of various confessions is clear – to help Europeans preserve the feeling of identity and not be afraid of speaking about their roots. Only thus we can preserve the Europe we know as a unique and original region of civilization that maintains equal relations with other world centers.

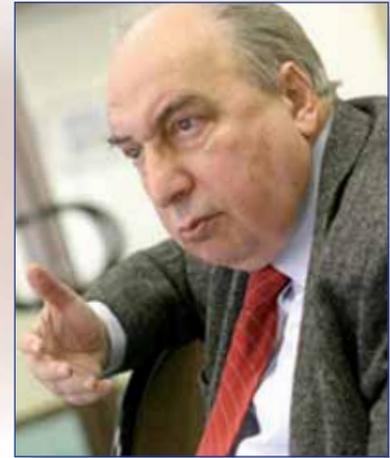
Today the activities of the Churches, of bodies of authority and public associations in Europe shall offer evidence of historic truth and civilization commonness of European countries. We have to abandon stereotypes that impede fruitful communication, refrain from imposing unipolar ideology, and promote the spiritual heritage of Europe to the rank of a truly unifying startup. Only thus it is possible to establish an atmosphere of solidarity and openness in relations between European peoples and make the dream of a united Europe from the Atlantic to the Pacific come true.

The word of Christ will always enliven the worldview of Europeans. It will not allow them to stagnate and be indifferent and hard-hearted to the fate of their own home and the rest of the world. I hope this point of view will be shared every year by a growing number of supporters from among representatives of traditional Christian confessions, authorities and public organizations in Europe.



His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill

History shall be no political weapon



History shall be no hostage to present-day life. It is a deadlock. It is most dangerous when attempts to politicize history and pose the Soviet times as a completely dark period and blame the neighbor (Russia) for it create in the Baltic countries the image of an enemy regarding the neighbor. That means we doom the young generations in the countries to reciprocal enmity.

There is yet another important aspect which has to be always taken into account. History offers numerous examples of collapsing empires and union states. But in most cases people in disintegrated countries and empires are free from the so-called «occupation» syndrome. Take India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, for example... Who is blaming an English tourist there today for his colonization ancestors? The whole Indian elite studied and continue to study in Oxford and Cambridge and grow up on the best samples of the great British culture. Those people are proud of their diplomas.

I know a lot of my colleagues in Baltic countries who studied or were on study placement in the Moscow State University (MGU). Thus, the director of the Vilnius

University opened a joint conference of Russian and Lithuanian historians and said he was speaking Russian not because of the attending Russian guests, but because he graduated from the MGU and is very proud of it. He recollects his student years in Moscow as the happiest in his life. By the way, we maintain a more fruitful dialogue with Lithuanians.

For example, I proposed to create a joint taskforce of historians who would review the difficult period and jointly publish a collection of archive documents on the relationship between Baltic countries and the USSR in 1938-1940. I have even arranged access for Baltic scholars to Russian state archives. The Lithuanians agreed and we have already jointly published three volumes of extremely interesting archive documents. In December 2010 it was agreed to create a Russian-Latvian taskforce of historians. This is inspiring.

We have to admit the process of history internationalization and sovereignization has been going on for nearly twenty years. In general it is absolutely normal for any country to enhance its national spirit. But why shall they do it at the expense of Russia? I am deeply convinced that tolerance is the only way to co-existence. Let's speak about good neighborhood succession. Lion Feuchtwanger once said that facts go and legends stay. So let us first restore the facts of everything positive that has connected our peoples. Believe me they will outnumber everything that divides us.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Chubaryan'.

Alexander O. Chubaryan

Academician,

Director of the Institute of General History at the

Russian Academy of Sciences,

Honorary President of the Baltic Civilization Institute



MULTILANE-TRAFFIC BRIDGE

There is always a temptation to ask: what has necessitated the creation of the Fund? I will answer frankly: there are several reasons. And one is a purely personal reason. I know Baltic countries well as I lived some 40 years in Latvia. I have quite a few good friends and acquaintances there. But after each visit to the amber region I have a sad feeling as relations between Russia and the Baltic countries have been devoid of good neighborly spirit for many years.

At first sight there are no specific changes in the attitude of our neighbors. The national elites seem to be resolute to continue pressing on with contradictions between the countries, with old and new hard feelings. However the approach contradicts elementary commonsense which, on the contrary, demands to search for unifying rather than dividing aspects to facilitate the resolution of problems rather than aggravate them. In this respect the official visit paid to Russia by Latvian President Valdis Zatlers in the end of 2010 inspires. Neighbors simply must look for joint ways to promote economic prosperity of their countries. Much depends in this respect on public diplomacy.

In other words, the Fund set itself the task to encourage a «reset» in Russian-Baltic relations. The «reset» definition properly describes the process we are working to launch. That does not mean we shall start a new life from scratch. On the contrary, we have to take joint effort and comprehend various historic



developments in the life of the Baltic countries, but abandon ideological bias in the work. Our first effort showed it is quite possible. That was an international conference held in Riga in July 2010 to discuss the results and consequences of the Great Northern War for the fate of Europe. Scholars from Baltic countries, Sweden, and Russia participated. The agenda comprised not only purely historic aspects of the war, but also the myths that emerged in public conscience. So the first pancake baked jointly with colleagues and partners from the Latvian Amber Bridge Baltic Funds was no failure.

There is yet another important detail. The topic of the international conference was proposed by Latvian historians themselves. It confirmed the Amber Bridge Fund would operate and definitely take into account the opinion of the Fund and of the Baltic Civilization Institute which covers all ten countries of the Baltic region.

It would be logical to believe the Amber Bridge Fund would not limit itself only by historic research. If we agree to span a bridge, it shall be multilane rather than one-way traffic.

The Amber Bridge will actively promote humanitarian and social projects which have been frozen for a long period of time. The Baltic Civilization Institute, of which Academician and Director of the General History Institute Alexander Chubaryan is the honorary president, will offer a platform to discuss most vital issues that currently trigger problems and



conflicts. If they reduce in number with time and rough corners are rounded off, that will mean we are partners who succeeded to join effort.

Much has to be done to revive economic contacts between Russia and the Baltic countries. The Fund Charter clearly obliges us to facilitate economic cooperation with the countries of the region. We have to arrange media outreach and cooperation in higher education, create a single Russian-Baltic Internet environment, promote modernization and innovations to the maximum, as well as exchange of technologies and scientific discoveries.

We shall work to integrate the intellectual potential of all countries of the region along various avenues, including the vital issue of environmental safety.

Russia and the Baltic countries have always lived in a common cultural space which has been losing integrity in the latest decades. It is a specifically important aspect of our mission. And we have already succeeded to do something. The Baltic forum for cultural heritage has been held in Riga with the assistance of the Fund and jointly with UNESCO. The unique book *100 Russian Portraits in Latvian History* has been placed on our website www.amberbridge.org. It speaks about Czar Peter the Great, Decembrists Wilhelm Kuchelbecker and Pavel Pestel, fabulist Ivan Krylov, and Soviet Academician Mstislav Keldysh. The Fund plans to publish the Amber Bridge magazine (in English and Russian) that will offer scientific essays

and discussions, fascinating research, photos, portraits of culture workers, and works by writers and poets from all countries of the Baltic region.

The Fund will focus on the youth. Young people are free from stereotypes and willing to contact. We shall introduce a set of grants for gifted students from Baltic countries to study in Russian higher educational establishments and arrange study placement for them. Such an exchange between universities and institutes shall become permanent with time.

The Amber Bridge Fund unites realists. They are people of action whose vocation is to span bridges. The profession of bridge constructors has been honored since ancient times, by the way. You will definitely agree that spanning banks and coasts and offering prospects to people is a grateful business which is strongly sought for. Our hopes and plans target prosperity of all countries of the Baltic community.

Yuri V. Sizov
Amber Bridge Fund President

TOWARDS NEW «HELSINKI ACT»

The 20th anniversary of the change of epochs is approaching. In 1991 the Soviet Union disintegrated and triggered major transformations in the global system.

The Amber Bridge Fund opens the «jubilee» year with the scientific conference Baltic-Scandinavian Region 20 years after the USSR: Expectations, Realities, Prospects. It will be held in Helsinki in February 2011. The partner of the Fund is the Finnish Institute of International Affairs.

The venue of the conference is symbolic as 35 years ago the capital city of Finland hosted the summit at which 35 heads of state signed the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Present-day realities clearly demand a new international document that would fix security and sustainable development parameters on the Eurasian continent and in the world as a whole.

Like in 1975, the year of 1991 also provided hope the spirit of mistrust and confrontation in international relations would vanish. It looked like Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika policy contributed a lot. However historic realities of the past two decades showed the process had sidetracked considerably. Confrontation backslide occurred in many places of Europe and even peace itself stopped to be perceived as an absolute value. Northern Europe was no exception, specifically the eastern part of the Baltic region.



However, the regional historic context in the past two decades did not boil down only to negative symptoms. The Russian-Finnish relations offer evidence of a completely new quality of international environment.

It is hard to doubt the historic reconciliation of the peoples of Russia and Germany which positively influenced not only North European, but also pan-European and global context of international relations. Positive transformations have taken place of late in Russian-Polish relations which give ground to hope for historic reconciliation of the two peoples. Russian-Latvian relations also offer positive prospects.

All that gives ground to hope for deeper mutual understanding in Northern Europe, in the Baltic Sea region whose identify historically shaped out at the junction of the East and West.

The Amber Bridge Fund wants to make at least a minor contribution to the promotion of a new «Helsinki Act» and plans to discuss at the conference in February the regional situation in the sphere of security, the results of economic and political transformations in Baltic countries, as well as Russian foreign policy avenues and guidelines as they are perceived by colleagues from Russian neighbor countries.

The conference in Helsinki is the first round of the dialogue which the Amber Bridge Fund plans to bring to each of the ten countries of Northern Europe.

BALTIC NEIGHBORHOOD EPOCHS AND EVENTS

Mutual perceptions are an important factor of relations between peoples. Steady perceptions of each other often exert considerable, also negative, influence on relationship between states.

The history of the Baltic region is contradictory and full of tragic events and blank spaces. Their interpretation differs as a rule in intellectual traditions of various countries. Reasonable correction of stereotypes that shaped out in centuries demands quiet and delicate comprehension of numerous circumstances that are often rooted in a remote past.

The Baltic Civilization Institute of the Amber Bridge Fund in cooperation with the Institute of General History at the Russian Academy of Sciences is implementing the project Baltic Neighborhood: Mutual Perceptions on the Background of Epochs and Events. A working meeting held in Moscow on October 7, 2010 set up the organizing committee of the conference with the same name which will be held in the Russian capital in late June 2011.

Along with representatives of the General History Institute (Academician A. Chubaryan, A. Komarov, Yu. Mikhailova), the Latvian University (G. Straube), the Swedish Military Academy (G. Oselius), the History Institute at the Tallinn State University (M. Ilmjarv), the organizing committee also includes Amber Bridge Fund President Yuri Sizov. Scholars from other countries of the region will join the work at subsequent stages.

If history can divide us, it should also bring us closer. Such was the decision of scholars from four



Baltic countries who began to prepare the international scientific conference Baltic Neighborhood: Mutual Perceptions on the Background of Epochs and Events.

«Much which is still dividing the countries of the Baltic region is based on history, on different assessments of historic events, and the influence of old historic accounts on modern policy,» said Academician Alexander Chubaryan, the director of the Institute of General History where the organizing committee of the future conference met.

The Baltic Sea has been always a region of close communication among various peoples and even civilizations, said Yuri Sizov, the president of the Amber Bridge Fund which co-organizes the conference. Numerous historic processes intercrossed there and today it remains one of the most «intensive» regions of Europe. «Therefore the aim of replacing confrontation in the Baltic region by cooperation guidelines seems only natural to us. It is better to begin with discussing historic issues – both areas of conflicts and of cooperation,» Sizov said.

He told the organizing committee that historians further plan to create an international research institute to study Baltic civilization. It will aim at expanding the databank of ideas circulating in the political, social, culturological, and economic space of the region, enhance interaction of elite communities of circum-Baltic countries, and promote joint research and innovative projects.

NORTHERN WAR FOR EXPORT

It was the first project launched by the Baltic Civilization Research Institute, an international non-governmental organization created with the support of the Lomonosov Moscow State University. The project was initiated by the Latvian Amber Bridge Baltic funds (ABBF) and the Russian Amber Bridge Fund.

In July 2010 Riga hosted the international conference Great Northern War: Culturological Aspects in the Baltic Region. The discussion moderated by ABBF President Andrew Yakovlev involved scholars and experts from Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, and Sweden. The conference discussed historic events, the possibility or impossibility to consider their lessons outside the political context and to treat historic heritage as a source of enrichment, both intellectual and material.



Yuri Sizov:

«We are spanning the amber bridge».

«We want to create a strong intellectual platform and «raise bridges» to settle numerous vital problems that trigger problems and conflicts today,» Amber Bridge Fund President Yuri Sizov told the conference. «There are various disputable issues. The aim is to find a common historic integral of interest for all parties.»



Andrew Yakovlev:

«Research of war history can bring people closer together.»



Expert in Scandinavian countries from the Institute of General History at the Russian Academy of Sciences, Professor Vadim Roginsky said it would be correct to call the war that lasted from 1700 to 1712 as the Great Northern War at least not to confuse it with the Northern War which Sweden and its allies waged against Rzeczpospolita and supporting countries. Besides, the «Great» definition would be appropriate as, besides Russia and Sweden, the war also involved Danish-Norwegian Kingdom, Saxony, England, Hannover, Holland, Prussia, and Rzeczpospolita. «Actually, it was a limited world war,» the scholar said.

The Nistadt peace treaty that joined Liflandia, Estlandia and some other territories with Russia was not the only result of the war. The Russian Empire was proclaimed after it. Changes affected the whole map of Northern Europe. Before the war two empires dominated there – Denmark and Sweden, but during the hostilities a multi-polar system of modern states has emerged in general. Finland began to sidetrack from Sweden. In Sweden absolute royal power collapsed and it forgot about previous imperial ambitions which modern Swedes assess quite positively.



July 2010 marked an anniversary in Riga history as 300 years ago Russian troops seized the major port on the Baltic Sea. The Great Northern War: Historic and Culturological Aspects in the Baltic Region was the name of the international scientific conference held in Europa House in the Latvian capital on July 9.



Marite Yakovleva, PhD (History) from the Institute of Latvian History pointed at one reason for local interest in the Great Northern War. She said foreign authors take a detached view of the 300-year old events while in Baltic countries the historic developments are poorly studied. To a major extent it also concerns military aspects and concrete developments on the given territories during wartime. Yakovleva recalled confusion of geographic names that differ in spelling, for example, in Swedish and Lithuanian languages.

Ceslovas Laurinavicius
(Institute of Lithuanian
History):

«Past historic events are often
perceived as myths».



Riga and its outskirts have numerous been sites of Northern War hostilities and offer an immense potential for intellectual tourism development. «We can speak about many distinguished personalities related to the Northern War, related to Riga the memory of who can promote tourism development in the city,» said Riga historian Oleg Pukhlyak. «They include Russian military commander Nikita Repin who lived in Riga for a long time and is buried here, and Swedish Governor-General Eric Dahlbergh.»

Inese Sture, PhD (Geography) from the Latvian University spoke about tourism potential as well. She said it is necessary to fix non-material valuables on site and develop them into a product.

We can add in this case Latvia will benefit from excessive activities of Charles XII and Peter the Great.



Marite Yakovleva:

«We have to produce new
research based on primary
sources».

Still Latvia has what to be proud of as Riga hosts one of the oldest museums in the region. It is the Museum of History and Sailing founded by Nicholas von Himsel in 1773. It has over 500 thousand ancient exhibits and a hundred of them are related to the Northern War, said Ingrida Miklava, a department head of the museum.



RE-WRITING HISTORY IS UNPRODUCTIVE

One of the participants in the conference in Riga devoted to the Great Northern War was Alexander Sharavin, Director of the Institute of Political and Military Analysis. His speech went far beyond the framework of developments that took place 300 years ago.

The scholar resolutely opposed attempts to revise World War Two results. Too much blood was shed and then too many swords were crossed to correctly assess the tragedy and arrive at common positions. The difficult process of adjusting positions continued for a long time. The vivid example of Germany and France shows how bitter enemies developed into the closest partners.

It is clear that a revision of World War Two results is dangerous. The Nuremberg Tribunal summed up the results of the war and dotted the i's. It would be unreasonable to doubt what the whole international community has recognized.

Historians have definitely to continue research, however the verities established through bloodshed and difficult talks and agreements should not be doubted. Some positions can be specified, new documents may emerge, and some developments may be assessed differently.

We also oppose attempts to equate Nazism and Communism. The latter deserves a proper assessment as it had a lot of sins. But it is completely counterproductive and unreasonable to equate Communism and Nazism. They are different phenomena. They have a different nature, manifestations, and therefore their results differ. How can we forget that western democracies succeeded to defeat Nazi Germany with the help of the Communist



Soviet Union? It played the decisive role in the rout of Nazi Germany. This fact cannot be revised or doubted. It is also wrong to claim the Soviet Union won the war all by itself. It is impossible to underestimate Lend-Lease assistance, the second front, and the resistance movement in Europe. They all played a role. We won the war together.

However, the more we move away from historic developments, the more they want to beautify the position of their country and exaggerate its merits. It is not incidental that school manuals in some western countries carry only several lines about the Soviet role and contribution to the victory in the war. However, most influential scholars and politicians in the West correctly assess the role of the Soviet Union and the allied effort.

I do not know politicians who support Nazi ideology, but I can definitely say there are a lot of extremists in any country. As the ideology is very infectious, there is a major temptation to earn easy points on it by playing the moods and spiraling up xenophobia. It can be very profitable at a given moment, but in the final end the policy will hit the politician back.

Amber Bridge Fund activities will help develop normal and professional cooperation that will be also promoted by the Baltic Civilization Institute created with the support of the Lomonosov Moscow State University.

Alexander A. Sharavin

*President of the Institute of Political and Military Analysis
Acting member of the Academy of Military Sciences*

BALTIC CIVILIZATION INSTITUTE

Baltic Civilization Institute (BCI) is an international non-governmental organization created with the support of the Lomonosov Moscow State University.

The Institute provides analytical, academic, scientific and organizational support to the Amber Bridge international public fund with the main aim of promoting intellectual potential integration of ten countries of the region: Russia, Germany, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Finland, Sweden, and Estonia.

The Institute aims at:

- expanding the range of ideas circulating in the political, economic, and cultural spaces of the region;
- searching for new interaction formats for public institutions and policy-forming communities;
- reconciling potential contradictions through mutual clarification of positions.

The research of the Institute is focused on the following guidelines:

Baltic Civilization as an historic and geographic phenomenon

- Integrity of the space of Northern Europe («northern mirror» of the Mediterranean).
- Baltic space structure, its specifics, and the place in the history of Europe.

Environmental research

- Baltic region as a common ecosphere.
- Conceptual, theoretical, and practical consultative backup to environmental projects.



- Environmental awareness and responsible approaches to the ecosphere, international environmental dialogue.

Economic research

- Experience of regional countries in the buildup of socially-targeted economies.
- Transit and trade logistics in the region.

Social and political research

- Institutional basics and socio-demographic consequences of the combination of democratic parliamentary and socialist mechanisms in the development of Scandinavian societies.
- Political models in Baltic countries.
- Regional political agenda.

Historic, ethnographic and cultural research

- Cultural anthropology, linguistics.
- Historic projects of Baltic integration.
- Modern war experience and conflict settlement.
- Baltic fleets history and maritime traditions.

Public opinion research

- Public stereotypes, perception of history and knowledge of regional neighbors.

Alexander L. Chechevishnikov

Executive Director,
Department head of the Research Institute of Social Systems
at the Lomonosov Moscow State University,
senior research fellow of the Moscow State Institute of
International Relations
at the Russian Foreign Ministry



PROTECT BALTIC CULTURAL HERITAGE

The International Public Amber Bridge Fund and its Latvian partner Amber Bridge Baltic funds sponsored the 4th Cultural Heritage Forum of the Baltic region held in Riga in September 2010. The event was supported by UNESCO World Heritage Center and the French Foundation for Support of UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

The meeting in Latvia discussed «cultural heritage as a contemporary challenge,» which suggested a wide discussion of contradicting processes in modern town-building and architectural principles. The forum aimed at identifying risks that can result in an irretrievable loss of cultural heritage valuables.

Experts from Germany, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Latvia, Poland, Russia, Finland, Sweden, and Estonia participated in the discussion.

Russia was represented by three experts – [Alexander A. Skokan](#), a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Architecture and Construction Science, Academician of the International Academy of Architecture, and laureate of the Russian State Prize

for architecture. The Russian Culture Fund delegated Leonid M. Arinstein, adviser to the Culture Fund president, PhD and Professor of the Moscow State University, and Irina Yu. Yuryeva, an author of Culture Fund projects.



Alexander Skokan said the topic of the forum was vital and caused acute debate in many European states. The presence of historic elements, originals rather than imitations in the urban environment triggers fundamental human demand for self-identification.

He quoted Russian philosopher Georgy Fedotov as saying Russia has three faces, three facades, and three points of cultural unification with the rest of the world – Kiev through Byzantine and Constantinople to the Mediterranean culture, Moscow that represents Russia facing the East, and St. Petersburg that promotes relations with west European culture through the Baltic region.

Survival and preservation of historic quarters became vital because of the latest construction boom and overwhelming commercial approaches to city development. Despite improved legislation and operations of bureaucratic agencies in charge of preservation of monuments, as well as active and prominent public movements for their protection, the number of disappearing historic objects is increasing and the surrounding cultural layer is depleting. Definitely, there is a contradiction of principle between the necessity to develop and modernize urban environment and the wish to preserve historic habitat. In Russia the contradicting situation often results in a growing number of pseudo-historic objects, which are imitations with zero historic but high commercial value, as such reconstruction method allows to increase the space of the building and equip it with modern technical systems, etc. Non-scientific and improper restoration with new expansions is also on the rise.

The speed and the very process of restoration are considered to be the biggest value rather than the material result. Practically any work of a modern architect in a historic city means interaction with cultural, historic, and social context. Cultural heritage elements are present both tangibly (buildings, quarters, etc.) and intangibly (local legends, traditions, history, sights, strange changes and anomalies which are often defined as *genius locus*). An architect shall be capable of comprehending the information and finding a reasonable compromise between building layout and metaphysical factors by offering an architecture that fits into the given place. However the idea is in contradiction with the intention of modern architecture to be universal and international. This is due to universal technologies and the same materials used in construction everywhere which determine architectural designs, Skokan said.



Forum participant Professor **Leonid Arinstein** outlined his view of the discord and disproportion in Russian cultural heritage. He said the first half of the XX century in Russia was an epoch of wars, revolutions, militant spiritual and cultural intolerance accompanied

by mass destruction of cultural heritage. He recalled that dozens of thousands of churches, mansions, and architectural monuments were demolished. The Bolsheviks did not limit themselves by the destruction



of architectural heritage, in the 1920-30s they worked to delete from public memory historic names of cities, settlements, and streets. In the 1990s historic names were restored practically everywhere.

Therefore, in preserving and restoring Russian cultural heritage it is important today not only to revive and rebuild ruined monuments, but also to change public conscience so that it targets creation rather than destruction, according to Arinstein. Fortunately, it has been achieved to a major extent. An important role was played by the education system and the emergence of public organizations: Pan-Russian Society for the Protection of Historic and Cultural Monuments, the Russian Culture Fund, etc.

The scholar recalled the history of the unique Memel iconostasis of the Russian army of the times of Empress Elizabeth Petrovna (middle of the 18th century), its restitution to Russia from Germany, restoration and installation in the metropolitan cathedral of Kaliningrad.

Speaking about modern challenges to cultural heritage in European countries the professor noted they mostly originate from private owners and major monopolies whose interests often contradict cultural and esthetic norms and threaten destruction to certain monuments and historic-architectural complexes and landscapes. In this respect national and world public has to play a major role and influence the situation regardless of state boundaries and raise awareness to promote preservation of cultural heritage.