

ADAM DANIEL ROTFELD

Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland

Thank you very much. I will not continue this paper. I feel like a young teacher in Poland in the 1960s introducing the new subject of sexuality for schools. The young teacher did not know how to explain and she said, 'There are three categories of love: between men and women, but I will not discuss this because you know much more than I do from your friends in the yard. The second is between men and men and the last is between women, but this is something that should not really be promoted.' The fourth category of love is the love of the Polish nation for the Soviet Union, and that will be the subject of my presentation.

I would like to say that it is not my intention to speak about how simple and how easy it was. In fact, between us from June 2008 up to December 2010, we decided to select the most painful chapters of our common history. It was presented in a very fair and open way and I would like to say that in my view, the first element that has to be taken as a kind of conclusion to be followed in all these types of discussions is to accept that there is no other way, but to tell the truth.

However, the truth does not mean that it is interpreted in the same way, and so we decided that it had to be presented from two different positions, following the principle of mirror reflection. We had the same chapter written by Russian historians, experts and sociologists on one hand and by the Polish experts on the other. In this way, the part of the chapter written by the Russians in Poland has much higher interest, and the same about Polish chapters in Russia. In Poland, the Prime Minister decided to publish the book and make it available in all the schools and universities. This is my first point.

My second point is that Polish-Russian relations are really very specific. A Polish poet who was also an essayist and philosopher wrote about what the Russians know about themselves, but are not able to recognise. I do not know if he was right, but definitely some Poles know Russia much better than many others for all the reasons that were mentioned already by Anatoly.

I just want to say that our group was really independent and what we reflected in the book does not mean that it is shared by all Russians or all Polish readers. In other words, the second element is that one should accept and recognise that Russia does not speak with one voice. Russia is differentiated. Russian intellectuals and scientists often are very independent and fortunately that was the case in this group. Anatoly invited people into the group who were really independent and very often went against the common Russian historical literature.

My last point is that we did not only discuss the problems of the past. For example, recently, we prepared a report about the relationship between Russia and the European Union. We published this report and presented it on 25th November in Brussels under the title *Rethinking EU/Russian Relations*. It was prepared under the auspices of our group on difficult matters. In my view, the main element in this report, which needs further elaboration, is that the EU/Russian relationship is understood quite differently in Russia than in Poland. In our view, it is much more important to view it in a conceptual way. In Russia, it is seen in a much more geopolitical sense.

I would like to say that in this context, the fact that we were able to produce this type of common report in a relatively short period is a great achievement. Anatoly mentioned two achievements, namely the common volume of *White Spots Black Spots Difficult Issues in Polish-Russian Relations*, which is more than 1,000 pages, like the *Bible*. The second is the Polish-Russian Centre for Dialogue and Understanding. The third one is that we initiated some reports addressing not just the past, but also the future.

Thank you very much for your attention.