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STRATEGIC CULTURE AND FOREIGN POLICY OF UKRAINE

MONOGRAPH

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INTRODUCTION

The state's strategic culture is an integrated system of symbols reflected in language, analogies, myths, metaphors, and daily rituals. This system creates firm strategic goals and/or preferences for the role of power (economic, military, and political) in the interstate relations. Strategic culture relates to shared beliefs and patterns of behaviour, which grew out of common experiences and adopted narratives (oral and written). These change collective identity and relations with other groups, determining the accepted objectives and methods for fulfilling tasks in the realm of security.

Contemporary political scientists and scholars of international relations are paying more attention to the study of strategic culture since there are more and more international problems related to the fact that the actors "speak different languages", meaning that the same phenomenon is interpreted differently in different cultures; one side often cannot comprehend the viewpoint of its opponent. In order to foresee future developments and to conduct strategic planning, the politicians and scholars, who are involved in the decision-making process, must be able to account for sudden changes in cultural symbols and behavioural habits, adjustments which were already made by the political elites of various states. The question of how identity influences the strategic choices of a state is timely for contemporary political scientists. So, the main notions that are most frequently connected to the analysis of strategic-cultural discourses are the following: history, national character, national memory, culture, religion, faith, customs, ethnicity, multiculturalism, behavioural habits, socialization, political thought, values, morals and law, ceremonies, and myths.

The main factors that influence strategic culture are: 1) geography, resources, climate, military and technical organization; 2) political system; 3) historical experience, the views of political elites, the views of various generations, myths and symbols, "the main book" (religious or other). The scholars of the "Odessa School of International Studies" have ignored the problem of studying strategic culture. A decisive factor in choosing our methodology for studying Ukrainian foreign policy – the subject of our long-term study – was the fact that "strategic culture" is not one of the classical theories. On the contrary, it is a new research program that has a high degree of compatibility with political realism at the same time. We see that "strategic culturalists" and "realists" usually set goals which mutually enrich and complement one another. "Realists" are trying to "explain" (cause – effect) categories like power ("force", "might"), national interest, balance of power, "the bounds of international systems", "centres of power", "division of power among sub-

jects”, “spheres of influence”, and “rules of the game”. “Culturalists” attempt to understand (context, interpretation). At the same time, security undoubtedly remains the focus of both schools; security in its broader meaning. It not only includes military-political aspects, but also economic and ideological. The latter component increases in importance within the context of the contemporary phenomenon, which is often referred to as “the Ukrainian crisis” in the literature. However, in our opinion, it is in fact a proxy conflict, with significance for the entire system of European relations’ development.

This monograph reflects on the evolution of Ukraine’s foreign policy in the areas, which were studied by the professors of the Department of International Relations of the Odesa Mechnikov National University. The monograph is structured in twelve chapters, each one dedicated to a specific dimension of our country’s foreign policy.

CHAPTER I
STRATEGIC CULTURE OF UKRAINE
AS THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT
OF THE UKRAINIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Olga Brusylowska and Polina Sinovets

The idea that a strategic choice is influenced by decision-makers' values and assumptions, which are deeply rooted in their states' histories, is not a new one. The concept of strategic culture (or as it can be better called "a scientific-research program") is quite popular all over the world, and it is important for understanding the "security portrait" of a state. To some extent, this definition is connected with the notion of political culture, but it is narrower, as it is directed at the analysis of "hard power" in the state's worldview.

Jack Snyder was the first to use the term in late 1970s; he defined strategic culture as "the sum total of ideals, conditional emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behaviour that members of the national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other with regard to nuclear strategy".¹ Therefore, Snyder defined this phenomenon as the framework of the general worldviews, attitudes, and behaviour patterns, and became the first to attempt an interpretation of the military conduct of the state using its cultural and historical background.²

Alastair Ian Johnston claims that a strategic culture is stable if the advantages' rating is stable. The high correlation between strategic advantages and actual strategic behaviour is an indicator of the application of a strategic culture concept. Johnston also pointed out that analysts should keep in mind that there might be a difference between declared and secret doctrines when they study the concept of strategic culture.³

Other writers have a rather more sceptical attitude of the concept of strategic culture. One of the most obvious features, which could be criticised, is that the concept is almost impossible to quantify. As Nicholas Rengger has observed, the term "culture" "seems to represent everything that good, positivistic trained international relations specialists should hate. It is an inevitably loose concept and is open to endless reinterpretation".⁴ There is a danger that the concept is so loose that it can explain everything and therefore nothing.

Yet, despite these obvious objections, the notion of strategic culture persists in the literature on international relations. This suggests that despite its problems, the concept is quite reliable in offering a useful contribution when it comes to strategic choice and state behaviour.

Academically this idea comes from constructivism, which broadens the neorealist vision of the states' security behaviour, which is driven by the concept of threat. In this case, the idea of rationality is explained by the peculiarities of the states' national strategic cultures, which is essential for understanding of the main aims and restrictions of the state on the strategic level.

Summing up the differences between political and strategic cultures, political culture is defined as the combination of the common values, attitudes, beliefs, orientations, which are contributing to the regulation of the political behaviour of all society members. While strategic culture could be defined as a "set of shared beliefs, assumptions and models of behaviour, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups and which determine appropriate ends and means of achieving national security objectives".⁵

Snyder's work had significant influence in his times, but far more attention has been paid to strategic culture since the first decade of the twenty-first century. It related to the United States' understanding of the necessity to build its defence policy (and first of all their deterrence policy) coming from the peculiarities of the potential opponents' national security styles.

It is well known, that Robert Kagan argued that Europeans and Americans have rather different attitudes when it comes to the use of military power. The USA, as the only one superpower in the world, was inclined to act unilaterally and pre-emptively, if necessary. Hiding in their "Kantian paradise", the Europeans were less inclined to use military power and were rather more committed to the rules-based international order in contradiction to Americans.⁶ Similarly, Steven McGuire and Michael Smith characterize the US as a "warrior nation"; whereas, the EU is a "trading state".⁷ Asle Toje has also used the concept of strategic culture when he was trying to reconcile the EU's stated foreign policy objectives and its behaviour in the context of transatlantic relations.⁸

Colin Gray has argued that strategic culture is not purely deterministic. However, the concept is useful, since it provides context for certain strategic choices. In other words, it greatly assists us when we interpret why decision-makers make particular choices. Gray also acknowledges that circumstances may compel decision-makers to make a choice, which is against the state's "strategic culture". It is clear that circumstances may force decision-makers to make a choice that is far beyond their "comfort zone". However, we can expect that under these circumstances they may face resistance. For instance, there could be some debates in society as to whether the course of action is wholly desirable or not. Opposing politicians could criticize the new direction of the government's foreign policy. In the media, those who shape public

opinion may also participate in the debate; and public opinion may well detect the degree of inconvenience or even direct opposition to the new course.⁹

Some of these elements could be seen when German decision-makers were compelled to re-evaluate their attitudes towards the use of military force in the 1990s. A. Dalgaard-Nielsen has suggested that two dominant schools of thought have been developed in Germany since 1945. The first school of thought was aligned with the centre-right in German politics, which can be characterized as “never again alone”, meaning that Germany needed to be a part of the multilateral alliance. The second school of thought was aligned with the social democrats, and could be defined as “never again war”; in other words, Germany should not use the military force except the cases of self-defence. The fact that there were two competing schools “emphasizes the plural and dynamic, rather than monolithic, nature of strategic culture”.¹⁰ Both schools “represented competing interpretations of German history regarding security and defence policy.”¹¹ During the Cold War, there was a consensus regarding the foreign and national security policies that West Germany should follow. In the 1990s, in the face of the disintegration of Yugoslavia, which caused a humanitarian catastrophe, both the left and right in German politics were forced to reconsider their attitudes to the use of military force. As Dalgaard-Nielsen noted, the left concluded that “Germany’s historical responsibility was not only a responsibility to oppose war; it was also a responsibility to stop aggression against unarmed civilians, if necessary by threatening or using force”.¹² Eventually, the German government decided that it would have to participate in the 1999 Kosovo War and dispatch troops to Afghanistan, which was more controversial. However, the government opposed the 2003 Iraq War, and recently chose to abstain from the 2011 intervention in Libya.

Christopher Reeves characterizes modern Polish strategic culture in a similar way; it was born in the struggle of two dominant schools of thought. Because of this struggle, Polish strategic culture was transformed in a few years. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Poland adopted an interventionist policy, which had rapidly evolved under the circumstances of retrenchment. It was rather more the case, that one strategic doctrine displaced another. The policy of retrenchment was not a new one: it had been evident throughout the discussions with Polish intellectual circles since the Second World War, and it had been central prior to the first post-communist governments’ when they came to power in the early 1990s. The “Romantic” interventionist doctrine was re-asserted when Poland became a member of NATO in 1999, mostly because the government was concerned about demonstration of a positive contribution to the Alliance. The fact that Poland’s participation in overseas

missions did not seem to bring any benefits, combined with the deteriorating security situation in Eastern Europe, meant that the “interventionist” doctrine began to weaken and was replaced by a defence provision that emphasized territorial defence more (Komorowski Doctrine).¹³

In his article “The Russian Bear: Russian Strategic Culture and What It Implies for the West,” Norbert Eitelhuber identifies the nature of Russia’s strategic culture: it is the tendency to use force for achieving strategic goals. He argues that Western politicians consistently misperceive the reasons for Russian foreign policy behaviour, as they do not consider the enduring nature of Russia’s strategic culture. Since 1600, military power has become the main institutional foundation of Russian statehood. As Russia does not have easily defensible geographical boundaries, it was always vulnerable to external attack.¹⁴ As George Kennan wrote about Russia’s situation, “here caution, circumspection, flexibility and deception are the valuable qualities”.¹⁵ Defeat would have been a catastrophe for Russia with its far-flung geography. Over time, a highly centralized, militaristic (but at the same time risk-averse) political system, which relied on the idea of mass forces, could be sacrificed knowingly. Succession of the Russian strategic culture is impressive, despite all the strategic changes during its history, and it “certainly arises in the main from a political culture and psychology shaped by geography”.¹⁶ This succession must be kept in mind during discussions of possible changes in Russia’s strategic culture.

This article claims that Russia has a strategic culture that is quite stable, although significant changes occurred after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The role of military strength as a source of power declined, while the prominence of economic power increased. Throughout the post-Cold War era, Russia has aimed at restoring its status as a great power and developing (or revising) its national identity. At the same time, the strategic culture that prevails in Moscow makes Russia very sensitive to actions taken by the West. Russia pays special attention to the former Soviet republics and the ethnic Russians who live there, and this fact causes significant concern among people. On September 27, 1994, Boris Yeltsin told the United Nations that “Russia’s priority interests lie in the newly independent nations of the former Soviet Union”.¹⁷ Multifaceted interaction within the CIS region remains an absolute priority for Russia. Within that region, Ukraine – with its large Russian population and its strong cultural and economic ties to Russia – is of the utmost importance.

In the early 1990s, Yeltsin’s flirtation with integration and Russia’s response to the attacks of 9/11 gave birth to the myth that Russia had adopted integration with the West as a fundamental strategic choice. This would have

been a major change in Russia's strategic culture, a change that would never take place. Today we must cope with Russia, which is still pursuing its interests according to the rules of the Hobbesian order. Thus, as Robert Kagan has expressed it, "Russia's complaint is not with this or that weapons system. It is the entire post-Cold War settlement of the 1990s that Russia resents and wants to revise".¹⁸ In the mid-1990s, Russia started to consolidate as a state. National ideology, nationally oriented policies, and the idea of Russia as a great power re-emerged and became key subjects for appraisal by all major political parties. Sergei Kortunov has described the school of thought that emerged from this era as "enlightened democratic patriotism" that "will incorporate the ideas of an open society, individual freedom, and strong and responsible state power".¹⁹

The last fundamental shift took place in Russia's strategic culture in the early 2000s. The economy must be considered as an important pillar of Russian power, perhaps even more important than the military itself. The Russian government hoped to overcome the crisis of national identity, which became intense after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

In 2007, "sovereign democracy" – first used by Vladislav Surkov as a modernization paradigm in 2006, described the notion of being an independent sovereign state that is free of foreign influence – was introduced into the platform of the United Russia party, and became the new national ideology. According to this idea, only a state with a strong army can be considered a sovereign state. In order to have a strong army, the state has to have state control over its export potential of the economy; only then, the state will have a sustainable national future. As Norbert Eitelhuber concluded, Putin's choice became possible only because of a culture of authoritarian rule in Russia that has existed for centuries. Today most Russians want to have a strong and powerful leadership.²⁰

Thus, the strategic culture of our country remains one of the least studied cases today. Perhaps, it could be explained by the fact that the strategic culture of Ukraine is still in the process of formation, which means that all current security threats can be considered as factors of potential influence over the creation of the Ukrainian strategic worldview.

However, we believe that there is an urgent need to research the strategic culture of Ukraine within the framework of its stable elements, especially those which are dynamically transforming.

Geographical and historical features of defining Ukrainian strategic culture. The basic features of Ukrainian strategic culture come from the combination of geographical, geopolitical, and historical factors. They are the background for the creation of the strategic culture of Ukraine.

Given its geography, it should be noted that the most of Ukraine's territory is constituted of flat lands open for penetration from the East, as well as from the West. The southern part has a natural Black Sea border, but the Southern steppes' region only joined the country recently. Prior, this region had been separated from the majority of Ukrainian territories for a long time. Vulnerability of Ukrainian territories was increased by the fact that for centuries they were located at the crossroads of most of the trade routes connecting the East to the West and the South to the North; therefore, Ukrainian territories were always attractive for the neighbouring countries strategically. Anyway, it has led to certain consequences.

On one hand, the attractiveness of Ukrainian territories often made them a victim of the neighbours' aspirations, and in the course of history, it prevented Ukrainian's successful efforts to build a strong and independent state. After the glorious pasts of Kievan Rus and the Galicia-Volyn Principality during the Middle Ages, Ukrainian lands became part of different countries, most of all, a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (later – the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) and then a part of the Kingdom of Moscow (later – the Russian Empire).

On the other hand, in order to secure its borders and to later provide the state independence, Ukrainian national leaders had to sign agreements with neighbouring countries to prevent war with two or more enemies from the East, the South, and the West. Therefore, this policy of providing security through diplomacy has turned diplomacy into the most important tool of its nation building policy.

Moreover, it has promoted the search of a strong partner as a fundamental feature of Ukrainian strategic culture, and this often transformed into the asymmetrical partnership like the “protector (patron) – vassal” relationship. To a large extent, there was a consequence of the time constraints and conditions which were placed on Ukraine. In the 17th century, a quite successful attempt to create Ukrainian state under the leadership of Bogdan Khmelnytsky could hardly have been possible without support of a strong partner and the benefits it brought. When Khmelnytsky rebelled against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, he was guided by the Sublime Port and received military aid from its vassal – the Crimean Khanate. Later Khmelnytsky found the Kingdom of Moscow which was very close to Ukrainians culturally, linguistically and religiously, to be an ally. With the passage of time, it became a Ukrainian political tradition to build its own sovereignty through alliances with a more powerful state. For instance, hetman Mazepa, who tried to win freedom for Ukraine from the Russian Empire, formed an alliance with the Swedish king, Charles XII, but this attempt failed. From 1917 to 1921, when the Russian

Empire had collapsed, the new Ukrainian republic got a chance to develop itself independently, which was bound to the development of Soviet Russia. According to Volodymyr Vynnychenko, at the same time Ukrainians were considering two other paths of development; one of them was reliance on their own resources and the other was reliance on the support of the West, especially Poland.²¹ A few years later, when the Ukrainian state was led by hetman Skoropadskyi, it began to rely on the West (in particular, Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire) in its policy.

It is quite interesting to follow the typical Ukrainian narrative, based on the Cossack culture as the part of the national mythology. This mythology also offers a better understanding of the role of military organization in Ukrainian traditions, and underlines the already mentioned tendency. On the level of national myths and narratives, Ukrainian statehood partially derives from the Zaporizhian Sich. It was a purely male, militaristic community with strict hierarchy and a professionally trained army, which earned for life due to the regular assaults on the Ottoman Empire. Often these raids were sponsored by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth or the Kingdom of Moscow. However, due to this tradition, established by its founder prince Dmytro Vyshnevetskyi, the Zaporizhian Sich often changed its political patrons in attempts to gain more rights and privileges for Cossacks, which demonstrates the domination of diplomacy as a main tool of strengthening national security.²² This peculiarity was clearly demonstrated by the political and military activity of hetman Sahaidachnyi, when he had conquered Kafa, so that Cossacks could gain an increase in military registration from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. As a result, Sahaidachnyi united his efforts with the king Wladislaw in a joint military campaign against Moscow.

Also, besides diplomacy's domination as a strategic tool of survival and development, one of the specific features, inherited by Cossacks from Kievan Rus' state tradition, was the ongoing search for more internal freedom, as well as from the patron state, in case they considered themselves to be too pressured or humiliated. Therefore, according to the famous historian and lawyer, Bogdan Kistiakowskyi, "each period of the striving for independence... was closely connected with some previous repression against Ukrainians".²³ This tendency can be seen in the regular clashes between Cossacks and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and in one of its dramatic moments – the national liberation movements of 1648-1657.

This feature is rooted in Kievan Rus' times, when any oppression of the people's rights prompted active revolts and often even pushed a shift of power. In particular, Mykola Kostomarov noticed that the princes of Kievan Rus were elected and changed by the people's Veche, which "considered possess-

ing the right to change and destroy their established order and sometimes even them [princes]”.²⁴ This custom to change power for the sake of the people’s interests has generated features of the Ukrainian strategic culture, such as “the absence of a clear goal, the impetuosity of movement, striving for the creation and at the same time the decay of that not yet created”.²⁵

Therefore, the Ukrainian strategic culture contains two contradictory trends. On one hand, Ukrainians are ready to unite with more powerful allies, easily giving up the initiative in this alliance, and, on the other hand, even “the custody of the parents over their children is considered the unacceptable despotism [for Ukrainians]. The ambitions of the elder brothers [to control the younger ones] can provoke terrible animosity between them”.²⁶ Hence, during their long history, Ukrainians were feeling comfortable with the existence of the “elder brother”, who was often able to organize and defend them in the framework of a common state. Meanwhile when this “elder brother” started to oppress their rights, it initiated certain spontaneous protest, aiming not only at the annihilation of this alliance, but sometimes even the brother.

Threat Perception. Special attention should be paid to the definition of enemies in the Ukrainian strategic culture. Interestingly, despite traditional divisions between Ukraine and the Polish and Russian nations, Ukrainians have never defined them as enemies. On the contrary, to a certain extent it is possible to say that Ukrainians have passed through a process of convergence with both dominate political cultures; this has defined not only the dualism of Ukrainian political culture and self-identification, but also created an extremely low threshold of pain for the Ukrainian strategic culture.

This is one of the most vivid distinctions between the Russian and Ukrainian strategic cultures. Whereas the former traditionally underscored the primacy of its civilization over the “others”, feeling highly vulnerable in the face of any enlargement of Western civilization near Russian borders, the later was traditionally open to any form of integration and engagement with “others”.²⁷ Kostomarov pointed out that Ukrainians have adopted Greek Christian Orthodoxy, but have not accepted their repulsion towards the Western church. “Those spirits of tolerance as well as the absence of national arrogance were also accepted by the Cossacks’ culture and are still living among the people... The military campaigns against Turks and Crimean Tatars were caused not by the blind fanaticism towards “infidels”, but by revenge for the assaults and imprisonment of the Ukrainians... The memory of the bloody confrontation with Poles is still alive, but there is no animosity... towards the Polish nation among the Ukrainian people”.²⁸

The Russian factor is one of the biggest controversies in Ukrainian strategic culture. It has been a matter of fact that from the beginnings of Ukrainian

state development Russia always prevented Ukraine creating an independent national state – since the Pereyaslav Treaty, which in laid the groundwork for the future erosion of the Ukrainian statehood and its digestion by the Russian Empire as the inalienable part of it, and even later, in 1917, after the creation of the Ukrainian National Republic.. At the same time, this policy turned out to be quite successful, creating significant “myths of a special Slavic mentality and common historical destinies between Russia and Ukraine on both elites and societal levels”.²⁹ Of course, this idea did not sound credible in Western Ukraine, which historically was part of the Habsburg Empire; however, this section was always a minority of the state’s population and never served as a major supplier the political elites. Therefore, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, public opinion statistics continued to show that only 25% of the Ukrainian population perceived Russia as a threat.³⁰

This traditional sympathy towards Russia can be explained not only by the religious, linguistic and cultural closeness of the Ukrainian and Russian people, but also by the fact that (especially in the Soviet Union) Ukraine was regarded not as a colony, but as an integral part of the state.³¹ This feeling was also emphasized by the status of Ukraine as the member-state of the UN. This also explains the fact that Ukraine, in part, inherited some features of Soviet strategic culture, such as ambitions for a great power status, as well as a feeling of equality with Russia as a legal successor to the Soviet heritage.

One more controversial issue is the spread of the popular Eurasian ideology, which became dominant in the Russian Federation, among Ukrainians. The supporters of the Eurasian ideology claim the existence of a separate Russian civilization within the territory of the former Russian Empire. They assign cultural meaning to the Russian-speaking community (so-called “Russian world”). The idea of the nation is expanded to include the regions where Russian language and culture are dominant. Notably, these ideological schemes have been added to Putin’s so-called “conservative values” since 2012, when the president declared the “existence of a multi-ethnic civilization with a Russian core” and the triune Russian nation (the Great Russians, the Small Russians and the Belarusians). This ideology has become a tool to manage the conflicts in the post-Soviet space (Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Crimea, and “Novorossiia”).

In particular, regular opinion polls in Russia show that the majority of Russians were not able to accept the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the independence of Ukraine. According to VCIOM, in 2006 66% of all Russians regretted the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In 2005 71% and in 2007 48% of Russians expressed their wish to unite with Ukraine.³² In 2012 the main basis of Putin’s successful election campaign was the promise to revive

the Eurasian Union or in fact to bring back Soviet heritage. In 2014, the annexation of Crimea was interpreted as the unification and “correction of the historic mistakes, made in 1954” and it was supported by 97% of Russians. Putin’s rating has reached the maximum level for all the years of his presidency. Interestingly, in December 2014, Putin, reinforced claims to Crimea, was referring to its sacred value for the Russian nation, comparing it with the importance of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem for Jews and Muslims.³³ It is evident that the annexation of Crimea increased confrontation between Ukrainian and Russian citizens. Today many Russian citizens believe their government’s interpretation of events in eastern Ukraine. During 2015, the amount of those who supported EU integration decreased from 52 to 44%, and the amount of those who supported the Eurasian Union increased from 13 to 17%; the amount of those who did not support the membership of Ukraine in both organizations increased from 23 to 27%.³⁴ However, paradoxically the amount of those who supported Ukraine’s integration to NATO increased from 44 to 75%, and those who did not support it decreased from 35 to 20%.³⁵ Consequently, Ukrainian strategic culture inherently leads them to assertions that in a situation where it seems that all previous rules have been broken, that power is the only thing in international relations that currently has value; it will be extremely difficult for Ukraine to oppose Russia’s hybrid war alone.

General features of the Ukrainian strategic culture. The political scientist Andriy Okara describes the Ukrainian worldview as “generally indefinite and spineless. The reason of its existence is – the disorder of sex-role and gender harmony towards the decreasing of male and the increasing of the female root cause”.³⁶ The combination of these features demonstrates the so-called “feminine” style, which means the identification of Ukraine’s interests with the interest of another state – the strong partner of Ukraine.

Historical experiences demonstrate that within the framework of such a partnership, Ukraine is prepared to give up some parts of its sovereignty and to play the minor role, but only under conditions in which its interests and rights will be respected by the stronger partner.

It must be noted that Ukrainians an inherent desire to be respected in this partnership. Thus, their willingness to comply with the demands of a stronger partner used to have a certain limit; the crossing of this limit could easily push a peaceful and compromising Ukrainian society into aggressive resistance. Events of ancient times, the national liberation movement of the mid-17th century, Kolyivshchyna, and contemporary events, such as the Orange Revolution and both Maidans, stand out as the best examples of this.

A clear example of Ukrainian strategic culture can be found in Ukrainian-Russian relations, especially considering Ukrainian interpretations of them.

On one hand, in the Russian-Ukrainian alliance, Kyiv is always considered a younger brother, who usually accepts the patronage of Moscow as natural. On the other, Kyiv always considered itself as being equal with Moscow, as its brother, but not a vassal. This also explains why Ukraine considered that it had an equal right to share Soviet heritage with Moscow. When Moscow tried to “direct” Kyiv on the way, which Russia considered more appropriate, it caused alienation and enmity between Kyiv and Moscow.

Today the situation is different from the period prior to 2013, because not every Russian-speaking citizen of Ukraine is pro-Russian. In 2014, according to the IRI review, more than 79% of the Russian-speaking citizens in Ukraine opposed Russia’s decision to send its troops to Ukraine for “protecting Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine”. The vast majority of Russian-speaking people from Southern and Eastern Ukraine also did not support this decision.³⁷ According to Gallup opinion polls, support of Russian leadership in Ukraine decreased from 43% (57% in the South and the East) in 2013 to 5% (12% in the South and the East) in 2014. In September 2014, A. Navalny’s opinion poll in pro-Russian cities such as Odessa and Kharkov showed that 87% of residents wanted to see their region as the part of Ukraine (88,3% in general), 3% of residents wanted to join Russia, 2% to join Novorossiia, and 8% have not decided yet.³⁸

Thus, the features of Ukrainian strategic culture, as a style, are, rather passive, responsive to certain initiatives, and also open to convergence with other national-cultural spaces.

Conclusions. By definition, strategic culture is quite connected with the political culture, but is different due to its narrower focus, aimed at exploring the role of “hard power” in the creation of a nation-state’s worldview. Academically, this idea comes from constructivism, which broadens the neorealist vision of the states’ security behaviour. Jack Snyder defined this phenomenon as the combination of the general worldviews, attitudes and security patterns. The strategic culture of Ukraine was defined by the historic conditions, under which Ukrainian leaders had to make alliances with their neighbours in order to prevent wars with two or more enemies at once. Therefore, a specific feature of the Ukrainian strategic culture was gaining the security through the diplomacy. The search for a strong state-partner often led to an asymmetrical partnership. Another specific feature was the permanent search for freedom from the external partner if it oppressed their rights. Strategically Ukrainians never defined Poles or Russians as enemies. On the contrary, Ukrainians allowed certain convergences with both cultures. The mentioned feature shows one of the principal differences between it and Russian strategic culture: the Ukrainian strategic culture is considered to be open for the integration with

“others”. The combination of the aforementioned features demonstrates the so-called “feminine” features of Ukrainian strategic culture.

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³ Alastair Iain Johnston, “Thinking about Strategic Culture”, *International Security* 19(4) (1995): 37–39.

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¹⁹ Sergei Kortunov, “The Fate of Russia: Several Observations on ‘New’ Russian Identity” (unpublished research paper), accessed December 19, 2016, <http://www.stanford.edu/group/Russia20/volumepdf/Kortunov.pdf>

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²¹ Володимир Вінніченко, *Відродження нації (Історія української революції: марець 1917 р. – грудень 1919 р.)*, 10.

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CHAPTER 2

**STRATEGIC CULTURE OF UKRAINE
AND ITS NON-NUCLEAR STATUS**

Polina Sinovets

Ukraine's refusal to maintain nuclear status not only clearly demonstrated the main features of Ukraine's strategic culture, but also signified a defining stage in its development. This was the first attempt of the Ukrainian state to challenge the will of the great powers, and it could help masculinize its strategic culture and it strengthens its self-reliance in security and foreign policy matters. However, in this case, characteristic features of Ukrainian strategic culture defined the scenario, which led to the signing of the Budapest memorandum and the further nuclear disarmament of Kyiv.

Ukraine proclaimed the non-nuclear course in 1990, but, in fact, it came to this in 1993. During the period from 1990 to 1993, Kyiv was often accused of pro-nuclear sentiments and ambitioning to become a transit nuclear state. Indeed, the ratification of the Lisbon Protocol by Verkhovna Rada, in 1992, occurred with the exception of Article 5, which envisaged Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear state. From 1993 to 1994, Ukraine resisted the demands of Russia and the US and refused the unconditional nuclear disarmament, making many experts suggest that Kyiv would draw the NPT regime into a severe crisis, which it would not be able to overcome. After, Ukraine's decision to give up nuclear weapons was the background for the other issues, such as the unlimited extension of the NPT at the conference in 1995, as well as the further situation of the arms control regime (most importantly, the future of START-1).

The period from 1992 to 1993 highlights some important features of the Ukrainian strategic culture. In this case, it must be noted that non-nuclear status was not an easy step for Ukraine; however, the struggle that took place during the mentioned years demonstrates the current Ukrainian decision's conformity.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Ukraine kept 220 strategic delivery vehicles (130 SS-19, 46 SS-24, 44 heavy bombers equipped with 1,068 long-range air-launched cruise missiles, and 1750 nuclear warheads assigned among them).¹ Moreover, Ukraine possessed a strong civilian nuclear infrastructure, as well as the world's largest missile companies.

From the early stages of Ukrainian independence, there were two approaches concerning nuclear weapons among Ukrainian political elites. The first approach was formed during the adoption of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine in 1990, when the main aim was to prompt a civilized

“break up” with Russia. This “break up” would not be possible if Ukraine stayed nuclear; therefore, the idea to give up nuclear weapons was based on this intention. In addition, the so-called “Chernobyl syndrome”, meaning the widespread fear among the Ukrainian population of the nuclear technologies (including nuclear weapons), played a significant role. All these factors influenced Ukrainians relatively low support of nuclear status in the beginning of the 1990s (about 33%).²

A second approach to nuclear weapons was formed later, after Ukraine has already become an independent state. The main idea was formulated by Yuri Kostenko, the leader of the “hawks” parliamentary group, in his article “Nuclear Weapons: Good or Evil?” In it, he supported the idea of designating nuclear weapons as the property of the Ukrainian state. The nuclear disarmament should be performed gradually, considering the primary demands of Ukraine, in particular, financial compensation and security guarantees.³ In April of 1993, 162 deputies of the Verkhovna Rada signed a letter “in support of the Ukrainian nuclear status”; this letter proclaimed Ukraine a successor of the USSR and “a transit nuclear state”.⁴

On June 3, 1993, in his speech at the Verkhovna Rada’s closed session on the ratification of START-1, the Prime Minister, Leonid Kuchma, emphasized that for Ukraine “the only real and stable perspective could be found in the doctrine of guaranteed deterrence and not by provoking defence”.⁵ According to the Prime Minister, the basis for this deterrence could become the preservation of 42 national ICBMs, which had to be destroyed as an element of START-1 implementation.

Besides, Kuchma not only spoke about ideas of conventional deterrence, but he also added that Ukraine was the owner of nuclear weapons; at least for a certain period it should be proclaimed as a nuclear state.⁶

Russia and the US often interpreted these Ukrainian demands as the state’s attempt to delay the process of disarmament and, as the result, to become a real nuclear state. Even after the Ukrainian President signed the Trilateral Agreements with the leaders of Russia and the United States, the deputy director of the US and Canada Institute, Serhiy Rogov, noted that he “knows no example of when a state publicly claimed its nuclear status and then gave up nuclear weapons”. Rogov also insisted that Ukraine, as well as Russia, could not be trusted because “the current political culture in both countries does not include the notion of compliance”.⁷

Nonetheless, since declaring its intention to become a non-nuclear state, Ukraine has fulfilled its promise. The reasons for its initial denial to disarm as well as its final disarmament can be found in features of the state’s strategic culture. From the very beginning, Ukraine’s unpreparedness to accept

the compelled decision concerning the withdrawal of its nuclear arsenal to the territory of Russia (as Belarus and Kazakhstan did), demonstrated some of these features. For instance, it is worthwhile mentioning that Ukraine has declared itself equal to Russia as the official successor of the Soviet Union. In the winter of 1992, when President Yeltsin publicly announced his Presidential Nuclear Initiative, which aimed for the unilateral reduction of Soviet tactical nuclear weapons and the retargeting of the Ukrainian ICBMs without any consultations with Ukraine, President Kravchuk unilaterally stopped providing Russia with tactical warheads.⁸ Also in April of 1992, the Verkhovna Rada issued a decree to establish administrative control over all tactical nuclear weapons, confirming its right to possess these weapons.

Thus, Ukraine demanded equality from Russia at the same time when Russian officials publicly called Ukrainian independence “temporary”, implying, that European governments should not hurry to open embassies in Kyiv.⁹

Strobe Talbott, the head of the US delegation on the negotiations over Ukrainian nuclear disarmament in 1993, mentioned that the Russian Ambassador to the US, Volodymyr Lukin, compared the relationship between Russia and Ukraine with the relationship between New York and New Jersey. While the deputy of the Russian defence minister, Georgy Mamedov, often reminded Americans, that “everything between us and Ukrainians is a family business”, implying that Moscow would not tolerate the interference of Washington “into the family” for too long.¹⁰ This apparent disregard of Ukrainian independence took place at the same time that Moscow declared its claims to Crimea, as well as disputed Ukrainian rights to the Black Sea Fleet.

It must be mentioned, that in resisting Russian pressure, Ukraine still did not regard Russia as a potential threat to Ukrainian national security. “Ukraine and Russia were living together for 350 years, so they have never applied weapons against each other, and will never do”, said President Kravchuk in his interview with an Italian newspaper in 1994.¹¹ This expression complies with the idea of experts in the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, which they declared in the mid-2000s: “Not then, not now, we do not consider that a military threat from Russia is real, that it is necessary to have such a radical instrument as nuclear weapons for its deterrence”.¹²

Ukraine’s perception that Russia posed a low degree of threat in their relationship significantly reduced Ukrainian political elites’ motivation to retain nuclear weapons as a mechanism of deterrence. The primary motivation for resisting nuclear disarmament was the understanding of the great role that nuclear weapons played in politics, along with Ukraine’s wish to prove its equality with Russia as a successor of the Soviet Union.

During that time, the United States fully supported Russia, which created the impression that the importance of Ukraine was measured only by the nuclear weapons deployed on its territory. In this situation, Ukraine considered the nuclear weapons as the only tool that could influence the situation.

There is a wide spread question as to the motivation of Ukraine. In particular, if it was going to disarm, why it had been resisting nuclear disarmament for two years? In this situation, we must consider the importance of understanding of Ukrainian strategic culture.

One of the main features of Ukrainian strategic culture is the absence of clearly defined aims providing for the state's national interests. From the very beginning, there was no clear understanding as to how Ukraine would be able to use its nuclear potential practically. For instance, Yuriy Kostenko, as one of the strongest opponents of disarmament noticed: "...due to its specifics, nuclear weapon performs defensive functions even if it is not controlled by the state where it is deployed. Therefore, the liquidation of nuclear weapons without an adequate substitute by the other instruments of deterrence will result in the loss of effective national security elements as well as threaten the existence of the Ukrainian state".¹³ Kostenko's concept looked strange for any nuclear-weapon state. Having such a weapon and not controlling it is a rather dubious bonus in terms of security. Because any delay in Ukraine's nuclear disarmament could cause Russian aggression (for instance, violent disarmament operations)¹⁴ or the total economic and diplomatic isolation of Kyiv by the US. Accordingly, Kostenko's sincerity should be questioned, due to the absence of intentions to develop nuclear deterrence, or nuclear weapons had a different function for Kyiv. The third variant is the absence of strategic understanding, which was already mentioned. This means that the main concept was to leave nuclear weapons in Ukraine and find out what kind of deal could be made later.

Firstly, let us consider the variant, in which nuclear deterrence offered a potential chance for Ukraine to develop its "hard security" sector; that is one of the distinctive features of masculine political culture. It is known that in April of 1992, in a general meeting devoted to blocking Ukraine's ability to launch of missiles from its territory, they realized that without the permission of Moscow, Kyiv's intervention in the command and control system for nuclear weapons management was impossible.¹⁵ Thus, they were not working to create their own nuclear deterrence. However, it is known that at the same time the Centre for Operational and Strategic Studies was opened on the Ukrainian territory. This Centre was studying the possibilities of mastering nuclear weapons. Additionally, in February of 1992, the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons to the territory of Russia was stopped; this fact meant

that on the level of Ukrainian political elites, Ukraine at least investigated the prospects of nuclear deterrence. Ideologically, this idea never had wide political or expert popularity; little public popularity. In particular, the only deputy advocating for the concept of nuclear deterrence in Ukraine was a member of the Committee on Security and defence, Major-General Volodymyr Tolubko. He claimed that the path of nuclear deterrence was less expensive than the development of conventional deterrence. In particular, Tolubko referred to Soviet statistics, according to which Moscow was spending only 5-6% of its military budget on nuclear weapons.¹⁶ In terms of strategic culture, an interesting feature of Tolubko's position was the fact that he saw nuclear deterrence for Ukraine in tandem with Russia. In other words, he offered to create a common strategic space under the command of Moscow. Ukraine was supposed to have a sort of "autonomy" within this space, such as administrative control over weapons, Ukrainian citizens' service in the strategic nuclear forces, and the application of nuclear weapons under the control of both the Russian and Ukrainian Presidents. Tolubko's main concern was a threat from the USA, which could do to Ukraine the same thing that it had "with Grenada, Yugoslavia and Iraq".¹⁷ Meanwhile, the deployment of Russian strategic forces on the territory of Ukraine would oblige Russia to defend Ukraine since "46 of 176 Ukrainian missiles are already equal to the capacity of the half US' land based ballistic missiles".¹⁸ Tolubko suggested that Ukraine should not join the NPT; it should ratify the Lisbon treaty to START-1, but without the sections which obliged Ukraine to withdraw its nuclear weapons over a certain period. In addition, he considered an alternative, in which Ukraine would not ratify START-1 at all and only limit itself in its bilateral agreements with Russia, which was "the most credible and the best partner for creating an agreement concerning nuclear weapons".¹⁹ The constructive idea meant that Ukraine would be able to accurately create its own deterrence or an independent nuclear industry using its partnership with Russia.²⁰ Tolubko's pro-nuclear position even included the idea that Ukraine should have a strong partner, which would defend its military independence. Moreover, this partner was traditionally associated with Moscow, which also proves the aforementioned statement that Russia was not considered as an enemy.

It is interesting that in the Verkhovna Rada, despite the lack of open ideological support for the ideas of Tolubko, there was still interest in nuclear deterrence. There was a famous episode, when the Pylyp Orlyk Institute for Democracy distributed copies of American experts' articles, written by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Miller, in the Verkhovna Rada. In these articles, the authors discussed the expediency and possibility of nuclear deterrence

in Ukraine. John Mearsheimer insisted that Ukraine should retain nuclear weapons, since it “cannot defend itself against a nuclear-armed Russia with conventional weapons, and no state including the United States, is going to extend to it a meaningful security guarantee”.²¹ At the same time, Miller spoke about the perniciousness of nuclear weapons for the world’s security and the disastrous consequences, if Ukraine retained nuclear weapons on its territory.²² So, after the distribution of an equal number of both articles to the Council, the parliament requested 70 more copies of Mearsheimer’s article and no copy of Miller’s article the next day.²³

A symbolic gesture that confirmed these pro-nuclear approaches was the partial ratification of the Lisbon protocol in November 1993. Instead of joining START as a non-nuclear state, Ukraine agreed to reduce 42% of the nuclear warheads that were deployed on its territory and 36% of its launch vehicles, as it was obliged by START. It was officially proclaimed that “Ukraine does not consider it necessary to execute Article V of the Lisbon Protocol”.²⁴

Often, Americans cautiously considered Ukraine’s resistance to the immediate disarmament, while Russians suspected Kyiv in serious nuclear ambitions. In addition, Mykolay Sokolov, who was working at the arms control department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia during this period, assessed Ukraine’s primal position as a “feasible” to consider the possibility of developing its own nuclear deterrence.²⁵ Indeed, there was some other evidence, in addition to those which were already mentioned, that Ukraine was interested in nuclear weapons which it could control by itself.

The process of withdrawing tactical nuclear warheads to Russia was ceased, and Ukraine took administrative control of its nuclear weapons. These weapons were considered to be the most dangerous, as there was no central mechanism for blocking them; therefore, even field commanders could potentially control them. And, of course, it could be controlled by the state, if it had the least organizational capabilities available. In reality, the practice demonstrated that there were no such opportunities in Ukraine at the beginning of the 1990s. This can be proved by the fact that the transfer of TNWs, performed by the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence and the loyal officers at the bases, was resumed in April 1992 as a result of direct orders from Moscow. As the result, President Kravchuk was unpleasantly surprised during his June 1992 official visit to Washington, when he was informed that all tactical nuclear weapons were successfully withdrawn to the territory of Russia. He was surprised, because he did not even have any information about the fact that the TNWs withdrawal had recommenced. “I was trying to control the situation, but I haven’t succeed”, Kravchuk commented, referring to the fact that the military forces of CIS had more control over nuclear weapons based in

Ukraine, than Ukraine did.²⁶ According to the Alma-Ata Declaration, CIS was granted the right to control nuclear weapons belonging to its member-states. It turned out that the oath of allegiance did not change the situation in the Ukrainian Army significantly.

However, some other ideas existed. In his recent interview, President Kravchuk said: “If I could produce nuclear weapons, I would be able to withstand the pressure of Russia and the United States”.²⁷ Kravchuk was also going to use the support of a partner state to fulfil this idea; this time it was going to be the United States. The idea was to dismantle nuclear weapons located in Ukraine instead of transferring them to Russia. The Ukrainian President offered its American partners the opportunity to build the necessary industry on the Ukrainian territory, where it would be possible to dismantle nuclear warheads from three countries. In addition to the significant costs which would be invested into this industry, the ability to dismantle such weapons would provide Kyiv with the appropriate information, knowledge and experience on how to produce them. Americans understood this situation very well and they were not going to let it happen.²⁸

Ukraine had lost its illusions of the creating it's a nuclear deterrence in 1992, but in 1993 the Verkhovna Rada was still voting for Ukraine's recognition as a nuclear state. It seems that at that time Kostenko's approach began to dominate in Kyiv; this approach meant that Ukraine had nuclear weapons, but it did not have nuclear deterrence.

The main problem at that time was the lack of a clear strategy concerning the role of nuclear weapons in Ukrainian policy. A feature of Ukrainian strategic culture, which clearly describes Ukrainian nuclear policy, was defined by Kostomarov as “the absence of a clear goal, the impetuosity of movement, striving for the creation, and at the same time the decay of that not yet created”.²⁹ By the way, the positions of the experts and political elites were not so different. In particular, the experts of the National Institute for Strategic Studies recommended connecting the transition “to the non-nuclear status of Ukraine with preservation of its security and the radical reduction of strategic weapons to the minimal level which could provide nuclear deterrence”.³⁰ In fact, both claims are mutually exclusive. If Ukraine was going to become a non-nuclear state, why does it care about a minimal level of nuclear deterrence? Thus, further negotiations were conducted without a clearly defined final goal.

Later, when it was clear that Ukraine could not retain nuclear weapons, the nuclear arsenal turned into a bargaining chip in Kyiv's big game. As a tool for the possible development hard power (which is a feature of masculine policy), under the pressure of circumstances and the international community,

Ukraine turned nuclear weapons into an tool for gaining certain political and economic profits for itself. Many issues were at stake, such as the recognition of Crimea as a part of Ukraine by Russia, further delimitation of the borders, and Kyiv's debts to Moscow. In these situations, nuclear weapons could be used as a bargaining chip in relations with Russia. The openness of Ukrainian strategic culture played a significant role during the process of disarmament; in particular, it concerned Kyiv's desire to integrate into the community of democratic countries. Specifically, Borys Tarasyuk, who played a significant role in the negotiations for the nuclear disarmament of Ukraine, noticed that "the disarmament provided Ukraine with a kind of passport to the international community of the civilized nations".³¹ The openness and maybe the incapacity for self-sufficient economic and even political development, along with the security guarantees, supported the introduction and the further domination of traditional features of Ukrainian strategic culture.

This approach showed the gradual development and approval of feminine Ukrainian policy. The failure to gain control over nuclear weapons pushed Ukraine to more peculiar diplomatic games and concessions.

The last step was the best, given the circumstances. Moreover, it was absolutely natural for Ukraine, which did not clearly understand the definition of hard power; the situation worsened after the signing of the Budapest memorandum on security assurances.

Nowadays it seems that the promised security assurances, which were given by the great powers, created an illusion of protection in Ukraine.

In fact, the Budapest memorandum stalled any reliance on hard power in Ukraine. It seems like the loss of such important element of hard power, nuclear weapons, has pushed Ukrainian political elites into a paradoxical neglect of conventional deterrence and army development.

The events of recent years present a different picture of hard power in the framework of Ukrainian policy. Regarding this factor through the prism of nuclear weapons discourse, there is currently an intensification of discussions about it on both political and social levels.

In 2014, the number of the bills was introduced to the Verkhovna Rada. In particular, in March of 2014, the deputies of the popular parliamentary parties "Batkivshchyna" and "Udar" initiated a bill "On denunciation the NPT of 1 July 1968 by Ukraine". On July 23, 2014, the deputies of "Svoboda" registered the bill "On the restoration of the nuclear status of Ukraine". The Verkhovna Rada did not vote on either of these bills; therefore, the question of the withdrawal of Ukraine from the NPT, as well as the restoration of its nuclear status, remain open and may turn into serious political discussion in the case that the security situation is aggravated.³²

If we look at the prospect of such an opportunity, the voting would be ambiguous anyway. In particular, of all the political parties represented in the Verkhovna Rada, only three of them (“the Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko”, “Svoboda” and “Pravyi Sector”) officially support the restoration of Ukraine’s nuclear status. Despite the fact that they did not gain more than 15% [of the vote] at the last parliamentary elections; we should not forget that moderate parties, such as “Batkivshchyna” and “Udar,” supported the idea of Ukraine’s withdrawal from the NPT. Therefore, any general voting could become crucial for Ukraine remaining within the framework of the NPT.³³

The opinion polls confirm the growth of similar sentiments in the country. At the end of 2014, according to the Razumkov Centre, 49.3% of respondents were sure that it was necessary to restore the country’s nuclear status, at the same time 27.7% of respondents were against this idea. The interesting fact is that pro-nuclear sentiments dominate in Western and central parts of the country (64.3% and 60.3%), a bit less in the South (39.5%), while only the Eastern parts of Ukraine show a rather negative attitude to the nuclear choice (36.8% for the nuclear choice and 39.5% against).³⁴ Therefore, according to public opinion, the percentage of those who currently support Ukraine’s nuclear option has doubled compared to the beginning of the 1990s, when almost 33% of citizens supported this choice.

An interesting evolution was shown in the so-called “Chernobyl syndrome”, which was considered by the West as one of the most important reasons for Ukraine to give up nuclear weapons. In particular, in 2005, 13.5% of Ukrainians were worried about Chernobyl as an issue; in 2008 this amount decreased to 7.8%. In 2014, the opinion polls confirmed that the Chernobyl disaster was in last place (only 10%) compared to the fear of an invasion (62%) or growing prices (68%).³⁵

These figures suggest a certain evolution of the pain threshold within Ukrainian strategic culture, which has been under the influence of obvious challenges to Ukrainian security, like the Russian threat. Thus, resulting from the Maidan and its consequences, such as the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and the beginning of the war in the Donbas, the number of Ukrainians, who perceived Russia as a threat increased to 73%.³⁶

It also gives the impression that those events have generally increased the role of “hard power” in Ukrainians’ consciousness and in Ukrainian policy.

At the same time, the traditional feminine approach can also be located in the strategic and cultural worldview of Ukrainians, especially when comparing the statistical numbers. For instance, among Ukrainians who support Ukraine’s nuclear choice today, only 4% believe that this decision is possible.³⁷ Therefore, these social sentiments reflect Ukrainians’ perception that

their country is not an independent player in international politics. A comparison of the Euro-Atlantic integration's popularity ratings' statistics: from 15% in 2012, to 64% in 2014, and to 78% in 2016, gives a clearer demonstration of traditional Ukrainian strategic and cultural stereotypes.³⁸

Conclusions. In the early 1990's, Ukraine received some impetus for the transformation of its strategic culture. Nuclear weapons, as the most powerful symbol of hard power in politics, could give the Ukrainian strategic culture some incentive to masculinize. However, key features of the existing strategic culture of Ukraine played a role in this. In particular, the considerable pressure from Russia and the United States, along with Ukraine's lack of confidence in defending its own interests at any cost, even at a high price, prompted Kyiv to continue the traditional path of development. The permanent search for a strategic partner as an instrument for the protection of Ukrainian statehood was also a hallmark of the process of disarmament. On one hand, attempts to retreat from international requirements and to launch their own nuclear program or to preserve nuclear forces have always been considered by Ukraine in tandem with another great power. Both alternatives - the United States or Russia - were considered as partners who could financially support or defend Kyiv, [albeit] by different forces of the Ukrainian political system. On the other hand, the result for Ukraine, namely the Budapest memorandum, became the quintessence of a policy of finding a strong partner - in the form of both states guaranteeing Ukraine's security.

Diplomacy as a means of developing national security (instead of adequate military-containment policies) along with Ukrainians' openness, contributed the success of US and Russian policies; political pressure coupled with the promise of Ukraine's integration into the community of democratic states were key factors in the nuclear disarmament in Ukraine.

Kyiv did not have any conscious motivations to keep nuclear weapons. On one hand, the Russian threat in 2014 was significant enough to resist with weapons, especially nuclear weapons. On the other hand, neither political nor expert communities clearly understood the main challenges of the country's policy, which could be solved by nuclear weapons. At the strategic level, Ukrainians did not have a clear understanding of their own goals and interests, which were connected with nuclear weapons and worth some state's concessions. As a result, the two years of defending Ukraine's rights to nuclear weapons ended in defeat, this fact emphasized the "inconsistency of movement" and the lack of effort to complete something that had been started.

The above-mentioned features are now quite noticeable in Ukrainian politics. In this case, one cannot help but to agree with G. Perepelytsya, who notes a certain fetishization of diplomacy as a means of ensuring Ukrainian national

security and defence.³⁹ In modern Ukrainian politics, this tradition originates in the Budapest memorandum, but can also be located in later documents, such as the Military Doctrine of 2012, in which the main methods of preventing a military conflict were not military restraint, but a set of political and diplomatic measures. The text of the doctrine mentioned that, if Ukraine wanted to deter aggressors, it would appeal to the United Nations Security Council as well as to “the powerful guarantors of Ukrainian security ... according to the Budapest memorandum”.⁴⁰

Our study does not argue that Ukraine should retain its nuclear potential, since it would greatly complicate not only its existence, but also its integration into the global community of democratic states. The main thesis is that Ukraine’s refusal of nuclear weapons best demonstrates some of the specific features inherent in the strategic culture of our state.

A particularly striking set of polls conducted by Ukrainian citizens in 2014-2016 underscores this example. They have a clear understanding of Russia as an enemy, and an understanding of the need to develop the state’s “hard power”. Some Ukrainians are nostalgic for nuclear weapons; however, an absolute majority does not believe in Ukraine’s capacity to strengthen its security independently. Traditionally, as a guarantee of security and the state’s independence, most Ukrainians would rather consider joining a powerful military-political alliance such as NATO.

¹ Marco De Andreis, Fransisco Calogero, “The Soviet Nuclear Weapon Legacy” (SIPRI Research Report. – N 10, Oxford University Press, 1995), 23.

² Christopher Stevens, “Identity Politics and Nuclear Disarmament. The Case of Ukraine”, *Nonproliferation Review*, 2008 (15) 1:54.

³ Юрій Костенко, «Історія ядерного роззброєння України» (Київ: Ярославів Вал, 2015), 98.

⁴ De Andreis, Calogero, “The Soviet Nuclear Weapon Legacy”, 27.

⁵ Костенко, Історія, 263.

⁶ Костенко, Історія, 264.

⁷ Trip Report: CISAC Delegation Plutonium in Moscow, March 14-18, 1994 (Nuclear Control Institute Collection, FSU-8/94-10/94. – Folder 111, US National Security Archives), 10.

⁸ Defense Intelligence Report ODB 27029, 119-120.

⁹ Long, Grillot, “Ideas, Beliefs and Nuclear Policies”, 33.

¹⁰ Talbott, *The Russia Hand*, 80.

¹¹ Kravchuk: Nonproliferation Treaty to be Signed as Soon as Possible. *La Republica* – 29 June 1994.

¹² C. Stevens, “Identity Politics and Nuclear Disarmament. The Case of Ukraine”, *Nonproliferation Review*, 2008 (15) 1:54.

¹³ Костенко, Історія, 260.

¹⁴ Dynamics of Change in Eurasia, no 29, DI-26870-348C, 92 (N) (Nunn-Lugar Revisited).

A Conference at the Musgrove Conference Center St. Simons Island, Georgia, 26029 September 2013), 128.

¹⁵ Костенко, Історія, 64-65.

¹⁶ Владимир Толубко, «Ядерное оружие, космос и флот: решение вопросов не терпит промедления» (Предложения для Верховной Рады Украины/ Архив министерства иностранных дел Украины, Фонд 1, дело 7058), 102.

¹⁷ Толубко, 101.

¹⁸ Толубко, 101.

¹⁹ Толубко, 103.

²⁰ Толубко, 103.

²¹ John Mearsheimer, “The Case for a Ukrainian Nuclear Deterrent”, *Foreign Affairs*, 73 (1993): 50.

²² Steven Miller, “The Case Against a Ukrainian Nuclear Deterrent” *Foreign Affairs*, 72 (1993): 73.

²³ Trip Report. (Discussions of CISAC Plutonium Study. Kiev, Ukraine – May 30 – June 3, 1994 US National Security Archives, Folder 111), 16.

²⁴ Постанова Верховної Ради України Є Про ратифікацію Договору між Союзом Радянських Соціалістичних Республік і Сполученими Штатами Америки про скорочення і обмеження стратегічних наступальних озброєнь, підписаного у Москві 31 липня 1991 року і Протоколу до нього, підписаного у Лісабоні від імені України 23 травня 1992 року (Костенко Ю.І. Історія ядерного роззброєння України), 444.

²⁵ Nikolai Sokov, interview to the author, given April 15, 2016.

²⁶ Leonid Kravchuk, interview given to the author, April 1st, 2016.

²⁷ Leonid Kravchuk.

²⁸ Defense Intelligence Report ODB 27092, 124.

²⁹ Николай Костомаров, “Две русские народности”, в *Собрание сочинений Н. И. Костомарова* в 8 книгах, accessed December 19, 2016, http://dugward.ru/library/kostomarov/kostomarov_dve_russkie_narodnosti.html

³⁰ «К вопросу о размещении на территории Украины ядерного оружия» (Аналитическая справка, Филиал Национального института стратегических исследований, конструкторское бюро «Южное», 1992), С.35.

³¹ Long, Grillot, “Ideas, Beliefs and Nuclear Policies”, 57.

³² Nuclear non-proliferation (Ukrainian Prism. Foreign Policy 2015), 134.

³³ Nuclear non-proliferation, 135.

³⁴ Ставлення громадян до вступу в НАТО і інших питань безпеки. Фонд Демократичні ініціативи імені Ілька Куричіва – Accessed December 2016, <http://dif.org.ua/ua/publications/press-relizy/stavlennja-gromadjan-do-vstupu-v-nato-i-inshih-pitan-bezpeki.htm>

³⁵ Ядерна енергетика в світі та в Україні: стан та перспективи розвитку. Аналітична доповідь Центру Розумкова. Національна безпека і оборона, 3 (2008):10.

³⁶ Лише 2% українців продовжують вважати відносини з РФ дружніми, 73% бачать загрозу для своєї країни. Accessed 6 July 2014, <http://news.finance.ua/ua/news>

³⁷ Референдум щодо вступу у НАТО був би виграний, проте це питання ділить Україну, 29 листопада, 2015 Фонд Демократичні ініціативи імені Ілька Куричіва. Accessed 15 November 2016, <http://www.dif.org.ua/ua/publications/press-relizy/referenit-ukrainu-.htm>

³⁸ Опитування: за вступ у НАТО на референдумі проголосували б 78% українців, Радіо Свобода, accessed 6 July, 2016, <http://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news/27841417.html>

³⁹ Grigory Perepelitsa, the Round Table “The 20th anniversary of the nuclear disarmament of Ukraine”, Odessa April 25, 2016.

⁴⁰ “Указ Президента України № 390/2012 Про рішення Ради національної безпеки і оборони України від 8 червня 2012 року «Про нову редакцію Воєнної доктрини України»”, accessed 10 September 2016, <http://armyua.com.ua/voenna-doktrina-ukraini/>

CHAPTER 3
EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION OF UKRAINE
AND RELATIONS WITH NATO

Sergii Glebov

Conceptualization of Ukraine-NATO relations as a phenomenon of Ukraine's strategic culture. Realizing the essence of independent Ukraine's strategic culture's formation and development is impossible without analysing the main stages of interaction between the Ukrainian state and NATO. For the last 26 years, in the entire range of Ukrainian foreign policy topics, it is perhaps only relations with the Russian Federation, which are now more dramatic with the tragic, yet predictable, conflict, in which the NATO factor appeared to contribute to this outcome fodder. The drama of Ukraine-NATO relations was recharged with other potential, but it also became an integral part of Ukrainian-Russian relations and came to the forefront of multilateral relations in the post-bipolar era. Objectively, the history of Ukraine-NATO relations from the outset, were marked by geopolitical scandal, what actually created an extremely difficult route for Ukraine on its route towards Euro-Atlantic integration in the future. In the mid-1990s establishing of close bilateral cooperation, not to mention the declaration on the official course towards Euro-Atlantic integration in 2002, was expected to provoke an ambiguous reaction, both in Ukraine and abroad for several reasons.

Before turning to their analysis, it is important to immediately consider the conceptual context of the strategic development of bilateral relations between Ukraine and NATO, in addition to what has already been said. Without doing so, this the research will hardly be able to claim objectiveness in evaluating the quality components of strategic culture in Ukraine which is often denied as subjectivity in the world arena. In our opinion, this context, which is the basis of the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of Ukraine, should see the desire of Brussels (or Washington), not just as subordinated to the interests of NATO, but also to successively displace Russia from post-Soviet space, and to act like an "external threat", purposefully expanding Eastwards, closer to the borders of Russia at the expense of Ukraine. Of course, such NATO plans are hypothetically possible, provided that they really are disqualitative, although from the standpoint of the present, in certain contexts, they can be evaluated both in the positive and negative ways. Nevertheless, in our opinion, the foundation of the Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine, above all, is based on Kyiv's voluntary and sovereign desire to become a part of the Trans-Atlantic security space. Of course, in articulating (in one form or another) the desire to self-identify in a military-political sense, the ruling elites of Ukraine pro-

ceeded from their understanding of what national security and mechanisms of its provision were, both domestically and internationally. Objectively declared interests, and the goals and objectives along each stage of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration were not always supported by the necessary tools, resources, public support, a clear information campaign, or by deep systemic reforms of the national armed forces and the entire security sector.

In this regard, on the path to rapprochement with NATO, Ukraine went through periods of progress as well as periods of deceleration along its progression. While in motion, often consciously or unconsciously, Kyiv ignored, not always justifiably, NATO and Russia's real plans for one another (if it is possible to speak clearly about true and constant intentions of global players in principle). After 2002, there were times when Ukraine abandoned its strategic goal to pursue membership in the Alliance, both informally by a banal imitation of Euro-Atlantic integration in words and formally in the form of the legislatively confirmed status of Ukraine as a non-aligned state. Sometimes Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations were limited by populist rhetoric; sometimes they acquired specific practical features, but they were constantly accompanied by rigid public debate and political confrontation within the country. The very theme of Ukrainian Euro-Atlantic integration became the subject of domestic and foreign policy speculation, a pretext for confronting many actors both, on the global and regional scale. However, there is something that has always been a constant component of the relationship between Ukraine and NATO: Russia's negative, sometimes jealous, attitude towards such interaction. Permanent rapprochement of Ukraine with NATO, albeit with many years of interruptions, provoked Moscow's aggressive policy towards Kyiv, which varied from a diplomatic pressure to energy blackmail. As a result, Russia's military aggression against Ukraine in 2014, which includes the annexation of Crimea and the conduct of the so-called "hybrid war" in the Donbas, was partly explained by the Russian leadership as a necessary measure to prevent Ukraine from joining NATO (which will be discussed further). At the same time, NATO expressed its strong protest against Russia's aggressive actions in Ukraine, which was the reason for a new round of aggravation in relations between Moscow and Brussels, placing them on the brink of a new, post-bipolar "Cold War." An analysis of the Euro-Atlantic direction of Ukraine's foreign policy is fundamentally necessary at this historical stage, as sheds light not only on the dramatic formation of Ukraine's strategic culture in the post-bipolar era, the specifics of Russian-Ukrainian relations, cooperation within the Ukraine-NATO-US-EU-Russia pentad, but also on a number of Trans-Atlantic security related topics for many years to come.

In any case, the starting point in all of the above-mentioned contexts is Ukraine's foreign policy strategy, as it sought its own mechanisms for ensuring its national security as a subject of international relations, and not as an object of other states' policies. By and large, 50% of all Ukrainian problems in this context were the reactions of an external actor to the strengths and weaknesses of the components of Kyiv's determination to defend its national interests consistently, while the other 50% is the result of internal factors' influence, like the unstable Ukrainian social and political systems, on foreign policy decisions and the further development of its strategic culture towards the Euro-Atlantic integration.

Factors of NATO and the U.S. in the Ukraine's domestic political culture. In the context of the latter, it is important to emphasize that bilateral Ukraine-NATO relations was confronted with various ideological perceptions about what might be implied by concepts like "NATO" and "Euro-Atlantic integration". The expert community, Euro-Atlantic integration is already at the subconscious level associated with its central, "framework"-the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The latter, certainly typical for sectors of post-Soviet society in the formerly Soviet republics, is almost unconsciously identified as one hundred percent American, as hostile. This is not surprising, since the roots of such an associative process run deep into the history of the "Cold War" and the shared historical past of USSR, where the collective historical memory of the former builders of communism prefer to perceive the U.S. as a potential enemy, and NATO as a hostile bloc. Such perception of the "Euro-Atlantic", through the prism of the United States as an enemy, was and remains to be quite typical for those Ukrainian citizens who advocate for the reintegration of Ukraine with Russia, within the framework of post-Soviet integration structures, where the Russian Federation is the leader. Thus, it is not surprising that NATO's actions were interpreted as aggressive, as one that threatens the national security of both Ukraine and Russia. And this relentless conviction has steadily increased, despite the permanent military threat to Ukraine from the latter, in contrast, by the way, to NATO. Despite the fact, prior to 2014, Russia, which did not want to join NATO, maintained much closer relations with NATO than Ukraine, which had expressed a desire to join.

Indeed, it is characteristic of anti-NATO forces in Ukraine to adhere categorically to axioms that support the logic of their ideological behaviour, in a sequential chain of perceptions: "Russia is Ukraine's friend", "NATO is Russia's enemy", and therefore "NATO is Ukraine's enemy". The ongoing anti-American and anti-NATO hysteria of pro-Russian political forces during joint U.S.-Ukrainian annual naval exercises, called "Sea Breeze", in the

Odesa Oblast and Crimea must be mentioned. Thus, the behavioural logic in the style of “the enemy of my friend is my enemy” became virtually the sole reason for pro-Russian forces in Ukraine to oppose NATO and the Russian Federation. Additionally, all these were accompanied by intense talk about Slavic brotherhood, Orthodox unity, and the historical bonds between the three East Slavic peoples. Although the attempt to escape the “historicization” of politics (which at one time gave birth in Ukraine to the “Pereyaslav syndrome” of the “younger brother”) was objectively impossible in the framework of bilateral Ukrainian-Russian relations. Opposite to this case is a united Europe, which was first created inside the EEC and then inside the EU. This became possible due to the willingness the large and medium- European states did not completely forget past quarrels and wars, but they decided not to insert them into current discussions of political problems. If they had not, references to the history of Europe and its states would not only constantly revive issues of disputed territories and state borders, but they would also prevent dialogue about contemporary problems within the framework of a single organization – the EU.

In the case of Ukraine, as in some other countries, the “historicization” of its relations with Russia is an objective reality. However, the historical image of NATO as the “enemy”, as mentioned above, is a tribute to our shared Soviet history; its image as a modern “aggressor” that poses a definite threat is a product of political propaganda. The latter is quite often officially reflected in conceptual doctrinal documents in the field of foreign, military and defence policy, and national security in the Russian Federation. In all fairness, it should be noted that the image of an “aggressor” also reflects the military actions of NATO in the post-bipolar world, including the events in Yugoslavia in 1999. In deconstructing the image of NATO as an aggressor; however, we may invoke the counterargument that the alliance was compelled to deter another act of aggression and respond to threats in the interests of a collective security system. Comparisons of NATO’s actions in Yugoslavia in 1999 to Russian actions in Georgia in 2008 provide fertile grounds for such theorizing; not to mention the events in Ukraine.

The “Insecurity” dilemma as an integral part of Ukraine’s strategic culture. The essence of Ukraine’s difficult dilemma, concerning its own security parameters, is the fact that it is permanently doomed to make decisions in a situation where the internal and external political situation is constantly changing. In this regard, the international community faced the political ambiguity, equivocation, and “turbidity” of Ukrainian foreign policy at the dawn of Ukraine’s independence. As it turned out, flirting both with NATO and Russia at the same time did not help Ukraine preserve peace on its land. The

suicidal bifurcation of Ukraine's domestic and foreign policy until 2014 was probably one of the most pressing internal dilemmas: where should Ukraine be – within the integrated Europe and Euro-Atlantic structures of security with Russia, within the political, economic, military structures, headed by the Russian Federation.

Implementation of an alternative course towards neutrality and non-alignment, which has occasionally been instilled into Ukraine's strategic culture, was doomed to fail due to the permanent threat of a potential aggressor. Historically, Ukrainians have always been destined to make an important and sometimes tragic decision about their own statehood and national survival: choosing whose side to join, to ensure its independence – the West or the East? Unfortunately, since Bohdan Khmelnytsky's times the continual struggle for the restoration of independence was only possible in conjunction with a strategic partnership with one of Ukraine's neighbours. A peculiar feature of this policy was that those neighbours who helped Ukrainians were, at the same time, also interested in expanding their influence on Ukrainian territory under their own control. Apart from the main interest – how to regain independence, there was another, equally important one – how not to lose it immediately after its recovery. Therefore, gaining Ukrainian sovereignty and independence in 1991 related to the collapse of the Russian Empire, as it manifested in the last stage of its existence, the Soviet Union. In this regard, the new paradigm of bilateral relations between Ukraine and Russia could not rid itself of the “fresh” memories of the recent historical past, which was considered the “oblivion” of Ukrainian statehood. For example, an American historian of the Ukrainian origin, a professor at Harvard University, Roman Szporluk, rightly questioned the possible outcome of strategic rapprochement between Ukraine and Russia, posing the following conceptual dilemma: “...a call for closer relations between Ukraine and Russia is motivated by the desire to help both peoples to become part of Europe or we are just talking about something completely different, namely about the revival of the once existing imperial model of the Ukrainian-Russian relations. In short, about getting rid of Ukraine's independence...”¹

The historical dilemma for Ukraine – the East or the West – gradually became the cornerstone of its strategic culture, where NATO and Allied relations with Russia have come to the forefront of Ukrainian politics. As a result, Ukraine could not but be drawn into a new round of global rivalry between the Collective West in the US-EU-NATO partnership, on one hand, and Russia as the successor to the USSR on the other. In other words, an analysis of the process of Euro-Atlantic integration and bilateral relations between Ukraine and the North Atlantic Alliance has been directly related to the specifics of the

Ukraine-Russia relations, as well as to the problems of interaction on a higher system level, on the level of the bilateral relations between Russia and NATO.

Relations between Russia and NATO as one of the key trends of the development of the transatlantic strategy of Ukraine. Since 1997 (the decision to expand NATO towards the East and the Yugoslav crisis in 1999) cracks in the relationship between NATO and Russia appeared became visible, and they have been accumulating every year, since the world has started to talk about the restoration of Cold War. Since the signing of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation on May 27, 1997, and the adoption of the current text of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation in 2014, only 17 years have passed; however, for Russia it was enough time to shift the official course on cooperation towards an official course on confrontation with NATO. If in 1997 Russia and NATO did not consider each other adversaries and set out a common goal “of overcoming the vestiges of earlier confrontation and competition and of strengthening mutual trust and cooperation”,² in 2014 the Kremlin placed NATO in first place on its list primary external military threats to Russia: a) NATO’s increasing capacity for “power potential”, and obtaining “global functions carried out in violation of international law”,³ and b) in the context of “approximation of military infrastructure of NATO member states to the borders of the Russian Federation, including by further enlargement of the bloc”⁴ And this shift occurred only (!) before the annexation of Crimea and a year and a half prior to the new Military Doctrine in 2014. As of February 18, 2013, Russia, in its fundamental document, Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, – designated as their priority as “development of relations with the states of the Euro-Atlantic region,” with which Russia, as claimed in the document, “associates, besides geography, economy and deep-rooted civilizational ties”.⁵ Only four years ago, consciously associating itself with the Euro-Atlantic countries as part of its Euro-Atlantic direction, Russia oriented its foreign policy “at creating a common space of peace, security and stability based on the principles of indivisible security, equal cooperation and mutual trust... through developing genuine partnership relations between Russia, the European Union, and the United States”.⁶

Of course, it was known that Russia had a negative attitude towards any plans concerning the accession of new states from Eastern European countries to NATO and towards the overall strategy of NATO enlargement to the East. Officially, Russia has repeatedly declared its attitude to the potential plans of Ukraine to integrate to NATO. In particular, it was clearly stated in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation of 2008, that “Russia maintains its negative attitude towards the expansion of NATO, notably

to the plans of admitting Ukraine and Georgia to as members in the alliance, as well as to bringing the NATO military infrastructure closer to the Russian borders as a whole.”⁷ It is noteworthy that neither in 2008, even when it was a question of granting Ukraine and Georgia Membership Action Plan to NATO, and even more so in 2013, when there could not have even been talk about the accession of Ukraine to NATO, the actual topic of expanding NATO at Ukraine’s expense could not have been implemented in such a short period especially in light of what was constantly articulated in the Kremlin. However, it was this theme that became one of the basic explanations to the whole world and, above all, to Russian citizens, as the motive for returning the Crimea “back home”. It turned out that Ukraine has simultaneously become a cause of exacerbation of Russia’s “NATO syndrome” and also a reason to start an open confrontation in the Black Sea region and with the West on a global scale; and this had happened despite the fact that Russia, as we know, has been watching over Crimea since 1991 while anticipating the right time to attack. Since Russia, in its global narrative, in the English version, often prefers to use the phrase “NATO expansion” instead of “NATO enlargement”, there is a direct link between geopolitical paranoia and fears of “NATO expansion” after 1991 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014, which entered the final stages of preparation during the days of the Euromaidan and the Revolution of Dignity.

The confession, made by the Russian President on April 17, 2014, is that the actual annexation was dictated also by Russia’s reaction to Ukraine’s accession to NATO (a hypothetical, totally unreal at that period of time for the still non-aligned Ukraine under the existing “Kharkiv agreements” at least until 2042): “If we don’t do anything, Ukraine will be drawn into NATO sometime in the future. We’ll be told: “This doesn’t concern you,” and NATO ships will dock in Sevastopol, the city of Russia’s naval glory... But if NATO troops walk in, they will immediately deploy these forces there. Such a move would be geopolitically sensitive for us because, in this case, Russia would be practically ousted from the Black Sea area. We’d be left with just a small coastline of 450 or 600km, and that’s it!”⁸

Even more frank, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs accused NATO of what happened in Ukraine in 2014. In his speech for the Educational Youth Forum, “Territory of meanings at Klyazma River”, which he delivered on August 24, 2015, Sergei Lavrov attempted to justify Russian aggression against Ukraine, using the phrase “NATOfobic”. By accusing NATO of violating the principles of mutual respect of the “interests of a partner” and of “desire to find a consensus”, Lavrov stressed that if NATO had corresponded to these principles, as he believed Russia had, “there would have

been no confrontation over the advance of NATO's military infrastructure towards Russian borders,... nor would there have been the Ukrainian crisis, if things were done through the search for generally acceptable compromise rather than ultimatums, or a "black-and-white" understanding of developments, or the either-with-us or-against-us dichotomy... Thus, they gave up on the concept of a single and indivisible space of equal security in the Euro-Atlantic area, which had been proclaimed by their leaders. This NATO-centrism, this attempt to preserve the divides represents a systemic problem, while everything else, including the tragedy in Ukraine, is derived from their division into friend or foe".⁹

Here we will not delve deeper into the discourse about who did more to discredit the concept of "a single and indivisible space of equal security in the Euro-Atlantic" and to preserve those "dividing lines in Europe". Apparently, this "NATOcentrism" annexed Crimea and began a "hybrid" war against a sovereign European state. However, it turned out that with its military aggression against Ukraine, the Kremlin gave NATO a second wind, making transatlantic solidarity important again, and returning Ukraine, both officially and publicly, to the path of the Euro-Atlantic integration. However, by unleashing a war in Ukraine, Russia did its best to alienize itself from both to Ukraine and to the rest of the democratic world, plunging into the abyss of sanctions and self-isolation. One way or another, since the mid-1990s it was Ukraine which expressed its strong interest in strengthening European security and on its own, through systematic convergence and active cooperation with the main structural element of the Euro-Atlantic security – NATO – despite Russian pressure.

Paradoxes of the strategic "domestication" of Ukraine in the context of the key stages of the development of relations with NATO. From 1992 to 2017, an evolution of relations between Ukraine and NATO took place, it passed through many historical and, at the same time, controversial steps.

A) 1992 - first half of 2004: defining strategic priorities. The first direct contacts between an independent Ukraine and NATO began in January 1992, when the first representative of Ukraine took part in the meeting of the Working Group of the North Atlantic Cooperation (NAC), later renamed into the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (since 1997). During a visit of NATO Secretary General Manfred Wörner to Kyiv on February 22-23, 1992, Ukraine was officially invited to participate in the NAC (Ukraine became a member of this organization on March 10, 1992). The President of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, visited NATO headquarters in Brussels on July 8, 1992. Regular contacts and cooperation between Ukraine and NATO started on a permanent basis after Ukraine's signing – the first of the CIS countries – a Framework

document to join the program of international cooperation under the auspices of the North Atlantic Alliance – “Partnership for Peace” (PFP).

In particular, the second paragraph of this document, signed on January 10, 1994, stated that the partnership was established “as an expression of a joint conviction that stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area can be achieved only through cooperation and common action”, and member-states of the North-Atlantic alliance, as well as the other states subscribing to this document, “recall that they are committed to the preservation of democratic societies, their freedom from coercion and intimidation, and the maintenance of the principles of international law”, and also follow a principle “to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, to respect existing borders and to settle disputes by peaceful means”.¹⁰ As a result, Ukraine’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Anatoly Zlenko, signed the PFP Framework Document at NATO Headquarters on February 9, 1994, and on May 25th of that year, Ukraine gave its presentation document for this program to NATO. In 1997, in order to promote and expand cooperation, the Mission of Ukraine to NATO was founded, and the NATO Centre for Information and Documentation was opened in Kyiv. The NATO Secretary General, Javier Solana, took part in the opening ceremony of the Centre. Ukraine became the first country in post-Soviet space where such an office was opened.

In general, significant developments in Ukraine’s relations with NATO took place in the first half of 1997. Thus, on March 20m 19917, the first round of talks with NATO to formalize “Ukraine-NATO” relations took place at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. The NATO Secretary General visited Kyiv on May 1, 1997, and already on May 29, 1997, during the NATO’s foreign ministers’ meeting in the Portuguese town of Sintra, Javier Solana and the Foreign Minister of Ukraine, Hennady Udoenko, initiated the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine; later on July 9,1997 it was signed at the NATO summit in Madrid. This Charter became a fundamental document, which defined the relationship between NATO and Ukraine for many years to come. The Charter not only acknowledged that an independent, democratic, and stable Ukraine was one of the key factors for ensuring stability in Central and Eastern Europe and the continent as a whole, but also noted that NATO allies would continue to support the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, its territorial integrity, and its status as a nuclear-free state.¹¹ In order to create an effective mechanism for implementation of the Charter in Ukraine, taking into account the priorities in the development of Ukraine’s relations with NATO, on November 4, 1998, a Presidential Decree approved

the State Program of Ukraine-NATO Cooperation for the period until 2001, and then until 2004.

As a result, the landmark event in Ukraine's relations with the Alliance was the May 23, 2002 adoption of a decision on the strategic acquisition of full membership to NATO in the future for Ukraine by the National Security and Defence Council. The decision of the Council noted that "Ukraine considers NATO as the basis for a future European security system and supports the process of its enlargement," and coming out from the fact "that the ultimate goal of its policy towards Euro-Atlantic integration is joining the organization as the basis of a pan-European security structure".¹² On July 8, 2002, the Decree of the President of Ukraine No. 627/2002 approved the Strategy of Ukraine on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which envisaged a deepening of Euro-Atlantic integration on its path to becoming a member of the North Atlantic Alliance.¹³

Such strategic dynamics put an end to the multi-year fluctuations and geopolitical uncertainty, and state authorities faced a complicated, but specific task. Ukraine-NATO relations had strengthened even more with the Ukraine-NATO Action Plan as a framework; the Annual Target Plan was adopted on November 22, 2002 in Prague.¹⁴

Ukraine's intentions as to its integration into the NATO structures were confirmed by the Law of Ukraine "On National Security of Ukraine" dated June 19, 2003. Article eight of the "Basic directions of the state policy on national security" determined that "in the foreign policy sphere... Ukraine conducts an active foreign policy with regards to the membership in the European Union and NATO, while maintaining good neighbourly relations and strategic partnership with Russia, other CIS countries, and the countries of the world".¹⁵

More concrete intentions of Ukraine to join NATO were set out in the newly edited Military Doctrine of Ukraine, approved by Decree of the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma (number 648/2004 dated June 15, 2004). It provided for accelerated reform of the Armed Forces and the transition of the national army to NATO standards. Among the main conditions of ensuring the military security of Ukraine, a course was devoted to the implementation of the policy of Euro-Atlantic integration, the ultimate goal of which is the accession to NATO.¹⁶

B) The second half of 2004 – 2005: strategic zigzags of Ukraine. It would seem that the integration process towards Ukraine's membership in NATO was moving ahead dynamically. However, as a result, a natural factor in Ukrainian strategic culture – Russia – immediately came to forefront. The clearly declared course towards joining NATO, even in the long-term run,

was seen in Russia as a concrete step “against” and “from” Russia, rather than a formal and uncertain step of Ukraine towards the North Atlantic Alliance. In the light of relations of Putin’s Russia with an assertive Ukraine, one could treat Ukraine’s strategic decisions of e as a “strategic betrayal”, which, like “strategic déjà vu” of early 18th century relations between Peterine Russia and Hetman Ukraine.

Therefore, it is no coincidence that Leonid Kuchma’s Decree No. 800 of July 15, 2004, exactly one month after the confirmation of the course on Euro-Atlantic integration in the Military Doctrine, introduced an opposing decision from the National Security and Defence Council. As of July 6, “On the further development of relations with NATO based on the results of the meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission at the highest level on June 29, 2004” which contradicted the previous one and changed the text of the Military Doctrine, in particular the second paragraph of Article 9, and the second and third paragraphs of Article 16.¹⁷ In fact, Ukraine abandoned the provisions that the ultimate goal of Ukraine was to join NATO, and rejected the strategy towards preparations for a full membership in NATO and the EU, keeping just a thesis on the “substantial deepening of relations with NATO and the EU as with guarantors of security and stability in Europe”.¹⁸ Formally, this happened in response to the fact that during the working session of the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) within the framework of the Istanbul NATO summit, a decision to involve our country in the official preparations for NATO membership was not made. Such a decision was approved by the Alliance in response to the critical attitude of its member States towards the domestic political processes in Ukraine. Informally, the Ukrainian authorities, apparently to appease Russia by virtue of their narrow corporate understanding of the further development of the strategic culture of Ukraine, and to preserve the current political regime in the country, used this situation as an opportunity to reassure Russia by actually abandoning its strategic course towards European and Euro-Atlantic integration, and its reliance on political support from the Kremlin on the eve of Ukraine’s presidential elections. Playing this “Russian card” during the Istanbul NATO summit the President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma also stated that Ukraine was not ready to join NATO, perhaps also to save face and to play pre-emptively.¹⁹ And during the Ukraine-EU summit in The Hague on July 8, 2004, the President of Ukraine also said that Ukraine was not ready to join the EU.²⁰

One way or another, the gradual departure from rapprochement with NATO became more pronounced in the second half of 2004. In the fall 2004, on the eve of the first and the second rounds of the presidential elections in Ukraine, the Russian Federation supported the pro-Russian candidate wherever it was

possible; Viktor Yanukovych was from the ruling party and the Prime Minister of Ukraine at that time. This rather abrupt change of the course did not go unnoticed in the West. The demonstrative and rather sharp political rapprochement of Ukraine with Russia in 2004 was so disturbing to the West that he finally began to speak loudly about Ukraine strategically, albeit in the context of the Russian factor and less than a month before the presidential election in Ukraine. In October 2004, a series of strategic declarations were addressed to Ukraine from the West.

For example, on October 5, 2004, the former foreign minister of Austria, then a candidate for one of the highest positions of the European Commission, and subsequently European Commissioner for External Relations and Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, emphasized that the EU should be interested in keeping Ukraine on its side to avoid falling it into the sphere of Russian influence, as Russia is moving in the opposite direction from democracy.²¹ The United States similarly showed their concern. At the meeting with Polish students in Warsaw on October 6, 2004, Paul Wolfowitz, then the First Deputy Minister of Defence, noted that the goal of a united Europe would not be achieved as long as Ukraine did not join NATO.²² In his view, the U.S. had to pay more attention to Ukraine, and “NATO should reach out its hand to Ukraine and give it a membership eventually”.²³ Such approach was quite natural in Poland, which was and still remains an informal advocate of Ukraine as the member of the EU and NATO. In turn, Poland ten and other EU member states, during their meeting on October 10, 2004 asked the EU to give Ukraine a European perspective in order to keep Ukraine closer to the EU.²⁴ Unfortunately, we must admit that some positive signals from the West about of a pro-Ukrainian character were only heard after Ukraine moved closer to Russia, and were uncertain when Ukraine tried to communicate directly with the West. However, the scheme `of communicating with Brussels via Moscow also became a factor in the development of Ukraine’s strategic culture in terms of *Realpolitik*.

In December 2004, presidential elections took place in Ukraine against the background of the “Orange Revolution”. On January 23, 2005, taking the oath of office during the inauguration, the newly elected president and the government formed by him chose a course to intensify Euro-Atlantic integration in order to accelerate Ukraine’s accession to NATO. During the Brussels NATO Summit, on February 22, 2005, the Alliance, with the participation of the President Viktor Yushchenko, was informed of the new strategy for the integration of Ukraine into its structure. NATO was expecting a final self-determination from Ukraine, including internal reforms towards building a real democracy and fighting corruption. On this optimistic wave, and as it turned out

later, with overestimated expectations, an Intensified Dialogue was launched on Ukraine's aspirations to NATO membership and relevant reforms were initiated during the NUC meeting of foreign ministers in Vilnius on April 21, 2005. The political leaders of Ukraine strengthened their position on the integration of Ukraine into NATO with the Decree of the President, also on April 21, 2005, which reinstated the "integration" version of the Military Doctrine of Ukraine; that is, the text of the document again returned the position that Ukraine is preparing for full membership in NATO and the EU. The new text again included the following: "Based on the fact that NATO and the European Union are guarantors of security and stability in Europe, Ukraine is preparing for a full membership in these organizations".²⁵

C) 2006 - 2010: the period of strategic scandals and of a failed MAP.

Consequently, during the period of 2006-2008, NATO was responding to this Ukrainian with its "open doors" policy as to the issue of Ukraine's accession to the Alliance. Naturally, as it was expected, Russia reacted. At that time, Ukraine's course towards NATO and the EU provoked the question of reviewing energy prices for Ukraine, in such a way that in the USA and Europe, in the context of the first gas crisis in relations between Russia and Ukraine in 2006, talked about energy blackmail and energy as a new kind of weapon, which potentially threatened both NATO and EU member-states. At the same time, pro-Russian forces in Ukraine revealed themselves, taking advantages of the protracted parliamentary crisis in the first half of 2006. On August 3, 2006, the President, the Head of the Parliament, the Prime Minister, and the leaders of the parliamentary fractions of Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada signed the Universal of National Unity, which among other things stated that Ukraine would continue to develop mutually beneficial cooperation with NATO, and the issue of NATO membership would be resolved by the results of a referendum which would be held after Ukraine fulfilled all the necessary procedures.²⁶ However, on August 4, 2006, within the framework of Ukraine's exit from the governmental crisis, a political opponent of Viktor Yushchenko, Viktor Yanukovich, and a sudden and scandalous turnaround took place in Ukraine's foreign policy. Then, during the September NUC meeting in Brussels, Viktor Yanukovich, claiming to tell "the truth at the last instance", said that Ukraine is not yet ready to join the NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP).²⁷

The rhetoric of Prime Minister Yanukovich concerning NATO spoiled any chances for Ukraine build bilateral relations with NATO to a brand new level in 2006, has become a brilliant example of the mentioned inconsistency of official rhetoric with the official strategy and also in the context of the political struggle of the opponents. Finally, as it was noted by the former U.S.

Ambassador to Ukraine, Steven Pifer, in December of 2006, competitive process in the area of Ukraine's foreign policy leads to a decrease in trust both of the president, of the prime minister, and of Ukraine.²⁸ And it is not just because they dismissed former political agreements, but because of the fact that on behalf of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovich actually refused to implement the strategic course. Even the motivation that Ukraine's population did not support Ukraine's membership in NATO should not have led to a revision of the foreign policy strategy. Firstly, joining the Membership Action Plan in itself is the first concrete step towards NATO membership; however, it does not result in actually joining NATO, as far as if MAP was not fulfilled, there would be no talks about joining NATO. Secondly, if Ukraine was not even ready to join NATO, joining the MAP could assist Ukraine in preparing for this step, that is, to help Ukraine realize the strategic goal of the long-awaited reformation within the country, which was strongly insisted on both NATO and the EU. As it turned out, Ukraine's political elites were not interested in this, and it was obvious even then that they were interested in preserving a post-Soviet system of oligarchy, and to keep using it as a model for building political and economic relations in the country between the power and the rest of society. Only a foolish Ukrainian political culture simply rejected as an alien body all the attempts from the outside that sought its own enrichment in the non-transparent conditions of the under-reformed country. In the end, Euro-Atlantic integration for Ukraine is not so much a goal, but rather a process of transforming itself into high quality democratic European country with the support of the developed NATO member-states, which Ukraine's political establishment did not want to tolerate.

One way or another, such a cognitive foreign policy dissonance of the Ukrainian political elite at the heart of political decision-making, when the president says yes to Euro-Atlantic integration, and the Prime Minister says no, it leads not only to a lack of understanding of the logic of action by Ukraine's international partners, but also to domestic political crises. At that time, the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Borys Tarasyuk, who lost his position because of his consistent advocating for the course towards European and Euro-Atlantic integration inside Yanukovich's government, which was hostile to NATO, explained in March of 2007 that internal obstacles along Ukraine's path towards the EU were a long existing discrepancy between declarations about the desire to join the EU and the ignorance of European values and standards.²⁹ In our view, this fully applies to Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration. Boris Tarasyuk's resignation episode in which he was deliberately pushed out from his position as of a foreign minister in Yanukovich's government between December 2006 and Febru-

ary 2007, not only eloquently underscored that conclusion, but also proved the difference between the approaches of the pro-Russian Prime Minister Yanukovich and pro-Western Minister Tarasyuk, who entered the pro-Russian government on quota of the pro-Western President and was “kicked-off” of it for the same reasons. It is worth mentioning, that Russia rejoiced at the resignation of Tarasyuk.³⁰

Of course, the issue has never been about the immediate integration of Ukraine into the EU and NATO, but the orientation towards a conglomerate of democratic states with characteristics that are in line with the national interests of Ukraine, which had already integrated Ukraine into the value space of the united Europe. Internal political struggles, political scandals, and crises around democratic values outside and in the context of NATO only emphasized the internal regressive post-Soviet essence of the Ukrainian political and economic establishment. However, being itself a conglomerate of several oligarchic groups that are constantly fighting for power, the Ukrainian establishment, in the context of the course towards more or less real democratic reforms, preferred to set a course towards splitting the people of Ukraine on the issues of language, federalization, and NATO.

In early 2008, another scandal was triggered by a statement made by NATO Secretary General that the organization received a letter signed by the President of Ukraine, Prime Minister, and the Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament with a request for Ukraine to join the MAP. It has happened on January 15, 2008, when an official statement about the possibility of Ukraine joining the NATO Membership Action Plan was presented (the so-called “Letter of three” signed by the President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko, the Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and the head of Verkhovna Rada Arseniy Yatsenyuk).³¹ The scandal paralyzed the work of the Ukrainian parliament for 2 months because anti-NATO forces in Verkhovna Rada (the Party of Regions and the Communist Party of Ukraine) blocked its work with demands to withdraw the letter. However, in March of 2008 the speaker, Yatsenyuk, managed to reach a compromise in Parliament, and it was agreed by the leading political parties that the parliament would resume its work. Later, Yatsenyuk called signing the letter in 2008 by the leaders of Ukraine to the NATO Secretary General on Ukraine’s desire to join the MAP “a mistake”, because Ukraine did not hold “consultations not with the Ukrainian partners in the Alliance,” but also with those “who influence the decisions of Germany and others”.³² At the same time, Yatsenyuk also acknowledged losing the information war in the West and in the East in those days. “Our opponents of the integration into NATO from the East were much more active and have won this battle,” stressed Yatsenyuk while recalling the events of 2008.³³ The following words

of the former signatory of the “letter of three” are also indicative of the inconsistency of Ukraine in the implementation of its strategic culture: “If you said “Yes”, then you have to behave accordingly or do not say “Yes”... In our case our politicians say “Yes” to Russia, and then they run to Brussels to sign another declaration, and then return to Russia”.³⁴

Turning back to 2008, it is worth mentioning that the U.S. made significant efforts to persuade its NATO allies of the need to admit both Georgia and Ukraine to MAP at the Bucharest summit. At the same time, largely under the influence of the Russian factor, a strong opposition to admitting Ukraine and Georgia to the Membership Action Plan was expressed by Germany and France. As it was expected, on April 3, 2008, during the NATO summit in Bucharest, the Alliance did provide neither Ukraine nor Georgia with the MAP and decided to postpone consideration of Ukraine’s application to join the Membership Action Plan to NATO until a later period. However, the Summit unanimously agreed upon a declaration which assured Ukraine (along with Georgia) in obtaining NATO membership in the future.

D) 2010 - 2014: from non-alignment to the crisis integration. The question of Ukraine’s accession to NATO was totally frozen after Viktor Yanukovich came into power in 2010. On April 2, 2010, Yanukovich decided to eliminate the interdepartmental commission on the preparation of Ukraine to join NATO as well as the National Centre for Euro-Atlantic integration. Withdrawal from the agenda of the question of joining NATO was enshrined in the Law of Ukraine No. 2411-VI “On Foundations of Domestic and Foreign Policy” dated July 1, 2010.³⁵ In this document, President Yanukovich, through his subordinate parliamentary coalition of the majority, passed Article 11 of the Law established for Ukraine a principle of non-alignment, i.e. of non-participation of Ukraine in military-political alliances, but at the same time did not remove from the agenda the priority of participation in the process of improvement and development of the “European system of collective security”. To what extent Ukrainian “non-alignment” was correlated with the concept of the “European system of collective security”, which nevertheless involved mutual obligations and participation in the complex of the strategic agreements on the basis of the “collective” principle, i.e. within a single military-political structure (otherwise another one could simply be inefficient) was unclear.

The events of Euromaidan and the Revolution of Dignity in November of 2013 and February of 2014 became a turning point in relations between Ukraine and NATO. On December 23, 2014, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, by its Law number 35-VIII “On Amendments to Some Laws of Ukraine concerning the refusal of Ukraine to implement policies of non-alignment” can-

celled the non-aligned status of Ukraine and restored the vector of integration into NATO.³⁶

According to the new Military Doctrine of Ukraine, adopted and approved by the President Petro Poroshenko's Decree 555, dated September 24, 2015,³⁷ Ukraine considers deepening cooperation with NATO a priority and aims to achieve a full compatibility of the Military Forces of Ukraine with the relevant forces of the NATO member-countries by 2020.³⁸ By abandoning the non-aligned status, Ukraine is working on changing approaches to national security, and giving priority to the "participation in the improvement and development of the Euro-Atlantic and European system of collective security".³⁹ In order to ensure its national security, Ukraine "will integrate into European political, economic and legal space for the purpose of acquiring the EU membership, and will deepen cooperation with NATO to achieve the criteria required for membership in this organization", as is said in the Military doctrine.⁴⁰

Conclusions. Thus, in the mid-1990s, the international political situation dictated to Ukraine the need for further elaboration of a well-balanced policy in order to avoid geopolitical pressure from both the East and the West. Such a dilemma would not be as acute, if the interests of Russia and the West (especially the United States, NATO, and some allies in Europe) did not clash so completely, then they would not have strategic contradictions in the approaches to world and European security issues. However, Ukraine found itself stuck somewhere in the middle of NATO-Russia relations, i.e. between the security spaces where, on one hand, from the early 1990s, have been deemed "soft", and on the other, there were still "hard" approaches to the definition of threats, therefore ensuring protection against them. At one time, the aspiration of Central and Eastern European countries to integrate into NATO was largely due to the desire to distance itself from Moscow as far as possible and to provide itself with the "hard" security from Russia, hiding behind the military shield of NATO and the "nuclear umbrella" of the United States. In this case, Ukraine fell into the same "gray zone", the zone of overlapping of security spots - "NATO" and "non-NATO" - where there was a testing ground for the post-bipolar strategies of NATO and Russia in the context of their permanent confrontation. However, if Russia initially opposed NATO's hypothetical enlargement towards Ukraine and saw it as a threat to its national security, Russia's question of joining or not joining NATO in the context of its security interests should have been considered more subtly. From the point of view of Ukraine's strategic culture and its interests in national security, Russia's strategy for destroying the image of the country, which continues to pursue politics from the position of force for the sake of protecting its own interests,

was crucial for Kyiv. For example, Russia's national interests since the late 1990s could have been preventively protected by persuading the Ukrainian authorities to abandon their intentions to raise the issue of integration into NATO, but not because NATO is an aggressive bloc, but rather because Russia protects and respects its interests. Ukraine, no less than NATO, strives to develop close economic and political ties, emphasizing the indisputability of Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence, democracy, and orientation towards European integration. Only under such circumstances and exclusively on the basis of its own internal priorities Ukraine alone can decide whether or not to join NATO, while Russian domination can no longer be taken into decisive consideration, and Moscow must accept any decision of Kyiv without superfluous reproaches. Superpower status in the twenty-first century is secured not by historical speculation and annexing territories, but by influencing the decision-making process of genuinely independent and sovereign governments. Such influence requires the creation of conditions under which these governments, maintaining their independence and reflecting the will of the people as the supreme bearer of sovereignty, consciously enter the sphere of influence of one or another superpower. In the struggle for a sphere of influence, the victor will be the power centre that can offer a "popular commodity" and win from its opponent those which are willing to "acquire" this "commodity" in the form of a strategic partnership. This resembles the procedure of "zombification," but it is important that the ruling elite should make the decision consciously and without pressure, on the basis of civic interest, and that entry into a given sphere of influence should reflect a strategic choice to live by the rules, mechanisms, and standards that the centre proposes and the newly attached periphery shares. One way or another, Ukraine has taken a course on those rules, mechanisms, standards lying at the core of the strategic culture of the most economically developed democracies of individual NATO member states. However, Ukraine underestimated the "peacefulness" of its northern neighbor and became the object of Russian aggression, even outside the context of the issue of immediate membership in the Alliance.

Paradoxically, Russia itself updated the agenda for Ukraine after 2014. On February 2, 2017, President Poroshenko in an interview with the German newspaper *Berliner Morgen Post* stated: "Four years ago, only 16% of the citizens supported Ukraine's accession to NATO, now – 54% ... As the president, I listen to the opinions of my people and will introduce a referendum on joining NATO. And if the Ukrainians vote, I will do everything possible to achieve membership in the North Atlantic Alliance".⁴¹ Petro Poroshenko expressed the view that Ukraine could not manage without NATO, and the Western countries would be totally irresponsible if they weakened transatlan-

tic cooperation. “I am firmly convinced that NATO is the only functioning organization of a collective security”, said Poroshenko.⁴² And such a vision of the subjectivity of Ukraine as of an integral part of the Euro-Atlantic space will remain one of key factors in the further development of its strategic culture, as well as in the post-bipolar process of forming a new world order in general.

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² “Основополагающий акт о взаимных отношениях, сотрудничестве и безопасности между Российской Федерацией и Организацией североатлантического договора, 27 мая 1997”, Организация Североатлантического договора, access February 15, 2017, http://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natohq/official_texts_25468.htm

³ “Военная доктрина Российской Федерации (в редакции от 2014 г.)”, Министерство иностранных дел Российской Федерации, access January 22, 2017, http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkV6BZ29/content/id/589760

⁴ “Военная доктрина Российской Федерации, 2014”.

⁵ “Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации (утверждена Президентом Российской Федерации В.В. Путиным 12 февраля 2013 г.)”, Министерство иностранных дел Российской Федерации, access January 23, 2017, http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkV6BZ29/content/id/122186

⁶ “Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации, 2013”.

⁷ “Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации (утверждена Президентом Российской Федерации Д.А. Медведевым 12 июля 2008 г.)”, Президент России, access January 23, 2017, <http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/785>

⁸ “Прямая линия с Владимиром Путиным 17 апреля 2014 года”, Президент России, access January 27, 2017, <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20796>

⁹ “Выступление и ответы на вопросы Министра иностранных дел России С. В. Лаврова на Форуме «Территория смыслов на Клязьме», Владимирская область, д. Дворики, 24 августа 2015 года”, Министерство иностранных дел Российской Федерации, access February 2, 2017, http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/1680936

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¹¹ “Хартія про особливе партнерство між Україною та Організацією Північно-Атлантичного договору, Документ 994_002, 9 липня 1997 р.”, Верховна Рада України, access February 3, 2017, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994_002

¹² “Рішення Ради національної безпеки і оборони України від 23 травня 2002 «Про стратегію України щодо Організації Північноатлантичного договору (НАТО). Указ президента України від 8 липня 2002 року”, Державний архів України, access February 3, 2017, <http://www.archives.gov.ua/International/Strategia.pdf>

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¹⁴ “План дій Україна-НАТО, 22 листопада 2002”, NATO official web-site, access February 4, 2017, http://www.nato.int/cps/uk/natohq/official_texts_19547.htm?selectedLocale=uk

¹⁵ “Закон України «Про основи національної безпеки України» (Відомості Верховної Ради України (ВВР), 2003, № 39, ст. 351)”, Верховна Рада України, access February 5, 2017, <http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/964-15>

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CHAPTER 4

UKRAINE – EUROPEAN UNION RELATIONS THROUGH THE PRISM OF STRATEGIC CULTURE

Iryna Maksymenko and Denys Kuzmin

The proclamation of Ukrainian independence as well as the regulatory and institutional framework of the European Union (the EU) took place under circumstances when the international relations system was changing. The turbulence of this period contributed to the emergence and aggravation of ethnic and political conflicts, and caused the spread of new, non-military security threats which required a rethinking of approaches to security and the means of support. In order to find their place in the new post-bipolar world, the EU and Ukraine relied on the same principles: indivisibility of international peace and international security, “security for themselves through security for all”. This effort led the young Ukrainian state to become part of a common European security space via integration into the EU. However, Ukraine remains on the periphery of the integration processes, in a so-called integration vacuum between powerful partners – the EU and Russia. Ukraine is not an EU member in terms of functional identity, it does not belong to the Eastern European Region, and it stays detached from Eurasian integration processes. In the context of polycentric world order formation, where the system of relations between the EU and the Russian Federation is changing, Ukraine, institutionally and economically weak, has become a tool in the geopolitical game between two poles. In order to defend its independence and lifestyle, it is necessary to rethink the nature of relations between Ukraine and the EU and to develop an adequate strategy for relations with the Union in accordance with modern trends. Using the concept of strategic culture allows on to distinguish these factors and consider the mistakes that led to the ineffectiveness of the dialogue between the parties, who spoke about the strategic nature of the relationship at different stages.

Special features of the EU strategic culture. Traditionally, strategic culture is deemed a set of ideas, attitudes, and approaches to security and defence issues. It is constantly changing, but it is a kind of “compass” which helps with decision making in times of uncertainty.¹ History demonstrates that it is possible to stick to the world order by force, influencing the behaviour of others, or by rules (set of rules, principles, political agreements and obligations shared by the international community or by its part). The First and Second World Wars devalued classic power (hard power) as one of the main instruments of global regulation in the eyes of European States. Back then, the basic features of EU strategic culture were formed, such as the “peace through

integration project”,² rejection of the balance of power principle, hegemony of certain states, and delineation of friends and foes.

Gradually, under the influence of internal (various national strategic cultures of the Member States) and external (Caribbean crisis, expansion, world energy and financial crisis, the Iraq war, etc.) factors, a specific approach to security issues was formed: a compromise through negotiations and mutual understanding, the primacy of law standards based on the participants’ consensus, the creation of international institutions to neutralize threats, and prevention and resolution of inter-state conflicts by peaceful means. This led to the creation of a special type of “security community” that combines classic elements (national interest) and idealistic motivations – humanism and ethics.³ A characteristic feature of EU strategic culture is the absence of the term “enemy”, focusing on security threats using regulatory instruments to neutralize it and view it through the historically formed “lens of perception”.

Unlike classical actors of international relations, the EU relies only on “soft power” in security: spreading their ideas, norms and rules the EU affects the social and political systems of other countries and creates conditions for mutual trust and communication that provide for dispute resolution without war. This approach has been successfully applied in the immediate vicinity of the community – regarding the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Proclaiming a new world order, the leaders of Western states provided for the expansion of peace and stability by assisting with Europeanisation and the integration of CEE States. This explains the choice of a clear format for relations with CEE countries – from the association to expansion. However, the situation with Ukraine was more complicated.

Perception of the EU by Ukraine and Ukraine by the EU as the basis of relations in the 1990s. We should note that the strategic culture of Ukraine has characteristics similar to the EU: openness to cooperation and peaceful coexistence with other states, aversion to confrontational approaches, and commitment to diplomacy in the regulation of contradictions and conflicts. Therefore Ukraine was the first of the post-Soviet republics which proclaimed a course of restoration of close contacts with European countries and accession to the European regional integration processes. This course is completely natural; it is a civilizational choice which was made in the ancient times and it is still in force.⁴ Even before Kievan Rus, the Slavic tribes had campaigns against the Byzantine Empire for “peace and love”. Subsequently, via the establishment of commercial and military-political contacts (including the dynastic marriages) the great princes of Kievan Rus sought recognition of their own state on the international level. In addition, Ukrainian leaders sought assistance from the West, in order to fight external enemies that were a threat to all European nations (Danylo Halytskyi against the Mongol invasion, Hetmans Bohdan Khmelnytsky, Ivan Mazepa and Ivan Vyhovskyi against the

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Russian state; the leaders of the UNR and the Central Council of Ukraine against Soviet Russia). These traditions of political culture were spread among the Ukrainian lands which, and are now determined as European values: dignity, freedom and the rule of law, equality, democracy and the right of peaceful coexistence of different peoples and peaceful resolution of conflicts etc.⁵ In addition, it completely meets national interests and current trends of the global order.

From the beginning, Kyiv saw the EU as the main centre of gravity, an important element of the post-communist development of the country, which was at the crossroads of a spectrum of foreign policy interests: developing contacts with Western countries and international organizations, assistance for comprehensive transformation and modernization, as well as an important tool for supporting Ukraine on the international level, increased involvement in decision-making processes globally and regionally. In addition, under the constant breakdown of the Soviet system, the Ukrainian “European course” was considered an ideologically new platform that would define the progressive future of the state and facilitate the consolidation of the Ukrainian nation. However, the main imperative was to guarantee security, and convergence with the EU was not considered a threat to the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine. In July of 1993, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine officially defined the full membership of Ukraine in the European Communities as a priority of Ukrainian foreign policy.⁶ The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA, 1994) became the first step towards associate and further full membership of Ukraine in the EU.

Signing a radically new agreement between the EU and former Soviet countries indicated considerable interest from officials in Brussels. On the other hand, this type of agreement differed from the European agreements signed in December of 1991 between the EU and Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, because these provided the specific perspective of membership, giving an associate member status to the applicant-states. Such agreements were signed with all CEE countries, except Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine. Thus, the EU had a clear line between Eastern and Western newly independent states and chose different strategies for relations with the two groups of countries.

Because of total Russian domination for centuries in Europe, lack of knowledge about Ukraine was observed as “a big blank spot” on the mental map of Europe.⁷ At that time, almost no one knew about the Ukrainian State and its history; it was considered “a shadow of Russia”. It was also considered to have Eastern Slavic cultural features that were similar to Russian and dissimilar to the European ones. Referring to the thesis of S. Huntington about the impossibility of peaceful coexistence between different cultures, opponents of Ukrainian integration into the EU claim that our country should build its future in a “Slavic system”.⁸ This was actively supported by Russia,

as it complied with the interests of the Kremlin to regain full control over the economic, political, and security areas of the former Soviet Union. Kyiv's tendency to maintain close relations with Moscow and to maintain trade and economic ties with the former Soviet republics in the CIS gave Brussels reason to expect the rapid unification of Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus with Russia. Thus, in the early 1990s, according to Z. Brzezinski, Europe doubted the viability of the new states that emerged from the wreckage of the Soviet Union and Moscow's will to adapt to the new reality.⁹

It negatively affected the domestic and external contexts of independent Ukraine's solidifying position. It did not work in favour of the implementation of a course that "returned to Europe": providing direct participation in the European process and European institutions.¹⁰ Although, according to former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, A. Zlenko, this surprised Europeans along with the disintegration of the Soviet Union.¹¹ In January of 1992, the EU formally recognized the independence of the Ukrainian State, called for a dialogue, and then began to negotiate an agreement on partnership and cooperation.

The dispute over the nuclear weapons located on the Ukrainian territory did not improve the image of Ukraine. Europe welcomed Kyiv's rejection of nuclear weapons and rapid destruction of its arsenal, but was concerned about the Ukrainian side's attempts to link their implementation with appropriate compensation, aid in this case, as well as the extremely negative provision of international security guarantees. The EU did not want to take Ukrainian arguments into consideration. Geographic proximity, a lack of clear understanding of the issue of responsibility for the safety of storage and transport of nuclear materials, and the risk of local armed conflicts – all of these issues increased insecurity in the EU prompting them to put pressure on Ukraine categorically.¹²

At the same time, the EU was interested in the maintenance of an independent, economically and politically stable Ukraine as a buffer between Europe and Russia. Moreover, as part of this strategy, the nuclear issue was only part of the problem.¹³ To solve the complex issues associated with it, the EU used the PCA, which included the entire spectrum of establishing and developing economic and political relations with Ukraine. For example, the signing and ratification of documents became an instrument of bargaining, establishing the principle of conditionality in the EU policy towards Ukraine. The PCA was an instrument of Ukraine's rapprochement with the Western world, creating a system of "returning Ukraine to Europe". While this document was not the main impetus for Ukraine to sign the Lisbon Protocol, it supplemented the efforts of the USA and played an important role in resolving the problem.

The negative impact of the economic crisis should be also considered, as well as the lack of experience in self-administration, the acceptance and im-

plementation of strategic decisions, whether in security or economic issues, and the need to solve the issues that accompany the creation of institutions for an independent state, while simultaneously forming a nation, democratizing, and implementing market reforms— all this contributed to the formation of an attractive image of Ukraine.

It is clear that under these circumstances, European leaders did not strive to make long-term policy decisions regarding Ukraine, including provisions for associated membership in future. Referring to the necessity of the EU to adapt to new conditions and to prepare the applicant states for the potential risks, Brussels continued to talk about partnerships, “almost adequate” for association, and the opportunity to return to this issue later.¹⁴ According to A. Zlenko, this led to the sense for many Europeans, including politicians, that, the wall had not disappeared, it only moved to Ukrainian border.¹⁵

However, in the framework of the declared responsibility of the EU for the security and stability of all European countries, Brussels adopted a number of documents to support Ukraine’s sovereignty and reform. Thus, within the framework of the Action Plan for Ukraine (December 1996), the EU discussed support for Ukrainian entry into the European security, including security issues in the political dialogue, developing common benchmarks in the area of international relations based on common interests, and promoting the deepening of contacts with the WEU and OSCE.¹⁶ Positive effects appeared quickly: From June to July 1997, Ukraine and the CEE countries signed an agreement on cooperation in the field of air transport for peacekeeping and humanitarian purposes in the Petersburg missions; Ukraine and Romania signed an agreement on good-neighbourly relations and cooperation; the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between Ukraine and NATO was also signed; Ukraine was invited to the London meeting of the “Big Seven” (June 1998), during which the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan were discussed as well as the situation in the region.

These events, as well as the adoption of Ukraine’s Strategy of integration in the EU (June 1998) and the National Agency for Development, Ukrainian perceptions of European Integration changed slightly. During the second EU-Ukraine Summit (October 16, 1998, Vienna) “based on shared values and interests which are vital for strengthening peace, stability, and prosperity in our countries and Europe”, bilateral relations received the status of a “strategic and unique partnership”.¹⁷ This approach was enshrined in the EU common strategy towards Ukraine (January 1999). The crucial point of this document is the recognition by the EU of the European choice and aspirations of Ukraine as well as the fact that full cooperation is in the best interests of the EU, as it is an integral factor of peace, stability and prosperity in the new united Europe.¹⁸

The strategy clearly outlined in the strategic objectives of the EU regarding the Ukrainian state is to promote democratic and economic reforms; to develop cooperation in order to ensure stability and security, and to solve common issues in Europe; to strengthen the cooperation between the EU and Ukraine in the context of EU enlargement. This document supplemented PCA with specific projects, particularly in the sphere of security and foreign policy: preventing crises, deepening security, disarmament, arms trafficking, as well as Ukraine's accession to the EU activities in the framework of Petersburg missions. On the other hand, the EU has demonstrated an unwillingness to discuss the prospects for transition to accession or association, stressing the need to work constructively via the PCA; the need for its thorough usage before considering any other agreement.

All statements of Ukraine's representatives concerning the change of format of relations between the EU were considered as counterproductive idealism, a lack of understanding of the nature of events. However, the EU also had a misunderstanding of the Ukrainian authorities' position, for which the prospect of EU membership on the eve of presidential elections in 1999 would have been a consolidation instrument for conducting complex and difficult system reforms.

Thus, during the first period, the EU's position on Ukraine differed from its policies on other CEE states.¹⁹ The inclusion of Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, and the former Soviet Baltic states in its enlargement policy, as well as the convergence of the EU with Russia, giving it some advantages over Ukraine (in particular, we can highlight the following facts: the agreement between Russia and the EU before the PCA, giving the Russian state a status of a market economy country. Ukraine remained a transitional economy country, despite similar problems and economic situation. The adoption of the EU Common strategy on Russia occurred in June 1999, while similar document was adopted for Ukraine only in December, caused Kiev to feel a sense of exclusion and double standards. These moments strengthened the feeling that the EU did not consider Ukraine to be part of "Europe", but rather as a part of Eurasia, part of the Russian sphere of influence.²⁰

This situation did not facilitate the transformation of the state "into a completely European country, measured by levels of stability and prosperity" in contrast to "a simple country, located in Europe".²¹ Commenting on the situation, J. Sherr noted that "Ukraine's political leaders have sometimes acted as if they could achieve integration by declaration or simply by joining and participating in international organizational and political clubs rather than by undertaking concrete structural changes".²² K. Wolczuk pointed out that the reference to geographical parameters and historical examples formed a specific perception of the EU as based on the civilizational dimension of geopolitical association, in which membership is provided

in accordance to the European identity.²³ Unfortunately, the lack of understanding of Ukraine's European integration on both sides, which, according to D. Tedstrom, resembled a "dialogue of the deaf",²⁴ defined relations between Kyiv and Brussels in future.

Key trends in EU - Ukraine relations at the beginning of the twenty first century. Kuchma's re-election for a second presidential term formally launched the next stage in relations between Ukraine and the EU. Brussels perceived the figure of Kuchma ambiguously, but confirmed support for Europeanization processes in Ukraine and intention to strengthen the relations of "strategic partnership" with Ukraine that held a "unique position" in Europe being a "regional actor in the foreground".²⁵ In turn, during his inaugural speech, Kuchma declared the course towards EU membership as a strategic goal of his policy that was later embodied in a series of documents. These documents noted that "the basic foundation of our future development is the European choice... Of particular importance is the consistent policy of Ukraine on convergence with the European Union, acquiring the status of an associate and a complete member of the EU",²⁶ taking into account that "this group will determine the directions of economic progress and political stability in the region in the long term".²⁷ To achieve it, it is necessary to implement "a set of transformations that would give the opportunity to our country to qualify for entry into associate membership status in the EU by the end of 2007, and to create real (internal) conditions for Ukraine's accession to the EU by 2011".²⁸ However, Ukrainian politicians and experts said that Ukraine's progress towards the EU could not come at the expense of unilateral steps; therefore, the EU should make equivalent reciprocal steps towards Ukraine's associate membership.²⁹ At the same time, Ukrainian politicians and experts said that Ukraine's move towards the EU could not take place at the expense of unilateral steps; therefore, the EU should make equivalent counter-measures to Ukraine's becoming an associate member.³⁰ The European community perceived Ukraine as an important state, wanting to support regional consolidation, security, development, allowing the latter to get a lot of advances, including a "positive signal" during the Gothenburg Summit (July 2001) and "a signal of friendship" at the Ukraine-EU Summit in Yalta (September 2001). In 2002, the results of parliamentary elections dashed the EU's hopes for a breakthrough in process of Europeanization of Ukraine. After the elections, Brussels "began to say openly that unpredictable Ukraine, with its administrative resources and unequal access to the media, has no place in Europe"³¹, that "Ukraine has no dimension, by which it would have been so strategically important for Europe and the West, and could sell it in exchange for relaxation in the requirements for compliance".³² In response to the demands from the Ukrainian side concerning adequate steps, the EU representatives stated that "it takes two to tango" and that "while the EU and

Ukraine is not on the dance floor, they have to know the steps”.³³ The EU’s concern about the dangerous and uncertain future of a neighbour on their borders, in which the perspective of membership was not even considered, against backdrop of strengthening Soviet totalitarian tendencies, reached a critical point.

Among the reasons that brought relations between Ukraine and the EU to a deadlock, there was the dominance of “declarative” and lack of “implementing” culture by the executive bodies, as well as in domestic reforms, and in the implementation of the PCA and the Strategy of Ukraine’s integration into the EU; the weak security of European integration priority; underdeveloped mechanisms for interagency coordination and the monitoring of the implementation of decisions and obligations; as well as a low level of civil officers’ professional training, knowledge and skills concerning European integration.³⁴ Brzezinski had an interesting thought that the main reason for the inability of Ukraine to play a potential role in the region and to come closer to the EU was the low level of patriotism among high political elites, who were mostly concerned with their own enrichment, making it independent of external forces, resulting in very confusing and chaotic relationships and the lack of strategic vision for the development of a purely Ukrainian democracy, which in turn could be the basis for integration in Europe.³⁵

Changes in the attitude of the EU to Ukraine and its European ambitions were reflected in the Brussels’ initiative about the “Wider European – Neighbourhood: a new system of relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours” which included a zone of prosperity and good neighbourhood – a “ring of friends” – with which the EU could be in close, peaceful relations and cooperate with them for stability, security and sustainable development within the EU and beyond. The basic idea of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), which was based on this initiative, was to “implement integration without accession” when the benefits of “membership” are given without the right to participate in the EU institutions and influence on decision-making processes.³⁶ European experts immediately began to talk about the introduction of a new European platform of “minimalism” or even the doctrine of “rings around Europe”, which would have serious risks for the EU. Thus, M. Emerson noted that a weak European policy or offer of weak incentives in the presence of hard obligations could be much worse than its absence: the growth of scepticism about the EU, and further exclusion and growing instability in the EU and its borders.³⁷

This is the situation in Ukraine with regard to the ENP, which was not a step forward for integration, despite the provisions on the value of the Ukrainian state as a partner for the EU, including in the context of the success of the neighbourhood policy. Moreover, the status of the strategic partner of the EU gradually turned into “special neighbour” status, along with Belarus and Mol-

dova, Morocco, and Israel. It is advisable to note the common statements of European and Ukrainian experts on the non-compliance of ENP to the needs and potential of Ukraine. In particular, K. Wolczuk and T. Kuzio pointed out that the benefits of the ENP would not stimulate a far-reaching reform.³⁸ Firstly, in order to mobilize domestic support for reforms (first of all, to overcome internal barriers to reform, social ambivalence, and to reach consensus among political elites), for Ukraine, “Europe” should become, first and foremost, a political, and not only economic project. Secondly, the cost-benefit ratio for Ukraine is less attractive than for the countries with the prospect of membership. Especially considering that the political and economic transformation of Ukraine was equal to the preparation for membership, and the requirements set out in the ENP coincided with similar requirements for associated members. Thirdly, the ENP and its undifferentiated approach do not provide the EU with sufficient leverage on the countries. This situation only strengthened asymmetric relations between the EU and applicant states, putting pressure on the domestic situations in the latter, causing a sense of double standards in the EU’s “open door” policy.

The EU had a feeling of “Ukrainian fatigue” due to a significant gap between the domestic reality (problems in the sphere of freedom of speech and justice, the “Kuchma-Gate” crisis and “Kolchuga scandal”, corruption and the virtual struggle against it) and its foreign policy rhetoric. The securing of Ukraine’s peripheral status by obtaining the status of a neighbouring country showed the following: the EU is gradually moving away from the concept of “mutual importance of Ukraine and EU; we share vital interests in maintaining stability and prosperity in Europe”³⁹ to be perceiving it as a country that the EU should strengthen and deepen relationships with – so Europe would not have problems in the neighbourhood.⁴⁰

However, despite the shortcomings of the ENP and the critical attitude to it by Ukrainian politicians and experts, reality has demanded the most effective use of the potential of interaction with the EU, a special focus on security issues.

In 2003, the EU adopted the European Security Strategy (ESS) which was “a strategic EU identity card” in world politics⁴¹ and which is associated with strategic culture of the EU. In the document, the European Union officially defined its place and took responsibility for the dissemination of European integration values, which should become the basis for the development of the rest of the world. According to leading European experts, the ESS points out that longstanding stability can only be guaranteed under circumstances when the security, prosperity, democracy and equality of all citizens are guaranteed. Promoting these core values in the rest of the world in order to transform the international environment in the context of its own interests is the best way to protect them for themselves.⁴² Thus, in the field of foreign policy aimed at guaranteeing and strengthening its

own security, the EU has chosen the way of influencing its environment and modelling it more at the expense of what it is, and not because of what it does.⁴³ The main goal of the EU policy under the ESS is to form a “circle of friends” along the peripheries of various types through enhanced cooperation in priority areas (economy, transport, energy, environment, conflict prevention).

Ukraine found itself at the crossroads of these dimensions, because, on one hand, it spoke about integration with the EU, and on the other hand, it tried to maintain friendly relations with Russia, balancing between East and West. However, the incomprehensibility for the EU of the need for Kyiv to support bipolar policy only increased its perception as a serious source of instability. This situation exacerbated the risk of turning Ukraine into an outsider country and consolidation of the EU conservative approach to it.

At the same time the accession of new members (primarily Poland and the Baltic States) has increased the number of supporters of the idea of establishing a “privileged partnership” with Ukraine. Given that the strategic culture of the EU to some extent is a combination of elements of strategic cultures of its members, one can state that attention to Ukraine has increased. Poland was one of the first to raise the issue of developing a separate approach to Ukraine, supported by the initiatives of Sweden and Denmark to more actively involve the Ukrainian state in joint projects with the new members of the Union. In addition, the active participation of Polish President, A. Kwasniewski, as an international mediator in a series of “round tables” with EU representatives in November-December 2004 and the participation of many Polish politicians and public activists as observers in the presidential election contributed to the peaceful settlement of the political crisis.⁴⁴

The Orange Revolution had a positive impact Ukraine’s attitude, and was the “the culmination of disappointments and the demand for structural changes in the political leadership of the country”.⁴⁵ The active participation of civil society and peaceful protests, which advocated for the democratic development of the country, and pro-European foreign policy, became evidence for EU citizens that the Ukrainian people also belonged to Europe. Ukraine became more understandable, and passed from the “other” category into the “own”, and became an integral part of the common European space. The fact that in mid-2005 55% of respondents from Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Poland supported Ukraine’s accession to the EU can be considered as a kind of evidence.⁴⁶

It was a window of opportunity for Ukraine to find “the path forward – a path of the United Europe”. In this respect, the new government aimed to intensify the political dialogue between Ukraine and the EU, as well as to use the positive attitude towards Ukraine effectively. Kyiv starting point was

“transfer of relations from partnership and cooperation to integration and association”. However, the EU consistently adhered to the position defined in 1994 - only full implementation of the agreements (PCA, Action Plan) are a prerequisite for successful integration of Ukraine into the European economy, that could help Ukraine to confirm its European identity. The EU stressed that Ukraine’s membership issues distract from the real internal changes. Talking about the prospects of a Ukraine-EU dialogue could be possible only after this “homework”.

At the same time, Ukrainian analysts acknowledged the failure of Ukraine to implement either the PCA or Action Plan (February 2005) independently. This was especially the case with the Action Plan, included a wide range of requirements for Ukraine, which generally seemed like more work. The implementation period was only three years and did not include the relevant technical assistance received by the candidate countries for such steps. In addition, the strengthening of bilateral cooperation was made dependent on the implementation by Ukraine of a broad list of requirements stipulated by the AP.⁴⁷

The EU tried to show support for Ukraine, contributed to Ukraine’s WTO membership, expanded cooperation in the CFSP and conflict resolution, initiated regional projects and programs that contained the incorporation of Ukrainian State in the EU projects. On one hand, it demonstrated only partial satisfaction of Kyiv’s implementation of European integration issues, and, on the other hand, it showed returning return to the recognition of Ukraine’s geopolitical importance. The latter contributed to the adoption of decision to start negotiations on an Association Agreement in September 2008, based on the principles of political association and economic integration. Brussels officially recognized their obligations with this step. This approach is embodied in launching the initiative of “Eastern Partnership” and the decision of the Association Agenda in 2009.

The basic idea of the Eastern Partnership (EP) was to create the necessary conditions to accelerate political association and further economic integration between the EU and Eastern Partnership countries within the framework of regional and bilateral cooperation. It was expected that the implementation of the initiative would restore trust between the EU and partner countries, would create closer ties between them, and would build a qualitatively new system of relations based on the principles of strategic partnership and shared values. Despite the ambitious program, which was a result of a compromise between supporters of further EU expansion to the East and critics of this policy, its content was characterized by blurry goals, the lack of a rational approach, and asymmetry between the agenda of the EU and partner countries. In particular, it concerns the incentive of membership, which was powerful enough to bear

the significant costs associated with reforms. Otherwise reforming according to the European model was an unbearable burden.⁴⁸ In Ukraine adaptive pressure without the prospect of membership had no such effect. In addition, the insufficient financial framework and lack of correlation with the EP-EU policy towards Russia greatly exacerbated the “interests and values” dilemma in relations between Ukraine and the EU, which threatened to return Ukraine to Russia’s orbit.⁴⁹

In terms of Ukraine, which tried to become “more than a neighbour”,⁵⁰ the EP initiative did not contain any fundamentally new approaches that would go beyond the already reached agreements with the EU. It gave reason to talk about the absence of an EU strategic approach, an attempt to preserve the role of observer, but not an active participant in the political process in the region.⁵¹ Moreover, the unwillingness of the EU and Russia to recognize the objective existence of the tripartite system of international relations in the region led to the fact that powerful actors did not recognize the opportunities to develop equal relations for partner countries with both of them. Under the circumstances of the intensification of geopolitical confrontation between Russia and the EU, it led to a transformation of Ukraine into the “normative”, and then into a real battlefield since 2014.

Russian factor in bilateral relations. The Russian factor played an important role from the very beginning. However, Brussels could not or did not want to understand that Kyiv’s orientation to Russia was associated with the prolonged economic and energy interdependence of Ukraine and Russia. Only the preservation of a shaky and fragile balance system could preserve Ukrainian independence and integrity. Note that this contrasts with the EU approach to Ukraine, as ESS is based on the fact that even in the era of globalization geography is important.

Viktor Yanukovich emphasized the priority of the pro-European course and the continuation of negotiations on “Ukraine’s integration into the European political, economic and legal space in order to obtain membership in the European Union”.⁵² He departed from the principle of “European integration as an end in itself” and considered it as an instrument for the modernization based on existing formats of cooperation. In 2010, the result of active political Ukraine-EU dialogue was statements about the need for pragmatic bilateral relations and the Association Agreement (AA) in 2011, which would become a “reference point” for a further promotion of relations.

At the same time, Yanukovich was counting on Brussels’s inability to recognize European progress “without good relations with Russia” and without “strict observance of the bilateral balance of national interests and mutual respect”⁵³, because Ukraine was going “to Europe in addition to Russia, perhaps to a greater extent than with Bulgaria and Romania – simply by virtue

of larger dependence”.⁵⁴ However, his understanding of the Moscow’s steps (talks with the extension of the Black Sea Fleet in Crimea, the free economic zone with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, the signing of the Ukrainian-Russian energy agreement) raised doubts about Ukraine’s geopolitical choice.⁵⁵ Instead of developing a less technocratic approach in relations with Ukraine and introducing flexible negotiation scenarios with a number of compensatory mechanisms, the EU has prepared for Ukraine a so-called “Füle Matrix” – a list of reforms that should be implemented within clearly defined terms. These guidelines were only a list of obligations that Ukraine had undertaken before. However, their implementation and transformation of Ukraine into a country with a developed democracy, perfect judicial system, and low levels of corruption, a fundamentally new way of governance were not possible within a few months.⁵⁶

This situation led to some political rhetoric (many statements, appeals and resolutions to “blame and shame”, promises, and warnings)⁵⁷ and uncertainty in the dialogue, which eventually manifested in the deepest crisis of EU-Ukraine relations, characterized by a “cold peace”. Thus, during the process of AA test approval, contradictions regarding the functioning of the free trade zone became more acute and inclusion of the prospect of Ukraine’s membership in the text of the document. In addition, the EU criticized the internal processes in Ukraine which were contrary to the “need to follow our common values, such as freedom of speech, rule of law” and others. The EU even pushed for a unilateral postponement of the official visit of Yanukovich in October 2011, and some leaders of the EU member states refused to attend the Euro 2012 in Ukraine and Yalta summit. In such circumstances, Ukraine has resorted to proclaiming a course to establish a “strategic equilibrium”. The EU could not allow the emergence of new authoritarian state in Ukraine, and therefore – the suspension of enlargement of democracy, freedom and security to the East.⁵⁸ The EU provided some concessions to the declared values, agreeing on the text, initialling and signing of the AA, which, according to Jean M. Teixeira, would give Ukraine the same status as Norway or Switzerland had.⁵⁹ The main criterion still was the ability of Ukrainian elites to fulfil their promises. This move was made under pressure from Poland, Lithuania, to some extent, Sweden, the Czech Republic, and Great Britain, which were the most interested in Ukraine remaining in the orbit of the EU. They believed that AA would give the EU the authority to control the course of reforms, and the functioning of the FTA would be a mechanism for the gradual integration of Ukraine into the EU, and it would break the system of Russian control.⁶⁰ But the significant limitation of the agreement, which did not provide adequate support for the prevention of the economic crisis and guarantees of national security, caused disappointment in Kyiv.

In addition, when the Kremlin proceeded from statements concerning the belonging of the Ukrainian State to Russian geopolitical orbit⁶¹ to using Realpolitik instruments to defend its interests in the region, the EU continued to be guided by the idea that Ukraine's rapprochement with the EU depended on the Ukrainian elections. Brussels believed that it would be sufficient to adopt the resolutions to support the efforts of pro-European Ukraine, and criticized Russian pressure on Ukraine.⁶² The extreme politicization of the negotiations on the AA and lack of clear understanding in the EU about the need to support Ukraine in conditions when Russia offered substantial financial and economic benefits⁶³ with no extra requirements strengthened the dissonance of bilateral relations. Finally, the policies of the EU and Russia, which forced the Ukrainian government to make the final choice, led to a political crisis in Ukraine and a new conflict in Europe.

Unfortunately, the EU failed to adequately assess the significance of the events of the EuroMaidan in Ukraine and Russia's readiness to take extraordinary steps. Statements of representatives and EU institutions in support of the "right of sovereign states to conduct foreign policy without external pressure"⁶⁴, calling for a "democratic solution of the political crisis in Ukraine" did not correspond to either the current situation or the "value-oriented" policy of the EU in the region.

Expecting a strong and rigid EU response to Russia's actions, which led to violations of international norms and territorial integrity of the state as a result of its European orientation, Kiev was very disappointed with the ambiguity of EU policies during the annexation of the Crimea and the beginning of an armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine.⁶⁵ Similarly, resentment and even accusations of "treason" of Ukraine by European officials who were afraid to irritate Russia⁶⁶ again caused the EU's position to sign only the political part of the AA. We could agree that such move has become the recognition of the legitimacy of the authority of the new Ukrainian government before the presidential elections in May 2014 but, on the other hand, under the circumstances of "the most serious challenge to European security after the fall of the "Iron Curtain", the EU should take more responsibility for the situation. Even European experts, drawing parallels between the policies of the leading European countries to Germany in 1938, emphasized the importance to act quickly and effectively, otherwise the price would be enormously high.⁶⁷

It can be assumed that the EU was waiting for the election of a new president in Ukraine, but after the election of Petro Poroshenko, the statement of EU leaders did not change in general tone: support for Ukraine, calls for cooperation at all levels and among all parties, resolving the crisis peacefully, execution of Geneva agreements, the introduction of sanctions against Russia. However, a proposal to give Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia, with

the prospect of full membership in the EU as an alternative to Russian EEC project was presented for the first time. It was announced by Stefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement, in an interview with German newspaper *Die Welt* on May 30, 2014: “If we seriously seek for transformation in Eastern Europe, then we have to use the most powerful instrument that contributes conversion – extension”. He expressed the same considerations that Ukraine has been trying to convey to Brussels for a long time: European perspective, despite the existence of a number of preconditions, was the best incentive for real reforms.

It must be mentioned that the crisis of confidence in It is worth noting that the crisis of confidence in Ukraine’s relations with the EU and the strategic uncertainty of both actors in further relations, under the influence of increasing geopolitical contradictions on the continent, negatively affected the attitude of Ukrainians towards the EU. So, if in 2010, 52.8% of respondents supported the idea of Ukraine’s integration into the EU, in the first half of 2013 only 45.8%.⁶⁸ It is interesting that the situation is repeated: after the summit in Vilnius – 60% of respondents considered the orientation to the EU and the association to be the main condition for improving the situation in the country⁶⁹, in December 2015 56% of respondents supported the idea of accession to the EU⁷⁰, in September 2016 only 49.7% of respondents did.⁷¹ However, this did not eliminate expectations of the Ukrainian people that the AA between Ukraine and the EU would promote the formation of European identity in Ukraine and would be an impetus and a particular algorithm for developing a new form of social-political relations, as well as a modernization mechanism for the development of the economy and political systems and innovative development as a prerequisite for steady progress of the country.⁷²

In his Inaugural Speech, President Poroshenko said, the “European choice – is the heart of our national ideal, choice made by our ancestors”.⁷³ In the Presidential Speech to Parliament the main objective of the policy was the formation of the basic conditions up to 2020, necessary for Ukraine’s accession to the EU.⁷⁴ Thus, signing and ratifying of the AA formalized the European integration priorities of Ukraine and its exit from the zone of Russia’s geopolitical influence. However, delaying the start of FTA between Ukraine and the EU till January 1, 2016 was ambiguously perceived in Ukraine and among the Member States.⁷⁵ In particular, a negative factor was that the decision was made under pressure from Russia, creating a corridor of time for breaking the European integration of Ukraine and the deterioration of Kyiv’s negotiating positions, because of “fatigue” of the Ukrainian issue and the increase in economic losses due to European sanctions against Russia. Positive effects include certain safeguards for obtaining “a clear signal from the EU membership perspective” at the Riga Summit on the Eastern Partnership,

maintaining preferences for Ukrainian exporters, and an increase in customs revenue, which would improve the economic situation in Ukraine.

Nevertheless, both sides underestimated the Kremlin's inability to accept the loss of Ukraine. Russian aggression in Crimea and eastern Ukraine created the conditions retarding reforms, delaying resources for military and defense needs, and weakening the Ukrainian economy. The Kremlin is once again to play on the contradictions within the EU, widely popularizing the idea that support for Ukraine and sanctions against Russia are too expensive for economies of European countries and this burden is unnecessary for the EU. Another important tool successfully operated by Moscow is the threat of a full-scale war, which will involve European countries. Thus, the largest fear of the member states will come true – war will come back to Europe. But if Poland, Sweden, and the Baltic countries are ready for more decisive action, those EU Member States economically associated with Russia (Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Hungary, and Czech Republic) and even France and Germany stand for normalizing relations with Russia.

This is the key to the relationship between Ukraine and the EU during 2015-2016. The outcome of the 17th Ukraine-EU Summit and the Riga Eastern Partnership Summit indicate that the EU is not eager to offer anything more than the existing format of relations. On one hand, the EU expects Ukraine's progress in the implementation of the provisions of the AA, and, on the other hand, it hopes to reach a compromise with Russia.

A similar position of the EU is threatening for Ukraine. The limitation of sanctions and their temporary nature does not convince the Kremlin to perceive the EU as a serious partner and seek a peaceful solution. On the other hand, as the results of the "the Normandy Contact Group" showed, France and Germany put pressure on Ukraine on the issue of the implementation of the Minsk agreements, having no effective mechanism to force Russia to fulfil its obligations. As Alain Guilmeau, a French writer, rightly noted, "the interests of Europeans and Ukrainians within this format do not necessarily coincide, but the resolution of the crisis in Ukraine" is a chance for the EU to achieve great success.⁷⁶ The EU does not want to hear the arguments of Ukraine: the withdrawal of Russian troops is not possible without ceasefire, fair elections on the occupied territories of Donbas, and consolidating the special status of these territories in the Constitution legalizes the occupation regime, which will conserve the problem for many years. Moreover, these elections will be a step to formalize the conflict in the East as purely internal, and Kyiv's refusal to negotiate formally with the legitimate representatives of the authorities on the occupied territories will eventually transform the Ukrainian authorities into those main responsible for the events and peace-making. It will give the EU the possibility to remove sanctions against Russia, but Brussels does not

consider that the Kremlin will receive the instrument to destabilize Ukraine in this way, and, therefore, the situation in Europe.

Thus, 2014, on one hand, has become a point of non-reciprocity in relations between Ukraine and the EU, has determined the activity, but also the ineffectiveness of relations that often became hostages of the domestic policy of the EU member states. So, migration and the Syrian crisis, terrorist attacks, Brexit, as well as the growth of right-wing populism and Euroscepticism within Europe have identified the negative attitude of 61-71% of residents of Austria, Germany, Luxembourg, France, Belgium, and Finland to further EU enlargement. However, 61-73% of the population of Romania, Lithuania, Malta, and Croatia are “for”. As for Ukraine, in 2010 its accession to the EU was supported by 37%, in 2014 52% of EU citizens (mostly from Poland, Sweden, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Italy) agreed that Ukraine should be given membership perspective.⁷⁷

However, domestic events do not improve the position of Kyiv: corruption scandals, slowness of reforms, the formal character of adopted regulations and laws (the law on lustration, for example). Unfortunately, this tendency will remain in the coming years, which does not give rise to a breakthrough in relations. However, referring to the words of Donald Tusk, the President of the European Council, who recognized that “the Ukrainian people deserve better” and “Ukraine’s success will be the success of Europe” in November 2016, the conservation of practical integration of Ukraine into the European space can be predicted. The main task for the Ukrainian government is implementing large-scale reforms despite the extremely difficult conditions.

Conclusions. Trends in Ukraine-EU relations are determined by their strategic culture. The dominating feature is the excellent perception of each other, which led to the formalization and excessive politicization of relations, the parties take political measures that, despite a clear and common goal – the Europeanization and European integration of Ukraine, results in misunderstandings. A conscious and logical “European dimension” gradually turned into an instrument of domestic and foreign policy for different political forces in Ukraine. The EU, refusing to recognize Ukraine’s European integration prospects and perceiving Ukraine as part of Europe, helped to transform the geopolitical choice into a declaration. Today, the dilemma between political imperatives, practical interests and pressing tasks of the EU policy intensified. Asymmetric relations between Kyiv and Brussels should be revised, the policy should be transparent. Today, the EU has the exclusive right to determine the prospect of membership of any state and the timing of its accession, and assessing the results of the implementation of bilateral agreements (PCA, Action Plans, and Association Agreement) is dependent on the Member States. Attempts by the Ukrainian side to demonstrate its willingness to

defend their own interests with regard to certain issues, including the prospect of Ukraine's membership in the EU or relations with Russia, has caused EU criticism and statements about Ukraine's failure to do its "homework". All this contributed to preserving the tendency to politicize the practical spheres of cooperation, denoting the "length" of the European route of Ukraine.

The security of European countries is a fundamental imperative for the EU. The first real challenge for EU's strategic and geopolitical engagement in the 21st century is a conflict around Ukraine, which, contrary to the strategic interests of the EU, continues "beyond the control of the European Union".⁷⁸ Therefore, we can expect that the EU will provide support and assistance. However, the duration and effectiveness of these steps will depend on Ukraine itself. Ineffectiveness (in particular, implementing the provisions of the Association Agreement) while maintaining the weakness of political institutions in Ukraine will be negatively reflected in the EU's attitude towards the country. At best, the situation will provide the scenario of long-term selective approach. In the worst case, conservative approaches will be intensified in the EU, which will leave Ukraine behind the "last" lines, allowing Russia to exert pressure on Ukraine.

Therefore, to avoid the previous mistakes and to achieve mutually beneficial relations, Ukraine and the EU must build further relations based on the principle of joint participation in defining the objectives and roadmaps for implementation. Ukraine should follow through on the implementation of its obligations. The EU should abandon unilateral demands, offering means for their implementation in close cooperation with Kyiv, clear mechanisms to support and control their implementation.

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CHAPTER 5
UKRAINE'S FOREIGN POLICY
IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

Sergii Glebov

«Black Sea's» (de)conceptualization of Ukraine's strategic culture. The exceptional complexity of the geopolitical symbiosis of military and economic factors in the Black Sea region, and their influence on the global international and political context of recent years, testify to the high degree of relevance of international relations in the region. The geopolitical space that has been formed in the Black Sea region since ancient times has always remained on top of the attention of those who were located there, but appeared to be a subject of military confrontation from the side of external powers which were eager to penetrate it. Taking into consideration that strategic culture as a single state, as well as that of the whole regional political system, represented by a set of comprehensive “beliefs, attitudes and norms towards the use of military force, often moulded according to historical experience,”¹ interstate crisis-conflict points in the Black Sea basin have been naturally correcting the processes of formation of Ukraine's statehood and foreign policy of Ukraine at all historical stages. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, scientific and practical interest in the Black Sea region was fully restored in independent Ukraine. The task of conceptualizing national interests, considering regional specifics, has been put before the new Ukrainian leadership for consideration. Such specifics were predetermined to a great extent by a set of geopolitical advantages that had been previously set in the Black Sea region which with the new post-bipolar impetus in the early 1990's began to be actively pursued in the region in the direction of building a system of regional cooperation. From the standpoint of today, the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation set a landmark in the independent Ukraine's Black Sea history as well as in the geopolitical history of the whole region now and forever. Such a landmark defined Ukraine's national interest's margins and specific features of development of its strategic culture in the context of what was “before” and what is “after.”

The national interests of the Ukrainian state in the Black Sea region – in the region of its natural existence as a subject of international relations – “before” focused primarily on the spheres of trade and economics, security, energy, ecology, information, social and cultural dimensions. In the context of the post-bipolar regionalization of international space, as well as in the context of elaborating of an effective system of international security and cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic area, it was always an urgent task for Ukraine to de-

velop an integrated, conceptually grounded regional policy. It was important that such policy should fully respond to acute geopolitical and geo-economic interests of Ukraine at all system levels. It is not difficult to assume that successful implementation of regional policy priorities in complex would not only strengthen international prestige of the Ukrainian state and contribute to the internal consolidation, but also would enhance the status of Ukraine as of a strong maritime European state.

However, on the way towards formulation of the “Black Sea regional doctrine” and its successful implementation, a scattering of the “Black Sea underwater cornerstones bricks” appeared; they caused the national strategy of the independent Ukrainian state to “slip” all the time while a mode of the strategic cultural behaviour was elaborating. These included unresolved interstate political and economic problems with some neighbours in the region and the lack of a clear strategic vision of the link between European sub-regional issues and global processes. Perhaps many generations of Ukrainian leaders believed that it was possible to avoid having a comprehensive program of regional action. Possibly it was easier to concentrate on resolving some tactical “inconsistencies”, to solve problems of bilateral or multilateral relations here and there as soon as they appeared by means of the “regional holes patching”. Most likely, such “phlegmatic” *ad-hoc* approach towards strategic priorities of the country’s foreign policy in the context of defending national interests on the regional scene accompanied much more prosaic interests such as economic benefits of some political oligarchic groups which were close to the centre of a decision-making. Nevertheless, without going into the domestic political discussion of the life of Ukrainian geopolitical elites in the 26 years of Ukrainian independence, it should be emphasized that success in foreign policy depended directly on them. Indeed, a presence of a consolidated strategy that considers the whole range of sub-regional, inter-regional and global agendas in making foreign policy decisions and respects multi-level requirements of the Ukrainian national interests could probably make regional policy much more effective as well as it could defend respective interests, and not only in the Black Sea region. As a result, additional chances to resolve “old” (acute for Ukraine before 2014) regional issues could appear successfully, but it could also make possible the prevention of new challenges of Ukrainian national security at all levels. It is not a fact, of course, that the existence of a more coherent and structured policy of Ukraine in the Black Sea region before 2014 could have prevented Russia’s aggressive actions in Crimea and Donbas. However, it would probably have complicated Russian plans to seize the peninsula, if it did not completely make any provocation of military aggression against Ukraine impossible *per se*. However, the time for that has passed. As a result, a key national interest of Ukraine in the Black Sea

region “after” – is neither more nor less – the restoration of its territorial integrity and sovereignty on the temporarily occupied territories of the Crimean Peninsula and the East of the country.

Establishing post-bipolar regional foreign policy culture of Ukraine. Returning to the foundations of the formation of the Black Sea vector of Ukraine’s foreign policy in the late 1980s - early 1990s, it is worth mentioning again that a failure of the bipolar world order recharged traditional international political and economic processes with the new impulse during that historical period. At the same time, the process of creating of a new world order began to involve new forms of interstate connections. Among the most sought after was the process of regionalization of the world space, taken on by states in different parts of the world as a transition mechanism from a flexible bipolar system to a new, multipolar. At the stage of the mono-polar model that was undergoing transition, a “new regionalism” gave a chance to the Newly Independent States (NIS), such as Ukraine, not to be isolated from global political and economic transformations. Since the beginning of the 1990s, under objective and subjective reasons (end of the Cold War, the dissolution of the Soviet Union that led to the appearance of NIS, a foreign policy will of the states towards cooperation in an increasingly interdependent world, etc.) a new system of international relations with its elements, structure, and environment began to reveal itself in the Black Sea area. Eventually the presence of special content and formation of inside relationships among the Black Sea states allowed to identify them as part of a common space – of the Black Sea region with geographical and structural understanding of existing relationships in the definition of the term “region”. Formation of the Black Sea regional relations appeared to be a natural process where by the end of the 1990s the Black Sea region became one of the examples of the post-bipolar regionalization of the international space as a “perceived need” for the sake of a peaceful coexistence of the Black Sea states.²

Not surprisingly, Ukraine immediately joined the process of building of new systems of relationships on the level of regional ties. Yet in the early 1990s, besides certain practical cases, primarily associated with the Black Sea Fleet of the former USSR and the “Crimean” issue, Ukraine’s Black Sea agenda started clearly manifesting itself on conceptual and theoretical levels. In particular, this is reflected in a number of legal provisions fixed in 1993 by Verkhovna Rada in such a basic national document as “The main directions of the foreign policy of Ukraine.”³ The national interests of Ukraine and its main tasks in the foreign policy, somehow, were associated with a successful theoretical and practical “processing” of the Black Sea vector. This vector was also compatible with the four major directions of the foreign policy of Ukraine which in the 1990s were consisting of such interests, like: further de-

velopment of bilateral relations with the neighbouring countries (in the Black Sea region among them, first of all, were Russia, Moldova, and Romania); expanding participation in the European regional cooperation frameworks (especially in the framework of the initiative on creation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation); cooperating within the CIS (and this is interaction with the Black Sea countries such as Russia, and Georgia, as well as with Moldova, Armenia, and Azerbaijan); participating in the activities of the UN and other international organizations (such as the Council of Europe and OSCE, which also include countries of the Black Sea basin).

Thus, a wide range of the national interests of Ukraine have been expanded all over the Black Sea from the very first day of its state independence. Without their proper protection in the Black Sea region no one could say for sure that Ukraine's national security was provided, its political independence was protected, as well as its state sovereignty and economic interests. A key task in this context was to preserve the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the inviolability of its borders. Paragraph 5, Section II of "The main direction..." affirmed the thesis that "Ukraine does not articulate territorial claims towards neighbouring countries and does not recognize any territorial claims towards itself." As it turned out, Ukraine was not able to preserve its territorial integrity. Its territorial interests were infringed in relation to its immediate neighbours in the Black Sea region, in particular in the Black Sea basin; and this was not limited just by neo-imperial "soft" attacks on Sevastopol in the 1990s and peacefully resolved crisis over Tuzla in 2003. Moreover, if in the case of Zmijinyj Island in relations with Romania and in the case of Giurgiulești in relations with Moldova, civilized procedures have been respected but not on a mutually beneficial basis, the Crimea simply became an object of a forced annexation by Russia.

Such a finale is even more painful taking into account the fact that the Black Sea state orientation of Ukraine goes many centuries back into its history. While defining it, Yuri Lypa emphasized, that Ukraine's goal to capture the Black Sea coast, which for a long time occupied the largest Ukrainian rivers flowing into the Black Sea from the Danube to the Kuban, then retreating under the pressure of nomads upstream, then going down to the mouth under more favourable conditions.⁴ During many centuries the Black Sea had become a part of the cultural identity of the Ukrainian people, an element of its self-identification. Thus, since ancient times the people of Ukraine had access to the Black Sea coast both on land and by river systems and in different periods of its history Ukrainians had to prove their right for settlement in the coastal zone. In his "Letters to Dnieper Ukraine" (1893) one of the prominent Ukrainian politicians of the second half of 19th century Mykhailo Drahomanov wrote: "Without the Northern Black Sea coast Ukraine is not possible as a cultural region..."⁵

Anyway, the course on bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the Black Sea basin was taken in 1990. An initiative to create a “zone of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation” (BSEC) was proposed by the president of Turkey Turgut Özal. An idea of regional cooperation was supported by the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (UkSSR) during the meeting of the Head of Verkhovna Rada Leonid Kravchuk with Turgut Özal in Kyiv in March 1991.⁶ According to the Article 27 of the UkSSR’s bill “On Foreign Economic Activity” UkSSR had a right to gain membership in international intergovernmental economic organizations solely in accordance with respective international agreements and/or statutory regulations of that organization’s provisions.⁷

Quite rapid implementation of the project on creation of the regional community became possible thanks to two essential factors that accelerated it – one was objective, and the other was subjective. An objective was that the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in theory made possible an emergence of the first association of states with different economic and political systems based on common economic and other interests. A subjective factor had found itself on the level of a state psychology: this was a conscious desire of the countries of the Black Sea region for the close cooperation that led to a rapid practical implementation of the Turkish president’s initiative. Because of the initiative of Turkey, a founding act – the Declaration on the Black Sea Economic Cooperation was adopted at the highest level⁸ – and was signed on June 25, 1992 during the Istanbul summit of the heads of eleven countries – Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Greece, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine. A multilateral intention was also supported by a common Bosphorus statement.⁹ Paragraph 8 of the Declaration clearly set an aim of formalization of the regional cooperation, thus reflecting a key national interest of each country in it: “...to ensure that the Black Sea becomes a sea of peace, stability and prosperity, striving to promote friendly and good-neighbourly relations”.¹⁰

The geographical proximity of the member countries, common historical destiny, traditions of economic and humanitarian ties, shared environment, international agreements – all of these have formed the grounds of a pan-regional strategic culture, an integral part of which had to become a regional policy both of Ukraine and Russia, as well as of the all other Black Sea countries.

Strategy of geopolitical conflict and the “Russian factor”. However, methodologically it would be wrong to analyse the Black Sea vector of Ukraine’s foreign policy without the context of the strategic course of the country on the world’s arena and vice versa. At least five multi-level processes influenced Ukraine on its formation directly: worldwide economic globalization, political fragmentation of international space, European integration, Euro-Atlantic integration, and post-communist transformation in the post-Soviet space. In

this context it was not just about Ukraine's "multi-vector" approach towards choosing a particular vector of integration and resolving its geopolitical dilemma of the foreign policy choice between the EU and Russia, NATO and Russia, between symbolical "West" and "East" in times of globalization. First of all, this was about international relations on a sub-regional level. The specificity lies precisely in the fact that they usually are developing on the bilateral and multilateral levels of the countries, that share a common borderline, have a long history of relationship, and it is not always positive; and quite often they also may have territorial disputes, up to armed conflicts between them. In this regard, bilateral challenges to Ukraine's national security rather than prospects of the multilateral economic cooperation emerged as the most important issues of its regional policy. The key ones were directly related to the problem of the dividing Black Sea Fleet of the former USSR and to Russian methods which were dangerous for Ukraine to promote their Black Sea interests in Crimea.

Even if under a condition of equal approach towards Ukraine we tolerate Russia's interest to keep its military presence in Crimea as a strategic precondition in defending our own national security, the issue of the Black Sea Fleet's redistribution (including the bases of the deployment) should not turn into Russia's territorial claims.¹¹ The Emergence and articulation of the question about Russian sovereignty over Crimea and Sevastopol expressed a total disrespect of Ukraine's international status as an independent state with a full violation of international law. As noted by the well-known Canadian political scientist of the Ukrainian origin Taras Kuzio, attempts to resolve the Black Sea Fleet problem (at that time) failed due to Russia's inability to recognize Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea and Sevastopol.¹² Eventually, Russia appeared to be able to do this in May 1997, but only on paper. In accordance with the bilateral Agreement on friendship, cooperation, and partnership between Russia and Ukraine which was signed on May 31, 1997, the Russian Federation had recognized the territorial integrity of Ukraine directly (Article 2).¹³ Thus, for the first time, after a long hesitation, Russia agreed to maintain (as it turned out, temporarily) the former internal borders of the Soviet Union as international borders, and because a few days before the fate of the three basic conditions of the BSF bilateral agreements were decided,¹⁴ it was in the interests of Russia and the Black Sea Fleet to keep Sevastopol as its territory, at least until 2017. In fact, Ukraine received an official confirmation of its territorial inviolability of the existing borders between the two countries. However, Russia with its more powerful naval indicators got a real opportunity to destabilize the sovereign territory of Ukraine from the inside at the right time. Even the "Kharkov agreements" from 21 April 2010 to extend the lease of the naval base in Sevastopol for the Black Sea Fleet until 2042

did not calm down the Kremlin's obsessive desire to accede Crimea formally. Thus, even before the annexation of Crimea, Russia followed the tactics of a "smouldering problem" in its claims on Crimea and Sevastopol by repeating from time to time on different levels, in some form or context, an idea about existing problems and Russia's involvement in it.¹⁵ In the 1990s a German researcher, Uwe Halbach from the Federal Institute for East European and International Studies (Cologne, Germany) noted that acceleration of a conflict was a modern Russian instrument to keep new states in its sphere of influence.¹⁶ Thus, such a neo-imperial instrument worked out in 2014; neither NATO's, nor Turkish counterarguments for various reasons prevented a realization of such a tragic scenario.

Such development was not a surprise for the experts. At the beginning of 2000s the author of this chapter noted that "a further escalation of the "problem" of Crimea, Sevastopol, and of the Black Sea Fleet out of the context, as well as in connection with, the strengthened dialogue between Ukraine and NATO, can be a key instrument of Russian foreign policy" which "Russia may use: 1) to destabilize a political situation in Ukraine; 2) to preserve Ukraine in its sphere of influence even after signing of a wide-ranging political Ukrainian-Russian agreement and formalization of the redistribution of the Fleet."¹⁷ Even then it became apparent that the delays and especially irritation of a number of Crimean problems in the Ukrainian-Russian relations could turn them into a source of a military conflict which would be sharper than the Yugoslav conflict.¹⁸ As it was suggested by Taras Kuzio in 1994, the Crimean problem could be not only a test [what actually became a reality in 20 years – author's note], for the Ukrainian independence, but also for the international community to on its ability to prevent conflicts.¹⁹

Therefore, in this context a special regional specificity for Ukraine was the fact that this conventional "East" in the face of the Russian Federation – a regional neighbour of Ukraine – represented a major destabilizing factor to impact its strategic culture. Without an immediate response to the challenges of Ukraine's national security from the side of Moscow and successfully overcoming them (a number of the Black Sea countries had faced similar challenges of security) all prospects of a mutually beneficial cooperation in the Black Sea region in a multilateral format were doomed to failure. Actually, this was instructively expressed by the evolution of the BSEC which activity after 25 years from the date of initiation could be assessed as an ineffective, especially in the light of its totally disastrous (taking into account the annexation of Crimea) and inaccessible ambitious goal "to ensure that the Black Sea becomes a sea of peace, stability and prosperity..." Indicative in this respect was the diplomatic demarche of the delegation of Ukraine during the BSEC meeting in January 2016 (which was supported by a number

of member states) in connection with the Russian presidency in the general Black Sea region political organization.

Thus, the foreign policy course of Ukraine both at the global and the sub-regional levels was dependent on many internal and external factors, which appeared to be part of the strategic planning in both theory and practice. All of them were related to Ukraine's national security challenges. Not accidentally, during his speech at the Kiev Institute of International Relations on September 4, 1995 the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Sir Malcolm Rifkind admitted, "Ukraine, like every other state, must proceed from the fact that there is no security without good relations with its neighbours."²⁰

Given all the above, it is not an exaggeration to say that the policy of Ukraine in the Black Sea region since 1991 and in the following decades as in the whole history of the independent Ukraine in the Black Sea region, – this is not just a history of elaborating effective models of interregional economic cooperation, but rather not always successful policy of strengthening its own maritime security, sovereignty and territorial integrity; it is a history of tactical victories, and strategic mistakes; it is a history of unrealized opportunities.

Anyway, an analysis of the regional policy of Ukraine both within the strict geographic perimeter of the Black Sea, and in a geopolitical framework of the wider Black Sea region as a system fits a long-standing scenario of a geopolitical struggle of the centres of global and regional power with significant exposure to other system components and external environment. In this context, for many centuries the Black Sea region with its own specifics of international relations has formed a special strategic regional culture, which had to be promptly analysed and from which Ukraine's security had to be preventively secured. In addition, the Black Sea strategic culture has always been characterized by geopolitical competition of the regional centres of power which applied a violent behaviour towards each other and balanced "on the edge." Such a scenario expectedly remained acute after 1991, when many actors of international relations in the Black Sea region openly entered into geopolitical relationships, where "geopolitical relations are presented by relative unity and struggle of various international and regional forces that arise alongside with a critical or an essential role of spatial and territorial factors"²¹ A fact, that a geopolitical competition among leading global actors took the entire post-bipolar Black Sea region hostage including Ukraine, was fully demonstrated by the annexation of Crimea by Russia "allegedly" in response to NATO's geopolitical appetites. However, with the beginning of the formation of an independent foreign policy of Ukraine and national Black Sea Studies it was expected that complete deconstruction of geopolitics (with its struggle for space) as the basis of analysing international relations in the

Black Sea region would not be possible. First of all, because the region from the very beginning appeared at the junction of the “old” and “new” regionalism, allowed a preservation of geopolitical competition between the United States and its allies with the legal successor of the USSR after the end of the “Cold War.” As a result, despite the diversity and heterogeneity of the concepts of regionalism in the theory of international relations as a modern science, its analysis has largely been remaining open towards interpretations of the Neorealism and similar schools and trends. This thesis was just confirmed with an unambiguous clarity in 2014 by the realities of the Black Sea (in)security.

Global culture of a regional security and Ukraine. Security in the Black Sea region as a prerequisite of its prosperity immediately came directly dependent on the dangers inherent at two levels: international and domestic. In this regard, a problem emerged in front of the Black Sea countries, especially in front of those new ones that stepped into the road of national revival and regional cooperation, in how to deter such duplex threats. Despite the fact that not all of the threats directly impacted their territories or boundaries, these threats presented challenges to their national security. It should be noted that a need for joint responses towards threats and challenges did not come out of nowhere. Despite the fact that during the years of the bipolar model’s functioning in the global system of international relations, a leading role in defining parameters of global and regional security was an attribute of the two superpowers, political and scientific debates on the new configuration of security systems never stopped, especially during the years of “Détente”. Such notions and concepts as “collective security”, “common security,” “comprehensive security” fell into circulation and became subjects of international negotiations, conventions, regulations and resolutions. This meant that, despite all the conservatism of the centre-power approaches to security, especially a nuclear one, leaders of the USSR and the U.S. realized a need to find more efficient, and more flexible systems of “peaceful coexistence” while sending a warning message to the rest of the world not to make irrational decisions to avoid even the potential threat of the Third World War, the nuclear war. During the Cold War an approach to combine mutually respected national interests of each state with the interests of a “joint”, “comprehensive” security played an active role in the theory and practice of international relations. Then, when the bipolar system ceased to exist globally, and regions were granted an economic and political independence, a duty to take responsibility for their own security also at the expense of their own resources and often at the expense of their own interests were “lowered” down to the level of particular regions and states.

In this regard, since the beginning of the 1990s a need to find and to install a new security system in the Black Sea area appeared which had to meet

the political, economic, military, political, environmental, and informational interests of each country of the region. According to Robert Gilpin, the international system is stable, when none of the countries consider initiated changes in the system as the useful ones to itself and vice versa, the state will try to change the international system if the expected outcomes exceed the expected losses.²² Building such a security system would have to go towards the creation of such conditions which would exclude zero-sum outcomes. David Farnsworth defined such system as follows: inside this system states still face the victories and defeats, but without obvious winners and losers.²³ In this context, Ukraine and all other Black Sea states tried to create structures of cooperative security, both at the level of a regional multilateral cooperation (for example, “The Black Sea naval operational group” BLACKSEAFOR since 2001) and also by means of involving out-regional navies (for example, like annual multinational naval exercises in the Ukrainian Black Sea coast “Sea Breeze” since 1997). Ukraine has also inoculated a culture of protecting its own regional interests by the so-called “troikas”, “foursomes” like launched in 1997 and created in 2006 “Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – GUAM,” or inside the framework of the Ukraine-Georgia initiative of the “Community of Democratic Choice” (CDC) which was launched in 2005 in the days of friendship between the two presidents Viktor Yushchenko and Mikhail Saakashvili. By using such sub-regional organizations and initiatives Ukraine tried to turn itself from the actual object of the foreign policy of the more powerful actors into the real subject of international relations.

In general, a construction of such a universal system of regional security in practice which was mentioned by cited Robert Gilpin and David Farnsworth often has been destroyed by different national objectives of each country in the region. It should not be forgotten that “regions themselves are arenas of competition... of the “national interests”, which “intersect.”²⁴ They in turn, are dependent on the state’s ideology of strategic development. During the Cold War the Black Sea region, like some others, had become an arena of an ideological competition, an arena of an epic struggle of opposing interests. In this context, from the very beginning the criteria of the values of the democratic world have made a strong impact on the strategic culture and foreign policy of the Black Sea countries with a burdensome communist past. At the same time, the processes of the post-communist transformation which were initiated began to slip in some post-Soviet countries which led to emergence of threats of a new confrontation in the Black Sea region after the dissolution of the USSR. Securitization of the processes of democratic development became an essential part of the international relations’ agenda in the Black Sea region and an integral part of the security issues on the level of East-West

confrontation. Therefore, for Ukraine both GUAM and CDC, which were perceived as anti-Russian and pro-American in Russia, had to become important supplementary components in its progress towards strengthening democratic foundations of its strategic culture at the sub-regional level. However, as far as Ukraine made its democratic choice, it had to carry out democratic reforms in the country successfully as soon as possible, which unfortunately did not happen.

The annexation of Crimea by Russia was a reaction of Kremlin on another attempt of halting the Ukrainian society returning back to the track of democracy what was also accompanied by blaming NATO in hostility as a military-political bloc of the countries which follow democratic principles. In general, the Black Sea security has been affected by different approaches from the side of the Black Sea actors as to the essence of democracy, as well as its distribution which led to the conservation of its geopolitical image in the world map as of the region of constant tension and conflicts. Using the terminology of the well-known American theorists Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky who in the early 1990s offered their understanding of the model of the “real world order”, the Black Sea region to a greater extent still continues to be a “zone of turmoil”, i.e. a zone of disorder, a mess, shock, confusion, rather than a “zone of peace”.²⁵ The concept of democracy in our view takes a key place in the definition of a “zone of peace”. The lack of democracy converts a zone of peace into the zone of disorder, or rather, if we speak about the Black Sea region, it does not allow this zone of disorder to become a zone of peace. Therefore, it is necessary to link tightly the internal reforms in Ukraine with the issues of strengthening security against threats that concentrate on the verge of collision of the democratic and non-democratic spaces of geopolitics. Ukraine, like the entire Black Sea region, is located on the edge of their collision, creating this “gray zone” where “disorder, a mess, shock, confusion” take place.

It is clear that a constant location in a hostile environment can form adequately neither strategic culture, nor appropriate methods of defence. This, incidentally would encourage Ukraine as a sovereign state to look at the problem of neighbourhood and regional borders; namely in the context of regional culture of behaviour towards neighbours in the region in the context of strengthening the protection of its border, including by military means. If the state borders with the beginning of the post-bipolar era tended to become “diluted” under the circumstances of political and economic integration, universalization of everyday problems, and globalization of common threats. However when it comes to the national security, States prefer to act more pragmatic. These actions are largely dependent on the desire to control a particular geopolitical space in order to enhance their own security, even though

it is not threatened in reality. However, it must be taken into account, that a “geopolitical problem of borders occurs whenever a struggle for control, acquisition, exploration of a political space begin” where the borders themselves “are peripheral organs of the state as well as evidences of its growth, strength and weaknesses of the changes in this body”.²⁶ In this context a relationship could be investigated in a triangle Ukraine-Russia-NATO, where Russia in order to confront NATO’s enlargement towards the post-Soviet space which it treats as its own sphere of influence used an annexation of Crimea as a unique mechanism of preventing further Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine. In this case a category of a state border actually loses its relatively new function to unify and to connect. Instead, it begins to act in the traditional way: as a factor of dissolution, division, separation, as an object of careful attention and as the key objective to protect as far as “the border between the states, even between the most friendly – it is always a political and a strategic line which divides their interests”.²⁷ In our case, this is the border to separate different interests indeed; this border separates non-democratic political space from the democratic one between Russia and NATO countries, between East and West *a-la* «Iron Curtain». There is one problem: the Russian Federation as part of its strategic ignorance towards post-Soviet countries just “forgot” to ask Ukraine about its attitude towards democratization and unilaterally sacrificed its territorial integrity to satisfy its own global neo-imperial ambitions in this aggressive manner.

It should be emphasized that Ukraine, as well as the rest of the Black Sea countries, should promptly adjust its strategic culture towards peculiarities of the development of the Black Sea region on the way to introduce the foundations of the regional security architecture. In this context, an appearance in the scientific discourse of the concept of the “Wider Black Sea region” put on the agenda of the Black Sea countries new strategic objectives as a reflection of the global impact on the formation of the regional security landscape. In general, the concept of the “Greater Black Sea” or the “Wider Black Sea region” is an “invention” which was activated by military and political discourse in the U.S. and the EU in the early 2000s on the future of the Euro-Atlantic security and thus of the Black Sea as its integral part. It is not by chance that the Black Sea region was considered by the Western scholars as a sort of a “Bermuda triangle”,²⁸ something unknown, as a mysterious space filled with the “vacuum of power” where it was unclear up to an extent how various strategies that got there would behave. By introducing the concept of the “Wider Black Sea Region”, its authors, in fact, tried to establish a new political and strategic framework for debate about Western strategy towards Turkey, Ukraine and the South Caucasus. Such an approach got no chance to pass through Russia. In many respects, the article “The Black Sea and the

frontiers of freedom” by a leading expert of the German Marshall Fund of the United States, Ronald Asmus and by founder and president of the “Transitional Democracies” Bruce Jackson where we may find American’s foreign policy unofficial theses concerning newly introduced concept of Wider Black region²⁹ set a landmark in this context. In this Euro-Atlantic context the Black Sea region acts as a “strategic communion, which unity has been dictated by economic interests of the EU and those of the military-political bloc of NATO... They are designing a space, onto which a security system of the Euro-Atlantic community extends... On a conceptual level the Wider Black Sea region tends to be considered as a part of larger geopolitical entities: as a part of Europe, as a part of the whole Euro-Atlantic community.”³⁰ This partly has been explained by the more active regional policy of most Black Sea countries which expressed their will to become a part of NATO and Euro-Atlantic community in the 1990s. As Ronald Asmus admits, “the starting point for a debate in the West about strategic plans to create the “Wider Black Sea region” was an initiative of those Europeans, namely Romanians and Bulgarians, who inhabited the Black Sea themselves. They realized that the process of both the EU and NATO enlargements should not stop at their countries, but should reach other Black Sea countries if there is such a possibility”.³¹ Because of the obvious reasons, what will be discussed in detail in the chapter on relations of Ukraine with NATO, the Euro-Atlantic factor became a powerful aggravator to geopolitical ambitions of Moscow and provoked an aggressive strategy in response to it in the Black Sea basin.

Objectively, the presence of the Black Sea NATO countries led by Turkey in the Black Sea region has always had a considerable influence on the Ukrainian-Russian relations. In this regard, there are centre-power relations of the global and regional order which produced the most influential factors to shape Ukraine’s strategic culture as to the issues of their own security and as to the regional one in general.

Ukraine in the context of a centre-power competition. With the appearance of the new independent Black Sea states in the early 1990s, the composition of forces in the Black Sea region has changed dramatically. However, despite this fact a strategic change of the centuries old geopolitical scenario did not take place in the region. Like two hundred years ago, the post-bipolar geopolitical situation in the region has been determined by a struggle between Russia and Turkey for the opportunity to dominate in the Black Sea. The two most powerful Black Sea countries, leading military and political forces, and became poles of attraction for countries with similar interests (by no chance, when examining the foreign policy steps of the sovereign states in the Black Sea region since early 1990s we had to admit their vector of attraction – pro-Turkish or anti-Russian, and vice versa). Therefore, on the eve

of the 21st century the following partner nodes that basically had common, similar foreign policy interests rather than with the other side were established: Russian-Greece-Armenia and Turkey-Azerbaijan-Ukraine-Georgia. In their foreign policy Bulgaria and Romania maintained a priority course on the direct communication with the EU and NATO without forcing a special relationship with nodal formations in the Black Sea.

Such composition of forces initially predetermined the ways of establishing a regional security system. Ideally it could be paralleled decreasing of bilateral contradictions in the Russian-Ukrainian, Russian-Turkish, Turkish-Greek, Armenian-Azerbaijani relations. In practice, it appeared to be a complex process of maintaining the balance of power in the region between the opposite parties. It has combined a whole range of issues, first of all, connected to formation of suitable military-political conditions in the region. In this regard the key issue was that of composition of naval forces of the Black Sea countries.

However, the Russian Federation which inherited geopolitical interests of the Russian Empire and the USSR had to again consolidate its interests in this sphere of Russian influence, which had been forming for decades, and with the loss of which it was difficult to claim the recovery of a superpower status. At the same time, unlike the events of the last two centuries, it was independent Ukraine which appeared to oppose Russia on its way towards revival of its domination in the region by acquiring its own interest in the region which was opposite to Russian. First of all, it was aimed at distancing from Russia and getting out of its sphere of influence, both economically and politically. Ukraine had deprived Russia of 2782 kilometres of coastline in the northern part of the Black Sea with the strategically important naval infrastructure, minimizing a military presence of the latter in the region; Ukraine due to several objective and subjective reasons, was almost the main among those forces which shook Russia's position as well as the Mediterranean states. Turkey, in turn, claiming the role of the regional superpower under conditions of the Russians inability to confront its growing influence on the countries of the former-USSR in the 1990s, and fully enjoyed an opportunity to expand its economic, political and cultural influence in the region. The Ukrainian-Turkish dialogue in addition to the promising economic relations appeared to be a particular priority for both countries in the context of their matching foreign policy interest during the 1990s – the deterrence of Russian policy in the region. However, the rapprochement of Russia and Turkey in the early 2000s changed the approach of both countries in determining the role and the place of Ukraine in their regional policy. Ukraine-Turkish relations are examined in detail in the relevant chapter. However, having this centre-power context, in the situation of the current friendly relations between Russia and Turkey,

despite the November 2015-June 2016 crisis, the question of how far they would go to oppose the interest of Ukraine on keeping the balance of power in the Black Sea at the expense of the medium and small size countries is appearing to be acute. Ukraine had to take the lesson from such centre-power tandem during the Five-Day Russia-Georgian war in August 2008, when Turkey, despite expectations of a tough response toward Russian actions, had offered Moscow a moderate approach to conflict resolution. Perhaps, that approach contributed to the rapid cease of fire in Georgia, but that vulnerability of the energy pipelines connecting Azerbaijan and Turkey via Georgia from the side of Russia gave Moscow an additional level of influence both on Turkey and on other security conditions in the Black Sea.

In general, it must be stressed that while introducing both pan-European security and that of the Black Sea as a factor of an interaction of international actors in the sphere of production, transportation and consumption of the energy resources had emerged in the “front line” of the strategic culture a long time ago. In other words, the current strategic Black Sea regional security concept (not to take into consideration a military aggression of Russia against Ukraine) is focused on the concept of the “energy security” and in this case, there is no need to specify that security is “energy”;³² and the Black Sea region has actually been transformed into the Black Sea-Caspian region, becoming the subject for an energy securitization in a global dimension. Even in this context Ukraine must be seriously concerned by its own energy security, and must think about its strengthening through diversification of the sources of energy, including modernization of the entire energy infrastructure by implementing energy saving technologies. Also, Ukraine must be concerned with the protection of its energy interests through the market mechanisms of fixing prices for the imported hydrocarbons; it must bet on the development of its own oil, gas, and other alternative energy resources. Additionally, Ukraine must monitor the dynamics of the Turkish-Russian relations closely.

Conclusions. The landmark between “before” and “after” was identified by the events of 2014. It should be emphasized that today is already “after”. In front of the Ukrainian political leaders on their way towards further implementation of the Black Sea vector of its foreign policy there are very important tasks: to “work hard on the mistakes” and to make conclusions from previously unused potential of regional opportunities which are part of the statehood potential of Ukraine. This is important to do and except for problems in Crimea and Donbas, Ukraine still possesses regional interests, which previously were not fully realized. And, of course, in parallel with all of these there is an urgent need to develop a long-term strategy of returning the Crimean Peninsula back under Ukraine’s sovereignty. In this sense, all parties which are interested in the successful regional policy and in the

emergence of a coherent Ukrainian Black Sea strategy (perhaps in the form of an official doctrine or concept), in our opinion, must consider several key conceptual contexts of the regional strategic culture, which is a combination of strategic cultures of the Black Sea countries.

Firstly, from the scientific and practical point of view, in addition to a new strategic priority – the restoration of the territorial integrity of Ukraine – there is a need for a comparison of modern regional relations and internal political changes in the countries of the Black Sea with the effects of the global systemic crises of the past 30 years. After the collapse of the bipolar world in the late 1980s-early 1990s the Black Sea region was thrust into a whirlpool of political, economic, and value post-bipolar transformation, and now comparable in power to the scenario of the Cold War the sharpest post-bipolar crisis since, the annexation of Crimea, comes to its peak.

Secondly, an aggressive policy of Putin's regime, at first glance, does not correspond with the logic of the national economic interest to develop multi-lateral economic cooperation, as far as it is based on the logic of geopolitical domination and reintegration of the former Soviet Union by force. However, even this policy has the economic ambitions of the regional and global scale that is typical for Russia; this Russia is seeking ways to overcome an economic and political (self)isolation while it is attempting to divide the European and Euro-Atlantic unity by attractive economic prospects of revived cooperation with it. Following this approach and sharing a deterministic thesis that economic interests are the foundations of politics, in our opinion, current global economic, and energy strategies deserve special attention and study. They quite actively penetrate and have been acting dynamically for a long time in the Black Sea region via the South Caucasus forming a new regional geo-spatial reality – Black-Caspian Sea region. Not just regional actors, but also extra-regional actors including Transnational energy companies which are already on the market of the hydrocarbons in the Black Sea and in the Caspian for quite a long period of time, are ready to defend their interests in this interregional space quite strongly; and not just economically. In this context, in order to proceed with the further study of the strategic culture of Ukraine, the traditional mechanisms of influence on regional and European security which are being produced by the political struggle, economic cooperation and regional competition of such Black Sea centres of power like Turkey and Russia should be rethought. Inextricably with all these the logic of the current global geopolitical processes forces us to look at the interests and the “real” politics of such powerful extra-regional actors like the United States, and China in the near future closely. Moreover, for a long time the Black Sea region has remained a space of permanent struggle for competing, albeit unequal, integration processes into economic and military-political

structures. However, a question to which extent such organizations like the EU and NATO, on the one side, and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) on the other, would coordinate further development of the Black Sea region as a political system remains open. The strategic culture of Ukraine entering the post-post-bipolar period, which is quite chaotic these days, when a question of the future of the EU and NATO, the U.S. and Russia are on the agenda, cannot afford not to seek alternatives of the recently sustainable integration strategies today.

Thirdly, it is also important to continue examining problems of cooperation and conflict in the Black Sea region even in the context of the war of Russia against Ukraine. The issues of the Black Sea security which under the current circumstances are understood widely and affect not only the traditional military component are coming up to the forefront of the world politics. The same thing applies to the economic security which also faces challenges in the Black Sea basin due to the increased global competition and a course towards protectionism which some influential players are tending to. Here there is a concentration of a “solid” mix of the promising opportunities for cooperation, on the one hand, and threats that may destabilize any promising field of the mutually beneficial cooperation on the other. Unfortunately, today the Black Sea region can be associated with the most dangerous regions in the world with a high level of intraregional conflicts. Moreover, there is a fact that more than one axis of the inter-regional security system, including the energy security both from the North to the South and from the West to the East could stretch via the Black Sea. In addition, the region is open for the ongoing penetration of global trends, if not of the confrontation or, at least, of the clash of the interests. It was the Black Sea region which became the first and today in fact remains the only one (except local problems of Kosovo in the Balkans) European arena where the global security strategies of the U.S., NATO and Russia clash with each other within the new “post-post-bipolar” period of the current historical round. It is not by chance that it is increasingly associated with the beginning of a new Cold War. As a result, the Black Sea region automatically becomes a working studio where new models of the multilevel security strategies that should act (or not act) in the medium and long-term perspective are being “tested”. For example, how the fact that Russia is converting Crimean Peninsula into the Russia “impregnable” military fortress, with the risk of deployment of nuclear weapons should be treated seriously; and consequently, the relevant initiatives of the U.S. and NATO to install elements of the ABMs in Romania and Turkey are taking place in turn. Such a dangerous pique of the Black Sea region towards the arms race triggered by the “hard power” of the Russian Federation has obvious reason to worry the Black Sea states, including Ukraine, which, like the whole region, became a

potential hostage of the foreign policy interests of the much stronger powers on the global level.

Fourthly, the issues of the current global geopolitical competition, which are being reflected in many regions of the world, especially in those where there is an economic perspective, are moving into the sphere of collision of values based on different legal traditions, histories, cultures and mentalities. The Black Sea region has not been left on the side lines of the worldwide process of an economic globalization, which has been accompanied by the transferring of ideas of the liberal democracy – those ideas that are being articulated by the locomotives of the global world – towards the regions, where such ideas either become objects of change according to the local conjuncture, or are fully discarded. In the Black Sea region, which is still in the process of a transformation, there is a conglomerate of the countries, which are going through a difficult phase of political, economic, and value transformation themselves. Thus, this leads to a situation where the adoption of democratic traditions and ideals is causing difficulties in this region that lacks the historical experience of realizations of these democratic values. As a result, almost all Black Sea states, and mainly Ukraine, are experiencing today a dramatic process of a revolutionary break-through via the evolution of the Black Sea regional strategic culture in general. Nevertheless, this culture should consolidate the region as a whole.

¹ Laura Chappell, “Differing Member State Approaches to the Development of the EU Battlegroup Concept: Implications for CSDP,” *European Security* 4 (18) (2009): 419.

² Сергій Глебов, “Постбіполярний регіоналізм як політична, світоглядна і функціональна парадигма,” в *Міжнародні відносини та політика держав в умовах глобальних трансформацій: аналіз сучасної політичної думки: монографія*, ред. І. Коваль і О. Брусилівська (Одеса: Одеський національний університет імені І. І. Мечникова, 2016), 56.

³ “Постанова Верховної Ради України «Про Основні напрями зовнішньої політики України, 2 липня 1993 р.», *Відомості Верховної Ради (ВВР)*, Ст. 379, № 37 (1993).

⁴ *Украинская государственность в XX веке (Историко-политологический анализ)*, под ред. Александра Дергачёва (К.: Політична думка, 1996), 84.

⁵ *Украинская государственность в XX веке*, 85.

⁶ Ігор Черніков, «... Вирішили зміцнити між собою назавжди найкращі та сердечні відносини», *Політика і час* 4 (1992): 37.

⁷ “Закон Украины «О внешнеэкономической деятельности», 16 апреля 1991 г.», *Право и практика* 21 (1997): 30.

⁸ “Декларація про чорноморське економічне співробітництво, прийнята на найвищому рівні, 25 червня 1992 р.», *Політика і час* 1 (1993): 85-87.

⁹ “The Bosphorus Statement, Istanbul, 25 June 1992,” in *BSEC Handbook of Documents*, Vol. 1 (Istanbul: PERMIS, 1995), 9-10.

¹⁰ “Декларація про чорноморське економічне співробітництво”, 85.

¹¹ Sergii Glebov, "Russian Black Sea Fleet and Ukraine's Security Strategy: Agenda 2017," in *Military Bases: Historical Perspectives, Contemporary Challenge*, edited by Luis Rodrigues and Sergii Glebov (Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2009), 181.

¹² Тарас Кузьо, "Чеченська криза і «ближнє зарубіжжя»", *Політика і час* 8 (1995): 45.

¹³ "Договор о дружбе, сотрудничестве и партнерстве между Российской Федерацией и Украиной, 31 мая 1997 г.", *Бюллетень международных договоров* 7 (1999): 50-58.

¹⁴ "Соглашение между Российской Федерацией и Украиной о статусе и условиях пребывания Черноморского флота Российской Федерации на территории Украины, 28 мая 1997 г.", *Бюллетень международных договоров* 10 (1999): 74-80; "Соглашение между Российской Федерацией и Украиной о параметрах раздела Черноморского флота, 28 мая 1997 г.", *Бюллетень международных договоров* 10 (1999): 34-37; "Соглашение между правительством Российской Федерации и правительством Украины о взаиморасчетах, связанных с разделом Черноморского флота и пребыванием Черноморского флота Российской Федерации на территории Украины, 28 мая 1997 г.", *Бюллетень международных договоров* 10 (1999): 80-83.

¹⁵ В. Чумак, "Роль России в Черноморском регионе, украино-российские отношения, вероятные интересы Москвы в Крыму," *Occasional Papers* 6 (1997): 51.

¹⁶ Чумак, "Роль России", 50.

¹⁷ Сергей Глебов, "Становление системы безопасности и сотрудничества в Черноморском регионе и роль Украины в этом процессе (1990-е годы)" (PhD thesis, Odessa Mechnikov National University, 2002), 72.

¹⁸ Oleg Strekal, "The Crimean Conflict and Its Implications for Ukraine's National Security," *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik Projektpapier* 2 (1994): 7.

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²⁴ Bjorn Hettne, "Globalization, the New Regionalism and East Asia" in *Globalism and Regionalism*, edited by Toshio Tanaka and Takashi Inoguchi, accessed March 14, 2017, <http://archive.unu.edu/unupress/globalism.html>

²⁵ Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky, *The real World Order: Zones of peace / Zones of Turmoil* (Chatham, New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, 1996), 224.

²⁶ Багров, "Объект, предмет, базовые категории регионального геополитического анализа", 244.

²⁷ Багров, "Объект, предмет, базовые категории регионального геополитического анализа", 244.

²⁸ Ronald Asmus, "Developing a New Euro-Atlantic Strategy for the Black Sea Region: Istanbul Paper #2", *The German Marshall Fund of the United States*, June 25-27, 2004, access October 3, 2016, http://www.gmfus.org/publications/article.cfm?id=48&parent_type=P

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³⁰ Ольга Тупота, “Концептуальное осмысление проблем безопасности в Черноморском регионе на примере деятельности Германского Фонда Маршалла (США)”, access March 14, 2017, <http://www.flot2017.com/ru/analytics/1983>

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CHAPTER 6
FACTORS AND EVOLUTION
OF UKRAINIAN-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

Olga Brusylovska

History and mythology of the relations of Ukrainians and Russians. Russia and Ukraine have a long period of common history. But today this history has become not only a subject of hot discussions, but it has also turned into one of the “stumbling blocks”, over which both sides will not be able to agree for years. Among the most vulnerable questions are the following.

Kyiv, the modern capital of Ukraine, is often referred to as the “mother of Russian cities” or as the cradle of Russian civilization. The powerful state of Kievan Rus was a predecessor of both the Russian (Moscow Principality) and Ukrainian (Galicia-Volyn Principality) states, the cradle of both nations. The biggest problem in media is: Who is the real successor of Kievan Rus? Since the question is formulated incorrectly, the answer should be as follows: Kievan Rus was inhabited by the “Rus”, who could be considered to be the ancestors of both of the Russian and Ukrainian nations; they could also be identified with none of them.

After the Mongol invasion the histories of Russians and Ukrainians began to diverge. Later, the Ukrainian lands became a part of Lithuania, because the Grand Duchy of Lithuania defeated the Golden Horde, and then these lands became a part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (a common state of Lithuania and Poland). Russian lands were grouped around Moscow. The second problem in public debate is: Did Moscow have the right to claim all lands of Kievan Rus as its own, considering that it positioned itself as the main Orthodox state (“the third Rome”) and the protector of all the Orthodox nations? It must be noted that this question is incorrect as well, it is important to speak not about validity of claims, but only about real political and military abilities of Moscow during this period.

After the signing of Pereyaslav Treaty in 1654, Ukraine was gradually absorbed by the Russian Empire, and fully absorbed by the end of 18th century. The third problem in discussions of experts and ordinary citizens is: Was the Pereyaslav Treaty a treaty of “reunion” of fraternal peoples or a temporary military union of the Kingdom of Moscow and the Zaporizhian Cossacks led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky? Historical sources admit that B. Khmelnytsky considered this treaty to be a temporary military union, but the interpretation of it as a “reunion” was deeply rooted in Soviet historiog-

raphy, and it is not doubted by Russian society. It should be noted that this illusion serves as an instrument in the consciously constructed ideological doctrine of modern Russia.

During 1932-1933 Ukraine survived the “Holodomor” (“Extermination by starvation”), which was a man-made famine that killed almost 7.5 million Ukrainians. Since 2006, the Holodomor has been recognized by independent Ukraine and several countries as genocide against the Ukrainian nation. Ukrainian scholars do not agree that natural factors and bad economic policy were the main factors of famine; they believe that Stalin’s goal was to destroy the Ukrainian peasantry, which was considered as potentially disloyal to the Soviet regime. On January 13, 2010, the Kyiv Court of Appeals posthumously found Stalin, Kaganovich, Molotov, Kosior, Chubar, and other functionaries of Communist party guilty of genocide against Ukrainians during Holodomor.¹ The fourth problem, which gained broad publicity, is: Was the Holodomor a genocide against Ukrainians or just part of Stalin’s Collectivization plan of agriculture (fight with “kulaks”)? The problems of history, broadcasted, rather distorted by the media, strongly affect the mutual perception of the citizens of both states.

Perceptions of relations with Russia in Ukraine differed to a large extent on a regional basis. Before 2014, many residents of the eastern and southern regions welcomed closer relations with Russia. The Central and especially Western oblasts (which have never been a part of the Russian Empire) showed a less friendly attitude to closer relations with Russia.²

However, in Russia, there were no regional differences in their assessments of Ukraine. According to social polls, Russians stably showed a more negative attitude to Ukrainians in general. Generally, Ukraine’s attempts to reorient towards the EU and NATO were assessed as anti-Russian and hostile. It was also fueled by a discussion in Ukraine, whether it is necessary to provide official status to the Russian language, or to make it the second official language.

In Ukraine, there is still a schism between the Orthodox Russian-speaking East and South of the country and the Greek-Catholic Ukrainian-speaking West. By 2014, this factor played an important political role. According to a survey conducted in 2010, about 83% of the population defined themselves as Ukrainians, but 14%, many - as Russians. 40% called themselves supporters of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, but 25% - the Russian Orthodox Church. As for the language, here the population was divided almost in half: 50% of respondents answered that they considered their native language Ukrainian, 47% called it Russian.³ Perhaps this information also prompted the Kremlin’s ideologues to insist that Ukrainians wanted reunification with Russia,

but Ukrainian authorities are hindering public desires. The most discussed issues in Russia that hurt Ukraine in the eyes of Russians: Ukraine's membership in NATO; attempts by Ukraine to recognize the Holodomor as genocide against the Ukrainian nation; attempts to rehabilitate the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA).

The last issue has always remained the most difficult for ordinary people, especially for older people, even in Ukraine. In Russia, in general, no one can understand that the UPA was something much bigger than the partisans who collaborated with the German fascist occupiers. Among the resistance movements in Europe, the UPA was unique because it did not have any substantial external support. Its growth and power reflected its popularity among western Ukrainians. Outside this region UPA did not have any support; therefore, most eastern Ukrainians considered OUN-UPA to be collaborators and fascists. On January 10, 2008, President Viktor Yushchenko submitted a draft law "On the official Status of Fighters for Ukraine's Independence from the 1920s to the 1990s". Under the draft, persons who took part in political, guerrilla, underground and combat activities for the freedom and independence of Ukraine from 1920-1990 (Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO), Karpatska Sich, OUN-UPA, Ukrainian Main Liberation Army, as well as persons who assisted these organizations) should be recognized as war veterans. To commemorate National Unity Day on January 22, 2010 President Yushchenko awarded Stepan Bandera the Hero of Ukraine honour posthumously. On May 15, 2015 President Petro Poroshenko signed a bill into law that provides "public recognition to anyone who fought for Ukrainian independence during the 20th century", including Ukrainian Insurgent Army fighters.⁴ In the Russian mass-media, this problem, as well as everything that was related to Ukrainian independence, was presented as the work of "nationalists". Russian audiences considered that Ukrainian political elites were the only thing blocking the "heartfelt desire of ordinary Ukrainians to reunite with Russia." The Russian public believed that the Ukrainian political elite was the only thing blocking the "heartfelt desire of ordinary Ukrainians to reunite with Russia." At the same time, some representatives of the Russian political elite continued to argue that the Ukrainian language is just a Russian dialect and that Ukraine (as well as Belarus) should become part of the Russian Federation. In June of 2010 Mikhail Zurabov, the former Russian Ambassador to Ukraine, said that: "Russians and Ukrainians are one nation with own nuances and peculiarities".⁵ In addition, Ukrainian history was not considered a separate subject in Russian universities; it was always included into Russian history.

Today all these problems are extremely important in the context of understanding the differences between the two cultures as well as differences between the strategic cultures of both nations, and the limitations that citizens

of Russia and Ukraine place on the ability of elites to make a political choice. At the same time, these restrictions are directly proportional to the degree of state democracy. Thus, such evolution is noticeable: the increase of the influence of civil society in Ukraine, and, at the same time, the gradual decline of its influence in the Russian Federation. In Russia today, it is impossible to write in writing about alternatives to these problems, in Ukraine they have become the subject of numerous political speculations, the division of society on the principle of “bad” – “good” Ukrainian, “traitor” or “patriot”. The historical problems of peoples impose their imprint and the difference in their mental characteristics. The identity of the Russian people is defined by the following factors: “Large space”; Russia’s uncertainty of its borders; the fact that Russia was never been an ethnic country before 1991; the East-Slavic idea; the struggle of the idea of a civilian nation (“we are all - Russian”) with the idea of an ethnic state (“Russia for the Russians”); Orthodoxy (traditional beliefs); the idea of “nationals” (compatriots) who are identified by usage of Russian language.

First of all, the identity of Ukrainians is pluralistic. It is based not only on ethnicity and language, but determined by the influence of such factors as regional affiliation, difference in history (joining the Romanov or the Habsburg Empires, earlier – joining the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth or “Wild Field”), religion (three Orthodox churches, Greek-Catholic and Protestant church, Judaism of Jews, Sunni Islam of Crimean Tatars), and clans of regional economies.

The Ukrainian identity is quite different from Russian in the level of its mobility and the fact that it has not been formed yet. First of all, today it is influenced by political culture (i.e., Cossack tradition of rebellion), the modern political regime (imperfect, competitive, authoritarianism), the current conflict, Russian pressure, the Russian language, insignificant progress towards joining Western structures, the absence of progress on internal policy changes, and corruption. Thus, today Ukraine is only becoming a political and civil nation that leaves a significant imprint on the problem of strategic choice and the success of the foreign policy of the country. At the same time, it should be noted that the strengths and weaknesses of such a state are practically counterbalanced. The imperfect or competitive authoritarianism prevents the unification of power in the hands of solid-handed supporters; after every obvious big achievement, the government becomes harder, and the oligarchs control the main mass media, but there are many alternative sources of information. The main weakness - Ukraine remains a divided nation today, and this division is easily exploited by external forces.

Ukraine cannot escape from its cage in the energy sector; it has poor in resources, it lacks a real “social contract” (social contract for Jean-Luc Rousseau), and effective state security. So, Ukraine can flutter for a long time between democracy and authoritarianism, but there is no reason to believe that the victory of authoritarianism is possible, as happened in Russia.

Thus, the development of the modern Russian and Ukrainian societies, overburdened not only by socio-economic and political problems, but also by the abundance of myths that negatively affect perceptions of each other, demonstrates a negative dynamic. The sense of unity generated by the common Soviet past, even post-communist nostalgia gradually disappears; it is replaced by the search for a new identity, dramatic for both societies. They have higher level of mutual distrust, because the nations felt very close in the past. There is nothing original in this tough scenario of “mental divorce”; in the course of history such things have happened more than once (for instance in Modern times the Czechs more stubbornly fought for freedom the more time they spent in the Habsburg Empire, and borrowed a lot from the rich imperial culture).

The development of Ukrainian-Russian relations in the end of 20th century – at the beginning of 21st century. The relations between Russia and Ukraine became international after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the emergence of new independent states (Belavezha Accords on 8 December 1991).

Russia immediately opened an Embassy in Kyiv and Consulates in Kharkiv, Lviv, and Odesa. Ukraine opened an Embassy in Moscow and Consulates in Rostov-on-Don, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Tyumen, and Vladivostok. However, on February 23, 2014, the Russian Ambassador to Ukraine, Mikhail Zurabov, was recalled and they appointed Andrey Vorobyov, who died on May 30, 2016, the extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador of Ukraine to Russia, Volodymyr Yelchenko, the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Ukraine to Russia was recalled in March of 2014 because of Russian aggression in Crimea. At the same time the Ukrainian Consulate to Russia continues its work; since January 2016 Ruslan Nimchynskiy has been the Ukrainian Charge d'affaires to Russia.

There are different interpretations of this situation. Thus, the representative of “Batkivshchyna” Olena Shkrum expressed her surprise concerning the fact that Ukraine did not recall all diplomatic representatives from Russia while Russia demonstrated direct aggression against Ukraine: “It’s strange for me why we did not recall ambassadors and did not instruct Switzerland to protect our interests, for instance. This is normal practice”.⁶ On March 15, 2016 the bill on the interruption of diplomatic relations with Russia was registered in

the Verkhovna Rada.⁷ The current situation is similar to Trotsky's formula during First World War which means "no peace, no war", which, I must emphasize, historically did not justify itself. It is obvious that the freezing of diplomatic relations did not result in a defence of the basic rights of Ukrainian citizens in the Russian Federation. For instance, on March 16, 2016, the Ukrainian consul, Alexander Kovtan, who was there in connection with the trial of Mykola Karpyuk and Stanislav Klych, was wounded in Grozny during an attack on Igor Kalyapin, chairman of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture.⁸ This did not cause any response from the both MFAs.

Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, which was signed in Kyiv on May 31, 1997, established the principles of strategic partnership, recognition of the inviolability of existing borders, respect for territorial integrity, mutual commitment not to use their respective territories to harm the security of one another.⁹ The treaty was ratified by the Federal Assembly on March 2, 1991, and it was denounced by the State Duma of the Russian Federation on March 31, 2014. In February of 2015, announced the suspension of certain provisions of the 1997 Treaty, which are related to the status of Crimea.¹⁰ Therefore this situation is surprisingly uncertain.

Russia and Ukraine share 2295 kilometres of common borders. But this border remains transparent; Russian armed groups easily go to Ukraine and return. In 2014, the Ukrainian government unveiled a plan to build a protective wall along the border with Russia; this plan was called Project "Wall". Its construction would cost almost 520 million dollars and require 4 years, but the project was not even started.¹¹ Moreover, during 2016-2017, as a result of the unlawful activity of the public servants of Government Tax Service and subjects of the private sector during the implementation and technical arrangement of the Ukrainian-Russian state boundary ("Wall") in territories adjacent to the anti-terror operation (ATO) and Crimea, which was annexed by Russia, over 100 million Hryvnias were appropriated from budgetary facilities.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, 5000 units of nuclear weapons remained on Ukrainian territory (about a third of Soviet nuclear arsenal) and Ukraine was considered the third nuclear state in the world.¹² In 1992, Ukraine agreed to withdraw about 3000 units of tactical nuclear weapons. After signing of Budapest Memorandum (December 5, 1994) on Security Assurances from the USA, Great Britain, and Russia as well as signing of the similar agreements with France and China, Ukraine agreed to destroy the rest of its nuclear weapons and to join Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.¹³ However, today it is obvious that memorandum did not work as a guarantee of Ukrainian security.

During the 1990's, both countries, along with other post-Soviet states, founded the Commonwealth of Independent States and re-established business relations. Despite the contradictions over the island of Tuzla, relations with the Russian Federation gradually improved during the governance of Leonid Kravchuk (1991-1994) and Leonid Kuchma (1994-2004).

These relations were built primarily on an economic basis. While the Russian share in Ukraine's exports decreased from 26.2% in 1997 to about 23% in 1998-2000, the share of Russian imports remained stable at 45-50%. The level of imports from Russia remained at a high level due to the high dependence on Russia's energy resources. Meanwhile, progress in economic integration with Russia was problematic to a large extent due to political reasons. Russia widely used a ban on the import of some goods to Russia as a political instrument. For example, there was a ban on the import of dairy and meat products from Ukraine.¹⁴ In 2004, 84% of Ukrainian exports belonged to other markets except Russia. The main reason for the relative decline in exports to Russia was the need of the Russian Federation in goods of Western standards, as well as in the gradually weakening ties among enterprises in post-Soviet space. However, Ukraine's dependence remained extremely strong in the energy sector: annually about 70-75% of gas usage and about 80% of petroleum were from Russia. In 2002, the Russian government participated in financing the construction of nuclear power plants in Khmelnytsky and Rivne. Russia remained the main market for Ukrainian metals, rolled steel and pipes, electrical machinery, tools and equipment, food, and chemical products. It was the sales market for about nine-tenths of the production of Ukrainian goods. Despite the slowdown of development, Russia was in fourth place among the investors in the Ukrainian economy (after the USA, the Netherlands and Germany): 150.6 million dollars of 2,047 million dollars of direct investments, which Ukraine received before 1998.¹⁵

But Ukraine's political relations with Russia were always complicated; periods of tension and direct enmity shifted with periods of relative calm. Instead of trying to integrate with the West, Russia set out to create a system with a centre in the Kremlin on the territory of almost all of the former USSR. In this worldview Ukraine took a significant place. Russia did not seek "a reunion" with Ukraine. "The leaders and elites of Russia see Ukraine as a sum of profitable assets and attractive opportunities, but not like a territory which must be attached to Russia".¹⁶ However, the significant part of Russians saw Ukraine as a separate state, but not like alien foreign country. Ukrainians, in turn, followed the same attitude towards Russia.

The significance of Ukraine for Russia, in the first place, was determined by several key factors. The most important among them is the position of Ukraine as a transit corridor for Russian oil and gas on the way to customers in the EU. The next factor was different economic assets of Ukraine from metals to telecommunications, which were interests for Russian business-groups. In addition, Ukraine is home to the largest portion of the Russian-speaking population outside the Russian Federation, which lives in the East and South of Ukraine. Finally, the Russian Orthodox Church considers Ukraine along with Russia and Belarus as an integral part of its “canonical territory”.

Russia’s radical changes in foreign policy took place not immediately after Vladimir Putin came to power. But between 2003 and 2005, the Kremlin defined Russia as an independent, great state, insisting that both the United States and the European Union treat Russia as an equal partner.¹⁷ Russian foreign policy became more assertive again. The interest of Russia was more often formulated under certain economic circumstances, including the usage of economic sanctions. Considering the surplus of energy as its main advantage, the Russian government sought to secure its dominance in the energy sector of the country. Energy supply was a big problem, as Soviet oil and gas pipelines to Western Europe passed through Ukraine. After the new agreements came into force, Ukraine’s gas debts were paid for Russia’s transfer of nuclear weapons, which Ukraine inherited from the USSR (including the TU-160 strategic bombers).¹⁸

However, Crimea was the most controversial problem. Firstly, it was a question the ownership of Crimea, which has been under control of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic since 1954. As a result of treaties from the 1990s, Crimea remained a part of Ukraine, but it gained a republican autonomous status. Secondly, there was a controversy about Sevastopol’s status as a base of Black Sea fleet. The city, along with other parts of Ukraine, took part in the national referendum on Ukrainian independence, and 58% of its population voted for its remaining as an integral part of Ukrainian state.¹⁹ However, the Verkhovna Rada of Russia, demanded a return of the city, in 1993. After several years of intense negotiations, in 1997 the problem was solved with a compromise: The Black Sea fleet was divided and some Black Sea bases in Sevastopol were rented to the Russian fleet until 2017.

Until the beginning of 2000s Moscow agreed with the geopolitical vacillation of Kyiv between Russia and the West. However, in 2003, it made an attempt to draw Ukraine closer to her. The EES of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, which led to the economic alliance and then to the creation of political and security group under the auspices of Moscow, was created with obvious goal to distract Ukraine from the EU and NATO.²⁰ This project,

however, was based on a false premise; Moscow learned about this after the fiasco during the 2004 presidential election campaign in Ukraine, which culminated in the Orange Revolution. When developing its strategy before the 2004 presidential election in Ukraine, the Kremlin made a huge miscalculation. It relied on the single candidate of the “party of power”, who was promoted by the former president Kuchma. The Prime Minister Yanukovich was considered a pro-Russian politician. But to be genuine and consistently pro-Russian, and not just to play the Russian card, one must abandon Ukraine and wish it to be included in Russia. So, Leonid Kuchma, who was first elected in 1994 as a friendly candidate, soon found himself a difficult partner for the Kremlin. Putin himself testified to the unreliability of Kuchma at his meeting with the new President of Ukraine, V. Yushchenko, in Astana in January of 2005.²¹ Gleb Pavlovski, the Kremlin political strategist who worked for Yanukovich on behalf of Kremlin, noted that the conditions of his contract with the Administration of the Russian President included the securing victory in the elections he had prepared (although it was challenged by the Ukrainian opposition), and did not include the obstruction of the Revolution.²² Later, the Kremlin made another mistake, because of the perception of the Revolution as a “special operation”, directed by the USA. By spring 2005, their self-confidence fell to the lowest level since Putin came to power.

Evolution of Ukrainian-Russian relations after 2004. After the Orange revolution in 2004, several problems of bilateral relations, including Ukraine’s desire to join NATO and a gas dispute, worsened immediately. A lot of analysts emphasized the subjective factor, and consider that responsibility for the deterioration of relations lies with the presidents V. Yushchenko and V. Putin, as well as the militant of Moscow city, Yuri Luzhkov, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Borys Tarasyuk, and the leader of the parliamentary opposition Yulia Tymoshenko.²³

In our opinion, the other points were more important. Firstly, there was a sense of threat towards the regime which spread in Kremlin after the Ukrainian revolution. Democratic development of Ukraine (whether it wants it or not) influences the internal social and political development in Russia. Thus, the Ukrainian Maidan of 2004 became possible, and, in the opinion of officials, this was undesirable for Russian society. Secondly, the Russian Federation feared that the ultimate goal of the United States and the EU was to facilitate a change of the regime by organizing a colour revolution in Russia itself.²⁴ So, if before the Russian political elite was optimistic about the EU, considering it as a milder alliance than NATO, then after the Orange Revolution, the Kremlin opposed the further expansion of the EU to the East, even

if such a prospect was very far away. Thus, Ukraine, like Central Asia and the South Caucasus, was viewed by the Kremlin as a “battlefield” with the West. For the Kremlin, this greatly increased the “price” of defeat in these areas. Having strengthened his position during his first years, Putin staked both traditional Russian patriotism and a new post-imperial nationalism. The official nationalism of the Kremlin has been reflected in such twin-concepts as “sovereign democracy” and “energetic superpower”, which came to the fore in 2005.²⁵

Soon after the Orange revolution, Moscow understood that Yushchenko’s victory was not the end of the world; it was necessary to change the conditions of the big game. Moscow’s new tactics were based on four key elements: 1) ignoring the pro-Western policy of Kyiv, especially the ambitions regarding NATO at the official level; 2) provoke destabilization within Ukraine, deepening the historical division of the country and restraining the movement towards NATO; 3) to use direct economic, social and cultural pressure as an instrument of foreign policy; 4) offer assistance in securing Ukraine’s security through various forms of cooperation with the CIS or bilateral channels.

A large group of differences in Russian-Ukrainian relations related to Russian military base in Crimea, and, in particular, the basing of Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol. Since signing the Russian-Ukrainian Treaty in 1997, Ukraine considered a huge number of disputes caused by the deployment of the Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine, which did not receive a final decision. At the technical level, the main issues of concern were the status and functioning of Russian military tribunals in the Crimea, the transfer of hydrographic and navigational equipment to Ukraine, the inspection of the Black Sea Fleet by Ukraine, the number of military contingents placed in Ukraine, the inventory of occupied space and equipment leased to the Black Sea Fleet, as well as an agreement on joint actions in emergencies. Some of the above issues, such as moving hydrographical and navigational equipment to Ukraine, were fundamentally excluded by the Russian side from the Russian-Ukrainian sub commission’s program for the Russian Black Sea Fleet until the end of the lease term in 2017.²⁶ Other questions, such as the regime of border crossing for Russian troops and modernization of the fleet were the matters for negotiations on the highest level.

At the political level, one issue quickly became very popular in Moscow, especially considering the 2008 presidential election in Russia. During the annual telephone conversation of Putin with Russian citizens in October 2006, he suggested the possibility of expanding the base of the Black Sea Fleet in the Crimea, and after the official termination of the agreement in 2017, Mos-

cow rhetoric served not only for domestic Russian.²⁷ Moscow's rhetoric did not only serve the internal goals of Russia. The proposal of security assistance was a logical continuation of organized mass protests against "Sea Breeze" exercises in Crimea in 2006. These protests first ended with the cancellation of common military exercises with the USA and other countries of NATO according to the program "Partnership for Peace" since 1997. Russian Intelligence Services and Black Sea Fleet personnel took part in preparing anti-NATO attacks along with Yanukovych's Party of Regions, which pursued anti-NATO policy in Ukraine.²⁸

The goal of Moscow was a friendly and neutral Ukraine, so to speak, a later version of Finland, located between Russia and the West. For Russia, the question of extending the right to set up the Black Sea Fleet in Crimea after 2017, when the current contract expired, became a key issue. It was also important for the Russian Federation to maintain the use of two early warning radars in Mukachevo and Sevastopol, which the Russian Federation rented in Ukraine. Another constant controversy was the border in Azov Sea near Kerch Strait.

"The point of no return" for Ukrainian-Russian relation was 2008. It began with the fact that in February, Russia unilaterally withdrew from the Ukrainian-Russian intergovernmental agreement on SPRN, signed in 1997.

During the Russo-Georgian 8-day War, the relations between Ukraine and Russia finally deteriorated. New Ukrainian instructions for the Russian Black Sea Fleet required that firstly the fleet should obtain the permission to cross the Ukrainian border; Russia refused to fulfil them. Russia accused Ukraine of selling weapons to Georgia and that 200 members of UNA-UNSO had fought on Georgian side. The Ukrainian Minister of Defence Yurii Yekhanurov denied the fact that the Ukrainian military was in Georgia and that Ukraine had handed over its arms; the transfer of military equipment between Ukraine and Georgia was carried out in accordance with previously established contracts, laws of Ukraine and international agreements.²⁹

In August of 2008, Kyiv political scientist Oleksandr Sushko wrote about a possible scenario of Russian strategy: "If the West forgives Russia for the Georgian war, a "peacekeeping" invasion on the territory of Ukraine will only be a matter of time. Since the beginning of the massive invasion of the regular army on the Georgian territory, Russia has begun a geopolitical war aimed at destroying the existing world order. Ultimately, a revanchist strategy may lead to the destruction of Russian statehood; however, before it happens, multiple local conflicts will erupt, eliminating the rudiments neighbouring countries' independence ... The Russians deliberately prepare themselves for a war with

Ukraine. In Russia, the absence of war causes excitement, instability, and a decline in national pride. Periods of national enthusiasm were almost entirely related to wars. Putin started with Chechnya, Medvedev with Georgia. The motto “Our citizens are there” helps to create a sense of quasi-legitimacy which is enough for Russian citizens. At best they would say: “Americans are doing the same”. In the event of the beginning of hostilities against Ukraine, ordinary Russian citizens will support their political leadership. They will be told that it was not a war against brotherly people, but a war against “the criminal government”.³⁰

Since 2008 the international context has become the most important thing for understanding of bilateral relations. Russia openly opposed the unipolar world order and claimed its willingness to return on the world arena as superpower with global interests. If the USA supported Ukraine in its desire to join NATO in 2008, when Ukraine sought to obtain Membership Action Plan, then it was extremely important for Russia to oppose any Euro-Atlantic perspective for Ukraine and Georgia. According to transcript of Putin’s speech during the meeting on the highest level of Russia-NATO Council in Bucharest in 2008, Putin spoke about the responsibility of Russia for the ethnic Russians in Ukraine and persuaded NATO to act wisely; according to mass media, he privately hinted to his American colleague about the possibility of Ukraine losing its integrity if it joined NATO. According to the leak of these diplomatic documents in the United States, Putin “challenged the territorial integrity of Ukraine, saying that Ukraine was an artificial formation modelled after the Second World War from patches of Poland, the Czech Republic and especially Russia (“Ukraine received from Russia the entire Eastern and Southern parts and still the one third part of its population are Russians, and about 90% in Crimea”)³¹.

In January 2009, the dispute over natural gas prices resulted in a “gas war”: Russian natural gas exports through Ukraine were closed. Relations worsened further in February of 2009 after Russian President Dmitry Medvedev’s statement that Ukraine should compensate for the gas losses of European countries. Following the publication on March 23, 2009, of a plan for the modernization of the natural gas infrastructure of Ukraine, with the participation of the EU, Russian energy minister S. Shmatko said that this harms the interests of the Russian Federation. According to Putin, “it is just not serious to discuss such problems without the main supplier”.³² The attraction of the EU to the Ukrainian reforms led to the fact that NATO was initially considered as an enemy of the Russian Federation, but then the EU became this enemy. This year was the peak in terms of the information warfare con-

ducted by the Russian media against Ukraine, unanimously depicting it as aggressive and greedy state, which sought simultaneously to join the enemies of Russia and exploit cheap Russian gas. From this moment on, Russia began to develop several projects designed to redirect gas flows bypassing Ukraine (South Stream, North Stream).

In July of 2009, during the discussions of the theme of the 300 years anniversary of the Battle of Poltava State Duma, Deputy Head Sergei Bagdasarov said that “the following elections in Ukraine ... will be our second Battle of Poltava”.³³ At that time, 80% of Russians supported Putin’s policy towards Ukraine.

On August 11, 2009, on the website Kremlin.ru, President Medvedev criticized Yushchenko for the deterioration of relations between Russia and Ukraine and his “anti-Russian position of the authority”. Medvedev emphasized that he would not send a new ambassador to Ukraine to improve relations.³⁴ All their hopes were connected with new political elections, which Yanukovych could win not by Russian support but by the internal differences among Ukrainian “Westerners”.

According to Taras Kuzio, Viktor Yanukovych (2010-2014) was the most pro-Russian and pro-Soviet President of Ukraine.³⁵ Since coming to power, he has met all the requirements put forward by the Russian Federation. On April 22, 2010 Yanukovych and Medvedev signed an agreement on the lease of Russian naval base in Sevastopol for the next 25 years. The Kharkiv Accords were ratified on April 27.³⁶ In return, Ukraine received discounts for natural gas supplies of 100 dollars per thousand cubic meters.

After the adoption of Kivalov-Kolesnichenko law “On State Language Policy in Ukraine” in July of 2012 by the Verkhovna Rada, the state status of Ukrainian language became a fiction. At least 80% of periodicals were Russian speaking in Ukraine. Radio and television were filled with Russian products. In general, during the whole period of independence, Ukrainians have been watching only Russian TV channels which instilled Russian mentality and undermined Ukrainian identity.³⁷

At this moment, about 70% of the economic potential of Ukraine was under the control of Russian capital. During last 10 years in the Verkhovna Rada and government, “Regionalists” and communists, have created a strong pro-Russian lobby. The Russian Intelligence Services established control over the security forces of Ukraine – army, police and security service.

On December 17, 2013, it seemed that the last fight for Ukraine was over; Yanukovych refused to sign a European Union Association Agreement, reaching another agreement with the Russian Federation instead. President Putin agreed to give Ukraine 15 million dollars of financial help and a 33% discount

on natural gas.³⁸ The agreement was signed amid mass protests in Ukraine under the slogan of rapprochement with the European Union. In fact, there were two waves of street action in 2013 – in April and November; the last one is known as Euromaidan.

Before Yanukovich shamefully left Kyiv, Moscow said that it would not interfere into the internal conflict of Ukraine and accused the Western countries, which showed solidarity with Maidan. Moscow believed that Yanukovich would be able to restore control over the country. But it did not happen. Therefore, Euromaidan caused the Kremlin's planned political and economic measures, which were considered as a repulse to global enemy – the West – on the territory of its vital interests in Ukraine. Russia preferred hard power. Few people assumed that as soon as new government was formed in Ukraine, the Kremlin would move to unprovoked armed intervention. Why did Moscow choose this way? In our opinion, if at this moment it failed to change the vector of development of international relations system, then not only any further activity in the space of the CIS could become meaningless, but also the RF would gradually lose hope for the restoration of the status of the superpower, namely this hope is the basis of Russia's strategic culture.

Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Putin explained the origin of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, which was caused by the haste with which the European Union sought association with Ukraine. “It was unacceptable for Russia, because it encroached on its interests in the neighbouring country”. Nikolai Patrushev the secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation interpreted the events in Ukraine as “the following steps of the plan to destroy the Soviet Union and then Russia”.³⁹

In this context, the annexation of Crimea and the conflict over “Novorossiya” were just separate incidents of the “Cold War” between Russia and the West. Conditionally, its beginning can be attributed even before Putin's first presidency and George W. Bush's presidency. During one of his speeches in 2004 Bush said: “I believe that God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom. And even when that desire is crushed by tyranny for decades, it will rise again”.⁴⁰ The intention of the USA to promote the expansion of democracy over the world was perceived by Russia as an invasion of the West on the territory which was considered as a space of its vital interests (“neighbouring countries”). The Russian doctrinaires said that in fighting with liberal globalization, first of all, Russia resisted anarchy (“global Maidan”, denial of all hierarchic rules) and protected the sovereignty and the right of nations to choose their own values. The new “Cold War” became a war of interpretations. The proper interpretation is multiplied by all possible means,

while the “alien” interpretation is marginalized. The aim is to neutralize the enemy, to support allies, and to win unsolved disputes.⁴¹ In February of 2014, the Kremlin began to use the arsenal of measures a whole arsenal of means to further destabilize the situation in Ukraine. First of all, it was claimed that an unconstitutional armed seizure of power took place in Ukraine, although the Verkhovna Rada, which was elected in October 2012, continued to work in full force. The powerful propagandistic machine of the Kremlin began to gain momentum. All mass media was used especially Internet and satellite television. “The Russian world” is the analogue of the British Council (since 2007) and “Rossotrudnechestvo” - of USAID (since 2008). Also, the Russian Orthodox Church and the so called non-governmental organisations were used for propaganda as well.⁴²

In March of 2014 almost without a single shot the Russian Federation annexed Crimea.⁴³ On March 6, 2014 the Crimean Parliament adopted resolution 1702/14 which provided for referendum. Arranged with 10-days warning the referendum was characterized by a complete lack of transparency of the composition of the voter lists and electoral commissions, as well as the lack of international observers. Besides the initiative did not offer the voters to choose the status-quo, leaving only two options: 1) to join the Russian Federation as a subject of Federation; 2) to return to the Constitution of Crimea 1992 as “an integral part of Ukraine”.⁴⁴ The referendum was held only on the territory of the Crimean Peninsula, contradicting the Constitution of Ukraine, because the issue of changing borders could be solved only on the national referendum. Secondly, the Crimean Tatars boycotted this referendum. Thirdly, the referendum was held at gunpoint by the so-called “green men”, in fact, they were Russian service members who later received medals of honour from Putin for “returning Crimea”. And finally, the Crimean referendum was falsified. According to the official information, 123% inhabitants of Sevastopol voted to join Russia. In fact, the annexation of Crimea has never been recognized by the international community, on the contrary it was announced as an offense by the United Nations General Assembly, which supported the territorial integrity of Ukraine. On March 27, 2014, the UNGA issued advisory Decision 68/262, which claimed the Crimean referendum invalid and the annexation of Crimea as Russia’s offence. At the session of PACE on June 26, 2014, Petro Poroshenko, who was elected a new President of Ukraine on May 25, 2014, stated that bilateral relations with Russia could not be normalized until Russia returned to Ukraine control over Crimea.⁴⁵

Putin could not accept the loss of Ukraine and acted accordingly. Russian Special Services was preparing the Donbas rebellion for many years and it be-

came possible thanks to the direct aggression of Russia. At the beginning of Donbas rebellion, separatists succeeded, because the police and security service in Donetsk and Lugansk oblasts almost completely turned to the separatist side. “The Donetsk People’s Republic” and “The Luhansk People’s Republic” were proclaimed thanks to support of the communists and “the regionalists”. On May 11, 2014, the “referendum” on their independence was held. The leaders of separatist struck an agreement to unite these “republics” in the federal state “Novorossiia”. The notion of “Novorossiia” means the confederation of self-proclaimed republics of Donetsk and Lugansk. Putin, for the first time, called this part of Ukraine “Novorossiia” on March 17, 2014, after the annexation of the Crimea, and on September 11 he visited the church in Moscow to “light candles in memory of the fallen in the struggle for Novorossiia”.⁴⁶ Today “Novorossiia” is an example of pseudo-reality; it is in the spirit of the imperial ambitions of “the Russian world” and correlates with such historical terms as Pax Romana. These ideas serve to create new myths.⁴⁷

Unlike the situation in Crimea the Ukrainian army actively resisted in the Donbas gradually increasing its fighting efficiency. Tens of thousands of volunteers joined the National Guard of Ukraine. On the other hand, citizens of the Southeast remained passive, which was an unpleasant surprise for Putin; many intelligence officers and tens of thousands of fighters were sent there to help the rebellion. The separatists continued to receive weapons, ammunition, and finances in sufficient quantities through the transparent Russian-Ukrainian border. However, in the Russian Federation the level of support for a hot war decreased from 70% in 2014 to 30% at the beginning of 2015.⁴⁸ The peak of death rates during August-September alarmed the Kremlin: the public learned about the coffins arriving in Russia from Ukraine, about the secret funeral of soldiers, killed in “Novorossiia”. The combination of military casualties and economic recession became a problem for Putin’s regime. The sanctions struck Russia, and Moscow understood that the escalation of aggression could cause further sanctions. The ultra-nationalists criticized the Kremlin for not trying to seize new territories. The Kremlin is far from being a hostage of their views, but it understands that the defeat in the Donbas could cause serious damage to Putin’s reputation. Moscow aspires to prevent Ukraine’s movement to the West but, according to A. Korewa, it not sure about the best way of actions to achieve this: try to make Ukraine “a failed state” or to meet an agreement with President Petro Poroshenko.⁴⁹

The Minsk Agreements (February 12, 2015) included, among other things, the removal of military assets from the separatist regions and the control of the Russia-Ukraine border. This border is still transparent. The current OSCE

border control mission is only symbolic. Some researchers even believe that the Mission can bring more harm than good, since the OSCE presence affirms the legitimacy of an unacceptable situation.⁵⁰ The road map for the settlement of the conflict has not yet yielded tangible results, except the partial exchange of captives, partial devotion to the reduction of heavy equipment, and decreased intensity of shelling. According to the Kyiv researcher Galyna Zelenko, “the compromise which, in the point of view of its guarantors and signatories, was laid out in the Minsk Agreements, provokes the so-called “strengthening of one type of the conflict by another” and leads to the further destabilization of socio-political and economic situation”.⁵¹ Because “the Minsk Agreement, as an international treaty, does not have legal force; the subject of the conflict is also mistaken. It is not a matter of lack of authority of local authorities, but it is a matter of presence of the Russian troops and paramilitary forces on the Ukrainian territory”.⁵²

Conclusions. Because of differences in the development models of Ukraine and Russia, the countries that declared themselves strategic partners entered a period of protracted conflict. The domestic Ukrainian aspects of this conflict are extremely diverse. The negative sides of the conflict prevail; at the same time the conflict with Russia cemented Ukrainian political identity. Even though, as a result of Maidan, Ukrainians remained a divided nation, the Ukrainian civil society, if under it the most active and organized part of the citizens is in mind, has become more mobilized. It could be concluded that the current conflict gave Ukraine a national idea, the lack of which has painfully affected the process of post-communist development of our country for a long time. It is also evident that during the conflict, initiated by non-Ukrainians, they for the first time abandoned the traditionally passive role, the “feminine” role of those who are not trying to protect themselves, but only looking for a new strong partner. If to speak about Russia, there is an impression that both the political elites and the society in general are obsessed by Ukraine. There are several reasons for this: the struggle of the Kremlin with colour revolutions in case to prevent the same scenario in Russia; the perception of Ukraine as a mirror reflection of Russia; “East Slavic” ideology; Putin’s beliefs that Ukraine is “an artificial country” and “a state which failed”. Without Russia’s interference, Ukraine could theoretically be an example of success; Because of ambitious reforms of the new government and the implementation of the Association Agreement with the EU, Ukraine could repeat the path of the neighbouring Slavic countries (Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic). On the contrary, the failure of Ukraine can be presented to the Russian public as the inevitable consequence of a democratic uprising

and rapprochement with the West. Putin wants Ukraine to collapse because of internal instability, rather than destroy it by military means from the outside; he wants to achieve the greatest possible collapse of the Ukrainian Europeanization. Also, Russia seeks to acquire an unofficial right of veto to prevent the further expansion of NATO and the EU to the East. The neutrality imposed on Ukraine on the international level, first of all, would mean Russia's ability to influence the situation in Ukraine much more than the EU. The status of a buffer state would have become a factor that affirmed the tumultuous situation in the region. Russia has already shown the breadth of its geopolitical ambitions and, obviously, intends to continue to act from the standpoint of the difference between "Russian civilization" and the West. This will not only be the source of many difficulties in relations between Russia and the West, but also the greatest threat to the existence of the system of international relations, as we know it today.

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CHAPTER 7

US – UKRAINE RELATIONS (1991-2017)

Volodymyr Dubovyk

The dissolution of the Soviet Union took the United States by surprise. The American leadership did not pay enough attention to interactions with the post-Soviet states until after the collapse. U.S. policy on Ukraine illustrates well the fluidity of U.S. thinking on foreign policy in the last months of the Cold War. The president George H. W. Bush's August 1991 "Chicken Kiev" speech, cautioning Ukrainians against "suicidal nationalism" just a few weeks before Ukraine declared its independence, was the manifesto for his administration's policy toward the Soviet Union. Washington saw a trusted and reliable partner in M. Gorbachev, and was afraid of instability and chaos that disintegration of the USSR might have brought. The future of the Soviet nuclear arsenal worried Washington tremendously.

However, since the events of the failed August coup, G. H. W. Bush's administration acknowledged the deep and irreversible changes occurring in this post-Soviet space. There was no doubt in the later months of 1991 that relations with the newly emerging independent states would have to be developed. The administration committed itself to recognizing Ukraine if a majority of Ukrainian citizens voted in favour of independence. The idea of linking recognition of Ukraine's independence to the fate of the nuclear weapons then on Ukrainian soil was rejected, although Ukraine was expected to denuclearize. Therefore, when Ukrainians voted in favour of independence on December 1, 1991, the road to American recognition was open. Washington waited until the Soviet Union was finally formally dissolved and offered recognition on December 25, 1991.

Throughout the first year of bilateral relations, all that Washington seemed to care about was the expedient denuclearization of Ukraine. The impatience about Ukraine's denuclearization grew and became a sort of self-imposed frenzy. In the meantime, Ukraine's attempts to develop a more comprehensive relationship were basically turned down.

The build-up of negativism at an early stage of the bilateral relations was very unfortunate, of course. Kyiv's focus was most definitely on domestic challenges, of which there were many. The country – from its leadership to political elites to the public – was ready to embrace the U.S. as its main ally, a source of financial assistance, and as a model for development. Washington, in turn, was seeing Ukraine exclusively through the prism of the "nuclear issue", blocking out all other significant avenues for improvement of relations

with Kyiv. Moreover, the so-called “regional bloc view” prevailed in U.S. foreign policy deliberations at that point, which on many occasions took the form of unapologetic “Russocentrism”. The inertia of the last years before the breakup of the USSR was quite strong, and Moscow was seen as the one and only partner in that vast area, at the expense of other newly independent states, including Ukraine.

One other factor, no doubt, was that 1992 was an election year. This preoccupation with the elections left an imprint on foreign policy, which was not active enough. Ukraine has not been sufficiently investigated, either by experts or by journalists in the United States, not to mention the lack of attention from the administration. The “nuclear” cloud lingered over their relations. When Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma visited Washington in the fall of 1992, he was denied meetings with high level officials.

The new W. Clinton administration re-launched dialogue with Kyiv, and Washington now wondered what it would take to move forward on the “nuclear issue”, but also what could be done in other domains. The Secretary of State’s special advisor, Strobe Talbott, was a key figure. Vice-president A. Gore was also involved, and stayed focused on Ukraine as a part of his portfolio for the years to come. Secretary of Defence Les Aspin dealt with Ukraine in a constructive way. The change in tone was an indication that Washington was now willing to listen to Kyiv’s position and concerns, creating the conditions for a breakthrough. One other factor, so it seems, was the realization that a Russian “success story”, which was anticipated, just did not take hold. Therefore, there was a growing apprehension in Washington of the fact that “Russo-centric” policies in the post-Soviet space could not serve U.S. interests well.

In the “nuclear issue,” Washington proposed a three-way approach, when it became apparent that Kiev and Moscow were in a deadlock in their bilateral talks. Negotiations were held on the conditions for denuclearization, which were put forward by Ukraine. The Congress has made a contribution, including implementing the “Program for the joint reduction of threats” by senators S. Nunn and R. Lugar, to deal with this issue. The President personally came for the signing of a trilateral agreement between Ukraine, Russia and the United States in January 1994. The Budapest memorandum was signed in December 1994, where Russia, the U.S. and the U.K. provided their security assurances to Ukraine. Concrete, binding guarantees were absent in it, and gave way to rather ill-defined, vague security assurances. Ukraine was not prepared to bargain harder for them at that point. Finally taking this issue of the table; and thus,, beginning to receive support from the U.S. for its struggling economy seemed like the right thing to do for Kyiv. It was a big mistake to believe that the Budapest Memorandum in itself guaranteed Ukraine a viable security mechanism.

The progress on the “nuclear issue” unblocked cooperation between the two countries in other domains. 1994 was symbolically proclaimed as the “year of Ukraine” by the U.S. government. The presidential election in Ukraine in 1994 played a role. The new president, Leonid Kuchma, was seen in Washington as being able to carry out economic reforms. Financial assistance increased and Ukraine ranked third on the list of recipients for quite a while. It helped to stabilize the Ukrainian economy, its national currency, and curb inflation. American assistance was of critical significance in dealing with the impact of the Chernobyl disaster. Here the role of Vice-president A. Gore was especially critical.

The L. Kuchma – A. Gore binational intergovernmental commission has been engaged in cooperation since 1996 in various spheres, from foreign policy and security to trade, economic development, and investment. Tackling corruption in Ukraine was seen as a crucial prerequisite for implementing reform. One of the priorities was to strengthen Ukraine’s energy security. Improving the efficacy of Ukraine’s agricultural sector was also among the most urgent needs.

The “Sea Launch” project, designed to join efforts in the field of commercial space, was launched. A Ukrainian, Leonid Kadenyuk, flew as a part of a crew of the space shuttle “Columbia” in November – December of 1997. Some of the most notable achievements, though, manifested in the field of security. In 1994, Ukraine became the first country within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to join NATO’s “Partnership for Peace” program. It proclaimed the status of a strategic partnership with the United States (the Statute was signed only in 2008, and the Strategic Partnership Commission was established in 2009). Ukraine signed a Charter on Distinctive Partnership with NATO in 1997; Ukraine has played an active role in a variety of regional integration groupings. This has included GUAM, whose formation was looked at favourably by Washington.

Bilateral relations gradually deteriorated over the period of President Kuchma’s second term in office, from 1999 to 2004. First, troubling signs of falsification appeared in the election of 1999. A cascade of scandals then followed. The president allegedly sanctioned the application of ultimate measures to silence the leading opposition journalist, G. Gongadze. The major M. Melnichenko’s tapes revealed a portrait of leadership which was deeply cynical. The independent press and opposition were squeezed hard.

Kuchma’s authorization to sale of the anti-aircraft radar system “Kolchuga” to Iraq, which was at that point under severe sanctions, was seen rather negatively in Washington, especially as there was the possibility of a potential military operation in Iraq at that time. Also, Kyiv sold military related equipment to the government of Macedonia, despite a consensus on the prevention

of the inflow of weapons into that country. President Kuchma personally lied to the U.S. president's national security advisor, C. Rice, about those sales. All of this had tarnished Kuchma's reputation and led to the deep freeze in bilateral relations. Kuchma's announcement in 2002 of the Ukraine's desire to join NATO and his decision to send Ukrainian troops to serve in the U.S.-led operation in Iraq did not shift the mood in bilateral relations.

The events of September 11, 2001 and the beginning of the United States "war on terror", certainly impacted on the Ukrainian dimension of American foreign policy. The focus was now on the greater Middle East and the role of the entire post-Soviet space diminished noticeably.

This was where the bilateral relations were when the "Orange Revolution" occurred. This first Ukrainian Maidan took Washington by surprise. It had to take a position, and naturally this position manifested itself in the firm support of the democratic movement of Ukraine. The Post-orange period offered opportunities to substantially improve the bilateral relations. In fact, president's G. W. Bush's administration saw Ukraine as a sort of "poster boy" for the successful promotion of democracy. That momentum was soon gone, as it became clear that systemic reforms were not taking place and corruption remained. This led to the American administration's gradual disillusionment with Ukraine and ultimately to "Ukraine fatigue".

Relations between Ukraine and the U.S. were not active on the eve of the Euromaidan; however, there was no reason to describe them as negative, either. After Viktor Yanukovich came to power, Washington watched the events in Ukraine rather calmly, without neither satisfaction nor despair. Even some of Yanukovich's moves in favour of Russia – suspending the course of NATO integration and extending Russia's lease of the navy base in Sevastopol until 2042 – were not seen by Washington as a cause for concern. On the contrary, then Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton, even spoke positively of such events, emphasizing that Ukraine's foreign policy had become more "balanced".¹ That fit in well with new format of relations with Russia, as part of their "reset".

The situation in Ukraine was not seen as a crisis in demand of urgent US intervention. The "Ukrainian direction" was delegated to those sub-departments in the administration, which dealt with monitoring situation in the field of human rights. Together with allies in Europe, special attention was paid to Yulia Tymoshenko's case. Washington shared the EU's position on this matter.²

Viktor Yanukovich's statement concerning his refusal to sign the Association Agreement with the EU surprised Washington. Washington was not able to accurately predict the possible consequences of Russian pressure on Kyiv, considering the planned signing of the association agreement. On the other

hand, even if Washington had specific information about Moscow's pressure on Yanukovich to disrupt signing of the agreement, the U.S. probably did not have leverage or even the willingness to help Kyiv withstand this pressure somehow. Moscow's offer to Yanukovich, which he essentially accepted, consisted of a combination of blackmail and promises of large, immediate loan. Washington and Brussels could not propose similar offers to Kyiv, to deter Yanukovich's government from accepting Moscow's proposition.

The refusal to sign an agreement itself was not have the reason for a shift in relations between Kiev and Washington. It was, of course, the Ukrainian authorities' decision to use brutal force against protesters, who were critical of the government's refusal to sign the agreement, which created situation, which Washington could not simply ignore. Washington did not have a distinct long-term program of actions for Ukraine after beginning of the Euromaidan; the position of the United States was mostly reactionary, situational, that is, it varied depending on the events in Ukraine.

From the point of view of Washington, the new Maidan resembled the previous one very much. However, there were differences as well. First, it quickly became obvious that this time the regime was prepared to retain power by force. Second, unlike in 2004, the events of the end of 2013, it was a question of the fate of a legitimately elected president. Washington was not about to entertain a notion of a "regime change." The accent was given, instead, on attempting to correct the Ukrainian government's conduct, mediation, and establishing dialogue between the authorities and opposition. The U.S. diplomatic efforts were focused on this, not on promotion of the Euromaidan, as Moscow's propaganda insists.³

It should be noted that by then, President B. Obama's administration had almost completely abandoned the policy of promoting democracy in the world. Demands to support democracy were made occasionally, but there was no systematic approach to supporting democratic movements. Instead, the emphasis was placed on the promotion of American interests, not values (sometimes rather formally). After some hesitations, the administration agreed to support the so-called Arab Spring. Such support offered in Egypt and Libya. However, in Iran, Syria, and Bahrain the administration's position was different.⁴⁵ B. Obama constantly used the promise of multilateral diplomacy on his way to presidency. He promised to act alongside traditional US partners in Europe. In this case, Washington was able to act in accordance with these promises and to coordinate its position with the position of the leadership of the European Union and the leading European powers. The tendency to coordinate its actions with European players in Ukraine continued during the new phase of the crisis, caused by the beginning of the Russian invasion. This, among other things, gave Washington the opportunity to abandon its

leadership in resolving the crisis. However, in practice, over the course of the long-term crisis in Ukraine, at every moment, it seemed impossible to solve the crisis without American participation and leadership.

For nearly three months, the United States sought to calm hotheads among the Euromaidan activists down, warning them against revolutionary ways of resolving the crisis. Priority was given to a compromise variant of reciprocal concessions with a clear division of powers. There were suggestions to exclude some of the most odious figures from the government and include several representatives of opposition instead. Also, American diplomacy supported a reformatting of the government and the creation of a provisional, technocratic government.⁶

At the same time, it seems that Yanukovich and his entourage did not really trust the American mediation. Washington's critique of his address convinced him that the United States was not neutral, and in fact, apparently, would like to eliminate him from power. He certainly did not forget that positions of the Western countries and institutions, the U.S. among them, did not allow him to gain power in 2004. Naturally, this increased Moscow's influence on him. The channels, which Washington had previously used to reach out to Yanukovich, were blocked.

At this stage it became clear that the danger of escalating the crisis and violence had increased; Washington's diplomatic efforts were aimed at achieving a certain compromise. The opposition was called on to accept a compromise, to alter its expectations, and to stop the radicals (in each statement there was an appeal to both sides of the confrontation to refrain from violence). Yanukovich's government was urged to allow the opposition to take part in the distribution of power, to consider the creation of a technical government of national unity, to agree on constitutional reform, to consider the possibility of holding early elections and, of course, to abandon the escalation of violence. Until the last hours of Yanukovich's tenure in power, the United States addressed to him as to the president of the state. American officials conducted phone talks with Yanukovich and personal meetings. American diplomats never expressed wishes or demands for Yanukovich to resign. This radically differed from Washington's position in civilian confrontations in countries such as Egypt, Syria, and Libya, when, at some stage, calls were made for the resignation of old leaders. Washington supported the Steinmeier – Fabius – Sikorski mission. However, at the same time, the opposition leaders did speak for all the Euromaidan. The agreement of February 21, 2014 reflected the *status quo* no longer existed. It lost its validity the very next day, when Yanukovich unexpectedly deserted his post and, soon, Ukraine. The U.S. took Yanukovich's flight as *fait accompli*, as a voluntary and deliberate action.⁷ Washington recognized the legitimacy of the new Ukrainian authorities. The

Verkhovna Rada was a legitimate body, elected by people of Ukraine. The redistribution of power in the parliament took place naturally after the culmination of the crisis, when supporters of the ex-president turned away from him. Moreover, this was not a usurpation of power, since the newly elected leaders had the status of only temporary representatives; general elections of the new president were held. All this gave the United States reason to recognize the new Ukrainian government.

But the main tests for Ukraine were still ahead. Russia set a course for annexation of Crimea. This is a flagrant violation of all norms of international law, namely its basic principles, such as state sovereignty and the territorial integrity, not to mention the violation of several bilateral Ukrainian-Russian agreements, and it was an extraordinary event. Washington immediately and categorically condemned the annexation of Crimea. Thus, the United States was gradually drawn into a new round of the crisis, which now had risen on a new level and transformed from the Ukrainian crisis into a crisis over Ukraine.

One of the first steps in response to Russian military invasion in Crimea was the decision to suspend the Russian Federation's membership in the so-called G-8, which returned to traditional G-7 format. That was a joint decision of the U.S. and other member states, and was a signal for Moscow that its actions could result in further international isolation. From our point of view, the symbolic diplomatic steps in this direction should continue.

In early March of 2014, a US financial assistance program was issued in the form of loan guarantees worth \$ 1 billion.⁸ Of course, this is about direct assistance, but one has to remember about the considerable American contribution to the IMF budget (around 1/5), which, in essence, is the main donor to Ukraine at this difficult time. In addition, the United States also contributed to attempts, seeking the returning assets to Ukraine, which were illegally siphoned out of the country.⁹ At the same time, one might attempt to study the United States policy in the context of the Budapest Memorandum of 1994. There are many interpretations of this document. In our view, it was never an effective mechanism for protecting Ukraine's security and it should not be considered as such. Of course, the Russian Federation has flagrantly violated terms of the Memorandum. As for the United States and Great Britain, they promised to hold international consultations and consider the issue at the UN in the event of a security threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. And all of this has been done.

In response to so-called "referendum" held in Crimea on March 16, 2014, the United States immediately announced sanctions against specific Russian individuals, who were involved in undermining the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Ukraine. The executive orders 13660 and 13661 came into

force.¹⁰ That was a step in right direction, although the blocking of individuals' accounts and restrictions on their right to obtain an American visa could hardly be an effective lever of influence on Moscow's. It looks like the Russian leaders prepared for such developments in advance and foresaw these types of sanctions.

At the end of March 2014, the United States supplied the Ukrainian military with 300 000 ready-to-eat meals from its depot in Europe.¹¹ In fact, that was the first example of American direct assistance to Ukraine in the sphere of military cooperation. The first important symbolic step was made. Several other steps would follow. Meanwhile the situation developed very fast. After annexation of Crimea, the Russian Federation directed its aggression against Ukraine's eastern territories. Moscow's special operation in the Donbas was planned, financed, and supplied with personnel from Russia. Experts will long discuss the form of Russian interference: was it really the so-called "hybrid war"? But it was absolutely clear, that Ukraine found itself vis-à-vis Russian aggression. The United States participated in the first meeting dedicated to the crisis over Ukraine in Geneva on April 17, 2014. Although this meeting was not successful and drew criticism, American participation was a positive step. Unfortunately, after that, Washington refused to participate in further attempts to identify ways to solve the crisis over Ukraine in a multilateral format and delegated its powers to its two European allies. We believe that was a mistake on the part of Washington decision makers. An American diplomatic presence there might have given them a better chance to influence Moscow's position.

Responding to Russia's aggressive actions in Eastern Ukraine, the United States introduced a series of sanctions against the Russian Federation. The sanctions were introduced in several stages, according to degree of Russia's involvement in aggression against Ukraine. We believe that the introduction of sanctions is a positive instrument to influence Moscow's action, but, at the same time, they are an instrument, whose efficacy is difficult to measure and feel.

In the work of these (or any other) sanctions there are many aspects. First, sanctions take time to become really tangible. Therefore, despite the fact that we would like to see rapid changes, they rarely lead to such a result. Second, often enough sanctions lead to a gradual decrease in the standard of living of ordinary citizens, but not of the political elite, which is their main target group. Moreover, short-term sanctions can provide justification for the active propaganda of an authoritarian state, and it can consolidate the population around its leaders in the struggle against outside influence. Third, in order to be efficient, sanctions must be all-embracing, general, and not selective, which leaves some loopholes for possible violations of the sanctions regime.

Fourthly, sanctions strike at those who introduced them. The greater the object of sanctions and the wider the economic cooperation with this object, the more economic interests of the countries that imposed these sanctions suffer. Fifth, sanctions work better against countries with a weak economy. Russia cannot be referred to as a country with truly developed economy, although it is not a weak one. Moscow now utilizes considerable financial resources it accumulated in prior years. This somewhat mitigates the sanctions' effect. So, the sanctions have clearly not led to a change in Moscow's conduct, although one may speculate as to whether its conduct would be more aggressive without the sanctions being put in place. The sanctions must remain in force until Russia ceases its aggression towards Ukraine. The fact is the set of instruments available to the West and the United States, which might exert influence on the Russian Federation, is very limited. Not many opportunities for influence are left available when idea of direct military intervention in the conflict on the side of Ukraine is off the table, and only discussion concerning the possible supply of weapons to Ukraine continue.

The American sanctions are in accord with those implemented by the European Union. This was a fundamental aspect for the Obama administration. He did not want "to play the first violin" in this "concert" of sanctions. Washington made every effort to keep the consolidation of the transatlantic community in this matter intact. The United States had high hopes for a successful presidential election in May 2014. The U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of State provided financial assistance to support the preparation and holding this election. Successful elections had exceptional importance for discrediting Moscow's propaganda message about the alleged illegitimacy of new Ukrainian authorities. The early elections of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine that took place in October 2014 can be considered in the same context. Ukraine's American partners had high hopes for the new members of the Ukrainian parliament, a new ruling coalition, and the government it created. This government was expected to carry out far-reaching fundamental reforms and anti-corruption measures. The United States continues its efforts to help Ukraine to improve its economic situation, to implement reforms, and to protect its sovereignty and the territorial integrity.

In order to analyse the "Ukrainian direction" of American foreign policy (just like any other direction, for that matter), it is necessary, among other things, to note the complex nature of decision making in this area. Without doubt, all major decisions are made in the White House. This was particularly true of Obama's administration. It may sound trivial, because in any administration, the decisive word is up to the president, but this administration was especially centralized. Another distinguishing feature of the B. Obama Administration was its extreme closeness and lack of transparency. From the

beginning of his presidency Barak Obama insisted that it is impermissible to give away the administration's "inner workings" and that those who violate this rule should be punished. To a certain extent, this feature prevents us from knowing more about the discussions on any issues – including about the crisis over Ukraine – inside the administration. President Obama was known as a very cautious politician, which includes, also (perhaps, especially), his approach to foreign policy. He did not like fiery rhetoric, dramatic actions, and thought before making every decision. The President's "Ukrainian direction" policy raised a level of caution at times. The White House understood the importance and its responsibility for the consequences of any action. Every step here has implications for Ukraine, Ukraine's relations with the U.S., US-Russian relations, and American interests in broader Eurasia. President Obama was also aware that his policy has always been criticized on various sides. Unfortunately, the politicization effect is taking its toll, so that even successful steps in the foreign policy of an administration are often criticized. So, over time, the president and his inner circle have learned to reject criticism, even constructive, as politically biased. It often made them isolated from opposite points of view or conflicting views.

From our point of view, there was a certain lack of personal and public engagement on the part of president Obama in discussing the crisis around Ukraine. With the unprecedented and protracted crisis around Ukraine, the president did not often speak about it. Most often, he let his subordinates to do this. One can say that this position could have bad consequences: it is known that any direct intervention of the president has more weight than the action of any other representative of the administration; a statement or telephone conversation of the President draws more attention (and probably has more influence) than a statement by, let us say, J. Biden or J. Kerry (with all due respect).

During the administration of Obama, the role of the National Security Council was strengthened. James Jones (for 1.5 years) and most certainly Tom Donilon (2.5 years) raised the importance of the NSC. Ever since the NSC appeared under the helm of Susan Rice, a known confidant, a person from the president's "inner circle" (and very small circle it is), the role of the NCS has grown even more. Since she took this position in July 2013, the crisis over Ukraine has happened was under the supervision of this very adviser to the president of national security. The question of how strong the NSC's influence on the president was remains open (historians will eventually give an answer). The president determines the policy and priorities, recommends a certain course of action, and this is natural. The NSC could play different roles – just to precisely implement the president's policy, to try and correct something, or to use its influence on the President to change his attitude. It certainly appears that former was the case under Obama.

Of course, The Department of State is responsible for foreign policy. John Kerry has done a very careful job in this post (the final evaluation will be done over time). He has been a part of the attempts to resolve the crisis over Ukraine and provide it with needful help. However, a question arises, whether this particular secretary of state had enough time for this matter. The secretary of state is a person, who is responsible for numerous problems and areas. There is no doubt that the Middle Eastern problems took far more of Mr. Kerry's time than the crisis over Ukraine. Some might view this as a wrong signal when it comes to measuring Washington's attention to this matter. However, the delegation of specific matters within the State Department to particular divisions and individuals seems to be absolutely natural. During the crisis around Ukraine, Victoria Nuland, US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, was personally in charge of the "Ukrainian direction" of US policy. Thanks to the consistent and principled position of Nuland since the Euromaidan, and her active involvement with the situation in and around Ukraine, one can safely say that there was probably no other person in the history of relations with any post-Soviet country that caused the same strong emotions - from complete condemnation and demonization to extraordinary popularity, almost heroization. V. Nuland received the reputation of a rigid official, someone who could, if necessary, make an unpleasant or difficult decision. She clearly and unequivocally expressed her position.¹² While Nuland took the part of, let us say, "executive manager", and was responsible for the difficult routine work, the ideological design of the American approach towards Russian aggression on Ukraine was best represented by another notable representative of this administration – Samantha Power, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations. Power won recognition over the years with her continuous emphasis on the protection of the norms of international law and of human rights, and her harsh criticism of authoritarian regimes. Therefore, for Powers, Russia's actions were a direct challenge to all the norms and values, which she cared about so much. For years, the United States Department of Defence had good relations with the Ukrainian military. During the ongoing conflict, the Pentagon provided considerable assistance to the Ukrainian military, including some direct trainings for the military and the National Guard of Ukraine. One crucial issue, which has been under discussion for some time already, is that of the possible supply of American lethal weapons to Ukraine. Ashton Carter, a former defence minister, made it clear that he was personally inclined to support this idea, and that at least he is ready to consider it.¹³ General Martin Dempsey, who was Chairman of the JCS in 2011 – 2015, expressed the same opinion.¹⁴ His successor, and current Chairman of the NES, General Joseph Dunford deemed this idea reasonable.¹⁵ General Philip Breedlove, Supreme Allied Commander in Europe from

2013 until May of 2016¹⁶, as well as the current Commander, Curtis Scaparotti,¹⁷ and General Ben Hodges, commanding general of the United States Army in Europe have also expressed their support of this idea.¹⁸ However, it should be noted, that they were not 100 per cent positive that such step would definitely help Ukraine and would not bring, on the contrary, an escalation of the conflict and expansion of Russian aggression. It was precisely this lack of certainty as to the possible outcomes of such arms deliveries, as well as the setting of limits on what the United States could do to help Ukraine (not to mention the reluctance to be involved in an indirect war with Russia in Ukraine), that prompted B. Obama to take a decision against the delivery of lethal weapons to Ukraine.

Finally, we cannot ignore the active involvement of the American legislature in discussing and implementing US policy towards Ukraine, which has been very noticeable since the onset of the crisis around Ukraine. Foreign policy, of course, falls within the competence of the executive. However, Congress always has its word. Relations between the branches of power regarding this matter are not simple and they often compete for the prerogatives in this sphere. Certainly, one of the most important instruments Congress has is the power of the purse, an instrument for financing the administration's actions. However, bipartisan support of Ukraine in both chambers of Congress was visible. One example of Congress' bipartisan support for Ukraine was the Russian Aggression Prevention Act, adopted in July of 2014 (S.2277). Also worthy of note is the Ukraine Freedom Support Act of 2014, proposed in March 2014(S. 2828, H.R. 5859). Although, in essence, the Congress has a fairly limited influence to force the president to comply with these laws, even after he has signed them. The prerogative of foreign policy remains the head of the executive branch. Among American experts there are ongoing discussions about the crisis around Ukraine. This topic could be the subject of a separate monograph. The vast majority of American scholars were concerned about Russian aggression against Ukraine and felt indignant at violation of international law norms, sovereignty and integrity of our country. They treated Ukraine, which faced such substantial challenge, with sympathy and support. Scholars might have different opinions about what motivated the actions of Russian leadership, but they agree in their critical attitude towards these actions. They discuss possible forms of assistance to our country and how far the U.S. should go in its support of Ukraine.

However, there are certain exceptions. As it is well known by now, V. Putin is mostly supported in the West by two types of political forces – the ultra-right the far left. In the United States the far right has limited political influence (at least on foreign policy and D. Trump's arrival to the White House). Here, the situation differs from many European countries where there are

more influential parties, like Putin's great friends, the French Front National or the Hungarian Jobbik.

Many of the right-wing activists in the United States focus their attention exclusively on domestic affairs. Their foreign policy is traditionally directed at support for Israel (with the exception of most virulent extreme right fringe, which is anti-Semitic), and, since 2001, challenging Islamic fundamentalism. Some American traditional conservatives still distrust Russia since the Cold War, which, certainly, makes it impossible for these political forces to support Moscow's actions.

Some American right-wing representatives (in particular the religious, social right-wingers) try to co-operate with their Russian counterparts on the basis of common views, like racism, xenophobia, anti-immigration hysteria, neglect of human rights, homophobia, etc. The activities of the World Congress of Families come to attention in this regard, including their efforts to whitewash Putin's policies.¹⁹

The influence of libertarian ideology is more visible. Traditionally its supporters are closer to the Republicans, though this ideology is, in fact, a non-partisan one. The libertarians have both more moderate and radical wings. The moderates (The Cato Institute can serve as an example) are known for their criticism of the United States excessive intervention in international affairs, conflicts, and other countries' internal affairs, at least from their point of view. In the case of crisis over Ukraine, some of them also see Washington taking sides and helping one of the conflicting parties as excessive. Some radical libertarians (like the Ron Paul Institute) actually turned into an instrument of Russian propaganda. They blame the United States for the crisis, allegedly supporting Euromaidan, and promoting a coup against ex-President Yanukovich. They also criticise EU and NATO for pushing Russia to defend its sphere of influence.²⁰ This ideology definitely has its niche in the U.S., which is perhaps growing, but at present, it is far from being truly influential.

The American far left actually continues the Cold War traditions of anti-Americanism and anti-imperialism. They still find their own country guilty of beginning and unwinding international conflicts. They accept Putin's propaganda at face value. Distrust of their own country, government, way of life, and political and economic model automatically leads to their support of those who challenge these. They do not want to notice Russian imperialism, exploitation of the Russian population and natural resources for the benefit of the oligarchy, blatant violations of human rights, Moscow's attempts to dominate over other nations of the former USSR, racism, and the boundless chauvinism Russia's ideology towards Ukraine. Here you have an eclectic group, which includes radical left liberals, Trotskyists, Stalinists, Maoists and others. A separate role is played by a small group of authors, with Stephen F.

Cohen, professor at Princeton and New York Universities (often pitched by the “Nation” magazine) as its most prominent figure.²¹ Prejudices, mistrust in their own country and, conversely, the justification of Moscow’s policy are characteristic of them. Also, this is often coupled with the lack of any real expertise on what actually happens in and around Ukraine. The influence of this group at practical policy of Washington is minor.

Finally, some experts do their own analysis of this issue from the point of view of certain variety of classical political realism. They insist that Ukraine stays in the sphere of Russian influence and therefore, accordingly, there is no need to try to change this natural state of affairs. They mainly focus their attention on necessity to assist Ukraine in the financial sphere and in conducting of reforms to the extent that the West can. As for security and geopolitics, according to their position, Ukraine should not be encouraged to participate in the European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes. They see a future of Ukraine as a permanently neutral state, one that should undergo a “Finlandization” transformation. In their attitudes, these authors vary from “reconciliation” to the “pacification” of Moscow. This group is somewhat influential. At present it cannot be called a dominant one, although its voice is getting louder. The discussion about the crisis over Ukraine and the role of the United States in this context continues.^{22 23 24}

The situation in and around Ukraine was mentioned during the 2016 US presidential election. It has not become the central item on the agenda for the campaigners, but contenders were often asked to express their views on the subject. The Democratic Nominee H. Rodham Clinton has made her position on the subject pretty clear. She is a consistent critic of Putin’s actions vis-à-vis Ukraine and a proponent of strong American support for Ukraine. In substance there is not too much difference in how President Obama and Clinton see the crisis over Ukraine. She was more prone to vocal denunciations of V. Putin, for instance, being one of the first politicians of her calibre to compare him to “Hitler.” But, again, Obama was acting president, and she only used this rhetoric within the framework of her election campaign.

So, we hoped that, in the event of Clinton’s victory in the presidential election, her policy would be a natural extension of the Obama administration’s policy. There might have been some shifts in details, but no major changes. She might have come up with some new initiatives, but not on a scale that would be in position to dramatically alter Moscow’s course of action. Ukraine’s best hope would have been for Clinton to sustain pressure on Russia at its previous level, not to substantially elevate that pressure. At the same time, there was a reason to believe that she was not going to entertain an easing of that pressure until Russia complied with the demands of the international community and stopped its aggression towards Ukraine.

On the American side, there are several options for dealing with the crisis around Ukraine: as a direct threat to US interests, as an indirect threat to US interests, or as a complete absence of a threat to US interests. Republican candidate, and ultimately the winner of the race, D. Trump fluctuated between the second and third options during his campaign. Moreover, when it came to issues like what Washington should do, his response in many cases was as follows: “Nothing, this is not our problem.” He repeated that Ukraine is in Europe, and, therefore; Europeans should deal with this issue by themselves. When it came to his view of Putin, Trump stopped short of admiring Russia’s strong leader and promised that he would be able to get along with him just fine. Here, like with any other question, he did not provide any explanation of what this “getting along with fine” meant, and what the expense of achieving this outcome would be. Moreover, Trump appeared to justify the behaviour of Russia towards Ukraine and to consider lifting American sanctions, in addition to recognizing Crimea as a part of Russian Federation.

After the inauguration, Trump showed more caution and restraint in his comments on Ukraine (if compared with his speeches during the presidential campaign). Some prominent members of his administration, including Secretary of State R. Tillerson, Secretary of Defence J. Mattis, National Security Advisor H. R. McMaster, U.S. Representative to the U.N. N. Haley, and others have spoken clearly on the subject. They have expressed concern about Russian aggression towards Ukraine, noted that Russia could be perceived as a threat to the U.S., and indicated no intention of changing Washington’s position on this issue, with regard to existing sanctions or American support for Ukrainian territorial integrity. The President himself avoided demonstrating his position on this issue and offered no concrete commitments. The views of his most close and trusted advisors in the White House, such as S. Bannon and S. Miller, on this specific subject are not clearly known. At the time of writing this section, it was not entirely clear whether the president remained interested in normalizing relations with Russia, and how this could affect his relations with Ukraine.

Conclusions. The agenda for U.S. – Ukraine relations has never been so intense. This is true for almost all possible spheres of bilateral relations – from military and strategic, to political, economic, and informational. We observe an unprecedentedly high level of attention towards the crisis over Ukraine in the U.S. (from the government structures to mass media and the public). Yet the “Ukrainian dimension” has not become a top priority for the American foreign policy. The Greater Middle East, the challenge of Islamic fundamentalism, and the rise of China – all occupy the highest positions in America’s list of priorities, in comparison with “Ukrainian direction.” Nevertheless, it is really impressive, how noticeable this direction has become today.

The number of US statements about the situation inside and around Ukraine since the end of 2013 far exceeds the number of these statements over more than twenty years of bilateral relations. Certainly, statements cannot replace policies, but they also matter. They shape attitudes towards Ukraine and its future in American public opinion. Several important bills on Ukraine, specifically those, which were passed in 2014, were rather important. They define a high level of engagement of the United States in attempts to help Ukraine and solve the problems that our country faces now.

Ukraine needs comprehensive American support more than ever before. This support, certainly, has been practical and timely in the past, for example, when overcoming the disastrous consequences of Chernobyl, carrying out privatization, and so on. But American support has never been so crucial. Today Ukraine faces many existential challenges, but America's position and Washington's support help Ukraine to deal with all of them. The current situation is an unprecedented test of endurance for the bilateral strategic partnership. Debates over the crisis around Ukraine are continuing. At present, the approach, which was personally endorsed by President Obama remains largely unchanged. This approach declares strategic support for Ukraine, although it is mainly of political, economic and diplomatic nature. Within the framework of economic assistance, Washington makes a significant financial contribution to the budget of international financial institutions, which are in fact, the main donors of Ukraine. Fears about widespread support in the military sector prevail. Such fears are based on the assumption that more substantial U.S. military aid will escalate Russian aggression and the conflict in the territory of Ukraine. From our point of view, such an opinion is probably wrong, since present experience shows that new waves of escalation and acts of provocation are caused by the lack of hard response to the aggressive actions of Moscow in Ukraine. In addition, there is no doubt that Americans are tired of military intervention abroad, and prone to rejection of the possibility - even distant and hypothetical - of sending new contingents of American military forces thousands of kilometres away from their country. For Americans today, the possibility of a military presence abroad is too delicate and painful.

However, separate executive bodies called for a stronger reaction to Russia's aggressive actions. The American military's perception that modern Russia is a major threat to American interests attracts attention. It is transmitted in calls for the activation of military and strategic actions, both within NATO, and unilaterally. Several major representatives of the military establishment, including US Armed Forces leaders, endorse the idea of providing lethal weapons to Ukraine, although, at the same time, they emphasize that there can be no absolute guarantees that such a step will be effective. It will

be interesting to see how the American military's position will coincide with the somewhat different position of civil leaders in the near future.

One can clearly note the emergence of the so-called "realist paradigm" in some American experts' opinions about the situation around Ukraine. Adherents of this approach believe that the crisis over Ukraine does not directly infringe on the interests of the United States, and that Washington's influence on the situation is rather limited. They propose supporting Russia's ambitions in certain "special interest" areas and "spheres of influence", which should also include Ukraine. This leads to calls to restrict the sovereignty of Ukraine, turning it into a neutral state but implementing the so-called "Finlandization" of our country. Moreover, arguments are heard in favour of the Russian Federation's alleged importance as a partner for the United States in the solution to various global problems. Although, in our opinion, Moscow sees its strategic interest in undermining American interests around the world. In this context, one could mention the policy of "resetting", which ended in an utter and complete failure.

The previous and current administrations did not and do not want to cross certain lines in their relations with Moscow. This can be explained by their unwillingness to start a new Cold War. In practice, this means that Russia has already started taking Cold War like actions; whereas, Washington avoids proper counteractions, being satisfied by half-measures instead. President Obama claimed that sanctions against Russia are effective, although, they have not resulted in visible changes in Moscow's conduct. The introduction of new sanctions seems unlikely. With some degree of confidence, it can be argued that there are few reasons to expect any essential changes in the White House's approach.

The United States' support is critically important. However, it will not result in the liberation of the Donbas, the return of Crimea, or the execution of necessary reforms. American support helps our country withstand the tremendous pressure which it currently feels. But, Ukrainians should make the main contributions to solving the problems they currently face. In addition, it is important that our American partners see Ukrainian society come together to solve these problems, as proof that its declarations of a new direction in the development of the Ukrainian state, economy, and society are serious. Before asking Washington for support, we must clearly determine our priorities, set a strategy for our country's development, and keep moving in a right direction.

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CHAPTER 8

CHINESE – UKRAINEAN RELATIONS

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Relations between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China (PRC) from the beginning of their establishment have been an example of mutual relations of subjects with fundamentally different “weights” on the international arena. Moreover, their personal interest in each other was also completely uneven; these interests lay in different directions.

For Ukraine, interest in China is mainly in the trade and economic sphere. For Ukraine, the personal interest in China is mainly in a commercial and economic area. Kyiv considered the People's Republic of China as a market for the export of Ukrainian commodities and substantial resource for entering the country of freely convertible currency. At the same time, the geographical remoteness of China and substantial distinctions on cultural and mental levels also led to the fact that in the list of Ukrainian political priorities China is far from the first place.

Thus, in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Resolution, “On Basic Directions of Foreign Policy of Ukraine” (1993), in the list of priorities of bilateral relations, the PRC is included in the fourth group under the account and mentioned after Japan, along with India and Egypt.¹ In the Law of Ukraine “About fundamentals of domestic and foreign policy” (2010) China and Pacific region as a whole are not mentioned at all.²

At the same time, in the above-mentioned document, European integration is clearly indicated as the main priority of Ukrainian foreign policy, which is why the thesis, posted web-site of the Ukrainian Embassy in the PRC, concerning the strategic nature of relations between Ukraine and China is puzzling.³ However, this contradiction perfectly reflects one of the key features of modern Ukrainian foreign policy - the constant uncertainty with its priorities.

Concerning of the PRC, Beijing's personal interest in relations lies in a military-technical sphere. After the dissolution of the USSR, numerous developments of the Soviet military-industrial complex appeared at the disposal of Ukraine in virtually the entire range of means for an armed struggle: from the construction of aircraft carriers to the creation of intercontinental ballistic missiles. China, at the cusp twentieth and twenty-first centuries, had the opportunity to convert its growing economic power into military power, the possibility of acquiring several technologies option was difficult to overestimate.

Beijing was interested in up to 30 areas of collaboration in this military-technical sphere, including aircraft carriers, large transport aircrafts, super-

sonic training jet planes, tanks, the “air-to-air” and “air-to-ground” missiles. For 25 years, thousands of specialists have been involved in the Chinese state and private industry and more than 2000 the military and dual-use technological projects have been implemented.

Without cooperation with Ukraine, it would have been difficult to put in operation the aircraft-carrier “Liaoning” (ex-”Variag”), to succeed in the development of new warships, tanks, airplanes, and especially aero-engines. The “Liaoning” is equipped with the Ukrainian UGT – 25000 or DN/DA-80 gas turbines. According to a Chinese Defence Review in the 1990s, China received these turbines without the technologies. In the twenty first century, during the economic crisis, Ukraine finally agreed to transfer all technologies related to these turbo-shaft engines.⁴

At the same time, trade and economic relations and investment activity obviously were not priorities for China, since the Ukrainian market is not large enough, and its significant bureaucratization and high level of corruption prevented its investment in the Ukrainian economy.

When addressing the strategic culture of the PRC, it is necessary to mention, that it has a significant “pressure point” – the Taiwan question. The doctrine of “One China” is implemented as consistently as possible, Beijing does not make exceptions for anyone; therefore, the states counting on partnership with the PRC should strictly distance themselves from any official contacts with Taipei under the threat of the sharp deterioration of relationships with Beijing. Unfortunately, Ukrainian diplomacy only learned this position after two very painful lessons.

It should be noted that from the very first days of Ukraine’s independence, its relations with China developed quite dynamically. Beijing was the first in its region to recognize Ukraine as an independent state on December 27, 1991. On January 4, 1992, diplomatic relations were established between the two countries. Already in the autumn of 1992, the first President of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, arrived in Beijing on an official visit. A year later, in September 1994, President of the PRC Jiang Zemin came to Kyiv for the first time on a state visit. In the same year, the PRC declared the provision of security guarantees to Ukraine together with other nuclear states of the world. In December 1995, the new President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, travelled to the Middle Kingdom on the first state visit. In addition to many economic agreements, an important agreement was signed between the defence ministers of the PRC and Ukraine on military-technical cooperation in 1995, and the Memorandum on deepening cooperation between the Ministry of State Security (MSS) of China and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in 1996.

However, Ukraine then made a big mistake, which significantly complicated bilateral relations. In August of 1996, vice-president and prime minister

of Taiwan, Lien Chan, arrived in Kyiv on a private visit. His visit was widely covered by the press of the Republic of China with special emphasis on the fact that Ukraine could become a “gateway to Europe” for Taiwan.

Beijing’s reaction was swift, extremely painful, and consistent. Firstly, the Chinese representatives ignored invitations to the reception relating to Ukrainian Independence Day in the Ukrainian embassies in virtually all countries where they exist. Then there was the cancellation of the visit of the large Chinese government delegation, the cancellation of the Ukrainian military delegation to China, and the agreement on a military cooperation was not signed as well. The Cooling of China’s attitude towards Ukraine was a phenomenal, but quiet, without excessive noise in the media.⁵

In fact, in 1997-1999 political relations between the PRC and Ukraine were “halted to a standstill” especially regarding visits of high-level officials. Only in 2000, apparently after deciding that Ukraine got a sufficient lesson, Beijing reactivated bilateral relations, and the Chairman of the Permanent Committee in the National People’s Congress (NPC), former Premier of the State Council Li Peng, visited Kyiv. His visit, as representative of the legislative branch of China, can be assessed as preparatory to a state visit in 2001 of PRC’s President Jiang Zemin.

Because of negotiations between the leaders of the two countries, a declaration was signed in which the parties once again confirmed, that there were no political contradictions between them and they were ready to develop an active cooperation in the future. At the beginning of the next year, Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko flew to the Middle Kingdom on a return visit which turned out to be very symbolic – the parties noted the success and achievements of the decade of establishing diplomatic relations.

“At this stage and in the current geopolitical situation, Ukraine needs a partner, which values friendship, respects its independence and territorial integrity, and does not interfere in its internal affairs”, - the Ukrainian Foreign Minister summarized the main message of the visit.

A month later the Speaker of Verkhovna Rada, Ivan Plusch, flew to Beijing on a friendly visit. The Ukrainian parliamentary delegation was invited to China by the Chairman of NPC Permanent Committee Li Peng. The purpose of the visit was designated as studying the experience of the PRC in the sphere of coordination and regulation of interaction between executive and legislative authorities. According to him, Plusch was also interested in the forms and methods of work in the creation, realization, and compliance of decisions of the supreme legislative body of China, especially in the field of “spectacular economic reforms”. While Plusch met with his colleague, the business delegation took part in a Ukrainian-Chinese business-seminar under the aegis of the Chinese Committee for the Promotion of International Trade.

Wide prospects for the development of Ukrainian-Chinese relations were set the very next day during a meeting between Ivan Plusch and Jiang Zemin. The President of the PRC very warmly recalled his last visit to Ukraine and noted that “a new direction in the development of bilateral relations should be the expansion of ties of mutual friendship and cooperation that are characterized by long-term stability and high level of trust”.

In November 2002, the PRC began the process of transferring the supreme authority from Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao. It was at this moment, from November 17 to 20, that Leonid Kuchma paid an official visit, becoming the first foreign leader who paid a state visit to China after the change of the country’s top leadership. Also, the Ukrainian president was one of the first to personally welcome Hu Jintao after his election as a secretary general of the CPC.

Leonid Kuchma met with all the first persons and commended the decision of the Party Congress, noting that in China everything that was planned would be fulfilled. Jiang Zemin assured that China would understand and respect the decisions of Ukraine on internal and external issues, considering the situation in the country, and would provide all possible assistance.

In the Joint Declaration signed by the two presidents, the position of the PRC on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine was fixed, adherence to earlier obligations to provide it with security guarantees. Beijing also promised Kyiv all possible support on its path to the WTO, which it became a member of in December 2001.

At the same time, Leonid Kuchma also spoke about the Taiwan question, which Ukraine previously tried not to comment on. The president stated that Ukraine unambiguously supported China in resolving the Taiwan question and completing the country’s full unification based on the principles of one China, “One country - two systems”. As a result of the talks in Beijing, four documents were signed: the above-mentioned Joint declaration, the agreement of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of China on collaboration in the field of intellectual property protection, the protocol between the Ministry of Industrial Policy and the Commission for Defence Science, Technology and Defence Industry of the PRC in the field of aircraft construction, as well as exchange letters on the provision of assistance to the Government of Ukraine from the Government of China.

Six months later, in April of 2003, Leonid Kuchma visited China and Hong Kong again on a state visit. It seemed that the Ukrainian-Chinese relations had a thawed. The development of the Draft Agreement on the Principles of Relations and Strategic Cooperation between Ukraine and the PRC in the 21st century was active; it would last for 25 years. The document, fully agreed upon by the Ukrainian side, had already been transferred to Beijing. In the course of political consultations held in Beijing by First

Deputy Foreign Minister Volodymyr Yelchenko and his Chinese counterpart Lee Hui, the parties identified an approximate schedule for mutual visits over the next year: in the first half of 2004, a visit to China was scheduled by Volodymyr Lytvyn, the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, also Kyiv offered to organize a visit of the Prime-Minister Viktor Yanukovich. The new President of the PRC, Hu Jintao, intended to pay a return visit to Ukraine. Unfortunately, this thaw was short-lived, and in 2004 the Ukrainian-Chinese relations fell into a slump again.

China perceived the events of Orange Revolution very ambiguously. President of the PRC, Hu Jintao, congratulated Viktor Yanukovich on his victory even before the results of the elections were announced or the third round of elections was planned. Chinese analysts compared the events in Kyiv in 2004 to the events in Tiananmen Square in 1989, but with the opposite sign. It was not a coincidence that the reduction of contacts between Beijing and top officials of Ukraine began. For example, the previously agreed visit to Beijing of Ukrainian Defence Minister Anatoliy Grytsenko was cancelled just three days before the scheduled date.

In addition, Kyiv again resorted to a very unfriendly, in Beijing's view, foreign policy step by issuing a visa in 2005 to Taiwan's representative Huang Zhifang, who arrived in Ukraine to attend the International Crisis Group meeting. China's rigid response was rapid: China immediately abolished the meeting of the commission on trade and economic cooperation scheduled for early 2006.

The further actions of the Chinese side were quite consistent - the dialogue at the level of heads of the states between Ukraine and China was curtailed until 2010. During the same period, there were no visits of the heads of foreign affairs agencies of Ukraine and the PRC, and the meeting of ministers took place only once – during the 60th session of the UN General Assembly in September 2005.

With regard to contacts at the level of heads of legislative bodies of two countries, the Ukrainian side, in fact, showed disrespect to the PRC. The speaker of the Ukrainian parliament, Oleksandr Moroz, visited China in 2007, but at the time of his visit, Viktor Yushchenko dissolved the parliament, thus, in essence, depriving the head of the delegation of any official authority, respectively, the visit was disrupted. From the official point of view of Beijing, this step demonstrated Yushchenko's team's attitude of towards Ukrainian-Chinese relations; therefore, Yushchenko did not visit China himself.

Instead, in 2009, the dialogue took place between third-party political figures, three members of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee: the first deputy chairman of the CPPCC Wang Gang; the secretary of the Shanghai City Committee of the CPC Yu Zhengsheng, and the vice-prime of the state

Council Zhang Dejiang. There were two visits from Ukraine to China - in August 2008, the Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, I. Vasiunyk, arrived in China on a working visit, to take part in the official events on the occasion of the opening of the XXIX Olympic Games, and in September of 2009 the Vice Premier of Ukraine, Grygoriy Nemyria, was in China on a working visit to participate in the Summer Davos Summit.

At the same time, political problems did not hinder military-technical cooperation between Ukraine and China. During the period of 1992-2008, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), China was second place, after Pakistan, among importers of Ukrainian arms (624 million dollars). Since 2009, China has become Ukraine's number one partner, but not for long.⁶

The intensification of Ukrainian-Chinese relations has only been taking place since 2010, with the assent of a new president in Kyiv - Viktor Yanukovich. In April of 2010, he met with the President of the PRC, Hu Jintao, in Washington at the Nuclear Security Summit. The heads of state agreed to bring the Ukrainian-Chinese relations to a qualitatively new level and to imbue them with strategic meaning. Among the areas of further cooperation were: the intensification of mutual visits at the high-level and of practical cooperation on the principle of "mutual benefit" and "win-win", deepening cooperation on pressing international issues, the expansion of cooperation in the field of science and technology, and so on.

In May of 2010, the Foreign Minister of the PRC, Yang Jiechi, arrived in Ukraine. He met with his Ukrainian counterpart, Kostiantyn Gryshenko, with President Viktor Yanukovich, Speaker of the Parliament Volodymyr Lytvyn, and Prime Minister Mykola Azarov. In June of 2010 consultations were held in Beijing between directors of the relevant departments of the Foreign Ministry on security guarantees, during which a draft of the agreement on guarantees for Ukraine, which sought to provide it with enhanced security guarantees, was transferred to the Chinese side for consideration. Beijing confirmed its position, that under no circumstances would use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states, and that this position extended to Ukraine as well.

Apparently, during the above mentioned meetings, some arrangements were reached with the Chinese side, since on June 2, 2010 Viktor Yanukovich, delivering a message to the Verkhovna Rada, outlined a foreign policy strategy in which China was given a special place. "China is interesting for us, and we have something for to offer China", he said.

Soon thereafter, on September from 5-9, 2010, Yanukovich visited China on a state visit. Because of the visit, the Road map for Ukrainian-Chinese cooperation for 2010-2012, as well as 13 other documents, were signed,. It should be noted that this visit had a very solid economic justification, which

was not typical for previous summits. Thus, contracts worth \$ 4.5 billion were signed, among which there were two investment projects: “Air express” and the steam and gas power station in Shchelkyno. The Chinese side called Yanukovych’s visit epochal.

In of June 2011, the President of the PRC, Hu Jintao, came to Ukraine on a return visit. As a result of the visit, the Joint Declaration on the Establishment and Development of Strategic Partnership Relations was signed, and a number of contracts worth 3.5 billion dollars were signed. “China is the main partner of Ukraine in the Asia-Pacific region”, Yanukovych said. According to him, a lot of time and opportunities were lost in previous years. “Ukraine and China cannot lose time in the matters of establishing cooperation”, he assured. In general, the two sides announced the beginning of the development of a strategic partnership.

Declarations and signed documents directly influenced the trade turnover between two countries. It should be noted that at the beginning of 2010, at the start of the “post-Orange” stage of trade, the volume of trade between Kyiv and Beijing was 6 billion dollars and subsequently grew by 44%, to 7.7 billion dollars by the end of the year. By the end of 2011, the trade turnover exceeded the mark of 10 billion dollars.⁷

In December of 2013, Viktor Yanukovych again visited the PRC, this time on a state visit. One of the main reasons for this was the change of the Chinese leadership; in 2012 the reins of China shifted from Hu Jintao to Xi Jinping.

During this visit, the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between Ukraine and China was signed. The treaty was a key political document and reflected the basic principles of the development of the Ukrainian-Chinese strategic partnership and cooperation both bilaterally and within the framework of multilateral mechanisms, and it also contained a list of priority areas for the development of practical cooperation.

The Heads of State also signed the Joint Declaration of Ukraine and the People’s Republic of China, further deepening the relations of strategic partnership. The declaration reflected the basic agreements reached by the parties on further development of cooperation. In particular, it concerned the development of relations and strategic partnership between Ukraine and China, the intensification of interstate political dialogue at the highest levels, and the confirmation of the positions of the two countries on the most pressing issues of international life. In addition, the document recorded the fact that the two heads of state approved the Program for the Development of Strategic Partnership Relations between Ukraine and the People’s Republic of China for 2014-2018.

At the same time, the visit also had a significant economic component. Viktor Yanukovych, summarizing the results of the visit, stated that the signed

documents could provide Ukraine with 8 billion dollars of investments from China. In 2014, Ukraine expected to triple the volume of bilateral trade. By 2023, Kyiv and Beijing intended to increase the volume of trade in goods and services to 100 billion dollars, for which it was planned to optimize and balance the structure of trade.⁸

However, even then it was clear that the implementation of previously signed documents stalled. Thus, in 2011 the Chinese Ambassador to Ukraine, Zhang Xiun, reported that investment projects were progressing poorly, and one of their significant constraints was high level of corruption and bureaucratic red tape from the Ukrainian side. However, the ambassador noted, “if the Chinese come to Ukraine, they should adapt to Ukrainian conditions”.⁹

Military-technical cooperation also developed actively. In general, Ukraine sold about 30 military technologies to the PRC, among which were developments for the design of military transport aircraft, technologies used in the engines of aircraft carriers, and large ships and tank engines.

It should be noted that in 2013 the Chinese-Ukrainian trade turnover, according to the statistics of the customs service of China, grew by 7.1% and amounted to 11.11 billion dollars. At the same time, the import of Chinese goods increased by 7.3% to 3.27 billion dollars; export increased by 7.1% to 7.84 billion dollars.¹⁰ Thus, in 2013 the prospects of Ukrainian-Chinese relations looked quite bright, giving grounds for optimism. Unfortunately, in 2014 the situation changed dramatically.

Beijing’s line of conduct regarding the crisis in Ukraine was shaped by both the “Ukrainian” and geo-economic and geopolitical interests of the PRC. The resulting position was supposed to reflect China’s “fundamental neutrality in conflict situations, as well as meet the political and economic interests of China in Europe, its plans to re-launching the China-US relations, primarily in the Asia-Pacific region, where Beijing, Washington, and its allies’ mutual suspicions continued to intensify.

China’s first reaction to the escalation of the situation in and around Ukraine was traditionally low-key. It limited itself to statements of non-interference and the need for peaceful, diplomatic methods to resolve the conflict. China placed responsibility for the worsening of the political situation in the country on external forces. Beijing accused the West of manipulating “people’s thoughts” about the association agreement with the European Union. “The intervention of the West prevented a dialogue between the government and the opposition, sowing seeds of further social and political strife within the country,” Xinhua news agency reported.¹¹

Since the situation in Ukraine touched the global and regional interests of the PRC, and this exposed its foreign policy to certain risks, as the conflict developed, the more China’s involvement intensified; akin to the

international crisis after the dissolution of the USSR, the more it intensified, the more China's activity intensified.

The ascent of the "new coalition" to power has not changed the PRC's approaches towards Ukraine much. There was no question of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the new Kyiv leaders. On February 24, 2014, the Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said that China intended to continue to develop its strategic partnership with Ukraine based on equality and mutual benefits.

Assessing the situation in Kyiv and its impact on China-Ukraine relations, Hua Chunying emphasized: "We noticed that because of efforts made by different parties, there was a softening of the situation in this country. We hope that the political process to resolve the crisis is progressing within the framework of the law in Ukraine".¹²

The uncontrolled growth of radicalism and the intensification of the US and EU in Ukrainian political space have corrected China's position. At the UN Security Council meeting on March 3, 2014, the Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the UN, Liu Jieqi, expressed "great concern about the situation in Ukraine." He condemned the radical acts of violence and suggested that the interested Ukrainian parties settle internal disagreements within the legislative framework and peacefully, "in practice, defended the legitimate interests of different peoples of Ukraine." He added that "in China, attention was drawn to the rapidly stirring up of Russophobic sentiments".¹³

The appearance of the Crimean factor in the Ukrainian crisis and the preparation to the referendum on the peninsula initially did not impact China's position. On February 28th, the official representative of the MFA of PRC, Qin Gang, declared to the Chinese and foreign journalists: "The Position of China in relation to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine remains unchanged. China respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine".¹⁴

China's desire to resolve the situation around Ukraine with "political and diplomatic means" was confirmed during a phone conversation between President Xi Jinping and US President Barack Obama. "The Chinese position on the Ukrainian issue adheres to an objective and fair position. The situation in Ukraine is very complicated, and in the current situation all parties need to remain cool and restrained to avoid steps that could lead to increased tension. It is necessary to maintain a course towards resolving the crisis by political and diplomatic means," Xi Jinping emphasized.¹⁵

After the vote in the UN Security Council on the question of Crimea, from which China abstained, and Russia vetoed, the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry demanded that Chinese diplomats explain the position taken by the PRC.

Ambassador to Ukraine, Zhang Xiun, told the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, A. Olefirov, that one of the basic postulates of China's foreign policy was the principle of non-interference. The explanation did not satisfy Kyiv, which previously interpreted the PRC's statements about supporting "Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity" as supporting its position in the dispute with Moscow concerning the Crimean question.

As the conflict escalated, China stepped up its efforts to resolve the "Ukrainian crisis". At the meeting of the Security Council on March 16 China's permanent representative to the UN Liu Jie proposed mediation to solve the problem. He demanded, firstly, "to create an international coordination mechanism with the participation of stakeholders for the political settlement of the Ukrainian crisis." Secondly, he urged all parties to refrain from actions that could lead to further escalation of the conflict. Thirdly, he recommended that international financial institutions determine how to help preserve economic and financial stability in Ukraine.¹⁶ Liu said that voting on the draft resolution introduced by the US would only "strengthen the confrontation and further complicate the situation," and recalled that "external interference" became "an important factor, which led to violent actions on the streets of Ukrainian cities, which caused a crisis in the country".¹⁷

China could not ignore the growth of tensions in the South-Eastern regions of Ukraine. Responding to journalists' questions about the confrontation in the Donbas, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hua Chunying called on interested parties "to remain cool and restrained, and based on full account of the legitimate interests and concerns of different regions and different nationalities, find channels for crisis management through political dialogue in order to help stabilize the situation".¹⁸ A little earlier, March 6, 2014, a conversation on the Ukrainian problem with the country's Prime Minister Yan Zechi with Assistant US President for National Security Susan Rice occurred. In the conversation, Yang Jiechi emphasized that "the legitimate rights and interests of all ethnic groups in Ukraine should be taken into account when solving the Ukrainian problem (in general)".¹⁹

In addition, the official media of China issued a condemnation of the policy of the United States and its allies. On March 19, 2014, Xinhua news agency issued a commentary on the West's commitment to double standards and only to its own interests, which manifested itself in a wide geographical range "from Kosovo to South Ossetia as well as from Comoros to Crimea".²⁰

During the intensification of the Crimean issue, China was preparing intensively for participation in the "nuclear" summit in the Netherlands and for the visit of the head of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping, to the European countries, which at that time held an identical position to the US on the Ukrainian question. On the eve of the visit to Europe, Xi Jinping an-

nounced that China would maintain relations with the Kyiv government and continue joint economic cooperation. Thus, China confirmed that it is interested in trade and development of economic relations with Ukraine.²¹

Thus, another important and distinctive feature of China's foreign policy was emerging, which became a serious innovation factor in economic diplomacy.

China's restrained position was once again demonstrated during a meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and US President Barack Obama during the Nuclear Security Summit at The Hague. The PRC President recalled that China proposed to set up an international coordination mechanism and to abandon actions that could lead to further deterioration of the situation.²² During the meeting with the leaders of Germany, the PRC President stressed that the situation in Ukraine was complex and "extremely sensitive", since to contain the crisis, it was necessary to consider a variety of factors lead to further deterioration of the situation.²³

China approved the meeting that took place on April 17th in Geneva, with the participation of heads of diplomatic departments of Russia, the United States, the EU and Ukraine. Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said that "when resolving Ukrainian domestic problems, the legitimate rights, interests and needs of all regions and ethnic communities should be considered," and noted the need to provide "a favourable external environment".²⁴

In other words, in the process of the evolution of the "Ukrainian crisis", Beijing tried to make maximum use of the full range of diplomatic means and methods it was allowed, on one hand, to demonstrate its adherence to principles, and on the other, to consider the diverse interests of the PRC associated with its relations with the EU, Russia, Ukraine and the USA. At the same time, the Chinese position, with its apparent neutrality, contained a "roll" in the direction of Russia. Along with the development of the official position in China, broad public opinion was formed in favour of Moscow.

In the opinion of the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, "benevolent and strong words about Russia" in the leading Chinese media confirmed that "in the confrontation of Russia with the West, the most populous country in the world stands on side of the largest country".²⁵

The newspaper *Huang Chiu Shibao*, which is part of the information holding *People's Daily*, noted: "While the PRC government took a weighted position in Ukraine, public opinion, since it has the opportunity to express its views freely, basically took the side of Russia. People who support Moscow believe that Russia's actions are the reaction to long-term strategic pressure from the West ... We are more inclined to agree with those who support Russia".²⁶

There were also problems with the economic component of Chinese-Ukrainian relations. Yanukovych's government managed to add to the European "bias" the Chinese economic factor, which at that time was per-

ceived as one of the alternatives to the vague economic prospects of associating with the EU. However, with the coming to power of the “new coalition”, for China and its interests in Kyiv, risks associated with the uncertainty of the future of the programs planned for Ukraine arose.

In the face of political chaos, there was a misunderstanding in terms of implementing part of the agreements: a scandal broke out with a three-billion contract for the supply of Ukrainian grain to the PRC. Under the contract, China pledged to provide Ukraine with a 15-year loan (with a five-year grace period) for two portions of 1.5 billion dollars each. The first part of the loan, already received by the Ukrainian side, was to go for spot and forward purchases of grain, which was never delivered to the Chinese. The second part, allocated for the purchase of agricultural machinery in China, modernization, and construction of elevators, remained undisclosed due to inconsistency of the issue of the equipment nomenclature and prices. The “grain scandal” revealed some of the economic contradictions and was not the only one in the new conditions.²⁷

However, the PRC continues to count on the long-term nature of trade relations with Kyiv. On March 19, 2014, the representative of the Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China, Shen Danyang, said: “China is ready to maintain close relations of mutually beneficial cooperation with Ukraine and hopes for an early stabilization of the situation in this country”.²⁸

At the same time, the prospects for military-technical cooperation between Ukraine and China are becoming increasingly vague. Firstly, “Ukroboronprom”, which is China’s main partner in bilateral military-technical cooperation, focused on ensuring the needs of Ukraine’s defence, which inevitably caused a reduction in the possible supply of military equipment of Beijing.²⁹ Secondly, deeper cooperation between Ukraine and the EU could lead to the fact that according to the EU rules on the embargo on the supply of arms and dual-use equipment to a number of countries, including China, Kyiv may have to reduce the arms trade with the Middle Kingdom. Here, we should not ignore the decisive influence the United States has on the decision-making process of the new government in Kyiv. Finally, over the past 25 years, China has received from Ukraine almost all the technologies it needs, and in the Ukrainian military-industrial complex there is practically nothing left from the Soviet legacy that could be of interest to China, and new developments are being carried out at an extremely slow rate because of chronic underfunding. Thus, Ukraine is interested in maintaining contacts with Beijing in the field of military-technical cooperation; however, this cooperation may be subjected to adjustment.

Against this background, it is not surprising that the President of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, never received an invitation to visit China. Judging by the

statements of Ukrainian diplomats, this visit is unlikely to take place in the foreseeable future.³⁰

There is practically no political dialogue between Kyiv and Beijing at the highest level. During the previous two or three years, no official summit was held. Is it possible to mention two rather modest meetings - in April of 2016, Petro Poroshenko met with the head of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping (at the Global Nuclear Summit in Washington), and on January 17, 2017, they met during the World Economic Forum in Davos.³¹

A long lull in political activities is complemented by a deceleration of economic cooperation. Thus, the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Chinese Commission has not met for a regular meeting for three years in a row, although this should only be the third meeting. A preliminary (that is the second) meeting was held as early as October 2013.

A long pause in relations also affects economic indicators, including bilateral trade and investments, whose volumes naturally decreased. In 2015, trade turnover between Ukraine and China slightly exceeded 6 billion dollars. In any case, this does not stop that rapid collapse in bilateral trade, which is observed in comparison with the pre-war years, when the trade turnover exceeded 10 billion dollars (Ukraine's share in the total trade volume of China is still extremely low and amounts to only 0.18%).³²

Conclusions. The role of the PRC in Ukraine's foreign policy is very high, with Ukraine-China relations being asymmetrical; Ukraine's interest in China is much higher than that of China in Ukraine. The political component of Ukrainian-Chinese relations has developed unevenly; it is possible to single out the periods of the rise of these relations (in 1992-1997 2001-2005 and 2010-2013) and the periods of their cooling (in 1997-2000, 2006-2010 and from 2014 to the present). At the same time, Beijing initiated the cooling of relations, mainly because of the unwise steps of the Ukrainian side. Nowadays intensity of political contacts, especially at the highest level, is not expected; their revival requires prolonged and consistent work, first of all, on the part of Ukrainian diplomacy. At the same time, one should consider that for China relations with Ukraine are not a priority and they are often held hostage to higher-level geopolitical issues, including Chinese-Russian, as well as Chinese-American and Chinese-European relations.

The economic component of relations between Kyiv and Beijing, on the contrary, developed quite vigorously, and was not subject to such significant fluctuations. It should be considered that China does not often bind economic ties to political dialogue, and is ready to trade with any solvent client. At the same time, for Ukraine there are now two "pitfalls" in economic cooperation with China. First, this is a negative balance of trade, which leads to money laundering from Ukraine; in addition, it is a commodity turnover structure -

exports to China of raw materials and other goods with low added value in exchange for high-tech goods with high added value. In the end, this could lead to the loss of Ukraine's solvency. Trade is also complicated by the bureaucratization and corruption of the Ukrainian economy. As for the military-technical component of Ukrainian-Chinese relations, it can be called the most successful page of cooperation between Kyiv and Beijing. China was extremely interested in obtaining many critical technologies from Ukraine and was ready to pay for them. At the same time, the potential of these relations is not encouraging now, because China has already received the technologies that it wanted to receive, and the development of advanced technologies in the field of armaments of Ukraine is conducted on a very limited scale due to chronic underfunding.

In general, relations with the Chinese People's Republic played and continue to play an important role for Ukraine; however, they are given very little attention, and this periodically leads to unfortunate mistakes. Kyiv should pay more attention to strategic relations.

¹ «Про Основні напрями зовнішньої політики України», Відомості Верховної Ради України (ВВР), accessed February 07, 2016, <http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3360-12>

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CHAPTER 9

UKRAINIAN – TURKISH RELATIONS

Yulia Tarasyuk

The modern history of the bilateral relations between Ukraine and Republic of Turkey (RoT) is relatively brief. Except for a short period of the Ukrainian independency at the beginning of 1920s, both countries didn't have any diplomatic relations until the onset of the Soviet era. For most of the twentieth century, economic relations and foreign policy were generally coordinated from Moscow. Ukraine and Turkey were separated not only geographically, by the Black Sea, but also by their belonging to different political and military unions.

The collapse of the Communist system in this region put an end to the *status quo*, which had been established during the “Cold War”. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, unprecedented growth in the region dramatically changed its “political landscape”. The Black Sea region opened to international cooperation, and the strategic culture of the foreign policy of the newly independent states also started changing.

Throughout the existence and development of both peoples, Ukrainians and Turks had bilateral relations during the “Cossack” period, the period when Ukraine was part of the Russian Empire, as well as during the numerous Russian-Turkish wars. The strategic culture of their bilateral relations formed at the expense of economic, trade, border ties between peoples.

Historical overview. A true understanding of the significance of the Ukrainian problem appeared in Turkey during World War I. Even before the Ottoman Empire entered the war, the Union of Liberation for Ukraine appealed to the Turkish people. This appeal is the first official document in the relations between the two countries. Representatives of the Ukrainian Rada were sent to Istanbul to establish contacts with the Turkish and Bulgarian governments. The delegates of Ukrainian Rada, L. Tsegelsky and S. Baran, met with the Turkish political leaders Enver-Pasha and Talaat-Bey.

The biggest achievement of the Union for, the Union of Liberation for Ukraine's mission in Istanbul was the declaration by the Minister of Internal Affairs Taalat-Bey on the Ukrainian issue published on October 24, 1914. At the end of October 1914, in his article “The New State” he mentioned that the “creation of a new Ukrainian state would be a big favour to the world”. The political meaning of Talaat-Bey's declaration difficult to overestimate. This was the first official international relations' document that recognized the right of the Ukrainian people to create an independent state.¹

It should also be noted that the real possibilities of Ukrainian-Turkish relations in the war were very small. After the Brest-Litovsk treaty was signed in 1918, in the years of the Ukrainian National Republic and the Directorate ruling, relations between the two countries became more constructive. The activities of the first Ukrainian ambassador, M. Levitsky, in Istanbul were devoted to the problems of Crimea, Bessarabia, and the Balkan issue.

Under the hostile conditions of the Triple Entente's blockade, Turkey, after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, signed numerous agreements with its northern neighbours.

On January 2, 1922, an agreement on friendship and fraternity between Ukraine and Turkey was signed in Ankara. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the head of The Grand National Assembly of Turkey, proclaimed that "Ukraine and Turkey are the states closest to each other".²

New political conditions and the development of relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union did not allow the Treaty to be implemented in full. But, this first Treaty on friendship and fellowship between Turkey and Ukraine provided for the establishment of diplomatic and consulate relations, the legal basis for trade and economic cooperation, and it became an important milestone in the neighbourly relations of the two states.

Formation of the official bilateral relations. Bilateral relations were restored under conditions of the deep crisis in the USSR and the appearance of an independent Ukraine. The first documentary proof of this was the protocol between the Turkish Republic and the Ukrainian SSR on the development of trade and economic relations since 1989.³

In spring of 1991, then President of the Republic of Turkey, Turgut Ozal, made an official visit to Ukraine. On March 13, 1991, he had a meeting with the Head of the Ukrainian Parliament. During said meeting, the Declaration on the Principles and Objectives of Relations between the two states was signed. The Declaration proclaimed: "On the basis of bilateral intentions to continue the good traditions established by the Treaty on Friendship and Brotherhood of January 2, 1922, Ukraine and Turkey declare their intentions to develop mutually beneficial cooperation in the political, economic, environmental, scientific, technical, informational, cultural, humanitarian and other spheres".⁴

The Ukrainian side emphasized its interest in supporting the initiative of the Turkish President to establish a Black Sea Economic Cooperation Zone as one of the routes to develop integration processes in Europe. As such, the Declaration has demonstrated the mutual agreement of both parties to work together in the sphere of environmental protection, especially in the Black Sea, and to work on the development of environmental convention. The documents on cooperation in the fields of telecommunication and culture were

also signed in the course of this visit, and the countries reached an agreement on organizing a Ukrainian-Turkish Association for International Trade and Economy. Even before the Ukrainian referendum of independence on November 20, 1991, Turkey announced the establishment of consular relations with Ukraine.

The dissolution of Soviet Union and creation of an independent Ukraine had set new challenges and perspectives for Turkey. From March 5-6, 1992, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Çetin, paid his official visit to Kyiv, during which the Protocol on Consultations on the Foreign Policy Issues was signed. In May of 1992, the Ukrainian President, Kravchuk, paid a formal call to Turkey for the first time in history. During this visit the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between Ukraine and Turkey was signed.

The parties have confirmed “their responsibilities within the framework of all existing and previously existing acts signed between them”, particularly, the Agreement on Friendship and Fellowship between Ukraine and Turkey since January 2, 1922. The Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between Ukraine and Turkey as of May 4, 1992, created the foundation for the cooperation between the two states in political, economic, cultural and other spheres. Special attention was paid to cooperation in the Black Sea Region, which was the subject to the “Declaration of Black Sea Economic Cooperation” signed in Istanbul as on June 25, 1992 by eleven states of the Black Sea Region.⁵ Ukraine and Turkey, based on their international commitments, also agreed on cooperation within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as within the framework of the United Nations. The Turkish government’s conceptual approach to building a common strategy in the region was that the policy of balancing between Russia and Ukraine could be rejected on the Ukrainian side if the Ukrainian side would make efforts in this direction. Russia, in the opinion of Turkish analysts, is a country whose policy is difficult to predict as a result of a range of geopolitical, national, and social reasons. Ukraine, in their opinion, has demonstrated its desire to maintain peace and security, not only in the country, but throughout the region; its policy is more predictable and in line with the national interests of the Republic of Turkey. One of the main tasks Turkey had faced at the beginning of 1990s, was to help the new independent states transition to a market economy. One of the reasons was that all of those states were its neighbours. “The first reason – is our own interest, we want our neighbours riden of problems, we want them to stand on their own feet and go through this transition. We want to help this process”, – said the President of Turkey, giving a speech in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on May 31, 1994. “Another reason for Turkey’s interest in its neighbours is “*Turkic*”, and with regard to Ukraine, the *Tatar-Turkic* factor”. Turkey believed not only its business, but also the affairs of

other states to help the Crimean Tatars. “If thousands of Tatars returned to Crimea, today it is a problem not only for Ukraine, incapable of solving it on its own, but for all civilized countries”.⁶

Thus, a common past, the first steps of Ukraine and Turkey in developing their bilateral relations in new historical conditions, demonstrated mutual interest and an intention to reach a new level of the interstate relations. They determined a high rate of rapprochement between Ukraine and Turkey on a wide range of topical issues whose decisions potentially played an important role in the economic, social and cultural life of both countries.

Strategic interests and geopolitical environment. Let’s consider the directions of bilateral relations and the formation of Ukraine’s strategic culture and foreign policy regarding Turkey and the Black Sea Region in more detail. In conducting a comparative analysis of the interests of Ukraine and Turkey during the 1990s, first of all, it should be noted that Ukraine and Turkey were, for the most part, two similar countries both in their internal state and in the geopolitical environment.

Ukraine and Turkey are both countries that are on the verge of two civilizations: European and Eurasian. Such a position significantly influenced their foreign policy orientation and internal situation.

The strategic choice of Ukraine, like Turkey, however, in different years, has become a course towards European integration. The strategic interests of both countries in the civilization dimension of the West-East vector generally coincided. It was on this vector that bilateral relations between Ukraine and Turkey as geopolitical allies began to be built.

After independence, Ukraine became a democratic society. The Constitution of Ukraine laid out the basic principles of democracy, democratic institutions began to be established, and a mechanism for the distribution of functions of political power was introduced.

Political power in Turkey belonged to various democratic forces, the nucleus of which was the Party of the Fatherland, which expressed the interests of intellectuals, entrepreneurs, and industrialists. But, unlike in Turkey, democratic forces in Ukraine did not have such a significant impact on society and power.

Turkey was much more integrated into European structures, while Ukraine stood at the very beginning of this path. In the early 1990s, Turkey was already member of the Council of Europe, the Customs Union of the European countries, and in 1952 joined NATO, in which, if the primary South-Eastern outpost. With the end of the Cold War era and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the military and strategic importance of Turkey for NATO decreased. Therefore, it gradually began to form the concept of independent foreign policy in the Black Sea region, , and therefore to establish bilateral relations with

the countries of the region playing a role in guiding them into Euro-Atlantic structures. In the mid-1990s, relations between Ukraine and NATO were built based on the formula of “distinctive partnership”, which was embodied in the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine. It was embodied, first of all, in the Black Sea Force Program, which Ukraine had implemented jointly with Turkey and other Black Sea region countries.⁷

As for such European organizations as like the CE and the EU, Ukraine, as well as Turkey had common interests and issues. First of all, the main dispute in relations with the Council of Europe was the issue of the death penalty in the legal system of both countries, despite the moratorium, which de-facto was adopted in both RoT and Ukraine. The Council of Europe tried to impose sanctions on Ukraine, and Turkey was required to sign and ratify Protocol No. 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Further, Turkey was forced to carry out constitutional reform and to amend the legislation.

The strategic goal for both Ukraine and Turkey was the accession to the European Union. But both countries face significant challenges on this path. For Turkey, this problem was to a large extent in the sphere of humanitarian law. An example could be the arrest of the Kurdish leader A. Ocalan and the EU’s demands to hold a trial for him, following democratic procedures. As for Ukraine, the problems of joining the EU were related to the internal political situation. Although Ukraine signed and ratified the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU, and also approved the strategy of Ukraine’s integration into the EU, this process has not become a unifying idea for the Ukrainian political elite and Ukrainian society at that time. Unlike Turkey, a significant part of the political elite of Ukraine, declaring its goal of EU membership, continued to focus on the CIS and Russia. It should be mentioned that economic difficulties: inflation, a shadow economy, a flawed tax system, an immense public debt, and the economic crisis in general remained a main problem for both Ukraine and Turkey on their way to the EU. But, unlike the Ukrainian one, the Turkish financial system has a large investment potential, and the Central Bank’s foreign exchange reserves in 1997 reached about 26 billion dollars.⁸ For both Ukraine and Turkey, the movement towards Europe was largely restrained by the diverse geopolitical orientation of the eastern and western regions. Thus, the Western and central regions of Ukraine, according to surveys, tended towards Europe (62% of these regions came from the EU, 50% - NATO). At the same time, in the eastern regions, adherents of NATO membership were only 7%.⁹

However, naturally, the driving forces of pro-Asian or eastern geopolitical orientations in Turkey and Ukraine were different. In Turkey it was the Islamic fundamentalism of Eastern rural regions, and in Ukraine – Pro-Russian sentiments and the Communist past which was never filed as history. So, at

the parliamentary elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 1998, the communists again received passing percentage.¹⁰ In Turkey, on the contrary, fundamentalism retained its dominance in the eastern regions due to their economic marginalization. The economic development of the western regions was perceived as Westernization, that is, a challenge to the national culture.

Nevertheless, in the sphere of foreign policy, the European integration has never been abandoned completely. Throughout the 1990s, Turkey had been actively implementing European law in the domestic political and economic spheres of life. Ukraine came to this after the 2000s. It should be noted that the Turkish experience of European integration had a great influence on Ukraine.¹¹

Turning from the consideration of the global level of foreign policy priorities of both countries to the regional one, it is necessary to point out the commonality of geopolitical interests of Ukraine and Turkey in the Black Sea region. These interests overlap and intersect, but in no way, were incompatible. Even though Turkey occupied an extremely favorable geopolitical position, at the beginning of the 1990s, it was in a hostile environment. On the west, it faced problems in the Mediterranean (Cyprus) and the Aegean Seas (confrontation with Greece to demilitarize the surrounding islands). Friendship with Bulgaria was hampered by a complex historical past. Due to its conflict prone nature, the Balkans made it impossible for Turkey to create mutually beneficial multilateral relations. In the east, the Republic of Turkey faced the Kurdish issue and the spread of radical Islamic fundamentalism from Iran and Iraq. In the north-east, Armenia gradually posed another dangerous geopolitical problem.

One of the priority vectors of the foreign policy for the Republic of Turkey after the collapse of the Soviet Union was the concept of filling the security vacuum. After changing the regional order and reducing the pace of its European integration, Ankara could take advantage of the new geopolitical order and establish a friendly relationship with the former Soviet republics. This can explain the active policy of Turkey in the Black Sea region and Central Asia.

As for Russia, it generally viewed Turkey as its main enemy in the Black Sea region. Thereupon there were almost no geopolitical allies in Turkey. Ukraine in this context had some attractive features of a strategic regional partner. Given the balance of power in the region, both the economic and geopolitical interests of our countries were very close. For example, in the sphere of fulfilling Ukraine's transport interests was the transportation corridor – North-South. Ukraine had the opportunity to use the Black Sea straits of Turkey for international trade communications. Ukraine, in turn, would provide its transportation routes to link Turkey with Europe.

The issue of the Crimea, which was brought up from time to time in the consideration of Ukrainian-Turkish relations in the 1990s, has never been the subject of confrontation between the two countries. Rather, it was the subject of a potential confrontation in Ukrainian-Russian relations, which became real in 2014, when Russia occupied the Crimean Peninsula.

An important reason for talking about the absence of confrontational motives in relations between Ukraine and Turkey is that the main geopolitical interests of the latter in the 1990s were related not so much to the Black Sea region itself, but to Central Asia. This region proved to be the safest for Turkey. The affinity of the cultures and languages of the Turkic people, vast raw materials, and demographic potential allowed Turkey to easily win take key positions in the economy and banking sector of the countries in the region.

The conceptual component of the foreign policy trajectories of Ukraine and Turkey. In the mid-2000s, relations between Ukraine and Turkey had still not reached a strategic level, despite the on-going rapprochement between the two countries. Objective causes for this were mainly the improvement of relations between Russia and Turkey, the focus of Turkey on its European direction, and the loss of Ukraine's international credibility in the period before the Orange Revolution. In fact, Turkey declined to become an observer in GUAM and CDC (Community of Democratic Choice), at the forum of the countries of Baltic and Black Sea region. The anti-Russian, from the Ankara's point of view, tenor of these projects would make any presence of Turkey in these regional cooperation schemes absolutely impossible.

In analysing the success of both countries in the first decade of the 2000s, we consider it necessary to give some assessment to domestic political processes in Turkey and Ukraine.

Ukraine, before and after the Orange Revolution, was focused on domestic political struggle and resolving energy issues. Diplomatic relations were maintained with all neighbouring countries, but the main direction of foreign policy is Western, namely relations with the USA, NATO, and the EU. Economic and trade relations with Turkey were sustained at the declared level, but couldn't reach the point of strategic development. After the victory of the Party of Justice and Development at the parliamentary elections in Turkey in 2002, a new foreign policy course was taken, which is called by some researchers as "Neo-Ottoman". It was believed that Turkey should use its Ottoman Empire experience, its geopolitical advantages, and turn from a peripheral member of NATO into a major power centre. Internal transformation led the country to a state model that seamlessly combines Islam and liberal democratic values. It is precisely because over the years, the national interests of Turkey prevailed over the block, Turkey, in spite of NATO membership and strategic partnership with the United States, actively cooperated with

Moscow and distanced itself from Washington. Ukrainian-Turkish relations in those years were inactive.

A few years later the concept of “zero problems with neighbours” foreign policy was added to Neo-Ottoman concept. The new regional strategy of the country was explained by the complex geopolitical situation of the country. The then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmed Davutoglu, explained the expediency of foreign policy activity as follows: “We can’t afford long-term tensions with our neighbours. We must not only have positive relations with our neighbours, but also pursue an active policy in the regions that surround us. We have to be everywhere”.¹² In the framework of this new foreign policy of “zero” problems and creating a “security belt” in the region, there was a gradual de-securitization of its foreign policy – solving problems using “soft power”, without excessive politicization. An example of the transformation in the foreign policy field was the plan for creating a “Caucasus Stability Platform” after the Russian-Georgian war in August 2008. The platform represented Ankara’s ambitious plans to become the basis for the future regional formation, whose founder would be Ankara. This example is also of interest to us because Turkey has ceased to perceive Russia as a permanent threat since 2008, and it feels, according to a Turkish researcher, more self-sufficient and less dependent on the western community.¹³

Events of a later period in the unstable region, where Ukraine and Turkey are located, have shown us that such a thaw in relations with Russia, a feeling of safety and attempts to change the status quo in relations with the West were premature.

The said processes also influenced Ukrainian-Turkish relations. Relations, declared as “strategic” in 1993, were not reflected as such according to the opinion of experts.¹⁴ The Strategic culture of Ukraine contributed to the fact that said relations were declared with more than 20 countries, reflecting the principle of a multi-trajectory foreign policy, enshrined in the Constitution of 1996. Declaring more than twenty countries as strategic partners at different times is not also consistent with the real capabilities of our country.

The intensification of the economic and energy cooperation. In the first decade of the 2000s, Turkish-Russian relations have improved significantly due to active and positive economic and energy cooperation. The strategic partnership, on the verge of a regional rivalry, involved the active cooperation of the countries in areas where their positions coincided. Such relations essentially differed from the format of bilateral relations between Ukraine and Turkey; moreover, they were dependent on Turkey’s balancing between Ukraine and Russia. The tendency of Turkey to focus on Ukraine for the sake of pressure on Russia has become a hallmark of bilateral relations and reflects a historical example of strategic culture of the relations between the two

countries. But this does not mean that cooperation between Ukraine and the Republic of Turkey, which started in the 1990s, was only to provide Turkey with the opportunity to have an additional counter measure in the game with Russia, and Ukraine - to have a chance to get out of Russia's sphere of influence. Obviously, such a close, though not strategic, interaction at that time is due to the existence of commonalities between Ukraine and Turkey and the desire of both parties to develop these relations.

By 2004, relations between Ukraine and Turkey could be characterized as "strategic in certain sectors", according to Turkish and Ukrainian diplomats.¹⁵ This evaluation of extended economic, trade, military and technical relations between the two countries was more consistent with reality.

At the end of the first decade of the 2000s, Kyiv and Ankara were trying to enhance their dialogue. Proceeding from the fact that there were no problematic issues in the political sphere of Ukraine-Turkey relations, the Ukrainian side expressed the intent to intensify the development of strategic partnerships.

On May 5th – 6th, 2010, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the RoT, Ahmet Davutoglu, visited Kyiv, where he had a meeting with Yanukovych, Azarov, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine – Gryshchenko. The key issue was the signing of the Action Plan for 2010-2011 and reaching agreements in the transportation sector (on the organization of ferry crossings). During the visit, Davutoglu stated that Turkey was interested in maintaining peace and stability in the Black Sea Basin. Also, the Minister commented on the decision of Ukraine to extend the term of stay for the Black Sea fleet of Russia in the Crimea as carrying no threats from the Turkey's point.¹⁶ This caution of Ankara towards Ukraine and the levelling of conflicts in order to deepen cooperation in non-political spheres is explained specifically by the Russian factor. Ukraine, in turn, accepted this kind of controlled competition between Russia and Turkey, without demanding any more decisive actions and statements.

Intensive dialogue between Ukraine and Turkey at the highest level continued in June of 2010, when President Yanukovych paid a formal call to the RoT. A series of meetings between the President of Turkey, Abdullah Gul, and the Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, resulted in the Parties agreeing to develop relations at the level of strategic partnership. An important point was the signing of the Declaration on Establishing High Level Strategic Cooperation Council between Ukraine and the Republic of Turkey. The document was signed during an official visit of Erdogan to Ukraine in January of 2011. The signing of this document gave new status to the Turkish-Ukrainian relations, not only at the declarative level. Further meetings of the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council were held in December of 2011, during Yanukovych's official visit to RoT in September of 2012, and during Erdogan's official visit to Ukraine, and they had the following results: specialized committees of the

parliaments of the countries, which provided the opportunity for mutual support, were established; a consultative mechanism was established through the Ministries of Foreign Affairs covering issues of political and military matters, security in the Black Sea, European integration, consular issues, and energy cooperation ; the visa regime was abandoned as of August 31, 2012; the signing of a free trade agreement was discussed; cooperation in the energy sector was promoted; and investment in the construction and transport sectors was increased.¹⁷ In particular, the Turkish party promised to allow the passage of 8 Ukrainian methane tankers through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits on a monthly basis, which opened an opportunity for Ukraine to receive liquefied natural gas via the LNG-terminal in Odessa, not only from Azerbaijan, but also from Qatar and Algeria. Since 2010, Ukraine and Turkey cooperate fruitfully within the frameworks of international organizations and in the Black Sea region, within the framework of the BSEC, as well as military and security measures - the “Blackseafor” rapid response forces and the “Black Sea Harmony” operation.¹⁸

Turkey is gradually becoming one of the main trade partners of Ukraine. From January to September 2010, Turkey was rated the second (after Russia) among the countries with the largest export deliveries of Ukrainian products (6% from the total exports of Ukraine as compared to 5.4% for the same period in 2009). According to the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, the trade turnover amounted to about \$ 3 billion, which is 41.75% more than in the same period of 2009. While the exports amounted to \$ 2.2 billion (increased by 46.5%) and imports – 841.3 thousand USD (increased by 30.9%); therefore, for Ukraine positive balance amounted to \$ 1.3 billion.

An important mechanism in the trade and economic spheres was the work of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Turkish Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation, the seventh meeting of which was held in May of 2010 in Istanbul under the chairmanship of Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, Tihipko, and the State Minister of Turkey – Caglayan. During this meeting, the projects for investment in the Ukrainian coal mines, joint exploration of energy resources on the Black sea shelf, the supply of electric power from Ukraine to the RoT, as well as plans for the further development of cooperation in the sectors of the metal industry, shipbuilding, motor vehicles, tank building, the construction industry, chemical, consumer goods, and food industries were designed.¹⁹ According to the official statistics, in 2010 the value of Turkish investments in Ukraine amounted to \$ 143 million. If one includes the Turkish investments coming to the Ukrainian market via European channels, the amount raises to \$2 billion. Thus, at this stage, for Ukraine the development of economic relations with Turkey was the ultimate solution to the problem of strategic choice, as believed by the experts.²⁰

However, rapprochement with one of the partners often leads to a deterioration of dialogue with others. Ukraine, for example, tried to balance between Moscow and Brussels; Turkey is between the Muslim countries and the Euro-Atlantic institutions. In this context, the situation in Ukraine and Turkey looked similar: the problem of “existential” choice in foreign policy and the consolidation of society in the domestic one is the essence of development of modern Ukraine and Turkey. Taking into account the peculiarities of the development of the two countries after the end of the Cold War, the dynamics of regional processes, the passivity of Ukraine regarding the further implementation of proclaimed initiatives, the inconsistency of the actions of the branches of power within the country, the periodic change of proclaimed vectors of foreign policy orientation, economic decline, and the impact of global players, Ukraine and Turkey failed to realize the potential of a “strategic partnership” in the first two decades of bilateral relations. The parties were forced to develop and make traditional relations in the field of economy, tourism and culture.

The political component of bilateral relations. The situation is somewhat politicized since 2014, after the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine, the beginning of Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine, and the occupation of Crimea. The domestic political situation in Ukraine changed, new presidential and parliamentary elections were held. The country proclaimed a course the Euro-Atlantic integration. Due to the military interference of Russia in the political situation of Ukraine, Russia ceases to be the subject of the “East – West” discourse in the foreign policy trajectory of Ukraine. The internal tension and the problem of uniting the people under the slogan of one national idea remain the cornerstones of Ukrainian society. Turkey provides strong political support to Ukraine in the matter of returning Crimea to Ukraine. However, the Republic of Turkey did not join the sanctions applied against Russia by the Western countries. The level of economic and energy interdependence of these key actors in the Black Sea Region did not allow Turkey to take a radical stance. Only tensions in relations with Russia after the downfall of the Russian aircraft by the Turkish side in November 2015 and the bilateral imposition of sanctions by mid-2016 stimulated the dynamic development of relations between Ukraine and Turkey. Turkey, as a possible counteraction to Russian aggression, aroused some interest in political circles. Let’s consider in more detail the new conceptual and doctrinal basis of Ukraine in the context of the Turkish foreign policy direction. The Republic of Turkey is not mentioned independently in the strategic documents of Ukraine and the issue of cooperation is outlined in general terms. The National Security Concept of Ukraine emphasizes the use of Black Sea Economic Cooperation as a priority in the regional format of

the Organization of the Black Sea and security in the Black Sea. The Military doctrine of Ukraine separately emphasizes military and technical cooperation with NATO member-states. The strategy of sustainable development “Ukraine-2020” considers the reform of the national security and defence systems to be the most important one. In an analytical report of the President’s address to Parliament, Turkey was mentioned as “an important regional partner”.²¹ However, Turkey has not been mentioned in the first part of the report “Interaction with Key Partners and Allies”.

The Cabinet of Ministers program set the task of conducting negotiations on the signing of FT agreements with several countries, in particular with Turkey. Also, the negotiations related to the permission of passage for tankers with liquefied natural gas through the Bosphorus were included in the program. It should be remembered that the last time the issue was discussed was at the second meeting of the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council between Ukraine and Turkey in September of 2012. The inertia of the Ukrainian party and the “special” nature of relations with Russia have extended the process of solving many issues for several years.

Thus, the strategic partnership remains at the level of diplomatic rhetoric, except for the period of rupture in relations between Republic of Turkey and the Russian Federation in 2015-2016. However, the main directions of Ukrainian-Turkish cooperation directly coincide with the priorities outlined in the above documents. In addition, the search for partners and allies in the confrontation with the Russian Federation forced the Ukrainian establishment to pay more attention to its northern neighbour.

In 2015-2016 meetings of the President of Ukraine, Poroshenko, and the President of Turkey, Erdogan, were held. The first meeting, in March 2015, was held in the framework of the 4th meeting of High Level Strategic Cooperation Council between the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine. The Turkish party underlined its support of the territorial integrity of Ukraine and “significant potential in promoting stabilization of the situation in Ukraine”.²² Also, FTA talks were resumed, and agreements were reached on joint projects in the aviation and nuclear construction industry. Special attention was paid to the parties’ desire to extend military and technical cooperation, and to continue the joint exercises of the Ukrainian and Turkish naval forces in multinational operations.

The Crimean issue became a marker of significant progress in the development of political relations between Kiev and Ankara. Financial assistance and investment in Crimea were traditional indicators of Turkish activity on the Peninsula, even before the Russian occupation. After 2014, the Crimean issue, namely the situation of the Tatars and other Turkic peoples, has become a peculiar bridge in the relations between the parties.

As noted above, Turkey has not recognized the annexation of Crimea by Russia, supported the Ukrainian position in the UN, and sent its representatives to the Special Monitoring Commission of the OSCE. At the same time, non-alignment with the sanctions against Russia has showed the inability and unwillingness of the Turkish party to cross a certain red line in relations with Russia. As for humanitarian assistance, a group of experts and scholars visited Crimea to examine the situation on the Peninsula. In August of 2015, under the support of the Turkish government, 2 meetings of the World Congress of the Crimean Tatars were held, and they were officially supported by Ukraine.

Turkey has also provided financial and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons and to the building of a military field hospital. The annexation of the Crimea also led to a dramatic decrease of bilateral trade to 5 billion USD per year. This fact additionally stimulated the desire of the Turkish partners to sign the FTA agreement between the two countries in 2016. The warming in Russia-Turkey relations in the summer of 2016 has once again halted the process.

The partnership of Ukraine and Turkey in the energy sector is also incomplete and unambiguous. First, Turkey has its own interests in the matter of energy transit in the Black Sea-Caspian Region. Also, Erdogan supports the idea of building a Turkish Stream, proposed by Putin, which is mutually beneficial for both countries, but eliminates the transit potential of Ukraine.

In the author's opinion, under the current situation Ukraine's interests with regard to Turkey can be defined as follows. In the security sphere: ensuring security in the Black Sea Region and potential participation in the establishment of de-occupation mechanism for the Crimea; in the field of economy: strengthening trade relations and grant of loans to Ukraine; in the energy sector: allowing for the passage of tankers with liquefied natural gas through the Bosphorus (in fact, instances of the passage of tankers through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles do not yet exist); in the humanitarian sphere: extending the cooperation in the field of education, providing assistance to the Crimean Tatars and establishment of links between Crimean Tatar minority in Ukraine and the Crimean Tatar Diaspora; in the field of integration: exchange of experience in the process of reforms and EU integration.

Conclusions. The relations between Ukraine and Turkey are currently developing. The regulatory framework for bilateral relations is sufficient to deepen the strategic partnership between the two countries. According to the author, an important factor is the need for Ukraine to formulate a clear foreign policy concept, a national security strategy not in the West-East plane, but taking into account all key partners and southern neighbours. As in the past, and at the end of the Cold War, Ukrainian multi-trajectory policy, based on

its political culture, is strategically unjustified and in many cases ineffective. The potential of the Republic of Turkey as a strategic external partner is underestimated by the Ukrainian authorities. In relations with the Republic of Turkey, Ukraine often appears to be not the generator of new projects and concepts but rather acts in response to the options and the rules of the game suggested by Turkey. Turkey, in turn, except for the periods of aggravation in relations with Russia, in relations with Ukraine is guided by its “Russia oriented” model of the Black Sea Region.

In different periods since independence, Ukraine declared its strategic partners in more than twenty different countries, which in no way corresponds to the potential of our state. In implementation of its foreign policy, Ukraine should have been more realistic and should have dropped the excessive rhetoric. In the light of relations with Turkey throughout the broader historic period (the Cossack epoch, the First World War), it is possible to trace the main stages and features of political and strategic culture of Ukraine. The main characteristic is the lack of a clear understanding of their own national interests, the problem of existential choice, passivity, and controllability by more influential regional and global players. However, relations with the Turkish Republic have, theoretically, a chance to evolve from situational to strategic, but only on condition of further evolution of the political culture of our country.

¹ Б. Сергійчук, “Сучасна турецька історіографія про україно-турецькі зв’язки у XVII-XX сторіччі», *Сходознавство* 48 (2009): 177.

² “Україна і Туреччина”, *Східний світ* 1-2 (1929): 8-9.

³ accessed April 1, 2017, <http://mfa.gov.ua/ua/press-center/newswire>

⁴ accessed April 1, 2017, <http://mfa.gov.ua/ua/press-center/newswire>

⁵ І. Черніков, “З глибин століть. Про миротворчу тенденцію у взаєминах України і Туреччини в контексті історії», *Політика і час* 7 (1994): 82.

⁶ М. Несюк, “Україна в зовнішній політиці”, *Українська державність у XX сторіччі*. 1996 (2006): 213.

⁷ Г. Перепелиця, “Чорноморський регіон як зона інтересів України і Туреччини», *Україна та Туреччина: безпека і співробітництво в Чорноморському регіоні*, ed. G. Perelitsa at al. (Kiev, 2000), 77.

⁸ Перепелиця, 113.

⁹ Б. Парахонський, “Інтереси України і Туреччини у Чорноморському регіоні: порівняльний аналіз, Україна та Туреччина: безпека і співробітництво в Чорноморському регіоні”, ed. G. Perelitsa at al. (Kiev, 2000), 57

¹⁰ Р. Жангожа, “Турецький вектор геополітичної орієнтації України, Україна та Туреччина: безпека і співробітництво в Чорноморському регіоні”, ed. G. Perelitsa at al. (Kiev, 2000), 33.

¹¹ Дж. Матос, “Україна і Туреччина: безпека та співробітництво у Чорноморському регіоні”, *Україна і Туреччина: безпека та співробітництво у Чорноморському регіоні*, ed. G. Perelitsa at al. (Kiev, 2000), 153.

¹² О. Волович, *Туреччина у сучасному світі: пошук нової ідентичності: збірник ста-*

тей та аналітичних матеріалів ed. Volovich O., Vorotnyuk M., Gaber E. (National Institute for strategic studies in Odessa, 2011), 34.

¹³ Volovich, 26.

¹⁴ Д. Верне, «Турция, Украина: общая битва?», accessed April 1, 2017, <http://www.inosmi.ru/translation/215749.html>

¹⁵ І. Ердоган, «Взаємне скасування віз – наша мета», accessed April 1, 2017, <http://www.turkishnews.com.ua/haberler-mainmenu-2/6051-2009-09-04-09-48-16>

¹⁶ О. Волович, Туреччина у сучасному світі: пошук нової ідентичності: збірник статей та аналітичних матеріалів ed. Volovich O., Vorotnyuk M., Gaber E. (National Institute for strategic studies in Odessa, 2011), 34.

¹⁶ Volovich, 398.

¹⁷ С. Корсунський, «Українсько-турецькі відносини: минуле, сьогодення, завтра», Зовнішня політика і дипломатія 17 (2011): 26.

¹⁸ Н. Мхитарян, «Стан та перспективи українсько-турецьких відносин», accessed April 1, 2017, <http://www.niss.gov.ua/articles/472/>

¹⁹ Корсунський, 28.

²⁰ В. Кравченко, «Слово Ердогана», accessed April 1, 2017, http://gazeta.zn.ua/POLITICS/slovo_erdogana.html

²¹ Українська призма: Зовнішня політика України у 2015 році, accessed April 1, 2017, <http://prizmua.org/scorecards>

²² accessed April 1, 2017, <http://mfa.gov.ua/ua/press-center/newswire>

CHAPTER 10
LEVANT COUNTRIES AND EGYPT
IN THE POLICY OF UKRAINE

Iryna Zubarenko and Dmitry Poble

Ukrainian foreign policy priorities are clearly imprinted in the Law of Ukraine “On the Fundamentals of the Ukrainian Foreign and Domestic Policy as of 1 July 2011”, where the second part of Article 11 defines the basic fundamentals of the Ukrainian foreign policy as “ensuring the integration of Ukraine into the European political, economic, and legal environment with the aim to obtain membership in the European Union”.¹ The document refers to the uniqueness of the geographical location of our country, a territory of which has been a token in the tangled games played by monarchies and empires. Ukraine is considered to be a historical crossroads, where paths intersect not only from West to East but also from North to South. Additionally, Union is interested in cooperation with Ukraine because our country “is aligned with the East as well as the South and has an inherent influence in the Black Sea region, the Caucasus, and the Middle East”.²

It was the end of April 2012, when the UkrInForm media agency hosted a round table on the subject “Recent Middle East Solitaire: Ukrainian Card – its Place and Role” attended by the scientists of Kiev, Odessa, Kharkov, and some representatives of the public authorities and NGOs. Interestingly, the event took place one year after the so-called “Arab Spring” and one week after President Yanukovich’s visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Among the conclusions of the round-table participants, the following should be noted: “In its Middle-Eastern geostrategy, Ukraine should focus on the leader of the Arab world - Saudi Arabia, promote Ukraine’s approval in the Middle East, and develop cooperation with the Levant countries (Jordan, Lebanon and Syria). The leadership of the Ukrainian state must organically combine the priority of European vector with the Middle East, which will allow them to receive dividends from both directions. The state policy in the region of the Middle East should be more coherent, consistent and systematic, with appropriate qualitative analytical support.”³ At the present stage of the development of Ukraine’s relations with the countries of the Middle East, the task of developing the most promising and modern forms of economic and scientific and technical cooperation is of paramount importance.

Attention to the Levant and Egypt is primarily due to the geographic and strategic location of these countries, which can be called “soft subterranean” of the Black Sea region (analogous to the well-known statement of U.

Churchill with respect to the Balkans). Syria, Lebanon and Jordan are located in the north of the Arab world, and, through the territory of the Asian part of Turkey, they go to the Black Sea basin, in particular, to southern Ukraine. The strategic position of Egypt is determined to a considerable extent by the Suez channel, as a junction between two continents, it provides extraordinary capabilities.

For Ukraine, for a state with a both very modest naval and river fleet (as opposed to the capabilities of a large network of sea and river ports and numerous Ukrainian skilled personnel working on foreign ships), it is very important to establish relations for maritime traffic and access to the eastern Mediterranean. On June 17, 2017, the Verkhovna Rada adopted the Draft Law on amendments to the Ukrainian Merchant Shipping Code (regarding the promotion and development of waterborne traffic in Ukraine). The amendments should help to overcome a run-down in number of ships and procedure for their registration under the National Flag (Thus, in 1991, under the Ukrainian flag there were 375 vessels with deadweight of 5 thousand tons and more, in 2006 - 155, in 2005 - 91, in 2008 - 75, in 2012 - 60, in 2014 - 46 vessels. Moreover, under the foreign flag there are more than 200 medium and large vessels belonging to Ukrainian companies).

Considering the security component (both military and economic) and considering the key role of Turkey and Egypt in providing access for Ukraine to the Global Ocean (the Atlantic and the Indian oceans), the revival of Ukrainian foreign policy in the Middle East would be of benefit for our country. Russia has demonstrated how important the use of the logistics shuttle bridge between Russian Black Sea ports and ports in the Eastern Mediterranean has been to support its direct military intervention in Syria from September 2015.

Since proclaiming independence, the factors that impact the foreign policy of Ukraine have undergone transformations, which couldn't help but influence the implementation of foreign policy measures by the Ukrainian foreign service' officers. Namely, a desire to correlate the above-mentioned vector of the Ukrainian foreign policy within the meaning of "Cultural Strategy" is spreading among scientific circles and official sources. As to the scientific research of Ukrainian scientists in the field of cultural policy, without using the definition of strategic culture, they are represented by the works of such scholars as by the papers "State Policy in the Sphere of Culture: Essence and Specifics of its Realization under Current Conditions" by V. Karlov, "Cultural Policy as an Issue of Recent Social and Cultural Process" by S. Drozhzhin, "Ethno Social Vector of Cultural Policy of Ukraine: Strategic Priorities" by V. Bakalchuk, "State Management of the Development of National Culture in the age of Globalization" by O. Batishev, "Conceptual Framework of the

Ukrainian National Security Policy within the Humanitarian Sphere” by L. Chupriy, and “Shaping a Dialogic Capacity of the Ukrainian Culture as a Priority for Humanitarian Security of the Country” by K. Stepiko.

If we take as a basis the study of the multidimensional structure of strategic culture identified by American scientist Alistair Johnson as “integrated system of symbols (e.g. argumentation structures, languages, analogies, metaphors, etc.), which acts to establish pervasive and long-lasting strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs...”,⁴ the areas covered by Strategic Culture are much wider than the humanitarian components of the above-mentioned Ukrainian research works. Therefore, in our opinion, it will be logical to consider a specific Middle East direction of Ukraine’s foreign policy precisely in the context of strategic culture.

Extra attention should also be paid to the religious constituent of the Strategic Culture for Ukraine. It influences the development of communications with the world orthodox autocephalous churches beyond the Orthodox Church of Russia, i.e. Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Patriarchate of Alexandria, Patriarchate of Antioch, and Patriarchate of Jerusalem, with the influential patriarchates, located in Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Israel. For instance, take a document dated June 28, 2016, “the Address of Verkhovna Rada to His All-Holiness Bartholomew, the Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch to grant the status of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in Ukraine.”⁵ This subject was raised by President Poroshenko during his meeting with Bartholomew the 1st in the Ecumenical Patriarch’s headquarters of Fanar (Istanbul) during a discussion about “the future of Ukraine, the peace, and the unified local Orthodox Church, which is the aim of Ukrainian people’s aspirations and expectations”.⁶ The second time around, Poroshenko welcomed the Archbishop Job of Telmessos, representative of Patriarch Bartholomew, on the slope of Volodimir’s Hill in Kyiv on July 28, 2016 saying: “Please, tell to His All-Holiness that the Orthodox Church in Ukraine requires immediate consideration by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Nobody but Him is capable to help orthodox believers in Ukraine unify and to adjust canonical status of the Ukrainian church within the structure of Ecumenical Orthodoxy”.⁷

Not only have the high-rank officials participated in the shaping of a new strategic culture, particularly, in its religious component, but also 20 million members of the Ukrainian Diaspora from 53 countries around the world. On November 18, 2016 in Istanbul Eugene Czolij, the President of the Ukrainian World Congress, called the Ecumenical Patriarch to issue the Tomos (decree)

of Autocephaly for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kyivan Patriarchate). Such precedent took place in past in 1998, when Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople issued “a Synodal and Patriarchal Tomos on Granting the Autocephaly for the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.”

The theme of religious influence on the strategic culture of the state, in which there are two Orthodox patriarchates: Kyiv and Moscow, is very delicate, so an unreasonable interference in this area can lead to an unexpected reaction from the church and the faithful. But this subject cannot be omitted while considering the subject of national security. In analysing the events of 2016, one may come to the conclusion that the religion may become a hostage of political and geo-political intrigues. Suffice it to cite several resonant examples: the war in Syria, the meeting between Patriarch Kirill of Russian Orthodox Church and Pope Francis, the Bishop of Rome in the Havana airport, the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church held in Crete (attended by 10 of 14 churches), and Russian aggression against Ukraine. Therefore, when forming the foreign policy course, all these components and challenges must be taken into account, especially in a country whose national security has dramatically deteriorated. In order to adequately assess the phenomenon of strategic culture in Ukraine in modern conditions and its influence on inter-governmental relations, we consider it appropriate to trace the history of the establishment of Ukraine’s relations with the Arab world on the example of the three Levant countries (Syria, Lebanon and Jordan) and Egypt.

In recent years, attention has grown considerably towards countries of the so-called Levant, and this is not only due to the events of the five-year-old Arab Spring, but rather the emergence of the phenomenon of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (IDIL, Arabic “DAISCH”). It is worth mentioning that the Arabs call this region as “Ash-Sham”, and in Europe the name “levante” appeared at the end of the 15th century (as a translation from Italian “levante” and/or French “levant” as “east” and/or “eastern”) In other words, Levant is a land of sunrise (obviously, from the Europeans’ point of view) or the countries of Middle East. Today the territory of several states is included in the Levant: apart from Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan, “Levant” implicates Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iraq, and Israel.

The geographical location of the Levant nations isn’t the only factor unifying this community. Levant nations have a common history, similar cuisine, and customs. Most of them, except Turks and Jews, speak the same language – Arabic. With regard to the religious priorities of the Levant population, Muslims are of absolute superiority to Islam, but apart from the compact location of the Jews, there are also supporters of other religions - Catholics, Kurds, Yezidis, Protestants, and others.

In the opinion of Yulia Gergel (Diplomatic academy of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Ukraine may play a full-fledged role in the Middle East under the condition that “it’ll keep an active political dialog as well as develop close and beneficial relations” with the Levant countries (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan). The reason, as seen by the author, is in the geopolitical weight of these countries in the region, whereas they create an important transit corridor, transportation and communication junction”.⁸ However, let’s consider the possibility of a practical implementation of such an ambitious goal. According to Gergel’s idea, the Levant countries may have a strategic importance for Ukraine as a perspective market for Ukrainian goods and services and their subsequent distribution to other markets, first of all - Iraq. But the latest events in the region have upset the applecart and destroyed all the virtual benefits of the establishment of the Islamic State within the part of the territory of Iraq and Syria, as well the armed confrontation continuing between the governments and opposition of these countries, international coalition, and combatant groups of ISIS (Islamic State).

The history of interstate relations between Ukraine and Syria reveals a lack of events. Syria recognized the Ukraine’s state independence on December 28, 1991. On March 31, 1992, Ukraine and Syria signed a Protocol on establishing diplomatic relations and Agreement on cooperation and coordination between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Syria. The embassy of Ukraine opened in Damascus in February of 2000. The embassy of the Syrian Arab Republic opened in Ukraine in August 2004.

Leonid Kuchma, the President of Ukraine, paid an official visit to Syria in April of 2002. Several basic agreements in the economic sphere were signed during the visit, and the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Syrian Commission on Trade, Economic, and Technical Cooperation was established. In 2010, the President of Syria paid a visit to Ukraine, which had an extended effect on all the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation in economic, technical, and humanitarian spheres.

The economic cooperation between Ukraine and Syria increased exponentially. Within the period of 2000 – 2011, 49 legal documents were signed; the trade turnover increased annually until 2008. There are some impressive statistical figures: Ukrainian exports to the Syrian Arab Republic ranked third in 2008, following the Russian Federation and China; Ukraine ranked first in total Syrian imports in 2009. Even today, despite ongoing military operations in Syria, Ukrainian-Syrian trade is characterized by a positive balance in favour of Ukraine. Bilateral trade turnover is generated primarily via Ukrainian export (approximately 90-93%). The general structure of exports of Ukrainian products is divided into the following main groups: cereals – 37%; metal products – 23%; fats and oils – 15%. The Ukrainian

import from Syria includes the following goods: potassium phosphate – 60%; pharmaceutical products – 12%; fabrics and textile goods etc. – 9%. Thus, the analysis of trade relations between Ukraine and Syria points to the commercial attractiveness of domestic products and services in the domestic market of Syria. Despite the Syrian crisis, Ukrainian goods are still in high demand; there are tendencies towards the diversification of the range of Ukrainian products and services.⁹

Prior to the outbreak of the conflict in Syria in 2011, contacts between Syria and Ukraine were maintained in the form of political consultations at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers, as well as during the annual sessions of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Syrian Commission on Trade Economic and Technical Cooperation (seven meetings of the said Commission were held in total). Interaction within the framework of international organizations was carried out through the support of Ukrainian and Syrian candidates during the elections to various international bodies. Currently, Ukrainian-Syrian relations are characterized by a pause in the political dialogue, caused by Syria's political support of the Russian policy towards Ukraine, expressed in a telegram sent by the Syrian President to the Russian President on March 6, 2014, as well as Syria's vote against the Resolution of UN General Assembly, "The Territorial Integrity of Ukraine", on March 27, 2014.

Proceeding from the prioritization of the European integration policy in Ukraine's foreign policy, in June of 2014, our state joined the EU Council Decision 2014/309 / CFSP of May 28, 2014, concerning restrictive measures against individuals and legal entities of Syria by June 1, 2015. At the same time, the possibility of cooperation with Syria in the economic, commercial and humanitarian spheres, which are not subject to international sanctions and restrictions against Syria, has not been excluded. Ukraine's position towards the conflict in Syria is that the crisis should be resolved solely by political and diplomatic methods. The UN, the Security Council, as well as influential regional organizations, including the Arab League, should play the key role in the peaceful settlement.¹⁰

The situation for Ukraine was complicated, not only by the conflict in Syria itself, but also the unexpected interference of Russian armed forces in it. It was de jure to demonstrate to the world community Russia's contribution to the fight against an international terrorist organization representing ISIS; but de facto – it revealed the Russian leadership's intentions to support the regime of Bashar al-Assad in its fight against the opposition. According to V. Shved "the geopolitical processes in the Middle East today are also characterized by unprecedented dynamism of changes in the distribution of forces between the main international and regional policy centers, which rapidly forms a qualitatively new "face" of the region".¹¹

In the future, Ukraine should clearly monitor the situation with civilian confrontation and Russia's direct military intervention in the Syrian conflict. Maybe not now, but prospectively, Ukraine should be ready to find its niche among the main actors in the Middle East.

Another key country in Levant is Lebanon, which was among the first Arab countries to recognize Ukraine's independence in 1991. Diplomatic relations between the two states were established on December 14, 1992 via the exchange of diplomatic notes. The Embassy of Ukraine in Beirut was opened in August of 1995; the Embassy of Lebanon in Kyiv was opened in February of 2006. Bilateral relations have gained momentum thanks to the official visits of the President of Ukraine to Lebanon in 2002 and the President of Lebanon to Ukraine in 2003. In 2002, the Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine was in Lebanon V. Kremen, Ukraine's Education and Science Minister, paid a visit to Lebanon in 2002, during the visit the Agreement on Cooperation in the Sphere of Science and Technology was initialled. The First Joint Session of the Intergovernmental Ukrainian-Lebanese Commission on Trade and Economic Co-operation was held in Kyiv in 2010.¹²

Economic cooperation between Ukraine and Lebanon over the last five years is characterized by positive dynamics. Ukraine continues to maintain an absolute surplus of trade, accounting for 99% of the total. Based on the analysis of 2014-2015, the overall structure of exports of Ukrainian products to Lebanon is divided into the following groups: 40% - ferrous metals and products, 40% - cereals, 20% - fats and oils of animal or vegetable origin. Basic import products from Lebanon are: 70% - tobacco and its industrial substitutes, 12% - vegetable processing products, 18% - plastic and polymeric materials.¹³

In the Soviet Union, thousands of Lebanese people were trained in Ukraine (80% of the Lebanese graduates of Soviet universities are graduates of higher education in Ukraine). Each year, the Embassy of Ukraine in Lebanon issues 600-700 student visas. Basic specialties are medical, engineering, and technical.¹⁴ Therefore, it is no coincidence that one of the important areas of bilateral scientific and technical cooperation is the establishment of links between universities (National University "Lviv Polytechnic", Zaporizhzhya National Technical University, National Linguistic University).¹⁵ Lebanon even hosted an international conference in 2011, which was dedicated to the famous Ukrainian orientalist Ahatanhel Krymsky.

During 2011-2012, Ukrainian creative groups have repeatedly been in Lebanon. There is an operating NGO, "Ukrainian Cultural Centre", in Beirut. Liaison with talented compatriots who live in Lebanon, in particular with the pianist Tetyana Primak-Khoury, and artist, Natalka Dzyadik-Habib. Amateur dance troupes 'Star' (Zirka, city of Beirut) and 'Seagull' (Chaika, city of Sidon) are based in Lebanon. In 2013, for the first time in the history

of bilateral relations, the Days of Ukrainian Culture in Lebanon took place; the musicians of the Veryovka National Academic Folk Chorus of Ukraine and the ballet dancers from Shevchenko National Opera and Ballet Theatre gave several performances; and there was an exhibition of photo-paintings “Ukraine Today”.

Regardless of certain achievements in the economic and humanitarian spheres, the interstate relations with Lebanon are in a state of homeostasis. Altogether it’s worth mentioning that the Russian Federation applies considerable pressure on both Syria and Lebanon, so any conversation for coordination of foreign policy events and mutual support of Ukraine in the international arena is highly unlikely for both of the mentioned countries.

The third of the major Levant countries, Jordan, established diplomatic relations with Ukraine on April 19, 1992. In 2002, the consulate of Ukraine began its work in Jordan, and in February 2003 it was transformed into an embassy. The interests of Jordan in Ukraine since 1997 are represented by the Ambassador of Jordan in the Russian Federation. In the same year, the Department of the Jordanian Embassy in Russia, which deals with culture, began to work in Kyiv. The Honorary Consulate of Jordan in Ukraine opened in Kyiv in 2000. Ukraine and Jordan have exchanged over 60 official visits; most of them were official and working visits of Ukrainian delegations to Jordan. The Ukrainian President, Kuchma, paid his first official visit to Jordan in 2002. In general, the bilateral dialogue is maintained through political consultations between the foreign ministries of the two countries. Since 1995, in Amman, five delegations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine have held political consultations. The contacts between the Ukrainian and Jordanian parliaments constitute another direction of bilateral political cooperation. In 2009, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine set up a deputy group for inter-parliamentary relations with Jordan. In 2011, for the first time ever in Ukrainian-Jordanian relations, the King of Jordan, Abdullah II, paid his first official visit to Ukraine. Several bilateral documents were signed during this visit concerning the development of cooperation in the military sphere, healthcare, and the exchange of information to prevent money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

Jordan is of great interest to Ukraine as a prospective market for all its goods, services, and technologies, as well as the transportation, transit, trade, financial and tourist centre of the Middle East; since the signing of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation by Jordan and Ukraine on April 23, 2002. The Kingdom, due to its traditional role as a regional trade and economic intermediary, can be considered as a kind of “gateway” for the promotion of Ukrainian products and technologies to the markets of other Arab countries.

Over the past two years, foreign economic relations between Ukraine and Jordan have been characterized by a gradual decrease in the trade of goods

and services. This is primarily due to the difficult financial and economic situation in the Kingdom due to the Jordanian state budget's high expenses for the maintenance of Syrian refugees, the closing the borders of Syria, which was the main route for Jordanian exports, and shortening construction works of for the large-scale infrastructure projects, as well as the annexation of Crimea by Russia and the unstable situation in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions. At the same time, the Jordanian leadership is taking active measures to increase exports of goods and services to other countries.

According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the total turnover of goods and services between Ukraine and Jordan in 2015 totalled to 154.7 million USD, while in 2014 it totalled 353.65 million USD. The total trade balance (goods and services) between Ukraine and Jordan was positive for Ukraine and amounted to 139.698 million USD. The overall Ukrainian export volume in 2015 decreased by 54.8% as compared to 2014 and amounted to 147.19 million USD. The main factor for the decrease was a decrease in the supply of milk and dairy products, eggs, honey, cereals, and ferrous metals. At the same time, there was an increase in supplies to Jordan of meat and edible offal, fats and oils, and machinery. The imports from Jordan to Ukraine in 2015 also decreased by 72.8% (to 7.51 million USD), due to decrease of supply of pharmaceutical products, representing 45.1% of total import from Jordan, as well as plastics, polymers. However, there was a significant increase in the import of ferrous metal products by 617 thousand USD and goods purchased in ports by 370 thousand USD.¹⁶

Cooperation in the sphere of education remains another priority area for the development of Ukrainian-Jordanian humanitarian relations. Suffice it to say that since 1992, more than 5,000 Jordanians have received higher and secondary specialized education in Ukraine, and now more than 3,000 Jordanian students study in Ukrainian universities.

In 2006, an Agreement on the Cooperation in the Sphere of Tourism was signed. Over the past few years, cooperation in the field of medical science and healthcare remains a promising area of scientific cooperation between Ukraine and Jordan. The Kingdom is one of the biggest international centres of "Medical Tourism"; it occupies first place in this sphere among the Arab countries and fifth place worldwide. Moreover, a significant number of Jordanian doctors (i.e. approximately one thousand graduates) completed their professional education in Ukrainian educational institutions; there are several thousand Jordanian citizens who continue to study at the Ukrainian medical universities.¹⁷

The Days of Jordanian Culture in Ukraine in 2011 became a significant event in the bilateral cultural cooperation between Ukraine and Jordan. The Royal Cultural Centre of Jordan hosted an art exhibition, "Jordan in the Eyes of Ukrainian Artists".

Another impetus of cooperation between Ukraine and Jordan was the adoption in 2013 by the municipalities of Amman and Madaba to name one of streets in the Jordanian capital and Madaba town after Taras Shevchenko, the great Ukrainian poet and artist. It is worth noting that the Ukrainian Embassy in Amman is located at Al-Umouma Street (and now it is Shevchenko Street) and it is the first Ukrainian foreign mission stationed in the street named after the Great Kobzar. Furthermore, the Kingdom of Jordan is the first Arab country which named a street in its capital after Shevchenko.

Regarding the political sphere, for Ukraine, the support of Jordan was very important, as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council March 14, 2014 it voted for a draft resolution on the Crimea, confirming the territorial integrity of Ukraine in its internationally recognized borders and the illegality of the referendum on the Crimea. Furthermore, at the 80th plenary session of the UN General Assembly held on March 27, 2014, Jordan casted its vote for the UN General Assembly's Resolution A/RES/68/262 supporting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and recognizing the changes in status of Crimea and Sevastopol city as illegal.

In April of 2014, during a UN Security Council session, the Jordan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, HRH Prince Zeid bin Raad, expressed his deep concern towards the recent situation in the Eastern part of Ukraine and made the following statement: "What is happening there (in the East) will lead to the disintegration and division of the country. Ukraine has the right and obligation to its citizens to preserve the territorial integrity, as well as to reinstate the supremacy of law in all parts of the country".¹⁸

The positive experience of coordinating the political positions of both Ukraine and Jordan turned to out be one of the factors which brought Ukraine (being a non-permanent member of UN Security Council) to vote on December 23, 2016 in favour of Resolution S/RES/2334 condemning Israel's establishment of settlements in Palestinian territories and qualifying Israel's actions as a violation of international law. Fourteen members of UN Security Council, including Ukraine, have voted in favour of the said resolution, and the USA, which previously was resorting to its veto power to block anti-Israeli resolutions, abstained this time. The voting procedure has put Ukraine into an awkward position, i.e. if Ukraine were to vote against UN Security Council's resolution 2334 or abstained; it could have affected the economic and political ties with the Arab World. By the way, in 2015, the turnover of goods and services between Ukraine and Israel totalled to 930.6 million USD but the trade with Egypt only has reached 2.2 billion USD. It is also possible that Ukrainian abstention in the UN Security Council from condemning Israel for its construction activities on the occupied territories may bring the Arab university applicants to recall their applications from the higher educational institutions of our country. And vice versa, a Ukrainian vote on condemn-

ing the construction activities could complicate bilateral relations with Israel. Therefore, as exemplified by three Levant countries, we can draw the following conclusions. To a certain extent the following conclusions can be drawn from the example of the three Levant countries. Ukraine could some extent implement some of the three main functions inherent in the foreign policy of the state (protective, informational, representative and organizational intermediary), and to present their interests in these countries. They are more fully manifested in the trade and economic sphere. Unlike other regions of the world, Ukraine must approach the development of bilateral relations with the Levant countries in each case separately, considering the whole spectrum of obstacles, as well as the general political instability of this region. The most significant example of the coordination of foreign policy measures in the political sphere can be considered the consultations of the governments of Ukraine and the Kingdom of Jordan, in particular in the UN, where our country receives support during a difficult time for us. The study of Ukrainian-Egyptian relations reveals their consistent development in all fields. The Arab Republic of Egypt officially recognized the independence of Ukraine on January 3, 1992. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on January 25, 1992. Ukraine became one of the first post-Soviet republics where the diplomatic representation of the Arab Republic of Egypt was opened in May of 1993. The official opening of the Ukrainian Embassy in Cairo took place on September 1, 1993. In December of 2009, Egypt and Ukraine negotiated in Cairo regarding the preparation and finalization of a draft bilateral Treaty on legal assistance and collaboration in civil affairs.¹⁹ The ratification of the Treaty provides for the recognition and implementation of the Ukrainian courts' decisions on the territory of Egypt. In December of 2010, the Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of Egypt on visa exemptions for holders of diplomatic and other special passports was signed.

Since 1991, representatives of the two countries have paid numerous visits at different levels, the visit of the President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma in December 1992 was among the most important ones; during this visit Ukraine and Egypt signed the Agreement on the Basic Principles of Relations and Cooperation. In 1997, the Agreement on Maritime Merchant Shipping, the Convention on Avoidance of Double Taxation of Income and Property, etc. was signed. The same year, the joint Ukrainian-Egyptian tractor building plant in Alexandria was opened co-founded by the Dnipro plant "Pivdenmash" and the leading Egyptian corporation "MM". In 2008, the President of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko, paid an official visit to Cairo; during this visit the issues of trade, economic, military, and technical cooperation were discussed. Special attention was paid to creating a free trade zone between Ukraine and

Egypt. The Arabic party demonstrated a great interest in the exchange of new materials and technologies (irrigation, food, fisheries, etc) and cooperation in the fields of weaponry, space industry, banking, and tourism development.

The foundations for scientific and technical collaboration between the two countries were laid long before Ukraine's independence. During the 1960s and 1970s, Ukrainian experts made a significant contribution to the development of the technical infrastructure of Egypt. More than twenty Ukrainian companies supplied the equipment necessary for shipbuilding in Alexandria. In the 1960s, Ukrainians helped Egyptians with the design and construction of irrigation and underground tunnels of the Aswan complex. Ukraine also contributed to the Egyptian metallurgical engineering industry; in 1961 it turned into a major supplier of mining and metallurgical products and machinery for development of metals, coal, coke, chemicals for all countries in the African continent. Few people know that over 60 Ukrainian plants presented Egypt with 118 pieces of valuable equipment for high-rise construction project of the Altitude Dam.²⁰

After Ukraine has become independent, its relations with Egypt in the field of high and industrial technologies started developing at a rather intense pace. In 1995, a delegation from the Egyptian National Research Centre visited Ukraine to learn about its scientific capabilities, and the following year, Ukrainian scientists paid a visit to Egypt. They examined the prospects of founding the joint Ukrainian-Egyptian Electric Technology Institute and the possibility of collaboration in the nuclear field. In 1999, the Egyptian Commission of nuclear materials together with the Committee for Nuclear Research and the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine held a scientific conference in Cairo on research of nuclear materials, technology, and geochemistry of nuclear materials for peaceful purposes. The Ukrainian side offered to share experiences with Egypt in the field of construction of gas pipelines. For their part, Egyptian scientists have confirmed their interest in cooperation with Ukraine in the field of planimetry and the construction of aircraft engines. In 1995, the two countries signed an Agreement under which Ukraine pledged to modernize some of the air defence systems of Egypt, replace MiG 17 and MiG 19 aircrafts with MiG 29 and old tanks with the modern A-27 models.²¹ In 2003, the Kharkiv State Aviation Production Enterprise has won a contract in Egypt to supply nine AN-74T-200A and AN-74TK-200A planes to security agencies. In 2005, the company delivered the first AN-74T-200A machine to Egypt, which was certified the same year. Due to financial difficulties, the terms and conditions of the contract have somewhat shifted. However, in December of 2009 Ukraine sent the second AN-74T-200A plane to Egypt.²²

In 2001, Ukraine won the competitive bid for the production of an artificial Egyptian satellite for the remote sensing on the ground, "EgyptSat-1", the construction of which started in 2003 at the "Pivdenmash" plant, and in

2007 it was first launched by the Ukrainian missile carrier “Dnipro” from the “Baikonur” launch site. In 2008, the satellite control station was opened and an agreement on cooperation in the field of peaceful use of space was signed.

Due to the reduction of its stock of organic fuel, Egypt planned to increase its share of non-traditional energy sources by 2015, including up to 20% of the total energy balance; thus, the Egyptian side was interested in the prospects of Ukraine’s nuclear energy development and its experience with international cooperation in this field. Ukrainian nuclear experts can provide advisory and methodological support as well as assistance in staff training in the field of nuclear energy and industry, also in construction and operation of nuclear power stations.²³

Based on the 2006 Concession Agreement between the “Naftogaz Ukraine” Company and the Egyptian General Petroleum Corporation, the successful implementation of the project for the development of the Alam al-Shawish East in the Western Desert of the AE continues. Due to consistent efforts of the two sides, a third production field was opened on said territory. During the trials of the horizon “G” well of the Abu Rawash formation in 2010, industrial tanks of gas with a flow of 270 thousand cubic meters per day and condensate of flow rate 64.5 cubic meters per day were obtained.²⁴ In the course of well drilling, a full range of geological, geographical, and industrial research was carried out, including survey works within the concession area. Taking into consideration the positive results of implementing the State program of hydrocarbons sources diversification of Ukraine, “Naftogaz Ukraine” and the Ministry of Petroleum of Egypt signed a concession agreement on the exploration and exploitation of the hydrocarbon fields of Wadi Mahareeth No 8 and No 9, managed by the company “GANOPE” (Ganoub El-Wadi Holding Petroleum Co). In addition, the agreement on the establishment of a Ukrainian-Egyptian bank for financing joint projects was reached. However, despite the existence of broad prospects for joint investment, the lack of funds both in Ukraine and Egypt is the main obstacle on the path to their implementation.

In recent years, within the framework of twinning contacts between Odesa and Alexandria, a series of meetings with the leadership of the Arab Academy of Sciences, Technologies and Marine Transport was held in order to establish cooperation with the Odessa National Maritime Academy through the via concluding a correspondent protocol. In the long term, cooperation between these maritime educational institutions could also be a strong basis for the development of cooperation between the ports of Odessa and Alexandria.

In the trade and economic relations between Ukraine and Egypt, it should be noted, that both sides are interested in strengthening and extending mutually beneficial contacts. Overall, the trade turnover between the two countries indicates a positive trend. If in 1992 it amounted to 21.1 million USD, in 2009 it reached a record level up to 1.75 billion USD, of which 1.6 billion USD fell to the share of Ukrainian exports.²⁵

The Arab Spring has negatively affected the trade between Ukraine and Egypt. Commodity circulation between the two countries decreased to 130.5 million USD, but in 2013 it rose again to 2.85 billion USD. It should be noted that since 2008, Egypt is in the top ten largest importers of Ukrainian goods. In 2010, Egypt's domestic market took eighth place in the consumption of Ukrainian goods, leaving behind China and Kazakhstan. The share of Egypt in total Ukrainian exports amounts to 2.59% on average, with a trade surplus in favour of Ukraine totalling to 1.25 billion USD.²⁶

Among the main articles of Ukrainian exports to Egypt are chemicals, fertilizers, and metal products for the engineering industry. In addition, Egypt has a strategic interest in agricultural exports from Ukraine. It is the price / quality ratio for grain products that became the deciding factor for the purchase of Ukrainian wheat. This is supported by the need for Egypt in qualitative wheat of grades 3 and 4, which can be offered by the Ukrainian side. Each year Egypt buys from 6 to 8 million tons of wheat. The share of the main state wheat importer GASC amounts to 4.5 - 6 million tons of the total volume (through competitive bids). If the government of Ukraine supports proposals encouraging grain exports and stops applying quotation mechanisms to the export of grain, the share of Ukrainian grain in global exports to Egypt will increase significantly. The Egyptian side is interested in signing a long-term contract for the import of Ukrainian wheat at fixed prices. This proposal can be economically advantageous for both countries: a fixed price for grain will enable Egypt to forecast the budgetary costs to be allocated for the purchase, and for Ukraine, the signing the agreement with fixed prices with Egypt will give it an opportunity to develop a mechanism for signing similar agreements with other countries in the Middle East and South Africa. Such practices may lead producers of agricultural products in Ukraine to work "on request", in particular to grow crops that meet the quality standards of individual countries in the region and will be guaranteed for purchase. In addition, the conclusion of such contracts will help to pre-neutralize the excess supply of grain in the domestic market of Ukraine. In case of adjusting the supply to the Egyptian market, Ukrainian barley exports may increase to 1 million tons per year.

As for Egyptian exports to Ukraine, it is primarily agricultural products and medicines. Among the main difficulties for Egyptian exports to Ukraine, the Trade mission of ARE in Kyiv noted high customs taxes in Ukraine and the presence of a certain amount of goods imported and smuggled from other countries, which mostly affects the competitiveness of Egyptian export goods against foreign analogues that are not subject to customs duties or have certain benefits.²⁷

Despite the abovementioned difficulties, the representatives of both countries are seeking new opportunities for effective cooperation. In Egypt, Ukraine International Airlines, the Black Sea, Danube and Azov Shipping Companies, and 140 Ukraine - Europe - World corporations like "Ukrmontazhpetsbud"

(Kyiv), “Ukrenergochermet” (Kharkov), “Hirhimprom” (Lviv), and “KrAZ” (Kremenchug) have permanent representation in Egypt.

Another important aspect of trade and economic relations between Ukraine and Egypt is the exchange of experience and provision for necessary assistance. In 1992, Egypt’s Foreign Ministry set up the Foundation for Technical Cooperation with CIS countries, which aims to support relations between Egypt and the CIS countries, facilitate the exchange of technical experience in various fields through interested organizations, stakeholders, education, and training in both countries. In order to familiarize itself with the experience of the free economic zone in ARE, the Foundation organized a visit to Egypt of Ukrainian businessmen, during which they held a series of negotiations with top Egyptian companies like “Arab Kontraktorz”, “Oraskom”, “Artok Group”, “Edzhikvip”, “Heluansky Steel Plant” and others, which considerably contributed to boosting of bilateral trade and economic collaboration.

Considerable attention was paid to the development of humanitarian cooperation in relations between the two countries, particularly in the field of education and culture. In 1992, Ukraine and Egypt signed the first agreement on cultural and humanitarian cooperation, and in 2010, they signed documents on the development of cooperation in the field of education and science, culture, and tourism.²⁸

According to the Ministry of Tourism of Egypt, the tourism industry provides 11.3% of the country’s GDP and provides more than 14% of its foreign exchange earnings. Therefore, the decline of tourist traffic to this Arab country, due to security issues during 2015-2016, pushed tour operators to reduce their tariffs on popular routes. According to the data from Ukrainian travel agencies, the popularity of leisure on the Red Sea outweighed other destinations among the preferences of Ukrainians since the beginning of 2017.

When it comes to cultural collaboration, the Egyptian side has certain interests in promoting the learning of Arabic language in Ukrainian schools. In 2014, there were 624 registered Muslim communities in Ukraine. The approximate number of Muslims in Ukraine varies from 500 thousand to 1 million individuals.²⁹ Ukrainian Muslims take a rather active part in the international religious conferences conducted by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs in Egypt. In 2000, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs of Egypt offered to set up a course on the Arabic language and the Quran at the Islamic school for the Muslim community in Kyiv, and this initiative was greeted by the Chief Mufti of Ukraine. Delegations from the Theological Administration of Ukrainian Muslims (RAMU) visit Egypt from time to time, to enhance collaboration with the Islamic University, under the auspices of RAMU and Egyptian Al-Azhar University, which is a prestigious training centre for Sunni clergy worldwide.

Undoubtedly, an important role in promoting the Arabic language in Ukraine is played by the Foundation for Technical Cooperation with CIS

countries, which belongs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt. During last 20 years, the Foundation organized linguistics studies in the Universities of Cairo and Alexandria for dozens of researchers, professors and students from the higher educational establishments of Ukraine. In 2008, the Egyptian Centre of Arabic Language and Culture at the Institute of Philology of Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University had its grand opening. The Egyptian side provided funding for the centre and provided all the necessary audio and video equipment.³⁰

In 2015, an international exhibition, “Ukraine Invites to Study”, was held in Cairo; where the representatives of 14 Ukrainian universities briefed the graduates of Egyptian schools on the learning conditions in Ukraine. Attractive entry conditions, high levels of education, and relatively low education costs as compared to other European states are key factors in encouraging Egyptian students to receive higher education in Ukraine. As on 2016, 1106 Egyptian students were receiving their education in Ukraine.³¹

The list of cultural events of Ukrainians in Egypt includes the memorable 2001 exhibition dedicated to the 140th anniversary of the outstanding Ukrainian poet, Lesya Ukrainka, who at the beginning of the twentieth century was undergoing treatment in the Egyptian cities of Alexandria and Helwan and wrote a collection of poems named “Spring in Egypt”; the tour of the National Academic Ensemble of Ukrainian Folk Dance, named after P. Virskyi; and theatres troupes from Lesya Ukrainka Drama Theatre, “Molody” (‘Young’) and “Brama” (‘The Gates’) Theatres. There is a good tradition in Egypt to hold a children’s drawing competition named “Painting Ukraine”, dedicated to the Independence Day of Ukraine. In UNESCO, Egypt supported the initiatives to include “Petrykivka Decorative Painting – the Ukrainian decorative ornament painting of the nineteenth through twenty first centuries” in the representative list of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

As for the political area of cooperation, Ukraine supported the resolution on the creation of a nuclear free zone in the Middle East, according to the draft proposed by Egypt in 1980. Ukraine, together with Egypt, refused to vote for the resolution on the violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories, participating in meetings of the Human Rights Committee of the General Assembly at the 53rd session of the United Nations (1998).

Ukraine, Egypt and the United Nations signed a Memorandum of Understanding in order to establish trilateral cooperation with Ukraine and promote Egyptian experiences with reforming and rebuilding the economy and providing work places for young Ukrainians using a structural fund, similar to the Egyptian Social Development Fund. A positive achievement of the Ukrainian diplomatic mission in 2009 was the decision of Arab countries to accredit the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine in Egypt, Mr. Yevhen Mikitenko, as an observer at the League of Arab States Headquarters located in Cairo. Moreover, within the framework of the regular session of

the UN General Assembly in New York, the Memorandum on Cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the General Secretariat of the Arab League was signed, which allowed Ukraine to take a more profound part in the Middle Eastern political processes. Under these circumstances, the intensification of cooperation between Ukraine and Egypt gained more substance. Thus, there was progress in solving problematic issues, in particular the intensification of trade shipping between Ukraine and Egypt, exhibitions, and exchanges between business and industrial delegations.³²

The events of the so-called Arab Spring, as well as further political events in Ukraine, somehow slowed down the process of bilateral cooperation. However, the mutual desire of the two countries to open new horizons of cooperation is the key to the successful development of relations between them.

Conclusions. Although the Ukrainian authorities have relegated Ukrainian-Arab relations to the lowest ranking position among their interests, many Arab countries – Egypt and oil-producing countries like Saudi Arabia - have been defined by Ukraine as strategic partners. But during the whole period Ukraine did not receive adequate responses from these countries.

The dynamics of the deployment of the mechanism of trade-economic and military-technical cooperation between Ukraine and Arab countries has had its own specificities. They were defined as the development of liberalization processes in the Arab world and in Ukraine, as well as by the domestic market scopes and the export-import commodity structure. At the beginning of the 21st century, Ukraine reached its highest numbers in of bilateral trade with Egypt, besides Syria. Ukraine succeeded in getting access to the Arab market of arms while reviving its former ties and enhancing exhibition and marketing activities. Ukraine has adjusted to military and technical cooperation best with Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and the UAE.

The implementation of further opportunities in the development of bilateral relations with Arab countries demands that Ukraine apply the following measures: activate contacts and exchange of delegations at the highest level; coordinate positions within regional and international organizations; monitor the fulfilment of legislative and contractual fundamentals of cooperation closely; timely and qualitatively fulfill obligations for implementation of projects in the branches of industry and agriculture, and to keep the turnover at the high level; provide the most favourable investment climate for both partners; promote scientific and cultural cooperation, in particular between higher educational institutions and mass media.

The main goal of Ukrainian diplomacy and specialists should be finding the best model of cooperation. Upon examination of our experience, considering the concept of “Strategic Culture”, an additional task appears, devising a policy of informational support for national interests in the region and the world in general. Introducing certain adjustments and an appropriate reconsideration of the role and importance of the Arabic vector within the foreign

policy activities of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, under the current troublesome conditions for the state of Ukraine, shall allow us to test a development model, which will correspond to the current realities and challenges of the global world.

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² Василь Короткий, “Сучасний близькосхідний пасьянс: місце та роль української карти”, accessed January 19, 2017, https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-other_news/1344086-blizkoshidna_strategiya_ukraini_saudivska_araviya_levant_ta_balans_z_e_vropeyskim_vektorom_1722617.html

³ Короткий, “Сучасний близькосхідний пасьянс”.

⁴ Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton University Press, 1998), 36.

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⁸ Ю. В. Гергель, “Роль і місце держав Леванту в міжнародних відносинах на Близькому Сході та в системі зовнішньополітичних пріоритетів України в регіоні”, *Науковий вісник Дипломатичної академії України* 19 (2012): 177-185.

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¹⁰ “Україна та Сирія – політичні відносини”, Офіційний сайт Посольства України в Сирійській Арабській Республіці, accessed January 19, 2017, <http://syria.mfa.gov.ua/ua/ukraine-sy/diplomacy>

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CHAPTER 11
UKRAINE'S POLICY TOWARDS THE COUNTRIES
OF CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE

Alina Zadorozhnia

For a long time, the territory of both modern Ukraine and the Eastern European countries was subject to or part of powerful states: The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Russian Empire. Together they liberated the lands from the Turkish invasion, defeated fascist Germany, and jointly started recovering from socialist ideology for the sake of European values. Long-term dependence and lack of national identity “influenced all spheres of public life of countries, including their mental characteristics. It is known that nothing changes as slowly as the mentality of the people therefore it is not surprising that in the twentieth century. Eastern Europeans, wishing to change their historical destiny, first of all changed their foreign policy.”¹

Common historical, geopolitical, social and economic features divided the countries into specific regions: “Central and Eastern”, “Mitteleuropa (Middle Europe)” or “Outer Europe”, which, according to external formal features, arose between Russia and Western Europe, and for a long period belonged to the Socialist camp (not to the USSR). However, sometimes Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, even Ukraine and Moldova, and rarely Belarus have been included into the said territory.

A Croatian professor, Radovan Vukadinovich, made a clear distinction between the Central European countries and those located in the South-Eastern part of the region, which he included in a transitional group with fragile democratic foundations.² A Czech political scientist, Oskar Krejci, has come to the conclusion that the region has no natural boundaries, due to geopolitical features and cannot be considered beyond the limits of the pan-European context.³ A Ukrainian researcher, Volodymyr Fisanov, has called Central Europe “a shifting geopolitical zone”, because lands cannot provide for the integrity and invariance of their territorial borders in the previous century; over the course of more than 70 years, Czechoslovakia changed its “geopolitical status” six times. This feature is characteristic of Ukraine, where the researcher identified the following as movable geopolitical points: Bucovina, having “changed” its subordination five times; Transcarpathia, had a similar experience, even having gained its political independence at some point; and the Crimea. At the same time, it should be kept in mind, that Ukraine shares borders with geopolitically unstable regions like Moldova and Transnistria

(Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic).⁴ The Polish historian Jerzy Kluczowski agreed to see the Ukrainian state in the center of Europe, emphasizing the importance of studying the region as a bridge open to the west and east.⁵ Polish politicians' idea of the so-called "Idea jagiellońska" had confirmed the belonging of Ukraine, and now Belarus, in the region. In accordance therewith, the heritage of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was the decisive factor for the culture and mentality of the peoples.⁶ An American expert on Eastern Europe, Russia, and Eurasia, Angela Stent allocated those Post-Soviet countries including Moldova to "The New Eastern Europe", assigning them the role of a buffer zone.⁷ This term is commonly used in conservative political circles in the United States to identify post-communist European countries located in Central Europe. The polemic has shown that, even though the described system started losing its integrity within the context of the EU expansion in the east (in 2004, 2007, 2013), definitions distinguishing those countries from the rest of Europe have maintained their relevance.

In the modern literature, Eastern European countries are most commonly considered under the following groups: 1) the states of Central Eastern Europe or the Visegrad Four (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic) – an area of relative stability and rapid transformational changes; 2) the states of South-Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Romania) represent an intermediate territory, which is characterized by a protracted process of social and economic transformation; 3) the former Yugoslav republics and Albania – are sparsely populated and geographically the most remote from the Ukrainian borders that form the Western Balkan region.

The special position of countries located along the line of contact between different geopolitical and religious worlds has led to the formation of the mentality of Ukrainians and Eastern Europeans, which took place under the conditions of pressure and oppression, and had a special impact on components of their national identity. Considering the research works of psychologists, one may conclude that the mental composition of the majority of Eastern Europeans and Ukrainians is the result of integration of the elements of Eastern and Western cultures with additional components of the Byzantine one. At the same time, the peoples of the CEE felt the psychological influence of the West European psychotype, which was defined as masculine and characterized by aggressive, rigid behavior, focused on the achievement of materialized success. The will to power, realism, dogmatism, idealism, rationalism, individualism, and ideal of harmony stand out among characteristic features of the said psychotype. The Eastern (feminine culture) and Byzantine (feminine dominated) influences were more felt in the formation of the mentality of the population of the Balkans, Bulgaria, Romania and

Ukraine. The Byzantine psychotype is sometimes assigned a buffer position between the West and the East. It has such features like “moderation in action, social attractiveness, vulnerability, apathy, naivete, need for a strong and strong ally.” The formation of the mentality of Ukrainians and Eastern Europeans under the conditions of pressure and oppression influenced the composition of their national identity.⁸ Establishment of the mentality of Ukrainians and Eastern Europeans under the conditions of pressure and oppression has had an impact on the elements of their national identity.

Thus, the personification of contradictive features in Ukrainians and Eastern Europeans has increased the sense of love for the land, diligence, spirituality, obedience, and paternalism in the mental features of the peoples,; however has almost deprived them of determination in actions and heroism as an expression of national feelings, which, in turn, testifies to the prevalence of feminine over masculine (with exception of the Central Europeans). However, recent events in Ukraine and in Eastern Europe demonstrate new qualities of psycho-cultural symbiosis, which may lead the population to self-determination and the self-realization that it is an integral part of a single civilizational space.

Specificities of the dialogue between Ukraine and the Countries of the Visegrad Four (V4). Relations between the Ukrainians and the peoples of Central Europe are deeply rooted in history, and in different periods they were of a different nature: friendship, hostility, rivalry or the distribution of opportunities. It was such a multi-faceted and complex relationship between actors that, according to A. Wendt, formed the basis of the “structure of roles” (“enemy”, “rival”, and “friend”) to which the three “cultures of anarchy” corresponded: Kantian, Lockean, and Hobbesian. Researches of external influences on the behaviour of the main participants in the dialogue demand that special attention be paid to the consideration of the issue of collective security, which becomes more relevant for Ukraine, as a hostage of the Kremlin’s neo-imperial policy.

Since the beginning of the dialogue, the feeling of extreme hostility between Ukraine and the V4 has not been observed: a certain negative vibe came from the Polish people in regard to Soviet Ukrainians, but at the official level, Poland was the first to recognize Ukraine’s independence, and has always supported its aspiration to strengthen its credibility. The territorial claims of Romania slowed down the process of signing a Treaty on Neighbourliness, with it, which would, by the example of the agreement with Poland, confirm the inviolability of borders and guarantee protection from any military aggression by a third country in their territory. For Central Europeans, the threat of instability came from the Balkans. Taking into account the value orientation of the Ukrainians and the weak external environment of the country, the

choice of a foreign policy strategy was largely made in favor of a “balance of interests” strategy that sought to find a compromise, taking into account the national interests of the countries. An alternative strategy – “the choice of priorities” – required a high level of self-determination and independence in the choice of strategic partners. Meanwhile, Ukraine and Poland were the first to choose to promote their relations to “the strategic partnership” level. Slovakia and Hungary are complementary to the path to peace and stability. The nature of cooperation with the western neighbors and the geographically close Czech Republic highlighted the conceptual document “The Main Trajectories of Ukraine’s Foreign Policy” (1993), cooperation through rapprochement with the EU within the framework of international and regional structures. Those priorities were modernized by the Law of Ukraine “On the Fundamental Principles of Domestic and Foreign Policy” in 2010, which focused on a cooperation within the framework of European integration. In practice, cooperation at the level of local administrations and in the area of protection of national minorities was the most effective.

In Ukraine, in 2001, there were almost 157 thousand representatives of the Hungarian diaspora, 144 thousand Poles, about 6 thousand Slovaks and around the same number of Czechs. At the same time, the number Ukrainians diaspora in these countries was ten times less: about 30 thousand were registered in Poland (2002), 11 thousand in the Czech Republic, as well as in Slovakia, and the smallest of all was in Hungary, at only around 7 thousand (2001).⁹ The protection of their rights was ensured by the creation of various unions, societies, the opening of national-cultural centers, Sunday schools, and the publication of newspapers in their native language. The annual Culture Days and the Days of Cinema became a good tradition. University mobility, academic fairness, the technological sphere, the arts, environmental protection, and work towards the restoration of historical values were chosen as main spheres for cooperation.

Scientific, cultural, economic, trade, tourism projects were also implemented within the Euroregion: “The Carpathians” (1993), established at the borders of Poland, Slovakia, Hungary; “Bug” (1995) at the Ukrainian-Polish border. Joint businesses were organized there, environmental, border, transportation infrastructure issues were solved, monitoring of the river water pollution level was conducted, general approaches to the exercise of the cultural and national rights of the national groups were developed, modern Check Points were created (such as “Yagodyn”, “Ustilug”), not without the financial and technical aid from the EU (primarily, PHARE, TACIS, INTERREG). Border patrol guards and law enforcement officials from the different countries fought together against illegal migration, drug trafficking, smuggling,

and economic crimes while neutralizing criminal groups and jointly patrolling the grounds. Cooperation within the Euroregion promoted the establishment of the Board of Ukrainian and Polish Universities, the introduction of the monitoring system on Western Bug, Uzh, and Latoritsya Rivers, and the creation of biospheric wildlife reserve included in UNESCO list.

The direct engagement of the population in the projects and an opportunity to bring authorities, businessmen, and scientists to the negotiating table contributed to a constituent, which has become the key to the success of many cross-border projects, albeit not large-scale but extremely necessary. Moreover, the strengthening of ties between the local authorities on both sides of the new border was the objective of the Nyíregyháza Initiative. This initiative was accomplished under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary as an instrument for the practical implementation of the “Wider Europe” concept. “The Transparency of the Schengen Border” program, developed under the initiative of the Slovak party, aimed at mitigating the negative effects of new border crossing conditions.

The younger generations of the Poles and Ukrainians gradually adjusted to mitigate the cold relations between the elderly people: the Poles couldn't forgive the actions of the Ukrainian nationalists during the World War II, and the Ukrainian population – the consequences of the notorious Vistula Operation. The joint statement of the Presidents of Ukraine and Poland, “Towards Understanding and Unity” (1997), called to resolve this issue at an official level. A noticeable consolidating factor was the growing role of churches in the countries, in particular the visit of Pope John Paul II to Ukraine in 2001; however, this effort was to some extent undermined by the recent recognition by the Sejm of Poland of Volynsk tragedy by the Sejm of the Republic of Poland as an act of genocide. The quest for the historical truth of this sort was called nothing but a political decision' by the MFA of Ukraine'. Eventually, the draft of a similar resolution concerning the genocide against Ukrainians was registered in the Ukrainian parliament.

Hungary has always acted as the most ardent defender of rights of 'theirs' [diaspora]. It considered the status of Hungarians in Ukraine to be the most protected, which had a positive influence on establishment of the bilateral relations. Hundreds of children from the families of Anti-Terrorist Operation participants had an opportunity to go to Hungary for a vacation due to support from the Hungarian government. The initiative of the Hungarian association “Csillagfalu” “The People Greet the People” which gave the Hungarian officials, community leaders, and ordinary citizens an opportunity to send video greetings of Ukrainian Hungarians to the 25th anniversary of independence became symbolic. Moreover, the Hungarian community currently has a repre-

sentative in the Verkhovna Rada, on the other hand, the representatives of the Ukrainian national minority were given an opportunity to lobby their interests in the Parliament of Hungary. Meanwhile, some of the official Budapest proposals (for example, the inaugural speech by V. Orban in May 2014 on the autonomy of Transcarpathian Hungarians and dual citizenship) are disturbing Kyiv. The statement of the Hungarian president was preceded by participation of the “Yobbik” political party members in the so-called “Crimean referendum”, then in “elections” in the Crimea and the Donbas as observers. The European Parliament deputy Kovacs was spotted among them, who as a result, Ukraine banned entry into its territory, and the EU deprived of immunity.

The Slovak diaspora, specifically that residing in the periphery, has gained massive support from an ancestral homeland. Ukrainians in Slovakia had to experience the anti-Ukrainian moods popularized by the Russian Pan-Slavists in media and it obviously had a negative influence on reception of Ukrainians in Slovakia. According to a poll, were Slovaks perceived Ukrainians as the worst of all among the V4 countries. 17% of respondents agreed to trust and rely on Ukraine; 44% had an opposite opinion.¹⁰ On the other hand, that did not stop Ukrainians from taking a leading position by the number of visas issued by the Slovak Embassy and Consular Sections and residence permits (as compared with citizens of other countries). There was an opinion that the issue of visa for Ukrainians would be resolved in general through the efforts of Slovakia as the head of the EU in the second half of 2016. The bilateral relations of the countries included the sharing of experience in the spheres of the energy efficiency, and the development of civil society and institutions. The Slovak reformers, together with the Polish, were widely involved in the domestic political processes in Ukraine: the ex-Minister of Finance of Slovakia Miklos and one of the co-authors of the Polish ‘Shock therapy’, and currently the representative of the President of Ukraine in the Cabinet of Ministers, Balcerowicz, headed the Strategic Advisors Group. Miklos also became the chairman of the Group of Advisors of the Prime Minister of Ukraine. Given the geographical remoteness, Ukraine’s relations with the Czech Republic were largely confined to solving the visa issue and cooperation in the energy sector. It’s no secret that the Czech Republic is attractive to Ukrainians through highly paid jobs. According to various estimates, in the Czech Republic there are 112-116 thousand migrant workers from Ukraine (Poland is still leading where there are twice as many of them). At the end of 2015, the government of the Czech Republic simplified the procedure for receiving a long-term work visa for highly qualified personnel from Ukraine. The Czech people showed their support for the Ukrainian people in a mass rally of thousands against the president of the Czech Republic Zeman, who called the

Russian aggression in Donbas “a civil war”, and the Ukrainian Maidan – “the den of Banderovites”.¹¹ Zeman’s statements were sharply criticized by the ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Schwarzenberg, and the intellectual elite of the country. Recently, the Foreign Ministry of the Czech Republic had to make efforts to refute information about the opening of a diplomatic mission of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic (DPR) in the city of Ostrava. At the same time, the Security service of the Czech Republic accused the Russian Federation of an attempt to manipulate Czech society and to wage a media war which in turn is indicative of the recognition of wrongful acts on the part of the aggressor.

An analysis of the level of support provided by the EU Member States, which was conducted by leading Ukrainian experts after the events on Maidan, showed that Poland is the best friend of Ukraine in the EU. The Czech Republic (7) and Slovakia (9) were in the top ten. Hungary took the 19th position.¹² According to the analysts, said poll was supposed to become an incentive for the countries, which were willing to bend their own principles from time to time. It is comforting that none of the countries was recognized as an enemy. A confirmation of this is the TNS Company survey results (as of October 2015) demonstrating that 42% of Ukrainians considered Hungary as a friendly country; the minority saw the relations as neutral and perceived them as attractive from the point of tourism, a rich history, and culture.¹³

The welfare of the population, protection of the cultural needs of national minorities, freedom and justice, and the rule of law, these are the social values with which the concept of national security is closely linked. In the early 1990s, the countries tried to ensure security through creating a new collective security system in the region; however, neither the ideas of the Polish President Walesa “NATO-bis”, nor the proposal of the Ukrainian President Kravchuk, concerning the formation of the new security zone were implemented. The country’s best option was to see rapprochement with the Alliance through the Partnership for Peace (1994) program, envisaging their participation in discussing urgent problems with the members of the bloc. Poland was interested in Ukraine at the bilateral level as a source for military equipment spare parts; the interest of the rest of the countries was expressed in the purchase or servicing of the Mil Mi-8 and Mil Mi-24 Helicopters by Ukrainians, and the organization of exchange programs for the military. In modern conditions, Polish, Hungarian, and Slovak professional and financial support is particularly noticeable in the organization of treatment and rehabilitation of Ukrainian soldiers who were injured in eastern Ukraine, in conducting courses for military doctors and joint exercises. Poland is perhaps the only Central European country that consistently pursued a pro-Ukrainian policy (since 1991). It

was mostly interested in establishing a strong Eastern border at the expense of a stable and European Ukraine which in turn would deprive it of its status as a “the most Easterly point” of the EU. Ukraine showed commitment to NATO’s security system for the first time on the territory of Poland, participating in the “Cooperative Bridge” joint exercise, then in “Cooperative Spirit”, and “Peace Shield”. The field exercise “Carpathian Safety”, an emergency planning plan, provided medical equipment, supplies, and clothing: a system for forecasting, alerting, and responding to floods in the Carpathians was created as well. The joint exercises under the alias of “Cooperative Neighbour” (1997) were held at the Yavoriv training field (nearby Lviv), transforming it into the PfP training centre. The reaction of the Polish-Ukrainian peacekeeping battalion Ukr-PolBat was an additional achievement. Recently Ukraine, Poland, and Lithuania signed the Agreement on the creation of a joint military brigade “LitPo-UkrBrig”, with the participation of five hundred Ukrainian service members, about two thousand of the Polish and about 350 Lithuanian personnel.¹⁴ It is worth emphasizing the participation of the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (from 2010) in the alternation of the EU Battle Tactical Groups. Also, the An-26 airplane, with the aerodynamic evacuation of the Armed Forces, together with Slovak and Polish military personnel, was on an operational duty as part of the Baltic Tactical Group (BTG). Over the next few years, the Armed Forces of Ukraine worked as part of the the EU Combat Tactical Group “Helbrok”. In the summer of 2016, Ukraine, with the V4, countries launched an exercise in the framework of large-scale manoeuvres for exercising in coordinated operations under the conditions of hybrid war. At the same time, the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine joined the Technical Agreement between the Defense Ministries of the Visegrad Four for co-operation within the framework of the EU Combat Tactical Groups (CTG EU V4), aimed at the maintenance of operational coordination with the armies of other states in the matters of crisis management. The number of the group amounted to about four thousand military personnel. Within a year, the Ukrainian representatives acted as observers in Common Challenge Manoeuvres (Drawsko-Pomorskie, Poland), designed to test the group before assuming the EU watch. Large-scale participation of the countries in the military exercise was directed at testing the capabilities of the West to protect their Eastern flank. But this did not prevent the threat on the eastern borders of the Ukrainian partner.

The matter of the country’s military security required a radical behaviour. If the cumulative military budget of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary amounted up to 5 billion USD at the edge of the twenty-first century, and Slovakia’s expenses reached over 3 hundred million USD, Ukraine was spending about 800 million USD. The amount seemed considerable; howev-

er, in per capita calculations, the expenditures in this sphere looked ten times smaller than in Hungary or Poland. Since 2002, the country started to increase its financing of the military substantially. Sharp changes were triggered by events on the eastern border. The domestic media reported that nearly 2.4 billion USD (64 billion UAH) was allocated in the state budget for the Ministry of Defence in 2017. It turned out that Ukraine was not the only one in its mobilization aspirations. It should be noted that Poland, according to public information, also planned to increase its defence budget to 9.2 billion USD (8.7 billion EUR). Ukraine and Poland had agreed to strengthen cooperation in the sphere of defence via signing of a general agreement between the two governments a few months prior to the approval of the budgets. The analysts observe an increase of military expenditures all over the world. In particular, the Central European states, due to their fear of Russian aggression, have succeeded in such measures (in 2015 the expenses have increased by almost 13% as compared to 2014).

Which reminds us that unlike its Central European neighbours Ukraine had to make a tough choice at the start of a new stage in the development of its strategic culture. Ukraine, a nuclear power state with more than 700 thousand Armed Forces troops and a mighty merchant fleet, had to give up the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world and transform the country into the transmitter of a nuclear fuel. Thus, the fatal “Memorandum on Security Assurances” (Budapest, 1994) was signed with the USA, Russia, and Great Britain. Under the conditions of modern security challenges, these guarantees were supposed to be enhanced by the July 6, 2010 Declaration of the Verkhovna Rada on Providing Security Guarantees, which expanded the list of those defending Ukraine’s sovereignty to also include China and France. The marked resonance in the world political arena raised the issue of the deployment of a missile defense system on the territory of New Europe. The Czech Republic and Poland were considered footholds for the deployment of the ABM defence systems. Later on, the first one was replaced with former Deveselu Airbase (in Judetul Olt) in Romania. Among the offers were two Radar systems for missile warning located near Sevastopol and in Mukachevo. Moscow overtly called this act, NATO moving closer to Russia’s borders, inadmissible. Constant Russian objections concerning the ambitions of the West were scarified in the speech of the ex-president of the Czech Republic Havel: ‘Russia’s main problem was that it never knows where it begins or ends... and, if Russia wants to be the rightful neighbour, it must abandon militant pressure on the world around it’.¹⁵ But the Kremlin chose otherwise. Events in Eastern Ukraine fueled security measures in the region, and, accordingly revived discussions in Ukraine (in July of 2014, the depu-

ties from “Svoboda” registered the draft Resolution on the Statement of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine concerning the renewal of the nuclear status with the Parliament). The opposition initiated the introduction of a UN peacekeeping contingent, which also included military contingents from both Ukraine and the Russian Federation, in order to prevent the escalation of the conflict. However, both matters did not result in wide discussion within the country’s political circles and did not go beyond its borders.

If separate statements of neighbors were sometimes subject to condemnation, then in common decisions of the country they acted in defense of Ukraine’s national interests: the prime ministers condemned Russia’s policy of violating Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity at a meeting of the governments of the B-4 countries in Bratislava (December 2014). During a complex time for Ukraine, the leaders of the V-4 defended her European choice, acted as mediators between the authorities and the opposition, and provided financial and energy assistance. Central European support for Ukrainian aspirations was especially felt during the ratification of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU. In Poland, almost 60% of voters took part in the referendum. The political ingenuity of the facilitators might have had something to do with this: the referendum was held for two days. The Czech Republic was the latest to deposit its ratification letter in Brussels.

The strongest resistance in the face of the Russian policy of pressure was shown by Poland. Ukrainians felt it: the Polish policy regarding the Russian-Ukrainian conflict was supported by nearly 57% of Ukrainians (the population of the Western and Central regions - 74% and 63% respectively, Southern and Eastern - 45, 43%, public opinion in the Donbas was divided – 42% supported, as many showed the negative attitude). In general, the population expected economic and humanitarian assistance from Poland, over half of them hoped for the provision of military equipment and training of military personnel.¹⁶ Jointly with Sweden and Great Britain, Poland initiated the creation of the EU civilian mission in the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy, aimed at assisting in the reformation of law enforcement agencies and, in particular, legal proceedings. The official position of Poland has changed somewhat since the new Prime Minister, Eva Kopach’s, statements concerning the non-interference policy in the conflict with separatists and focusing on own security.

Hungary known as Russia’s ‘best friend’, and Slovakia – as Russia’s powerful business partner, in their “soft” conclusions on the anti-Russian sanctions were guided by dependence on deliveries of Russian energy products. According to an Ipsos Company’s poll (April 2014), among 11 EU countries, Hungarians showed the least support (31%) to their government in “making all possible efforts to preserve stability in the rest of the territory of Ukraine”.

Only one third of the population supported the application of anti-Russian sanctions by the government. Mostly, the respondents advised not to interfere with the problems of their neighbours.¹⁷ Incidentally, at a meeting with the Ukrainian president in the winter of 2016, representatives of the official delegation from Slovakia confirmed the country's critical approaches to the construction of the second branch of the North Stream gas pipeline (bypassing Ukraine). The Czech Republic tried not to take an active part in advocating further prolongation of sanctions. However, in a statement by the Foreign Ministry, it saw in the actions of the Russian Federation "an unprecedented violation of international norms and obligations".¹⁸

The Western neighbours took an identical position on the matter of the annexation of Crimea, which was prophesied like the scenario of in the unrecognized Transnistria, to be next unstable territory of the Russian Federation. The "new creation" was not officially recognized among most of the countries in the world, because international law didn't support unilateral separation, besides the referendum, of a dubious nature, was conducted by forces of a foreign state. The adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution on Ukrainian territorial integrity (March 27, 2014) demonstrated the absolute support for international law, Ukrainian borders, and the ARC status by the V-4 countries. Only eleven states, among 193 countries in the world, voted "against" and none of the Eastern European states were noticed among such delegates (Bosnia Herzegovina and Serbia did not participate in that vote). Meanwhile, the Resolution, "Situation with Human Rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol (Ukraine)" as of December 19, 2016 wasn't adopted by the Serbian delegation, along with other Russian supporters; thus justifying the actions of Russia as an occupying power in the Crimean Peninsula. Despite the energy dependence on the aggressor, the V-4 countries and the Balkan states are on the side of the rule of law.

The deputy of the Polish Sejm, Malghizhat Gosyivska, presented a report on Russia's actions in the Donbass, with evidence of war crimes committed by the Russian military and pro-Russian separatists, in the European Parliament. The politician prepared testimony of Ukrainian prisoners (both military and civilians) who were imprisoned and tortured by terrorists, for the Hague Tribunal. The shocking materials were intended to show the European politicians the real "face" of the country they wanted to have common interests with.

The start of proceedings in the UN International Court of Justice (ICJ) in Hague in March of 2017, under Ukraine's claims against Russia to counter the financing of terrorism in the Donbas and racial discrimination against the Crimean Tatars drew the attention of the world community to Ukraine again.

The assessment of the situation by the international experts was ambiguous. The rule of law advocates believed that a judicial decision could at least prevent an escalation of the conflict, forcing Russia to bear responsibility for the crimes and negatively affect the image of the neo-imperial state. The sceptics argued that even a positive verdict (in favour of Ukraine) wouldn't return the Crimea to the country and restore peace to the Donbas.

Support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, joint defense activities, and the protection of the rights of representatives of the national diaspora constitute the basis of today's bilateral cooperation. Recently, it has become impossible to consider this block of issues without a visa component. A concrete breakthrough in the solution of this issue was the March approval by the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) of a draft legislative resolution on Ukraine's inclusion in the list of countries whose nationals may travel to EU countries without visas. Only four delegates out of the 44 who were voting, voted against the resolution. The next procedure to be completed by the EU Council will be to decide whether Ukrainians will be able to cross the western border without visas in June 2017.

According to Western and domestic analysts, several European countries, including Hungary, could become an obstacle. Due to fear of influx of labour emigrants and infiltration of criminal elements under the new conditions, more diligent checks at customs should be expected. Once again Poland acted as a distinctive lobbyist for Ukrainian interests. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Witold Waszczykowski, called on the European colleagues not to delay the procedure of visa liberalization and implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement.

Therefore, today it is possible to claim that Ukraine is reaching a new stage in its revival, under the conditions of an existential crisis, in which its population is anxious and focused on questions concerning the meaning of their country's existence, and seeks ways to survive between the East and the West.

"The Heavenly Hundred" (people killed during Euromaidan), occupation of the Crimea, and the growing list of war victims in the East of the country (according to some official figures the country lost over 2.5 thousand defenders of the homeland, and nearly 300 thousand persons were sent to the battle)¹⁹ are unprecedented phenomena in the quarter century since the declaration of independence and the choice of a democratic and peaceful foreign policy by the country. The people of the state showed their readiness for social modernization once again. The decisive step now for the authorities is whether effective reforms will be implemented and whether the formation of political elite under the example of the Czech Republic and Poland will be

gin. Therefore, the international support from Central Europeans is especially important and can be a driving force that can bring the country to a new stage in the development of democratic culture.

Conclusions. Thus, the transformation of the strategic culture of the Post-Communist European states evolves more dynamically than on the rest of the continent. We should seek the reason, not only in the political traditions of the countries, but also in external influences: the Eastern European countries did not depend on the authoritarian regime in the Soviet period for as long as Ukraine did. It should be recognized that the Catholic Church, which neutralized the influence of the Communistic ideology on the political culture of citizens, played an essential role in returning the population of the V4 countries, also Slovenia and Croatia, to the bosom of their natural national guidelines.

The challenge today must be the resuscitation of the national democratic sentiment of Ukrainians, which in various historical times led to attempts to establish their own Ukrainian state and demanded the conclusion of unions with their neighbors in order to strengthen security. The prevalence of love for freedom and patriotism in Ukrainians exacerbated the desire for national unity. Consequently, the consolidation of society on the basis of generally accepted political and cultural values - an integral part of a single geopolitical system, allows us to create a group of reliable partners capable of securing peace at the borders.

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² Radovan Vukadinovic, "South East Europe and European Security Architecture", *Slovenska academia vied*, accessed July 12, 2009, <http://www.sav.sk/journals/mot/full/mo101i.pdf>

³ Oskar Krejčí, *Geopolitics of the Central European region: the view from Prague and Bratislava* (Bratislava: Veda, 2005), 65.

⁴ Володимир Фісанов, "Державність як експеримент і сучасний український контекст", *Наукові записки НаУКМА, Політичні науки* 20 (2002), accessed March, 17, 2004, http://www.nbu.gov.ua/portal/soc_gum/naukma/Polit/2002_20

⁵ *Historia Europy Srodkowo-Wschodniej*, edited by J. Kloczowski, Vol. 1 (Lublin: Instytut Europy Srodkowo-Wschodniej, 2000), 8.

⁶ Алексей Миллер, "Тема Центральной Европы: История, современные дискурсы и место в них России", Research Center "Borderland Society: Past and Present", accessed September, 23, 2010, <http://www.timeandspace.lviv.ua/files/session/Miller3454cb65501418.doc>

⁷ Angela Stent, "The Lands In Between: The New Eastern Europe in the Twenty-First Century", In *The New Eastern Europe: Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova* (Baltimore, Maryland: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2007), 3.

⁸ Олена Донченко та Юрій Романенко, *Архетипи соціального життя і політика. Глибинні регулятиви психополітичного повсякдення* (Київ: Либідь, 2001), 119.

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¹⁰ Марина Воротнюк, "Аудит зовнішньої політики: Україна-Словаччина", Інфор-

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CHAPTER 12

THE SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE AND WESTERN BALKANS IN THE UKRAINIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Iryna Maksymenko and Yulia Maistrenko

At any given time an indispensable feature of Ukrainian leaders' foreign policy was the attempt to guarantee the security of the state and to receive support for its sovereignty and integrity, including through the development of symmetrical relations with neighbouring states. Eastern European countries occupy a specific place in this context: as neighbours they are in the same region, which makes security indivisible for them. Ensuring security through the establishment of friendly relations with neighbouring countries is immanently inherent in the strategic culture of Ukraine. On the other hand, the functional dimension of regional identity continues to develop in Ukraine, which involves the participation of the state in the creation and development of the region to which it belongs; its role in shaping the structure of regional security becomes a vital condition for the national security.¹ The importance of this aspect can be characterized by the words of Zbigniew Brzezinski, who stressed, "Yet if Ukraine is to survive as an independent state, it will have to become part of Central Europe rather than Eurasia, and if it is to be part of Central Europe, then it will have to partake fully of Central Europe's links to NATO and the European Union".² In turn, an independent Ukraine is extremely important for the national and regional security of the Eastern European countries, first of all, Poland and Romania.³ This idea not only became relevant with the collapse of the Soviet Union, but became extremely acute against the background of Russian policy towards Ukraine in 2013-2014. Thus, ensuring Ukraine's security requires the search for new algorithms for cooperation with EU member states and NATO, first of all, rethinking relations between Ukraine and its neighbouring countries in Central and Southeast Europe, as well as the determination of a further strategy of interaction at the bilateral and regional levels. The basic principles of bilateral relations between Ukraine and Bulgaria and Romania were formulated in the first documents of independent Ukraine. They recorded the efforts of the young Ukrainian state to build friendly, equal, and mutually beneficial relations with neighbouring and geographically adjacent countries, to participate in international and regional organizations with the aim of strengthening security and peace, addressing a wide range of issues that are common for the neighbouring countries. Additional impulses for the development of relations

were, first, the implementation of the course for integration into the European Union and NATO, which was the strategic goal of the domestic and foreign policy of the three countries, and secondly, the proximity of interests in the Danube and Black Sea regions. These factors became the basis for the proclamation of Bulgaria and Romania as strategic partners of Ukraine⁴. But despite these factors, in 2000, none of the ordinary Ukrainian citizens polled and only 2% of experts believed that Bulgaria and Romania were among the priority directions for the development of Ukrainian strategic relations.⁵

The Ukrainian-Bulgarian relations are rooted in centuries and they've never included "aggravating circumstances"⁶; they are based on belonging to one Orthodox religion, the community of spiritual culture, and similarity of historical destiny. The latter is connected with the important transit and strategic location of both Ukraine and Bulgaria, their role as a link between Western and Eastern World. This kinship contributed to the fact that on December 5, 1991, the Republic of Bulgaria (RB) was one of the first to recognize Ukraine's independence, it established diplomatic relations within a week, and in October of 1992, unlike its former allies in the USSR, parties signed a basic Treaty on Friendly relations and cooperation. At the same time a lively start and the close trade, economic, cultural and historical ties of two nations did not provide a solid foundation for dynamic relations in the post-bipolar period.

By far, a broad international treaty basis consisting of almost 160 bilateral documents has been created; it governs the development of cooperation in all fields: political, trade, economic, military, technical, interregional, cultural, and humanitarian, etc. Key documents were signed during the 1990s and supplemented in the new millennium, taking into account current changes and needs. Among the key documents, it's worth recalling the Declaration on further development and deepening of cooperation between Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus on March 24, 1998, which has a special significance: it formalized the parties' intentions to develop relations for comprehensive cooperation and strategic partnership, taking into account regional and global interests and the will to cooperate in their implementation. Thereby, directions for integrated collaboration in the major spheres of cooperation were outlined for the long-term perspective: mutual support of the course for integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures, construction of a new European security architecture and regional cooperation in the Black Sea, joint participation and interaction in the construction and operation of trans-regional energy, transport and communication corridors.⁷

Importantly, the relations between the two countries did not depend on the domestic political situation in both countries: the parties have always empha-

sized their mutual interest in developing friendly partnership relations. Despite the common interests and the importance of Bulgaria for Ukraine's access to the Balkans, the bilateral dialogue between the two countries is characterized by scarce communications, both at the top level (only four summits were conducted for the entire period, which is not consistent with the potential of the cooperation and strategic partnership level), as well as at the level of heads of parliaments, governments, and foreign ministries. Mainly, the low dynamics of bilateral relations during the 1990s was due to the following factors: political forces in Ukraine and Bulgaria were primarily focused on domestic issues of an economic and socio-political nature, related to the difficulties of the transitional period; different approaches to foreign policy strategies (a multi-trajectory focus in Ukraine), which led to the dispersion of energy and the loss of an important moment for the declaration of priorities; the dominance of the Balkan and Western European trajectory in Bulgarian politics, where it attempted to position itself as the "Balkan leader".⁸ Among other causes of passivity in bilateral contacts during the 1990s, some mention the low level of knowledge about Ukraine in RB in 1991, along with a popular belief in indirect guilt of the Ukrainian leadership in the collapse of the USSR, seen by the Bulgarian leadership as a guarantor in the relations with Turkey.⁹

In the early 2000's, Bulgaria concentrated fully on the fastest integration into NATO and the EU. After the accession of Bulgaria to the EU in 2007, the dialogue on negotiation and signing of many important documents for effective cooperation almost ceased to exist. The uncertainty of the foreign policy of Ukraine during this period prevented the deepening of cooperation between Kyiv and Sofia in the field of European integration and the realization of bilateral potential. Bulgaria is the major trade partner of Ukraine in the Balkans; however, trade and economic relations between the countries were developing slowly: the scope of turnover increased from 307.6 million USD in 1995 to 672.6 million USD in 2015 (3.2% of total exports and 1.7% - imports of goods), while the exports and imports of services did not exceed 1% and 0.5%. The level of investment cooperation with Bulgaria remains low as well. Differences in the business processes of two countries, the lack of a legislative framework, poor interest from business representatives, and both countries being recipients of foreign capital for modernization and economic development, altogether translate into a low level of economic cooperation.

Said situation has a negative impact on the tourism sector, the development whereof was constrained by the lack of direct transportation links between Ukraine and Bulgaria for a long time. The situation could be improved through mutual support within the regional and all-European projects of

transportation infrastructure, such as: creation of the Black Sea Ring Highway which, if implemented, would boost the development of tourism and trade help intensify people-to-people contacts; the Rhine-Danube corridor and TRACECA - Transport Corridor “Europe - Caucasus - Asia”, which includes, as a component, a ferry line crossing Varna - Ilyichivsk - Poti/Batumi; the “Viking” project, combining different types of transportation networks in Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Lithuania, Romania, and Ukraine.

For a long time the parties ignored the matter of energy cooperation, but today this area is one of the most important ones, given the fact that Ukraine and RB depend on external energy sources, most of which come from Russia. Upon refusal from participation in oil projects “Burgas – Alexandroupolis” and the “South Stream” gas pipeline, the energy policy of RB has been driven by diversification of energy sources, energy efficiency through modernization, the introduction of alternative energy sources, and the deepening of regional cooperation in combination with creating a new interconnectors and liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals for acquisition of the energy resources from the Caspian and Middle East Regions.¹⁰ Bulgaria supports the creation of a new forum, open to the countries of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe – the Danube Energy Initiative, within the framework whereof it is planned to develop large-scale projects on the energy infrastructure and reduce dependence on political tensions between the US, Western Europe, and Russia.¹¹ Such an approach, which allows not only diversification of sources of energy resources, but also suppliers, is extremely important for Ukraine. Therefore, new opportunities are opened to deepen the interaction between Ukraine and all neighbouring countries of Eastern Europe, realizing both the idea of the Baltic-Black Energy Axis and the slogan voiced by President of Bulgaria Rosen Plevneliev in Kyiv: ‘We stand together, and together we are strong’.¹²

Awareness of the history and culture of the two nations is an important step towards improving mutual understanding and trust, which indirectly impacts their perceptions of one another from the point of security. In this direction, Ukrainian-Bulgarian relations have a positive experience in inter-regional and humanitarian cooperation, which contributes to the intensification of trade and economic collaboration, extension of people-to-people contacts, and development of relations in the fields of education, science, culture, and tourism. The development of cultural and humanitarian relations between Ukraine and Bulgaria is described in terms of the positive dynamics. They are based on traditional cultural ties and the presence of the Ukrainian Diaspora in Bulgaria (1.79 thousand ethnic Ukrainians according to the census in 2011),

and the largest Bulgarian Diaspora abroad in Ukraine (204.5 thousand people, mainly in the Odesa and Zaporizhia regions). The cooperation is mainly implemented through joint cultural events aimed at maintaining friendly relations and disseminating information about Ukraine and its history directly to Bulgaria and indirectly in other SEE countries and the EU in general.

During the 2000's, the most notable dynamics were seen in contacts between the two countries within the international and regional organizations. Bulgaria supported the accession of Ukraine to the Council of Europe and the WTO, both countries cooperate closely within the OSCE and NATO's "Partnership for Peace", CEI, and BSEC. Of particular importance is the relationship between Kiev and Sofia in the context of the signing of the Association Agreement with the EU in June 2014. Bulgaria continuously supported Ukraine's course towards European integration, as was demonstrated by Sofia via ratification of the Association Agreement with the EU in July 2014. Thus, specifically within the framework of the multilateral projects in the transport and energy sectors, as well as regional initiatives and structures, the cooperation between Ukraine and Bulgaria is expected to increase in its efficiency and effectiveness. Bulgaria already provides Ukraine with advice in the energy and tourism spheres; infrastructure projects (like the construction of a new road connecting Ukraine, Romania and Bulgaria, which serves as a "symbol of friendship",¹³ the development of river transport and the connection of Danube and Dnipro rivers with the prospect of creating a waterway E-70 Black Sea - Dnipro - Pripjat - Vistula) are currently under development. Ukraine's accession to the regional cooperation programs, within the framework of the Danube Strategy of the EU is promising, in which Bulgaria, together with Romania, is in charge of projects to increase cruise shipping, to create a common tourism product, the flow of green, religious, recreational and wine tourism. Bilateral military-technical and defence cooperation, as well as partnership and the deepening of cooperation in the field of European and Euro-Atlantic integration, were on the agenda during the 1990-2000s. The major areas of military and technical cooperation are the exchange of experience in the establishment and management of the armed forces, the structural reform of the security sector, and exchange of best practices, the organization and conduct of humanitarian operations, and the build-up of regional security system, etc. In the 2000s, Ukraine paid special attention to the expansion of the military and political regional cooperation. In 2001, Ukraine, Bulgaria and Romania were among the founders of the Black Sea Naval Co-operation Task Group (BLACKSEAFOR); in April 2002, Kyiv initiated the signing of the Document on Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs) in

the Naval Field in the Black Sea, which aimed at recognizing direct connection between security in the Black Sea Region and all-European and international security in general. Also, Kyiv, Sofia, and Bucharest have been working together within the framework of Operation “Black Sea Harmony”. Under the support of RB, Ukrainian military officers participate in the Black Sea Border Information and Documentation Centre, established in October 2004, and the Council of Defence Ministers of the SEE. Ukrainian observers are also included in the Southeast Brigade SEEBRIG, which is part of the South-Eastern Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG)/ Multinational Peace Force South-Eastern Europe (MPFSEE), which operates under the supervision of the NATO or EU and may be deployed in peace making and peacekeeping operations of the UN and the OSCE. Since 2014, a special unit of the Ukrainian armed forces has been taking part in the duties of the southern division of the EU Rapid Reaction Force Battle Group (HELBROC). The matter of Ukraine’s accession to the implementation of the initiative for the creation of a new model of regional cooperation in the field of defence in South East Europe, South-East European Defence Cooperation (SEDEFECO), intended to be focused on the implementation of specific projects open for participation, the improvement of defence capabilities, and cooperation in the region, is still a topic of discussion.

Ukraine and Bulgaria have a common view on conflicts, territorial integrity, sovereignty and the right of each country to choose its future at will. RB holds an active stance on the Crimea and the conflict in the East of Ukraine. At the UN General Assembly session, president Plevneliev pronounced that annexation of Crimea is a flagrant violation of international law and its principles. He also underlined the responsibility of the signatories to the Budapest Memorandum and the importance of abidance by its commitments. The vote of Bulgaria in the UN, NATO, and EU - “is with the protection of Ukraine and peace,” - said Plevneliev. Active efforts of the Bulgarian president to support Ukraine against the backdrop of Russia’s aggressive policy earned him the title of the “Man of the Year 2015”.¹⁴ Within this approach, Bulgaria took leadership of the NATO Trust Fund for the rehabilitation of Ukrainian military men from the ATO zone, as well as the conduct of trainings for the Ukrainian army’s representatives.¹⁵

As opposed to the Ukrainian-Bulgarian relations, *relations between Ukraine and Romania* within the 25 years after the proclamation of the Ukrainian independence were controversial and uneven. On one hand, Romania recognized the independence of Ukraine on January 8, 1992 (by the way, the last among the neighbouring countries) and established diplomatic rela-

tions on February 1 of the same year. On the other hand, in Romania, negative perception of Ukraine is widespread, supported by several radical political parties and media. Romanian policy towards Ukraine was determined by the fundamental factors of the strategic thinking within the Romanian political establishment. First, an integral part of the foreign policy of the Romanian state in the XX-XXI centuries was the solution of the “territorial issue” and fight for the expansion of borders - the return of the “Greater Romania”.¹⁶ Secondly, with the end of the Cold War in Romanian strategic culture new features are emerging: the absolute paradigm of foreign and security policy has been integration into NATO and the EU, now there has been a high level of ambition on the role of Romania in the region and in Europe as a whole, domination in foreign policy security and defence considerations (especially in terms of perceptions of threats), Russia’s perception of Russia as a major threat to regional instability.¹⁷

Ukraine immediately recognized the strategic partnership with Romania as an important objective of its foreign policy, determined by objective factors: lengthy common state border, presence of the national minorities of the other party in both countries, significant reserves and potential in the field of trade and economic cooperation, common interests related to political and economic collaboration in the Black Sea Region, as well as EU integration. However, the multidirectional policy of Ukraine, continuous uncertainty of integration into NATO, and the attempts to develop close relations with Russia affected the dynamics and nature of Ukrainian-Romanian relations.

Today, interstate relations are governed by 45 statutory instruments. Within 1991-1996 the development of constructive dialogue was restrained because of the Romanian territorial claims, which were dismissed due to a clear and unconditional position of the Ukrainian authorities on the territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of Ukraine and neighbouring countries, as well as Romania’s strive to get a candidate status for membership in the NATO and EU.

In 1995, Bucharest proclaimed the political and economic importance of Ukraine for Romania, which contributed to the completion of the preparation and signing of the Treaty on Principles of Good-Neighbourliness and Cooperation between Ukraine and Romania in June 1997 combined with mitigation of other issues (demarcation and delimitation of the border, national minority issues, religious issues, waterborne traffic in the Danube delta, completion of a joint project - Central Mining and Processing Plant in Kryvyi Rih). Riding on this wave the parties achieved success in regional communication (discussing the idea on creation of a Baltic-Black Sea axis, creation of BSEC in 1998, Euro-regions of the Lower Danube in 1998 and Upper Prut in 2000). A

meeting of the Presidents of Ukraine and Romania followed by the signing of the above-mentioned agreement was the only official visit of Leonid Kuchma to Romania during the 1990s. The President of Romania has also paid only one visit to Ukraine - in May 1999. The number of summits increased after 2005, but since 2008 Ukrainian and Romanian presidents have had almost no interactions. The level of intergovernmental and inter-parliamentary contacts throughout the whole period of Ukraine's independence was also low. Upon electing Poroshenko as the President of Ukraine the political dialogue intensified - the leaders of the two countries paid official visits and held several meetings during international events. Romania became the first state to ratify the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine, and actively supported Ukraine at the international level after the annexation of the Crimea.

Trade and economic relations between Ukraine and Romania have neither been stable nor productive. The value of turnover fluctuated constantly: 318.8 million USD in 1995, 227.54 million USD in 2000, 1 388.1 million USD in 2010 and 569.9 million USD in 2015 (4.4% and 2.1% of total exports and imports, accordingly). The level of trade in services is extremely low (0.24% and 0.17% of the total exports and imports of services, respectively) and investment cooperation (from 0.0% in 1995 to 0.04% at the beginning of 2016). These modest indicators were the result of the flawed commodity structure in bilateral trade, dominated by products with low added value (ferrous metals, ores, mineral fuel, oil and refining products).

Energy cooperation is still a promising area of cooperation. Romania is one of the suppliers of petroleum products in Ukraine, which has the potential for further energy cooperation (joint projects for the production of hydrocarbons at the Black Sea shelf, investment and support for international companies, development of projects for the extraction of gas hydrates are prospectively seen as a source for diversification of energy sources in the future). Ukraine also invited Romania to build interconnectors between the gas transportation systems of the two countries.

Low efficiency of the whole complex of bilateral relations is both the cause and effect of the lack of progress in resolving conflicts and transformation of their basis into additional factors for mutually beneficial cooperation. Moreover, they created the foundation for mutual suspicion and distrust, and occasionally the actions of the Romanian party exacerbated the situation. A graphic example is the official Bucharest policies on border issues, navigation on the Danube River and national minorities.

Even on the eve of the referendum on the independence of Ukraine, Romanian authorities urged the ethnic Romanians, residents of Chernivtsi and

Odessa regions (the so-called “lost territories” - northern Bukovina and southern Bessarabia) not to participate in the vote. Then Bucharest unilaterally denounced a number of Soviet-Romanian agreements determining the line of Ukrainian-Romanian border and ownership of the Snake Island.¹⁸ Guided by the main paradigm of the foreign policy - integration into the NATO and EU - Romania signed a basic agreement recognizing the inviolability of the existing border between the two countries. At the same time, Romania insisted on a separate consideration of the border regime between the states and the delimitation of the continental shelf and special economic zones in the Black Sea. The signing of the Romanian-Ukrainian State Border Regime, Collaboration and Mutual Assistance on Border Matters (June 2003) was promoted by virtue of the Romania’s preparation to join NATO in 2004. Under the agreement, the parties recognized the State border in accordance with the articles of the Treaty between the USSR and Romanian People’s Republic as of 1961 and other documents as of 16 July 1990, determining the permanent boundaries of the territorial sea (12 nautical mile) as well as sealing the immutability of the state border, unless the contractual parties agree otherwise¹⁹. But the Romanian politicians did not consider this agreement as satisfying their plans and submitted a claim to the International Court in September 2004. Bucharest’s assertion in challenging the status of the Snake Island was explained by a significant part of the shelf that was rich in energy supplies and special economic zones around it which would be possessed by Romania as a result. In February 2009 the International Court decided as follows: the Snake Island was recognized as an island, Ukraine received a 12-mile zone, but special economic zone around the island was divided between Ukraine and Romania in the ratio of 1 to 3. Thus, this issue was resolved, although Romania is still trying to review other disputable parts of the border: the area of Rakhiv and Tyachiv Districts (Trans-Carpathian region) on the Ukraine-Romania border, which runs through the middle of the river-bed of the Tisza River and changes due to floods, as well as five islands in the mouth of the Danube River. As for the islands, this issue has an economic background, as according to the Romanian party navigable channels of the river and the size of the special economic zone should be measured depending on their affiliation. Similarly, Bucharest is guided by the economic factors in the matter of renewal of the deep water part of the navigable transit traffic lane “Danube - Black Sea”, which is an alternative to the Romanian channels. Therefore, officially the territorial issues between the two countries were solved, but some Romanian politicians and some of the general public believe that Romanian lands belong to Ukraine unlawfully.

An important role in relations between Kyiv and Bucharest is played by the ethnic minority issue: numerous Romanian (151 000 people) and Moldovan (258 600 people) minorities live in Ukraine (the latter are not recognized by the Romanian official circles and considered to be Bessarabian Romanians).²⁰ In the early 1990's Romanian politicians tried to apply the concept of building a "shared cultural space". Thereupon, the policy of Kyiv regarding the Romanian minority in Ukraine was sharply criticized at the international level without any reliable arguments²¹. The situation with the Ukrainian minority, making up from 57 to 200 thousand people under different estimates, is rather complex. Although most of the Ukrainians in Romania live in the border areas next to the Trans-Carpathian and Chernivtsi Regions, there is no educational establishment in Romania teaching all subjects in Ukrainian from the first to the graduate year, there are problems with the allocation of radio and TV broadcasting time for Ukrainian-language programs, pro-Romanian youth organizations remain very active. Another tool of Romanian politicians in their support for the Romanian Diaspora as an important element of the Romanian identity is a simplified procedure for issuing Romanian passports to Ukrainian citizens, restoration of Bessarabian Metropolis of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Kamyshovka Village (Odesa Region) with the prospect of transferring Episcopal departments to other cities (Khotyn, Izmail, Bilhorod-Dnistrovskiy). Those steps are of concern in Ukraine, as they create the grounds for possible revision of the status of the southern Bessarabia and Bukovina in the future²².

Cross-border cooperation in the framework of European regions of the Lower Danube, Upper Prut and the Carpathians did not help to resolve these issues. For a long time, due to lack of funds the joint development strategy for the Euro-regions of the Lower Danube and Upper Prut existed mostly *de jure*. After Romania's accession to the EU in January 2007 and implementation of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Romania – Ukraine – Republic of Moldova" under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument the Euro-regions were raised to a new level: institutionalization of the Lower Danube Euro-region was completed, a number of joint projects in the environment protection, water management and flood prevention, and support for small and medium businesses were implemented. There are important areas of cross-border cooperation remaining on the agenda, intended to promote the convergence between the two peoples and implementation of Ukraine's European integration policy at the regional level, including the following: awareness of the investment potential of the parties, development of tourism, maintenance of cultural ties and preservation of shared cultural

values, improvement of transport infrastructure and transport links between the countries. These issues returned to the agenda of relations between Kyiv and Bucharest only in 2014-2015. But there have already been some positive changes: local border traffic was initiated, new check-points at the border opened, direct railway connection from Kyiv to Bucharest resumed, bus routes established, an agreement was reached on resuming direct flights and a build-up of transportation between Ukraine and Romania in the Danube delta, particularly, the construction of new bridges.²³

Regional interaction is one of the most promising areas of cooperation between Ukraine and Romania which has not been implemented to its full potential by either country. After becoming a member in NATO and EU, Romanian politicians defined a new approach to the role of Romania focusing on strengthening its leadership position in the region of SEE and the Black Sea, achieving the status of guiding force in the Black Sea policy within the EU and NATO. Based on the new tasks, the Romanian leadership became actively involved in the regional and Black Sea cooperation, taking on responsibility for strengthening the democracy in the former Soviet republics. At first Romania supported Yushchenko during his presidential elections in Ukraine in late 2004, welcomed the establishment of the Community of Democratic Choice (December 2005) and strengthening of the BSEC role, then actively participated in the GUAM summit in Kyiv in May 2006 during which the Forum was transformed into the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development ODED-GUAM, and initiated creation of the Black Sea Forum in June 2006.

Sharp criticism of these processes by Russia actualized the sense of danger for the Romanian state. Today Russian policy revives Romanian fears of being turned into a “grey zone” which originated in the early 1990’s, as well as a threat to the Romanian state through the militarization of Crimea and promotion of the “Novorossiya” project being a threat to the Romanian national minority in the South-Western part of Ukraine and Moldova. According to the polls, at the beginning of 2015 66% of Romanian citizens negatively perceived Russia and 64% of respondents perceived war in Ukraine as a threat to Romania.²⁴ Romanian President Iohannis publicly announced that Russia was directly involved in arming militants in the Eastern Ukraine and did not use its influence to resolve the conflict.²⁵ Therefore, today Romania makes efforts to enforce its own security through the measures described below.

Firstly, it provides comprehensive support to Ukraine, recognizing the unlawfulness of the referendum and Crimea annexation, condemning Russia’s actions in the Donbas, and providing practical military and technical assistance within the context of the opposition to military aggression of Russia (it

was the first to apply the term “military aggression” in the NATO’s statements concerning military actions of Russia against Ukraine), contributing to the Ukraine - NATO Trust Fund for the issues of cyber security, signing agreements on joint patrols at the Ukrainian-Romanian border and cooperation in the area of military trafficking, taking part in monitoring the security situation in Ukraine as a part of the OSCE mission in the East of Ukraine and taking charge of the monitoring group in Chernivtsi.²⁶

Secondly, Bucharest is initiating projects under the regular military cooperation and improvement of “soft” security instruments (the fight against corruption and organized crime, cyber security, data security, energy and economic independence from Russia). The main purpose of these steps is to prevent Russian attempts to destabilize the state at the Eastern borders of the EU and to prevent Romania from isolation.²⁷ One of the said projects involves the creation of a joint NATO fleet in the Black Sea with the participation of Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey. If NATO approves this proposal, Ukraine would be ready to join it. It will transform Ukraine into a coherent regional security link in Eastern Europe. A joint team UkrLitPolBrig as well as the implementation of the ideas of the President of Ukraine on the creation of such military brigade jointly with Romania and Bulgaria, is to promote this process.²⁸

So today, both countries are extremely interested in a radical renewal of relations between Kyiv and Bucharest. The events of 2014 gave a boost to the first change in mutual perception of both nations proclaiming the “reboot” of bilateral relations and strengthening of bilateral cooperation, including that via the enhanced regional formats (particularly, “solidarity group” – triangle “Poland – Ukraine – Romania”). According to the research conducted in 2015, 41% of surveyed Romanians have a positive attitude to Ukraine, but 48% of Romanians expressed “negative feelings towards Ukraine”. The main reason for the negative attitude is the division of the country to pro-European and pro-Russian parts, insufficient level of European identity. However, 30% of Ukrainian respondents perceive Romania positively, 58% - neutrally and only 7% - negatively.²⁹ Improvement of Romania’s image in Ukraine is related to a definite position of the Romanian state concerning the Russian aggression against Ukraine and active support of the Ukrainian position at the international level and assistance within NATO.

Western Balkans states (WBS) were developing in almost the same historical conditions as Ukraine, thus the strategic culture of these countries has similar features. Countries of WB in different periods of their development were under the rule of other states as well as Ukraine. Thus, beginning from the 20’s – 30’s of XI century Serbian state entities – Raska, Zachlunia, Zeta

(Montenegro) were under the Bulgarian rule for a short period, then became a vassal of Byzantium. Due to the successful attempts of Stefan Nemanja to unify Serbian state entities at the end of the XII century, Serbia became an important factor of political life in the Balkans. WBS, like Ukraine, at different stages of their historical development tried to find support from the mightier countries. In 1208 Stefan Nemanja married a second time taking a Venetian princess for a wife. Orientation towards the West proved to be beneficial, and in 1217 Stefan received a crown from Pope Innocent III upon gaining his support. During the reign of Dusan the medieval Serbia reached the peak of its development: Bulgaria was completely dependent on its will, Byzantium was seeking its support, Venice was happy to be allies with it. But after the battle of Kosovo (1389) Serbia became a vassal of the Turkish sultan. Serbia, like Ukraine, was squeezed between two powerful aggressive neighbours, in its case they were Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. Serbia wasn't able to pursue an independent policy and became a victim of the clash of other states' interests. Similarly, in the years of independence the rulers of Bosnia tried to find compromise with the rulers of more powerful nations; Croatia sought support of more powerful neighbours, and entered a union with Hungary in 1102. In the middle of the XV century Croatian rulers tried to use the Habsburgs to counter the Turkish expansion. Since 1797 till 1815 Istria, Dalmatia and Dubrovnik belonged to Austria.³⁰ WBS and Ukraine also have a common Communist past and the proclamation of independence in the early 1990s. Ukraine is going through the same stages in the political transformation as WBS, also experiencing political and systemic crisis under the conditions of armed conflict. Despite the similarity of historical lessons, or perhaps because of it, Ukraine and WBS did not develop strong political ties and the countries do not live up to the existing potential in the economic sphere. When considering the relations between Ukraine and WBS in the early 1990s, it should be mentioned, that in this period the independence of said countries was only being established as well as their foreign policy.

The Yugoslav crisis directly affected the formation of Ukrainian foreign policy concept. Events in the Balkans forced the Ukrainian leadership to form a clear attitude towards the ethnic conflicts within the country and abroad. Ukraine's participation in the peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the UN in the Balkans in 1992 launched a peacekeeping history of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Ukraine supported the resolution of the Yugoslav conflict through negotiations and under the mediation of the United Nations.

During the 1990's there were no active relations between Ukraine and WBS; the changes began after the launch of NATO military operations in Yu-

goslavia on March 24th, 1999. The mediation initiative of Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma was published in the first few hours of the Kosovo conflict.³¹ Ukraine's position was based on the fact that the controversial international issues should not be resolved by force, but only through negotiations. It was unacceptable for the governments to restrict and violate the rights of their own citizens or use violence against them. Finally, the use of force without a corresponding resolution of the UN Security Council was recognized as intolerable. The Ukrainian party proposed to solve the conflict in three stages, in particular: 1) synchronized cessation of all hostilities, 2) the return of refugees under the protection of peacekeepers and launch of OSCE humanitarian mission, 3) convening a peace conference in the capital of one of the neutral states. In 1999 Ukraine, under the presidential decrees, sent an international peacekeeping mission 800 people strong to support peacekeeping operations in Kosovo and sent peacekeeping personnel of 30 people to the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

In the political dialogue between Croatia and Ukraine there are no problematic issues that allowed them to bring their relations to a qualitatively new level. The Sabor Republic of Croatia recognized the independence of Ukraine in December 1991.³² In turn, Ukraine was the first UN-member country, which recognized the independence of Croatia on December 11th, 1991.³³ Diplomatic relations between Ukraine and the Republic of Albania were established on January 13th, 1993.³⁴ In 1993 Ukraine recognized independence of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), on April 20th, 1995 establishing diplomatic relations with it, and in 2000 signed a Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation. In 2001 the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine ratified the "Consular Convention between Ukraine and the Republic of Macedonia" and signed a number of agreements on mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields. Ukrainian-Macedonian relations were intensified in the early 2000s, when the Balkan direction of Ukraine's foreign policy was enhanced, especially in connection with Ukraine's participation in peacekeeping operations in the region. Presiding in the UN Security Council in March 2001, Ukraine expressed support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Macedonia. Ukraine supported FYROM in peaceful resolution of the ethnic conflict. The relations between Ukraine and Macedonia were developing under the conditions of constructive cooperation as one of the elements of the course towards the political and economic convergence with the countries of the Balkan region within the framework of the European integration.³⁵ Ukraine recognized the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina on October 12th, 1992; and the diplomatic relations were established on December 20th, 1995.³⁶ Development of diplomatic rela-

tions between Ukraine and Bosnia and Herzegovina was deferred due to the interethnic tensions and the uncertain status of B&H in the Balkan region. Diplomatic relations between Kyiv and Sarajevo were established on December 20th, 1995.³⁷ Political dialogue between Ukraine and Serbia started progressing after Kostunica initiated democratic changes in Yugoslavia in 2000, replacing Milosevic as the president of the FRY.³⁸ After gaining independence on June 3rd, 2006, Montenegro opened a new page in bilateral relations with Ukraine; in 2008 Ukrainian Embassy was opened in Podgorica.³⁹

Among the priorities of bilateral relations, the cooperation in cultural and educational spheres should be mentioned. It developed rapidly because the material, spiritual culture of the peoples in WBS has much in common with the Ukrainian culture. Thus, the agreements on cooperation between Kiev and Belgrade Universities, Chernivtsi, and Novi Sad Universities were signed. Croatia regularly hosts Ukrainian art exhibitions, literature presentations, concerts and other events, and books by Ukrainian authors are published in Croatian. The subject of special pride is the Department of Ukrainian language and literature, opened in Zagreb in 2001.⁴⁰ Croatian students visit Ukraine for language practice in partner universities – Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. By virtue of the cooperation between the Ukrainian and Croatian universities, and appropriate contractual and legal basis between the Ministries of Education of the two countries, Ukrainian philologists also have the opportunity to extend their knowledge of the Croatian language and literature interning at the University of Zagreb. Speaking of B&H, cooperation was established between the University of Banja Luka and higher educational institutions of Ukraine, Chernivtsy University (agreement as of 1996), National Technical University of Ukraine “Kyiv Polytechnic Institute” (agreement as of 2004); Sarajevo University and Karazin Kharkiv National University (agreement as of 2012) joined the cooperation as well.⁴¹

A special place in bilateral relations is the Ukrainian-Ruthenes minority in Serbia (about 5.5 thousand citizens). The meetings of the Ukrainian leadership and the representatives of the Ukrainian Diaspora are held in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina – a place of residence of the Ukrainian and Ruthenes ethnic communities (cities of Kula, Vrbas and Novi Sad). The Ukrainian community in Serbia lately has become more organized. Ukrainian schools, summer camps, radio and TV broadcasting, and publishing companies have been established in the country with state support. In addition, there are five local cultural communities in Serbia and the highest representative body – the Ukrainian National Council of Serbia and Montenegro. A milestone for

the Ukrainians in Serbia was assigning Ukrainian language the status of a regional language and minority language in July 2006 which allowed for the Ukrainians to use their own language in identification documents and local self-government in Serbia. In Ukraine, the Serbian minority is represented by a small community residing mainly in Kirovohrad and Lugansk regions. Under the auspices of previously established Ukrainian-Serbian community “Saint Sava” the International NGO “United Serbian Diaspora of Eurasia” was organized in Kyiv in May 2008 becoming a bridge for connecting Serbia and the countries of CIS in the cultural, spiritual, historical and economic sphere, initiating many business, political, humanitarian activities, and organizing meetings between the politicians, businessmen and cultural figures.⁴²

Ukrainians and Ruthenes in Croatia belong to the most ancient Ukrainian Diaspora in the world. In the middle of the XVIII century immigrants from the Carpathian regions of Slovakia under the name “Ruthenes” arrived to the territory of Vojvodina (Serbia), and then moved to Eastern Slavonia (Croatia). In the late XIX - early XX century Ukrainians from Galicia, which at that time was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, moved to Posaviny (eastern Croatia) and northern Bosnia, and then – to other areas of modern Croatia. Ukrainian migration in the late XIX - early XX century was caused by economic conditions and by the attempt of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to populate this land by Christians after annexation of Bosnia.⁴³ The Ukrainian community conducts various activities, such as organizing annual Ukrainian summer schools for children. The Diaspora is publishing a few magazines – “Herald”, “Our Newspaper”, “New thought”, and “The views of the Danube” almanac in Ukrainian. Ukrainian and Ruthene Diasporas receive massive financial support for their activities from the state; having the right to elect their representative into the parliament.⁴⁴

In the economic sphere the cooperation between Croatia and Ukraine is as follows: in 2015 the value of bilateral trade amounted to 41 million USD and decreased compared to 2014 by 53%; bilateral trade balance was generally positive for Ukraine and amounted to 11 million USD. The structure of commodity exports from Ukraine was dominated by ferrous metals (62% of total exports in monetary value), wood and wood products (8%). The structure of commodity imports to Ukraine was characterized by a predominance of equipment for nuclear power plants (35%), pharmaceuticals (11%), plastics and polymeric materials (9%).⁴⁵ Generally speaking, the trade turnover between the countries went down primarily due to the events in Ukraine.

In 2015 the general trade volume of goods and services between Ukraine and Macedonia decreased as compared to 2014 by 59% (37 million USD) and

amounted to 26 million USD, with surplus amounting to 0.3 million USD. The base of Ukrainian exports to Macedonia comprised of ferrous metals - 68% (cold-rolled and hot-rolled products, hot-rolled rods); copper and copperware - 12%; nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery - 6%. The base of Macedonian import to Ukraine in 2015 comprised of tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes - 42% of the total volume; electrical machinery - 34%.⁴⁶

Ukraine is the key trade partner for B&H among the post-Soviet republics, but the volume of trade turnover is relatively low. In 2015 total trade volume between Ukraine and B&H amounted to 17.134 million USD. The balance of bilateral trade in goods was positive for Bosnian party and amounted to 2 million USD. The structure of imports from B&H to Ukraine is dominated by pharmaceuticals (46%), oil refining products and coal (20%).⁴⁷

For 2015 the trade turnover between Ukraine and Albania amounted to 20.6 million USD. Positive balance for Ukraine amounted to 15.6 million USD. There was some growth in Albanian imports, especially with regard to ferrous metals, plastics, polymers. The total value of imported ferrous metals during this period amounted to 0.9 million USD. When analysing the structure of export and import transactions, one can notice the absence of significant fluctuations in the volume of the main components of Ukrainian exports (fertilizers (46%), ferrous metals (40%) and fats and oils of animal or vegetable origin (9%)).⁴⁸

In the political sphere the WBS are of insignificant importance for the Ukrainian strategy. Ukraine cooperates with Serbia within the framework of such organizations as UNESCO, PACE, OSCE, CEI, BSEC, Danube Commission, and the Regional Cooperation Council.⁴⁹ Ukraine is actively developing cooperation with Serbia at the regional level. There is a number of agreements in force in this area: Protocol of Intent to Promote Bilateral Cooperation Between Chortkiv District of Ternopil Region (Ukraine) and the Kula community of Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (Republic of Serbia); Agreement between the Kyiv Regional State Administration of Ukraine and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina in Serbia and Montenegro on Trade and Economic, Scientific and Technical and Cultural Cooperation. Ukraine and Croatia adhere to a pan-European trend of essential decentralization and promotion of interregional ties. Throughout 2010 arrangements were made for the organization of cooperation between Ukrainian and Croatian local authorities and local governments. From our point of view, relatively weak political ties are explained by the fact that both Ukraine and WBS tend to seek a strong partner and rely on it, while considering each other too weak for this purpose.

Conclusions. Ukrainian-Romanian relations were complex and uneven. Stereotypes (“aggressive expansionary Romania”, Ukraine as a failed state and the “shadow of Russia”) as well as issues of historical and ethnic character did not contribute to the development of strategic relations. Neither Ukraine nor Romania developed a holistic view of international relations stipulated in conceptual form. There were also no policy documents for an integrated approach to solving problematic issues. Relations between Romania and Ukraine and prospects for their development are viewed ambiguously in both countries: from critical to positive. Upon combining all opinions and approaches to relations between Kyiv and Bucharest, the following conclusion can be made: Romania is simultaneously strong, clearly focused on own national interests and a goal-oriented competitor of Ukraine (in some matters), as well as its ally, potentially one of the most important strategic partners in Eastern Europe and the Black Sea Region. Over the past two years, a fundamental decision on reorganization of relations was made at the bilateral level. However, one should not expect the rapid establishment of either good-neighbourly or strategic relations; considering the fact that the priority directions for Kyiv and Bucharest nowadays are security and defence, the attention should be focused on establishing a strategic alliance of “Ukraine – Romania” for the implementation of joint security initiatives, given that Ukraine and Romania are neighbouring countries and a matter of security for one is a matter of security for another. Additional opportunities are opening in the context of Ukraine and Moldova approaching the EU, which is perceived by Romania as a guarantee for stability and security in the region. That is why Romania has announced its desire to take a more prominent part in supporting the member countries of the “Eastern Partnership”, especially Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine. Against this background, Romania has offered Ukraine another option for the extension of multilateral cooperation within the “triangle” – Romania-Moldova-Ukraine – for the purpose of enhancing the economic potential of the region (said initiative was announced in October 2014). One of the issues contributing to the safety and positive cooperation is the coordination of policies of the three states in the settlement of the Transnistrian border customs issue, which remains a cause of instability due to the presence of the Russian armed forces on the territory of the unrecognized Republic of Transnistria. Romania is ready to support Ukraine in the process of internal reforms necessary to fulfil its obligations under the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and for NATO membership, which could be an important basis for achieving progress in bilateral relations. It is clear that the prospect of Ukrainian-Romanian relations will depend on Ukraine’s

success in the implementation of the Association Agreement with the EU and the success of reform. However, the active participation of Ukrainian state in the regional and European projects under Romania and Bulgaria's support will serve to stabilize the situation and give an additional impetus to the accelerated modernization of Ukraine.

When considering the prospects of Ukrainian-Bulgarian relations, the following factors should be taken into account. Traditionally the foreign policy interests of Bulgaria were focused on the European and Balkan directions; this is where Bulgaria sees the prospects for stabilization and modernization. On the other hand, there is no consensus with regard to Russia among the Bulgarian political establishment; which causes Bulgaria to apply precautionary approach to extension of military cooperation and a NATO presence in the Black Sea. Imperatives of Sofia's foreign policy include obtaining financial and technical assistance for the promotion of national interests in the energy sphere and the development of the economy and infrastructure. In this context, the words of the Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov are important, 'Russia and Bulgaria have two levels of relations – historical relations that are immune to external influences and political relations affected by the current events'. Russia continues to occupy a significant place in the foreign and energy policy of Bulgaria. Within described strategic scope, Bulgaria is considering relations with Ukraine. However, the most important characteristic of the new strategic culture of Bulgaria is the full identification of Bulgarian foreign policy and security interests and objectives on the regional and global level with the interests and goals of EU and NATO. The signing of the Association Agreement with the EU, creation of Free Trade Zone between Ukraine and the EU creates additional opportunities for the implementation of the existing potential of Ukrainian-Bulgarian relations, particularly in the area of modernization of Bulgaria's energy complex, communications, and tourism. Ukraine's withdrawal from non-aligned status will create additional opportunities for the development of military-political cooperation at the bilateral and regional levels. At the same time, Bulgaria believes that interaction within the framework of the Black Sea region has fallen into a deadlock after the annexation of the Crimea and the support of insurgent units in the East of Ukraine, and plans to focus on defence cooperation in the SEE. Thus, further development of Ukrainian-Bulgarian relations will depend on how successfully Ukraine will be able to integrate into the projects and initiatives of the EU and SEE, which will imbue the declared strategic partnership between Ukraine and Bulgaria with real significance.

As for the Western Balkans region, today Ukraine and the WBS do not utilize all the existing potential of cooperation. Ukraine and the WBS have fi-

nally chosen their foreign policy trajectory: integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic structures, so it's practicable for Ukraine to analyse the experience of WBS, which has achieved significant results in this sphere. Equally important is their experience in conflict mitigation. As for the economy, the recent trade turnover has decreased due to the events in Ukraine and the world economic crisis. In the long run, economic cooperation can be a link that will also help to strengthen the political dialogue between the states.

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CONCLUSIONS

The events of 2013-2017 underscore the peculiarities of Ukrainian influence on the development of an effective security strategy for the state. Getting cosier with NATO one day, and then with Russia another, did not contribute to the preservation of peace within Ukrainian lands. The suicidal bifurcation of Ukraine's policy reflected one of the most acute problems: where should Ukraine actually be? The strategic culture, characteristic of Ukrainians, led to Ukraine's unpreparedness to Russia's "hybrid war" alone. Thus, the development of the "hard security" sector, one of the most characteristic features of masculine strategic culture, is a significant task for Ukraine's contemporary political elites.

The concept of a strategic culture is especially important for understanding the "security portrait of a state". This category is connected to the notion of "political culture", but differs from the focus on the study of "hard power" and its role in shaping state's outlooks. The fact that this problem remained beyond the attention of those studying Ukraine's foreign policy is not surprising. Not only because the strategic culture of Ukraine, as well as Ukrainian nation itself, is still being developed. But also because Ukraine has traditionally used less of the "hard power" tools, instead favouring those of "soft power". Ukraine has demonstrated so-called "feminine" features of strategic culture. The security policy has historically made diplomacy the most active method in shaping the nation. The search for a powerful partner-state has become a fundamental feature of the Ukraine's strategic culture. This frequently led to asymmetric partnerships like the "patron-client" relationship. At the same time, the permanent search for the increase of freedoms from the patron was a second historic feature, if it was limiting Ukraine's rights.

At the beginning of its history as an independent state, Ukraine, under the pressure of circumstances and the international community, abandoned the development of hard-core nuclear weapons. Instead, it chose to turn its nuclear arsenal into a mechanism for obtaining certain political and economic dividends for itself. The priority issues at that point appeared such as Russia's recognition of Crimea being part of Ukraine, delimitation of borders, and the economic indebtedness of Kyiv to Moscow. It appeared that giving up nuclear weapons, the basis of Ukraine's hard power, was the right decision. However, the security assurances given to Ukraine by the nuclear powers created an illusion of complete security in Kyiv. The Budapest memorandum undermined attention to hard power as a pillar for providing for Ukraine's security, which should have been a natural thing to do for any country. The loss of nuclear weapons pushed Ukrainian political elites towards neglecting conventional deterrence and mili-

tary forces in general. Even in the Military doctrine of 2012, it is stated that the main method of preventing a military conflict is not military deterrence, but a combination of political and diplomatic actions.

One of the main indicators of this was growing cooperation with NATO, as NATO was seen as the most effective military-political blocs of our time. Paradoxically, this growing rapprochement between Ukraine and NATO, even with multi-year lapses in it, provoked Moscow's aggressive policies towards Kyiv, which has ranged from diplomatic pressure to energy blackmail. As a result of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine in 2014, which included the annexation of Crimea and the waging of a so-called "hybrid war" in the Donbas, was partially explained by Russian leadership as a necessary step in preventing Ukraine from joining NATO. Ukraine's historic dilemma – East or West – has gradually turned into the cornerstone of its strategic culture, where the subject of NATO and NATO member states' relations with Russia risen to the top issues of Ukrainian policies. As a result, Ukraine could not be drawn into a new cycle of global competition between the collective West and Russia.

Speaking of the "collective West" as an actor in international relations, we should not simplify this issue, as EU and NATO policies are not the same, and Ukrainians' perceptions of those policies differ. While integration into NATO has caused fears among most citizens until 2014, joining the EU was welcomed by the society from the outset, as societal perceptions always placed Ukraine as a part of European civilization. Non-integration of Ukraine was primarily an "achievement" of the government, which does not listen to public opinion. The Euromaidan was actually caused by outright indignation of citizens, whose European choice had been cynically discarded by the government. At the same time, after the Revolution of Dignity, the Euro-bureaucrats sent very few encouraging signals to Ukrainians, who were depressed by the complexity of their domestic and external problems. Therefore, we can foresee a gradual decline in Euro-optimism among the Ukrainians, which might fatally affect not only the pace of domestic reforms, but also the process of strategic decision-making by the Ukrainian leadership.

The study of regional trends in Ukraine's foreign policy through the prism of strategic culture leads to conclusions that appear as somewhat paradoxical.

Obviously, Ukraine is a middle European power, which cannot act independently and should look for regional partners. The Black Sea may be the most important region for this. However, recently, this has not affected Kyiv's decisions. On the contrary, it is in the Black Sea region that we see a bunch of unsettled interstate problems of an political and economic nature, as well as a lack of a strategic vision concerning the interconnectedness of sub-regional problems with pan-European and worldwide processes. As a result, the new

tasks for Ukraine, such as the restoration of its territorial integrity and state sovereignty in the temporarily occupied Crimea peninsula and its eastern territories, is not supported by partners in the region; the region is very much a “zone of turmoil.” This should push Ukraine to look at the problems of the regional neighbourhood from a different angle: in the context of the current behaviour of its Black Sea neighbours, it might be in the Ukraine’s interest to actively promote the notion of the Black Sea region as much as possible in order to attract more states, which would become potential allies. At the same time, it might be useful to establish interregional contacts in those areas that are freer from politicization contribute to securitization. In this context, the problem is the relationship with Turkey, which, with the exception of periods of exacerbation in its relations with Russia, is guided by a “Russia-centric” model of the Black Sea region.

The Russian Federation has long lost its place as one of the most important strategic partners of Ukraine. The ongoing conflict has given Ukraine a national idea, the absence of which has so long and painfully affected the process of post-Communist development of our country. In the course of this conflict, which was not started by Ukrainians, they, for the first time, discarded the traditional passive role, the “feminine” role of those who did not try to defend themselves, but instead looking for a new strong partner.

The events of the last years have also radically changed the tone of Ukraine – U.S. relations. If the first Ukrainian president, L. Kravchuk, maintained that the United States should be our main strategic partner (as patron and donor), P. Poroshenko has realized that the Ukrainian dimension would never become the main priority of the American foreign policy. The power and interests of our states are so incomparable that we cannot talk about the possibility of an equal partnership. However, the agenda for Ukraine – U.S. relations has never been so saturated in all possible domains of bilateral relations – from military-strategic partnership to political, economic and information cooperation. Within the framework of economic assistance, Washington makes a significant contribution to the budget of international financial institutions, which, in essence, are the main donors of Ukraine. We are witnessing and unprecedentedly high level of attention towards the crisis over Ukraine in the United States (from government agencies, to the media, to the public), although another issues is whether or not Ukrainian’s top officials will be capable of using this attention for Ukraine’s national interests.

Another example of asymmetric relations is the case of Ukrainian-Chinese relations. Ever since 1991, Ukraine’s interest in China was much higher than that of China in Ukraine. The evolution of relations seems to be that China has already received what it needed most of all (modern military technologies),

and that it does not intend to intervene in situations that cannot benefit Beijing. It is interesting that neither the political nor strategic cultures of China and Ukraine influence relations between them in any way. One can conclude that the “clash of cultures” bears fruit (positive or negative) only when there is common ground for a collision, territorial proximity, and a common historic past.

An example of this can be found not only in relations with Russia, but also with some other neighbours from the former “socialist camp”. For instance, neither in Ukraine nor in Romania has a holistic vision of interstate relations enshrined in a conceptual form. The established stereotypes (“aggressive expansionist Romania”; Ukraine as a “failed state” and “Russia’s shadow”) and problems of ethno-national and historical character did not aid in development of strategic relations. In general, Ukraine’s vulnerability of frustrates the transit states of CEE and SEE, and Ukraine’s “feminine” complex of prevents cooperation with other weaker states.

Since its independence, Ukraine has proclaimed more than twenty different countries which were proclaimed by as its strategic partners. This does not correspond to our state’s potential. For instance, Egypt and some oil-rich countries, in particular Saudi Arabia, have been identified as strategic partners in Ukraine. The analysis shows that those countries in this region, with which Ukraine has established military-technical cooperation (Egypt, Syria, Jordan, UAE), are relatively significant.

In the process of implementing its foreign policy, Ukraine should act more realistically, rejecting excessive rhetoric. At the same time, there are a number of issues, which Kyiv has not paid much attention so far. This includes the unrealized but increasingly important goal of developing an effective information policy to protect national interests in the region and international arena as a whole.

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