The objective of the paper is to identify, describe, and explain those points of the regional policy that resulted in the Polish-Lithuanian rapprochement during the tenures of the presidents Lech Kaczyński and Valdas Adamkus. Author tries to define the nature of common interests interpreted on the basis of political practice that impacts the real value of cooperation, i.e. the quality of cooperation, which is – in other words – the quality of political friendship between the two countries. Author offers interpretation of foreign policy programs within the theory of the national role performance and the “center – peripheries” relations. Activism of Eastern policy, close Alliance with the United States, and energetic independence of Russia are the crucial points in the foreign policy of both presidents. More extensive diagnosis of the regional and national crisis allowed for the use of political and cultural capital as a counterbalance to the economic predominance of the Western center over Eastern peripheries. Political friendship generating quality of bilateral relations that could not be experienced for decades or even centuries lacked deep, internalized sources that could protect its stability against any short-lived or economic fluctuations in the future.

Keywords: Lech Kaczyński, Valdas Adamkus, Political Friendship, Foreign Policy, National Role Approach, Center-Periphery.
INTRODUCTION. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Aristotle – in Book VII of the Nicomachean Ethics – noted the necessity of friendship as an element constituting polity. Without friendship, truly understood polity becomes unattainable and Aristotle’s ethics of friendship is closely associated with being a real, rightful, and virtuous citizen. Yet true friendship is possible only with someone we know personally. This feeling is unattainable without a direct contact and cognition. Hence, a close relationship between friendship, polity, and cognition point to a possible perspective of the foreign allies, and primarily to the Polish – Lithuanian bilateral relations between 2005 and 2009, which is sometimes called a “golden period.”

The objective of the paper is to identify, describe, and explain those points of the regional policy that resulted in the Polish-Lithuanian rapprochement during the tenures of the presidents Lech Kaczyński and Valdas Adamkus. It is the nature of common interests interpreted on the basis of political practice that impacts the real value of cooperation, i.e. the quality of cooperation, which is – in other words – the quality of political friendship between the two countries. The primary issues may be divided into two areas: the source and diagnosis. The first one refers to the attempts made between 2005 and 2009 to identify the real sources of political alliance. Was this the outcome of personal, subjective convictions of the top Polish and Lithuanian foreign policymakers? Or – rather – was this the convergence of strategic objectives expressed in the tactical compliance of those policies? Perhaps, the alliance was in equal measure to the outcome of effective institutional mechanisms providing convenient cooperation channels between Warsaw and Vilnius after the EU and NATO accession. The questions about the impact of international politics are of equal importance: they include the impact of the perception of Russia and United States – the two major subjects of the international politics – on the choice of such path. Moreover, the author aims to identify those internal fields that contributed to the decrease in Polish-Lithuanian cooperation potential. Another area pertains to the diagnosis of the country’s situation and location in relation
to neighbors and Western countries. It is this internal definition of the current position regarding other participants of the system providing policymakers with the agenda for international actions.

Author offers interpretation of foreign policy programs designed by Lech Kaczyński and Valdas Adamkus within the theory of the national role performance developed by Kalevi J. Holsti and the “center – peripheries” relations discussed by a number of scholars, including Immanuel Wallerstein, Stein Rokkan or Tomasz Zarycki in Poland. The theory of the national role performance seems to be the tool that fully meets requirements of the description of internal concepts of the country’s foreign policy.

Kalevi Holsti distinguished four primary spheres determining operational fields in the international politics: role performance, national role conceptions (self-defined), role prescriptions and position (status in the system). Yet the determinant impacting the foreign policy content, key vectors, possible forms and modes of implementation that he found crucial was the national role concept. This is what he claimed: “In the study of international politics and foreign policy, in particular, there are reasons … for assuming that the role performance (decisions and actions) of governments maybe explained primarily by reference to the policy-makers’ own conceptions of their nation’s role in a region or in the international system as a whole.”

Holsti saw significant gaps in the explanation of complexity of the international system by traditional international relations theories, which usually focused their explanatory efforts on the holistic perspective.

The national role concept includes a number of national tasks and interests, personal needs, and leaders’ capabilities as well as adoption of specific values as those that are primary in the policy. The essence of this concept lies in the foreign policymakers’ conviction about the best (most appropriate for the country’s potential) modus operandi in the international environment: “the policymakers’ own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international
system or in subordinate regional systems. It is their ‘image’ of the appropriate orientations or functions of their state toward, or in, the external environment.”

In Holsti’s view, the primary sources of the national role concept include geography, topography, natural resources as well as axiological reasons being subject to adjustments, including traditional policies, socioeconomic needs articulated by the most important subjects of the domestic policy, national values, doctrines, ideologies, attitudes of the public opinion or personal and political needs of the key policymakers. According to the theory, the state (as a research subject) is situated between the two extreme, determined by the size scale, perspectives of the state’s organism – a superpower and a small, passive state adopting foreign norms. Holsti emphasized significance of the ever-strong role of sovereignty that should focus scholars’ attention on the internal aspects of designing foreign strategies. Although the theory was developed during the Cold War, its author did not disregard the roles identified with a different, non-binary, matrix of the description of foreign actions. In this manner, 17 distinguished national roles did not lack the policy pursued in the region and sub-region or the programs minimizing country’s activities in the realm of international relations. Therefore, the utility of Holsti’s paradigm increases along with the extension of the margin of possible-to-pursue forms of the Polish and Lithuanian foreign policy after 1989 / 1990 and particularly between 2005 and 2009, which is the period most interesting for this study.

Lisbeth Aggestam, the other scholar interested in the national roles, highlighted strong associations between foreign policy, values and political community’s culture impacting this policy. According to Aggestam, the identity legitimizes actions in the field of foreign policy, and specified understanding of the axiological identifications may consolidate cohesion of agenda and solidarity in its performance: “The politics of identity refers to a particular set of ideas about political community that policy-makers use and drawn on to mobilize a sense of cohesion and solidarity to legitimate the general thrust of foreign policy. As a consequence of its articulation and institutionalisation
in the political culture, it may become internalised in the cognitive framework – or prism – through which foreign policy-makers interpret the political reality.”6 Vit Benes, a Czech scholar, paid attention to the fact that it is primarily applicable in small and medium countries that pay considerable attention to the internal conditions of their diplomacy.7 Structurally restricted, small countries were able to increase their activity in the system of external relations by selecting an appropriate national role. On the other hand, Holsti cautiously offered a thesis about the cause and effect relationship between clarity, coherence, and long-lasting roles and activity, and a larger impact on the international system of the national subjects.8 On the other hand, the states with unclear concepts of the national role were generally entities lacking subjectivity, awareness of the foreign policy goals and the vision of favorable developments in the international environment. Their internal and external operations resembled stagnation: „These states appear to be objects, but not actors, in international relationships. Except for commercial matters, they do not try to change external conditions in their favor, and they see no continuing external tasks for themselves. Yet, their internal life is highly vulnerable to disturbances coming from the external environment.”9 Although quite clear, the mechanism did not consider a more complex spatial and meaning relation on the “center – peripheries” axis. Yet monotony of the scheme developed by Holsti may be supplemented by a more external dimension of auto-definition of the country’s location in the “center – peripheries” system.

The “center – peripheries” model applied to interpret international politics was used by Immanuel Wallerstein in the development of the “world system”10. In his theory, Wallerstein distinguished four areas: centers, peripheries, semi-peripheries, and external territories. The primary criterion included issues related to the economic advantage, deepening of disparities and hiding the center’s advantage over peripheries: “This is particularly the case in the advantaged areas of the world-economy – what we have called the core-states. In such states, the creation of a strong state machinery coupled with a national culture, a phenomenon often referred to as integration, serves
both as a mechanism to protect disparities that have arisen within the world-system, and as an ideological mask and justification for the maintenance of these disparities”11 Importantly though, the relation between centers and semi-peripheries are ambivalent, given the situation of Poland and Lithuania. The latter ones used to be a part of the center whose socio-economic and political condition has always been considerably better than those at the peripheries suffering from the hierarchized contacts with the centers. Certainly, the disadvantages of being outside the center of the above mentioned processes are associated with the ossification of this state at the social, cultural or political level. Yet they may be supplemented with a number of benefits received from the leading economies. This “interactive” aspect of the described model is highlighted by Tomasz Zarycki who discussed the possibility of development of non-obligatory, autonomous links between the center and peripheries. A scholar warned that “in one way or another, the necessity of an active participation in the interaction may quite frequently provide the subordinate party with a considerably larger number of unexpected assets than the players who dominate in theory.”12 Regarding foreign policy, these assets may include security guarantees offered by larger, central organizations, economic aid provided by the funds, foreign investments made by central economic entities or the center’s hints on conducting negotiations and developing theoretically joint stance on the international arena.

Yet the center – peripheries relations, particularly in the context of the development of the socio-economic model, frequently turn out to be a form of the West’s domination over Eastern Europe. Zarycki provides Romania as an example of the country that abandoned developing original diagnosis of the hallmarks of its economy, society, and culture in favor of adoption of the Western-born Knowledge-Based-Economy concept. In his paper “Democracy of Peripheries”, Zdzisław Krasnodębski focused on the falseness of the thesis about a sole, universal mode of political modernization, warning Polish political elite of the negative consequences of imitating or coping Western solutions.13 Also in Lithuania, well known book written by
Gintaras Beresnevičius provoked discussion about Grand Duchy of Lithuania legacy and its meaning for actual Lithuanian foreign policy. The central notions were provinciality of Lithuania, centrality of Western parts of EU and strategies aimed to overcome this status. Thus foreign policy is an element of a slightly more extensive vision of the development of original, independent, national culture and regional identity-based sources of the functioning of political community. In this context, external policy may be perceived as a specific communication channel and an effective means to ensure security and interests of the nation.

If the foreign policy programs implemented by Lech Kaczyński and Valdas Adamkus are interpreted as a choice of political resources necessary to ensure political and economic development, two possible concepts of exploiting a semi-peripheral location of Poland and Lithuania should be worth discussing. Regarding Poland, these general characteristics should be highlighted due to the utter difference of the diplomacy run by the President and government between 2007 and 2010 (along with objective conditions). On the other hand, the casus of Lithuania, a small country located at the EU and NATO border, should even more urge to verify a rationality of the strategy of adopting the regional logic of policy. In his presentation of the two concepts of development – exogenic and endogenic – Tomasz G. Grosse outlined a general mode of the periphery taking a stance toward the center. The exogenic method refers to the center as a model pattern possible to catch up with owing to the absorption and spillover of development from the poles of growth onto the areas legging behind. The endogenic option draws the policymakers’ attention to internal resources, being inert by the time when the exogenic dominance begins. Adaptability of peripheral regions may be the means to make use of the location so that it would become the asset founded on the consensus and internal coherence of the adopted form of modernization. Zarycki distinguished three dimensions of “getting out from the marginal position”: political, economic, and cultural. The first one means a total independence of the sovereign political subject. The second is associated with mobilization and accumulation
of the economic growth factors. The third one means selective mobilization of culture and national identity-related resources in the face of modern challenges. These elements had a share in the Polish and Lithuanian foreign policy between 2005 and 2009. Hence, the description is aimed to define peripheral strategies aimed to eliminate a number of structural dependencies and weaknesses on the modern center (some Western countries) and a core of the former alliances (Russia).

CRUCIAL COMMON POINTS

Year 2004 meant the European Union Accession for Poland and NATO Accession for Lithuania. Therefore, that year is presented as a geographical revolution or the “return to Europe” of Central and Eastern European countries. The latter phrase implies associations with a spatial dichotomy of centers and peripheries, which frequently sparked criticism about the ostensibly restored Europeanism of these countries. Moreover, that period witnessed internal crises in Lithuania and Poland: Lithuania was affected by international enfeeblement resulting from the actions of the President Rolandas Paksas and had to promptly restore the image of a reliable ally, and Poland fell into crisis following corruption scandals in the surroundings of mass media and executive power (Rywin scandal), which, in 2005, led to the total reorientation of political powers in Polish Sejm. Both countries entered a new quality of international relations in the shadow of problems revealing a high level of corruption and topicality of dependence on Russian business in Lithuania. This political capital could only exacerbate a sense of distance, difference, and dependence on the central core (“3 x D” model developed by Rokkan). On the other hand, apart from these problems, more permanent, structural circumstances enhanced readiness of presidents Adamkus and Kaczyński to improve international positions of Poland and Lithuania by building regional subjectivity.

Lithuania began to seek its geopolitical code, which primarily meant the idea of “regional leadership” defined in the assumptions
for a “new foreign policy” program.\(^1\) Since 2005, a new Polish government was determined to reform the state and saw opportunity to improve its status in the relations with the EU and in the regional cooperation. President Lech Kaczyński tried to prove that the quality of Polish political capital (defined in terms of the state’s institutions) was poor as compared to that of the EU core: “In my view, the Polish reason of state is a strong and effective government, which is crucial also due to the EU membership. We won’t be able to manage in the EU without an effective government. We are still trying to catch up with other EU members and this is another reason why we should be a serious state.”\(^2\) Artūras Paulauskas highlighted a similar correlation between internal institutional effectiveness and international position, citizens’ trust, and compensation for political capital defects in his speech inaugurating the foreign policy program continued later by president Adamkus: “If we earn respect in these organizations (UE and NATO) and make our voice heard in them, the people of Lithuania would be able to take even greater pride and have more trust in their state. If we have a focused foreign policy and muster broad public support, it would be easier to achieve the desired results in Europe and defend the interests of our nation in the world.”\(^3\) Likewise, Lithuanian politicians did not avoid criticism of the infrastructural, social, and economic situation in their country and regional environment. This is how Paulauskas perceived a fragmentary nature of the region: “Wherever you go, fragmentation is shocking. Industry and trade suit only narrow needs of each nation and lack a clear vision of economic interface. Differences are evident in the level of economic and social development, and in standards of democracy and civil liberties. We even have no highways running from border to border and from capital to capital. We do develop our infrastructure, but each to his own.”\(^4\) Fragmentation, addressing narrow needs, increasing social disparities and democratic standards, fragmentary development of infrastructure – this was the diagnosis of peripheral condition of Lithuania at the moment of its EU and NATO accession.

Importantly, such situation did not implicate isolationism defined in the categories of retaining sovereignty for any price. On the
contrary, president Adamkus made attempts to begin the “interactive game” turning to one’s advantage the geographical location of Lithuania and fast economic growth compared to the Western centre: “We will seek to expand the Baltic regions’ engagement with the neighbours in the North, the South and the East and contribute actively to the development of new formats of regional co-operation, which would bridge the Nordic countries and the Central and Eastern European nations. In this context, Lithuania’s favourable geographical location and its experience of co-operation with neighbours and within the region will be a great asset.”23 Here, staying outside the center meant exceptional location between two different European regions, which provided opportunity to be a link in the regional cooperation. The position adopted by the president was characteristic: he associated joining the “main stream” of the European policy with offering Vilnius a role of the regional leader. This is how Adamkus presented a role of “the regional centre” dedicated to Lithuania: “Now, when Lithuania has become part of the mainstream of European affairs, it will be able to develop with greater vigour neighbourly relations and co-operation within the region, and take part in the formation and implementation of the Union’s neighbourhood policy.”24 A special position of Poland – a “strategic partner” of Lithuania – was manifested by the frequency of Lithuanian leader in Warsaw. President Adamkus visited Warsaw 16 times, proving this way that Lithuania was Poland’s regional partner (“regional-subsystem collaborator”).25

The crucial points of the foreign policy pursued by Lech Kaczyński and Valdas Adamkus determined a list of common priorities, shared tactics, and similar national roles embraced by the presidents. The basic point of departure was still the imperative of political activity seeking geopolitical space of the strategic destination. This “dynamic space” (the phrase used by minister Antanas Valionis) defined as the area spreading between the Baltic and Black Sea was to be the key element of legitimization of the full EU membership and enhanced subjectivity of both countries. The platform of their activity was to include energy policy and support lent to the Eastern neighbors in their endeavors to join NATO and EU. The “Promethean”
moment was to attract Eastern neighbors, and pulling them out of the post-communist space (understood as a former center) was supplemented by an endeavor to highlight political realism of the offered initiatives. According to the principle developed by Lech Kaczyński, which he presented during his visit in Vilnius, “1+1 does not equal 2” which was a means of persuasion used with regard to the Lithuanian elite. This account manifested logics of the operations run by the EU which should jointly recognize interests of all players, including those from the peripheries. On the other hand, Eastern policy was a convenient political code used by those regional leaders who showed the largest interest in consolidating demographic and geopolitical transformations in the nearest neighbors. This is how Lech Kaczyński outlined his understanding of the structure of this self-regulating system: “This is how it looks like: a strong position in the East means a stronger position in the European Union, which, in turn, means good relations with the USA, and this, in turn, translates into a stronger position in relations with Russia.” Valdas Adamkus highlighted special competences Lithuania had regarding Eastern policy: “Lithuania knows the region and the mindset of people; it has gone through similar reforms. Thus we know the pitfalls and the steps that must be given priority. A little, but visible help from outside is of the utmost importance for building confidence and political consensus in young democracies. We should not hesitate and offer this help to those who today need it most.”

Political friendship of the peripheries excluded paternalism toward East – in Lech Kaczyński and Valdas Adamkus’s view, internal democratic progress depended on the plausibility of assistance offered by EU and NATO and not vice versa – assistance and support depending on the progress in the implementation of reforms. This is because those leaders found permanent security to be of critical importance, much more important than any secondary issues related to the civic society, natural environment protection or transparency of laws. Both presidents found the realistic-geostrategic paradigm to be crucial compared to the “soft” issues associated with the NATO and EU membership, “reform-minded” approach (creating a wide range
of opportunities for evading, avoiding plausible perspectives of the membership, establishing substitutes or multiplying international entities of seemingly similar strategic value as that of NATO and UE). Such perception of one’s own position in relation to the Western center may be identified in two different manners. The first one involved offsetting the weakness of their political capital (including unfavorable difficult geographic location) by the theory of cultural closeness and better understanding of the problems of the area under discussion. The second one, which seems complementary, referred to the existence of two centers (new – European, Western, and old – Eastern, Russian, post-Soviet). Zarycki showed that the elites of Baltic states are in a special situation – they have access to the two central codes. At the political level, presidents Kaczyński and Adamkus sought their own, idiomatic code, comprehensible, primarily, for the Western European countries. On the other hand, the past Eastern core posed a challenge for the Eastern European countries that had to overcome long-lasting, structural, economic, and cultural dependencies.

Another crucial foundation for both visions lied in Washington. The views on hard security were supplemented by the belief that NATO and, certainly, USA are the tools deciding about the guarantee and quality of military protection. At the same time, international developments (war against terrorism, Afghanistan, Iraq) drew the US attention to the potential allies in Central and Eastern Europe. Certainly, Central and Eastern European countries sought support of the biggest superpower able to endorse Poland and Lithuania in the global, European, regional, and Eastern policy. Yet as the leaders of a small and medium country, presidents did not overrate a “causative potential” of Poland and Lithuania. This policy was particularly reflected in the harmonious American-Lithuanian-Polish cooperation during the Ukrainian crises and war in Georgia. The stake in that play was not a simple bandwagoning strategy in relations with the leading superpower, with a task of seeking partial, tactical advantages but making use of this instrument to maximize actual guarantees of defense (anti-missile shield, deployment of American troops)
and extension of area of independence from the Russian autocratic system (political, legal, energy or economic). Both leaders chose a role of loyal regional partners and anti–imperialist agents as the best form of relations with the United States.

The concepts presented by Warsaw and Vilnius highlighted importance of remaining an active participant in the play run by the central links of the international policy. This is what Lech Kaczyński said about the necessity of maintaining a relative balance between USA and Europe: “There are two schools of thinking in the European Union. According to the first one, European Union is a competitor of United States. According to the second one, we should cooperate with Americans. We are advocates of the Euro-American cooperation. If there is just one policy, we will become a big but poor province of the Community. And then we will be the country of secondary importance also for the United States.” President warned against ‘peripheralization’ of Poland’s position as he perceived a wide range of potential schools of thinking about the US engagement in Europe as a remedy for the unifying endeavors of the center. Some sort of apprehension resulted from the experience-justified conviction about centers’ ability to work out compromises at the expense of peripheral entities. Negotiations between EU, USA, and Russia were found not only a chance to ensure economic and political stability (as this was assessed by peripheries) but also a challenge in the area of opposing neutralization of the post-communist countries. Paulauskas indicated that “today the EU and Russia are engaged in a dialogue on energy issues, tomorrow they may discuss common trade area and then the time may come for a visa free regime. This is a natural development. We should be at the forefront of these processes in order to defend our national interests and to avoid a situation where we are made an item of trade or other states pursue their interests at our expense.”

A strategy of balancing between the European and American center resulted from the assessment of the Russian threat as the past core, which was particularly noticeable in the Baltic States and Ukraine. In Poland, the Russian military doctrine and actions undertaken by Vladimir Putin were perceived as a restitution of imperial traditions
most threatening to the regional security. Kaczyński found that “Poland has absolutely no interest in lending support to the extremely emancipatory European policy toward the United States. This would undermine our position toward Russia as – apart from other reasons – Kremlin has ambitions in Ukraine and Baltic States.”

As those processes had to be taken into account, actions aimed at the elimination of the regional energy, and development dependence on Russian natural resources had to be taken. The diagnosis that if the region does not become independent of the post-Soviet sources, distribution, and transfer infrastructure, it will be unable to free from the impact of the strategy reintegrating the area of the past communist center led to a number of common attitudes toward the projects opposing that goal (Nordstream, negotiation mandate EU-Russia, subsequent demands to restore “Druzhba pipeline”), projects decreasing the level of dependence (Mažeikiai, nuclear power station, LitPolLINK, LitPolGrid, Odessa-Brody-Gdańsk, via and rail Baltica) as well as for a providing platforms for a long-term cooperation (LIT-POLUKR, GUAM, 3balt+PL summits, Community of Democratic Choice, Club of Georgia’s friends).

Interestingly, though, Poland and Lithuania initially showed willingness to improve their relations with Kremlin (Pawel Kowal’s missions and negotiations with Sergiej Jastrzembski, Polish ambassador in Moscow Stefan Meller as a new foreign minister, declarations made by Adamkus). Despite those efforts, Russia decided to impose the embargo on Polish meat products. Lithuania and Poland jointly counteracted such measures by blocking a negotiating mandate of the European Commission to begin talks with Russia. The fact that in 2007 Chancellor Angela Merkel recognized lifting that embargo as the issue concerning all the EU members should be regarded as an example of the effective pressure exerted by the peripheries on the EU center. Effectiveness of Polish-Lithuanian cooperation in this respect turned out to be high although after the political change in Poland, in 2007, new Polish government abandoned support for Vilnius in enforcing resumption of oil supplies to the power station in Mažeikiai. This shift in the national role of Poland during the tenure of one
foreign affairs minister was criticized even by Vytautas Landsbergis: “I am going to tell you just one thing: you must have a vision in politics. You can’t focus on just current affairs and calculate what is worth doing at just this moment. Pragmatism easily turns into conformism and ends in the disastrous Realpolitik. You shouldn’t always follow what the European capitals say and dance to the music played by Berlin. Poland is losing a position of the regional leader. Warsaw is giving up something that was its strength.”

OBSTACLES

Two crucial elements of a partially or totally internal nature should not be ignored: economic growth between 2004 and 2008 and the period of political turmoil proceeding those years. Had it not been for those crises, presidents would have rather been unable to exercise their power. On the other hand, the events from 2003 and 2004 had a huge impact on the limits of political possibilities of those leaders – (despite semi-presidential systems empowering president with a number of competences in the foreign policy). President Adamkus had more prerogatives, especially after the collapse of the left-wing coalition of the Lithuanian Socialdemocratic Party (LSDP) with Viktor Uspaskich and Arturas Paulauskas establishment of the minority government led by Gediminas Kirkilas and personal experiences in the failed attempt of implementation of a “new policy” during the first tenure (presidential semi-“presidentialism”). On the other hand, Lech Kaczyński focused on the international relations after early elections in 2007. Yet a scale of the conflict with a new government made it impossible for him to fully implement his concepts. Polish foreign policy, and Eastern policy in particular, became incoherent due to personal animosities that depreciated Warsaw as a strong partner in this part of Europe. Lithuania, on the other hand, had a number of problems with political biographies of Paksa, Uspaskich and – to some extent – Brazauskas or Paulauskas. Political career of the Prime Minister Brazauskas ended in corruption allegations, Uspaskich – charged with financial abuses – fled to Moscow, and Paksa became
the European Parliament member. Hence, Adamkus’s primary task was – at least for a period of time – to re-legitimize image of the Republic of Lithuania as a country that, despite obstacles, managed to expose, fight and dismiss corrupted politicians.

The problems hampering implementation of these ambitious visions should be divided into several categories: international, political and systemic, internal, and source-related. The first one includes primarily economic shifts in the global politics measured by the level of economic crisis, reorientation in the Washington’s policy priorities or the growth of neo-imperial trends in the Russian policy. The second ones include political limitations whose sources should be sought in the consensual, transformational form of political changes in the early 1990s. As the constitutions enacted in Poland and Lithuania are the product of numerous political and social agreements, the subjectivity of presidential offices they stipulate is rather vague. On the one hand, president has been invested with relevant competences (military forces, nominations, foreign policy, historical policy), but on other hand, executive power has been split and its center is in the cabinet of prime minister. The internal factor encompasses predominance of the technocratic tactics of accommodation and absorption of the imported recipes ossifying peripheral status of Poland and Lithuania. Lack of effective cooperation with governments (Kaczyński after 2007, Adamkus before 2006) forced them to merely defend the moral content of their doctrines and the lack of real instruments to exercise the policy of values at the executive, legislative or partisan levels. This led to the dilution of the crucial content of their programs and dramatic limitations in the channels of their implementation. Therefore, Lech Kaczyński sought subjectivity on his own and limited relations with expert groups to the absolute minimum (high personalization poses a problem, which was reflected by the controversial support offered to minister Fotyga), while Valdas Adamkus actually remained a sole depositary of the “new foreign policy”, repelling attacks of a number of politicians, including Dalia Grybauskaite (the then EC commissioner). Similarly, the Lithuanian strategic analyses (Center for Strategic Studies or Center for European Integration Studies) focused
mainly on specific issues and avoided a broader, long-term strategy defining key points of the country development and its foreign doctrine. Despite a program consensus declared by all political parties after 2004, Lithuania and Poland (much more divided at the stage of development of normative visions) suffered from the real split between a theoretical, “paper”, concept and the possibilities of its execution and enforcements. A noticeable characteristic of that stage is the lack of political willingness uniting the majority of elites, parties or youth groups. The division concerned the evaluation of the strategies compensating peripheral location, condition of the state (political capital) or the choice of national roles serving the state’s interests most effectively. Although “new foreign policy” was in opposition to the Russian military doctrine and political strategy, a real degree of its acceptance and assimilation in the Lithuanian political leadership was poor.40

Source restrictions posed a considerably more serious problem as they led to the lack of meta-political vision of the development of Poland, Lithuania, and European Union as well as a kind of a gap in the political leadership. Consequently, the ambitious foreign policy was undermined not only by the lack of enforcement tools, inability to develop a specific political situation by elected leaders or the program stratification of elites and subordinate officials but also disinterest in its origins in the culture, strong company brands, effective think tanks, social identifications and etc. Lithuanian and Polish soft power would require considerably more systematic work, larger outlays, and improvement in the reliability (which was difficult given economic scandals).

CONCLUSIONS

Activism of Eastern policy, close Alliance with the United States, and energetic independence of Russia are the crucial points in the foreign policy of both presidents. Activism closely associated with the national role of a regional leader and a partner, support lent to US combined with the concept of anti-imperial participant, player, and ally
in the region along with the Energy policy decided about the joint international space, where Polish and Lithuanian interests were in the strategic symbiosis. More extensive diagnosis of the regional and national crisis allowed for the use of political and cultural capital as a counterbalance to the economic predominance of the Western center over Eastern peripheries. Recognizing legitimacy of the theses about catching up with the centers, Polish and Lithuanian leaders struggled with the heritage of the recent dominance of the past Eastern core. A means to eliminate the gap between the periphery and the new center and dependence on the former center was to begin an interactive play on the line “center – periphery” where the critical point consisted of balancing influences of the European and American policy toward the region. The region played a role of a kind of the context necessary to accomplish interests regarding national security identified in the categories of physical threat posed by aggressive Russian policy. Despite initial attempt to open to Russia, its aggressive policy sparked extension of the strategy aimed at neutralizing the past center by regional solidarity and potential of the Western European and American centers.

In the horizontal perspective, Poland and Lithuania share a number of vital interests – the policy of making the region independent of Russia, development of the subjective relations with a new center, ensuring energetic and military security, enforcing European solidarity, and highlighting a special role of Eastern neighbors in the geopolitical transformation. In the vertical perspective, Vilnius and Warsaw sought neutralization of the Russian influences, increase of one’s own value inside the geostrategic system established in 2004, and engagement in the process of balancing a wide range of schools of perception of the American engagement in the European policy. The basic tools used to pursue such policy included regional cooperation for an energy summits or active bilateral meetings. On the other hand, internal political conditions drastically and substantially limited possible effects of the policy of Lech Kaczyński and Valdas Adamkus. Weakness of the post-communist periphery resulted from political contradictions, political elite’s susceptibility to corruption.
and resistance to long-term strategies of economic and social development, failure to engage experts or considerable divisions in assessment of the country’s potential on international arena. Thus political friendship generating quality of bilateral relations that could not be experienced for decades or even centuries lacked deep, internalized sources that could protect its stability against any short-lived or economic fluctuations in the future.

NOTES

2 Ibidem, p. 239–240.
9 Ibidem, p. 281.
11 Ibidem, p. 231.
17 Ibidem, p. 31.
22 Ibidem, p. 11.
24 Ibidem, p. 18.
38 Ibidem.
Bartosz Światłowski

POLITINĖ DRAUGYSTĖ LENKIOS – LIETUVOS SANTYKIUOSE: PREZIDENTAI VALDAS ADAMKUS IR LECHAS KACZYŃSKI. SILPNI PAKRAŠČIAI VERSUS STIPRUS CENTRAS?

Santrauka


Reikšminiai žodžiai: Lietuva, Lenkija, prezidentai, draugystė, centras, periferija.