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AMBER COLLECTING REGULATIONS IN COASTAL LITHUANIA UNTIL THE MIDDLE OF THE 19TH C.

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The history of regulations that governed amber production in modern-day Lithuania has not yet received a comprehensive analysis. This has been determined by a number of causes. Some problems in the history of coastal area failed to be addressed at all. In the period between the 13–19th c. six historical entities were active on this narrow coastal strip. Some researchers did not consider the past of small coastal sections to be of importance. This study has no ambition to give a complete picture reflecting the change of regulations on amber collecting in coastal Lithuania. Rather, an attempt will be made to introduce some of emerging problems and to highlight important features of this process.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

Material on amber harvesting and realization characteristic of the coastal strip of modern-day Lithuania lacks consistency and comprehensiveness. Historical sources and research works devoted to the coastal portions ruled by Prussia, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Carland and Russia differ in distribution, number and quality. Most and broadest scientific interest has received the history of amber collecting and trade in Prussia. It suffices to mention the monograph by A. Auerbacher [A. Auerbacher, 1551] published as early as 1551. In the late 17th c. the same problems were in the focus of the works by P.J. Hartmann [P.J. Hartmann, 1609], M.C.H. Hartknoch [M.C.H. Hartknoch MDCLXIV], M.Praxenius [M.Praxenius, 2000]. The last two have served as reference and source for the present study too. Contribution by F.S. Bock [F.S. Bock, 1767], A. Korzusche [A. Korzusche, 1811], the 18th c. certainly deserves mentioning. The 19th c. was extremely rich in investigation in this field, of the works of the century stands out the study by K.G. Hagen [K.G. Hagen, 1823], which has also been used by the authors. The works by German historians of the 18th centuries served as reference for the Lithuanians J. Remeika [J. Remeika, 1939], J. Kaikulis [J. Kaikulis, 1933], J. Buibys [J. Buibys, 1957], V. Karinas [V. Karinas, 1968] and others who have used the ideas by German authors too indiscriminately. Historical amber production and trade features of the coastal strip of Memel were addressed by the historians A. Bezenberger [A. Bezenberger, 1889], G. Willoweit [G. Willoweit, 1969a, 1969b], F. Ulrich [F. Ulrich, 1970] in the 19-20th c. Besides these, as additional sources for separate facts or additional material served works of regional ethnological and history character by C. Hinte, U. Dziereckis [C. Hinte, U. Dziereckis, 1986], P. Jakštas [P. Jakštas, 1992], V. Kalakov, S. Šimėnas [V. Kalakov, S. Šimėnas, 1999], G. Hermansowski [G. Hermansowski, 1956]. Changes in regulations applied to amber collection and trade on the coastal strip ruled by the Grand Duchy of Lithuania reflect only in the old inventories of Darbėnai estate, and the townships of Palanga and Sventoji. These inventories have been used as sources Z. Kiepa [Z. Kiepa,
Coastal Lithuania: historical outline

In the history of regulations imposed on amber production, the paramount question was that of the order on one particular strip of the seawall. Historical entry established in one section determined specific manner of administration, law and law enforcement. Six historical entries (Livonian and Prussian Orders, Curland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and Russia) were active on the coastal strip of modern-day Lithuania. Let us track the changes in the rule of this coastal area over the period from the 13th to the middle 19th century.

From 1252 to 1328, the Livonian Order and the bishop of Curland ruled this coastal strip. The sea coast was included into the commanderies of Memel and Grobin. In 1328, the commandery of Memel (to the south of the river Šventoji up to the Nemunas delta and to the north of the Grobištas Cape in the area of the Carmonian Spit) was transferred to the Prussian Order. The Livonian Order continued to rule the lands that were under the command of Grobin. Also, the lands of Aisputn north of the river Šventoji. In 1392, the Prussian Order received the lands that had belonged to the bishop of Curland. In 1427 the Prussian Order had to give up the strip of Nemiršta–Sventoji. It should be noted that the boards established in the battles with Prussia and the Livonian Order were not respected as were the ones established by the wars inside the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Such division of areas of rule was established around 1466. [Nikertatiš N., 1999, p.105 – 117; Sembrzitik J.S. 10 – 32, 38, Balčius M. 1999, P.193 - 197.]

Amber collection. The Baltic-Herz office had to insure that all amber was accumulated in Loščad castle and to prevent everybody else from trading in amber. [Heranowskis G. 1996, S.15; Kulakovas V., Šimėnas V. 1999, P.270 – 271; Hagen K.G. 1823, S.1 – 4]. In the 16th century Garnrau refers to Heinegast von Arfterfen, a Börnestien at Loščad in 1332. [Prætorius M., 2000, P.627] The castle of Loščad was named Börnestien or Börnestein. The same name was given to the residence of the bishop of Sambia in Fischaseno castle (earlier – Bischeshusen), built between 1266 and 1268. It was a storage place for the bishop’s part of amber gained. [Heranowskis G. 1996, S.98; Kulakoves V., Šimėnas V. 1999, P.277 - 273; Hagen K.G. 1823, S.7 - 8] Shortly the right to trade in amber and collect it was reserved to the monastery of Danzig and Oliva. The latter were obliged to sell amber to the Order at an established price. [Hagen K.G. 1823, S.3 – 4] Rich in amber Sambian seashore was divided into smaller strips. Anzelm von Rosenberge, Sambian Vepr friar issued an order, which sent to the gallows anybody charged with illegal collecting of amber. The fishermen could not respect regulations of the government until the Vepr did not introduce a procedure to hang everyone caught gathering amber without a judgment or trial, and to do so on the nearest tree. Rich in amber coastal strips were assigned supervisors. By power of the Flemish law, these supervisors accepted claims. Everybody caught on crime scene was hanged without any investigation. The Order’s provincial (flaunakta) in Königsberg became head of expanding system of supervision. [Hinze C., Dierichs U. 1986. S.70; Kulakovas V., Šimėnas V. 1999, P.224] He was in charge of amber realization. Later on, he was vested the right to trade in amber; he handled leasing of all amber of Prussia. The commander of Königsberg started appointing people who were tasked to watch and prevent amber thieves. In 1447, Erhard von Reimstein (Reisstein) who was in this duty took over amber merchants’ office. The rechtamt (Lehmeister) was created. It was headed by a Börnestien Verwaltor. All knights-commanders who had amber in lands under their supervision, had to take care of amber trade. Besides, amber was accumulated by the Fishmeisters (Fischmeisters) of Belga and Elbing. It is not surprising at all, because fishermen would find it in their nets. Amber was caught from the boats too. In the end of the 15th century, a complete system of amber production supervision was emerging. It spread along Sambian seacoast and further off into the Sudvilių corner. The commander of Königsberg was in charge of appointing official merchants and trade in amber, [Prætorius M. 2000 D. 627, 615; Hagen K.G. 1823, S.7 – 8; Harknocks M.C. MDCCLXXIV, S.209 – 211].

Collection of amber and delivery of it into the amber palace was performed by amber managers – Verteilern (Fischmeisters, Vepr, abboz), Strandreiters and Strandkuchos stood a step lower in the system of supervision and dealt directly with people who picked up amber and fisherman. [Hagen K.G. 1823, S.7 – 8; Willoweit G., 1960b, S.275 – 276, 1969b, S.201]. Seeking to influence those who actually har vested amber, the Order would resort to fraud. In 1523, the Grand Master Albrecht delayed remuneration in a form of salt, which was due for the bearers of amber. The farmers started trading amber to the town dwellers of Fischasen. The violators were severely punished. [Hinze C., Dierichs U. 1986. S.107; Kulakovas V., Šimėnas V. 1999, P.224]. The Order protected the monopoly of amber. In the late 15th century the Order entered into conflict with the Danzig’s amber driller’s shop, established in 1474. Between 1480 and 1482, the Order complained of this workshop to the Polish King. Later, by higher profits, the Order kept increasing the price. As of 1496, the Grand Master of the Order started entering into transfer treaties with merchants on all amber found in Prussia. [Prætorius M. 2000, P.9 – 16; Hagen K.G. 1823, S.9 – 16, S.5 – 6; Hinze C., Dierichs U. 1986, S.107]. It is not known when and how this system reached the commandery of Memel. The famous investigator of economic aspects of this area G.Willowett assumes that it had to operate in the times of the Order. But he gives no references to any historical sources. [Willoweit G., 1969a, S.275, 1969b, S.201]. The inventories kept in the Memel castle have no mention of amber either. However, such a situation should not be surprising at all. The Order took over a country, which had become the field of conflict and battles. It remained in a state of war for almost entire period of the Order’s rule. Relative peaceful periods were between 1584 and between 1648 and 1725. All amber and its administration of the commandery was concentrated in the Memel castle. A part of functions was taken over by the castle of Wendenburg built in 1630. Amber revenue, likewise in other commanderies, might have been a responsibility of the commander, Fishmeisters, Pfliegern and Strandkuchos. The Fishmeister in Memel is mentioned a round 1400, the one of Rusnė in 1448, the Vepr of Palanga is mentioned in 1452. [Willoweit G. 1969b, S.120, Jukić P., 1999, P.121; Kulakovas V. 1999, P.105 – 117] In 1523, in accordance with the Kulin
Law, property in the commandery was granted to Straßendorf and the translator Benedict Ducx. [Willowit 1969g, S.103]. It is possible that the Vogt from the Rositten castle (built between 1379 and 1830) in another commandery was charged with supervision of amber production on the Curonian Spit. The mentioned officials had to rescue property and people from drowning boats and regulate fishing. When in 1474, the regulations on amber collection and realization became more stringent in Sambia, similar measures could be introduced also in the commandery of Memel. A relatively peaceful period could facilitate introduction of amber trade. However, these considerations failed to be supported by more solid arguments. Numerous privileges authorizing for keeping inns and estates, fishing in the sea and the lagoon were issued in the late 14th and 15th centuries. None of these documents address amber. [Willowit 1969g, S.89–109]. On the other hand, the local government tried to inhabit war-devastated country as soon as possible. Stringent and drastic measures would have worked against that. Quite numerous amber beads and half-processed ones have been found in the cultural layers of the Klaipėda castle dated to the turn of the 15th-16th c. [MLM 3530 – 5539, MLM 6692]. This could indicate that there were people in this castle who stocked and processed amber. Unfortunately, historical sources contain no mention of that. In 1525, the state of the Order became a lay duty of Prussia. It took over the monopoly of amber. Between 1533 and 1647, the Duke of Prussia leased the right to exploit all Prussian amber to merchants of Danzig. Shortly afterwards amber business became monopoly of the Jäckle clan. [Hagen 1969, S.24 – 26; Praetorius M. 2000, P.629; Kalkeis J. 1933, P. 44, 62]. The sources of the period refer for the first time to a Memel’s official who should be associated with amber trade. The 1537 treaty establishing fishing territories between Memel and Schackenport Arns mentioned „theam of supervising fishing on the Curonian Spit. [Willowit 1969g, S.124]. Bernstein-Herr functions in Prussia were passed to Bernsteinmeister Lochsche. Hans Fuchs became the first one in 1540. In 1562, the job was filled by N.von Biedermann (Bredrenampus). Until 1655, Christoff von Lauterbach and N. von Kraecke performed this duty. In 1581, the Bernsteinmeister’s residence was moved closer to the rich in amber Sudvietis corner, into Dirschław. Gradually it received a name of Bernstein-Kammer. [Praetorius M. 2000, P.613 – 615; Kukalovas V. Siménas V. 1999, P. 272; Hermanowski G. 1996, S.114]. On 20 December 1851, the Duke Georg Friedrich approved a statute of amber (Ordnung). The amber yielding seashore of Prussia was subdivided into seven zones. Seven. Strandmeister subordinated to the Dierscheim’s Bernsteinmeister were responsible for enforcing the regulations on obtaining amber by mining, scooping, catching and picking. Some of them were aided by the Kammermeister. All the Strandmeisters and their helpers observed the weather conditions and wind in their zone. In weather favorable for harvesting am- ber they made farmers and fishermen of designated vil- lagers to go scoop and fish for amber. The officials had to ensure that the booty was not illegally appropriated. The Strandmeister and Kammermeister would sort out raw amber and pour it into barrels. The barrels then were delivered to the treasury (Reichskammer) in Königsberg. Likewise under the Order’s rule, coastal inhabitants were remunerated by salt. The amount of salt equaled that of amber collected. The officials had to identify cases of fraud or theft. Coastal neighborhoods also were obliged to report on such instances. The officials were obliged to turn in to the authorities the cargo carried by the ships, which underwent wreckage and were washed onto the shores. The officials and the locals had to watch and insure that handling with hounds made to damage to the rule. [Hagen 1969, S.213; Willowit 1969g, S.275 – 276; 1969b, S.201 – 202]. On 23 December 1852, the amber statute was appended by a requirement for the Strandmeister to ban walking along the shores with no permission by authoritaries, they were also ordered to appropriate all pieces of light amber, which was valued for its curative properties [Hagen C. 1852, S.21, 22; Willowit 1969g, S.203] It is pos- sible to conclude that in the Memel Amte the Strandmeister performed a part of the Fischmeister’s functions. [Willowit 1969g, S.228]. In 1617, the Kurfürst Johann Sigismund approved punishments for stealing amber or trying to report thefts. [Hagen G. 1823, S.22]. The 17th c. historian Prerius refers to the first at- tempts to mine amber on the shores of the lagoon. How- ever, the groundwater and constant floods of the lagoon cut this activity short. [Praetorius M. 2000, P. 263]. The instructions for the coast Strandmeister in 16 March 161623, specify their duties. When the weather cooperated, upon their order, the farmers liv- ing on the coast had to go amber gathering and scoop- ing. When harvested amber was immediately passed over to the rider. The figner would get small remuneration for it. All the booty had to be delivered to the castle of Memel where it was safeguarded. Amber would be poured into a barrel (Tonne). When full, the lid of the barrelled would be nailed down, and the barrel taken to the Kurfürst’s treasury palace in Königsberg. At Christmas time, Strandmeister brought over salt as reimbursement for the amber he had received. The Strandmeister with his Kammermeister had to watch the seashore and ensure that no Lithuanians, Jews, Scots or German fishermen entered. All unauthorized amber rammers were punished. The town folk of Memel were pushed aside from amber. All violators when apprehended were given over to the rulers of the castle. When amber turners Danzig, Kolberg, Königsberg, Elbing, Stulp’s showed up in Memel, they ran a risk to be immediately detained and face charges. Another duty that remained for the Strandmeister was transfer of cargo of wrecked or washed off ships. [Biesebrecker A. 1889, S. 127 – 128; Willowit 1969g, S.275 – 276; 1969b, S.202 – 203]. On 6 July 1625, the ruler of Prussia banned all amber trade transactions, it was also banned to keep and even carry amber. A ban on merchants from Danzig, Königsberg, Elbing, Braunsberg’s entry into the sea coast went into force. [Hagen G. 1969, S.222]. Leasing of amber monopoly brought losses to the Kurfürst, but the rulers of Po- land protected the rights of the Jäckle clan. [Hagen G. 1969, S.26 – 27]. A statement of expenses issued on 14 November 1629, shows 325 marks earmarked for the Strandmeister posted in Memel. This money includes remuneration, in natural products (12 Scheffel of hay grain, 25 Scheffel of barley grain, 46 Scheffel of oat grain, 2 Scheffel of green peas, 2 good sheep, a chunk of back fat, eight Söffel butter, eight Scheffel of smoked fish, six Scheffel of dried roach, a barrel of coarse salt and four Scheffel of cheese). [Willowit 1969g, S.275 – 276; 1969b, S.202]. In 1644, the regulations on amber became ex- tremely stringent. On 20 February, a new amber statute was issued for the Kurfürst, who was moved from Dierscheim to Germany remained at the top of supervising hierarchy. Alongside with him, a Memel Bernsteinmeister was appointed. Germany received the name of the Amber palace, Bernsteinmeister-Kammer. The duties of the Strandmeister and Kammermeister did not change. All men living on the coast had to be sworn when they turned eighteen, and do so in the presence of a local priest and an official. Amber fishermen were strictly ordered not to keep amber at home or on one’s self. Those who did where called thieves. A sack with amber booty was to be carried on a neck and hanging on the chest. Removing this sack or putting it aside with- out informing a supervising official was interpreted as theft. Only two amber craftsmen in Königsberg were authorized to process amber. The statute set forth pun-ishments for amber thefts and trade. The gravity of pun-ishment was based on sort and amount of amber. On second apprehension, punishment was respectively bigger. Small punishment was flagellation at the pill of disgrace and turning over to the services of Fischmeister Schacken, Memel. Graver forms of punishment were flagellation with stripping one’s honor and expulsion from the country. Those charged with stealing one fourth of barrel of simple amber, over four pounds of fine white amber or over two pounds trade amber (lumps over four laths) faced the gravest, death by hanging, pen- ality. Officials could face fines from 90 gulden, they could be removed from office, any of those mentioned punishments could be applied to them too. They could be held liable for negligence on job, for crime encour-agement or even for some action on part of the family members. 180 gold gulden was the highest fee given. Unauthorized strolling along the seashore was fined by 18 gulden. A permit to walk on the shore could be issued by a shore supervisor or the Königsberg palace arranged in advance. A person who needed to walk along the seashore had to be escorted by a farmer under oath or a Strandmeister. In the towns of Fischmeister, Schacken and Memel, the amber and coast statute had to be read yearly from the church pulpit. [Willowit 1969g, S.275 – 276; 1969b, S.202; Hagen G. 1969, S.23, 26, 27; Praetorius M. 2000, P. 615 – 616; Ulrich Fr. the 1970, S. 215 – 216]. A decree issued on November 3, 1644, prohibited obtaining any artifacts of amber. Upon selling his product, a well known to authorities amber carver or turner was obliged to issue an official docu- ment specifying the work he performed. He had to in- dicate when and how much of amber he sold. Other- wise, craftsmen who processed raw amber were punished for theft. [Praetorius M. 2000, P. 617]. On 21 November 1644, Fischhausen set up a coast and amber tribunal of six individuals. The tribunal could be convened by the Vogt of Fischhausen. The Kurfürst’s treasurer headed it. [Praetorius M. 2000, P. 617 – 623]. Hagen G. 1969, S.2 – 81. On 21 February 1644, the Kurfürst’s treasurer in took full control of amber monopoly. Between 1649 and 1837, it was leased to high officials, merchants and nobility. [Hagen G. 1969, S.26, 29 – 32, 180 – 183]. Between 1665 and 1681, the functions of the Bernsteinmeister gradually passed over to the castle. Kurfürst in Königsberg and treasury officials. [Hagen G.S. 110 –
Amber Regulations on the Coastal Strip Annexed by the Russian Empire

Amber booby from the coastal strip of Curonia (from Palanga to Ventspils) was not abundant but steady. In 1797, Curonian farmers collected 38 pounds of amber, in 1799 – 64 pounds, in 1800 – 12.5 pounds, in 1801 – 79.5 pounds. Some of the pieces weighed up to 15 pounds each. These were immediately delivered to the Emperor’s Office in St. Petersburg.

As long as 1800, amber was delivered to the treasury from the environs of Libau. F. Keppen indicates that amber was collected on the seashore from Palanga to Rutuc, more to the north up to Libau, around Vindzau and at the Cape of Kolkasgau. Local farmers (from Palanga, Šventoji, Papendorf, Niederbarn and Perkons) paid 60 kreuzers for each amber piece for permission to collect amber on the seashore. Since 1800 coastal farmers living on the strip from Niederbarten to Sakenhausen were fishing for amber, the farmers from Niederbarten to Palanga paid for the right to fish and collect amber. Of places where amber was harvested near Libau, the treasury estate of Niederbarten, the Aviken private estate, the treasury estate of Rutuc, also that of Budendischhof and the private estate of Palanga are mentioned. At 1831, 400 gulden for amber reached from 20 to 25 rubles.

Among the amber pieces found were small square shaped and heart shaped pendants. The latter look very similar to the ones found at the Englishman’s farmstead. Nothing is known about regulations on amber. His serfs could provide the Budendischhof Landlord with amber. It could be processed, and amber ornaments could be produced at the Budendischhof estate. The landlord himself or his agents handled trade. (Baltius M. 1999, P. 207 – 197, 198).

A 1331 Heiligenv. As Vögts is mentioned in Eliza. He was responsible for the cargo and crews of wrecked ships, the life of neighboring settlements, delivery of fish. Most settlers in the village were fishermen. This official could also collect amber from fishermen. "This office remained in Heiligenv. As until 1780. (Baltius M. 1999. P. 193 – 194, 212). However, it is doubtful that this part with amber being scarce and the boader close experienced such drastic measures as were applied in Prussia. During the Livonian Order period amber could be taken to Grodno, afterwards to Tiga. In the 17th century, it had to reach Libau. M. Praetorius mentions amber craftsman – Bernardus Arethusa – who worked there. (Praetorius M. 2000. P.607)."

Amber Production Regulations on the Coastal Strip of Curland

In the late 17th c., the Darbėnai estate, which ruled Palanga and Šventoji townships, became interested in amber. Until 1639, amber was not mentioned in any documents. The first entries on amber appear in the 1699 inventory of Darbėnai, saying that all amber collected in Palanga has to be delivered to the Darbėnai estate. (Baltius M. 1739 inventory of Palanga indicates that townsmen had to pay the estate 1.5 of the Polish złot for the nets they used for fishing amber. Ten nets like this seem to have existed in Palanga and in Šventoji. The “amber man” or *barzyniek* Ermann Zyffert would purchase all the booty of amber. In 1797, he still lived in Palanga, and was nicknamed a “German.” In 1781, amber man’s functions in Palanga were performed by Meyning. It seems that the estate enjoyed an exclusive right to trade in amber. In 1794, the estate leased that right for 3600 Polish złot. The inventories of the period refer to a coast tax, which was collected from Palanga and Šventoji residents. In Palanga, besides being taxed for property, 35 households of 81 had to pay coast tax; in Šventoji coast tax was collected from 29 of 34 households. The tax varied from two to 16 Polish złot. In Palanga mostly townsmen paid this tax. Of them, 24 had to pay two Polish złot. In Šventoji 20 individuals paid 16 coins each. Most historians consider that these individuals were fishermen, but it is possible that they harvested amber. Other inventories show that fishermen had to account based on their boats, number of nets, but it did not relate to the coastal strips. (Kriaup Z. 1999, P.137; Melisius E. 1997 P.81).

Amber Production Regulations on the Coastal Strip of Curland

In the late 17th c., the Heiligenv. –As village appeared on the northern bank of the river Šventoji. In the 16th c., Palanga and Šventoji coastal townships emerged. Between 1679 and 1698 an English merchants colony Januariburg in operated in the vicinity of Šventoji, this colony was granted a city charter. On the site of one of the English merchants’ farmstead, archeologists found amber ornaments: heart shaped amber pendants. (LMJ 5010, LMJ 5017). In the 16-17th c., the local Curonians still believed in the magic power of amber as their forefathers had done. A bag with small pieces of amber has been placed next to a buried man’s burial shroud in one of the graves of the Naglis hill cemetery. (Žiulkus V. 1828.). In 1681, Praetorius wrote: “...amber is still found in Samogitia (Zemaitija), I have seen myself pieces of incredible color and quite big pendants. However, I have been told, the rulers there have not introduced amber regime." (Praetorius M. 2000. P.623).
decree required scrutinizing amber business on the strip of Curland, Lithuanian dependency. On 17 September 1801, another order was issued which charged V.F. Derschau to deliver to the palace all huge pieces of amber, to sell smaller ones and to get profit from that. Besides, it recommended employing coastal farmers fisher- men, by selecting of 10 people one for harvesting amber in summer time. It was suggested to put one guard to watch five such recruited fishermen. The Funtener were tasked to supervise the process and be responsible for delivering collected amber to the Oberförstermeister. Amber fishermen had to be issued notebooks, sticks or labels to record their hoary and report to superiors.

To prevent private amber trade dealings, punishments for that were introduced. A purchaser was fined 10 rubles for each pound of amber, a vendor risked physical punishment. Amber fishermen were suggested to be paid 10 kopecks per pound of fine amber, and 10 kopecks per each larger piece.

V.F. Derschau designed amber collecting system similar to the one functioning in Prussia. In 1803, his draft was introduced to the Interior Minister, but received no approval, since: "such measures are wrongful to the farmers, and they would bring little profit." So, despite the facts that the laws were drafted, amber collecting regulations did not come into effect in Curland and a part of Lithuanian territory. [Uhanova I.N. 1972, S. 239 – 242].

Conclusions:

1. Regulations on amber production and realization on the coastal strip of modern-day Lithuania were not uniform and kept changing over centuries. Six separate historical entities active in this area had dramatically diverse concepts of amber business.

2. Most data on amber collecting-realization procedures pertains coastal Prussia. The data relating to the coastal strips ruled by Curland and the GDE is scarce. Few available sources reveal attempts of respective governments at regulating amber collecting and business. Little light so far shed on these issues leaves plenty of room for further investigation.

3. The aspirations by the Russian Empire at introducing stringent regulations of amber business look like attempts to replay the out-of-date by that time Pruss- ian system. Interestingly, such plans were concurrent with Prussia doing away with its strict regulations in this field.

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