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Dear Readers,



During the preparation of the release of this issue – the first of The Warsaw Institute Review (WIR) of this year – we were still in what can be described as the “old” reality. We, like most, were doing our best to become aware of the impending crisis and the global coronavirus pandemic, which has already changed and continues to change our optics of the world.

It would seem that having begun to reveal many underlying difficulties and fragilities, almost all areas of life – political, social, and economic – require some recalibration. It is not an overstatement that even the most well-positioned and robust states, such as the US, Germany, and Australia, are seeing their economies strained, and sadly, people lost. However, we humans are relentless, and the difficult fight against the pandemic is only at its beginning, where the focus is still primarily on stopping the spread of infections from a medical angle.

We all know the following months will be a great test for both the current balance of power in the world and the stability of the global economy. The world stopped for a moment. However, the pre-existing geopolitical conundrums across the world did not. In what direction will these go when the dust settles after the first shock? We definitely look for answers to this key question in our quarterly.

And thus, I would like to cordially invite you to read the articles prepared by an excellent array of experts. The first that I would like to recommend is the work of Professor **Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse**, who in an interview describes the possible consequences of fighting the coronavirus for the European Union and the condition of international organizations in the world in the impending crisis. In a separate article devoted to the analysis of the French vision of Europe, the Professor contemplates to which extent the French vision of European integration can materialize after the United Kingdom’s departure and to which extent is Germany weakened internally. And in the text of **Grzegorz Kuczyński**, an expert on eastern policy of the Warsaw Institute think tank, we seek answers to questions about Russia’s military alliance with China. In the context of the likely change in the balance of power in the international arena, the above analyses provide the basis for considering possible directions of change – all happening at once.

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In the article “**Giants Built on the Fundamentals of Economic Patriotism**” we touch on the topic of the doctrine of *economic patriotism*, which assumes solidarity of consumers in purchasing choices and enterprises with a focus on local capital. This trend is being successfully developed in all developed economies of the world, as it means that the local economy has the opportunity to grow faster without cutting off the benefits of globalization. It is economic patriotism that is particularly noticeable in times of economic crisis, when countries minimize its negative effects through social solidarity.

Ultimately, it is impossible to overlook one of Poland’s most important recent successes, which was the victory in the arbitration of PLN 6 billion by the Polish gas champion against Russia’s Gazprom for gas prices in the Yamal contract. Polish lawyers have proved that gas in the years from 2014 to 2020 was sold to Poland at artificially inflated prices. **Janusz Kowalski**, former Vice President of PGNiG and incumbent Secretary of State in the Polish government, elaborated on the backstage developments of the whole endeavor.

In wishing you a pleasant read, with great sadness, we extend our heartfelt to those most afflicted, including the tragedies befalling Italian, Spanish, or American societies. Together with the entire Editorial Team, we would like to express our great support to all our partners from all over the world who are currently struggling with coronavirus pandemic and its effects. We will get through this ordeal by helping one another together.

With the highest regards,

IZABELA WOJTYCZKA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
THE WARSAW INSTITUTE REVIEW

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THE VIRUS WILL CHANGE THE EU, BUT NOT HOW WE MIGHT EXPECT

IZABELA WOJTYCZKA'S INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR
TOMASZ GRZEGORZ GROSSE

The COVID-19 pandemic has reached all European Union countries, changing the landscape not only of individual countries and their economies, but also of the entire Community. Professor Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse, in an interview by Izabela Wojtyczka, Editor-in-Chief of The Warsaw Institute Review, elaborates on the fight against the virus in Europe, its economic effects, the condition of the EU, and ultimately, changes on the geopolitical chessboard.



GERMAN MINISTER OF FINANCE OLAF SCHOLZ AND PRESIDENT OF EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK CHRISTINE LAGARDE DURING EUROGROUP FINANCE MINISTERS' MEETING IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FEBRUARY 17, 2020.

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IZABELA WOJTYCZKA: FOR SEVERAL WEEKS NOW, WE ALL HAVE BEEN WATCHING CLOSELY THE EUROPEAN UNION'S REACTION TO THE SARS-COV-2 VIRUS, WHICH AT PRESENT IS STILL RAGING IN EUROPE. HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE COMMUNITY'S ACTIONS?

Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse: European institutions were busy with the migration crisis on the Turkish-Greek border, while in the European Union the pandemic was developing at its most intensive rate. For this reason, it would seem that the EU “missed” the first phase of the crisis, allowing the Member States to act on their own. In general, it was not decisively helping, but also it was not interrupting the national authorities, who are the most responsible for tackling the crisis. The only issue that ought to be definitely be assessed in a negative light is the European Commission’s call to keep national borders open when they should have been closed in order to limit the movement of people infected in the first phase of the pandemic.

In the next phase of the crisis, the EU should focus on supporting the Member States facing the crisis. In part, this has already begun taking shape. Most notably, the European Commission channelled financial means for vaccine research, organised joint tenders for medical equipment, made strides to popularise good practices in combating the pandemic, as well as having loosened internal market and public procurement rules. Additionally, it sought to develop financial instruments to counter the health crisis and the impending economic recession. All this should be listed on the plus side of the EU institutions’ actions undertaken.

What is negative is the Commission’s attempts to impose universal ways of exiting the crisis and to interfere in the internal affairs of the Member States. On this occasion, it turned out – again – that the EU institutions are applying double standards in relation to Central European countries, where,

Poles should understand that it is necessary to build their own strong state with strategic instruments of coordinating action in order to effectively respond to various crises in the future. One should not excessively rely on the EU for a disproportionate array of elements, because this can only lead to disappointment on all sides.

for instance, some practices are being criticised in Hungary and not noticed in France. Moreover, it would seem that the European Commission has likely abandoned in its entirety the ethos of ‘apoliticality’ and impartiality. During the crisis, it was even more distinctly subject to national influences, and even divided internally according to national interests. An example attesting to this was the public support for the idea of “corona bonds” by the French and Italian commissioners, contrary to the official position of their German superior.

IN SOME EU COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY WHERE THE VIRUS TAKES ITS HEAVIEST TOLL, PEOPLE TALK ABOUT GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT WITH THE

EUROPEAN UNION. ONCE WE HAVE DEALT WITH THE CORONAVIRUS SITUATION, COULD WE EXPECT MORE RHETORIC ORBITAL AROUND COUNTRIES POTENTIALLY CONSIDERING TO LEAVE THE COMMUNITY? INCREASINGLY CRITICAL VOICES ARE COMING EVEN FROM GERMANY, WHICH SPEAKS OPENLY ABOUT THE LACK OF SOLIDARITY IN THE FACE OF SUCH A SERIOUS PANDEMIC...

Not only Italians and Spaniards, but other nations of Southern Europe and Western Europe are also increasingly bitter and disappointed with European integration. In recent years, their countries have become the scene of successive crises in which, according to the majority of Italians for example, the European Union abandoned them, or worse, even handicapped their efforts, rather than helping in overcoming their difficulties. Of course, a counter-argument could suggest that it is not farfetched to assume that the expectations of Italian society towards European integration are too high. And this could help deduce a conclusion which Poland would do well to draw from this observation. It is not a solution to jump in head-first into the deep end and speed up integration, through means such as entering the monetary union to state an example, and to do these with sole focus to get them done as soon as possible, rather than doing them responsibly. Poles should understand that it is necessary to build their own strong state with strategic instruments of coordinating action in order to effectively respond to various crises in the future. One should not *excessively* rely on the EU for a disproportionate array of elements, because this can only lead to disappointment on all sides.

As such, in my opinion, it is necessary to support actions of the EU which distinctly strengthen the EU’s subsidiarity



THE PRESIDENT OF EUROPEAN COMMISSION URSULA VON DER LEYEN HOLDS A PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE EUROPEAN UNION RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

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and can be used by all Member States, especially those in the most need. But at the same time, it ought to be underlined that Western European partners should be more respectful of our interests and preferences with regard to European integration, without coercively imposing their specific visions of the EU on us.

We have to be also prepared for further problems and disintegration processes in the western part of the continent. Therefore, regional cooperation, i.e. within Central Europe, should be even more important for us than in any other stage prior. We should present our position together to the partners from the western part of the EU, rather than remaining declarative to each other, because then there is a chance that we will be heard.

AT THE END OF JANUARY THIS YEAR, FRENCH PRESIDENT EMANUEL MACRON CALLED FOR A EUROPEAN REVIVAL. MEANWHILE,

WE CAN SEE THAT ITALIANS ARE ALREADY RECEIVING “HELP” FROM RUSSIA, AND HUNGARIANS ARE COOPERATING WITH CHINA. WHICH VISION OF THE EU SUFFERED THE MOST DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC? IS IT POSSIBLE TO FREQUENTLY FIND ARTICLES MENTIONING THE WEAKNESS OF EUROCRATS? WHAT IS THE CONDITION OF THE EUROPEAN “SUPERSTATE” TODAY?

Considering all these factors, one could argue that the European Union should fundamentally change its integration model. Above all, it should certainly not interfere in the competences of nation states, e.g. under the pretext of protecting European values and the rule of law, and make a clear distinction when this is the case. Moreover, it should not interfere in the electoral policy of the member states, for example, by supporting the opposition against the legally elected authorities, i.e. in effect, what could seem like actually seeking to change the government if it

Another problem is the excessive centralisation of power in Brussels and Luxemburg, including the CJEU, which is pushing the Union towards a federation against the opinion of many European states and nations.

has slightly different views on the EU agenda from the EU bureaucrats or the strongest member states. The EU has been greatly appropriated by the particular interests of the largest countries, which is visible in the preference for Macron or Merkel's proposals and blatantly ignoring most of the political ideas coming from Warsaw. Another problem is the excessive centralisation of power in Brussels and Luxemburg, including the CJEU, which is pushing the Union towards a federation against the opinion of many European states and nations.

THE EU SHOULD BE A SUPPORT, NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE MEMBER STATES.

And the strongest in the EU should not use the EU institutions and law to subordinate smaller states. Centralisation and federalisation of the EU system enhance the asymmetry of interests between the largest and smaller states. Therefore, Poland should oppose the federalisation tendencies, both in the fiscal sphere, for

example by blocking the establishment of EU taxes, as well as legal federalism by defending the prioritised legitimacy of the national constitution over CJEU rulings.

A period of crises should encourage support for weaker states or those in trouble, but the price of assistance should not be the imposition of political conditions favourable to the stronger states and difficult to accept for those in need. As a result, the concept of solidarity is devalued and citizens are discouraged. In turn, the external forces that benefit are those which aim to weaken European integration and even to lead to its total failure. But the integration leaders themselves are seemingly actually heading towards this failure because they are guided almost exclusively by their own interests, treating other EU countries as rivals or unruly children.

YOU HAVE ALREADY MENTIONED THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF NATION STATES IN THE FIRST PHASE OF THE CRISIS. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT SUBSEQUENT EVENTS, WILL EUROPEAN INTEGRATION BE OVERSHADOWED BY THE STRATEGY OF STRONG NATION STATES? OR PERHAPS MIGHT THIS BE THE CASE ONLY IN SOME AREAS OF STATE ACTIVITY?

Answering this requires that I underline, as mentioned, that the main role in the EU is played by the largest states, which are primarily guided by their own national interests. In a crisis, they are the most responsible, especially with regard to financial programmes supporting the weaker EU members. In this way, they can show solidarity and responsibility for the future of integration.

The problem is not only that the resources of even the richest countries are limited and taxpayers are reluctant to share their own funds with other nations in a crisis.

The problem is that the economic crisis affects the monetary union, which is incomplete. Existing instruments may not be sufficient for this project to continue and additional redistributive instruments such as “corona bonds” may be a fiscal burden too heavy for the richest countries, thus risking their credibility and the credibility of the monetary union as a whole. The monetary union is trapped and is a huge burden and risk to European integration.

WHAT KIND OF RISK WOULD THAT BE?

The monetary union forces the federalisation and centralisation of the EU system, as well as a ‘two-speed Europe’. All this is very unfavourable for the Polish state. On the other hand, the Eurozone is in a difficult situation and is actually struggling to survive. For Poland, it is crucial to stay away from the problems of the monetary union as far as possible and, at the same time, to demand from Western European countries to treat Poland and other countries not belonging to the Eurozone as partners and to respect their subjectivity.

TODAY, WHEN ALMOST ALL EU ECONOMIES ARE IN EFFECT TEMPORARILY DORMANT, WE ARE ALMOST CERTAIN THAT DIFFICULT YEARS ARE COMING, AND THAT A RECESSION-ORIENTATED CRISIS IS APPROACHING. WHAT CAN WE EXPECT? WHAT WILL EUROPE LOOK LIKE IN THE COMING YEARS? WHICH BRANCHES OF THE ECONOMY WILL SUFFER MOST? WHAT WOULD BE THE SCALE OF THE CRISIS?

Though analysts and institutions across many spectrums are trying to figure this out, there seems to be a general consensus that there is unfortunately potential that the crisis can be painful and long-lasting. It will affect everyone, but probably smaller companies will suffer the most. We do not know how foreign companies,

Centralisation and federalisation of the EU system enhance the asymmetry of interests between the largest and smaller states.

whose strategies are decided on outside our borders, will behave. In the crisis, the public sector, which can provide jobs, will be particularly important, as well as state-owned and other domestic companies. The key is the government’s strategy for emerging from the crisis, which should be an opportunity to change the profile of the economy.

On the one hand, it is about laying the foundations for strategic national companies, perhaps controlled or at least with the participation of the state treasury, in sectors important for national security – in its broadest sense, i.e. health, energy, technology, arms, etc. On the other hand, the crisis is an opportunity to change the profile of the economy towards services, especially electronic and high-tech based, preferably in our national “intelligent” specialities.

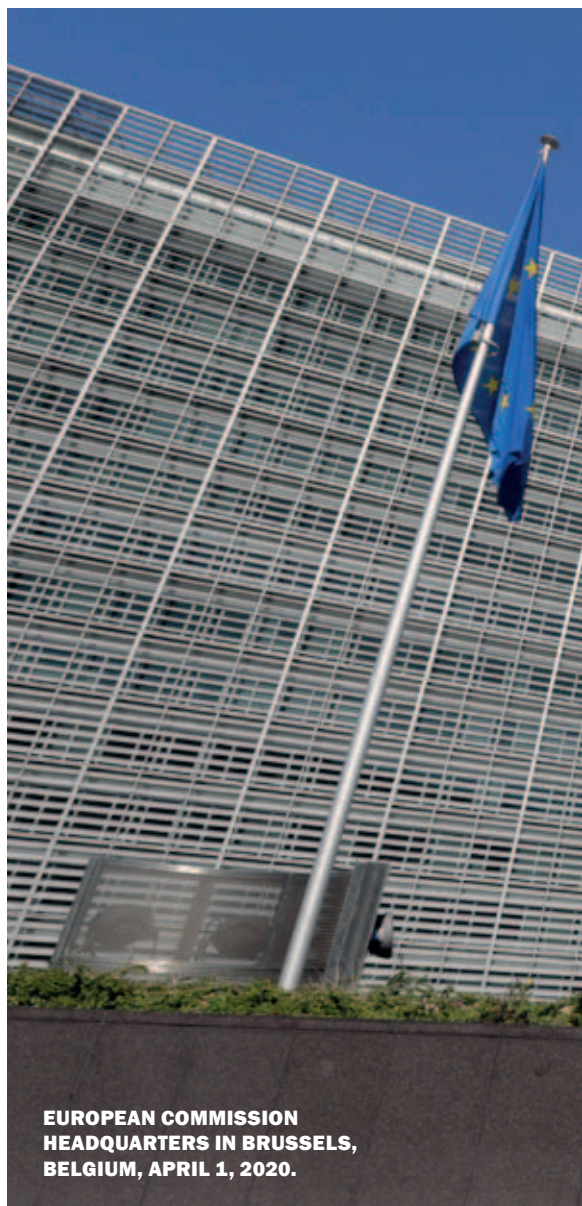
AND ON THE GEOPOLITICAL CHESSBOARD – WHAT RESHUFFLING CAN WE EXPECT? HOW WILL THE SEEMINGLY WEAKENED UNITED STATES BEHAVE? AND WHAT ABOUT THE EXISTING ALLIANCES OR POLITICAL FORMATS, SUCH AS THE THREE SEAS INITIATIVE?

China will strive to benefit geopolitically from the crisis whilst Russia and Western Europe will probably find their positions de facto weakened. The crisis

will not lead to the “spinal fracture” of the Americans. We must remember that they have high technology, one of the best medical laboratories and leading corporations in this sector. Therefore, they have the resources to find a cure for the virus relatively quickly even in the face of high mortality rates. The crisis may even strengthen Donald Trump’s strategy. First of all, it will force the US economy to become independent from China and its reindustrialisation. It will even partly fulfil the president’s hope of “separating” the US economy from China.

However, transatlantic relations may suffer in the crisis, but this would be a greater loss for Europe than for the US. In such a situation the Americans should not leave Europe, but rather confidently look for allies there. That is why I believe they can continue to support the Three Seas Initiative and closer integration within Central Europe. The interests of China in this region are exactly the same. Regardless of the policies of both powers, Poland’s interest is also to cooperate in this region. The crisis is an opportunity to show solidarity with our “brothers” and neighbours, both in dealing with the coronavirus and with not always justified allegations made by our partners from the western part of the EU.

IT CAN BE READ IN VARIOUS SOURCES THAT THE COMMUNIST AUTHORITIES IN BEIJING FAILED TO INFORM THE WORLD ABOUT THE VIRUS WHICH HAS BEEN SPREADING IN WUHAN SINCE NOVEMBER 2019, CONCEALED FACTS ABOUT THE THREAT AND TODAY, IS “OFFERING” COMMERCIAL “HELP” TO THE WORLD. HOW WOULD YOU COMMENT ON CHINA’S PARTICIPATION IN THE WHOLE SITUATION? WHAT, IN YOUR OPINION, SHOULD BE THE



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEADQUARTERS IN BRUSSELS,
BELGIUM, APRIL 1, 2020.**

POLISH AND THE EU STRATEGY IN RELATIONS WITH CHINA?

As many of us, I have no additional knowledge about the origins of the epidemic to the already widely available information which shows that the Chinese authorities neglected the threat and understated data about the victims. This could result from the internal policy of the communist party. However, it should also be noted that China offered help to many EU countries, including Poland, and that



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our government is buying medical supplies from China. We should also remember that the Middle Kingdom is already one of the greatest powers, and its position is constantly growing. Moreover, a possibility sometimes overlooked, in specific circumstances, it may also be a partner to Poland in the situation of a possible threat from the Russian Federation. The challenge for Poland is to arrange economic relations with this giant which would be as beneficial as possible for our country,

to derive wealth and technology, but certainly not to become dependent, which threatens us at least in some sectors. The second challenge is the growing tension between the US, our strategic ally, and the Middle Kingdom. Finally, the last challenge is the growing investment, migration and political involvement of China in Central Europe. We should consider how to solve the basic problems related to these three challenges with the benefit for national interests. But I am far from

interfering in China's domestic policy, mainly because I expect exactly the same from our EU allies.

YET IN FEBRUARY, WHEN THE VIRUS WAS ALREADY SPREADING IN EUROPE, THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION WAS ALSO ENGAGED, EXCEPT FOR THE MENTIONED MIGRATION POLICY, IN A DISCUSSION ABOUT THE RULE OF LAW IN POLAND. WAS THIS CONCERN RIGHT? HOW CAN THIS BE EXPLAINED?

In Poland, there is an ongoing discussion between governmental groups and the opposition about judicial reform, and whether it is compatible with the Polish Constitution. This problem cannot and should not be resolved by the EU institutions in any way. It is not within their competences to examine the compliance of reforms in the Member States with the local constitution. The EU interferes in the reform, which is essentially a competence of a Member State and gives rise to a sharp internal dispute. Such external interference will always be risky – benign and desirable for part of society, and discouraging the idea of integration for the others. Especially in a nation like Poland, which is over-sensitive with regard to its own sovereignty because it has been taught by history that its neighbours have repeatedly used internal disputes of Poles for their own benefit. This is why thinkers who have been considering integration projects in Europe since the 17th century have often stressed the iron principle – the sovereignty of individual nations should be respected and their internal affairs should not be interfered with. This is what William Penn thought at the end of the 17th century, Abbot of Saint-Pierre, who proposed something of a European Union in the early 18th century. Immanuel Kant and many others also thought of integration in the same way.

WHAT WILL CHANGE IRREVERSIBLY IN THE EU LANDSCAPE ONCE THE PANDEMIC IS CONTAINED?

It is difficult to augur, but a pandemic will certainly lead to many tensions on the international scene. All the hidden problems, discords and grudges will likely explode with new force. Therefore, it will be a major challenge for the EU to protect itself from disintegration. Both in the world and Europe, absent a clear change in trajectory, I expect diminishing some respect for international organisations and international law. With this, one can also expect a tendency of individual states and nations to seek security firstly on their own as it will no longer be possible to fully trust either globalisation, European institutions or even allies. This may, paradoxically, strengthen those states that would have previously had trusted in overly liberal ideas and made themselves almost defenceless in the face of further crises.

Countries will have to rebuild the infrastructure that is necessary in times of crisis, such as border protection, health care, telecommunications, including postal services, etc. They will have to focus more on some hitherto neglected public policies, such as industry, health, but also migration. The presence of the state in the economy will probably increase, especially in those sectors which play a strategic role in security. The EU will have to adapt to these grassroots trends, or it will experience another crisis, this time caused by the disobedience of part of the Member States. This is why I believe that the solution for the EU in such a situation is providing greater flexibility of action, less centralised management and generally greater freedom left to the Member States. The EU will probably have to abandon, at least for a while, the vision of building a centralised super-state and adopt a more subsidiary attitude towards nation states and their democracies.

NEW CHAPTER: POLAND - UK RELATIONS AFTER BREXIT

BERENIKA GRABOWSKA'S INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR
ARKADY RZEGOCKI

Recent events may cause significant changes for the UK and for Polish-British relations. The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic occurred just after the UK departed from the structures of the European Union. Due to brexit, Poles in the UK will have to face new challenges in the introduction of new legislation. A significant increase in the migration of Poles from the UK to Poland is also noticeable. At the same time, the UK remains an important foreign partner for Poland, which whom we share common interests and points of view on many international issues in the European and global dimension. We invite you to read the interview with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Poland to the Court of St. James, Prof. Arkady Rzegocki.



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POLISH PRIME MINISTER MATEUSZ MORAWIECKI AND AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND TO THE COURT OF ST. JAMES'S, PROF. ARKADY RZEGOCKI DURING A MEETING WITH THE POLISH COMMUNITY IN LONDON. LONDON, GREAT BRITAIN, DECEMBER 20, 2018.

BERENIKA GRABOWSKA: LAST WEEK, YOU EXPRESSED THANKS TO POLISH DOCTORS AND NURSES LIVING IN THE BRITISH ISLES AND WORKING IN THE NHS (BRITISH HEALTH SERVICE) FOR THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE CORONAVIRUS. THIS WOULD SUGGEST THAT POLES ARE STILL VERY ACTIVE ON THE BRITISH ISLES. WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION OF POLES AFTER BREXIT, BOTH IN GENERAL AND IN THIS CONTEXT?

Arkady Rzegocki: All healthcare workers, carers and volunteers are making sure that we get the necessary help if and when we need it. Their sacrifice and selflessness deserve our utmost gratitude. Among them are thousands of Polish people, and the whole of Poland is very proud of that fact. They are great ambassadors of our country in the United Kingdom and represent the best there is in us Poles. Despite the ongoing coronavirus

pandemic, our community is, of course, still very active. Our lives have changed considerably, but the precious qualities for which we are known and valued in this country – hard work, expertise, openness and kindness – will always be there. Just like during the normal times, now, in the times of crisis, Poles are contributing to the British society, economy and culture – it is just that they are doing so from their homes.

Currently, Poles who wish to remain in the UK after Brexit need to apply for settled status – that has not changed. They need to do so by the end of June 2021 if there is a Brexit with a deal, and by the end of 2020 if there is a no-deal Brexit. Until then, their rights will not change. At the start of 2021, a new immigration system will come into force, which will require EU citizens to hold settled or pre-settled status. As Polish Ambassador, I would like for Polish citizens to feel best at home and so I encourage Poles to consider the

possibility of returning to Poland in the future, but this, of course, is each person's individual choice. I want what's best for my compatriots.

THE LATEST CLICKTRANS.PL REPORT SHOWS THAT 90% OF MIGRATION BETWEEN THE UK AND POLAND IN 2019 WAS MOVING TO POLAND, WHILE IN 2015 IT WAS ONLY 55%. CAN WE EXPECT THAT WHEN THE CURRENT SITUATION RELATED TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC IS OVER, THE TREND OF POLES RETURNING FROM THE UK TO POLAND WILL CONTINUE?

It is difficult to predict what is going to happen because we do not know how large an impact the coronavirus pandemic is going to have on people's lives. Certainly, over the last three years we have been observing a growing interest among our nationals in the UK in returning to Poland. Official British statistics confirm that this movement is taking place on a large scale – according to them, around 150,000 Polish citizens have left the UK. We are also regularly hearing anecdotal evidence in our conversations with Polish parishes, organisations and Saturday schools which shows that the perspective of Britain's Poles on Poland has changed substantially, and they now see new opportunities back home. I am glad to hear this.

The situation with the coronavirus has also resulted in many Poles returning to Poland, including around 14,000 onboard the *Lot do Domu* repatriation flights organised in March and April by Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and LOT Polish Airlines.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT PROCESS OF APPLYING FOR SETTLED STATUS BY POLES? HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE SUBMITTED SUCH AN APPLICATION SO FAR? WE KNOW THAT AT THE

Perspective of Britain's Poles on Poland has changed substantially, and they now see new opportunities back home.

BEGINNING THIS NUMBER WAS NOT SIGNIFICANT AND POLES LIVING IN THE UK FOR MANY YEARS WERE NOT AWARE OF THIS OBLIGATION. THE POLISH EMBASSY IN LONDON HAS BEEN STRONGLY COMMITTED TO HELPING THEM.

Poles and all other EU citizens wishing to remain in the UK after Brexit need to apply for settled status by downloading an application on their phone or tablet (technical requirements are available online), scanning their biometric passport or biometric Polish identity card, and following the process within the application. Currently, due to the coronavirus pandemic, there are delays in Home Office's decisions on the applications.

Additionally, the applicants are asked not to send additional documents via post, which they had to do previously if asked by the system. The documents that had been sent before 25 March 2020 will be considered and sent back, but there will be a delay. If the documents were sent after 25 March 2020, they will be returned as soon as possible. The application is connected to the HMRC and Department for Work and Pensions databases, so people who are employed, pay taxes as well as those using their pension should not need to provide additional documents confirming that they reside in the UK. The ID document scanner locations, where applicants could also go with their

The unemployment level is very low and our economy has grown uninterrupted for nearly 30 years.

documents and confirm their identity, has been temporarily suspended. Non-governmental organisations offering official assistance with the process are still providing the service, though they have limited their activity to mostly help lines and online services.

The application can be made by those EU citizens who will have lived in the UK before 31 December 2020. It is the same for the extended family, but closer family can join the applicant after that date. People who have been living in the UK for five years (at least six months in each year) are eligible for settled status, with those living here for a shorter period of time eligible for pre-settled status, which then allows them to apply for settled status.

The latest data available shows that 639,200 Polish nationals applied for settled status by February 2020. It is true that initially many Poles were not aware that they had to apply for the status or did not even know that such a scheme exists. This is why we have held a number of meetings with the Polish diaspora in numerous places across the UK to raise this awareness, and in September 2019 I wrote a letter addressed to all Poles in the UK appealing for them to secure their future status. The letter was met with widespread media coverage and the desired effect in the form of a considerable uptake in the number of applications, and now we can say that the majority of Poles in the UK

have applied for the status, but, of course, we will not stop in our efforts to inform about the need to apply for the status until every Polish citizen has done so.

CAN POLES EXPECT ANY RESTRICTIONS AFTER BREXIT? CAN THEIR LIFE ON THE ISLES CHANGE SIGNIFICANTLY?

The lives of Poles living in the UK will not change until the end of this year. As specified in the Withdrawal Agreement, the rights of EU citizens living in the UK on 31 December 2020 who will have applied for settled status by then will be protected. The British government has declared that tourists will also be able to visit the UK the same as now until then. It has also stated that the rights of EU citizens after Brexit will be protected, but the negotiations on the final deal are still ongoing. From 2021, there is set to be a new immigration system, which will limit the ability to come to the UK for work and study.

THERE ARE STILL MANY POLES IN THE UK WHO ARE HESITANT TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO RETURN TO POLAND AND THERE ARE ALSO MANY WHO HAVE DECIDED TO STAY AND ARE STILL NOT SURE IF IT WAS A RIGHT DECISION. IF YOU MET ONE OF THEM, WHAT WOULD YOU ADVISE HIM OR HER?

As mentioned, it is each individual's choice, though if it is suitable to them and they do feel best at home, I would like to encourage considering a return to Poland. What I can say is that those who may be unsure about the economic or job prospects in Poland should not be worried, because the country has seen a remarkable transformation since it joined the EU. The unemployment is very low and our economy has grown uninterrupted for nearly 30 years. Despite the dangers of the coronavirus pandemic, Poland is well poised when it comes to mitigating the

consequences of the crisis, also having healthy levels of public and private debt. So if you wish to return to Poland, we are waiting for you with open arms.

And, of course, Polish-British economic relations are going from strength to strength. Since 2005, Polish exports to the UK have tripled and UK exports to Poland have doubled, with our trading relationship being worth £17 billion a year. Poles have now established more than 60,000 businesses in Britain, while the UK is the sixth largest investor in Poland. This means that Poles wishing to keep that Polish-British connection can easily do so!

THERE IS ALSO THE VOICE OF THE NEW GENERATION OF POLES LIVING IN THE UK, IT IS NO LONGER THE POST-MIGRATION GENERATION OF THE POLISH COMMUNITY, BUT OFTEN PEOPLE WHO WERE ALREADY BORN IN THE UK. ONE CAN SEE THAT THEY HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN ABOUT THEIR FAMILY HISTORY AND OFTEN RETURN TO POLAND, BUILDING A POLISH-BRITISH UNDERSTANDING. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ABOUT THEM?

I am proud of them and am grateful for their attitude. It is important that, just like their parents and grandparents, they nurture the Polish spirit in the UK and then build upon our historically strong relations for the good of our nations. They are the future, so we are counting on them being true ambassadors of Poland.

COMING BACK TO BREXIT – WHAT COULD BE THE ROLE OF GREAT BRITAIN AFTER BREXIT? DOES LEAVING THE EUROPEAN UNION MEAN GREATER OR LESSER INVOLVEMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN IN WORLD AFFAIRS?

The United Kingdom is an important partner for the European Union, and an important player on the international arena. We hope that it can remain a key

partner for the EU in the future and that we can continue our strong financial, economic and scientific cooperation as well as our cooperation within NATO.

AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR POLAND? WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF POLISH-BRITISH RELATIONS?

Poland is sad that the UK has left the European Union, but our bilateral relations, forged over hundreds of years and in the most difficult of times, will remain unchanged. We want to keep strengthening our ties with the UK in all currently implemented formats. The UK remains an important foreign partner for Poland with whom we share common interests and a point of view on many international issues in the European and global dimension. Frequent meetings of the Prime Ministers of our two countries as well as Ministers are the best proof of this. The most important meeting formats include the annual intergovernmental consultations, the meetings of ministers of foreign affairs and defence – the so-called Quadriqa consultations – and the civic society Belvedere Forum, which is a non-governmental platform for Poles and Brits from all walks of life, including scientists, businesspeople and students, to meet, discuss issues and exchange ideas. Our science and cultural relations mean that Poland is becoming better known in the UK all the time. Our military relations have also been flourishing, recognising Poland's military importance in the world as the Eastern flank of NATO, with 150 British troops stationed there, and Poland and Britain signing a bilateral defence treaty in 2017 (it is only the second such treaty that the UK had signed with a European Union country). With all those formats in place as well as our partnership within NATO, I am sure Polish-British relations will remain strong in the future.

POLAND WINS IN THE ARBITRATION WITH GAZPROM OVER THE PRICE OF NATURAL GAS

JANUSZ KOWALSKI

PGNiG, a gas champion overseen by the Polish Government, has won USD 1.5 billion in the arbitration in Stockholm. This is arguably one of the most remarkable victories in an international dispute for liberated Poland in over 30 years.

On 30 March 2020, Polskie Górnictwo Naftowe i Gazownictwo (PGNiG) Spółka Akcyjna announced the favourable outcome in the international arbitration with Gazprom. PGNiG's victory is a great success of the Polish gas champion, having effectually handled the dispute over gas prices included in the Yamal Contract in the Arbitral Tribunal in Stockholm.

In February 2016, as Vice President of the PGNiG Management Board, I was responsible for facilitating legal services to the company, as well as the initiation of the dispute with Gazprom, coming to the decisions to file a suit together with the Management Board. As such, it is difficult not to have regard for this success with a personal angle, having assembled the team of lawyers that won this 4-year-long legal dispute with a Russian tycoon.

POLAND WINS IN THE ARBITRATION WITH GAZPROM OVER THE PRICE OF NATURAL GAS



JANUSZ KOWALSKI, IN 2016 VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE PGNiG MANAGEMENT BOARD

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The final judgement of the Stockholm Arbitral Tribunal confirms the validity of PGNiG's stance – that since 2014, gas had been being sold to Poland at a non-market and inflated price. Consequently, the Arbitral Tribunal changed the price formula. The ruling does genuinely prove that during the years from 2014 to 2020, Russians were deliberately selling gas to Poland at artificially inflated prices.

TERMS OF PGNiG'S LEGAL DISPUTE WITH GAZPROM

This is the first arbitration proceeding in the dispute between PGNiG and Gazprom which actually concluded with a ruling. The previous arbitration proceedings initiated by the company in November 2011 did not result in a verdict but in an agreement between the parties which signed an annexe to

the Yamal Contract in November 2012. Eventually, despite the initiation of the arbitration proceedings, no ruling was made. Therefore, there was no precedent on the grounds of the Yamal Contract from which to follow. Moreover, PGNiG's victory in March 2020 may be considered as a meaningful success that acutely confirms the legitimacy of the actions taken by the Polish Government with regard to pursuing diversification of natural gas supplies to Poland. Experience indicates that Russia's Gazprom has repeatedly used its dominant position to impose solutions that were disproportionately detrimental to Polish national interests, harmful to the well-being of the economy and the supply security for gas consumers, as well as contradictory to the provisions of both Polish and EU law.

As a consequence of the Arbitral Tribunal's ruling, the price formula under which PGNiG purchased gas from Gazprom was changed. The change is retroactive to the first day of November 2014. The new price formula under which PGNiG is buying gas from Gazprom is effective since the day of the judgement, i.e. 30 March of this year. Therefore, PGNiG is already buying gas from Gazprom at the new price. Trading conditions of the state-controlled gas company changed overnight.

As a result of the implementation of the formula by the Tribunal's ruling, retroactive to 2014, it is necessary to settle the difference between the price paid by PGNiG and the price which should have been paid since 2014. The Company pointed that the settlement resulting from the final judgment of the Arbitral Tribunal indicates that the difference to be reimbursed by Gazprom to PGNiG amounts to approximately USD 1.5 billion, i.e. approximately PLN 6.2 billion for the period from 1 November 2014 to 29 February 2020.

NATURAL GAS PRICE

Inasmuch, the sums show the extent to which how much the price at which Gazprom was selling gas to the Polish PGNiG company had been inflated. It can be estimated that each month of arbitration proceedings cost PGNiG about PLN 80-100 million of overpayment¹. To put it another way, Gazprom, at the expense of PGNiG, gained about PLN 1-1.2 billion of overpayment every year. Such huge amounts affected PGNiG's revenues, which was of considerable importance as at the same time the company was selling gas at market prices to domestic consumers. It also resulted from the fact

that the price was calculated according to a completely archaic formula, based largely on the price of crude oil – a commodity behaving entirely different to gas as the crude oil market is more mature and wholly unlike to the gas market. The judgment of the Stockholm Arbitral Tribunal to a considerable extent tied the new price to the market quotations for natural gas on the European energy market. This means that the new price will follow gas prices to a much greater extent, rather than oil prices that are completely detached from them and subject to different conditions.

The arduous, 4-year long arbitration procedure has also had a significant impact on prices. PGNiG filed a lawsuit in February 2016, the preliminary judgment determining the ruling – a statement that PGNiG had the right to demand a price change and that the old price was incorrect – was issued by the Tribunal after more than two years of proceedings, in June 2018, with the final judgment arriving at the end of March 2020. Meanwhile, the parties to the Yamal Contract may apply for a change in gas price every three years.

It is worth recalling that PGNiG reserved such a possibility during the arbitration proceedings and in November 2017 it filed another request for renegotiation of the contract price. Gazprom did likewise. Therefore, there is a possibility to further change the gas price in the Yamal Contract in the future. This time, with effect from November 2017. Whether this will happen is uncertain. The first thing to do now is to assess how the new formula established by the Arbitral Tribunal in the light of the Yamal Contract relates to the price conditions in 2017. The results of this assessment will give rise either to a further requests for changes in the contract price, or will lead to the conclusion that there are no grounds for such actions.

¹ 1.5 billion USD / 65 months [overpayment period] = 23,076,923 million USD / month)

POLAND WINS IN THE ARBITRATION WITH GAZPROM OVER THE PRICE OF NATURAL GAS



A NATURAL GAS DRILLING RIGS IN PRZEMYŚL, POLAND, JUNE 17, 2019.

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Therefore, PGNiG faces a number of challenges related to the execution of the Yamal Contract and this situation may continue until the end of its term, i.e. the end of 2022. This results from the nature and history of the contract and the fact that Gazprom is a difficult business partner, if it is possible to be considered a business partner at all rather than simply a power structure solely carrying out the Kremlin's orders.

GAZPROM'S CHARGE AGAINST THE JUDGEMENT

It can be expected that the judgments of the Arbitral Tribunal will be appealed by Gazprom to the Court of Appeal in Stockholm, such as the preliminary judgement of June 2018. Although judgments of the Arbitral Tribunals are final and enforceable, according to the relevant regulations, they may be appealed to common courts. These are extraordinary remedies; in this case, the so-called petition for the reversal of an award of a court of arbitration. They may be brought only on the basis of

formal charges concerning irregularities of arbitration proceedings. In practice, such complaints are considered extremely rarely.

With regard to the case discussed, this happened with the preliminary judgment of June 2018² which Gazprom finally decided to appeal. It is likely that the same scenario may be applied to the final judgment. However, the appeal itself does not suspend the implementation of the judgment. In any case, the chances of success of such a complaint, even if based on statistics, should be assessed as rather unlikely. In general, less than a few percent of arbitral court judgments are overruled. Positive conclusions in this respect can be drawn from the already completed cases, in which Gazprom has demanded the reversal of the arbitration courts' judgements.

² PGNiG Raporty bieżące, *Raport bieżący nr 48/2018*, PGNiG, 02.10.2018, link: <http://pgnig.pl/relacje-inwestorskie/raporty-gieldowe/biezace/-/reports/details/raport-biezacy-nr-48-2018>



PGNiG HEADQUARTER, WARSAW, POLAND.

In November 2019, the Swedish court rejected Gazprom's complaint against the ruling of the Stockholm Arbitral Tribunal, which annulled the Russians' claims for USD 80 billion from Ukraine for undelivered gas. In this case, Gazprom appealed against the arbitration to the Swedish Court of Appeal, claiming that the arbitration included mistakes and exceeded its jurisdiction. The Stockholm Court of Appeal disregarded Gazprom's claims. When the judgement was delivered, Executive Officer of Naftogaz Yuriy Vitrenko remarked "A total victory! Ukraine wins again! We won the appeal on Gazprom's first complaint against the decision of the arbitration in Stockholm"³. Unfortunately, probably due to the agreement concluded in December between Naftogaz and Gazprom, we will not know how the next two similar court proceedings before the Court of Appeal in Sweden would be finalised. Towards the end of December 2019, Gazprom and Naftogaz concluded an irrevocable agreement to settle their claims. Under the agreement, it was

decided, amongst others, that they would withdraw all claims against each other from the courts and arbitration courts.

However, the judgment issued prior to this agreement by the Stockholm Court of Appeal in November, which was unfavourable to Gazprom, is open and available in English on the Court's website. It shows that Gazprom's complaint was unfounded⁴. It seems that the complaint was rather an element of Gazprom's broader position, which did not voluntarily implement the Arbitral Tribunal's ruling. *Nota bene*, this raises the question about the real effectiveness of the obligations imposed on Gazprom by the European Commission in the case of abuse of a dominant position by Gazprom⁵. Part of the obligations aimed at preventing Gazprom from inflating prices was Gazprom's commitment to introduce an effective review mechanism

³ Andrzej Kublik, *Ukraina znów wygrała z Gazpromem*, Euractiv, 27.11.2019, link: <https://www.euractiv.pl/section/energia-i-srodowisko/news/ukraina-znow-wygrala-z-gazpromem/>

⁴ Svea hovrätt, *Arbitral award in a dispute regarding supply of natural gas remains unchanged*, Sveriges Domstolar, link: <https://www.domstol.se/nyheter/2019/11/arbitral-award-in-a-dispute-regarding-supply-of-natural-gas-remains-unchanged/>

⁵ European Commission Antitrust/Cartel Cases, 39816 *Upstream gas supplies in Central and Eastern Europe*, European Commission, link: https://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/case_details.cfm?proc_code=1_39816

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of prices based on arbitrage into its contracts with customers. The possible failure to comply with the arbitration judgement may, therefore, translate into the assessment of Gazprom's compliance with its commitments.

In May 2018, the European Commission closed the anti-trust proceedings against Gazprom that had lasted for nearly 7 years⁶. As it was written in the press at that time, 'in May, the EC announced a decision which finally approved the settlement with Gazprom on the abuse of its position in Central and Eastern Europe. Thus, the Russian company avoided penalties for monopolistic practices'. Indeed, the European Commission's proceedings ended for Gazprom unbelievably mildly. PGNiG raised objections against such. The company appealed against the decision to the Court of Justice of the European Union in November 2018, stating that the judgement was in contradiction to collected evidence and a number of procedural provisions of the EU law were breached⁷.

There is no doubt that the obligations imposed on Gazprom were inadequate to the damage caused to Central European markets, including Poland. At the time, PGNiG stressed, as evidenced by the current ruling of the Arbitral Tribunal, that Gazprom overstated gas prices for its customers in Central and Eastern Europe. The European Commission's gentleness in treating Gazprom may be described as surprising. In cases against IT giants,

the European Commission is willing and capable of imposing considerably heavy penalties, such as a recent fine of EUR 4.3 billion on Google for forcing manufacturers to install the company's programmes, in exchange for access to the app store and free use of the Android system⁸. Meanwhile, in the case against Gazprom, which was charged with very serious allegations, the European Commission considered it appropriate to issue the so-called "commitment decision". In practice, this means that Gazprom's request to conclude the proceedings without any sanctions has been accepted. Albeit no two cases are identical, this would make it seem that it is not necessary to compare the scale of both cases. Hence the lack of rationality of the sentences imposed; a penalty for extorting access to an Internet shop compared with relatively no penalties in matters concerning strategic raw material and the world market. The actions of the European Commission in Google's case were completely inadequate to the violations of law committed by Gazprom. After all, this decision was a consequence of the European Commission's objections to Gazprom's monopolistic practices. The Commission's preliminary assessment included in this document stated, among others: violation of the EU competition law and implementation of the strategy of dividing gas markets along the borders of Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary.

Consequently, it is really difficult to understand the obligations included in the European Commission Decision (presented a contrario) differently than the fact that Gazprom "promises" not

⁶ Antitrust Procedure, CASE AT.39816 – *Upstream gas supplies in Central and Eastern Europe*, European Commission, 25.05.2018, link: https://ec.europa.eu/competition/antitrust/cases/dec_docs/39816/39816_10148_3.pdf

⁷ Krzysztof Strzépka, PAP: *{PGNiG złożyło skargę na decyzję KE ws. praktyk Gazpromu}*, PAP, 16.10.2018, link: <https://www.pap.pl/aktualnosci/news%2C341323%2Czrodlo-pap-pgnig-zlozylo-skarge-na-decyzje-ke-ws-praktyk-gazpromu.html>

⁸ Adam Turek, *Google to nie wszystko. Największe kary antymonopolowe dla technologicznych gigantów w historii UE*, Business Insider, 19.07.2018, link: <https://businessinsider.com.pl/firmy/zarzadzanie/kary-antymonopolowe-od-komisji-europejskiej-google-to-nie-wszystko/6z9216z>



GAZPROM HEADQUARTER, MOSCOW, RUSSIA.

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to do what it used to do, i.e. to abuse its dominant position. Since the Decision orders Gazprom, for example, to remove all restrictions on the cross-border resale of gas imposed on its customers, it means that those restrictions existed in the first place, which should not have. Further, since the Decision orders Gazprom to allow the free flow of gas to those parts of Central and Eastern Europe which, due to the lack of interconnections, are still isolated from the other Member States, namely the Baltic States and Bulgaria, and this in itself asserts that Gazprom had been preventing the free flow of gas right up until then. The European Commission's decision orders Gazprom to 'end the use of the dominant position in gas supply: the non-enforcement of the benefits connected with the gas infrastructure by Gazprom, which it could have obtained from its customers through its position in the gas supply market'⁹. This, a contrario, underlines that this dominance has so far been inappropriately used, in particular, by using Gazprom's position e.g. to derive illegitimate benefits in the gas infrastructure.

RELATIONS BETWEEN PGNIG AND GAZPROM

The contract between Gazprom and the Polish company PGNiG is valid until the end of 2022 and is expected to be executed in accordance with the current form of the contract, as amended by an arbitration court ruling. Failure to respect the contract may be assessed, among others, by the European Commission in terms of compliance with the obligations imposed on Gazprom by the Commission. It also seems that if this happens, it should be assessed in two ways – as a breach of the existing obligations and as another tort – the

manifestation of Gazprom's abuse of its dominant position on the EU market against the EU anti-trust regulations.

This complex relationship with the Eastern gas supplier is not only an individual arbitration dispute over price. A far broader perspective is needed. In 2016, I created the PGNiG's legal team, inspired by the actions of the late Professor Lech Kaczyński, who, during the years from 2002 to 2005, as the Mayor of Warsaw, created an excellent team of lawyers capable of effectually winning international disputes. As Vice President of PGNiG, I decided to restructure the company's legal services at once.

The architects of the legal victory in the four-year arbitration with Gazprom, i.e. the leaders of the in-house Polish legal team, were: legal adviser Dariusz Hryniów, a graduate of the Faculty of Law and Administration at the University of Opole who currently serves as Director of the Legal Department at PGNiG; as well as attorney Tobiasz Szychowski, a graduate of the Faculty of Law and Administration at the University of Łódź, a specialist in litigation and arbitration disputes, currently serving as Deputy Director of the Legal Department at PGNiG. These lawyers also worked on the case of the OPAL gas pipeline. This is another proceeding of PGNiG in which I had the honour of being involved in at the turn of October and November 2016, when, as the PGNiG Management Board, we decided to join, through a German PGNiG subsidiary, to Poland's appeal against the European Commission's decision to the Court of Justice of the European Union, which had concluded in a favourable judgment of the General Court of the European Union in 2019.

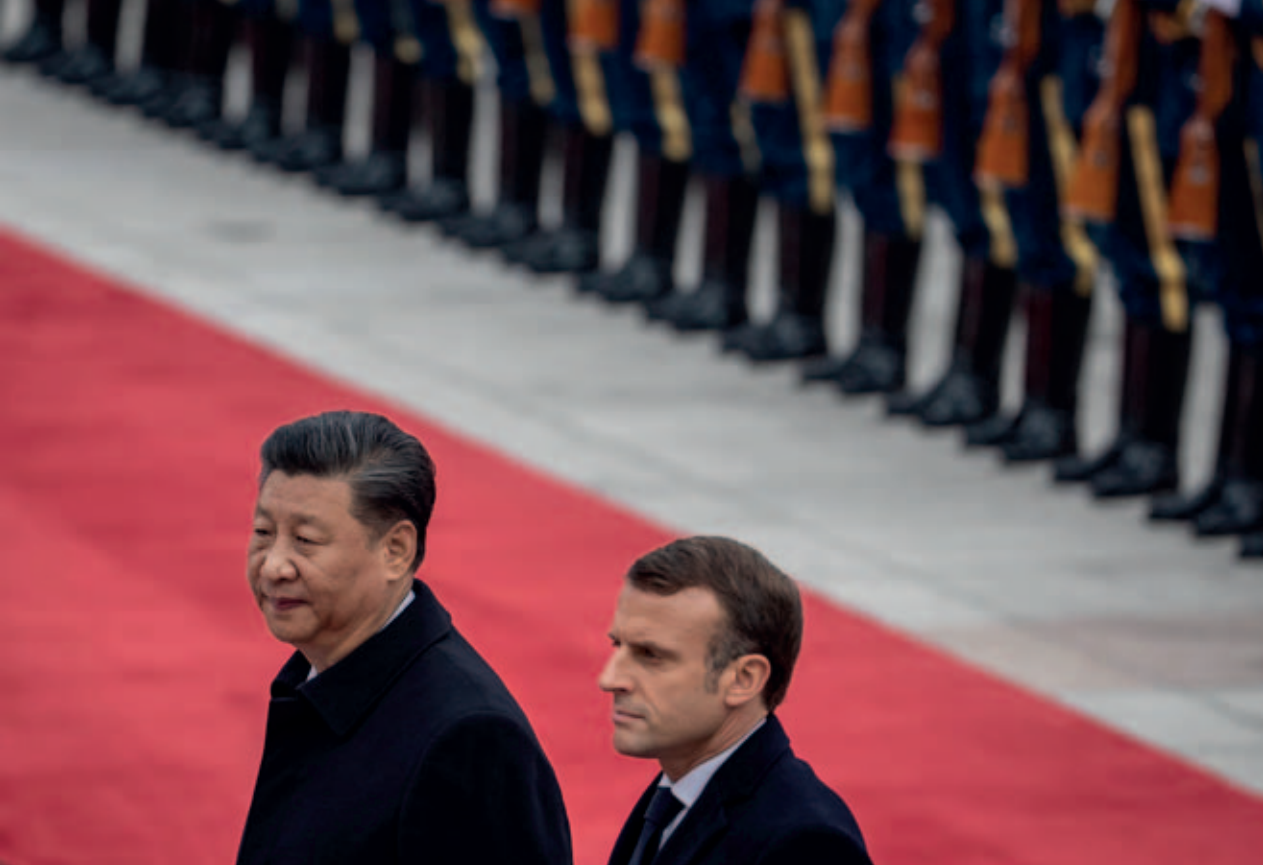
Janusz Kowalski ■
March 2020

⁹ Aktualności: Przedstawicielstwo KE w Polsce, *KE zobowiązuje Gazprom*, European Commission, 24.05.2018, link: https://ec.europa.eu/poland/news/ke-zobowi%C4%85zuje-gazprom_pl

THE FRENCH VISION OF EUROPE'S FUTURE

TOMASZ GRZEGORZ GROSSE, PROFESSOR

The UK's exit from the EU has become a strategic opportunity for the French elite to push their own vision of European integration. Another call for the political offensive is the weakness of Germany, which is currently facing problems in its own backyard. Further difficulties, including the growing divergence between Paris and Berlin and resistance from some other EU Member States, seem to even inspire Emmanuel Macron to take increasingly unconventional action. All of this provokes fundamental questions. Will the French plans for EU recalibration succeed, and will they be good for Europe?



CHINA'S PRESIDENT XI JINPING AND FRENCH PRESIDENT EMMANUEL MACRON INSPECT AN HONOR GUARD DURING A WELCOME CEREMONY AT THE GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE ON JANUARY 9, 2018 IN BEIJING, CHINA

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METHOD À LA TRUMP

Macron's method fully resembles that of Donald Trump. It involves taking unilateral actions, not reckoning with allies, breaking procedures and customs, and finally putting the interests of his own country first. Macron is trying to provoke change in the EU, but his unconventional actions, instead of healing the EU, could cause even more trouble.

Macron routinely refers to European interests. He often mentions the need to build "*European sovereignty*". In practice, however, there are often particular French interests behind these popular ideas. During the French President's visit to Shanghai in 2019, he repeatedly mentioned European interests – for example – in a conversation with President Xi Jinping, an agreement between the EU and the PRC on the protection of trademarks for about one hundred European food products was being finalized. Of these, French goods accounted for the largest

Macron is trying to provoke change in the EU, but his unconventional actions, instead of healing the EU, could cause even more trouble.

part. Many commentators pointed out that the French President had no formal mandate to represent the EU in these talks¹. Macron also settled with the Chinese leader that the EU Aviation Safety Agency and the Chinese administration would agree to grant the relevant certificates to allow the Italian-French company ATR to export aircraft to the

¹ R. Momtaz, *Macron, Europe's wannabe president*, Politico, 10 November 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/emmanuel-macron-europe-president-china-trade/> [27.12.2019].

The new European Commission is seen as a success for Paris.

Chinese market. Not only does this violate the procedures of the EU, but it shows Macron's growing ambition to control the EU administration. Furthermore, the new European Commission is seen as a success for Paris. Many experts have concluded that this will strengthen this capital's influence on bureaucrats in Brussels and Luxembourg. However, the visit to Shanghai proves that it is not enough for the French President to lead the EU from the back seat, and that he is now ready to take the wheel.

There are many other examples of how the French policy-makers approach European institutions. The latter constitute now, in a way, an extension of French foreign policy, especially when they, or their representatives, defend the interests of this country in external relations. In 2019, the French Parliament passed legislation imposing a 3% tax on the revenues of large tech companies such as Google, Amazon, Facebook, and Apple in France. In response, the US threatened to hit back with punitive duties imposed on certain French goods imported into the US. In the face of the Franco-American trade dispute, Paris decided to involve the EU institutions in the protection of its interests. Bruno Le Maire, the Finance Minister of France, has threatened that retaliatory EU sanctions would be imposed if the Americans do not withdraw from their plans to impose punitive duties on France². Indeed, Le Maire considered that the attack on France was an attack on the entire EU, even though imposing

the French tax on US internet companies was a unilateral action by Paris and not an agreed policy within the entire EU. In this way, he ignored not only EU procedures but also the different approach of many European countries both to tax policy and to transatlantic relations.

In the summer of 2019, Macron stated during a meeting with Vladimir Putin that the EU should overcome "misunderstandings" with Russia, which is after all "deeply European", and seek a new order from Lisbon to Vladivostok³. This has raised the question in many capitals: who gave this Frenchman the mandate to negotiate a new strategic architecture in Europe? Even more confusion was caused by his interview, in which he said that NATO was experiencing "brain death"⁴. He also questioned whether the allied obligations of NATO were still valid. Among those outraged at these statements were German politicians, and Angela Merkel herself distanced herself off from these statements. Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, her protégé to the Chancellor's seat, said that this was a manifestation of French aspirations for strategic autonomy from the US and an attempt to replace NATO with the EU's defense policy⁵. Another factor is Macron's unilateral decisions that block consensus within all countries. An example is that he blocked the start of EU accession negotiations with Northern Macedonia and Albania.

³ J. Nixey, M. Boulègue, *On Russia, Macron Is Mistaken*, Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 5 September 2019, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/russia-macron-mistaken> [27.12.2019].

⁴ Emmanuel Macron warns Europe: NATO is becoming brain-dead, 7 November 2019, *The Economist*, <https://www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-warns-europe-nato-is-becoming-brain-dead> [27.12.2019].

⁵ M. Heikkilä, *German defense minister hits back at Macron's NATO criticism*, Politico, 17.11.2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/annegret-kramp-karrenbauer-emmanuel-macron-german-defense-minister-hits-back-nato-criticism/> [27.12.2019].

² D. Keohane, Ch. Giles, J. Politi, *Europe will hit back if Trump punishes France for tax on Big Tech, warns Paris*, Financial Times, 6 January 2020, p. 1.

The Macron method is based on self-attributing pro-European intentions and denying them to his opponents. At the same time, it relies on isolating them. In the case of Poland, which in many instances has a different approach to European integration, accusations are made of authoritarian governance and violations of the rule of law. In addition, Macron is weakening the cohesion of Central Europe by trying to get some of the countries in the region to support his policies – wherever possible. This was the case during his tour in 2017 when he promoted the directive concerning the posting of workers. It was then that Poland – the biggest opponent of the directive – was purposely avoided.

Until now, the Franco-German alliance has been the “engine” for progress in European integration. It succeeded in implementing many initiatives that were not always approved by the other members of the Community, but the political power of the two largest Member States was, sooner or later, overcoming the resistance of those dissatisfied. This way of functioning of EU integration has become one of the reasons why the British elites decided to leave the EU. It was difficult for the British to accept a situation in which, despite their political potential, they could not steamroll their own preferences in European politics, and, what is worse, they were often forced to accept Franco-German solutions.

Interestingly, in recent years the Franco-German “motor” has clearly failed and more and more disputes appear between French and German visions of the future of the EU. This, in effect, makes Macron reach for unconventional ways of acting and, more and more often, surprise the Germans when he was trying to unilaterally shape the European agenda. In this way, French President tries to force his partners to approve of his own political

In recent years the Franco-German “motor” has clearly failed and more and more disputes appear between French and German visions of the future of the EU.

directions. In 2019, this was the case, amongst others, with the negotiations on the conditions for the UK's exit from the EU, trade policy towards the US, the issue of further EU enlargement to the countries of the Western Balkans, and geopolitical rapprochement with Russia. It seems that Paris is seeking to end the economic domination of Berlin, which has increasingly translated into German political influence in Europe. This was particularly the case during the Eurozone crisis when Germany's economic and financial power translated into having the greatest influence in deciding on how to solve the crisis. France is, therefore, trying to rebuild its geopolitical position in regard to Germany through a diplomatic offensive, which includes a whole series of ideas on how to heal the EU and trying to dominate the European agenda at the geopolitical and geo-economic level. This is why German politicians suspect that Macron is seeking to replace the German economic leadership with the French one in foreign and security policy⁶.

⁶ M. Rahman, *France is back, but where is Germany?* Politico, 27.11.2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/france-germany-foreign-relations-emmanuel-macron-angela-merkel-power-imbalance-eu/> [27.12.2019].



EMMANUEL MACRON HOLDS A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE END OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL SUMMIT IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, DECEMBER 13, 2019.

GEOPOLITICAL CHANGE

The mentioned objectives of the French President are best reflected in his numerous activities in the field of international politics. This is linked to a strategic change that he would like to apply to Europe. The aim is to move the EU away from the US, and at the same time shift it

closer to Moscow. The condition for this fundamental change is the arrangement of relations between Ukraine and Russia. While peace on the EU's Eastern Flank is desirable, it will probably be happening largely on Putin's terms. Regionalization of Ukraine and elections in the eastern part of the country were considered. This would not only sanction Russian



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influence in Donbas but would probably give Putin a veto on Ukraine's European or transatlantic ambitions. In such an arrangement, Russia's annexation of Crimea might also be silently accepted.

What is significant in this situation is the recent statement by Ihor Kolomoisky, an oligarch who has promoted the current

President of Ukraine. He told an American newspaper that Kyiv should return to Russia's sphere of influence, as it can count neither on joining the EU nor NATO⁷. This may mean that the Kremlin is getting closer and closer to achieving the most important objectives of its aggressive policy – above all, to stop the expansion of the West in its own sphere of influence. The same trend is visible in stopping the EU's enlargement to the Western Balkans. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Russian Permanent Representative to the EU reacted with satisfaction to the fact that France stopped this process⁸.

It is worth recalling that the French ambitions also concern autonomy towards the US, including limiting American influence in the Old Continent, as well as stimulating integration processes in a direction allowing Paris to effectively influence the EU, and even control political processes in Europe. The post-war history of Western Europe is a significant example of this. After the end of World War II, this part of the continent was under the profound influence of the US. The instrument of this influence, in the opinion of the French elite, was largely NATO. That is why the French demanded that the US agree on the most important decisions of the Alliance with France. They even expected that tripartite mechanisms (between the US, France, and the UK) would be created, which would hammer out policies not only concerning NATO, but also all other key global issues⁹.

⁷ A. Troianovski, *A Ukrainian Billionaire Fought Russia. Now He's Ready to Embrace It*, The New York Times, 13 November 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/13/world/europe/ukraine-ihor-kolomoisky-russia.html> [27.12.2019].

⁸ M. Peel, S. Fleming, *Russian envoy praises Macron stance on EU enlargement*, Financial Times, 17 November 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/14629414-0577-11ea-a984-fbbacad9e7dd> [27.12.2019].

⁹ T.A. Sayle, *Enduring Alliance. A History of NATO and the Postwar Global Order*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca – London 2019, pp. 55-61.

France's dream of creating a separate, and, at the same time, effective European 'pole' in international politics is too ambitious when confronted with real opportunities.

French politicians even suggested a geographical division of the spheres of influence within this triumvirate (or the new version of "*concert of powers*"), in which France was to get the West Europe, the UK – the Commonwealth, and the US – the Pacific¹⁰. Since it was difficult to get Americans to realize such a vision, Charles de Gaulle decided to focus his efforts on building European integration with the central position of France, while at the same time treating integration as the main instrument for increasing strategic autonomy towards Washington and NATO¹¹.

The main driver of this vision in recent years has been the development of the EU's defense policy. It is supposed to support the geopolitical plans of Paris – mainly related to the autonomy towards the US – but, in practice, also forcing the reconstruction of relations with Russia. In addition, the EU defense policy has very important economic objectives. The latter concern support for the industrial and technological base in the EU, especially the largest arms industry corporations in Western Europe. At the same time, the policy of the EU is to open up the entire EU internal market, also

of Central European countries, to the sale of European armaments, and, if possible, make it more difficult to sell armaments from outside the EU, mainly from the US¹².

Macron is a defender of a multipolar order, which he understands as distancing himself from Washington and seeking agreement with Moscow and Beijing. During his visit to Shanghai, new WTO regulations were the subject of talks with President Xi – again against US policy. The escalation of the EU's trade war with the United States may accelerate achieving objectives of Paris, but it is doubtful that this will be of any benefit to Europe. Even if the US has difficulty in holding back the geo-economic expansion of China, it will be all the more difficult for a lonely Europe – unless Macron is once again satisfied with making a deal on the terms dictated by its rival.

The actual strength of Europe on a global scale is best demonstrated by the failure of some EU countries to conclude an agreement with Iran to stop the development of nuclear weapons. The 2015 agreement with Iran, called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, was intended to bring about two basic goals for the three European signatories, i.e. France, the United Kingdom, and Germany (the so-called E3). The first goal was to rigorously constrain Tehran's nuclear agenda, which has not been achieved – especially after the US left this agreement. Iran has been systematically withdrawing from its commitments in this respect, and European countries have neither reached for sanctions nor had any other idea of getting the Iranians to respect their own commitments¹³.

¹² More details in T.G. Grosse, Development of Defence Policy and Armaments Industry in the European Union. Geo-Economic Analysis, Warsaw Institute Special Report, Warsaw, 10 December 2018.

¹³ N. Bozorgmehr, M. Peel, *Teheran pulls back further from nuclear agreement commitments*, Financial Times, 6.11.2019, p. 2; M. Karnitschnig, *Iran takes Europe hostage on nukes*, Politico, 21 November

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 72.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 121.



FRENCH PRESIDENT EMMANUEL MACRON, GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER HEIKO MAAS AND GERMAN CHANCELLOR ANGELA MERKEL IN BERLIN, GERMANY, JANUARY 19, 2020

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The second objective was to provide economic benefits from the agreement with Iran for European companies. In the situation of the tightening of US sanctions imposed on Tehran, the implementation of the discussed goal turned out to be impossible, even when European countries launched a special purpose vehicle (INSTEX), which was supposed to circumvent sanctions imposed by Washington.

The failure of all these efforts has clearly shown that the position of the three largest Member States (with the participation of the EU) does not create sufficient critical mass at the international level, especially when acting separately or even against US policy. This may suggest that France's dream of creating a separate, and, at the same time, effective European 'pole' in international politics is too ambitious when confronted with real opportunities. Europe can be effective, but mostly only

if it has the support of the US. Macron's strategic autonomy and his concept of multipolarity serve Europe little, and what they do instead is that they undermine transatlantic ties. What is more, as a result, they indirectly support the geopolitical ambitions of Moscow and Beijing.

FRENCH PROTECTIONISM

The French president aims to structurally reorganize the internal market. This idea is modeled on the solutions of state capitalism existing in France, and thus can be very beneficial for economic entities originating from that country¹⁴. This reorganization includes a number of elements, ranging from the introduction of a transfer union in the Eurozone

2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/iran-europe-relationship-nuclear-weapons-protests/> [27.12.2019].

¹⁴ V. Schmidt, *Varieties of Capitalism: a distinctly French model?* [in:] R. Elgie, E. Grossman, A.G. Mazur (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of French Politics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2016, pp. 606-635, V. Schmidt, *French capitalism transformed, yet still a third variety of capitalism*, *Economy and Society*, 2003, 32:4, pp. 526-554; B. Clift, C. Woll, *Economic patriotism: reinventing control over open markets*, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2012, vol. 19(3), pp. 307-323.

to the harmonization of taxes and social standards in the EU. Among other things, French politicians intend to introduce a minimum wage and a minimum basic income at EU level¹⁵. In this way, they intend to improve the competitiveness of French undertakings in the internal market and, at the same time, to make enterprises from less regulated countries or countries with lower production costs less competitive.

In his famous speech at the University of Sorbonne in 2017, Macron presented the main objectives for the reform of the Eurozone¹⁶. He supported the idea of a budget and a finance minister for the Eurozone, to increase structural investment and boost economic growth. He concluded that the budget of the Eurozone should come primarily from European taxes (and, as a result, be independent of the influence of the largest potential payer – Germany). What is more, French experts also add to that the need to set up common Eurozone bonds (the so-called safe haven assets), which could provide security for the growing public debt in the monetary union and increase public investment¹⁷. All these proposals aim at creating a transfer union and potentially increase chances of public debt – which would be beneficial for France and its southern European allies. However, it would be risky for German and Dutch politicians demanding greater fiscal discipline and stabilization of the banking sector in the monetary union.

¹⁵ V. Mallet, *French Europe minister backs integration drive*, Financial Times, 1 August 2019, p. 2.

¹⁶ *Initiative pour l'Europe – Discours d'Emmanuel Macron pour une Europe souveraine, unie, démocratique*, 26 September 2017, Paris, <http://www.elysee.fr/declarations/article/initiative-pour-l-europe-discours-d-emmanuel-macron-pour-une-europe-souveraine-unie-democratique/> [30.09.2017].

¹⁷ J. Pisani-Ferry, *The EU should take a bigger role in the provision of public goods*, Financial Times, 4 December 2019, p. 13.

French politicians also want to promote European champions, primarily understood as French-capital companies. It is worth recalling that the new position of the “super-commissioner” (who will be responsible for the internal market, industrial policy, defense, space, and digital technologies) will be held by a trusted colleague of the French President – Thierry Breton. It is the same person to whom Macron, who then worked as a Rothschild's banker, was advising in 2010 on the acquisition of a part of a German company, Siemens, by Breton-led company Atos. It is also said that later Macron was the instigator, and certainly the advocate of the merger of French Alstom and Siemens. Smaller countries such as the Benelux, the Nordic countries and Spain are opposed to his concept of ‘champions’ and the departure from the principles of competition policy.

Macron also aims to open up the single market to a higher extent to products, services, and investments of European champions, while at the same time limiting access to this market to external competitors. This applies, among others, to Internet and arms industry corporations – mainly American ones. The aim of French politicians is, therefore, to restrict access to the internal market for major external competitors, both in terms of public procurement in the EU or other opportunities to sell products, but also to make investments in the EU, for instance by acquiring European companies. In the latter case, it mainly concerns the Chinese competitors¹⁸.

IDEOLOGIZED CLIMATE

President Macron's industrial policy is directly linked to his ambitious climate policy – which, at the same time, is the flagship objective of the new European

¹⁸ J. Espinoza, S. Fleming, *Vestager eyes curbs on state-backed companies outside bloc*, Financial Times, 17 December 2019, p. 3.

Commission led by Ursula von der Leyen – which announced the introduction of the European Green Deal. The goal of French politicians is to make an actual industrial revolution based on a radical shift to low or even zero-carbon technologies. This approach can translate into a huge scale of investments in the EU by stimulating economic growth, and benefiting, above all, countries and companies with proper green technologies. The reason is that they have the potential to contribute to earning a lot of money by selling them both within and outside the EU. Besides, the idea is for the EU to put pressure on non-EU countries to apply climate standards similar to those of the internal market, for instance, through the imposition of punitive tariffs or applicable provisions in trade agreements with external partners.

However, the effectiveness of these intentions may turn out to be disappointing. This is primarily because the EU's largest trading partners, such as China and the US, which are also the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, can effectively avoid political pressure from the EU. If punitive duties are imposed, they can strike back imposing retaliatory tariffs on other services or goods – which will certainly hit European exports¹⁹. In this way, an ambitious climate transformation in the EU could worsen the competitiveness of production in many sectors of the EU economy, to the detriment of rivals, particularly the US and China. The EU's climate policy also causes strong tensions in Europe, as it generates disproportionate costs – for instance in Central Europe, especially in Poland, where coal and natural gas are the primary sources of generating electricity. For this reason, the Polish authorities have asked their EU partners to provide more financial assistance or to exclude

the achievement of climate policy goals from the ambitious agenda. However, the French President is opposed to this and expects all countries to adhere to costly climate objectives²⁰. He intends to outvote possible opponents as part of decision-making procedures in intergovernmental institutions.

For these reasons, the objectives of the French policy create tensions between EU countries and may also turn out to be disappointing in terms of stimulating growth in the European economy. Nevertheless, President Macron strongly supports this direction of change in Europe. It seems that the explanation for his determination is primarily politics. Many voters in Western Europe have increasingly strong views willing to counteract climate change. It is, therefore, an electoral theme that could possibly stop Eurosceptic tendencies in this part of the EU and, therefore, restore them to pro-European ideas. This is what the left-wing groups, in particular, are counting on, as they have made support for ecology and climate one of the most important campaign slogans. All these calculations can only be made if climate change does not lead to too strong an increase in energy prices and if it does not reduce the competitiveness of the European economy. Otherwise, in the eyes of Europeans, it will be proof of yet another fiasco of EU policy.

CONCENTRATION OF POWER

France has for years sought to concentrate power in the center of the European Communities (later in the EU), preferably in the Eurozone. This has been promoted under either “a two-speed Europe” or “a concentric circles Europe” slogan. The main idea behind all this is to ensure

¹⁹ A. Beattie, *Protect the planet or EU business?* Financial Times, 12 December 2019, p. 7.

²⁰ *Macron grozi Polsce! Chodzi o „neutralność klimatyczną”, W Polityce.pl*, 13 December 2019, <https://wpolityce.pl/swiat/477593-macron-grozi-polsce-chodzi-o-neutralnosc-klimatyczna> [27.12.2019].

that France has more influence on the EU. However, an important effect of this strategy is increasing the asymmetry in European policies, that is strengthening the role of the western part of the EU and weakening its eastern part. One example of the practical implementation of this vision are nominations for top positions in the European institutions in 2019, where there was no room for representatives of Central Europe. Another example is the nomination of committee chairs in the European Parliament after the 2019 elections. Of the twenty-two committees, only in two of them chairs from Central Europe were appointed. Meanwhile, the Germans filled five, and the French four positions.

The influence of Paris on EU policies is also increased through two other mechanisms. French experts encourage widening the scope of majority voting in intergovernmental institutions, which they believe could improve the governance of the EU²¹. This way of proceeding significantly increases the influence of the largest Member States on EU policies. Another idea is introducing new solutions only by the countries approving of it. This was the case with the French idea of the European Intervention Initiative. It was established outside EU structures although, at the same time, another cooperation of some countries in the same area of defense policy, Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), was established as part of the EU. Nevertheless, France wanted to launch more ambitious ideas for military cooperation (paving the way for a European army) than those envisaged by PESCO. Moreover, Paris has been taking a leading role in the European Intervention Initiative from the outset and can thus have more influence on its direction and use. This initiative is regarded as yet another idea of weakening NATO and the American

military presence in Europe²². However, it may also lead to a weakening of the EU's defense policy, as it builds cooperation structures outside the EU, including with the UK, a country that has just left the EU.

This example shows that not all forms of cooperation between the selected group of countries in Europe can strengthen European integration, especially when they are created – even if only temporarily – outside EU structures. Such actions most often cause divisions between the Member States, which, if they concern strategic issues, may prove to be considerably more enduring, or even permanent. While they may meet the ambitions of leaders in this form of cooperation, they may not necessarily strengthen European integration and the EU's cohesion in the face of major international challenges.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of Macron's diplomatic offensive since 2017 has been to fundamentally converse integration processes. This change is being forced by his unconventional methods of operation. It is intended to change the strategic architecture in Europe, introduce a new economic system in the internal market, and deepen the asymmetry of governance in the EU. Under the banner of creating "*European sovereignty*", Paris is pushing for solutions in line with its own interests. However, there are many doubts as to whether the French proposals are beneficial for the whole of Europe, and even whether they are advantageous for the European integration itself. What is certain is that they cause controversy and dispute in a crisis-weary EU.

Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse ■
March, 2020

²¹ J. Pisani-Ferry, op. cit.; V. Mallet, op. cit.

²² J. Dempsey, *Macron's Call for European Boots*, 13 November 2018, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/77703> [27.12.2019].

THE NEW RULES OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN GAME

PIOTR BAJDA, PROFESSOR

Besides the threat of a coronavirus pandemic, it is hard not to get the impression that Central Europe is becoming an increasingly important region in the power struggle of the world's most influential countries.

It is not surprising that the U.S., Russia, and China are trying to use every opportunity to strengthen their position in various countries of the region.

However, what may come as a surprise to certain observers is the relative inaction of the biggest European actors in this struggle. It is clear that Paris and Berlin are focusing first and foremost on managing issues in the European Union, especially the ones connected with negotiations concerning the E.U.'s new multiannual financial framework. Furthermore, both German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron have to deal with internal crises in their respective countries. The result of the increasingly worsening poll results of the governing

parties in Germany, the problems with CDU's leadership, and the constant wave of anti-government protests in France is that neither Berlin nor Paris are as interested in Central Europe as they used to be.

In this situation, the activity of other countries interested in the region is not surprising – as this is probably how recent events should be interpreted. The most important signal was the declaration of U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who, in mid-February this year, declared his readiness to allocate one billion dollars to energy projects implemented in the countries of the Three Seas Initiative. A similar statement was given by U.S. Secretary of Energy Dan Brouillette, who confirmed at the annual Munich conference that the U.S. is ready to block the Nord Stream 2 project with effective sanctions. These two voices demonstrate Washington's determination to join the Central European market. Washington has correctly noticed that there is a strong



**THE SUMMIT OF THREE SEAS INITIATIVE COUNTRIES
IN WARSAW, POLAND, JULY 6, 2017**

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determination of decision-makers from many Central European countries to free themselves from the dependence of energy supply from just one source – Russia. The fight against the Russian monopoly has been included in the energy strategies of not only Poland but also the Baltic States and Romania.

THREE SEAS INITIATIVE 2.0

All this creates a pleasant business environment that gives new dynamics to projects, especially energy-related, planned to be implemented under the Three Seas Initiative. It should be emphasized that building infrastructure connections in the North-South corridor and energy cooperation are examples of the pillars of this agreement. The first summits of the Three Seas Initiative took place in Dubrovnik in 2016, in Warsaw in 2017,

in Bucharest in 2018, and Ljubljana in 2019. Their character was, above all, political, and they provided Central European heads of states with the opportunity to meet each other. Now, following these summits, it is necessary to move on to the implementation part of the project to make sure it is successfully executed. The launch of the first funds and the initiation of even several projects will demonstrate the growing importance of the Three Seas Initiative. This should be a clear signal, especially for hesitant countries, that the initiative is not limited to meetings of presidents. On the other hand, what is dangerous is that without specific infrastructure projects, the whole idea of the new form of regional cooperation could turn into annual meetings of politicians without much influence on the decision-making

processes – and this may result in its failure. There is no guarantee that each of the regional cooperation projects will be a success – the best example of this is the history of the Central European Initiative. This project was launched in late 1989 with the intention to make it the main structure of Central Europe's organization. Today, hardly anyone can remember what its goals were, or where its official headquarters were located.

The Central European Initiative is a good example of how difficult it is for such ideas to move from the theoretical to the practical level, and that the very creation of the secretariat, the establishment of a formal institutional framework, and even a fixed budget do not yet guarantee success. The Three Seas Initiative is closer to the organizational format of the Visegrád Group, which – although established in 1991 – is still not a formalized international organization, but an institutionalized regional agreement. However, the Visegrád Group is today the most recognizable regional organization in Central Europe. The informal nature of this cooperation has one serious difficulty – it must continuously prove its usefulness, constantly mobilizing its members to be active and cooperate. This is definitely easier with a small coalition of stakeholders – such as the four Visegrád countries – but it is much more difficult with twelve countries – sometimes as far apart as Estonia and Slovenia.

THE U.S. IN, CHINA OUT

The U.S. already gave its support for the project before, when President Donald Trump came to Warsaw in 2017 for the Three Seas Initiative meeting. After the first conference in Dubrovnik, at which the presidents or their representatives launched the informal initiative of twelve countries, not all invited countries shared the same enthusiasm for the new proposal for regional cooperation. After this inaugural summit, numerous

What is dangerous is that without specific infrastructure projects, the whole idea of the new form of regional cooperation could turn into annual meetings of politicians without much influence on the decision-making processes.

voices were heard from experts who pointed out that the Three Seas Initiative project was imprecise and understated, especially in comparison with the well-functioning Visegrád Group. It was the visit of the President of the United States to Poland in the summer of 2017 and his unequivocal support for the new Central European cooperation project that determined the stability of the initiative. Exclusively for the President of the United States, the meeting place for Central European leaders was changed from Wrocław to Warsaw. Only the Business Forum was organized in the capital of Poland's Lower Silesia – initially intended to host the most important event. In this context, the abovementioned Pompeo's declaration could be seen as a signal of a need to reverse retreatment from the Three Seas Initiative. In a situation where only half of the countries participating in the project declared their interest in joining the financial mechanism of the Three Seas Initiative Fund established in 2018, and only four of them formally implemented it (Poland, Romania,



THE MEETING OF V4 PRIME MINISTERS, PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC, MARCH 4, 2020

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the Czech Republic, Latvia), such a strong signal of support from the USA, the informal patron of the entire initiative, was more than welcome. Of course, this does not mean that American financial involvement is charitable. Firstly, Pompeo's offer concerns only investments in the energy sector, not in infrastructure projects (especially roads and railways) and digitalization plans (which are essential for the process of catching up the innovative distance to Western Europe). However, this does not change the fact that the possible transfer of American funds to energy projects will allow local capital to be transferred to other areas.

Another element that could increase the importance of Central Europe is the joint-stock exchange CCE+ index launched

in September 2019 by the Visegrád Group countries and the stock exchanges of Croatia, Romania, and Slovenia. Predominantly, it is an excellent form of promotion of the best companies in the region, the shares of which are offered to investors, and additionally, it strengthens their position on the market against the largest international giants. The intention behind the Three Seas Fund and the common stock exchange is to make them solve the region's most significant problem – the lack of investment capital needed to launch infrastructure projects, both included in the list of joint actions of the Three Seas Initiative, and those of strategic importance for individual countries of the region. This does not mean, however, that such activities aim to build an alternative to the European Union – they are instead supposed to be

complementary to it. Being aware of the financial consequences associated with the exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union, it is evident that the future E.U. budget will be smaller than the previous one. In addition, the shift of emphasis to the E.U.'s climate or migration policy, and now the anti-crisis policy in response to the uncontrolled pandemic, means that strategic infrastructure projects in Central Europe may lack funds from cohesion funds or other projects. Individual Central European countries have made great efforts to catch up with the founding E.U. members after joining the European Union – following difficult times they went through as part of the Eastern Bloc. This process is still unfinished, and if it stops, it may delay the alignment not only of living standards but above all of the development opportunities in respective E.U. countries. Without a substantial modernization “boom,” some sort of new Marshall Plan for the region, necessary to develop its infrastructure, communication, or digital standards, Central Europe's economy may remain

The intention behind the Three Seas Fund and the common stock exchange is to make them solve the region's most significant problem – the lack of investment capital.

peripheral and support more modern industrial centers in the West.

The greatest threat to these plans at the moment is the coronavirus pandemic. Today (the text was written in March 2020), it is not known what the global consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic will be. On the one hand, the current situation has strongly damaged China's



GAS COMPRESSOR STATION IN DENMARK



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PIOTR NAIMSKI, GOVERNMENT PLENIPOTENTIARY FOR STRATEGIC ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE DURING THE BALTIC PIPE SIGNATURE CEREMONY IN WARSAW, POLAND, AUGUST 14, 2019.

image as a modern and attractive business and political partner. If more information about ignoring the threat, hiding the actual scale of the pandemic, or lack of cooperation in providing information to European partners spread to the public, people's belief in the positive impact of cooperation with Chinese partners will be undermined. From the perspective of the authorities of particular countries, it will be hazardous in the new situation to postulate the deepening of cooperation with China, especially in ICT or investing in critical infrastructure. On the other hand, the impact of coronavirus on the economy is currently unpredictable. It may turn out that instead of international cooperation, it will cause isolationism, which will freeze various forms of cooperation in the existing formats. The unpredictability of the situation is also the greatest fear that paralyzes potential investors needed by Central Europe to implement all

the intended plans and to guarantee its development. It is difficult to predict today how the whole European Union, and especially its institutions such as the European Parliament and the European Commission – already criticized for dealing with irrelevant issues and lack of appropriate reaction in their areas of competence – will deal with the crisis. The coronavirus pandemic will change the whole world, including the European Union and the Central European region. It will be crucial for the Three Seas Initiative to maintain its willingness to continue cooperation in the present format and to obtain real support from its external partners – first and foremost, from American investors wanting to strengthen their position on the energy resources market in this part of Europe.

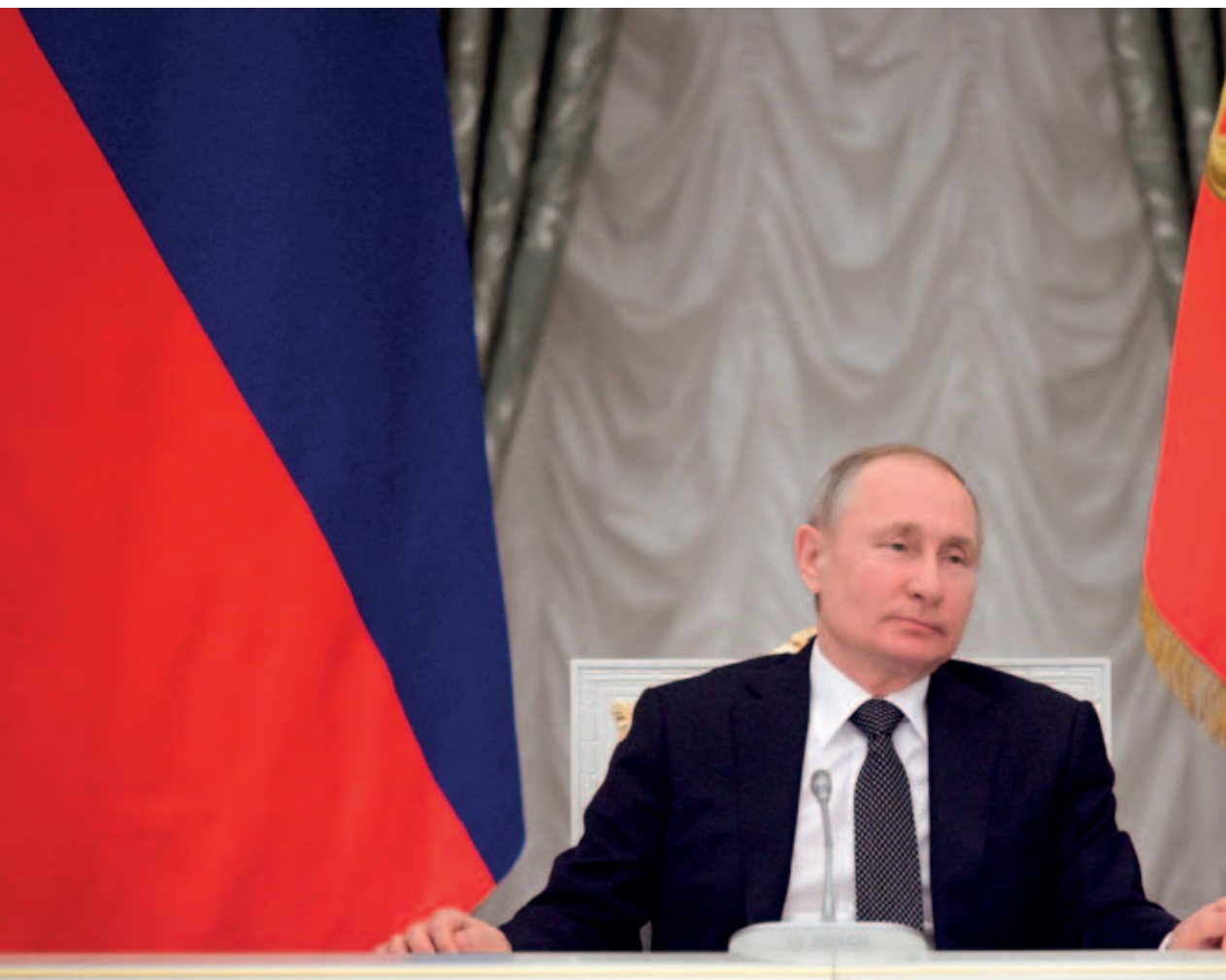
Piotr Bajda ■
March 2020

“Who controls the past controls the future.”
George Orwell, 1984

AN ALTERNATIVE HISTORY CREATED BY THE KREMLIN

PAWEŁ PAWŁOWSKI

History is one of the areas in which Moscow is applying its ‘active measures’ to undermine the unity of NATO and the EU, as well as to weaken the countries which are clearly opposing Russia's aggressive policy in Central and Eastern Europe. This time, thanks to the effective actions of the Polish government, the narrative proposed by the Kremlin has not gained the approval of the international community. However, it is necessary to develop mechanisms that will allow for a more effective response to similar attempts to rewrite history.



RUSSIA'S PRESIDENT, VLADIMIR PUTIN

PUTIN'S DELIBERATE LIES

Although almost 75 years have passed since the end of World War II, this subject still cannot be definitively closed. On the one hand, Poland still bears the consequences of the overwhelming losses suffered during the war itself and under the rule of the communists sent from Moscow after the war. On the other hand, however, Poland is painfully affected by accusations against it coming from various directions. Unjust accusations against Poland for its alleged involvement in the Shoah could be heard from prominent Israeli politicians and public figures. Recently, these individual voices have been joined by a slanderous choir conducted by the Kremlin, which

absurdly and openly blamed Poland for the start of World War II – the bloodiest conflict in history.

Just before Christmas, on December 23, 2019, Vladimir Putin, in his speech during a meeting with officials in Russia's Ministry of Defense unexpectedly attacked Józef Lipski, Poland's pre-war Ambassador to the Third Reich. He accused the diplomat of parleying with Hitler to solve the Jewish question and called him "*a bastard and an anti-Semitic pig*". To support his opinion, President Putin presented an allegedly secret note from 1938, which can be found in the Russian archives among many documents pillaged from the entire former Soviet



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sphere of influence. The verbal attack on Ambassador Lipski blatantly omitted facts and was deprived of the context of his actions. As indicated in the announcement of the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland with the Chief Rabbi of Poland, Vladimir Putin indulged in exceptionally scandalous manipulation. Józef Lipski was trying to implement Poland's policy of supporting the emigration of the 10% Jewish minority, also in agreement with the Zionist movement, which received secret military support from the Polish government. The same Ambassador Lipski was actively involved in supporting thousands of Polish Jews, who were expelled by the Third Reich in 1938. Accusing him of anti-

The same Ambassador Lipski was actively involved in supporting thousands of Polish Jews, who were expelled by the Third Reich in 1938. Accusing him of anti-Semitism based on a sentence taken out of context is an example of particularly vile manipulation.

Semitism based on a sentence taken out of context is an example of particularly vile manipulation.

However, this was not the first time that the Russian President said such things. A few days earlier, he accused Poland of the partition of Czechoslovakia and justified the entry of the Red Army into the Second Polish Republic in September 1939. This allegation was the first of a whole series of statements made by Russian politicians and public figures, in which attempts were made to unjustly attribute to Poland the co-responsibility for the outbreak of World War II and cooperation with Hitler. These deliberations even went egregiously further – an example of which was even that Yevgeny Satanovsky, one of the most famous political scientists in Russia, praised Stalin's decision to murder 22 thousand Polish officers who were in Soviet captivity after the Soviet invasion of Poland in 1939.

The statement of the Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki was imperative, in which he referred in strong words to the “deliberate lies” of the Russian President.

The Russian disinformation offensive in the domain of politics of history was confronted with a strong and effective response from the Polish government. Apart from the official announcements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the statement of the Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki was imperative, in which he referred in strong words to the “deliberate lies” of the Russian President. The words of the Polish Prime Minister received much attention around the world, reaching billions of recipients. Such institutions as the European Parliament and the European Commission have condemned Russia’s attempts to rewrite history. The US Ambassador to Poland, HE Georgette Mosbacher, also published a widely commented entry in which she reminded that the real initiators of World War II were Hitler and Stalin.

Contrary to what was feared, Vladimir Putin did not continue his accusations during the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau, German Nazi concentration camp, which was organized at the Yad Vashem Institute by Viatcheslav Moshe Kantor, known for his close relations with the Russian President. Poland observed the event with great concern. The fact that the Polish President

Andrzej Duda was not allowed to speak at the ceremony, and, as a result, refused to take part in it, was widely commented on. Finally, no new accusations against Poland were made during the event. It does not mean, however, that Poland can feel relieved now and consider this problem as solved.

THE INCONVENIENT TRUTH ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE USSR IN WORLD WAR II

The myth of the ‘*Great Patriotic War*’ plays an enormous role in contemporary Russia. Among the disasters, ubiquitous economic and structural problems, the history of the victory over Hitler is a crucial factor in uniting the Russians around a shared legacy paid for with the blood of millions. Myth is useful primarily at a national level, but it is also a useful tool in foreign policy. The memory of the joint victory over the Third Reich may give the Western leaders the false impression that cooperation with Russia is possible and can actually be beneficial.

However, the truth about the role of the USSR in World War II is not as glorious as the Kremlin’s ruler would have liked. The Hitler-Stalin Pact, signed by Ribbentrop and Molotov, was the leading cause of the outbreak of the most significant conflict in human history, which claimed the lives of as many as 27 million citizens in the USSR alone. The aggression against Poland, the occupation of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Bessarabia, as well as the Winter War in Finland ultimately mirror the Third Reich’s activities in Norway, Denmark, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, the Balkans, and the Atlantic. The consensual cooperation of the two totalitarian regimes contrasts drastically with the current narrative in Russia.

The truth about the Red Army’s soldiers’ attitude towards the “homeland of the proletariat” does not fit into the Kremlin’s history either. The Soviet Union



MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE MARIUSZ BŁASZCZAK DURING THE OPENING OF THE NATO EXPERT CONFERENCE ON STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION, WARSAW, POLAND, SEPTEMBER 25, 2019

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was such a dreadful place that its citizens could hardly believe that a worse fate was possible. They were wrong because the Germans did everything to outbid Stalin and his companions. However, before this became clear, by December 1941, 2.5 million Soviet prisoners of war were taken prisoner in Germany. Some of them even willingly gave away their weapons because they did not intend to defend “communist paradise.” Numerous cases of building welcome gates and celebrating by civilians of Wehrmacht units entering the USSR were observed. These are also the stories that today’s Kremlin is trying to hide because they do not fit the stories of the war of men and united resistance against the invader.

A similarly authentic image of the “liberation” of Central Europe by the Red

Numerous cases of building welcome gates and celebrating by civilians of Wehrmacht units entering the USSR were observed.

Army is at odds with the heroic vision, still very much alive in the consciousness of contemporary Russians. The rapes, murders, and pillaging, which marked the route of the Red march, made a daunting impression on all the “liberated” nations. It was only a prelude to almost half a century of slavery and terror, which



**PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR WIACZESŁAW MOŁOTOW (ON THE RIGHT)
AND REICH MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP
(IN THE CENTER), 1940**

© NAC

The contrast between the myth of the Red Army's heroic victory over fascist Germany and the real causes and course of World War II is a problem for Russia, especially in the year of the 75th anniversary of this conflict.

claimed hundreds of thousands of victims. The fact that the NKVD and the auxiliary formations kept their victims in the same

execution sites where the Gestapo did before them, best illustrates the nature of this "liberation".

The contrast between the myth of the Red Army's heroic victory over fascist Germany and the real causes and course of World War II is a problem for Russia, especially in the year of the 75th anniversary of this conflict. The Kremlin wants to take advantage of this opportunity to integrate society as far as its own goals are concerned and improve declining moods. Russia's worsening economic situation only reinforces this need. The traditional victory parade in Red Square is an opportunity for President Putin to present himself as one of the world's key political leaders. This is a vital context for the propaganda attack on Poland, which was undoubtedly also meant to prepare the ground and neutralize in advance of a narrative in

opposition to the Russian one. Fortunately, the result of the Kremlin's actions has so far been the opposite, and the reaction of the international community was unequivocal.

MOSCOW'S REAL INTENTIONS

There is, however, another side to the Russian offensive of historical propaganda, pointed out by Professor Sławomir Cenckiewicz and Dr Bolesław Piasecki¹ – it is an example of the use of active measures to violate the foundations of Polish security. The disinformation campaign carrying an exceptionally strong emotional charge for the Polish society is aimed at undermining the international position and internal stability of Poland. The intention of engaging Poland in yet another big conflict is to create the impression of a rogue state obsessed with Russia in the historical and contemporary context. The issues of internal conflicts in Poland cannot be overlooked either. The Russian provocations are another opportunity to build new disputes and mutual accusations of intelligence connections with Moscow. The last attack was also an excellent opportunity to test the reaction mechanisms in a special holiday period. After all, tests are a permanent element of the activities of the secret services of each state.

Poland was a carefully selected target. It is a country openly opposing the aggressive policy of Russia in the region and loudly speaking about the real role of the USSR in World War II. The Three Seas Initiative, energy diversification, tightening of cooperation with the US in the region, and dynamic arrangements to strengthen the eastern flank of NATO – these are actions that do not incite particular enthusiasm in Moscow, where precisely the opposite direction is desirable. At the

same time, Poland is being treated with a visible distance by many Western leaders, especially within the EU. For this reason, Warsaw seems to be a convenient target for attack, as it can count on a weaker reaction from its allies. In this case, however, the Kremlin's forecasts turned out to be wrong – the response was decisive and involved not only the leaders of the states but also the EU institutions. Nevertheless, this was another opportunity for Russia to undermine unity and create divisions within structures, which has been the goal of its secret services since Lenin.

To sum up, history plays a unique role in the contemporary position of Poland. Although Moscow's last offensive was not successful, we should be aware that Russia will make similar attempts in the future, likely to be accordingly adjusted from its deductions of this most recent undertaking. Therefore, Poland should work on being more prepared in the future. Reliable, honest, and non-ideologized historical research is of crucial importance here because it provides unquestionable arguments. Russia has worryingly mastered the techniques of information warfare and is a demanding adversary, and its lies may concern issues that until now seemed unmistakable and unquestionable to us. The presented example, however, shows that Poland is not defenseless and can effectively respond to hostile disinformation. The firm reaction of the Polish government and its activity in the major media around the world reminded the public who was responsible for the hecatomb of World War II. What particularly deserves attention is the unified reaction of the allied states within NATO and the EU, which have clearly supported Poland. As such, what will be the next goal of Russia's information warfare?

¹ S. Cenckiewicz, B. Piasecki, *Rosja chce chaosu. Tylko prawda historyczna nas przed nią obroni*, Plus Minus, January 17, 2020.

RUSSIA-CHINA: A LIMITED LIABILITY MILITARY ALLIANCE

GRZEGORZ KUCZYŃSKI

Over the last few decades, Moscow and Beijing have strengthened their military relationship. This partnership, however, should not be described as a traditional alliance. China particularly avoids this kind of wording. After all, this cooperation is based not on collective visions, but rather on shared fears. It is hard to resist the impression that the only factor bringing the two countries closer is their common enemy.

What brings Russia and China together is mainly their rivalry with the United States. There is, however, a significant difference between the two in their perspective in this race. Russia is competing at political and military levels and China – primarily in economics and trade. This difference becomes, in the

long run, a factor influencing Beijing's cooperation with Moscow.

Of the two countries, Moscow is more interested in tightening their cooperation or even building a Sino-Russian alliance. A weakening Russia sees its partnership with Beijing as a solution against



RUSSIA'S PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN WITH CHINA'S PRESIDENT XI JINPING DURING A WELCOME CEREMONY OUTSIDE THE GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE IN BEIJING, CHINA, JUNE 8, 2018.

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**SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (SCO)
SUMMIT IN QINGDAO CITY, CHINA, JUNE 10, 2018**

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Washington's global domination. Russia began to speak out about forming a partnership with Beijing shortly after it became clear that the reset policy towards the United States was coming to an end.

Over the last three decades, Russia and China have significantly developed their military cooperation (arms sales, joint military exercises, among others). The advanced weapons provided by Moscow have allowed China to strengthen its air defense and anti-ship defense. In particular, they have enhanced China's capability to defend against the threat of foreign naval and air forces near its territory. Participation in joint exercises allows China to learn from Russian combat experiences gained in Ukraine or Syria.

Shortly before his death in 2017, Zbigniew Brzezinski, a Polish-American diplomat who served as a counselor to U.S. President Johnson and President Jimmy Carter's National Security Advisor, said that "analyzing threats to American interest, the most dangerous scenario would be a grand coalition of China and Russia, united not by ideology, but by complementary grievances."¹ Beijing's cooperation with Moscow has not yet reached that level. The armed forces of Russia and China are cooperating more and more intensively, but any integration of their military potentials is still out of the question. The Sino-Russian agreements in this area are, therefore, still far from

¹ John S. Van Oudenaren, *America's Nightmare: The Sino-Russian Entente*, *The National Interest*, 12.01.2019

the alliance treaties that the U.S. has with many countries in the world, including the ones in Asia, not to mention such an advanced military alliance as NATO.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Nevertheless, today's cooperation between the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China is the most intense since the two countries signed their Treaty of Friendship in 2001. Although Putin's regime has never treated China as its enemy, Moscow's long-lasting priority originating in the Yeltsin era was its cooperation with the West. The situation changed when Putin transformed its policy towards the West and made it confrontational, and when the United States became aware of the perilously growing potential of China – already far beyond exclusively economic issues. Although Putin made a turn towards Asia at the beginning of his third term of office, Russia has been actively promoting a “privileged strategic partnership” with China since 2014. However, the actual cooperation gained momentum after the two countries concluded a significant gas deal ('Power of Siberia' pipeline project). Moreover, Russia's relationship with the West deteriorated after its aggression in Ukraine. China became Moscow's top priority, and the former started to form its Eurasian strategy – with Russia being its crucial element. In addition to access to cheap energy supplies, close ties China's western, weaker neighbor, offer Beijing an opportunity to develop its investments and political influence in the region, and, above all, to strengthen its position against the U.S.².

Already in November 2014, Russia openly suggested to Beijing to form a military alliance (with Russia's Defense Minister

Sergei Shoigu and his deputy Anatoly Antonov speaking of the joint fight against terrorism and 'color revolutions'). For a considerably long time, however, this idea did not hit the fertile ground in Beijing. China began to open up more to military cooperation with Russia only after the relationship of the former with the U.S. began to worsen after Donald Trump came to power. This also fits in with the increasingly forceful, global and expansive foreign policy pursued by China's President Xi Jinping. For many years, this country's military cooperation with Russia has boiled down to purchases of Russian armaments and, more recently, increasingly intensive joint military exercises symbolized by the participation of a large Chinese contingent in the strategic Russian military training activities – *Vostok-2018*.

In 2019, the cooperation between the two countries reached the next stage. At the end of July, the Russian A-50 airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) aircraft flew twice into South Korean airspace over Dokdo islands controlled by South Korea and additionally claimed by Japan. Seoul and Tokyo sent fighters against the intruders. South Korean pilots fired hundreds of warning shots at the Russian A-50. The most important thing in this incident was, however, something else – this reconnaissance aircraft accompanied the Chinese and Russian bombers. The next day, after the first-ever joint Sino-Russian airborne patrol, China's Ministry of Defense published a document entitled “China's National Defense in the New Era.” It reminds of China's principle of not entering into military alliances with any country in the world, but also praises the development of military cooperation with Russia, which “enriches the strategic partnership between China and Russia in the new era by playing a significant role in maintaining global strategic stability.”

² Warsaw Institute Special Report, *Chinese-Russian Unequal Partnership*, Warsaw Institute, 27.06.2019

ON THE PROVING GROUNDS

The greatest Sino-Russian rapprochement is visible in their joint military exercises – especially in their transition to joint strategic command and staff exercises and their readiness to use the armed forces together in military demonstrations in different regions of the world. Initially, the two countries took part in joint military exercises not on a bilateral basis, but on a larger scale. An example of such cooperation is the ‘Peace Mission,’ a project carried out by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) since 2005. As part of this initiative, these exercises aimed to improve cooperation in actions in Central Asia. The model of cooperation between Russia and China on water and land proving grounds began to change only in 2016 when exercises of the navy of the two countries were held near the Guangdong province. The scenario of the exercises consisted of, among others, landing, occupying, and defending the islands. It was the most massive naval operation of this kind in China and Russia so far. Less than a year later, in July 2017, the bilateral maritime exercise took place – for the first time in history – in the Baltic Sea.

As mentioned, a joint action of the two countries that was of crucial importance for the cooperation was *Vostok-2018*, Russia’s training activities, to which their Chinese partner was invited. The Chinese contingent amounted to 3.5 thousand troops, plus armored vehicles, tanks, artillery, helicopters, and planes. Later on, China began to regularly take part in Russian exercises and war games, for example, in 2019 in *Clear Sky 2019*, *Aviadarts 2019*, or *Tank Biathlon 2019*. As part of another war game, *Army 2019*, the parties swapped their subdivisions – the Russian exercised in a Chinese proving ground, and the Chinese took part in various exercises in Russia³.

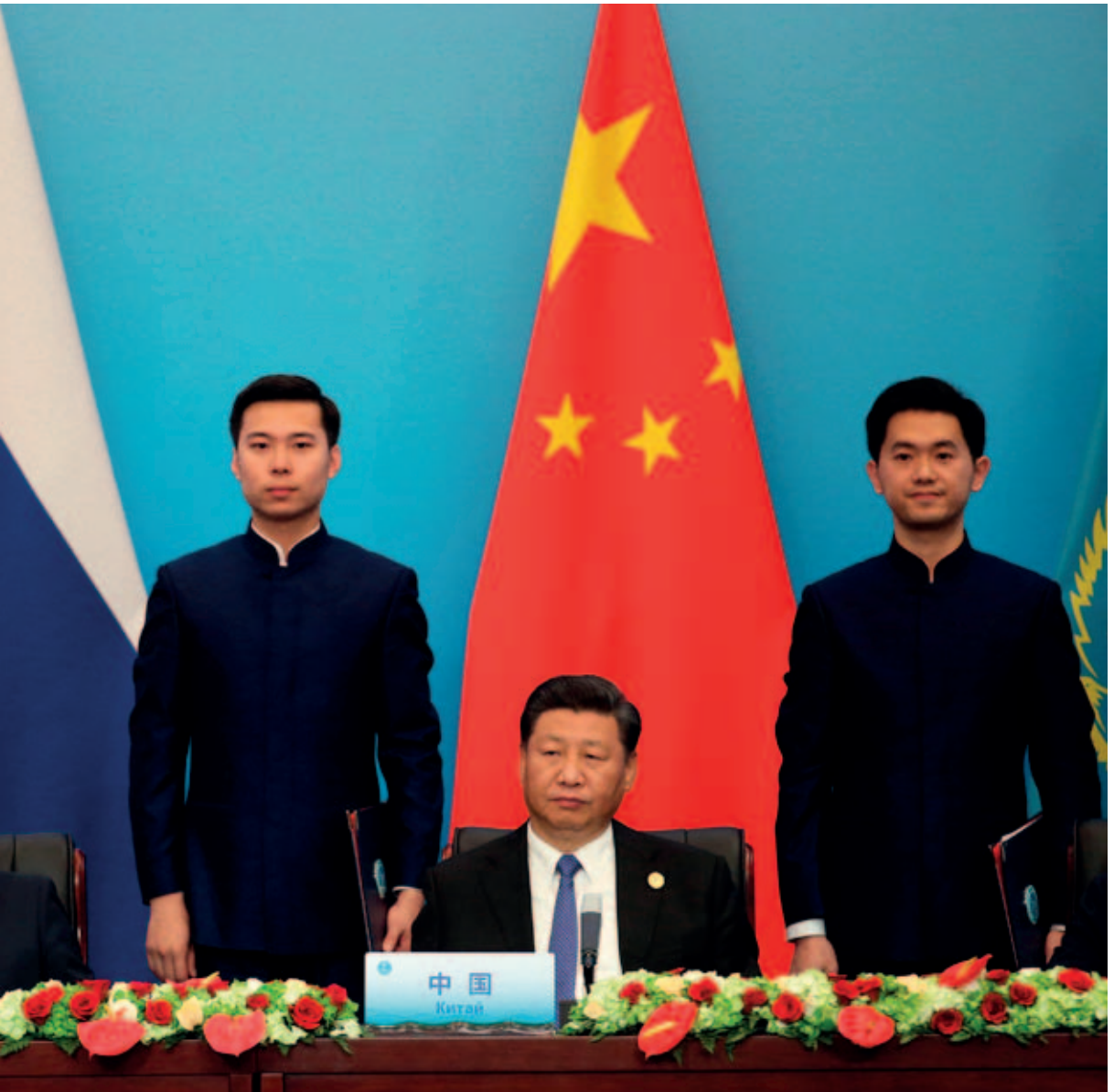
³ Marcin Gawęda, *Rosyjsko-chińskie wojskowe „braterstwo”*, *Defence* 24, 14.09.2019



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In the autumn of 2019, Russia once again invited China to take part in its annual strategic exercise, which summarizes and tests the armed forces’ preparedness after the entire exercise season.

The agenda of *Tsentr 2019* envisaged, among other things, large-scale offensive operations with air units and using Russian experience in Syria and Ukraine (rapid deployment of strike forces to occupy the territory before the opponent



SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (SCO) SUMMIT IN QINGDAO CITY, CHINA, JUNE 10, 2018

moves its reserves to this location). When practicing this type of operation, Russia had NATO in mind, while China was interested in the campaign against Taiwan – occupying the island in a massive landing operation before the U.S. comes to help. About 3,200 soldiers from China and over 20 Chinese aircraft took part in the training exercise with the use of heavy *H-6k* bombers capable of carrying atomic weapons. Sergey Shoygu and his Chinese counterpart, General Wei Fenghe, declared

Tsentr 2019 a great success, demonstrating high levels of Sino-Russian cooperation and exchanged military experience⁴.

During the past several years, both sides have engaged in many bilateral and multilateral exercises. Some of them were attended by Central Asian within the SCO, others, for example, by Iran – during

⁴ Pavel Felgenhauer, *Russia Completes Massive Tsentr 2019 War Games With Enhanced Chinese Participation*, Jamestown Foundation, 26.09.2019

A classic full-fledged alliance between China and Russia is currently impossible because it would be based solely on their rivalry with the U.S. – perceived differently in Moscow and Beijing.

a trilateral naval exercise in the Indian Ocean. The number and scale of exercises are increasing every year. What is valuable for the Chinese army, which has not fought in decades, is Russian experience in Syria on how to deploy brigade-sized forces that combine air and ground elements with special operations forces. China is also learning from Russia's military experience, gaining knowledge on logistics of foreign operations and how to protect bases in foreign countries⁵. Joint military exercises are also intended to increase confidence between the two countries and inform about the other's military intentions. This was the case during the Vostok-2018 exercise, when the Russian Eastern Military District, responsible for military planning for possible war scenarios with China, for the first time conducted its sizeable military training exercise with the participation of the Chinese army. However, it has not established a basis for joint major military operations between Russia and China. Even the SCO format lacks the mechanisms of integrated command, control, and support indispensable to conduct a large joint war

operation. The military relations between Russia and China are still not as close as those between the U.S. and its allies.

DISAGREEMENTS

In an assessment published in January 2019, U.S. Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats said that "China and Russia are more aligned than at any point since the mid-1950s."⁶. Nevertheless, compared to the diplomatic and economic aspects, the military aspect of the Sino-Russian partnership is still relatively weak in that it makes it impossible for Moscow and Beijing to forge an alliance. Furthermore, the participation of Chinese armed forces in the Vostok-2018 (and even more so *Tsentr 2019*) military training activities should not be overestimated. While Russia deployed several hundred thousand troops and about a thousand aircraft, China sent 3200 soldiers and six aircraft.

A classic full-fledged alliance between China and Russia is currently impossible because it would be based solely on their rivalry with the U.S. – perceived differently in Moscow and Beijing. Besides, there are many differences between the two countries – among others, the rivalry in the Arctic and the North Pacific, the two regions that Russia seeks to guard against competitors (China has growing 'polar' ambitions) and selling Russian weapons to Beijing's biggest rival, India, and also to Vietnam.

Another field of silent competition between Russia and China is Central Asia, the fact of which can be observed within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Russia wants the SCO to remain purely military and limited to defense, while China would like to transform it into a more comprehensive

⁵ Richard Weitz, *The Expanding China-Russia Defense Partnership*, Hudson Institute, 13.05.2019

⁶ Warsaw Institute Special Report, *Chinese-Russian Unequal Partnership*, Warsaw Institute, 27.06.2019

body, a tool for developing economic influence in the post-Soviet area.

The end of the Russian-American INF treaty opens the way for the deployment of intermediate-range missiles near China also by its main continental neighbor. The missile arsenal of China has long been a factor taken into account by Russian strategists. The development of modernized and more precise Chinese intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) was one of the reasons why Russia began threatening to leave the INF as early as 2007.

Beijing does not endorse the annexation of Crimea by Russia and its factual annexation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while Moscow does not provide formal diplomatic support for Chinese claims in the South China Sea and the East China Sea. Both Moscow and Beijing want to avoid being drawn into conflicts with third countries by the other side.

Can we refer to Russia and China's relationship as to a military alliance? As some rumor says, in 1969, Soviet Chairman of the Council of Ministers Alexei Kosygin stopped over in the Beijing airport for talks with his Chinese counterpart, Zhou Enlai, when coming back from the funeral of Ho Chi Minh. When the host wanted to welcome the guest, Kosygin drew back, saying, "This is premature."⁷

AN ALLIANCE? NOT NECESSARILY

Only recently, Russia started using the word "ally" to refer to China. One of such first public uses was a comment of the Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov on the Chinese participation in the Russian strategic exercises Vostok-2018: "It is a sign of the expanded partnership between

Beijing, on the other hand, treats cooperation with Russia more as a tactical, temporary state intended to serve only its own interests.

the two sides in all spheres." In June 2019, the Russians described the agreements signed by Putin and Xi in Moscow as the opening of a 'new era,' also in the military cooperation of both countries. China did not publicly correct the statements made by the Russians; it probably made it clear 'behind the scenes' that it did not approve of such a message, which can be concluded from what Putin said a few days later. "We do not have any military alliance with China. We are strategic partners: we do not act against each other; we work for the benefit of ourselves and our partners, and we do not intend to swap or remove anything," Putin said at The St. Petersburg International Economic Forum⁸. A similar situation occurred in the second half of the year when on October 3, 2019, Putin said that Russia was working with China to build a joint radar missile defense system and mentioned the "allied relationship" with Beijing. Nevertheless, already in December, during his annual press conference, he assured that the said radar system is purely defensive, and Russia is not planning to form a military alliance with China, even though it is helping the PRC to build a missile warning system.

⁷ Leon Aron, *Are Russia and China Really Forming an Alliance?*, Foreign Affairs, 04.04.2019

⁸ RIA Novosti, *Путин заявил, что Россия и Китай не создают военных союзов*, RIA Novosti, 07.06.2019

China is careful when it comes to using the word “alliance” to describe its relationship with Russia. There is a difference between how Beijing sees its military cooperation with Russia and how Moscow does. The rapprochement of the two countries results from bad relations with the U.S. of both China and Russia, and it is, nevertheless, limited by concerns of both sides. Russia is not particularly keen to develop cooperation in certain areas where it has a clear technological advantage over China. Beijing, on the other hand, treats cooperation with Russia more as a tactical, temporary state intended to serve only its own interests. The statements made by Russia (with Putin at the forefront) mirror a new level of military partnership – a kind of “undeclared alliance.” Russia wants to develop military cooperation with China in specific areas: in the air and at sea – which is clearly directed against the U.S. At the same time, Moscow does not want to hurry with supporting China in modernizing its land forces – the element of military potential that could threaten Russia in the future⁹.

The June 2019 “Joint Statement on Developing a Comprehensive Partnership of Strategic Coordination for a New Era,” states that in developing of their bilateral relations, Russia and China “refuse to forge an alliance, to confront and to act against third countries.” It also mentions a “strategic alliance” that does not, however, contain one crucial element of every alliance: the firm commitment to provide military assistance if one of the allies becomes a target. Although it is worth adding that the still valid Article 9 of the 2001 Sino-Russian Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation states: “When a situation arises in which one of the contracting parties deems that peace is being threatened and undermined

or its security interests are involved, or when it is confronted with the threat of aggression, the contracting parties shall immediately hold contacts and consultations in order to eliminate such threats.”¹⁰.

A MISSILE RAPPROCHEMENT

The Sino-Russian defense partnership falls into several categories – arms sales, military exercises, meetings, declarations, and exchanges. Recently, there has been a particular strengthening of cooperation in the latter group – these exchanges have become more institutionalized and better integrated. Military leaders of both countries meet frequently and regularly in various bilateral and multilateral formats. They issue numerous joint statements on various security issues, including missile defense, the militarization of space, international terrorism, and regional issues, with the Korean conflict at the forefront¹¹.

A new stage in the military cooperation of both countries began in 2018, although already in 2017, a three-year roadmap for bilateral military cooperation was signed from Russia’s initiative. Beijing became more inclined to such cooperation only after the beginning of the trade war with the U.S. The development of contacts in the area of technology and emphasis on strategic armaments have become a characteristic feature of the current Sino-Russian cooperation in the military area. Moscow admitted that it helped China to set up a missile warning system, which is the most important and sensitive component of any country’s strategic nuclear power management system. However, it is not clear what elements of the early warning system were involved

⁹ Paul Goble, *Russian-Chinese Military ‘Alliance’ Both More and Less Than It Appears*, Jamestown Foundation, 22.10.2019

¹⁰ Василий Кашин, *Необъявленный союз. Как Россия и Китай выходят на новый уровень военного партнерства*, Carnegie Moscow Centre, 18.10.2019

¹¹ Richard Weitz, *The Expanding China-Russia Defense Partnership*, Hudson Institute, 13.05.2019

in Russian contribution – whether it was the ground part or the space part; the management and data processing system, or all these elements at once.

What was known was only that Russia and China cooperate extensively in building missile and air defense systems in the domain of warfare (for example, regular joint exercises of anti-aircraft forces as part of “Aerospace Security” computer simulation).

Nowadays, cooperation can be expected in terms of strategic missile defense, supersonic technologies, or construction of nuclear submarines. These are areas from which both sides can benefit without compromising their strategic security interests. If there were to be a crisis with China in the future, Russia would be most concerned about the strength of China’s land-based troops and the arsenal of medium and short-range missiles. Increasing the capabilities of the Chinese ocean fleet, building a strategic missile early warning system, building strategic missile defense, or increasing the number of intercontinental missiles does not pose a problem for Moscow. The coordination of strategic early warning systems for rocket attacks would be a major strengthening of the defense capabilities of both countries. Russia could count on Chinese radars, while China could count on Russian ones – of course, in the context of the threat of a nuclear strike by the U.S.

THE ARCTIC AND ARMS

Since the threat of a potential impact of American intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) comes from the Arctic, it is China’s vulnerable northern flank in the context of this country’s nuclear safety. The key components of U.S. missile defense are located in Alaska. A report published in January 2018 by China’s State Council Information Office, titled “China’s Arctic Policy,” indicates three core priorities for China’s Arctic interests.

The Arctic is of crucial importance for China’s nuclear deterrence.

One of them is the security (*anquan*) – the Arctic is of crucial importance for China’s nuclear deterrence. China wants military access into the Arctic to strengthen its strategic position vis-à-vis the U.S. The Chinese underwater fleet has six *Type 094* ships, each of which can carry 12 intercontinental *JL-2* ballistic missiles with a range of 8-9 thousand kilometers. Beijing is also working on more advanced *Type 096* ships (which are to start being used between 2022 and 2023). It will be possible in each of them to arm it with 24 *JL-3* missiles. Stationed in Arctic waters, the Chinese would significantly reduce the distance of their catapults from U.S. land targets. For example, the distance from the Chinese coastline near Shanghai to New York is 11,800 kilometers, whereas from the North Pole it is 3,400 kilometers – three times less¹². In the annual Pentagon report on China’s military power published in May 2019, a section devoted to Beijing’s military interests in the Arctic appeared for the first time¹³. In August 2019, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg expressed concern about “China’s increased presence in the Arctic.”

If Chinese nuclear-armed submarines were able to access the Arctic basin undetected, the balance of power would change completely. The targets in the U.S. and Europe would immediately be within China’s reach. To reach this area, however,

¹² Sergey Sukhankin, *Russian-Chinese Military Alliance in the Arctic: An (Im)Possible Prospect?*, Jamestown Foundation, 31.05.2019

¹³ Annual Report to Congress, *Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China 2019*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 02.05.2019



ARCTIC OCEAN (NORTH OF WESTERN RUSSIA)

the PRC fleet must get through several chokepoints closely monitored by Japan, the U.S., and Russia: the straits that divide the Japanese archipelago; the Bering Strait; and the waters surrounding the Russian islands along the Northern Sea Route (*Severnaya Zemlya* – the Northern Land and New Siberian Islands)¹⁴. In May 2019, Russian analyst Alexander Shirokorad raised the possibility of Russia providing port support for Chinese submarines in the Arctic and proposed a joint Russia-China air and missile defense system for the Arctic¹⁵. Moscow may be ready to allow the Chinese fleet to enter these waters, linking this to Beijing's involvement in the development of the Northern Sea Route (investments, loans, technologies).

Russia played an important role in modernizing China's military equipment. What is more, it may also be interested in Chinese products, such as drones

and ships. As far as arms exports are concerned, Moscow has taken advantage of the restriction on China's access to Western products (sanctions introduced after the Tiananmen Square massacre). In the 1990s, Moscow sold a large number of *Su-27* to Beijing and even granted a license on its production in China. However, China later broke the contract and used the acquired technological knowledge to build its own *J-11* fighter, a near-copy of *Su-27*. Nevertheless, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), China was Russia's largest client between 1999 and 2006 (in 2005, China accounted for 60% of the volume of Russia's exports of weapons)¹⁶. This was followed by a sharp decline in China's share in Russian exports (in 2012, it accounted for only 8.7%). The arms trade between the two has been restored in recent years. In 2015, the two countries concluded a contract for the sale to China of the *S-400* and *Su-35* air defense systems – one of the most

¹⁴ Anne-Marie Brady, *Facing Up to China's Military Interests in the Arctic*, Jamestown Foundation, 10.12.2019

¹⁵ Александр Широкоград, *Борьба за Арктику нарастает*, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 17.05.2019

¹⁶ Siemon T. Wezeman, *China, Russia and the shifting landscape of arms sales*, SIPRI, 05.07.2017

advanced Russian weapons. It should be said, however, that Russia also sells them to other countries and that from 2013 to 2017, a Chinese rival, India, was the largest recipient of Russian weapons (with 35 percent of Russian arms exports going to this country, compared with 12 percent going to China)¹⁷. In June 2019, Moscow announced that it intends to sell the second batch of advanced *Su-35* planes to China. Furthermore, it may also sell *Su-57*. In March 2019, information was published that China and Russia are already jointly building heavy-lift helicopters, a total of 200 units for 20 billion USD¹⁸. On January 27, 2020, Russia has concluded the delivery of the second *S-400E* regimental set.

WHAT IS ON THE PAPER?

Paradoxically, observing the restoration of the arms trade, joint exercises, and military patrols, shows how Sino-Russian cooperation is delayed in the context of documents and formal agreements. The Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation Between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation signed on July 16, 2001, does not include a defense clause in which both parties would undertake to provide military assistance in the event of aggression by a third country. The document allows defense cooperation but does not give a possibility for joint military action against a third country.

The Russian government approved the present agreement between the defense ministries of China and Russia on October 11, 1993. The relatively short and general document focuses on creating conditions for cooperation in the area of military technologies of the two countries. It mentions training of personnel,

exchange of experience and information, mutual assistance in servicing weapons and military equipment, and joint scientific and historical military events.

The document did not provide for joint military exercises but mentioned inviting representatives of the other country to exercises as guests. The document did, nonetheless, leave room for other forms of cooperation by adding a provision that they are "subject to agreement between the parties."¹⁹. As a result, by December 1 of each year, the two countries would sign a cooperation plan for the following year, detailing the steps for developing mutual cooperation. Sometimes additional agreements were signed, such as the 2007 agreement on the status of troops temporarily stationed on each other's territory – which was made after regular joint exercises started to be organized in 2005. In 2017, a three-year roadmap was adopted, providing a legal basis for a wide range of forms of military cooperation between Russia and China.

All already existing new military contacts, as well as plans for the next ones, will most certainly be included in a new military cooperation agreement, which will replace the already outdated 1993 deal. Sino-Russian Treaty of Friendship will also soon expire – in 2021. It cannot be ruled out that the new document will include provisions concerning the joint defense of China and Russia. This may turn out to be the most accurate indication of the actual level of military cooperation between the two countries and, last but not least, of the intentions of their leaders for the future.

Grzegorz Kuczyński ■
March 2020

¹⁷ Leon Aron, *Are Russia and China Really Forming an Alliance?*, Foreign Affairs, 04.04.2019

¹⁸ Stephen Blank, *Joint Bomber Patrol Over the Pacific: The Russo-Chinese Military Alliance in Action*, Jamestown Foundation, 30.07.2019

¹⁹ Vassily Kashin, *Joint Russian-Chinese Air Patrol Signifies New Level of Cooperation*, Carnegie Moscow Centre, 30.07.2019

EMMANUEL MACRON AND FRENCH-RUSSIAN RELATIONS IN TIMES OF CRISIS IN INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCES

ALEKSANDER KSAWERY OLECH

Emmanuel Macron has never really taken an anti-Russian stance, even though this is the image of the French president that the Russian media have repeatedly presented. When he was Minister of the Economy and Industry, he advocated that the sanctions against Russia should be lifted, and two weeks after he became President, he invited Vladimir Putin to Versailles. The French president is also very positively viewed by the Russian minority in France. Several factors may cause his open policy towards Russia. One of them is undoubtedly the high-

flown aspirations to take the lead in Europe and decide on its fate. Nowadays, Macron is falling behind Donald Trump. Another thing to his disadvantage is that Chancellor Angela Merkel has slipped into the obscurity of the European political scene, whereas she could have been of much help to her French ally otherwise. This is why the French president had to take the initiative himself and decide on measures that would attempt to make him the leader of the post-Cold War game. However, he used an open-handed strategy seeking a favorable agreement in the region rather



INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM IN ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA, MAY 25, 2018

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than the rivalry that, from Emmanuel Macron's perspective, the United States is looking for.

GOOD THINGS START BADLY – HOW THE TWO POWERS CAME TOGETHER

Emmanuel Macron's turn towards Russia surprised the world's milieu of experts in international relations. Almost no one had foreseen such a scenario. On the one hand, France and Germany embody the strength of the European Union today, and Germany is maintaining relations that represent a considerable advantage in its favor, see: Nord Stream 2. On the other hand, Paris had not sent unambiguous signals that would indicate the possibility of reconciliation with Russia, especially at such a difficult time for NATO and the European Union.

Interestingly, the French media indicate that as early as May 2017, Emmanuel Macron demonstrated a willingness to establish relations with Russia by announcing possible cooperation. A year

later, at the Petersburg International Economic Forum, the French President showed rather considerable leniency towards Vladimir Putin. Although this was an excellent opportunity to emphasize the need to resolve the Ukrainian conflict and thus strengthen the influence of the Normandy format, the French President remained distanced and muted. He also declared that he respected the reinforced role that Russia plays in its region. He began his speech by saying that it is necessary to be telling the truth, but during the discussion, he did not make a reference to the contemporary threats in Europe.

France is exploring the possibilities of eventual international alliances. The election of Donald Trump as US President was followed by a permanent and visible split between the US policy and that of Macron. The impasse in bilateral relations created a gap that had to be filled by another superpower. As it turned out, it was an ideal moment for Russia, which showed that it is very keen



THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL CONVENING IN 2010

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to engage in cooperation with France. The uncertainty of the NATO Alliance was pointed out by Macron, who indicated that it is the current US administration that rejects the concept of the international community. He indicated that each country should take care of itself and put its own interests above those of other countries. Besides, other EU members are concerned about whether strengthening the potential of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization still lies in the interest of the EU member states. The situation is causing instability in the geopolitical circles, and there are more and more doubts regarding Washington's goals. It also raises questions about how or even whether the United States can still be a dominant player in the game for European stability and what is the role of the Kremlin, which accepts France's hand.

FRANCE AND RUSSIA: COMMON GROUND

Diplomacy plays an essential role in the context of sanctions against Russia, which are renewed on a regular basis. There are significant differences in the approach of NATO members to the

annexation of Crimea, political freedoms in Russia, or EU interference in public life in individual member states. However, it would appear, clearly to some, that France and Russia need each other for their ambitions.

ENDING THE WAR IN UKRAINE

France and Russia are likely to find a solution to the conflict in Ukraine. Their bone of contention is above all the legality of Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014. However, in terms of the ceasefire, respect for human rights and humanitarianism, and the establishment of an initial agreement, the first step in the form of an exchange of prisoners between Moscow and Kyiv has already been taken. On September 7, 2019, after several months of negotiations, the breakthrough was reached. Eleven civilians and 24 soldiers with Ukrainian citizenship were exchanged for 35 imprisoned Russians and pro-Russian separatists. The exchange was supposed to mark the beginning of disarmament in the region, but it remained only one of the rare acts of goodwill in the region. It should be noted that there are still many prisoners in prisons on both sides,

including Ukrainians and Crimean Tartars, who are held in prisons in Russian-occupied Crimea.

The most important thing now is to find a compromise that would restore the sovereignty of Ukraine over its eastern borders (the goal of Paris) and guarantee rights and protection for Russian-speaking minorities in eastern Ukraine – in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (the goal of Moscow). This should be done through the Normandy format as part of a long-term strategy, where it is possible Macron could be playing a significant role in the negotiations.

Moreover, a crucial aspect entails prospects orbital around ensuring Ukraine is not forced into giving up the areas occupied by Russian separatists. It is unlikely Kiev even considers this as an option at all. It does affect both Russian and French objectives in context of the Normandy format. For them, method and arguments that used to convince Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky are of secondary importance. What matters here are effects that will cause a real storm of events. It is imperative to avoid a scenario which includes a surrender of Ukraine that accepts the demands of Russia, as this could trigger a process that resembles the self-deterioration of this state. No more than 30 years ago, Ukraine began to rise from its knees and build its own history and identity, and yet the country is again being dismantled. Despite Ukraine's enormous problems with education, corruption, and, most importantly, with ensuring internal security, the authorities are trying to control Russia's attacks and not initiate any abrupt actions. The problem, however, is that Ukraine is starting to struggle not only with Russia but also with other countries that were initially supposed to help it in its conflict with the Kremlin.

The latest meeting of the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, Germany, and France took place in December 2019 in Paris. The commitments made at the meeting included: a complete ceasefire by the end of 2019, giving the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe full control over the areas of Donetsk and Lugansk, implementing the '*Steinmeier formula*' in Ukrainian law, and enabling the free movement of people, goods and services between Ukraine and the Donbas region. The next meeting is scheduled to take place in April 2020.

The formation of the Consultative Council certainly deserves attention. It will include ten representatives of Ukraine and the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (DPR and LPR), each with the right to vote and representatives, each delegated by the OSCE, from France, Germany, and Russia (one from each of those countries). The latter will have an advisory role. All Council members will have to be accepted by the OSCE, France, Germany, and Russia. At this point, it is very difficult to decide whether this could really be a breakthrough in Ukrainian-Russian relations. It is worth pointing out, however, that the representatives of both DPR and LPR have joined the new body, which was accepted by Ukraine. What will be decisive in this matter is the attitude of France and Germany.

MAINTAINING THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

France and Russia may also come closer together through the nuclear agreement signed in 2015 between Iran and the United States, Russia, Great Britain, France, China, and Germany. Trump's Administration condemned this agreement and stopped the lifting of sanctions against Iran. Since then, Tehran has resumed its nuclear

activities, destroying the status quo, to maintain its balance of power. Things have developed to such an extent that the U.S. had even been considering the possibility of direct military action. In this situation, France and Russia should have the same vision. It could then be argued that agreement should be maintained to avoid nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, an area already exposed to many conflicts and tensions. Quite simply, the U.S. has imposed sanctions on Iran, and France did not seem to care at all. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, who is an ally of Russia, has found another partner in Europe – where Macron offered Iran a \$15 billion 'credit line' plan to encourage Iran to reverse its largely declaratory breaches of the JCPOA. The idea is subject to approval for waivers from the US to avoid potential repercussions from US sanctions.

FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE SYRIAN CONFLICT

The prolonged civil war in Syria is already posing a threat not only to the country itself, to other countries in the region, but also to Europe. Hundreds of thousands of people have died and continue to be killed because of these battles, not to mention the continual displacement of several million people, many of which have headed for Europe. Russia's role in this conflict is important, considering that it has decided to intervene away from its borders and has been accused of helping the Bashar al-Assad regime to use chemical weapons. Today, Russia is actively seeking agreement with Turkey and Iran. Potential French efforts in discussions or measures to help bring the end of the destructive war in which Syrian citizens suffer most of the losses could be useful, if they are not obstructed by geopolitical ambition in the region.

Turkey is also trying to draw France and Germany into further engagement in Syria. The thousands of migrants who can enter Europe represent the main bargaining chip of President Erdogan in the process of putting pressure on the European Union, as was displayed with the latest tensions on the Greek-Turkish borders. He aims to attain the political and diplomatic commitment of the EU and NATO with regard to the situation in Idlib. If France maintains its relatively out-of-conflict position, it will somehow support Russia, which is seeking to isolate Turkey. In the worst-case scenario for Erdogan, some 4 million Syrians will enter Turkey. The Kremlin is thus once again observing clashes between Turkey and the European Union, showing that it does not care about almost anything that happens on Syrian territory. Even the loss of its own troops.

ACHIEVING STABILIZATION IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Several international observers have pointed out that private Russian military contractors are playing an increasingly active role in the ongoing crisis in the Central African Republic. France is permanently present in the area, and Russia is returning to the continent, and whether they find a *modus vivendi* or not will have a real but limited impact on the ongoing civil war in the Central African Republic which involves a complex array of factions. The region of Central Africa may constitute a relevant point in relations between Paris and Moscow that could provide a basis for further discussions on other issues. It could serve as an indicator (or warning) to other states of what French-Russian cooperation in conflicts looks like, whether there are contributions to stabilization or whether it could rather be argued as opportunistically taking advantage of conflicts to pursue geopolitical interests, and what it could mean for their country or situation.



SOVIET PRESIDENT MIKHAIL GORBACHEV AND UNITED STATES PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN SIGN THE INF TREATY AT THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, DC IN 1987

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INVESTING IN RUSSIA

It should be noted that Russia's economic cooperation with individual EU countries, including France, has been good. More than 500 large Russian companies use French capital; trade between the two countries increased by 16% and amounted to 14.2 billion USD, and at the end of 2018, France was the second-largest foreign investor in Russian shares after Germany.

Currently, the total value of French investments in the Russian economy amounts to about 15 billion USD. In addition, more and more companies with French capital seem open on operating on the Russian market. Active cooperation is particularly visible in the energy sector, the aviation and automotive industries, rail transport, infrastructure projects, the pharmaceutical industry, the food

industry, and joint investments in third countries. French investment in Russia could prove to be a considerable support for Emmanuel Macron's policy.

REBUILDING COLLECTIVE SECURITY IN EUROPE

Shortcomings on the part of the OSCE to be able to thoroughly verify compliance with the arms control treaties and conflict prevention in Europe, as well as the withdrawal of the United States from the Treaty on Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) on the total elimination of intermediate-range missiles, could in effect make France one of the main negotiators, if not the main negotiator, with both Moscow and Washington. If Macron wishes to cooperate with Russia, he must choose between solidarity with its Eastern European allies (Poland and the Baltic States) and Ukraine-related

issues or finding compromises with Putin. The Russian president likely feels that too many concessions to any of the NATO members, even France, may contribute to Russia's isolation in Europe and the loss of its influence. Whether both Macron and Putin can demonstrate ability to formulate deals that avoid such cold trade-offs remains to be seen. Nevertheless, it would seem that we are entering a new era of international relations in which France will strive to play an increasingly decisive role.

STARTING ALL OVER AGAIN

The French approach towards Russia sometimes looks like a diplomatic *tabula rasa* – one forgets about the past and starts adventurous cooperation from the beginning, i.e. a “reset” of relations. This was the case in 2009 when President Barack Obama tried to improve relations between the United States and Russia. On March 6, 2009, in Geneva, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton presented Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov with a red button with the word “reset” and the Roman alphabet transliteration of the Russian equivalent of this word. It was intended that this would be *неперезгрузка* [«*perezagruzka*»], but, instead of the correct transliteration of “reset,” it actually was the word for “overload” – *неперегрузка* («*peregruzka*.”)

An important fact is that the then renewal of the relationship was preceded by the Russian-Georgian war in 2008. Therefore, this, together with the aforementioned conflicts and policy conundrums, it could be argued French-Russian relations are more shaped by recent conflicts in other countries than they are by anything else. It seems that, from the Russian-French perspective, the contemporary situation in Donbas is very similar to that in South Ossetia. Russia is occupying eastern Ukraine, and France is engaging in the Normandy

format to resolve the conflict. There are no concrete results that can be confidently described as tangible from meetings between representatives of France, Russia, Germany, and Ukraine, which – after six years of talks – leads to stagnation.

For this reason, given Macron's policy towards Putin, a scenario in which more normalized relations between France and the Russian Federation are resumed is likely to be pragmatic from the perspectives of Paris and Moscow in these contexts. In such a hypothetical situation, potential outcomes include that the occupied territory of Ukraine could de facto remain in the hands of Russia whilst French-Russian relations would be renewed. Russia's attacks on other countries, sending Russian troops there or there, and pursuing an anti-Western policy could be part of the daily agenda, as a result of newly attained confidence.

What would be the responses or reactions of other countries in Europe – such as Poland, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Bulgaria, and Romania – to the “reset” of France's relations with Russia? Not to mention the USA, which aspires to be the guarantor of security in Europe. What would happen to European solidarity and the strategy to strengthen NATO's eastern flank?

It is possible that a part of France's calculus is that on the other hand, if the US administration was able to try to renew relations with Russia, whether or not it was an authentic attempt, why could not France do the same? In this, the issue is what concessions that Macron decides to make in order to develop a clear relationship with Russia, as it would appear that concessions appear to be a central trade-off in this –

hence, possibly, the engagements in other conflicts. The core problem would be, then, to what extent such actions could harm other countries in Europe, especially the ones sharing borders with the Russian Federation. If a relationship reset could be accomplished twice (at the expense of Georgia and later Ukraine), it seems likely that in a few years, it will be possible to press the reset button again. The question arises, however, at the expense of whom this time?

CONCLUSIONS

No wonder Russia sees great potential in its cooperation with France. Putin believes that once he reaches an agreement with Macron, other countries may be encouraged to follow the same path – forget about the recent past and look for cooperation opportunities. As Françoise Thom points out, this would be the ultimate culmination of the Kremlin's long-standing policy based on information warfare and the strategy of testing the waters. Russia is moving forward in achieving its goals to the extent within its own reach. Policy-makers ought to continue to try to figure out what it would take for Moscow to stop striving to increase its influence in Europe.

Observing from the side, it would appear that in the view of France's calculus, improving relations with the Kremlin to a noticeable extent would be a way for the French President to liberate himself from American geopolitical control. Emmanuel Macron is fighting for a more sovereign and independent foreign policy, and, with no German involvement, he is making progress towards becoming a leader of the West – with what could be interpreted as the long-term desire to overtake Trump. Macron is now talking about adopting a new strategy towards Russia that may attract many supporters. He is well

aware of the crisis of Russia in Europe after the annexation of Crimea – and may use this knowledge in negotiations. Furthermore, it seems that the improvement of relations with Paris is essential for the Kremlin. Vladimir Putin would like to prove to the Western elite that a healthy partnership with Russia would be beneficial. The question is whether such cooperation could be fruitful or outright detrimental to Europe as a whole, noting of course, the precarious situation of states in Eastern Europe.

Another essential factor to consider is the danger posed by the novel coronavirus. Can the ongoing pandemic have a real impact on the international situation and affect French-Russian relations? Macron does not seem to be ready for yet another catastrophe – other than those already having a negative impact on the situation in France, and already posing a threat to his candidacy in the presidential elections in 2022. The attempts to build relations with Russia are part of the French strategy of testing the NATO–EU alliance and a way to increase influence in Europe and Africa. In addition, the possibility of an idea that Italy may become relatively more closely aligned to Russia in the future is concerning, yet the publicity of the Russian army's help in fighting COVID-19 against the help from the EU does factor into this. In this kind of game, the parties in Europe would have to be redefined. What is certain is that the whole situation related to both the strengthened French-Russian relations and the coronavirus epidemic is very important for Poland. From now on, it is necessary to look not only at the East's vulnerability, but also at the West.

Aleksander Ksawery Olech ■
March 2020



THE INDO-PACIFIC: STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION

BRYCE WAKEFIELD

The Indo-Pacific, already a concept that attracted interest in foreign policy circles, increased significantly in importance after it was included in the 2017 US National Security Strategy and the 2018 Defence Strategy. The concept has thus, in media circles at least, been branded “America’s new geopolitical world view for Asia,” and, associated with the Trump presidency, has been criticised as one of a number of American attempts “to boil down foreign policy into just a few words.” Trump’s “Indo-Pacific Strategy” has

also been signalled as a rejection of earlier American approaches to regional diplomacy, such as the Pivot to Asia highlighted by former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

While the exact implications of Trump’s endorsement of the Indo-Pacific are unclear, what is clear is that the United States sees the Indo-Pacific as a military and diplomatic “strategy” geared towards enhancing American interests and relations with allies in the region. In particular, it is also a call to confront and perhaps even contain China.

A SUMMIT

Manila, Philippines



EAST ASIA SUMMIT IN MANILA, PHILIPPINES, 14 NOVEMBER 2017

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This is the sense in which the Trump administration uses the term “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” as a normative statement of what the region should be and a policy agenda that American allies should get behind.

The Indo-Pacific concept, however, is hardly new, nor is it the exclusive preserve of either the Trump Administration or US foreign policy circles. The term has been used as early as the 1920s, but in its more contemporary concept, it had regularly featured in the informal discussions of US politicians and officials, including former

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The first time the term gained clear official currency was when the Australian, not American, government included it in its 2013 Defence White Paper. Moreover, as an official position, Australia’s approach to this newly defined region recognised China as an important trading partner and was intended to be complementary to the Obama administration’s “management” of China through the Asian “pivot.”

The Indo-Pacific and its related concepts such as the “Quadrilateral Strategic Dialogue” also have evident precursors

in Japan, where officials in the first Abe administration from 2006-2007 outlined the need for such security concepts as a (geographically much broader) “arc of freedom and prosperity” and, later, an “Asian democratic defence diamond” based on attachment to fundamental values, notably democracy, open commerce and respect for international law.

It’s useful, then, to explore the different articulations of the Indo-Pacific concept. For the Indo-Pacific is beginning to pique the interest of observers and policy practitioners as far away as Europe. But engagement with the Indo-Pacific will be not be fruitful without an understanding that it has different implications for different actors. Here, I trace the development of the Indo-Pacific as a regional concept in order to highlight variety in national articulations, focusing in particular on Japan, Australia, and India, states that have lent a great deal to the development of the term, as well as the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) which is now reluctantly engaging with the Indo-Pacific concept.

THE CONFLUENCE OF TWO SEAS

Although, in its recent context, the term “Indo-Pacific” emerged in the United States, it has been the foreign policy communities in Australia and Japan that have been responsible for the early development and diffusion of the Indo-Pacific as a regional concept. In fact, the current normative American formulation of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” arguably owes much of its development to ideas that have been circulating in Japan since the mid-2000s. It was then that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe promoted the concept of the quadrilateral dialogue or the “Quad.” Building on existing structures, such as a series of trilateral meetings between Australia, Japan and the United States, Abe proposed the addition of India to a formal strategic dialogue

between the three democratic partners, which convened in May 2007 on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum in Manila, following military exercises in Japan between the four parties.

Understandably, Abe’s initiative was criticised by Beijing as a move to counter Chinese influence in the region. Indeed, many observers of security policy in Asia took it for granted that the Quad was conceived from the start as the beginning of a serious regional effort to contain Chinese power. Some urged caution in an era when the foreign policy goals of nations in the Asia-Pacific still focused on shaping “China’s peaceful rise.”

Criticism of the Quad as a new form of containment was particularly uncomfortable for Australia, given its increasing economic reliance on Chinese trade and investment. After coming to power in 2007, a new Labor government led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, a former diplomat with extensive experience in Beijing, announced that it would not propose another session of the four-way meeting in 2008. The announcement of Australia’s “withdrawal” from the Quad came during a joint press conference between Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith and his Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi, fuelling speculation that Australia’s international position was leaning ever further towards China. Neither Rudd nor his successor Julia Gillard showed any interest in reviving the Quad during their time in office.

Abe, however, continued to pursue the concept of greater regional integration. Speaking in India shortly before he resigned as prime minister due to health reasons, Abe spoke of a “broader Asia” emerging from a “Confluence of Two Seas,” the title of a book authored in 1655 by an Indian prince. At the same time Taro Aso, Abe’s foreign minister, who

soon after Abe became prime minister, spoke of broadening “the horizons of Japan’s diplomatic activities and, indeed, Japan’s outlook” by helping to maintain an “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity” a broad geographical semicircle that encompassed Southeast Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and India before heading through Afghanistan on its way to Europe. The concept of democratic nations working together to foster prosperity thus contained components analogous to the later American conceptualisation of the Free and Open Indo Pacific.

Language on regional integration based on a concert of democracies, however, subsided when Abe and Aso’s Liberal Democratic Party fell in 2009 to the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). DPJ Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama stressed a pan-Asian form of integration and continued Japanese engagement with India but resigned less than a year after his victory after becoming embroiled in a dispute over U.S. basing rights in Japan. For the rest of its time in office, the DPJ’s foreign policy priorities were to repair its relations with the United States and, after a maritime dispute with China, to reorient its security posture to focus more intently on the region to its South.

Back in office in late 2012, Abe attempted to revive the Quad, referring to the concept in an opinion piece as a “democratic security diamond,” where he directly referenced his 2007 India speech and the idea of the “Confluence of the Two Seas,” in other words, his version of the Indo-Pacific. Beijing’s attempts to claim territory in the South China Sea, coupled with the island dispute with Japan, had since raised concerns in Washington about China’s military posture. With the narrative about China rising peacefully sidelined, Abe could now let loose about the purpose of a four-power arrangement,

which was to allow like-minded states to safeguard the maritime region between Japan, Australia, India, and Hawaii and to prevent the South China Sea from becoming “Lake Beijing.”

Abe’s proposal of a four-power defence arrangement to counter China was initially met with little enthusiasm, but by 2013 found a fairly receptive partner in Prime Minister Tony Abbott, whose Australian Liberal Party had ousted Labor. However, political intrigue within his own party meant that Abbott would be replaced in 2015 by Malcolm Turnbull. Canberra’s subsequent decision to purchase French Shortfin Barracuda submarines to replace Australia’s aging Collins-class fleet cooled relations with Tokyo considerably, as Abe apparently believed Abbott had all but assured him Japan’s Soryu class subs would win the contract. Indeed, Richard Samuels, a prominent American analyst of Japan’s defence posture, noted at the time that of all the deals on offer, “only the Japanese choice would have strengthened strategic cooperation between America’s two most important partners in East Asia.” For the first year of the Turnbull government in Australia, relations between Tokyo and Canberra remained cordial, if rather chilly.

AUSTRALIA’S INDO-PACIFICS

Australia has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Indo-Pacific concept, if not always in the terms articulated by Abe. It was shortly after Abe’s re-emergence as prime minister, and his articulation of the “democratic security diamond” that Australia became the first nation to take up the term officially, in its 2013 Defence White Paper. However, under the then-Labor government led by Gillard, the concept of the Indo-Pacific was far less confrontational towards China than Abe’s thought-piece. Indeed, the White Paper “welcomed



AUSTRALIA'S PRIME MINISTER SCOTT MORRISON AND INDIA'S PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI DURING THE 2018 ASEAN SUMMIT IN SINGAPORE

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China's rise" and the attendant economic opportunities that would accrue to Australia.

Later documents published after the Australian Liberal Party came to power in 2013 outlined an Indo-Pacific that was more in line with Abe's notion of the region. While the 2017 Australian Foreign Policy White Paper noted the importance of Australia's relationship with China, this was more because "of China's growing influence on the regional and global issues of greatest consequence to our security and prosperity." This new White Paper noted the importance of Australia's partnership with Japan and in a nod to the Quad noted that Australia was ready to work in "small groups" with "major Indo-

Pacific democracies, to promote and protect a shared vision for the region and to support a balance in the region favourable to our interests."

The difference in Australia's position between 2013 and 2017 certainly reflects changing attitudes in Australia towards China, but also suggests that in Australia, more diverse understandings of the concept influence the debate on the Indo-Pacific than in Japan and the United States. It also highlights the fact that since 2012, at least, Japan's leadership has been more stable than Australia's. As noted, Abe made the Quad his pet project in 2006 and reiterated it almost immediately after taking office again in 2012. Since then, the conceptualisation of the Indo-Pacific

at Japan's highest level of government has remained largely consistent.

Not so in Australia, where there have been five different prime ministers over the same period and at least two major understandings of the Indo-Pacific. The first of these understandings is that the Indo-Pacific merely relabels Australia's region in a way that is more apt to Australian national interests than older formulations like the "Asia-Pacific." Former Australian Defence Secretary Ric Smith, for example, sees the term as a useful construct for outlining the importance of the Indian Ocean to Australia's trade and security, without discounting the importance to Australia of Asia or the Pacific. Within this conceptualisation, the Indo-Pacific is not a construct used to challenge China, but a description of a region where China is a very important and potentially constructive actor.

It is no coincidence that several of the key supporters of this view of the Indo-Pacific are, like Ric Smith, from or based in Western Australia. Most of Australia's mineral trade is exported from the state and travels either across the Indian Ocean or through the Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) in Southeast Asia. Stephen Smith, for example, the former foreign minister who was no enthusiast for the Quad, is nevertheless a supporter of the Indo-Pacific in this less "confrontational" articulation. In fact, the Indo-Pacific has entered the common parlance more in Western Australia than in any other Australian state. The Indo-Pacific is regularly referred to in Western Australian media commentary as the central concept that defines the region. Meanwhile, the Perth USAsia Centre, a think-tank based in the state capital, highlights Western Australia as "the gateway to the Indo-Pacific." This demonstrates

that even within nations, and certainly within Australia, differences in location can influence preferred definitions of regional concepts.

The second understanding of the Indo-Pacific in Australia is closer to Abe's formulation, and agrees that the more troubling aspects of Chinese geostrategic behaviour point to desire for regional domination that must be checked. However it less emphatically promotes the notion of a stable group of states challenging China. According to this articulation, the Indo-Pacific is an area where like-minded states can discuss and implement common policy programs, but always with an eye on China's increasing power and with a sense that floating coalitions of states in the region can work to prevent Chinese dominance without rigid containment strategies that might provoke an outright Chinese attack.

This conceptualisation, articulated most prominently by the Head of the National War College at the Australian National University Rory Medcalf, who has done much to develop the concept of the Indo-Pacific since the 2000s, is gaining ground in the Australian policy discourse. In 2017, the same year the Foreign Policy White Paper appeared, Australia responded positively to the approach from Abe to rejoin the Quad, signalling renewed warmth in relations between Japan and Australia. Indeed, Shiro Armstrong, a researcher at the Australian National University claims that it was cooperative diplomacy on the part of Abe and Turnbull that pushed Trump to recognise the Indo-Pacific as a central strategic concern for the United States.

However, official conceptualisations of the Indo-Pacific in Australia still tend to stress the notion of the Indo-

Pacific as the region, rather than a set of relations that Australia can work within to forward its interests. While the opposition Labor Party now sees some value in the Quad, moreover, the “geographical” aspects of the Indo-Pacific would come more clearly to the fore were a Labor government to gain power in the next election cycle, something that is unlikely to happen in Japan. While the two countries have both added much to the concept, there are different nuances to their approach to the Indo-Pacific.

INDIA’S TURNAROUND?

Meanwhile, India has become a most unlikely cheerleader of the Indo-Pacific concept, but again, this is couched very much in its own terms. For years, even after Australia’s withdrawal from the Quad, New Delhi was seen as the least committed major actor to the concept of the Indo-Pacific, despite the increased attention to India the concept was encouraging. Indeed, Australian strategic thinker Hugh White, who is sceptical about the Indo-Pacific as a strategic concept, bases his criticism largely on a sense that the interests of India do not converge with supposedly “like-minded” states in the way that analysts like Medcalf presume: while White sees Chinese domination of the Western Pacific as an inevitable security threat to states like Australia, he sees this domination as less of a concern to India, separated from China by the geographical barriers of the Himalayas and from the Western Pacific by South East Asia. India in this articulation has its own concerns about Beijing’s motives, but they do not overlap neatly with the concerns of those who more clearly share maritime space with China.

White’s critique is undergirded by historical experience: India’s security relations with Japan and Australia have

traditionally been shallow, and India has traditionally sought non-alignment in international affairs. There is continued reticence in some quarters of New “Delhi” to see Australia in particular as a potential regional security partner. To be fair, Indian reluctance in dealing with Australia is grounded in part in Australia’s withdrawal from the Quad—which New Delhi viewed as an abrupt unilateral move taken without prior consultation. Australia’s economic overexposure to China is also seen as a sign that Australia would be a fair-weather friend in a confrontation with Beijing.

However, India’s recent behaviour suggests that its government is taking the Indo-Pacific, including relations with Australia, much more seriously. There has been increasing speculation, for example, that India will invite Australia to participate in its Malabar naval exercises in 2020. Relations between Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Abe and current Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison are exceedingly warm, and all three have managed to cultivate good relations with Trump, which is no easy feat. As in Australia, a section has been set up within India’s foreign affairs ministry to deal specifically with the “Indo-Pacific.” And most noteworthy of India’s embrace of the Indo-Pacific was Modi’s decision to focus on the concept in his keynote speech to the Shangri-La Dialogue in 2018, arguably Asia’s most important dialogue on regional security.

Somewhat predictably, given White’s concerns, India’s articulation of the Indo-Pacific is markedly different to that expressed by Japan, Australia, and certainly the United States. In his Shangri-La speech, Modi stressed the notion of the Indo-Pacific as an “inclusive” concept. However, Indian



14TH MEETING OF THE ASEAN-JAPAN JCC, MARCH 11TH, 2020

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analysts such as Rajesh Basrur and Rajesh Rajagopalan consider it obvious that India's recent adoption of the Indo-Pacific concept is designed to hide a strategy designed to deal with China's rise. Thus, talk of inclusion is not the same as describing the Indo-Pacific in the geographical terms as is popular in some quarters in Australia. Instead, according to Rajagopalan, writing in a recent issue of *International Affairs*, India "is balancing China while trying to reassure it." India does not want Beijing to interpret the Indo-Pacific as "aimed at" China, although that is precisely New Delhi's motivation for supporting it. Rajagopalan sees this strategy—what he calls "evasive balancing"—as ultimately unsustainable, suggesting either that India will need to become more forthright and critical of Chinese power

or White's thesis about India's lack of commitment to the Indo-Pacific concept will eventually prove correct.

In the meantime, Modi is attempting to marry the Indo-Pacific to concepts inherent in India's past approach to the region. His Shangri-La speech stressed ASEAN centrality, consistent with the "Look-East" and "Act-East" policies that India had previously espoused. Those policies stressed India's economic integration into the East Asian region through ASEAN, however. The continuation of a military dialogue between Japan and India after the first iteration of the Quad failed and the revival of the Quad in 2017 suggest a much more strategic aspect to India's ideas about the Indo-Pacific. Even while engaging with the three other Quad

partners, though—and Modi has been much more “forthright” in this respect than his predecessor—India does try to mute strategic language. It refers not to the “Quadrilateral Strategic Dialogue” or even “the Quad” but merely to “India–Australia–Japan–US consultations.”

Language about ASEAN centrality, meanwhile, is clearly designed to suggest that India’s attention to the Indo-Pacific and the Quad is rooted in more benign and earlier notions of its foreign policy.

ASEAN’S ANXIETY

For its part, ASEAN has been notoriously sceptical of ideas for regional integration that emerge from outside its membership, and the Indo-Pacific is no exception in this regard. Nevertheless, Modi’s focus on ASEAN centrality, coupled with the increased American attention to the Indo-Pacific as a strategy moved the ten-nation group to publish its own position on the concept, titled the “ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific” in 2019. The move was seen as extremely significant by some commentators. Here was evidence, perhaps, that ASEAN had finally come to see the concept as the basis for wider regional integration.

However, it is hard to see any new thinking in the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. Rather, the document is a sign that ASEAN has capitulated to new terminology while trying to cement the ideas of the Indo-Pacific within familiar regional institutions. While the ASEAN Outlook does refer to the Indo-Pacific as a “closely and interconnected region” ASEAN nevertheless sees this “region” as consisting of two distinct entities—the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean—not a “contiguity of territorial spaces.” Like most articulations of the Indo Pacific, the Outlook stresses the “importance of the maritime domain and perspective in the evolving regional architecture” and of “development and prosperity for all.”

Importantly, maritime cooperation and connectivity head up a list of four “Areas of Cooperation” in the document, and the importance of freedom of navigation, dialogue and peaceful settlement of maritime disputes is stressed throughout.

The Outlook’s references on maritime security and connectivity might underscore what Australian, Japanese and American strategists have highlighted for decades: that the SLOCs flowing through the ASEAN states are crucial to an international system of open trade and therefore to regional security. The Outlook, however, almost bends over backwards to avoid any mention of strategic rivalry—no country, let alone China and the United States is mentioned by name in the document—and freedom of navigation is referenced among a cornucopia of issues including “sea piracy, robbery and armed robbery against ships at sea, etc.” Traditional security threats from particular nation-states are never clearly realised in the document, which places it in stark contrast to strategic documents of the United States, Japan, Australia, and other nations of the Indo-Pacific.

As indicated by its repeated references to the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean, the Outlook, then, is not a signal that ASEAN has embraced the concept of the Indo-Pacific. Even the very title has a certain distancing effect: ASEAN is not necessary “in” the Indo-Pacific so much as looking out “on” it. The text refers to the Outlook itself as merely a “guide for ASEAN’s engagement in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean.” In the section on Areas for Cooperation, there isn’t a hint of anything that looks like a practical policy measure that might address the issues the section highlights. In place of proposing solutions, the Outlook offers measures that are very much within type for ASEAN: continual dialogue.

Strategic discussions on “practical cooperative activities can be pursued at ASEAN-led mechanisms including, among others, the EAS, the ASEAN Plus One mechanisms, ARF, and ADDM-Plus.”

The lack of a clear policy agenda in the Outlook may highlight the differences in the level of support among ASEAN member states for the Indo-Pacific concept: the governments of Indonesia and Thailand were broadly supportive of the Indo-Pacific as a concept—in Jakarta’s case, in order to bolster claims of the centrality of Indonesia to the region—while Malaysia, at least under the presidency of Mohamed Mahathir, and Singapore were broadly sceptical or even hostile to the idea. This lack of agreement is one factor behind the absence of a clear policy roadmap for the Indo-Pacific with ASEAN at its centre.

In general, though, the ASEAN Outlook is symbolic of ASEAN’s desire not to be left behind in—and indeed, its desire to be central to—debates that are happening within its region. The Outlook also stands as only reluctant recognition that the Indo-Pacific has become a term of choice among some of ASEAN’s key partners. As with India’s conception of the Indo-Pacific, it is clear that the document is designed to tip-toe around Chinese sensibilities, but unlike India, there is little sense in the Outlook that ASEAN is trying to find ways to deal with the challenge of Chinese regional power outside of the norms and institutions that ASEAN has already established. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the Outlook attempts to redefine the Indo-Pacific in ways that stress the historical centrality of ASEAN and its institutions in the development of Asian regionalism. The ASEAN Outlook, far from buying into a new regional discourse, simply attempts to reassert comfortable forms of dialogue.

CONCLUSION

Despite the attempt by actors such as the United States and, to a large extent, Japan to articulate the Indo-Pacific in terms of a clear strategy to counter China, the Indo-Pacific is thus “still under construction.” The Indo-Pacific is variously a geographical description, a term to emphasise the importance of a maritime environment, a strategy through which US allies can balance China and assert the rule of law, a way of building shifting coalitions between like-minded states in the region, a rubric for reinventing past relationships while insisting those relationships remain the same, and a way of insisting that actors in the region not stray too far from the norms and institutions that have in the past served as useful platforms for dialogue.

If external actors—Europeans, for example—are interested in engaging in the region, they will need to note these differences, because joining the conversation on the Indo-Pacific may have vastly different connotations depending on the interlocutors involved. In fact, critics like Hugh White may be right, to an extent: given the vast geographical distance and different strategic environments within the region, it is unlikely that we will ever see an Indo-Pacific of “member states” on the same strategic page. But the Indo-Pacific is not going away. At the very least, it serves as a prompt for conversation about how states in the region can cooperate, even if on an ad hoc, shifting basis, to meet complementary if not completely mutual interests, and that, perhaps, is the ultimate value of the concept.

Bryce Wakefield ■

March 2020

ENERGY AND THE BATTLE FOR THE BLACK SEA

LAURENȚIU PACHIU, GEORGE SCUTARU

The Russian Tsar Peter the Great's desire to gain access to the warm seas has almost become an undisputable Russian achievement in the Black Sea. Most probably, in the foreseeable future, access to the East Mediterranean Region is likely to de facto become a prize as well. In the last decade, the Russian Federation has succeeded, by means of soft, but mostly hard power politics to impose itself in the Black Sea Region and to consolidate an arch of power projection along NATO's south-eastern frontier and the Middle East, areas which were controlled more or less wisely in the last decade by the United States.



AN OPENING CEREMONY OF THE TURKSTREAM PROJECT IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY, 08 JANUARY 2020.

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Long before the Russo-Georgian “Five-Day War” of 2008, the annexation of Crimea (2014), Russia’s foothold in Syria (2015) and the establishment of a Black Sea A2/AD (Anti Access/Area Denial) capability, Russia promoted a sustained and effective diplomacy in the Black Sea region by laying major critical energy supply networks in Europe (along with military cooperation, wherever possible), among Black Sea riparian or other relevant states, such as Turkey, Bulgaria, Hungary, Serbia, Republic of Moldova and Syria. Examples are the Blue Stream pipeline, the recently inaugurated TurkStream offshore gas pipeline system running through Turkey, Bulgaria and Serbia; Russian financed nuclear reactors in Hungary, gas supplies to and joint energy projects with Serbia – along with

Eurasian Union free trade agreement; privileged status of Russian energy companies in Syria, as a platform for Eastern Mediterranean energy projects.

RUSSIA’S CREEPING INFLUENCE VIA ENERGY

Even countries that did not have political or economic motivations for their entanglement with Russian energy projects, eventually became (influenced by Russia or not) “clients” of Russian energy supplies – particularly in terms of natural gas. For instance, Romania’s failure to develop in time its Black Sea offshore gas reserves (US energy giant ExxonMobil announced its intention to withdraw from the project, while Russian linked or backed undertakings are waiting in line to take over, despite recent Romanian legislation granting the government transactional

veto rights, and while investor unfriendly and populist legislation still remains in force) and the consequent rise in Russian gas imports into this country, are factual confirmations of Russia's capabilities in shaping energy markets and decision-making in the region.

The main vectors of Russia's energy expansion in Europe have always been the crucial role of energy as main revenue (particularly from Western Europe) for the Russian state, and its strategic relevance as a foreign policy tool. More recently, an added rationale for Russia's quest for energy dominance in the region is the strategic quest of avoiding transit routes through unfriendly or disobedient states, and an efficient combination of energy and military tools in a volatile geopolitical context to advance Russia's hegemonic aspirations.

THE EU'S SHIFTING ENERGY POLICY

EU efforts in the last decade to enhance its energy security by developing natural gas interconnectors as part of the internal energy market and to promote alternative sources and routes of gas supplies (considering the role of natural gas as a fuel of transition to the ultimate goal of a decarbonized European economy), have been outpaced by a much more resolute and efficient Russian approach of integrating diplomacy, market penetration and traditional "active measures" campaigns.

However, this hegemonic energy status of Russia does not remain unchallenged. The interplay between the EU and Russia, as well as the much higher challenge of climate change have led to a historical and dramatic shift in EU's energy policy, that is the European Green Deal, launched in 2019 by newly elected EU Commission.

A consequence of this shift in Brussels' bureaucratic environment and rhetoric

is that the notion of "natural gas as a transition fuel" has become a whispered subject within the EU and will, gradually, move to the bottom of EU's energy policy agenda.

Despite its revolutionary nature and uncertainty in meeting the set targets (given the tremendous economic impact on member states), any the implementation of the European Green Deal policies will likely shake the natural gas trade of Russia with Europe. One might therefore expect sustained Russian efforts (combined with independent actions of certain countries, particularly in the SE European region, that are highly dependent on carbon intensive fuels) to delay the implementation of the Green Deal policy and continue banking on natural gas as a "transition fuel". A major disruption caused by the European Green Deal on the short term to Russian energy interests might also add several "black swans" in the Black Sea as an "energy security sea".

MILITARIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA

Another challenge to the Russian hegemony in the Black Sea region is Turkey. Despite its increasingly independent posture in relation to the EU and, perhaps more importantly NATO, and a certain rapprochement with the Russian Federation in critical sectors like energy and defense, Turkey's regional power aspirations will most certainly collide with Russia in the Black Sea and near Middle Eastern regions. At least from an energy security perspective, Turkey, as a crucial hub and transit country, might eventually turn into a much more powerful and assertive Ukraine for the Russian Federation, thus impacting the energy security climate in the entire Black Sea region.

Last but not least, if not motivated by pure energy security concerns for Europe, but

New exclusive economic zone delimitation in the Black Sea after the occupation of Crimea, the Russian vision



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SOURCE: WWW.RUSSIANWORLDFORUMS.COM

also by reasons of promoting LNG exports to Europe, another key actor engaged in the energy security landscape in the Black Sea Region is the United States. The Three Seas Initiative promoted by the U.S. on the European NE-SE axis will definitely add

flavor to the energy security equation in the Black Sea Region and the progress of the European Green Deal.

The militarization of the Black Sea region by the Russian Federation also has a

strong economic impact. Russia had approximately the same number of naval exercises in the Black Sea in 2019, but the number of days spent at sea by military vessels was higher. Russia has begun to block wider perimeters in the Black Sea, under the pretext of military exercises. It legally notifies an exercise within a certain perimeter, but it is not necessary for this exercise to actually take place. The area is declared “dangerous for navigation” for commercial vessels and the entry in that particular area is being made only on the own responsibility of the respective vessels. Many of them decide to embrace the perimeters announced to be the area of military exercises, which increases the

exercises is not one desired by commercial vessels. Russia especially started in 2019 to notify such exercises, even in the exclusive economic zone of Romania and Bulgaria, where both countries have gas reserves.

After the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014, Romania and Bulgaria became *de facto* neighbours with the exclusive Russian economic area. As such, disputes over the Black Sea hydrocarbon reserves may occur between Russia and Romania especially, the estimated reserves of the latter being higher (about 200 bcm - billion cubic meters).¹

Perimeters of the Black Sea in which the Russian Federation notified in 2019 the conduct of military exercises



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SOURCE: NEW STRATEGY CENTER

number of days spent at sea and brings additional costs. Basically, freedom of navigation is impaired, and the prospect of sailing in an area with Russian military

¹ In order to highlight the significant dimensions of the off-shore reserves of Romania, for reference, in 2018, the gas consumption of Romania was of 10,9 bcm, of Republic of Moldova was of 2,5 bcm, of Bulgaria was of 3,3 bcm and of Serbia was of 2,8 bcm. (Source: <https://www.indexmundi.com>)



GAS PIPELINES

CONCLUSION

In this way, Russia disrupts the movement of commercial vessels in the Black Sea, affects the areas of real exercises of NATO states, limiting the movement capacity of Allied military vessels and tests the responsiveness of riparian NATO states. In addition, it creates obvious pressure in the exclusive economic zone of Romania, where the prospects have shown the existence of natural gas reserves. In this way, Russia wants to signal that it does not want to have “energy competitors” in the Black Sea region, wishing to maintain and strengthen its energy monopoly. The emergence of an alternative supplier to Russia, even for a period of only 10 years or for as long as natural gas can be used as transit fuel according to “Green Deal”, entail the risk of diminishing the economic and political influence of Moscow in countries such as the Republic Moldova, Bulgaria or Serbia, which are heavily dependent on Russian natural. The issue of energy represents an important stake for Russia in the region and not only, thus remaining an important element for the strategic relevance of the Black Sea.

The Energy Policy Group (EPG) is a Bucharest-based non-profit, independent think-tank specializing in energy and climate policy, market analytics and energy strategy, founded in February 2014. EPG’s regional focus is Eastern Europe and the Black Sea Basin. Its analyses, though, are also focused on wider trends and processes at global and EU levels.

<https://www.enpg.ro>

New Strategy Center is a Romanian think tank specialising in foreign, defence and security policy, a non-partisan, non-governmental organisation. The Balkans and the Black Sea space are priority areas of interest for New Strategy Center, activities of which also cover such subjects as national security, military modernization and defence procurement, energy security, cyber security and hybrid threats.

<https://www.newstrategycenter.ro/>

Laurențiu Pachiu, George Scutaru ■
March 2020

AGGRESSION OR COLLECTIVE SECURITY: HOPE, ANOTHER FACE OF IRAN

WITOLD REPETOWICZ

Iran is accused of conducting an aggressive foreign policy and being the biggest, and sometimes even the only, force destabilizing the Middle East. Iranian diplomacy, however, is trying to shape a completely different image of their country. One of its initiatives to serve this purpose is a project called Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE), which aims to establish a collective security dialogue in the West Asia sub-region. The feasibility of this plan is, however, deeply questionable.

JCPOA AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF US WITHDRAWAL FROM THE AGREEMENT

Already in 2016, Iran's Foreign Affairs Minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, claimed that Iran wanted to build a regional security system and maintain

good relations with all countries in the region. In 2017, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, he also suggested that Iran could even work with Saudi Arabia to solve regional problems. At that time, Zarif was shining among the world's elite. In essence, it was after



A YOUNG IRANIAN MANY WALK PAST NEXT TO A WALL PAINTING OF IRAN'S NATIONAL FLAG IN A STREET OF THE CAPITAL CITY OF TEHRAN, JANUARY 10, 2020

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the agreement on the Iranian nuclear deal i.e. the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was signed, and before Donald Trump's sanctions policy against Iran was reinstated.

The Republicans have always been critical of the JCPOA – and Donald Trump was no exception here. Since he took office as US President, the atmosphere around Iran has started changing. The last of the tensions between the US and Iran lessening had been terminated when the US withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018 and reinstated sanctions on Iran in November 2018. An escalation of tensions involved several severe crises throughout 2019. Iran was accused of the attacks on several tankers in the Gulf of Oman in May and June. It went as so far as war nearby being at hand on 20 June when

Iran has tried to show that any military action against it will meet with an adequate response.

Trump approved the bombing of Iran in response to Iran's shooting down of a US drone. Nevertheless, the attack on Iran was canceled in the last minute.

In July, the United Kingdom and Iran seized each other's tankers. International intervention in the Strait of Hormuz that was announced at that time, involving the introduction of military tanker convoys, did not take place because it turned out



**IRAN'S FOREIGN MINISTER MOHAMMAD JAVAD
ZARIF AT THE PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE IN TEHRAN,
IRAN, 16 OCTOBER 2019**

to be simply unrealistic. In the end, the United Kingdom released an Iranian tanker, and, in response, Iran did the same with the British one. However, an even more severe crisis soon followed, when in September, drone attacks struck two oil processing facilities in Saudi Arabia, causing a dramatic (although short-lived) decline in oil production. Yemen's Houthi rebels claimed the attack, but Saudi Arabia and the USA accused Iran of being responsible for it.

Through its actions, Iran has tried to show that any military action against it will meet with an adequate response – which was, in a way, a successful attempt. Consequently, Trump continued its economic 'maximum pressure' policy, accompanied by political sanctions involving the designation of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Council (IRGC) as a terrorist organization or attempts to isolate the country at the international level. Iran was unable to respond to economic sanctions and considered them to be a symptom of some kind of war. In return, it has recognized the entire US Army as a terrorist organization. However ridiculous it may sound; it was a logical step from Iran's perspective.

FAILED ATTEMPTS TO START NEW NEGOTIATIONS

US policy towards Iran has, however, encountered many restrictions. The sanctions proved to be effective in economic terms but hope that they would lead to a revolution in Iran proved to be vain. Protests were taking place, but they were not large enough to pose a threat to the Iranian political system. For this reason, Trump started offering an olive branch towards Tehran, suggesting that both countries could make a new deal. In September, he also unceremoniously dismissed the biggest supporter of a military solution in relations with Iran, former National Security Adviser John

Bolton. A breakthrough was almost there at the end of September, during the UN summit, when Iranian President Hasan Rouhani met French President Emanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Macron also tried to get Rouhani and Trump to meet, or at least to talk on the phone. The Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan also attempted to act as an intermediary. It has also been reported that Iran was ready to renegotiate the JCPOA and introduce new control measures to its nuclear program. However, the meeting did not take place because the Iranians did not trust Trump and demanded that sanctions be lifted before the meeting and their concessions, which Trump did not agree to. Consequently, another confrontation between the US and Iran happened in December in Iraq, and the prospect of any talks was lost.

The problem with the renegotiation of the JCPOA is yet not how far Iran can go in controlling its nuclear program. There was no evidence that Iran violated the provisions of the agreement between its conclusion and termination by the US. However, the aim was to force Iran to give up its ballistic missile program and its providing of military support to its allies in the region. Concerning the former, Iran claims to have the right under international law to develop its missile capability as a form of self-defense. Moreover, from Tehran's perspective, it is other countries that are pursuing an aggressive policy by destabilizing the region and militarizing it by purchasing weapons and creating bases of foreign (mainly American) forces on its territory.

THE MIDDLE EAST DESTABILIZATION – MUTUAL ACCUSATIONS

Allegations that Iran's actions destabilize the Middle East are based on its support for Yemen's Houthis, Iraqi

Not everyone in the region perceives Iran as a destabilizing force, and the country, despite the efforts of the USA, is not internationally isolated.

Hashd a-Shaabi forces, the Bashar al-Assad regime, Lebanese Hezbollah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. From the perspectives of the USA, Saudi Arabia, or Israel, in effect Iran is supporting terrorism. However, the outlook depends on interests, and the recognition that Iran bears sole or even major responsibility for, for example, the war in Yemen, is objectively an extremely controversial thesis. In turn, Iran's support for Assad's regime or Iraqi Hashd a-Shaabi may be mostly linked to the fight against Al Qaeda or the Islamic State, though this is contended by Iran's geopolitical rivals. In the case of Iraq, Hashd a-Shaabi is part of the country's armed forces, and Iranian support technically took place with the consent of the Iraqi authorities. There are several proxy wars in the Middle East, and Iran takes part in some of them. However, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, or Israel not only participate in them, but also openly conduct military operations outside their country. Some arguments suggest that there would also seem to be an objective contradiction between considering it legitimate to support jihadist groups (fighting against, in any case, the government of Bashar al-Assad) and treating the support of Yemen's Houthi as equal to support for terrorism, based on the legitimacy of

the Yemeni government of Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, which is disputed by other entities.

Not everyone in the region perceives Iran as a destabilizing force, and the country, despite the efforts of the USA, is not internationally isolated. Attesting to this is Zarif's intense diplomatic activity and the list of delegations at the Tehran Dialogue Forum in January, where Hormuz Peace Endeavor was promoted. At a minimum, Iran maintains diplomatic relations with Oman, Iraq, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Syria, as well as Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, China, and, of course, Russia. The list is longer, although understandably, different countries have different motivations for keeping their relations with Iran. Some states are simply afraid that they could become its targets in case of open conflict and therefore prefer to protect themselves. This applies even to one of the pillars of the anti-Iranian bloc in the region – the United Arab Emirates, which in the second half of 2019 began to de-escalate its tensions with Iran and withdraw from the war in Yemen. The reason for this was the three concerns that the UAE had. First of all, Yemen's Houthi directly signaled that the skyscrapers in UAE could be destroyed by rocket fire. The effectiveness of the attack on Saudi oil processing facilities was a warning light for Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Secondly, the UAE would have lost a lot on the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, and they preferred not to count on an unrealistic promise of convoys. Thirdly, economic ties between Dubai and Iran are intense despite sanctions and the Iranian-Emirati proxy confrontation in Yemen. In 2019, trade exchange between Dubai and Iran was estimated at 10-15 billion USD, and the value of Iranian investments in Dubai amounted to about 300 billion USD.

THE ASSASSINATION OF SULEIMANI – REACTIONS IN THE REGION

A lack of Iran's isolation can also be seen in the world's reaction to the killing of General Qassem Suleimani. The narrative seemed to be unambiguous in the West. Nevertheless, Tehran received condolences not only from countries and organizations unequivocally associated with the anti-American camp such as Cuba, Venezuela, Syria, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and Hamas (in this case, it reflects the strengthening of Iran's influence also outside the Shiite world), but also from countries and entities considered to be allies of the US and which are hosting American troops, such as Oman or the authorities of Iraqi Kurdistan, and of course Iraq itself. The killing of Suleimani was condemned by Russia and China, as well as by Azerbaijan, Lebanon, and Pakistan, among others. A whole series of condolences came from Afghanistan, where US troops have been present for 18 years, including from President Ashraf Ghani and his main competitor Abdullah Abdullah. Furthermore, Hamid Karzai, the country's first president, brought to power by the US after overthrowing the Taliban, also participated in the Tehran Dialogue Forum, where he even accused Americans of destabilization and praised Iran's decisive (at least in his view) role in the Afghan peace process.

In the Middle East, only three countries unequivocally supported the killing of Suleimani: Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and of course, Israel. What certainly was most painful for Trump was the reaction of Turkey (NATO member) and Qatar – home to the largest American base in the region. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan expressed his condolences to Hassan Rouhani. Erdogan's Turkey is far from joining any action against Iran. On the contrary, Ankara is not trying to

What certainly was most painful for Trump was the reaction of Turkey (NATO member) and Qatar – home to the largest American base in the region.

hide that it wants to strengthen military cooperation with Tehran against the Kurdistan Workers' Party in Iraq and Kurdish YPG troops in Northern and Eastern Syria. It is also known that General Suleimani had close relations with the head of the Turkish intelligence Hakan Fidan. Moreover, prior to the conclusion of the JCPOA, Erdogan and several ministers of the then Turkish government allegedly had been involved in secret gold trading with Iran, circumventing international sanctions.

Qatar found itself in an awkward situation after Suleimani was killed, as it was from its territory that the drone that was behind the attack took off. That is why Qatar has not only expressed its phone condolences or simply condemned this attack. The following day, the head of Qatar diplomacy Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani flew to Tehran, and a considerable representation from the Qatar MFA participated in the Tehran Dialogue Forum, which began three days after Suleimani's assassination. A few days later, the Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani flew to Tehran himself.



IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MOHAMMAD JAVAD ZARIF, RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SERGEI LAVROV AND TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER MEVLUT CAVUSOGLU ATTEND A NEWS CONFERENCE IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, OCTOBER 29, 2019.

TEHRAN DIALOGUE FORUM – DIPLOMATIC SUCCESS WITHOUT CONCRETE ACTION

The Tehran Dialogue Forum conference was a large-scale event, although it was practically nonexistent in the Western media. This was due to Iran's policy itself, whose regulations make it impossible for foreign media to send a correspondent to such an event in an instant. Therefore,

if Iran wants to improve its image in the world through such events, it has to be more consistent in its PR policy and liberalize visa regulations for journalists. The conference was attended by a considerable number of local journalists, as well as representatives of all diplomatic missions present in Iran. The event was also attended by Oman's Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs,



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China's Special Envoy on the Middle East Issue, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq, former President of Afghanistan, as well as large representations from Pakistan, Qatar, and Kuwait. However, there was no diplomatic representation from Syria and no representatives of Hezbollah, Hamas, Houthi, Islamic Jihad, and other non-state allies of Tehran. In turn, Russia was represented

only by a young expert in one of the local think tanks. Almost half of the guests, on the other hand, were Western European experts, some of whom were journalists, but were unable to perform their role due to Iranian restrictions.

The conference, therefore, was not a PR success, for which Iran itself is responsible. For this reason, this event did not contribute to the media promotion of Hormuz Peace Endeavor. It was, nevertheless, a *de facto* diplomatic success of Iran, and Minister Zarif in particular. This success was not so much in gaining regional support for Hormuz Peace Endeavor, but rather in demonstrating that Iran is far from being isolated. Concerning the initiative itself, the debate remained highly vague and theoretical and did not bring any tangible results.

HORMUZ PEACE ENDEAVOR – COLLECTIVE SECURITY AND COOPERATION

The idea of the Hormuz Peace Endeavor, which, not unintentionally, has the acronym HOPE, was presented by President Hassan Rouhani to the UN General Assembly in September. Its aim is the creation of a collective security system in the West Asia region. It concerns, therefore, a broader region than just the Middle East, stretching from Pakistan to Turkey. It asserts rhetoric that security ought to be guaranteed by respecting principles such as non-interference in each other's internal affairs, respect for territorial integrity, and respect for borders. Above all, however, it would be based on mutual trust rather than armaments and the presence of foreign military bases. This is the essence of the whole idea and, at the same time, its biggest problem.

At the conference in Tehran, Zarif sharply criticized the notion of "*buying*

Abandoning the “buying security” system in favor of the proposed “collective security” concept requires mutual trust, which is not abundant in the region.

security”, consisting of the dependence of countries in the region on foreign (mainly American) military aid, namely the sale of weapons and the presence of military bases. In Iran’s view, this kind of “buying” not only does not provide security but also makes people dependent on a “protector” who is continuously intensifying the threat in order for the “protected” to need help. According to Iran, the US military presence in the region has not led to the elimination of any problems but has only worsened them. It is therefore intended to serve as proof that the countries of the area must break with the philosophy of “buying security”.

The participants of the conference generally hinted signs of agreeing with Iran’s idea, but discussions on details were avoided. What was criticized by name was only Israel and the USA and the international military presence in Iraq (because the Iraqis themselves criticize it). However, the question of the presence of American military bases in any other country was not raised, and yet almost all the countries in the region that participated in this conference have them. Even the criticism of the countries of the region that were absent

– primarily Iran’s main rival, Saudi Arabia – was moderate. Iran stresses that the project is open to all, and it is willing to discuss it with Saudi Arabia. During the debate at the Tehran Forum, it was also argued that abandoning the “buying security” system in favor of the proposed “collective security” concept requires mutual trust, which is not abundant in the region.

The foundations of HOPE may somewhat resemble the Westphalian order introduced after the Thirty Years’ War in 17th century Europe. It is attractive for many Middle Eastern regimes not to interfere with each other in their internal affairs, and thus to allow other states to suppress any opposition movements ruthlessly – noting that both Saudi Arabia and Iran are accused of such interference in the region. It should be recalled that in 2011, the so-called Arab Spring affected almost all countries of the region. Individual actors, however, generally applied double standards when they were “supporting democracy” in the case of their opponents, and “legal authorities” in the case of themselves or their supporters. After all, nobody in the region gained anything, and almost everyone lost. Is it enough for regional regimes to conclude that it is time to change policies and get along?

The political deputy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran Abbas Araghchi went even further and compared HOPE to European integration or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), adding that the countries of the region can benefit from cooperation on such levels as nuclear energy. Given that the Iranian nuclear program is a bone of contention, this was a relatively symptomatic statement.

Witold Repetowicz ■
March 2020

GIANTS BUILT ON THE FUNDAMENTALS OF ECONOMIC PATRIOTISM

EDITORIAL TEAM OF THE WARSAW INSTITUTE REVIEW

A conscious choice of domestic products and services by consumers can be a driving force for the rapid development of the economy, building synergies between local companies, and the expansion of these companies onto global markets. Many national companies created with Polish capital are developing their businesses in Poland. These companies, having conducted their market activities, developed their new products and services in Poland, have meanwhile modernized, and then have proceeded to bring considerable profits both for their owners and for the national economy.



DRUTEX PRODUCTION CENTER

Exceptionally triumphant in the 21st century, globalisation continues to have an indisputably substantial, if not dominating, impact on the internationalisation of national economies. It makes the world witness to a seemingly relentless increase in trade network density and market integration. The effect is that whilst globalisation has its obvious advantages, it also has some negative consequences for certain sectors of the economies of individual countries that have also been observed. Since Poland's political transformation in 1989 and the conversion of its economic model to a free market economy, there has been a significant increase in the number of companies developing their businesses in Poland. After some time, these companies began to expand their businesses overseas and sell their products and services outside of Poland. Meanwhile, foreign enterprises can simultaneously use the opportunity to enter the Polish market

and compete with other, often national entities. Despite the high expansiveness of foreign enterprises and free trade with most developed countries, economic patriotism and its role in building a conscious society and economy should still be an important subject of analysis. This is all the more so since it plays the role of a connecting element not only of national economies but also of Polish society and democracy. Even though there has been an increase in globalisation for several decades now, it is not farfetched to argue that the most affluent countries in the world share their common element – an economic patriotism that consists of trade patriotism and consumer patriotism¹.

GLOBALISATION

The market has grown in importance in the last century, whereas it could seem that the role of national or regional policy has

¹ R. Zgorzelski, *Modern Patriotism*, Warsaw Institute, 8 March 2017, <https://warsawinstitute.org/modern-patriotism/> [10.04.2020].



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been somewhat marginalised in the age of globalisation. Since some companies in the world have annual profits many times higher than the GDP of entire countries, it is evident that they influence the economy of certain nations – and the policy of a given country often may become second priority to economic goals. Thus, taking into account globalisation, for the national economy, patriotism is a crucial element of an individual's identity. After all, it does constitute part of a particular national group or state. This important idea of a community is also adjointly connected with – albeit varying degrees from country to country – notions orbital around history, a common ethnic background, cultural heritage, origin, shared values, the memory of heroes, symbols, the anthem, and national holidays – and everything that defines the nation-state.

Since the times of Adam Smith, people's economic activity has translated into a simple search for their own interest – which is to bring wealth and prosperity to all

An economic patriotism that consists of trade patriotism and consumer patriotism.

entrepreneurs. This interest nowadays is the interest of the Polish entrepreneur expressed by means of taking care of domestic companies, including one-person businesses, micro, small, and medium enterprises, as well as big companies that boost the Polish economy and stimulate smaller businesses.

TRADE PATRIOTISM

Trade patriotism is defined as all actions taken by the public and private sector to help the economy of the home country in the wide array of aspects relevant to trade. Genuine and longer-lasting progress and successes of entrepreneurship can only be achieved if governments and public administrations take appropriate steps, both independently and symbiotically. The vital focal point in this context, not to be underestimated, is the simultaneously simple and complex issue of raising awareness of the need for promoting national goods – both on the national and international markets. There are wide ranging macro-economic models and schools of thought on this, however, it could be argued that seemingly, in general, there would seem to be a more mainstream consensus that, as opposed to complete laissez-faire, that Governments have the responsibility, and should, firstly, maintain the appropriate conditions for entrepreneurs so they can create and develop domestic companies. After all, this is where people tend to look to first for help and point the blame in the event of its absence, not the multinational corporations. Therefore, secondly, and



**ZGRUPOWANIA AK "RADOSŁAW" RONDO,
WARSAW POLAND, 02.02.2020.**

© ARCHIWUM KALBAR (PAP)

nationalism' has been described as by its critics. Economic, and in particular, trade patriotism is hence about encouraging and enabling the economic functionality of a country's entities in ways that are also beneficial to the country's partners, rather than excessively obsessive protectionist or trade war-like measures. One does not forget, whilst being proud of the goods and services of one's own country, that those of foreign entities also influence the economic growth of that country, provided these businesses function transparently and in good faith. Therefore, creating artificial competitive barriers is not a solution; on the contrary, such competition is necessary and ought to be both enabled and encouraged. National economies are fuelled by companies trying to compete globally with their products or services. The success of such companies should stimulate other smaller entities – ones that would fail without the support of economic giants or governments. In all developed countries around the world, for example, the United States, Japan, or Germany, the state supports national companies. It cooperates with them, understanding that an essential goal of internal economic policy is to build a strong group of entrepreneurs and – as a result – guarantee the development of their own societies.

CONSUMER PATRIOTISM

The notion of consumer patriotism is based on the conscious purchasing attitudes of consumers – above all, the awareness of benefits of choosing buy or invest in domestic products or services, where such possibilities exist. The latter fuel economic growth, reduce unemployment, create new jobs, and allow companies to compete in international markets. It is essential to understand that consumers can contribute to the wealth of the whole society by making individual purchasing decisions. Profits generated by individual local producers directly

most particularly in the trade patriotism context, Governments should avidly support the promotion of their products.

Such an economic strategy could be crucial for every well-developed and developing country alike, albeit likely to manifest in different ways. A significant advantage of trade patriotism, and this must be underlined, is that it does not prevent or directly or indirectly inhibit foreign entities from making their investments in the domestic market. It is neither zero-sum nor a rejection of globalisation, as sometimes 'economic



INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION AND ARCHITECTURE FAIR BUDMA 2020

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translate into increased tax revenue for the state budget, which benefits all citizens. In practise, Embassies and their respective trade departments or programmes contribute to encouraging the purchase of goods and services originating or associated with their country, like for instance, the 'Australian Made' campaign and website. Consumer patriotism is orbital around highlighting the positive aspects of goods and services coming from or associated to a particular country, not in any way demeaning others.

Some individual consumers, however, are reasonably wary of some negative effects associated with the spread of globalisation. They consider global trends and economic and social influences, the aim of which is to develop international brands as harmful to the local economy. Also, in many cases, they take action reflecting their attitude towards, for example, foreign companies, goods, or services. The example of such efforts is consumer ethnocentrism, increasingly emerging among consumers as the opposite of globalisation. It is reflected in their preference to buy

In these specific instances, paradoxically, globalisation would have naturally contributed to increased localisation.

national or local goods. These consumers often treat it as a responsibility and moral duty to support local producers and service providers as the latter emphasize responsibility towards the community and the role of social capital. In these specific instances, where the effects of globalisation are more negative than the limitations without it, paradoxically, globalisation would have naturally contributed to increased localisation. Approaching this both alternatively at simultaneously, this is also apparent in specific scenarios where the benefits of localised economic activity, such as relatively higher degrees of self-sufficiency in a community, outweigh the



**LESZEK GIERSZEWSKI, THE FOUNDER
AND PRESIDENT OF DRUTEX COMPANY**

© KRZYSZTOF MYSTKOWSKI / KFP

benefits of globalisation. In this context, an element of patriotism is considered advantageous for the success of businesses supporting the development of the society in said country.

POLISH COMPANIES WITH POLISH CAPITAL ARE DOING WELL

The Polish market, due to Poland's membership in the European Union, open borders, and numerous customs agreements with other countries, is filled with foreign companies transferring their income abroad. However, what should be emphasised is that Polish companies are

the basis of the state's economy since they contribute to the state budget funds and guarantee the protection of Polish tradition and culture. Naturally, competition is important because it increases the quality of products or services offered. As it turns out, many Polish companies can compete with foreign ones in terms of quality, price, or attractiveness of their goods. What is more, Polish products and services are sometimes presented as model solutions all over the world.

Economic patriotism is perfectly illustrated by the example of the Polish company Drutex, a tycoon in the window manufacturing market. The company set up 35 years ago in the small town of Bytów, and today employs more than three thousand people, has several production facilities totalling over 11 ha in one location and its prized technologies. Drutex not only produces and distributes products all over the world but also hires Polish citizens and creates its research programmes and IT solutions. The company uses its own know-how. It has also built some up-to-date machines and prototype of smart windows in-house, which are an excellent example of the company's strength and independent policy. This allows for extensive development of the company not only in terms of its technical and production potential, but also maximisation of its profits. What is crucial is that the company's activity also generates enormous benefits for the Polish economy – it contributes to the reduction of unemployment, supports other companies and entire sectors of Poland's economy, and generates direct inflows to the state budget. Drutex, just like other large Polish companies, also creates awareness among citizens who, in their consumer choices, prefer products manufactured on the domestic market.

Clothing and footwear are dominant segments of the economy with the Polish

capital in Poland. Such companies as CCC, Big Star, Bytom, Badura, Cropp, Reserved, Gino Rossi, Lasocki, Vistula, Wólczanka, or Rylko and Wojas have their shops in every major shopping centre not only in Poland but also abroad. Similarly to Drutex, these companies send their products, among others, to EU countries or to the United States, which not only increases revenues from product sales but also promotes the Polish economy. The quality of services offered by Drutex is appreciated all over the world and confirmed by the international certificates and technical documents. Thanks to the cooperation with almost 4 thousand international trade partners, Drutex company has been implementing the most prestigious projects. The windows produced in Bytom are used, among others, in large hotel designs in the United States, automotive centres in Mexico, or housing and commercial estates in Germany, Italy, France or Sweden. It is worth mentioning that the brand ambassadors were world-famous soccer players such as Jakub Błaszczykowski, Philipp Lahm and Andrea Pirlo. The positive opinions about the quality of products and services provided by this company are not only a profit for Drutex itself – they also guarantee the quality of Polish brands as a whole. The example of Drutex shows a comprehensive implementation of economic patriotism because it is a company with Polish capital which constantly improves its domestic and international activities, and thus fuels the Polish economy. Companies that act according to such principles nourish the Polish market and the tax system of the Polish state, leaving millions of złotys for the development of the economy, the social system, or local infrastructure investments.

ECONOMIC PATRIOTISM OF POLISH CONSUMERS

The research carried out by Katarzyna Włodarczyk from the Institute of Management and Marketing of the University of Szczecin shows that when

asked about the reasons for choosing a Polish or foreign product, the respondents indicated a few of them. In the case of choosing Polish products, the most frequent reasons were habituation (61% of respondents), predilection for the brand (52%), support for the domestic economy (45%), or preference for Polish products (45%). In the case of choosing foreign products, 44% of respondents stated that such a choice reflects the prestige of the owner; 43% could not explain the reason for their choice, and 33% of respondents declared that they prefer foreign products over Polish ones.

According to the author of the article *Globalizacja a patriotyzm ekonomiczny polskich konsumentów* [‘Globalisation and the economic patriotism of Polish consumers’], “the promotion of domestic goods makes it possible to escape from global patterns of behaviour and bulk purchasing. The transformation of the Polish economy initiated in 1989 has created new prospects for the economic development of the country and new conditions for the economic situation of business entities as well as for households, which, to support the domestic economy, should in today’s reality strongly support Polish production, Polish products, and Polish services provided by Polish entrepreneurs and employees.”

HELP FROM THE SYNERGY OF POLISH COMPANIES

Helping, especially in times of crisis, seems to be particularly difficult for businesses now forced to cope with its effects and mitigate negative market trends. Companies are saving their finances, jobs, and basically trying to survive in changing realities. However, the doctrine of economic patriotism and responsibility for the domestic economy makes assisting others an important task for responsible companies. As part of the fight against the global coronavirus pandemic,



OFFICIAL LOGOTYPE OF "WE ARE TOGETHER WE HELP" ACTION.

entrepreneurs operating in Poland decided to help Polish hospitals and patients by organizing the *"Helping. Together"* initiative. Its initiator, Leszek Gierszewski, President and founder of Drutex - a company that, thanks to the development of strong foundations, have not yet experienced the negative effects of the crisis and cultivates good practices in the field of the corporate social responsibility (CSR).

The action started with a noble gesture of the company, which donated 1 million zlotys in March to renovate and supply four Polish hospitals. Now, it's already over 1,5 mln PLN and it's not the last word that the company said. It has also launched its own production of safety helmets which are then forwarded to the medical staff all over Poland. Another big companies, for example LPP, Budimex, Posnet, CCC Posnet donated a lot of necessary protective equipment for hospitals – only in March they purchased thousands protective masks, medical suits, protective visors, and portable ventilators for the hospitals. So far, 70 companies taking part in 'Helping. Together' collected over 24 million zlotys which have been transferred to health care facilities, people affected by the coronavirus pandemic, and non-governmental organizations. The initiative was supported by key Polish companies, businesses with international reach, and smaller companies, sharing a sense of responsibility for their compatriots

and a country struggling with a deadly virus. Initiatives such as 'Helping. Together' represents a huge potential of our national champions, who can demonstrate their ability to manage the crisis and rise in solidarity above divisions, not only to return to business but above all to help those who need it most.

CONCLUSIONS

Economic patriotism constitutes an integral part of the economy and is progressively increasing its existence and importance in the world. Conscious consumerism of developed societies allows them to decide on their purchasing choices, taking into account both their economic and patriotic values. As far as state institutions are concerned, they provide the best conditions for the entrepreneurs to make sure the development of domestic entrepreneurship takes place smoothly and without obstacles. All these efforts will not go unnoticed, and will be rewarded – it is the entrepreneurs who may then promote the country abroad and bring measurable profits in the form of taxes that will serve the state, and in turn, circularly contribute to the wellbeing of Polish citizens and residents in Poland, and as such, elevate the position of Poland and its security in the world.

Editorial Team of the
Warsaw Institute Review ■
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STANISLAV SZUKALSKI: THE HUMAN RIDDLE

DANIEL POGORZELSKI

A plethora of creatives from Eastern and Central Europe electrified the arts world in the first half of the 20th century. In a part of the globe where the legacy of empires was profound and where the social order would upend itself repeatedly until the onset of the Cold War, mutiny was in the air. Conventions were abandoned, while innovative new perspectives and techniques caught the eye of a new audience. Previously shunned as a backwater of Europe, critics began to take notice. While perhaps not given the same attention as artisans from certain other countries, Polish visual artists nonetheless found themselves in a better position to highlight their artistic achievements than they had in decades.



KATYN BRONZE

© ARCHIVES SZUKALSKI

With a history of powerful forces pushing Poles to leave their native lands, it should come as little surprise that sons and daughters of Poland would weave themselves into the art scenes of other countries. Kazimir Malevich, Mela Muter, and Balthus are all noted painters whose Polish origin is often overlooked or absent in the discussion of their art. The same cannot

be said of Stanisław Szukalski, a dynamic figure full of passion and fire whose work exudes its own unique take on Polish history and Slavic folklore.

The aim of this piece is not to serve as an exhaustive history on Stanisław Szukalski, of which there are several excellent books in both English and Polish, as well as a recently released documentary film *“Struggle: The Life*

and Lost Art of Szukalski” on Netflix. Instead, it is to look at certain episodes in the early life of the artist and examine how they subsequently affected Stanislaw as well as his art.

In some ways, Szukalski’s biography seems beyond belief. A regular at the infamous Dil Pickle Club during the Chicago Renaissance, Stanislaw would become embroiled in one of the largest art scandals of interwar Poland. The artist’s earthly path intersected with the likes of some of the brightest minds in Poland and the United States, such as Hollywood scriptwriter Ben Hecht, painter Jacek Malczewski, and actor Leonardo Di Caprio. Sure of his own talents, Szukalski created prodigious amounts of work, only to see much of it destroyed during World War II. Yet despite being an inspired creator, he was his own worst enemy. Szukalski’s verbal attacks on others in the art world ultimately denied him what he craved for most; an admiring audience.

A WORLD IN NEED OF REVOLUTION

Szukalski was born in the town of Warta in 1893. A small Polish municipality dating back to the 13th century, the artist came of age when his birthplace had been a part of the Russian Empire for decades. Later in life, Szukalski paid tribute to his hometown with one of his artistic aliases as “*Stach z Warty*”, which translates into English as Stan from Warta.

It is impossible to understand an artist and their creative work without first getting a clear idea of their psychology. In the case of Szukalski, we can see how the life of the father he idolized influenced the future sculptor’s worldview. Stanislaw’s father Dionizy was a blacksmith by profession, but he was also a revolutionary.

Dionizy Szukalski was outraged by the injustices built into the European order that left Poles without a country after Napoleon’s defeat. This state of affairs drove Dionizy and many other political activists of his generation to be extremely determined to overthrow the imperial status quo of Europe at this time. It was an arrangement which Dionizy was driven to upset.

Being at odds with the establishment in territories under foreign occupation was not easy, and the family had to relocate again and again. Shortly before Szukalski’s birth, the family had fled for a short time to Brazil, where his sister Alfreda was born before returning to Russian occupied Poland. Financial struggles led Dionizy to leave his family in Warta for South Africa a year after Stanislaw’s birth in 1893. After working there for a few years, the pull of the righteous fight against overwhelming odds led Szukalski’s father to take up arms in the Second Boer War against the British. Dionizy fought alongside the Boers until their defeat in 1902, after which he returned to his family and together they moved to Gidle, a village within the Russian Partition of Poland. They wouldn’t stay there for long however, as within a few years the family would cross the Atlantic Ocean and settle in Chicago, another hotbed of activism and discontent at this time.

A REAL CITY

Although the young Stanislaw Szukalski was reputed to have produced small sculptures in wood and stone for his peers in Gidle, it was in Chicago where the refining of his artistic inclinations began to take shape. Even his later schooling in Cracow’s prestigious Academy of Fine Arts was inspired by a comment from Polish sculptor Antoni Popiel to Szukalski while visiting the Windy City.



MERMAID OF WARSAW

© ARCHIVES SZUKALSKI



BLACKSMITH FATHER

© ARCHIVES SZUKALSKI

The city was simultaneously ripe with grit while in the midst of an artistic ferment, the beginning of an era when some regarded Chicago as the “cultural capital” of the United States. The Chicago School of Architecture and a wealth of literary talent are just two facets of a host of creativity coming out of the “City of Big Shoulders” at this time. Yet Chicago could also be a cruel place where people sometimes were treated little better than the cattle

brought to slaughter in the city’s famous Union Stockyards. Rudyard Kipling poignantly alluded to this cruelty in his quote *“I have struck a city - a real city - and they call it Chicago... I urgently desire never to see it again. It is inhabited by savages.”*

It was in Chicago where Szukalski’s father died, the victim of an automobile accident. Stanislaw came upon his father’s mangled body, and carried

his corpse to the morgue. Some have theorized that the horribly distorted figures in some of Szukalski's sculptures draw their inspiration from that grisly death scene.

The influence of his revolutionary father is perhaps best captured during an exhibit by Szukalski at the Art Institute of Chicago, an event which went awry, after the artist was criticized for calling out British Imperialism. Given that his father had fought against the British Empire as they tried to expand their reach over the African continent and likely touching a raw nerve since this was only a short time after Dionizy's death, Szukalski flew into a rage. Instead of the art being taken down as the gallery demanded, Stanislaw destroyed his work and had to be thrown out of the Chicago Art Institute.

Several motifs and philosophical quirks which Szukalski is known for can be traced back to his time in Chicago. The death of Stanislaw's father was quickly followed by the deterioration of his financial situation. Forced to work in the city's meatpacking industry butchering livestock, Szukalski was surrounded by other Slavic and Baltic peoples who spoke different, yet similar languages to his native Polish, likely stirring Szukalski's lifelong pursuit of searching for the common linguistic roots which later manifested in his philosophy of Zermatism and "rediscovery" of the human protolanguage.

Chicago ties together many of the threads which come together in Szukalski's art. Is it a coincidence that Szukalski's early works are so deeply imbued with Impressionism, and that the Art Institute of Chicago possesses one of the largest collections in that style outside of France? Or that the

city, owing to the strength of its Polish community, imbued in him a strong attachment to the culture of his country of origin? Does Szukalski's search for an indigenous American sculptural form not parallel the philosophy of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School of Architecture? This is certainly a topic in need of further research.

CONCLUSION

Though his life may have straddled two continents, Szukalski's artistic influences drew from all over the world. It's a point which if he were still alive, the artist would likely deny. As Eva and Donat Kirch succinctly characterized Szukalski, *"Like many other self-assertive avant-garde artists, he chose radical dogmatism to express his views and attract attention. His dreams, career, and life were to be realized by way of perpetual conflict with all those who dared to disagree even on the smallest details of his art and views."*

When asked whether Szukalski's art will finally gain the kind of mass reverence Stanislaw sought during his life, Polish art historian Maciej Mieziak answered by sharing a conversation he had with Szukalski's friend Marian Konarski. Konarski, who had faced repression in his artistic career because of his associations with Szukalski, predicted that when Stanislaw's detractors eventually pass away, the next generation of fans would finally be able to popularize Szukalski's works unimpeded. Recent events seem to suggest that may very well be the case.

Daniel Pogorzelski ■
March 2020

THE KATYŃ MASSACRE – MECHANISMS OF GENOCIDE

KATARZYNA UTRACKA

80 years ago, on March 5, 1940, a decision was made at the highest level of the Soviet authorities, from which the NKVD murdered nearly 22 thousand Polish citizens. Among them were prisoners of camps in Kozielsk, Starobielsk, and Ostashkow, captured after Soviet Union's aggression on Poland, and people in NKVD prisons in the USSR-occupied eastern parts of Poland. The fallen constituted the nation's elite; its defensive, intellectual, and creative potential. Murdering them was an attack on 'Polishness' and the Polish nation; aimed to prevent a sovereign Polish state from being rebuilt.



BRINGING TO POLAND THE ASHES OF POLISH OFFICERS MURDERED IN KATYN. WARSAW, POLAND, APRIL 5, 1989.

© TEODOR WALCZAK (PAP)

HITLER-STALIN PACT

On August 23, 1939, Joachim von Ribbentrop, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Third Reich, came to Moscow. Together with Vyacheslav Molotov, the People's Commissioner for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, they signed a bilateral non-aggression pact.

A secret protocol, which was attached to this document, included a plan for the partition of Poland by the Third Reich and the Soviet Union. The worst fears were realised – Poland's eastern and western neighbors decided to take the freedom of Poles away again. For the price of seemingly smaller territorial benefits, Hitler received a guarantee of Moscow's neutrality in the upcoming military conflict with the West.

On September 17, 1939, just about two weeks after the Third Reich attacked

Poland, the Red Army attacked Poland from the east, implementing the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact. Meeting little resistance from the units of the Border Protection Corps and few military units, it occupied more and more towns at a fast pace. Because of the "stabbing in the back" with lacking support of allies, a decision was made to evacuate the highest authorities of the Republic of Poland abroad. At the same time, the Commander-in-Chief issued an unclear directive ordering the troops to get to Hungary or Romania and avoid fighting the Red Army. However, some Polish units and garrisons decided to take part in uneven battles against the aggressor – but given the huge disproportion, the disaster was inevitable. The independent Polish state was eliminated, and its territory seized by the Third Reich and the Soviet Union.

IN SOVIET CAPTIVITY

After the aggression on Poland, the Soviets took captive or arrested from 240 to 250 thousand Poles, including about 10 thousand officers of the Polish Army. Contrary to all international conventions, they handed prisoners over to the NKVD security services – as the counterrevolutionary element.

Three special camps were set up: in Starobielsk and Kozielsk – for officers, senior state and military officials, and in Ostashkow – mainly for soldiers of the Border Protection Corps and officers of the State Police, intelligence and counterintelligence, the Prison Guard, and the Border Guard. At the end of November 1939, a total of over 14.5 thousand Polish prisoners of war were in these camps. The conditions were difficult – overcrowding, lack of water and food. Each of the prisoners was inquired about their political views, professional position, assets, even associations with foreign countries, and foreign language skills. The network of informers provided information about life in the camp. Many months of interrogation and indoctrination of the prisoners brought little effect. Only a few broke down. The vast majority did not, openly manifesting their patriotism.

In the last weeks of 1939, NKVD officers accelerated the investigation. Their files were forwarded to the Special Council, the task of which was to decide on the fate of the POWs and prisoners held by the NKVD.

DEATH SENTENCE

Józef Stalin personally decided to murder Polish prisoners of war, at the request of the People's Commissioner of Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union, Lavrentiy Beria. In an extensive note of 5 March 1940, the head of the NKVD called for the case to be considered

“in a special procedure and giving them the maximum penalty – execution”. He also requested that “cases should be handled without calling the arrested and without presenting charges, decision to end the investigation, and indictment” (Andrzej Krzysztof Kunert, *Katyn. Ocalona pamięć* [“Saved Memory”], Warsaw 2010, p. 130). The verdict was signed by members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Kliment Voroshilov, Vyacheslav Molotov, and Anastas Mikoyan. The acceptance of Mikhail Kalinin and Lazar Kaganovich was also confirmed by adding their names to the margin of the document. On the same day, the Politburo formally accepted Beria's proposal.

Meetings discussing the subject were held in Moscow in the following days, and on 14 March 1940, the heads of the regional directorates of Smolensk, Kalinin, and Kharkiv regions and military commanders of the NKVD regional directorates were ordered to murder Polish prisoners of war. A week later, Beria issued an order “About unloading NKVD prisons”, which really translated into murdering Poles detained in NKVD prisons in the area of pre-war eastern provinces of Poland. Among them were retired officers, people involved in the state service, government officials, local government officials, prosecutors, judges, political activists, landowners, and others of a similar standing.

MURDEROUS STRATEGY

The implementation of the plan to murder Polish prisoners of war was carried out according to detailed instructions of the NKVD. The Soviets wanted the whole action to be carried out quickly and efficiently – so that as few people as possible knew about it. The killing

machine started up with momentum. On 16 March 1940, the NKVD investigating units began to complete the documents of future victims. Meanwhile, afraid of the prisoners' rebellion, the security apparatus of the camp focused on deceiving them. A massed and well-thought-out disinformation campaign had the anticipated effect. The prisoners were not aware of their fate until the last moment. They learned the terrible truth only in the Katyn Forest or in NKVD prison cells. One of the Starobielsk survivors, Józef Czapski, recalled: "There was no way of figuring out what were the selection criteria for the groups of us sent away from the camp. Their age, years of birth, ranks, professions, social backgrounds, political beliefs were all mixed. Every subsequent batch was another contradiction to our guesses. We all matched only in one thing: each of us waited feverishly for that hour when they announced a new list of those leaving. Maybe this time it would finally be our turn to be on the list [...]. Standing on the great church stairs, the commandant bid farewell to the groups of those leaving with a smile full of promises. You're going out there, he told one of us, where I would love to go myself."¹

Prisoners were transported from the camps to the places of execution – prisoners from Kozielsk were transported by trains to Smolensk, from Starobielsk to Kharkiv, from Ostashkov to Kalinin (now Tver). This is how Zdzisław Peszkowski, a survivor from Starobielsk, who later became a chaplain of the Katyn Families, remembered his departure from the camp: "They searched us thoroughly and took from us any sharp tools like knives, scissors, razor blades we had. Our photographs were checked, and we were led out of the camp gate in groups

of two. We were put into the prison wagons that had been already waiting for us. They have packed everyone in, eight men in each compartment. They locked barred corridor doors with special locks. NKVD soldiers were guarding from the corridor. We were just like wild animals in cages..."².

At the same time, the action of "unloading" the prisons of the so-called Western Belarus and Western Ukraine was prepared. The arrested were transported to prisons in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Minsk, and Kherson. The Special Council of the NKVD drew up "death lists" – shooting orders, which were then approved by the so-called "NKVD troika": Vsevolod Merkulov, Bogdan Kobulov, and Leonid Bashtakov. Executioners were trained in killing people with a shot in the back of the head. Moscow also appointed people to supervise their work.

THE MASSACRE

The first "death letters" reached the camps in Kozelsk, Starobielsk, and Ostashkov in early April, and to the prisons in Minsk, Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Kherson around 20 April 1940. The same procedure occurred in torture houses in Kharkiv and Kalinin. NKVD officers who participated in the executions mentioned their details in the testimonies.

Executions were carried out only at night, in strict secrecy. The prisoners were brought to the cellars, where, in a solitary and muted room, they were murdered with a shot in the back of the head. Those who resisted were tied up. The Nagant revolver was initially used to carry out the executions. Later on, the executioners started using German Walther 7.65 due to its reliability and high performance. The shooting ended at dawn. The head of the Board of the

¹ Józef Czapski, *Wspomnienia starobielskie* ["Memoirs of Starobielsk"], Rome 1945, p. 45.

² *Sprawa Katynia* ["The Katyn Case"], ed. Krzysztof Komorowski, Warsaw 2010, p. 44.



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**THE LATE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND, LECH KACZYŃSKI
DURING THE CEREMONY HONORING THE VICTIMS OF THE KATYŃ MASSACRE.
WARSAW, POLAND, NOVEMBER 9, 2007**

District NKVD in Kalinin, Major Dmitry Stepanovich Tokarev, recalled years later: “It was already on the first day. So we went. And then I saw all this horror. We came there. After a few minutes Blokhin [one of the NKVD officers who came from Moscow] put on his special clothing: a brown leather cap, a long leather brown apron, leather brown gloves with cuffs above the elbows. It made a huge impression on me – I saw the executioner! The charges were not read to the convicts. After being dragged to the cell, the victim was immediately killed by a shot in the back of the head” (*Sprawa Katynia...*, p. 50). In the morning, the corpses of the murdered were transported by trucks to solitary places with already dug pits.

Gravediggers were replaced by excavators that leveled the ground. The burial places of the victims were for years inaccessible even to the local residents.

We know much less about the execution in Katyn – in this case, our knowledge comes mainly from exhumations.

The shells found above the death pits indicate that the executions took place directly there. However, before the victims were sent to the execution site, they were directed to a villa, which in the 1930s served as a resort for the most deserving NKVD officers. This building was where the searches were conducted. Perhaps it was also where some executions were carried out. Those who resisted had their



**EXHUMATION OF THE CORPSES OF POLISH OFFICERS.
KATYN, RUSSIA, 1943.**

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hands bound. Some of them had coats put on their head tied with a rope, the end of which was connected with a knot on their hands. The prisoners were then reloaded into prison cars without windows and transported to the execution site.

Several Soviet documents give different numbers of people killed, although the differences are small. According to the note of the head of KGB Alexander Shelepin to Nikita Khrushchev of 3 March 1959, a total of 21,857 Polish POWs and prisoners were shot, including 7,305 people detained in prisons. Some researchers believe that the numbers are understated. Only 395 prisoners escaped mass murder – from three special camps they were taken to the camp in Yukhnov.

MOTIVES FOR THE CRIME

The reason for murdering Polish officers could have been the desire to take revenge for the defeat in the Polish-Soviet war of 1920 or the necessity to arrange the camps for Finns, who were taken prisoner in the ongoing war with their neighbour. The most probable motive, however, was the idea of depriving the Polish nation

of its leaders and intellectual elite.

In the opinion of the Soviet authorities, Polish POWs, who were manifesting their patriotism, were “irredeemable enemies of the Soviet authorities and are not likely to improve”. For this reason, they were to be murdered. The Soviet authorities decided that this move would facilitate the future governance of the Polish-Soviet Republic. Some researchers believe that the decision to “finally solve” the case of Polish prisoners of war was made in the name of the declared cooperation of German and Soviet security services in the fight against Polish independence aspirations. The coincidence in time with the AB-Aktion (Extraordinary Operation of Pacification) conducted by the Germans and aimed at the Polish intelligentsia does not seem to be unintentional.

VICTIMS AND EXECUTIONERS

Among the Polish POWs held in special camps in Kozelsk, Starobielsk and Ostashkov were professional officers of the Polish Army and State Police as well as reservists. In “death transports” to Smolensk and Kharkiv were: 12 generals, 1 rear admiral, 77 colonels,

197 lieutenants-colonels, 541 majors, 1 441 captains, 6 061 lieutenants, second lieutenants, cavalry masters, and warrant officers, and 18 chaplains and other clergymen. According to Polish historians, half of the then officer corps of the Polish Army were killed. In the NKVD prisons of so-called Western Belarus and Western Ukraine, the Soviets detained officers who were not mobilized in September 1939, civil servants and local government officials. Many of the murdered were high-class specialists in various fields, among them university professors, engineers, priests, doctors, lawyers, officials, poets, writers – the intellectual elite of Poland.

Many employees of the central apparatus, regional directorates in Smolensk, Kharkiv, and Kalinin, as well as NKVD convoy and military units, participated in the Katyn genocide. The perpetrators were the most experienced torturers from Lubyanka and local NKVD prisons, trained in killing with one shot. Some of them are known by name. One of the documents that were not destroyed was Lavrentiy Beria's order, released on 26 October 1940, rewarding 125 people "for the proper performance of special tasks". These people included all ranks from generals to the lowest NKVD officers. The torturers remained silent for years to come, carefully hiding the secret. Some of them managed to make a career, but many of them started to drink and died, one by one, within a few years of the crime. Some of them committed suicide.

DISCOVERY OF GRAVES

In the summer of 1941 Smolensk and its surroundings were occupied by the German army. The first information about the mass graves of Polish officers in the Katyń Forest was given to the Germans shortly after, but they did not make any attempt to verify it. In the

spring of 1942, Polish forced laborers found out about the execution of Poles from the local population. In April they started searching the forest on their own. In one of the suggested places, they discovered a corpse in Polish Army uniforms. They built a birch cross and notified the German authorities of the finding, but the latter did not show any interest in the case. It was not until February 1943 that the German secret field police started an efficient investigation. On 18 February, the area indicated by the Poles was partly dug up and several mass graves were identified. On 11 April 1943, the German news agency Transocean News Service was the first to report the discovery in Katyń – a place that became a symbol of this atrocious crime.

PLAYING WITH KATYN

The Germans revealed the Katyń massacre after the defeat in Stalingrad. They believed that the discovery of graves in Katyń would be an excellent opportunity to divide the anti-Hitler coalition. The announcement of the German news agency about the finding of the graves gave rise to massive propaganda. With Hitler's order, this case was given international publicity. All over Europe, the radio stations controlled by the Germans reported the discovery of the graves. The exhumation was attended by journalists, a delegation of the Polish Red Cross and an international committee of pathologists. Six days after the announcement of the Transocean News Service, Joseph Goebbels, Reich Minister of Propaganda of Nazi Germany noted: "The whole problem of Katyń has become a big political affair that may still have a significant resonance. That is why we make use of it in accordance with the state of the art. Since these 10,000 to 12,000 Polish officers have already lost their lives – perhaps not as a result

of no fault of their own, as they once instigated war, their fate should now serve the nations of Europe to open their eyes to the danger of Bolshevism”³.

Shortly after the discovery of the graves in Katyn, the Polish government called for an investigation. The disappearance of Polish officers has long been a matter of concern for the Polish authorities – they also repeatedly asked the Kremlin about their fate. The discovery made the Polish government demand that the Soviets explain what happened during the genocide. Moscow reacted with a false accusation of Poles covering up the German crime and cooperating with the Nazis. Under Stalin’s pressure, the British Foreign Minister demanded the immediate withdrawal of the appeal and the public announcement that the Katyn massacre was a German “invention”. British censorship stopped the Polish radio dispatches and confiscated texts intended for printing. The Allies feared that Poland’s position would complicate Soviet-British contacts. Although the Poles withdrew their appeal, the Soviets broke off diplomatic relations with the Polish Government-in-exile. Stalin triumphed – the Katyn case has damaged Poland’s position in the international arena.

FALSIFICATION OF HISTORY

After the release of the German news agency, the radio and press from Moscow were disseminating the position of the Kremlin, blaming the Germans for the massacre in Katyn. What is more, Moscow’s “Pravda” concluded the appeal of the Polish government to the International Red Cross for explaining

the situation with an accusatory article “Polish Hitler’s collaborators”.

The Soviets, having had broken off diplomatic relations with the Polish government less than a week later, and following the occupation of Smolensk by the Red Army, the NKVD and NKGB officers immediately went to Katyn to falsify evidence of a crime. In January 1944, a special commission headed by Nikolay Burdenko that investigated the Katyn massacre reported that the Germans were responsible for the crimes. After the war, the case of Katyn was raised before the Nuremberg Tribunal. However, it did not go to trial as the guilt of the Germans could not be proven. Over the following decades, the Soviets tried to erase the memory of the Katyn massacre.

A tool used in spreading disinformation was publicizing the German crime committed on the residents of the Belarusian village of Khatyn, located near Katyn.

EXHUMATIONS

The exhumations in Katyn began at the end of February 1943 – then the Germans discovered eight mass graves. Out of seven of them, they extracted over 4,000 bodies, of which nearly 2,800 were identified. After the entry of the Red Army, the Soviet commission concluded that the crimes were committed by the Germans in the summer of 1941. The official recognition of the guilt of the USSR by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1990 made it possible to resume exploration. As a result, in 1991, it was possible to locate burial places for prisoners: from Starobielsk in Piacthatki, and from Ostashkow in Miednoje. The remaining graves were found during subsequent studies in 1994 and 1995. At that time, the exhumations were also carried out in Katyn. Other Polish graves were discovered in Bykivnia in the suburbs of Kyiv. During the exhumation works

³ Eugeniusz Cezary Król, *Polska i Polacy w propagandzie narodowego socjalizmu w Niemczech 1919-1945* [“Poland and the Poles in the propaganda of National Socialism in Germany 1919-1945”], Warsaw 2006, p. 430.



ALL SAINTS' DAY AT THE MILITARY CEMETERY, WARSAW, POLAND, NOVEMBER 1, 1990

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conducted in 2011, the corpses of Polish citizens from the so-called Ukrainian Katyn list were discovered.

THE KATYŃ INVESTIGATIONS

The Polish investigation under the supervision of prosecutor Jerzy Sawicki started in the spring of 1945 and was interrupted in 1946. In the same year, the Soviet prosecutor-general Rudenko brought an accusation before the Nuremberg Tribunal against the Germans for murdering Polish officers. In 1950, as a result of the efforts of the Polish American Congress, the Katyn massacre was dealt with by a US Congress Committee. In its report, it recommended that the case be referred to the UN and the USSR be prosecuted before the International Court of Justice in The Hague. This ruling has triggered numerous protests of the authorities of the USSR and the Polish People's Republic. In 1959, the Katyn case was taken up by the then head of the KGB.

In a note for Khrushchev, he suggested destroying the victims' personal files and preserving only the principal documents. From then on, key files were only available to the General Secretary of the CPSU.

The review of the Katyn case was only possible after 1989. In 1990, the Chief Prosecutor's Office of the USSR opened an investigation conducted until 2004, when it was canceled due to the death of the guilty. The cancellation order and its justification have been kept secret. At the same time, the Katyn Massacre was classified as common crime, subject to a statute of limitations. In the same year, the Institute of National Remembrance decided to launch a Polish investigation into the Katyn case.

CONFESSION

In the USSR, revealing the truth about Katyn was only made possible by perestroika. In 1987, a joint committee

of historians was formed to explain the “blank spots” in the history of mutual relations. The breakthrough was when Russian researchers – Natalia Lebedeva, Vladimir Volkov, Yuri Zoria, and Valentina Parsadanova, found the NKVD documents and compared them with lists of German exhumations. Journalists and activists of “Memorial”, a Russian NGO defending human rights and documenting Stalinist crimes, also spoke out for the truth.

On 13 April 1990, the Russian agency TASS published an official announcement stating that the NKVD, and Beria and Merkulov personally, are responsible for the murder of Poles. On the same day, Poland received several hundred copies of documents concerning the prisoners of Kozelsk, Starobielsk, and Ostashkow. On 14 October 1992, a special envoy of President Boris Yeltsin solemnly presented President Lech Wałęsa with a copy of the famous Package No. 1, including a letter from Beria to Stalin, and an extract from the minutes of the Politburo of the USSR. A new stage in research on the Katyń Massacre had begun.

KATYŃ NECROPOLISES

In the early 1990s, Poles made efforts to build a large cemetery, mass tombs, ossuaries or honourary “necropoleis” for the victims of the Katyń Massacre. The first Polish cemetery where the remains of Soviet genocide victims are buried was opened in June 2000 in Kharkiv-Piatichatki. The remains of Polish soldiers and civilians, but also of Kharkiv residents, who were victims of Stalinist terror, were buried in the cemetery. In the following months, similar ceremonies were held in Katyń and Miednoje. These cemeteries became the final resting place for Polish officers from the camp in Kozelsk

and Ostashkow. In 2012, a Polish war cemetery was opened in Kyiv-Bykivnia, where the remains of victims from the so-called Ukrainian Katyn list were buried.

Many issues relating to the Katyń Massacre remain unresolved. What makes it even harder is that part of the volumes of the files of the investigation conducted by the Russians between 1990 and 2004 are not available. Russia refuses to disclose them, justifying their decision with the secrecy clause. What is more, Russia has not made a final decision on the legal classification of the crime. The Russian Prosecutor's Office considered it a common crime without revealing the legal grounding. The names of the victims on the so-called Belarusian Katyn list, not yet found, are still unknown. It is also unknown where these people were buried. In the case of the so-called Ukrainian Katyn list, the place where a small number of victims are buried was found. The aim of the Polish investigation conducted by the Institute of National Remembrance, which considers Katyń murder to be a war crime and a crime against humanity in its most serious form – that is, genocide – is to explain all the circumstances of this atrocious crime. The aim is to find out the names of all the victims of the Katyń Massacre, as well as the places where they were executed and buried. The investigators of the Institute of National Remembrance also seek to identify the names of all the perpetrators of the crime and determine the responsibility of each of them. In addition, if possible, it would be to prosecute the living perpetrators and bring about justice.

Katarzyna Utracka ■
March 2020

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