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Foreign Threats to Ukraine's Independence and the Challenge Posed to Polish National Security

Abstract: The purpose of the article is to examine the Russian threat to Ukraine's state sovereignty and its impact on Poland's national security; to underline that Russia intends to take revenge for its defeat in the Cold War, to regain control over the former Soviet Union republics, to defeat the USA and EU, and to establish control in the territory of the Eurasian continent. The research hypothesis is that the main purpose of Russia's foreign policy is the reconstruction of a neo-imperial state, Ukraine's reintegration into the post-Soviet space, and ensuring Russia's domination in the region. The research task was completed using the research methods of a detailed study of sources and literature and a critical analysis of the information available to the author. Conclusions: Russia is trying to take revenge for its defeat in the Cold War, to regain control over the former Soviet Union republics, to defeat the West, and to establish control over the Eurasian continent. Russia considers Ukraine and Poland as dangerous agents of Atlanticism. That is why the Russian Eurasian geopolitical project aims for the Ukrainian and Polish states to be neutralized in a radical way. To this end, Russia has started a "hybrid war" against Ukraine. Poland and the Baltic countries will be the next targets of Russian aggression. It is profitable for Russian neo-imperialism to destroy trust and the strategic partnership between Poland and Ukraine, and to act in accordance with the divide-and-conquer algorithm. In such circumstances, Ukraine and Poland need to work out a new "Doctrine of restraining Russia's aggression," to pursue gradual and coordinated policy for the sake of the victory over Russian neo-imperialism and the dismantlement of the Russian imperial social system. The article describes the peculiarities of the modernization of the Russian imperial system at the present stage, analyzes the content of the Russian neo-imperialistic policy against Ukraine, Poland and the West, the reasons for the failure of Ukraine to neutralize Russian expansion, and also shows possible geopolitical consequences for the national security of Poland in the event of the successful implementation of Russia's geopolitical strategy.

Key words: Russian factor, national security of Ukraine and Poland, national security threats, geopolitics, Eurasian geopolitical project of Russia, Russian neo-imperialism

The purpose of the article is to examine the Russian factor as a threat to Ukraine's state sovereignty and its influence on Poland's national security; to show that Russia intends to take revenge for the defeat in the

Cold War, to regain control over the former Soviet Union republics, to defeat the West (the USA and EU), and to establish control over the Eurasian continent. The research hypothesis that the main purpose of Russia's foreign policy is the reconstruction of a neo-imperial state, Ukraine's reintegration into the post-Soviet space and ensuring Russia's domination in the region. The methods employed to complete the research task involved conducting a detailed study of sources and literature and making a critical analysis of the information available to the author.

The priority of Ukraine's national security state policy is to ensure independence and sovereignty. The Ukrainian Law on National Security of Ukraine determines the following fundamental national interests: "state sovereignty and territorial integrity, democratic constitutional order, prevention of interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine" (*Pro natsionalnu bezpeku Ukrainy: Zakon Ukrainy*, 2018). Among all the countries of the so-called far and near abroad it is the Russian Federation that questions the existence of Ukraine as an independent state. That is why the National Security Strategy of Ukraine determines the following threat to its national interest from the Russian Federation: "Russia's aggressive actions directed to exhaust Ukraine's economy and to undermine social and political stability in order to destroy the state of Ukraine and capture its territory, namely: military aggression, the activity of regular troops, advisers, instructors and mercenaries in conflicts on the territory of Ukraine; reconnaissance, undermining and sabotage activities, actions aimed at inciting ethnic, interconfessional enmity and hate, separatism and terrorism, the creation and comprehensive support – including military – of puppet quasi-state formations in the temporarily occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions; the temporary occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, and further actions aimed at destabilizing the situation in the Baltic-Caspian-Black sea region" (*Stratehiia natsionalnoi bezpeky Ukrainy*, 2015).

The political elite and the population of Russia reached a consensus about Russia's future development as an imperial state and the reintegration of the post-Soviet space in order to once again achieve regional dominance.

This is performed through a multidimensional conflict, without actually declaring war. These are cybernetic, diplomatic, propagandist and hybrid wars (Klocek, 2018, pp. 145–146). Ukraine is the focus of Russia's greatest interest in the European continent. The pursuit of Ukraine's integration into the Eurasian space, dominated by the national interests

of the Russian Federation, is evidenced by all the ideological and political currents in Russia: national-Bolshevism and neo-Eurasianism, which consider Ukraine as a zone of Russian domination in the confrontation with Atlanticism (capitalism); Russian nationalism which, according to Pan-Orthodox and Pan-Slavic messianism, treats Ukrainian and Russian peoples as one supernatural nation; and the non-Western approach that considers the integration of Ukraine and Russia into the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Customs Union inevitable, because of its economic expedience (Kolosov, 2002, pp. 162–170). The differences can be seen rather in terms of tactics. The right wing supports active operations against Ukraine and its transformation into the province of a renewed Russian empire, while the left suggests that Ukraine should join Russia and rebuild the USSR. According to Andrzej Zapałowski, nowadays there are two conceptions of the national territory in Russia. One is represented by the Russian elite, which sees national territory as the territory within the current Russian borders. The other one consists of several variants and is supported by both the authorities and nationalist organizations. According to this conception, all the lands belong to “Ruthenia” (meaning “Russia”) – including Ukrainian and Belarusian territories (Zapałowski, 2015, p. 161).

The analysis of Russia's foreign policy proves the superiority of the strategy and tactics of seeking to incorporate Ukraine into the Eurasian space with the help of the economic expansion policy, and with the main role of the CIS (followed by the Customs Union, the Single Economic Space, and in the future – the Eurasian Union), which is a transition on the way to form a single common state.

The same opinion prevails in Russian society. The results of sociological research show that the population of the Russian Federation supports the creation of a single state, which would include Russia and Ukraine (Bashkyrova, Fedorov, 1999, p. 136). Only 5.5 percent of respondents in the Russian Federation directly recognized the independence of Ukraine and gave up the idea of getting Crimea and Sevastopol (*ibid.*, p. 135). It was therefore natural that, after the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin's popularity rating, according to the research of the non-governmental organization Levada Centre, increased rapidly from 32–48 percent (February–March 2013) to 72–74 percent (March 2014) (*Reitinh doveryia*, 2013; Hudkov, 2014). 58 percent of the respondents supported the occupation of Crimea and Southeastern Ukraine by the Russian troops, and 79 percent of Russians said that, after the referen-

dum that took place there, Crimea should be attached to Russia (Hudkov, 2014).

The Russian Federation proclaimed itself as the Soviet Union's successor and declared the breakup of this state to be the greatest disaster of the 20th century, whereby the zone of influence of the USSR had disappeared (Bukowiecka, 2012, p. 88–90). Actually, at that time Russia was trying to become a world superpower, and a main player in the post-Soviet territory in particular, and thus paid special attention to the Baltic states and Poland, which had broken free from the USSR's influence and conducted social transformations (Szubrycht, 2010, p. 229).

To start with, the Russian Federation denounced the Belavezha Accords adopted in 1991 and is nowadays trying to rebuild the USSR on a new basis, in the form of the Customs Union as a foundation for a future Eurasian Union, using the methods of economic and political integration, as declared in Vladimir Putin's platform during the presidential election campaign in 2012 (Putin, 2011; Putin, 2012). The population of Russia has supported this platform twice, electing Vladimir Putin as President of the Russian Federation, and he will be implementing it over a period of twelve years.

The modern Eurasian geopolitical doctrine propounded by Aleksandr Dugin indicates the first priority of Russian foreign policy, namely the neutralization of Ukraine as an independent state: "the establishment of a new geopolitical entity in this territory is an absolutely abnormal thing caused by completely irresponsible steps, from the geopolitical point of view. Ukraine as an independent state with certain territorial ambitions carries a great danger for the whole of Eurasia, and unless the Ukrainian problem is solved it makes no sense to talk about continental geopolitics at all" (Dugin, 1999, p. 348). That is why, in the 1990s Aleksandr Dugin formulated the following urgent tasks of Russia's foreign policy with regard to Ukraine: "An absolute imperative of Russian geopolitics on the Black Sea coast is Moscow's total and unlimited control over its whole area – from Ukrainian to Abkhazian territories. It is possible to divide this whole area in ethno-cultural terms, but only on the condition of Moscow's absolute control over the military and political situation... The northern shore of the Black Sea must be only Eurasian and subordinate to Moscow" (ibid., p. 349). President Vladimir Putin is of the same opinion: at the NATO summit in Bucharest in 2008 he directly declared that "Ukraine is not even a state" (Allenova, Heda, Novykov, 2008). In his interviews, Vladimir Putin has repeated over and over again that Russians

and Ukrainians are a common people, and that Ukraine is considered an integral part of "historic Russia." The implementation of these plans would give Russians an opportunity to have a decisive influence on the integration processes of Central European countries with the West, and on the Euro-Atlantic choice of Ukraine in particular (Bieleń, 1997, p. 243).

It should be emphasized that Alexandr Dugin is considered to be the unofficial ideologist of the ruling Russian party United Russia. His geopolitical neo-Eurasian doctrine is being implemented by Russia's current political leadership. Immediately after the 2000 elections, President Vladimir Putin began to form the Eurasian Economic Community and now he intends to build a Eurasian Union. Alexandr Dugin worked out and provided the theoretical arguments for Russia's Eurasian geopolitical project, while Putin has started to implement Alexandr Dugin's instructions and recommendations in practice. The aim of such a policy is to take revenge for the defeat in the Cold War, to regain control over the former Soviet Union republics, to defeat the West (the USA and EU), to establish control over the Eurasian continent, and to ensure Moscow's dominance in the international arena, essentially transforming existing independent states into the territorial units of the Russian world power.

The content of the Russian neo-imperialist strategy was outlined in the "Strategy for Russia," that was worked out by the leading Russian politicians and scientists and published in the "Independent Newspaper" in May 1994 (*Stratehia dlia Rosii*, 1994). The Russian political and intellectual elite treated the formation of the CIS as "a certain united political and economic community with a dominant role of Russia as a leader, chief-directing power" (Shmelev, 1998, p. 74). At that time, Russia declared its refusal to use force in its relations with the former Soviet republics, but warned that the "price of refusing" to adopt the proposed solutions would cause unavoidable economic, political and military losses for these countries and peoples (*Stratehia dlia Rosii*, 1994). The Russian version of the CIS led to the creation of a new community, functioning on the market economy basis. Under the influence of market laws, it was supposed that the old irrational economic relations, which violated the principles of equivalent exchange, would be replaced by new, more effective forms of economic interaction. CIS countries were treated as a huge market for Russian goods that would provide stable economic growth in the Russian Federation. This required the removal of all restrictions on the movement of goods and capital, unimpeded participation of Russian privatization campaigns in the Commonwealth countries, and transferring their im-

portant strategic economic enterprises to Russia through the repayment of national debt. Financial industrial groups, intended to provide capital interpenetration, were to be created and subordinated to Russian capital. The implementation of economic and political decisions, made at meetings of state heads and governments, relied on supranational structures (the International Economic Committee). The task of unifying all the CIS countries' laws, aligning them with Russian legislation, and forming a common political and legal field, was given to the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly. Based on the Collective Security Agreement, the CIS would transform into a political military union with the creation of unified armed forces in the future. This would strengthen the Russian military presence in the states which have arisen after the collapse of the USSR. Joining the military political union would require a coordinated foreign policy, subordinated to the geostrategic interests of Moscow. Then the CIS would transform into a separate international law entity and become a new system of international political and economic relations in the post-Soviet space with dominant Russian national interests (Shmelev, 1998, p. 74). This is how Moscow planned to regain control over its former possessions, modern independent states, using the methods of neo-colonialism and building "a liberal empire" (*Stratehia dlia Rosii*, 1994).

However, the attempt to build "a liberal empire" in the form of CIS made by Russian democratic forces in the 1990s failed. Russian neo-imperial strategy could not be fully implemented because of Russia's weakness in the transition period, while Russian society was undergoing systemic transformations, and due to the absence of the necessary consensus among its elite on defining the strategy of Russia's development, as well as other problems in the post-Soviet space concerning the situations in Georgia, Moldova, Belarus, Chechnya and elsewhere. With regard to the relations between Ukraine and CIS countries, there were "periods of very strong pressure," as the Dean of the College of J. Madison University of Minnesota Sherman Garnett notes, which often ended with "making agreements which were humiliating for a weaker partner. But later the period of non-fulfillment of agreements came and the weaker partner safely forgot about them" (Garnett, 2000, p. 16). Two centers of gravity were created in the CIS-Moscow and Kyiv. As a result of implementing the policy of liberalism in the conditions of the super monopoly of the still Soviet economy, there was a threat of deindustrialization, as well as of the disintegration of the Russian Federation itself. That is why Boris Yeltsin resigned prematurely; why Vladimir Putin came to power, rejected liberalism and relied

on the Russian Eurasian neoconservative doctrine. This doctrine, worked out by Alexandr Dugin, formulated the geopolitical project of Russia according to the realities of the 21st century and indicated the goal of the Russian state policy: not only maintaining the status of Russia as a superpower, but also the neutralization of the USA (new Carthage) and transforming Moscow into the only power center in the Eurasian continent and then in the world (Third Rome Moscow) (Dugin, 1999).

Immediately after being elected president in 2000, Vladimir Putin started to form a common Eurasian Economic Space along Eurasian geopolitical guideline sand relying on the experience of European integration. There was a mechanism for involving Ukraine in the Common Economic Space and rebuilding a new Russian empire. The following stages of its implementation were defined:

- first of all, the creation of a customs union, setting a single customs tariff and implementation of a common trade policy;
- the creation of a common market that involves free movement of goods, services, capital and labor;
- the establishment of an economic and monetary union, the harmonization of the economic policies of member states and the implementation of a common economic policy, common currency input;
- the formation of a political union, transferring the main features of state sovereignty of the union member states to supranational institutions and the implementation of political unification in the post-Soviet space, which will lead in the future to the creation of a single state.

In this way, the Russian Empire would be reinstated on a new qualitative basis, because Moscow's decision-making procedure would provide member states with votes depending on their participation in production, population size and ownership of resources. All this means the complete and unconditional dominance of the Russian Federation in this union (Pasičnyk, 2007, pp. 114–115).

In the same year, on October 6, 2007, an agreement was signed between Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia on the creation of a common customs territory and the formation of the Customs Union. On November 28, 2009, Dmitry Medvedev, Alexander Lukashenko and Nursultan Nazarbayev resolved, at a meeting in Minsk, to create a common customs area in the territory of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, starting on January 1, 2010. A number of important international agreements on the Customs Union were ratified at this period. The Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan came into force in July 2010.

During the presidential election campaign in 2012, in his programmatic article “A New Integration Project for Eurasia is the Future Born Today,” published in the newspaper “Izvestia,” Vladimir Putin said that the integration project of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, building the Common Economic Space, would start on January 1, 2012 (Putin, 2011). This meant moving to the next stage of economic integration – the creation of the common market that had to reach over 165 million consumers with unified legislation, free movement of not only goods, but also of capital, services and labor. The creation of the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space set the basis for the formation of the Eurasian economic union in the future, which was to provide complete coordination of economic policy and common currency input. However, Vladimir Putin has a long-term goal – the creation of the Eurasian Union. This means forming a political union, the implementation of common foreign, external and security policies leading, in fact, to the formation of a single state.

After the presidential election in Russia, Vladimir Putin immediately started to implement his campaign promises. On March 19, 2012, a meeting of the Eurasian Economic Community/Higher Eurasian Council was held in Moscow. A decision was made to prepare and sign an agreement on the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union. The Union was intended to work as a unique center of integration processes in the post-Soviet and Eurasian space, using multilevel integration. This policy was implemented by Russia’s new political elite. The breakup of the USSR was followed by a struggle for property and power, and the representatives of the KGB and FSB won. A particular and important role in this struggle was played by a group formed in the KGB with the aim of controlling foreign trade communities in the USSR which carried out direct export and import operations; to purchase equipment, in particular for military production; and to accumulate the funds in Western accounts needed for foreign policy tasks (support for workers’ parties and friendly regimes, funds for operations conducted by the special services, and funds for unofficial or semi-legal equipment purchase) (Hromov, 2013). The activity of these enterprises and the accumulation of funds were mostly conducted through offshore companies. Until the mid-1980s this group maintained strong formal and informal links. At that time, it was independent enough to make decisions outside the Soviet hierarchy. Hence, it had an opportunity to accumulate and increase great financial resources. During the breakup of the USSR this group became independent, it was united, had an internal statute, a “solidarity pledge,” delegated authority and collective lead-

ership, and was consolidated by fear of physical destruction (*ibid.*). After the USSR collapsed and privatization started in the Russian Federation, this group began to return the accumulated funds back to Russia in order to participate in privatization, while forming another economic system, based on the special services network.

By the end of the 1990s, the main tasks of seizing control of the country and its main assets had been fulfilled, and Vladimir Putin succeeded in coming to power. That is why the Russian economist Mikhail Deliahyn emphasizes that the real power in Russia was seized by “force structures”: “before now, the one who ruled was a ‘family,’ and now it is a ‘brigade’” (Deliahyn, 2004). As a result, strong vertical power was formed in the country, the Chekist structure was created and began to operate effectively, making it possible to control ownership and main processes in the country, headed by the President of the Russian Federation. In 2008, the main task of subjugating the country was launched, and by 2011 this process was successfully completed. As a consequence, there is nothing more to capture, everything is divided and there is nothing new, because the existing system is effective in capturing property and extensive development, but it is extremely inefficient in promoting intensive development (Hromov, 2013). The system is stagnating. The only possible way to prevent a collapse (struggle between different groups due to national dissatisfaction) is external expansion. It is actually for this purpose that the Customs Union and the Eurasian Union are being created. The West, with its assets, high technology, modernized and innovative assets, will be the next target. That is why Ellen Blan is right to warn the West and the authorities of her country: “It is time for France to finally realize the very real threat of this mafia neo-totalitarianism. And it’s high time!” (Blan, 2009, p. 349).

To achieve its aims, Russia pays particular attention to the formation of the Russian lobby, both in the post-Soviet space and in other countries of the world, above all in EU countries, creating the so-called “Russian world” (Russian world). The “Russian world” doctrine was recognized as an official state ideology in the Russian President’s Message to the Federal Assembly in 2007 (Bobrov, 2007; Tishkov, 2007). On the basis of the “Russian world,” the Russian Federation plans active steps to mobilize all Russians to implement a geopolitical Eurasian integration project, forming and using its agents of influence all over the world.

The author of the term “Russian world” is Peter Shchedrovtskyi, a Russian philosopher, political scientist and methodologist, who put forward the idea of creating a network structure of large and small communi-

ties which speak and think in Russian (Shchedrovytskyi, 2000). He suggested naming those communities in the near and far abroad the “Russian world.” The Russian Federation is the heart of the “Russian world,” and it cannot be restrained by its modern territorial bounds. Russians who are scattered all over the world make up a kind of Russian human capital that includes “a complex of cultural, intellectual, human and organizational potentials,” which must be actively used by Russia to implement Russian image of the future, that “will define the bounds of economic political and educational ontology” (ibid.). Lesia Kyrychuk, a researcher from Lviv, rightly notes that Peter Shchedrovytskyi proposed a postmodern project of the Russian state that is adapted to the conditions of globalization, with the aim of extending Russia’s influence over the whole world, trying to form and use non-state transnational structures as a tool for lobbying Russian interests through particular individuals (and communities), which will be involved in common Russian projects or transnational Russian and European corporations (e.g., gas companies) (Kyrychuk, 2012). The Russian diaspora and other pro-Russian social networks, scattered all over the world, have to be transformed into decision-making centers which in the future will be transformed into special state commitments in those countries where they stay. So the “Russian world” is a global strategic project of the Russian postmodern state that aims to influence world policy and other countries’ governments. On that score, the British journalist Edward Lukas rightly points out that the West is losing a new “Cold War” to Russia and indeed has not even noticed that it has begun; since Vladimir Putin and his allies seized power in the Russian Federation he is regaining influence over the eastern half of the European continent, having created a strong foothold in leading European countries (Lukas, 2009). Edward Lukas is worried that the West is not able to resist Russia’s expansion effectively, as Russia is going ahead, using its resources and exploiting the weaknesses of European politicians, who pursue short-term, mostly commercial interests.

Russia’s priority is the neutralization of Ukraine as an independent state. This threat is embodied in Russia’s modernization of relations with the former Soviet Union republics, which gives it an opportunity to keep and even strengthen its dominant geostrategic position in the post-Soviet space, to acquire the most favorable economic status, to get access to the natural, economic and human resources of the countries of this region, and to ensure its control over their markets of goods, services and capital (*Stratehia dlia Rosii*, 1994). This set of measures contributes to the

gradual economic absorption (“buying”) of Ukraine’s capital by Russia and also prepares the future conditions for establishing Russian political control over it.

Vladimir Lartsev noted the following main trends of the economic neo-colonization of Ukraine by Russia:

- 1) decreased competitiveness of the Ukrainian economy by keeping high prices for Russian gas;
- 2) regular trade wars started by Russia with the aim of weakening the export potential of Ukraine (pipes, cheese, meat, automobiles, chicken, etc.);
- 3) the forced involvement of Ukraine in the Customs Union, the Free Trade Area and the Eurasian Economic Space;
- 4) the financial enslavement of the Ukrainian state and private enterprises through large loans obtained from Russian banks;
- 5) the creation of Russian-Ukrainian joint enterprises in the strategic branches of the economy (e.g. nuclear fuel production, MIC, etc.);
- 6) the direct or indirect purchase of highly liquid Ukrainian enterprises by Russian or pro-Russian oligarchs;
- 7) the expansion of Russian bank capital in Ukraine;
- 8) stopping the production activities of the enterprises purchased by Russian capital, with the aim of lobbying for tax and other benefits for them;
- 9) deliberately bankrupting Ukrainian enterprises which constitute competition for their Russian “partners” (Lartsev, 2013).

The neutralization of Ukraine as an independent state is effected through its involvement in the Customs Union and later in the Eurasian Union, using Russia’s “fifth column” there for this purpose. As early as 1968, Pavlo Shtepa, a Ukrainian émigré scientist and public activist, said that “trained by unpleasant experience, Muscovy would not use open violence, it would use the old, tested for centuries method: to cheat, to bribe, to involve Ukraine to empire by the hands of the Ukrainians themselves” (Shtepa, 2010, p. 352). These observations are fully confirmed by Russia’s present strategy (“Putin’s plan”) regarding Ukraine, which aims to involve it in the Customs Union. This strategy was published in the “Mirror Weekly” in August 2013, when Russia blocked Ukrainian goods from its market just before the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU was signed (*O komplekse mer po vovlecheniu*, 2013).

This strategy had the following goals: 1) preventing the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU being signed; 2) creating an in-

fluent network of pro-Russian social and political forces, which would be able to restrain the Ukrainian authorities' unfavorable actions towards Russia and coerce them into making Ukraine join the Customs Union and the Eurasian Economic Space; 3) neutralizing the political influence of European integrators and weakening their media influence; 4) creating the conditions for Ukraine to join the Customs Union and the Eurasian Economic Space by 2015. "If Victor Yanukovich kept on drifting to the West and devolved Ukraine's sovereignty to the EU, the result of this work should be a victory of our candidate in the future presidential elections in 2015" (*O komplekse mer po vovlecheniu*, 2013). To achieve these ends, Russia worked out a relevant action plan, which contains a system of measures to associate Ukraine with the Customs Union and the Eurasian Economic Space through concentrated and comprehensive influence on decision-making centers. This meant the formation of a network of political forces that would implement this comprehensive action plan, including the government, as well as business, parliamentary, academic, cultural, intellectual, regional and shadow channels. With the support of Russia, they were supposed to exert "all-round pressure to form a sense of unavoidable association for survival of the modern dominant elite," which "must come out from business, clergy, public, mass media, experts, and also from the nearest Victor Yanukovich's surroundings including his family and court oligarchs" (ibid.). The first step in the implementation of this strategy was the inclusion of 43 Ukrainian enterprises in the risk group by the Customs Service of the Russian Federation. As a consequence, these enterprises faced problems at customs checks, which caused them to lose millions. Russia explained that its actions had been caused by complications and were the fault of Ukraine, as it was not a Customs Union member.

Under pressure from Russia, the government of Mykola Azarov capitulated and suspended integration with the EU, and the then President of Ukraine, Victor Yanukovich, refused to sign the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in November 2013. Instead of a success at the summit and the Agreement being signed, there was a crisis in relations between Kyiv and Brussels, which in the end caused destabilization in Ukraine, deepened the internal separation of the country, and sparked a revolution. Andrzej Zapałowski writes that eventually Brussels had to accept Moscow's stance on Ukraine to a greater extent than had been expected. With the aim of getting in touch with the EU, Victor Yanukovich proposed organizing a trilateral meeting between Ukraine, Russia

and the EU, which was unacceptable for the latter (Zapałowski, 2015, pp. 163–164).

The integration course taken by the Ukrainian government failed, which led to the destabilization of Ukraine and benefited Russia. As a result, Russia removed the economic blockade of Ukraine, reinstated bilateral trade and economic relations, agreed to reduce its gas price to \$ 268.5 and gave Ukraine a loan of \$ 15 billion.

Ukraine faces the real threat of losing its independence. The Russian Federation made Ukraine stop on its path to EU integration, caused a rift and provoked an intransigent struggle between the proponents of European integration, in which the pro-European forces began to weaken while the pro-Russian ones strengthened. Vladimir Putin succeeded in strongly binding Victor Yanukovych, by isolating him from the West. To retain power, Victor Yanukovych had to rely on the financial and political support of Russia and pro-Russian trends in eastern Ukraine. The Russian Federation managed to escalate the conflict between the west and the east of the country, at the same time weakening Ukraine's ability to resist Russian expansion. Russia had an opportunity to revise the price of its gas for Ukraine every three months, and to make a decision on granting Ukraine the next tranche of its loan. Using the financial dependence of Ukraine in the form of low gas prices, lending strategies and increasing its national debt, the Russian Federation has had strong tools for influencing Kyiv, blocking Ukraine's accession to the European Union, purchasing its strategic economic enterprises and involving Ukraine in the Customs and Eurasian Unions in the future, thereby gradually limiting its sovereignty.

However, the Dignity Revolution destroyed this plan of Vladimir Putin (Koshkina, 2015). In response, Russia started a "hybrid war," annexing Crimea and later a part of Donbass, having the long-term aim of creating Novorossiia (in the south and east of Ukraine), and even taking control of Kyiv. The "hybrid war" against Ukraine involves using information operations together with armed forces actions, special services and strong economic pressure (Mahda, 2017). Russia presents this conflict as a civil war inside Ukraine, caused by a *coup d'état* against President Victor Yanukovych with the support of the West. Actually, Russia's brutal intervention in the process of signing the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in 2013 disrupted the evolutionary process of Ukraine's development, strengthened the existing contradictions, and caused a fratricidal war in Ukraine, which had taken lives of Ukrainians on both sides. All the military, information, terrorist, economic and other aggressive actions

against Ukraine were clearly coordinated by one center and aimed at the complete subordination of Ukraine to the expansionist and neo-imperial plans of the Kremlin. Russia prepared for the war in advance and aimed to wage not only an information war, but also involve armed forces against Ukraine. In Moscow in early January 2013, there was a general meeting of the Academy of Military Science, where the Chief of the General Staff, General Valerii Herasimov, gave a speech. The General's report became a "point of no return" in the manifestation of Russian views on modern war (Mahda, 2015, p. 19). It described how the existing military political conflict should be conducted, which elements should be involved and when. The report emphasized the increasing role of non-military methods for pressuring the enemy, first of all through political, economic and humanitarian strategies. Informational confrontation was defined as a constant activity in all stages of conflict: during its inception, support and in the post-conflict period. Attention was also paid to "asymmetric measures," which included the work of Special Forces units, the development of internal opposition, and the steady increase of the disinformation aimed at the target (*ibid.*, p. 20).

Following these recommendations, in 2014, with the help of the Black Sea Fleet, Crimea was captured, the use of sabotage groups and local separatists made it possible to take control of parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and to create puppet quasi-state formations called the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic as a part of Novorossiia. During an intensified information campaign in the post-Soviet period, Russia succeeded in forming an anti-Ukrainian environment there, which desired that Crimea and Donbass be separated from Ukraine and joined to the Russian Federation, and that supported Russian aggression.

When it turned out that the Armed Forces of Ukraine would regain Kyiv's control over Donbass, Russian regular troops entered Ukraine in 2014. They were repelled but, supported by the West, Russia managed to impose the Minsk Agreements on Ukraine. Though the intensity of the conflict has decreased, the hostilities have not stopped. The Russian Federation is using a strategy which once helped it to neutralize the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Vorotylenko, 2007, p. 22): to support anarchy, in every possible way to degrade the social and economic situation in Ukraine and the financial conditions of Ukrainians, to provoke internal conflict in the Ukrainian state, to influence local and national elections in order to bring pro-Russian forces to power, to crush Ukraine at every

opportunity and eventually to subordinate it to Russia completely, by incorporating it into the Customs and Eurasian Unions.

Nowadays, the political leaders of the USA, France, Germany and other EU countries are conducting a short-sighted policy towards Russia, which could lead to the collapse of Western civilization. In accordance with Russia's neo-Eurasian geopolitical doctrine, there is a relentless struggle between the peoples of the sea and the land, between Atlanticism (the USA and the UK) and Eurasians (Russia). According to Aleksandr Dugin, it is impossible to reconcile antagonistic contradictions between these two worlds and only one side can win this struggle. In this context, Aleksandr Dugin repeats in *The Foundations of Geopolitics* that "Carthage (the modern USA) should be destroyed and Moscow (New Rome) should reign over Eurasia and the whole world" (Dugin, 1999, p. 728). As Ukraine is considered to be a dangerous agent of Atlanticism just by the fact of its existence as an independent state, and since Poland is the closest and the most reliable ally of the USA in Central Europe, therefore the Ukrainian and Polish states, in the Russian geopolitician's opinion, must be neutralized in a radical way. "In the context of the main dangers arising from imperial Russia," Faustyna Klocek writes, "the desire to divide the Union and take control over countries which were in its sphere of influence, may be the main aims" (Klocek, 2018, p. 147).

When the conflict with Ukraine is over, Russia will capture Poland, Lithuania and other allies of the USA. Danger can come from Russia's intervention in these countries in order to protect the Russian minority, just as it was with Crimea. This was discussed in detail at the meeting of the National Security Bureau of Poland in March 2015, where the military doctrine of the Russian Federation signed by Russia's President was analyzed in the context of Poland's national security. At the meeting it was clearly pointed out that Russia provides itself with "an opportunity for intervention in neighboring countries in order to protect its citizens" (Polska Agencja Prasowa, 2015). As Stanisław Koziej, the Head of the National Security Bureau of Poland at the time, noted, this doctrine was a continuation of the Russian policy which had been implemented for several years; it also strengthened the policy course of foreign security and was shown in practice during the intervention in Ukraine. He emphasized that "this doctrine strengthens an anti-Western course, introducing NATO as a source of potential and real danger" (Polska Agencja Prasowa, 2015). A newly appointed Head of the National Security Bureau of Poland, Paweł Soloch, made a similar statement at the meeting with the then

Secretary of National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, Olexandr Turchynov, in October 2018, saying that “the main danger for Poland and Ukraine is the aggressive policy of Russia and provoked destabilization” (Biuro Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego, 2018).

On that score Aleksandr Dugin states: “These lands (Poland and Lithuania – the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) were the main arm of the thalassocratic geopolitics, directed against Eurasia and the opportunity to create a continental bloc... It must be admitted that this problem does not have a positive solution, as it has the following formulation: either Polish-Lithuanian space will exist as independent reality (in this case it will become an insurmountable obstacle to the pro-Eurasian Baltic unity with the axis in Prussia), or its fragments will be integrated into other geopolitical blocs and it itself will be dissected and nipped in the bud” (Dugin, 1999, p. 273). Let us have a more detailed look at how Russia’s Eurasian geopolitical doctrine proposes to solve the Polish and Lithuanian problems after solving the Ukrainian problem.

In Aleksandr Dugin’s view, Poland should become a powerless subject on the Eurasian continent, dependent on other subjects – primarily on Russia and Germany. In order to drag Germany over to its side, to make it its strategic ally against the USA, the whole of Western and Central Europe must fall under the sphere of Berlin’s influence. For this purpose Poland is supposed to lose its northern and western territories and be cut off from the Baltic Sea. It is in this particular area that Prussia is to be located (nowadays it is the Kaliningrad region, bordering Poland and Lithuania), thereby gaining large territories of Poland. “The process of strategic associating of the Baltic states into one bloc will take place around Prussia...the rebuilding of Prussia would mostly solve problems with Poland, which in this situation would have an only way – to the south (as the Baltic region would be in German and Russian control)” (ibid., pp. 372–373). Russia’s geo-strategy, proposed and substantiated by Aleksandr Dugin, seems to be unbelievable and impossible to implement today, and therefore it may be not be taken seriously by Polish society. Actually, however, Ukraine treated the doctrine in the same way, ignoring the conceptual reasoning behind Russia’s expansion, which involved the seizure of the Crimea and the Northern Black Sea region. Then Ukraine came to be punished for such recklessness.

Another important aspect worth serious attention is the plan to destroy the national unity of the Polish people, historically based on Catholicism, and creating “the fifth column” there with Special Forces.

“Forces insisting on a non-Catholic policy orientation, such as supporters of secular ‘social democracy,’ ‘neopagans,’ ‘ethnocentrists,’ protestant, orthodox, religious circles, and ethnic minorities, should become the main geopolitical partners of Eurasia in Lithuania and Poland” (ibid., p. 373). By relying on them, Russia will try to form its “fifth column”(or use them actively for its own purposes) in order to destroy the unity and solidity of the Polish and Lithuanian peoples, on the one hand, and to sow dissension and tension among them, on the other. “Ethnic tension in Polish-Lithuanian relations” Aleksandr Dugin declared cynically, “is an extremely valuable element that should be used and, if possible, aggravated” (ibid., p. 373). Moscow will also try to sow the same tension between Ukraine and Poland. To this end one can use difficult pages in the history of Ukrainian-Russian relations, and the “fifth column” in Poland and Russia. It is profitable for Russian neo-imperialism to destroy the trust and strategic partnership between Poland and Ukraine, to bring tension into the relations between our peoples, acting in accordance with the divide-and-conquer algorithm.

While the USA, the EU and Ukraine are trying to resolve the conflict with Russia diplomatically, the Russian Federation is preparing for war. Aleksandr Dugin notes that “Russia is waiting for war ... It is inescapable. It is inscribed in the pattern of our destiny...War flows from our hearts. We give birth to war. And due to it we create a world, our Russian world... This is a decision of Russia’s core. Whoever makes it – either a ruler or the masses... it is the Russian angel who utters the last word, gives the last signal, and trumpets last...It is not necessary to rush the war, but neither should we hesitate. Subjectively, I feel that it is very close... And at some time it will come true” (Dugin, 2016).

The decisions of the NATO summit which took place on July 8–9, 2016 in Warsaw emphasized that Poland’s fears concerning the internal and foreign policy of Russia evolving into revisionisms and forceful decisions were justified. It was pointed out that Russian militarism and neo-imperialism constitute a real potential danger, and Poland should be ready for future “hybrid wars” in the neighborhood, as a regular scenario for the coming years, and it should also remember the possible worst-case scenario or “a usual regional war with Russia, where we will be a participant, not just an observer” (Balcer, Buras, 2016).

The final summit document stated that a democratic, sovereign Ukraine is the key to the security of the whole European continent; without safe Ukraine there will be no safe Poland. (Dereń, 2016, p. 35).

In such circumstances, Ukraine and Poland need to work out a new "Doctrine of restraining Russia's aggression," which should be based on the principle of the full mobilization of all military, economic, scientific, technical, social, moral and political capabilities of the state and society for the sake of the victory over Russian neo-imperialism and complete and unconditional dismantlement of the Russian imperial social system. It is also necessary to form a gradual and coordinated policy in the international arena with the purpose of ensuring Poland's and Ukraine's national and international security, and forming an extensive coalition to counter Russian neo-imperialism.

Conclusions

The main direction of the national security state policy is to ensure the independence and state sovereignty of Ukraine. However, Russia questions the existence of Ukraine as an independent state. Russia's ideas are aimed at exhausting the Ukrainian economy, undermining social and political state stability, rebuilding the imperial state, and reintegrating the post-Soviet space where Russia could dominate again. At the same time, special attention is paid not only to Ukraine, but also to the Baltic states and Poland.

Using the experience of European integration, starting in 2000, Russia began to form a common Eurasian Economic Space, creating a mechanism for Ukraine's involvement in the common economic space, and the reproduction of a new Russian empire. This geopolitical doctrine developed by Aleksandr Dugin was approved by the concrete action of the Russian government consisting of signing an agreement between Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia on the creation of a Customs Union on their territories in July 2010.

In order to achieve its aims, Russia pays special attention to lobbies, forming a doctrine of the so-called "Russian world," which is considered an official state ideology. On the basis of this doctrine, the Russian Federation plans active steps to mobilize all Russians to implement a geopolitical Eurasian integration project, using its agents of influence all over the world.

Russia's threat to Ukraine as an independent state includes the modernization of relations with the former Soviet Union republics, which provides an opportunity to keep and even strengthen its dominant geo-

strategic position in the post-Soviet space, and to exert control over their respective markets of goods, services and capital. This set of measures contributes to the gradual economic absorption of Ukraine by Russia, and penetration by Russian capital, while also preparing the future conditions for establishing Russian political control over Ukraine. The neutralization of Ukraine as an independent state was to have been guaranteed by its involvement in the Customs Union and later in the Eurasian Union, using its fifth column there to this end. The purpose of Russia's strategy was to prevent the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU being signed, to create an influential network of pro-Russian social and political forces which would be able to restrain the actions of the Ukrainian authorities that might have been unfavorable for Russia, and to create the conditions for Ukraine to join the Customs Union and the Eurasian Economic Space by 2015.

Under Russia's pressure, the then Ukrainian government suspended EU integration, and the President of Ukraine, Victor Yanukovich, refused to sign the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in November 2013. These events caused the crisis which led to destabilization in Ukraine and revolution. Russia started a "hybrid war," annexing Crimea and later a part of Donbass, with the long-term aim of creating Novorossiia and even taking control over Kyiv. Russia's strategy is to deal with Ukraine, and subsequently to take control over Poland, Lithuania and other allies of the USA. Danger can come in the form of Russia's intervention in these countries, purportedly in order to protect the Russian minority, and this was discussed in detail at the meeting of the National Security Bureau of Poland. That is why Ukraine and Poland need to concentrate their resources for the sake of victory over Russian neo-imperialism, and to implement a gradual and coordinated policy in the international arena.

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Zewnętrzne zagrożenia dla niezależności Ukrainy jako wyzwanie dla bezpieczeństwa narodowego Polski

Streszczenie

Celem badawczym artykułu jest prześledzenie znaczenia tzw. rosyjskiego czynnika jako elementu wpływającego na suwerenność Ukrainy i na bezpieczeństwo Polski. Postawiona hipoteza zakłada, że głównym celem rosyjskiej polityki zagranicznej jest neoimperializm, a częścią tej koncepcji jest reintegracja Ukrainy do przestrzeni silnych wpływów Rosji oraz zapewnianie sobie przez Federację Rosyjską dominującej pozycji w regionie. Problem badawczy został rozwiązany dzięki zastosowaniu metod jakościowej analizy źródeł, krytycznej analizie prac naukowych (od klasycznych do najnowszych), analizie informacji oraz dyskursu politycznego. Konkluzje: Rosja prowadzi politykę rewanżu za porażkę w „zimnej wojnie”, politykę zmierzającą do ponownej kontroli nad byłymi republikami ZSRR i ustalenia swoich wpływów nad obszarem euroazjatyckim. Rosja postrzega Ukrainę i Polskę jako niebezpiecznych dla siebie „agentów” wpływów amerykańskich. Wychodząc z tego geopolitycznego założenia Ukraina i Polska musi, według Rosji, zostać politycznie zneutralizowana. Z tego powodu Rosja zaczęła prowadzić przeciwko Ukrainie „wojnę hybrydową”. Następnym obiektem tej wojny będzie prawdopodobnie Polska i kraje nadbałtyckie. Dla rosyjskiego neoimperializmu korzystne jest podważanie zaufania i strategicznego partnerstwa pomiędzy Polską i Ukrainą, w imię zasady „dziel i rządź”. Polska i Ukraina w takich warunkach powinny opracować nową doktrynę „powstrzymania agresji Rosji” prowadzącą do konsekwentnej i skoordynowanej polityki hamowania rosyjskiego neoimperializmu i demontażu imperialistycznego systemu społecznego w Rosji. W artykule przeanalizowano cechy modernizacji rosyjskiego systemu imperialistycznego, neoimperialistyczną politykę wobec Ukrainy, Polski i Zachodu oraz przyczyny niepowodzeń Ukrainy w neutralizacji rosyjskiej ekspansji, a także wyjaśniono ewentualne geopolityczne skutki dla bezpieczeństwa Polski w przypadku sukcesu w realizacji geopolitycznej strategii Rosji.

Słowa kluczowe: czynnik rosyjski, bezpieczeństwo narodowe Ukrainy i Polski, zagrożenie bezpieczeństwa narodowego, geopolityka, euroazjatycki geopolityczny projekt Rosji, neoimperializm rosyjski