

Contributors of this volume

Roman Bäcker | Dariusz Gawin | Paweł Kowal | Jerzy Kulick | Jacek Kurczewski | Denys Kutsenko | Vakhtang Maisaia | Jan Malicki | John S. Micgiel | Kateryna Nasonova | Katarzyna Pełczyńska-Nałęcz | Rudolf Pikhoia | Adam D. Rotfeld | Richat Sabitov | Maria Magdalena Strońska | Vladislavs Volkovs | Kazimierz Wóycicki



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STUDIUM EUROPY WSCHODNIEJ  **UNIwersytet warszawski**
Pałac Potockich, Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28, 00-927 Warszawa
Tel. 22 55 22 555, fax 22 55 22 222, e-mail: studium@uw.edu.pl; www.studium.uw.edu.pl

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WHAT'S LEFT OF THE SOVIET UNION

Warsaw East European Review

Volume VII/2017

editorial discussion

What's Left of the Soviet Union

R

Gawin | Kowal | Kulick | Malicki | Micgiel | Pełczyńska-Nałęcz | Rotfeld

**Warsaw
East
European
Review**

Volume VII/2017



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East
European
Review**

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Pałac Potockich, Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28, 00-927 Warszawa
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Foreword

Twenty-five years ago, we bid farewell to the Soviet Union, but after a quarter-century we still feel how much of its empire it left behind. It was not an “ordinary” empire because its essential feature was a totalitarian system. The ideological pressure of Soviet Russia has changed the social structures of great swathes of the globe. The legacy of the USSR is a fascinating research topic, unfortunately today one rarely raised by researchers.

The seventh edition of Warsaw East European Review (WEER) was created as a result of the Warsaw East European Conference in 2016, entitled “Belavezha. Twenty-Five Years Later. States, Nations, Borders”. We begin the volume with a discussion of a group of Polish experts regarding the Soviet Union’s legacy. All the members of the panel have contributed to academia with their research work, and possess vast experience in scholarship, administration, politics and diplomacy. Hopefully this discussion will prove to be an inspiration for further researchers. Currently, there are few analyses of the effects of the Soviet system on social life, the economy or the political culture of the individual states that were created as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, as well as those that were in the Soviet sphere of influence.

This volume contains a number of texts, including the works by Professors Rudolf Pikhaja and Roman Bäcker, which create a kind of framework. The former demonstrates the economic causes of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, while the latter presents elements of the system that survived the Soviet Union. The remnants of the USSR are mentioned in other texts, in the volume prepared by an international group of scholars from several universities from around the globe. A number of them even deal with contemporary issues like the war in Donbas. What has been preserved from the aforementioned totalitarian system in social life, particularly in the information space dominated by new media, unknown in Soviet times? Perhaps this is the most important element of the various contemporary political problems in the great post-Soviet space –

old content, pressure, manipulation and information wars have found a perfect niche in new forms of communication.

The seventh edition of the Warsaw East European Review will surely be an interesting addition to the bookcases of post-Soviet-space researchers. We encourage you to read it and continue to work with us in the future. We have barely scratched the surface of this interesting and important topic.

Paweł Kowal
John S. Micgiel

4 July 2017

I

WHAT'S LEFT OF THE SOVIET UNION

What's Left of the Soviet Union

Warsaw East European Review Editorial Discussion

*with: Dariusz Gawin, Jerzy Kulick, Katarzyna Pełczyńska-Nałęcz,
Adam D. Rotfeld, Jan Malicki and John S. Micgiel*

led by: Paweł Kowal

Paweł Kowal¹: I recently found myself amongst six former presidents from our part of the world, and one of them, the former president of Moldova, Petru Lucinschi, told an old Soviet joke – Kuchma laughed, Kwaśniewski and Yushchenko laughed. And then someone said, “All we have left of the Soviet Union are jokes...” I’d like to ask you all somewhat perversely, besides jokes, is there any good memory left behind from this empire? Did the Soviet Union leave anything good behind? I mean the Soviet Union not as the Soviet Union itself, but also as the whole region, in other words the Warsaw Pact countries, as well as other communist countries and parties in the world. So, we see the empire as Alexei Salmin, the Russian political scientist, views it – as a concentrated orb: the Russian Federation, around it the USSR, then the Warsaw Pact, followed by other communist countries and finally the Comintern, and after its dissolution, parties cooperating with the Kremlin from all over the world. So, we see the entire empire, not just the Soviet Union, and the question is this – did it leave anything good behind? Surely every empire leaves something good behind...

John S. Micgiel²: Well, It’s not as if the day after the fall of the Roman Empire everyone was saying: “Darn! What a great empire that was.” No – it’s a historical reconstruction which sometimes takes ages. When asked whether the French revolution was a success, Zhou Enlai is rumoured to have answered that it was too early to tell. There’s something in that.

¹ **Paweł Kowal** – WEER editor-in-chief, historian, political scientist, publicist. He works in the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, College of Europe in Natolin and lectures and the Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw. He publishes on the topics of system transformation in Central and Eastern Europe. Co-creator of the Warsaw Uprising Museum; from 2005-2014, he was MP in the Polish Sejm and European Parliament. In 2006-2007, he was secretary of state at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

² **John Stanley Micgiel** – Former lecturer on international relations at Columbia University, former director of the Institute of East Central Europe and deputy director of the Harriman Institute. Former president and executive director of the Kościuszko Foundation in New York. Recurring visiting professor of the University of Warsaw’s Centre for East European Studies and the Estonian Diplomatic School. His area of academic interest encompasses contemporary history and current policy of the countries of East Central Europe.

Kowal: Do you think that in a hundred years it could turn out that someone will write a book about the positive aspects of the Soviet empire?

Micgiel: Undoubtedly. It is the right of every generation to review what was written previously and ignore things that don't match hypotheses. Political scientists have plenty of experience in this, while historians judge how bad or good things were, according to the source materials they have. At the moment, it is hard for me to look at the remnants of the Soviet Union and say something positive on the subject. In former countries of the Eastern Bloc, I see the beginnings of authoritarianism without even mentioning the Russian Federation itself, and I don't feel it will end well. A lot depends on civic society, which reacts to and defends its rights in a democracy.

Kowal: Language, common communication - universal scholarly standardisation of large territories thanks to the knowledge of Russian. Is there anything good we can say about this now? Or is there a hypothesis that someone might one day pronounce? Professor?

Adam D. Rotfeld³: These questions are formulated a bit like the ones in today's media, where one's answer must be brief and intrinsically simplified. Many people feel there was nothing good. Of course, this is only partially true. This was a certain process, which proceeded differently in different periods; it had different causes and foundations. Different in Russia, different in Yugoslavia, and even more so in Poland. Why don't we consider, for example, these three countries? The difference between Poland, Yugoslavia and Russia is based on the fact that in Yugoslavia and Russia this was not a system imposed from outside. It was the result of internal evolution, coup d'état, revolution – no matter how we call it – there were internal causes and sources. No one imposed this on Russia from outside. If there was such a group which imposed a new method of rule on the nation, then it was an internal group. It was a “homemade” process, or the result of internal Russian evolution. From the point of view of Russia, it can undisputedly be said that the Bolsheviks' exercise of power was unusually brutal and bloody. This was taking shortcuts, bypassing history. Russia paid an extremely high price for this. But it is also a fact, that in the history of Russia, there was never such a leap as in the decade after 1924 – in other words, from the death of Lenin until 1934, for which the entire society – especially the peasants and intellectual elites – paid a nightmarish price. Because of this, over the course of one decade, Russia became a military power that built the foundations of heavy industry necessary for its military needs. I won't get into details here, but in 1934, the Great Terror began. An-

³ **Adam D. Rotfeld** – Researcher of international relations, professor of humanities, former Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs in Marek Belka's government (2005) and member of the Polish National Security Council (2001-2005). Director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in the years 1990-2002. Participant in many international conferences within the framework of the process begun in Helsinki. The author of over 20 monographs, scientific editor, and co-author of around 50 collective works and 400 studies and essays. In the years 2008-2015, after being nominated co-chairman of the Polish-Russian Group for Difficult Matters, he was engaged in relations between Poland and Russia. The result of this work is the volume *Białe Plamy – Czarne Plamy. Sprawy trudne w relacjach polsko-rosyjskich 1918-2008*, edited by A.D. Rotfeld and A.W. Torkunov.

other element which left a heavy footprint on Russia is the “plough of history”... Anyone who has ever worked in the fields (and I, as a child, did) knows that the skill of setting a plough is based on it being situated in the soil not too deep and not too shallow. Too shallow, and it doesn't fulfil its function at all. Too deep, and it turns up sand and rocks instead of fertile soil. This “plough of history”, set too deep, due to the transformation that took place, resulted in the fact that social strata were destroyed. Those that had been pushed aside for centuries, you could even say since forever, onto the margin – not the subject, but the droppings of history – came up to take their place on centre stage. Suddenly, millions of people became empowered. In Poland, the peasantry became such a stratum. It is rarely spoken of, but it is worth remembering, that Poland – like most countries in that part of Europe, but also Scandinavia – was an agrarian society. The peasantry suddenly gained a role that it had never had in history. In effect, many of the traits we deem positive, as well as those we view as negative, are the result of this phenomenon, which – from a historical perspective – are in fact entirely positive. What am I getting at? The fact that there are no simple answers in history, that there is something unequivocally positive in the context of the legacy left behind by the USSR and the previous system – because everything that was positive also brought with it very negative elements. Thus, saying that something is totally positive, without any “buts”, will not be true, because the price for this social transformation was very high and left behind irreparable gaps and wounds.

Katarzyna Pełczyńska-Nałęcz⁴: I would separate the ‘subjective’ from the ‘objective’. We can objectively discuss what was positive, but in terms of negative, on the other hand, there was a massive number of “orphans” left behind by the Soviet Union in Russia itself. And this is demonstrated – for example – in polls conducted to determine the most well-liked historical figures – Stalin is always among the top few names. We in Poland know what Stalin did, but a large part of Russian society, the part that remembers the Soviet Union, he is the image of this Soviet Union, which for some reason is positive for them, and we have to understand that in Russia there are still many people who have very positive memories, or more positive than negative. Some of them are distorted memories and some are real memories, because today, they have a lower standard of living than they did during the Soviet Union. There is quite a great number of these real orphans, especially in the isolated countryside and in Siberia, and in many places, where life is worse today than it was during the Soviet Union.

⁴ **Katarzyna Pełczyńska-Nałęcz** – Sociologist and political scientist, specializing in the area of East European issues. From 2012 to 2014, undersecretary of state in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and from 2014 to 2016, ambassador of Poland to the Russian Federation. In 1999-2012, she worked at the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW), among others as head of the Russian department and deputy director. In 2011, she was in Brussels as OSW permanent representative at the French Institute of International Relations. In 2009-2010, she became a member of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, and from 2008-2012, member of the Polish-Russian Group for Difficult Matters. Participant in many Polish and international research projects, as well as the author of dozens of publications dedicated to transformation in Russia and the East European countries, Polish Eastern policy and Polish-Russian relations. Guest Lecturer at Warsaw University's Centre for East European Studies.

Kowal: Yes, but that plough that Professor Rotfeld referred to, ploughed especially deep. If we take the Eastern peoples, they were the ones who often lost their identities through policy – through this very plough that went too deep.

Pełczyńska-Nałęcz: If we are talking about the so-called “natives”, then yes. But I am talking about Russians, who in fact exist on these territories and there were a lot more of them during the times of the Soviet Union. We can bemoan the native people, that their cultures are dying and were devastated by the Soviet Union, but they are the minority in Siberia, and have been for decades. However, for a large part of Russians from the countryside, the Soviet Union was in reality something better than today's Russia. The quality of life in the countries of Central Asia, which we have a tendency to forget, was also totally different. And what is happening today in countries like Uzbekistan or Turkmenistan is evidently civilizational regression when compared to Soviet times. For those people who remember, both Russians and local people who fled from there, who have some memory and are able to think independently, there is a feeling of obvious loss – and this loss is not just subjective, but real. Of course, we're not talking about the Soviet Union from its worst period, the end of the 1930s, but the 1970s and 1980s, there is a clear drop in the quality of life, civilizational level, in everything. As a result of Soviet activity, a giant generational gap appeared in Russia. The generation of all those who stuck their necks out, who thought independently, was quite simply annihilated. These people were eliminated and could no longer pass on anything, either on a family or educational level, or even on the genetic level. On the other hand, those who largely did not stand out from the crowd or think, remained. Adverse selection has a massive influence on Russia today.

Kowal: At the moment, we still lack one term in the discussion, which has been lost somewhere – totalitarianism.

Dariusz Gawin⁵: Exactly right. I wanted to introduce this term, as it is key to our discussion. On the one hand, we use the term ‘empire’, which is well-rooted in history. As mentioned earlier, from the time of the Roman Empire, subsequent empires rose and fell. In this sense, the Soviet empire retains its similarity to other historical

⁵ **Dariusz Gawin** – Intellectual historian, publicist, deputy director of the Warsaw Uprising Museum, head of the Starzyński Institute. He is director of the Civic Society Department at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology PAN, and is interested in Polish political and social thought, political philosophy, and problems relating to historical politics. He has published in, among others: *Nowa Res Publica*, *Znak*, *Przegląd Polityczny*, *Teologia Polityczna*, *Więź*, *Życie*, *Rzeczpospolita*. Co-author of history and civic education textbooks. He is a member of the board of the Freedom Institute Foundation, member of the Historical Program of the Collegium of the European Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk, member of the advisory committee of the School of Leaders Foundation, member of the Polish-German Cooperation Foundation advisory committee (2007-2008), and member of the National Development Council to President Andrzej Duda. As of 2006, along with Marek A. Cichocki and Dariusz Karłowicz he presents philosophy seminars at the University of Warsaw. From January 2007 to June 2010, he co-hosted, along with Cichocki and Karłowicz, the TVP Kultura program *Trzeci punkt widzenia* (reactivated in 2016). He recently published a book: *Wielki zwrot. Evolucja lewicy i odrodzenie idei społeczeństwa obywatelskiego 1956-1976* (Znak 2013).

empires. However, on the other hand, the Soviet Union dramatically differed from earlier empires, and this was precisely due to its totalitarian character – totalitarian in all certainty during the formative phase of Stalin's rule. An additional circumstance which complicates the situation is the fact that this totalitarian soviet creation was formed on the ruins of the old, historical Russian Empire. The Russians as a nation were thus the first victims of this process, as well as its later beneficiaries. This is why the Russian attitude towards the historical legacy of this totalitarian empire is laced with resentment, and very complicated in a psycho-social sense. This is clearly visible now, on the one-hundred-year anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. Lenin is delicately pushed aside for the triumphant cult of Stalin. This is happening because Lenin built a red Russia, but destroyed the nation of the Tsars. Stalin, though, is divested of this ambivalence (which is of course a somewhat strange process, bearing in mind his role in building a new form of government in the first years following the revolution), because he built a power capable of victory in the Great Patriotic War. It was precisely this war and this victory, not the Bolshevik Revolution, which plays a central role in the historical policy of the new Russia. And since this is the case, then Russia must inevitably be a revanchist nation, full of resentment. Its essence is a feeling of injury.

For the new Russians who are being raised by Putin, this is the basic emotional fuel. The collapse of the Soviet empire was a “knife in the back”, in the sense that this is how they speak of Western betrayal in 1989 and 1990 – exactly like the Germans spoke of the “knife in the back” in 1918. The 1917 Revolution enshrouds a certain ambiguous darkness. The triumph of 1945 is unilaterally positive, because it endowed imperial status to Russia, dressed up in the costume of the Soviet Union. Thus, its fall was a grievous loss, and not an act of historical justice aimed at a radical, totalitarian wrong, though Russians also know very well the horrible price that Stalin demanded of them. You can see the difference when you compare them to the English, who in the last few generations, also lost their empire, but were able to construct one of the principle resources that England possesses today upon the myth of this empire. English soft power is based on the positive myth of this empire. Of course, historians can cite thousands of books on the subject of how the reality of British imperial rule really looked in India, Africa and all the places the English exploited, but for the world public at large, the symbol of this empire is James Bond. They recompensed themselves the lack of a real empire with the royal family, the Beatles, and with rock and pop music, so popular all over the world. The English worked very hard to forge all of this into their soft power. The Russians are unable to accept what happened to them. There is the whole psychological complication, and then also the difficulty of re-forging this into any kind of positive myth. They would first have to work through this like the English did, which means accepting the loss of a political empire, but their retaliatory nature means that they are unable to do this, that they constantly feel that they suffered a great injury, that they were deprived of their empire. This is where Putin's success comes from; he plays this tune and suggests that he will regain it for them.

Imperial Standard

Kowal: A question for Jerzy Kulick. Can anything good be said now about the former empire? For example, following the Austrian Empire, one can still spot portraits of Franz Jozef in Kraków, in academic works on that period one can come upon the issue of the democratization of Galicia, and encounter memoirs concerning social mobilization in Galicia. Can we say today that anything good remains of the Soviet empire? Or in the second variant, do we expect that there will be such elements of the empire's legacy that will be recorded as good, after say a hundred years?

Jerzy Kulick⁶: Do you know what GOST is? It stands for *gosudarstvenniy standart* or State Standard. All goods, everywhere in the Soviet Union, required certification - they had to fulfil certain norms. These norms were established in the USSR in a very bureaucratic but also very scientific way so that no one was poisoned or got sick - also the social culture of local people was taken into account. For example, milk, cheese, and sausage had to be transported over long distances, but GOST was a guarantee of state quality control. Ultimately, these products that people bought in stores were poor quality, but there was a feeling that this state standard was something positive. The Soviet Union disappeared, but today, when you speak with people from Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia, very often they look to see if the GOST stamp is on the butter, or cheese. This is a reference point for them, not whether something is made by Danone, or some other company, but whether the old Soviet GOST is there. People assumed that the USSR cheated them, but the machinery was so complicated, that when it came to butter or cheese, perhaps they cheated less than the large industrial concerns of the 21st century.

Kowal: So, standardization as a part of modernization?

Kulick: This is something a bit broader. I started with such a minor detail, but this is connected to the history of the USSR, especially Russia after 1956. On the one hand, a change of leadership took place, a change in the method of rule - the state withdrew from the more bloody and mass repressions, which at the time was a great relief for all of society. Perhaps one had to be less careful what one said drunkenly, one could trust one's neighbour more, one could also try to do something more positive. What was characteristic of the 1950s and 1960s, and perhaps the beginning of the 1970s, was the intelligentsia's conviction - one of the main beneficiaries of the thaw - that one could rationally accomplish something, even within the framework of the Soviet system. Some constructed the atomic bomb, closing their eyes to what that bomb was intended for, others occupied themselves with such GOSTs, striving so that foodstuff would in fact have the highest possible sanitary level. People tried to do something rational. At a certain moment, somewhere around 1968, this bubble burst and people understood - at least this is my impression - that the system was unable to accomplish anything positive, not even after the thaw. Nevertheless, in some areas, some positive footholds remained,

⁶ **Jerzy Kulick** - analyst, diplomat.

like for example education at a high level. Of course, one can speculate what would have happened if Soviet science, for example physics or chemistry, had developed in a free society; whether they might have had better results. The question is whether they would have had the sort of funding they did in the Soviet Union. If anything positive remained from the empire, then I think it is the kind of positive work in various isolated branches, conducted without the ideological framework, to do good work, to have job satisfaction on the basis of: "I can't have satisfaction from political life, from the country I live in, so at least I will do something well."

Kowal: Before I go to Jan Malicki, I would like to introduce a new thread, unless – that is – he really wants to address what we've been speaking of up to this point. The standard question would of course be about the bad consequences of the Soviet Union. Much has been written on this subject. I would like to encourage Jan Malicki to start the next round of discussion by thinking about what the Soviet Union left behind in its sphere of influence after the Second World War. We were in the second orbit of the empire. Exactly twenty-five years ago – everyone can remember – the spring of 1992 was for many people the first time in their lives when they felt that they were outside this grand imperial system. What were we thinking of then? Did we notice the moment when the Soviet Union ceased to be? There was no longer an outside power that shaped the lives of people in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary. But what remained from the Soviet Union outside Russia, outside the USSR? With regards to mentality, politics, public behaviour – but we can go further, like for example architecture or art.

Jan Malicki⁷: As mentioned earlier, some partial good memory remained, but this is strongly connected to one's point of view. It should be underlined here that bad memory was left – primarily – with the conquered or beaten, while good memory remained with those who conquered or did the beating. What is more, good memory, above all, remained in Russia, itself. And now another question. Are there any good consequences of Soviet imperialism like, for example, Russian language as a common form of communication over large swathes of the Earth, etc.? I wouldn't say so in the case of the Russian language, but I will say something which may discredit me somewhat. Mainly, I would like to point out a few good things from the Soviet Union – firstly, universal alphabetization, something which was impossible to accomplish before the Soviet Union, and which was done, and in an objective sense – of course – served to aid the propaganda manipulation of many nations, etc. But subjectively this also worked in other, good directions.

⁷ **Jan Malicki** – Director of the Centre for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw. A member of the first underground editorial board of the underground journal *Obóz* (1981), then later its editor-in-chief (1982), he was founder and head of the underground Institute of Eastern Europe (1983-1985); founder and chief editor of the quarterly *Przegląd Wschodni* (from 1991); cofounder (1990), and later, director of the Centre for East European Studies, author of the Eastern Studies program, coordinator of government and university scholarship programs for the East; director of the Konstanty Kalinowski Polish government scholarship (since 2006) and permanent deputy chairman of the "Consortium of Ukrainian Universities and the University of Warsaw". Chairman of the Polish-Ukrainian Partnership Forum inaugurated in January 2017, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland.

Kowal: Some nations even had their alphabets changed.

Kulick: Some were even changed twice.

Malicki: Yes, that's true, but at the end of the day, it's a positive thing. If we look at it in a global sense, then I think I would also recognize urbanization as a plus, especially if one recognizes it as a global tendency, because it certainly was; even if now are we escaping the city for the countryside. And now, if we're speaking about further circles of influence, about the so-called "outer empire", about us, then I don't feel that I have something of the Soviet Union in me, but this is probably always personal and generational, etc. What remained in other places? It seems to me post-communist parties are an inheritance in all the countries of the Russian imperial sphere. Of course, I agree that certain architectural elements also remained. The slow pace of democratization and westernization of the so-called socialist camp is, in my opinion, also the result of the legacy of communism, and a ballast that weighs on us in this sense. That's how I would express this.

Kowal: I really like Salmin's typology – precisely, to look at an empire and its imperial system as something more than just a legal existence which was created and then dismantled in 1991, and some said, "Thank goodness! No more empire". But it seems to me that things were a bit different with this empire. It had various degrees of periphery in relation to the centre, and various degrees of influence on those peripheries.

Gawin: From this perspective, the examples which are presented in relation to Poland must be observed in context. Every empire arranges, standardises, builds roads, sends postilions, enforces universal languages, religions, architectural styles, etc. It utilizes force and does this more or less efficiently over a wide territory. But the Soviet Union was different. It was – as we said earlier – totalitarian, which means it enacted its projects through totalitarian social engineering, without regard to the costs – including genocide. What's more, there was a messianic ideology of modernization, and it was calculated from this point of view. Every empire would like to leave behind the memory that they standardized or built something, or that they left behind railway lines, etc. But not every empire had these two specific traits – totalitarianism and modernizing messianism. With regard to Poles, but also some of our neighbours, the actions of such an empire might in fact have the opposite character, due to civilizational differences. The Polish problem, since we came under the influence of the first empire (the Russian Empire, not yet totalitarian), was the Poles' belief that they would be better able to modernize if they were independent and administered their own country as an instrument of modernization. That is how the Poles saw it since the generation of the Corps of Cadets and the Grand Sejm. Besides patriotism and love of country, this was one of the main reasons we opposed the Russians.

Malicki: Incidentally, the Corps of Cadets was housed 150 metres from here, in the Kazimierz Palace, currently the rector's office of the University of Warsaw.

The Soviet Version of Modernisation

Gawin: This meant that for us, the Russian version of civilization was civilizational regress. In Siberia, or the immeasurable south-eastern steppe between Central Asia and “mainland” Russia, this might mean civilizational progress – and there the Russians could have been civilizers and modernisers; independent of the fact that they imposed huge social, moral and other costs on those societies. However, in the case of the Poles, but also for example the Balts and the societies that neighbor ours – the Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, etc. – this was the element that in fact meant regress, not progress. In this sense, the Soviet inheritance is even more harshly judged. The People’s Republic of Poland (PRL) did not collapse because it was just another Russian invasion, but because the promise of modernization went unfulfilled. It’s just like Mr. Kulick said earlier, this continued until the 1970s, when unsuccessful attempts at modernization took place.

Kowal: The last attempt at modernization took place under the last communist prime minister – Mieczysław Rakowski; the last great attempt at modernization.

Gawin: Rakowski is a tragic figure, because his whole life he wanted to govern, but he gained power just before the collapse of the system. And instead of the role of modernizer, history gave him the role of gravedigger. But in this sense, he still attempted to fulfil some promises which were impossible to realise – until the beginning of the 1970s, when the differences between Poland and the West were not so great. Then it all fell apart, because the method of functioning of the Soviet empire, perhaps as opposed to those of other empires, was a genetically codified inability to fulfil its central messianic promise of modernization – Khrushchev’s “catch up and surpass”. This was not just supposed to consist of the fact that the Russians would civilize the Yakuts or Kyrgyz, but – most of all – on the fact that the Russians would be better than the West, something in which they still believed during Khrushchev’s rule.

Malicki: Of course, the famous slogan from the 1960s was “*Dognat y peregnat*”.

Gawin: Which was said in absolute seriousness and shouted in everyone’s face by Khrushchev.

Malicki: Dates were fixed, deadlines for further modernization achievements, but to no end, because just saying so doesn’t usually make it so.

Gawin: Yes, in this sense, this empire was – like others – sooner or later condemned to history, because empires are not everlasting. But it also, if I may say so, contained a devil’s pact regarding its fate that was written into its genetic code, that it would focus the history of mankind within itself. And not in a religious-symbolical sense, like all earlier empires, but in a scientific sense. Everything that the young philosopher Marx wrote about was to be fulfilled, meaning that the essence of the human species would be fulfilled through the universal-historical efforts of mankind. In this sense, this was a new quality which was added to the old form of Russian imperialism, and which makes it impossible for Putin’s Russia to return to this starting point. Because Putin’s Russia

does not possess a messianic universal-historical project. It wants to return to the old type of empire, is returning to the language which disgusted the Polish Romantic bard Zygmunt Krasiński, but it does not promise the things that Khrushchev did. This is especially so, since everyone who is watching what's going in the world can compare modern Russia to China, and see what has happened with regard to the resources, power and might of these two countries over the last 35 years. In this sense, Putin's proposal is in fact deeply "reactionary", and not "progressive" like Khrushchev's. In this regard, this had to derail as a massive *hubris* – not Russian, but rooted in Western European political philosophy. What's more, this is the point of view that it is judged from, because it made such big promises. It turned out that they went unfulfilled, and the costs surpassed everything known in history, and this is especially remembered in Poland. As Poles, we were first the victims of the "traditional" Russian empire, and then we underwent the totalitarian social engineering of the Soviet empire. In this sense, totalitarian Soviet engineering continues to cast a sinister shadow on Poland. An offhand example – we're here in Warsaw, where reprivatisation is a problem, and it's a problem due to Bierut's edict – that is, a totalitarian instrument of shaping space and ownership. Only a state of this kind had the power to impose something like this.

Kowal: But this would also have a practical aspect.

Gawin: The flip side of the coin is that the effects of this totalitarian engineering are finite and always will be – just as Nazi Germany wiped the Polish Jews from the face of the earth though its totalitarian engineering, so the communists erased the upper class, no matter whether it was landed-aristocratic-bourgeois or not. They will not return, no matter how many estates we return.

Malicki: Because it is not the return of assets which brings class back into existence.

Gawin: Exactly so. This is just a mechanical act which will not cause the rebirth of something that developed over hundreds of years and which was wiped out, torn out by the roots.

Malicki: I'd like to tell a little joke to illustrate this point. [...] A laundrywoman complains to Countess Potocka that her hands are so red. The Countess asks: "And how long have you been washing clothes?" "Well, about 30 years." "And what did your mother do?" "She washed clothes" And your grandmother?" "She also washed clothes." "So, you see, if you don't wash clothes for about three generations, then the problem with your hands will pass, as well." This is *apropos* whether returning estates brings back class.

Gawin: Either way, these are things that separate us from the English, French, Italians, to whom we will never catch up, because that is simply how history played out.

Pełczyńska-Nałęcz: We have to remember that this is not the end of the Russian/Soviet empire. As a land empire, it has lost a significant part of its territory, but contemporary Russia is still imperial Russia.

Gawin: Traditionally imperial.

Kowal: The Russian Minister of Culture, Medinsky, recently said that there was no break between the first and second empires...

Pełczyńska-Nałęcz: According to the thinking of Russians about the state, it is certain – in an obvious way – that one empire transformed through revolution into the second. However, what I'm saying is that what we today call the Russian Federation, continues to be an imperial entity. It's not just about aspirations regarding Belarus, Ukraine or Central Asia, but the Northern Caucasus. These are in fact colonies, though not overseas, but bordering Russia. The policy with regard to these regions is absolutely Soviet and the thing about Soviet imperialism is that it financed its colonies, instead of financing itself through them, and this is a continuation of the specific Russian imperial tradition. The Ukrainians have something from this imperial legacy, the Belarusians have something else, and we have something different. Naturally, for us, what's most interesting is what we have from this legacy. Let us approach this sociologically – I mean anachronistic thinking about the country today, atavistic thinking about the country as something not one's own, something external which can be blamed, complained about, but is not ours, and for which we fail to take responsibility. Today, we continue to feel the need to speak about our own country as “them”, not “us”. Is this the exclusive legacy of the Soviet empire? In my opinion, this starts with the partitions of Poland, including the Russian partitions, but the Soviet empire inscribed itself very well into all this. And now, the truths or illusions that we harbored, that we would have carried out this modernization better, have been confronted with reality, because suddenly it turns out that we can carry out our “own” modernization. It turns out that as a society, today, we have a problem with taking responsibility for our country, because we have gotten used to this “uncomfortable comfort”, by saying: “everything that's wrong with us is from outside.” Of course, there are more of these remnants in Poland, there is quite a degree of social demand and expectation from the outside, not the inside, with poor social capital or low levels of trust, similarly to other post-Soviet countries. And of course, there are remnants in other areas of social psychology. One Soviet legacy is gas connections, which is an evident post-Soviet infrastructural legacy that has turned out to be exceptionally long-lasting and economically burdensome. Finally, in the sphere of international relations – perhaps we don't have this, but in a few countries, the Russian minority is evidently a very large post-Soviet problem, starting with Ukraine, where it's unknown where the Russian minority ends and the Ukrainian majority starts. It's the same in Belarus, where this transition is entirely smooth.

Malicki: I didn't mention this, because we live a zone where there was no imposed Russian minority, but in the post-Soviet republics, of course...

Pełczyńska-Nałęcz: Yes. Happily, we don't have that.

Post-Empire Complexes

Kowal: When I invited you, Dr. Pełczyńska-Nałęcz, to this discussion, your first reaction was that we have complexes left over from the empire. We don't have a psychologist sitting here with us, but perhaps these complexes will be a good bridge to Professor

Rotfeld's statement. Do we still have social complexes today, because we were once part of the empire?

Rotfeld: I partially agree with Madam Ambassador, that in Russia, this imperial element is perceived – firstly – as very positive. The Russians are very proud that they were, are and will always be an empire. In Poland, a certain imperial tradition was deeply nestled in connection to the pre-partition period, but we must state that after World War I, Poland was reborn as a national state, though with national minorities. Secondly, the largest achievement of the inter-war period was that a generation of people was brought up that identified with this state, which is exactly what is lacking today. Primarily, the state is perceived as an external force – this is the “them” of which Teresa Torńska wrote. This is a result of what I said earlier – that in Poland, like in other East Central European countries, the Soviet system was imposed from the outside, and society viewed it as such. However, in such countries, as for example and I apologise for the ironic propaganda formula from those times, the “first workers’ and peasant state on German soil”, the GDR, it was felt that the Russians had accepted the German tradition of creating a Marxist-Leninist state. Communists in the GDR felt that they were the true continuators of the thought of Marx and Engels, all the while aspiring to the role of “best in the class”, or even the teachers of communism. On the other hand, in Czechoslovakia, the Communist Party was a genuinely strong party, while in Poland, this party was never strong. Poland ended World War II without practically any communists. Apparently, there were about 200 communists who survived the war. Over the years, from those 200, just over a dozen remained in power. The rest were eliminated through various ways. Let me add that the ideological communists did not feel that the system which formed in Poland was communist. As a rule, their relations with Stalin were characterised by fear, the root of which was the murder of Polish communists in the 1930s. From this point of view, Poland was a state where total alienation took place: methods of government were perceived by society as foreign, imposed forms, and were not accepted. Thirdly, the new authority was based mainly on “promoted” people – “Honest purpose, not a high school diploma, will make an officer out of you!” With time, a significant portion of the new nomenclature in a wide understanding – municipal, district and city – came to perceive the state as its own property. A fundamental difference between the perception of state in Russia and Poland is based on the fact that the Russians are prepared to sacrifice many comforts, even wealth and a normal state, for a strong state, because a great power has the right to make demands. The Russians often say “*za derzhavu obidno*”. They are embarrassed by this and it is the source of their complexes. The legitimization of Putin’s new rule is based on, among others, that the authorities very forcefully convince society – quite effectively for example in the case of Crimea – that it is worthy and necessary to be a global power. Crimea is not necessary for their existence – all it does is satisfy their longing for the symbolism to a large degree that “we’ve regained Crimea”. There were attempts to convince the nation that, in general, a “Russian nation” had been spawned – that we conquered Crimea, we own Crimea and will have it because it is “ours”, because we are founded on

success and military victories. The goal of all this propaganda flashiness is to maintain the imperial mythology. The effect is intended to be a clearly legible message: without the empire, Russia doesn't exist. *Nota bene*, the contemporary Russian authorities bear resentment towards Kwaśniewski in this regard. It was not his idea, he was just repeating what others, for example Zbigniew Brzeziński, said before him – mainly that without Ukraine, Russia will cease to be an empire. Kwaśniewski's statement aggrieved Putin quite a bit, just like Obama's casual remark that if Russia needs it, the United States can recognise it as a regional power. Obama's remark consolidated the Russian elite to an unbelievable degree, under the slogan: "look how they insult us". After all, Russia was, is and always will be a global power, just like the USA and China. Putin, Lavrov and others spoke of this publicly. The status of a world power is the new "Russian idea". Pride in the empire is an important element of consolidating society around the president and legitimizing the current authorities.

Kowal: But there can be ham, like in the Gierek era...

Rotfeld: This was a reference to the memories of simple people, that ham tasted "like in the Gierek era", because in that period you could actually buy ham. Since we're talking about this, in my opinion, the People's Republic of Poland left behind a few important things that will only be appreciated by future historians – I have in mind the physical-geographical shift of Poland, westwards. As a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the USSR occupied 48% of Poland's pre-war territory in the East, while as a result of World War II, Poland received territorial acquisitions in the North and in the West. This happened as a result of Stalin's efforts to weaken Germany. Germany's loss was Poland's and the USSR's gain. Neither Churchill nor Roosevelt were supporters of such a resolution. The whole time, Churchill tried to persuade that Poland would not be able to digest this territory, to integrate it.

Gawin: Although during the negotiations, he fought for Lviv for Poland...

Rotfeld: The decisions were finalized at the end of November 1943, in Tehran. At Yalta, Roosevelt was sick. He felt that this was a matter that the Russians should rightly settle with the English. The effect was that Stalin pushed through the final draft of this border. He demarcated it much earlier – in August 1944, not in February 1945 at Yalta. That was when a secret pact was signed in the Kremlin between the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN) and the Soviet government, in which the future course of the Polish-Soviet border, and a suitable Polish western border, were demarcated. The western border runs exactly along the lines that were written into the secret Moscow document. In Poland, the myth continues that we were sold out at Yalta. This conviction took hold still during the war, when archives were inaccessible. But they have been accessible now for many years. We know that the decision was made much earlier, in Tehran. One Polish historian recently wrote that we were the most loyal ally in the anti-Nazi coalition, but we lost half our territory. That's true – we did. But we also gained significant acquisitions in the north and the west. Russian policy was based on weakening Germany on the one hand, and somehow legitimizing the new authorities on the other,

giving Poland new territory so that the Polish population being evacuated from the East would have a place to settle. Also, it is seldom mentioned what Stalin said in conversation with de Gaulle. The French general expressed doubts as to whether the Poles would be capable of integrating the Western Lands. Stalin allegedly replied, "If not, then we'll help them." Stalin added that what was of prime importance was that he was putting a permanent wedge in place, between Germany and Poland, and that both those nations would now be unable to conspire against Russia. In the eyes of Stalin, giving Poland meaningful territorial acquisitions at the expense of Germany would make Poland permanently dependent on the USSR. Russia intended to be Poland's peculiar "eternal protector". Stalin and his successors did not expect that there would be a moment where Poland would not need the Soviet, or even Russian, protectorate; that recognizing these borders would be permanent and authentic, because it was to be the expression of the democratic will of a united Germany and sovereign Poland.

Here we are delicately touching on questions concerning the principles of our foreign policy. If we return to national niches, and the collapse of the European Union takes place, then the growing processes which we are observing in Italy, France, Holland, Austria, without mentioning our region – if these disintegration processes take hold in the future, then sooner or later, they will also influence German policy. Germany can also fall sick to the illness of contemporary nationalism. Then, that which seemed irreversible, permanent, eternal, will suddenly turn out to be fragile and endangered. Someone in Germany might ask: Since they can take Crimea, then why can't we recover "age-old" German lands?

The Polish *raison d'état* involves arranging relations with Germany in such a way that this question can never be asked. Since we are reflecting on what was positive and permanent, then territorial acquisitions and the cultivation of the western and northern lands are unquestioningly an important legacy of a period during which we remained in the empire's domain of influence.

My final remark concerns the construction of heavy industry and armaments. Russia built its empire on the foundation of military power. The whole economy was militarized. Everything, not just the development of missiles and nuclear weapons, but also the production of sweets and soap, was subordinated to the military industrial complex. Everything was produced mainly to supply the army with enough planes, tanks, artillery and ammunition, but also sweets, soap, vodka, methylated spirits, etc. Only a portion of what was left over was made available for common use. Sometimes this was 20% of the production of a sweets factory, and sometimes it was 40%. However, the main goal was not satisfying basic human needs, but supplying the army. This is a fundamental difference between the industrialization of Russia and military spending in the United States. In the United States, additional scientific funding takes place through massive investment in armaments, which, after a short period of time – usually 4-5 years – exorbitantly reimburse society. Examples include the Internet, GPS, mobile phones, or the whole miniaturization industry. Sometimes I would ask Russians a question I will repeat

here today – name any Russian article of common use which is a by-product of industrial-military Soviet production, which often encompassed 80% of the entire Soviet economy. On a world scale, the Russians unquestioningly have important achievements, such as manned space flight and Sputnik. There is no doubt that in this branch, the Russians are still on a par with the United States. Often their rockets are more powerful, because Russia cannot afford to build an effective anti-missile defence system; they are investing massive amounts to modernize their missiles. However, you can't eat Sputnik, you can't live in it. One can't find any product that one could say is a side effect of Russian technology that serves society. In Russia, society accepted this type of innovation, which Polish society did not accept.

Kowal: Professor Micgiel is able to provide such an example.

Micgiel: Yes, Optical Character Recognition (OCR) was a Soviet military product, mainly designed by staff of Jewish origin who emigrated to Israel in the 1980s, and there, they used their knowledge to build a company which has flourished in the global market.

Gawin: But that was in Israel. This only strengthens my thesis.

Micgiel: This had no influence on the lives of ordinary people in the Soviet Union. However, in the United States, this was very quickly seized upon by scientists who above all wanted to scan documents, forward and be able to examine them.

What Does the Empire Mean to Us?

Kowal: This indeed strengthens Professor Rotfeld's thesis, but I have a different question for you. Perhaps the largest problem is that the Soviets permanently destroyed the concept of 'empire'. In the West, the concept of empire is fairly ambivalent. In Poland, in public debates, it essentially only functions as an insult. In our thinking, thanks to the Soviets, "empire" is pejorative. If you tell someone they are an imperialist then it's obvious, but to say that you are rebuilding an empire, then it's bad. Here in Poland, we can't imagine that we might sell for example a product like "Imperial" brand soap. In Great Britain, this "Imperial" soap is just a brand of soap, which means that recalling this standardization is a good connotation, etc. How does it look from the point of view of experience in the Anglo-Saxon world? How does just the word 'empire' function there? Because it seems that in reference to Poland, it no longer functions...

Micgiel: It doesn't function in certain spheres, but now there are publications on the subject of how great the First Rzeczpospolita was, and how much European territory was partially under its rule...

Kowal: But we reluctantly call it an empire. Juliusz Mieroszewski, the Polish emigre political writer, still used the term 'empire' with regards to Poland in the 1970s. However, I can't imagine to say today that Poland was imperial. This would probably be unacceptable in the public forum.

Malicki: In the academic world, even in Poland, the trend that we call colonialism is gaining strength; or post-colonial studies, which also refer to the Rzeczpospolita.

Kowal: With rather critical overtones. This is something that comes to us from the Anglo-Saxon academic world, but which is experiencing a specific historical revisionism. This is an attempt to state that negative consequences of Polish colonialism do function. But let's return to Professor Micgiel with the last word on this subject.

Micgiel: In the United States, nobody talks of "Polish imperialism". Some speak of American imperialism – in the sense that the US controls Pacific islands like Guam, at one time ruled the Philippines and Cuba, and the unincorporated territory of Puerto Rico, which is now striving for US statehood. Some are embarrassed by this. For example, when one visits Hawaii, there is palpable sense of embarrassment regarding how Hawaii was taken over by the US. The French have a similar problem with the legacy left behind by their empire, which manifests itself through problems with its citizens, whose roots are in the former French imperial space, similarly to England, where many Pakistanis and Indians reside, who have their own cultures that do not suit some in the Anglo-Saxon majority

The Costs of Soviet Imperial Policy for Poland

Kulick: Continuing with the professor, I'd like to note that Robert Kaplan wrote the book "Imperial Grunts", in which he travelled the entire globe from one American military base to another, and wrote a collection of journalistic pieces. It turned out that it is possible to travel the entire globe without leaving *de facto* American territory. However, I would like to respond to what Professor Rotfeld and Dariusz Gawin mentioned, the question of shifting Poland westwards after World War II, and about urbanization. Sometimes I ask myself about how it appears, as in my tax returns, from the perspective of the cost of earning income? In the case of income of which the professor spoke, the Western Lands, Warmia, the costs were dramatically higher than the income itself – one could say Poland was in the red. If we take into account that we lost two large university centers – with all due respect to Wrocław, Gdańsk and Toruń together, they never recompensed the status that Vilnius and Lviv had. These processes were paid for with huge human losses and, of course, from a certain rationally technocratic point of view, we can state that today Poland is in better shape than before the war, because in fact, this is the case. The population is better organized, and this is so, because Poland is far more homogeneous and no longer comprises the 30% national minorities that it had before the war. The costs were nevertheless massive and Stalin, in my opinion, did not do this *pro bono Poloniae*. He didn't even do this to stir up the Poles and Germans against each other. At the time when he made the decisions regarding the western border, he didn't know what would happen with the Germans. He did know, however, what would happen in Poland, and he knew that he'd be able to position Russian tanks on the Oder.

Rotfeld: I agree, but the decision regarding the Rzeczpospolita's loss of its Eastern lands took place during the Molotov-Ribbentrop talks in August 1939. It was then that this Eastern border was demarcated in Moscow. What you are pondering is not based on the fact that in 1943, 1944 or 1945 there was perhaps even a theoretical possibility for us to return to Lviv or Vilnius. Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia were made part of the Soviet Union during World War II, and after all, this was a result of the arrangements made by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Kulick: I am merely pointing out that this type of operation always has its costs, and if we're talking about the positive aspects, or income, then we also have to look at losses, the costs that we incurred. In my view, these costs were huge. The question of political rationality, whether this was possible or not, is a separate discussion. The same is true of urbanization. I agree that there was urbanization in the USSR, but would there not have been urbanization without the USSR? How many cities were simply built on top of corpses?

Pełczyńska-Nałęcz: Even in places where no city should ever be founded.

Continuity of the Empire

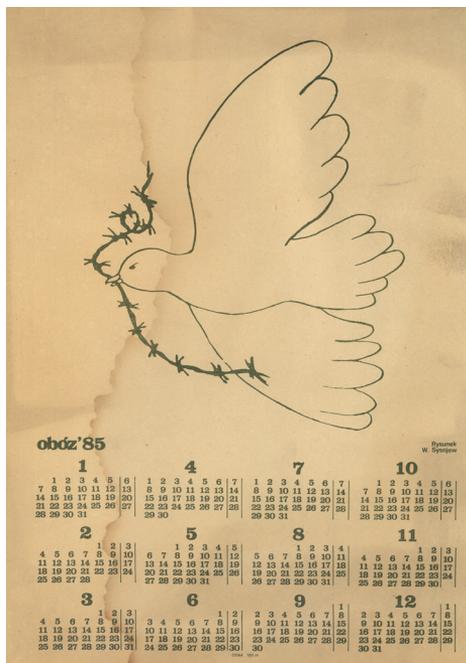
Kulick: This is a separate issue. There is an excellent book by Stephen Kotkin about Magnitogorsk as a metaphor for urban and civilizational experiment. Magnitogorsk, a city of over a million people today, was built where the taiga and steppe meet. Is this an accomplishment? Yes! But again – at what cost? The third thing which I think we should keep in mind when we are speaking about the Soviet empire, both in its internal and external dimension, is its continuity beyond the USSR. We are focusing on the USSR from 1918-1991, or in the case of East Central Europe, from 1945-1989, but yet this empire existed much earlier. And when one looks at the functioning of state structures, how it looked in the social reality, we see that many things which exist in contemporary Russia existed in the Soviet Union, and also existed before 1918. A trivial example, I had occasion to get to know two Russian Army officers, non-Russians, in two different places and moments in time. And they both said that in their families, the tradition of serving in the army exists from either the 17th or 18th century, respectively. This means they served the Tsars, they served Lenin, Stalin, Brezhnev, and today they serve the Russian Federation. In each generation, in two different places, there was the same custom, one son went to the army, and served in Warsaw or “on the hills of Manchuria”⁸, whatever the case may have been.

Gawin: I previously mentioned reprivatization, as an example of the costs of existence “under the empire”, which we are still paying for today.

Malicki: I understand that Professor Rotfeld's response wasn't intended to provide valuation. It was only, as I understand, this unambiguous answer to the question what was left after the Soviet Union. Thus, in my opinion, Ukraine, Belarus and Lithua-

⁸ Reference to the popular Russian army song, written just after the end of the Russo-Japanese war in 1906.

nia were left with borders that they never had before, Moldova, which never existed previously, and the borders of Poland, which it had one thousand years ago. Ksawery Pruszyński, who as an excellent Polish writer already before the war, after the war said something along the lines of: “they took Vilnius and Lviv away from us, where we’ve been the last 700 years, and gave us Wrocław and Szczecin, where we were 700 years ago.” During our discussion I placed an original 1981 calendar on the table from the publication “Obóz”. It features a drawing by an accomplished underground artist and dissident from the Soviet era, Vyacheslav Sysoev. His most famous drawing is of a man with his head wedged into a vice, while a Soviet official works on his head, forming it into a square; shaped and hewn according to Soviet requirements. After the Soviet Union, a certain type of reasoning enclosed in the Soviet framework was left behind. A few years ago, in Russia, a meteorite hit Chelyabinsk...



Kulick: At the time, I was ambassador to Russia...

Malicki: At the Centre for East European Studies, we tracked and analysed peoples’ reactions. Now, in the digital age, it turns out there were multitudes of recordings. And it turned out that a portion of human reactions were of the type “the Americans...” or “the Bourgeoisie” had struck.

Kulick: Or that Moscow had again attempted something and it hadn’t worked. This was the most popular reaction.

Rotfeld: Jerzy Kulick is correct in that we bore costs that were incommensurably high, compared to the advantages we gained. For the Russian nation, the biggest cost was getting rid of morality from the behavioral code. This system, though the Soviet Union has been gone for twenty-five years, continues to have intrinsic meaning. Russia is a country where, when one talks about morality, one gets the impression that you're entering a world of pure abstract consideration. One must deal with the phenomenon of "moral insanity". This is a fundamental difference between Russia and the Russian Empire in the historical space, compared to Poland and perhaps a few other countries in our part of the world. In this context, the history of Aleksander Zinoviev is characteristic. Zinoviev was a thinker, a dissident, but his successors are simply imperialists in an extreme sense. The Zinoviev Foundation is one of the most imperialistic institutions. The element of morality, so important among the traditional Russian intelligentsia, is often ignored and concealed in today's Russia.

"Radziecki" or "Sowiecki"?

Kowal: Today, after twenty-five years, what should we call the Soviet Union – *Radziecki* or *Sowiecki*? There are two schools of thought in this matter and I'd like to get to know their positions.

Kulick: I use *Sowiecki*, because the term *Radziecki*, in Polish pre-World War II historical literature, was reserved for institutions connected to medieval city councils (*rada*). There were *rada* courts, *rada* seals, and the *rada* tradition, and it had nothing to do with the Soviets.

Micgiel: Reading the emigre press over the last few years, I always saw *Sowiecki*, not *Radziecki*, and this was standard usage.

Gawin: I have to add myself to the list of those who use *Sowiecki*, and in the young generation, this is the same semantic-political problem as saying Germans or Nazis. There are young left-wing circles, which will never say *Sowiecki*, because they feel that it is right-wing; just as they won't say the Germans burnt down Warsaw, but that the Nazis did it. I personally say *Sowiecki*, because that was what was used during the Second Republic, and also Leszek Kołakowski wrote in this style.

Kowal: I switched to *Sowiecki*; a 1952 article in *Kultura* changed my mind, but I resisted it for a long time.

Rotfeld: I am of the opinion that we should simply leave some latitude in the matter. The problem is based on the fact that it was precisely communist propaganda which introduced the term *Radziecki* into the official language – only in 1946-1947. Up to that point, all of Bierut and Gomułka's speeches described the USSR as the Soviet Union. Then, one of the Central Committee ideologists of the Polish Communist Party probably concluded that if this new term was introduced, then it would force journalists, the intelligentsia, to overcome a particular internal resistance. Democratic Germany, but also the

less democratic Weimar Republic and the German Empire, had this principle that more or less once a quarter, or once a year, the foreign ministry sent out so-called “terminological recommendations”. For example, there was a recommendation issued by the foreign ministry in Bonn, that in reference to the GDR, no other term should be used other than SBZ, or *Sovietische Besatzungszone* (Soviet Occupation Zone), then with changes in West Germany’s relations with Khrushchev’s Russia, it was recommended not to use SBZ, but *Mitteldeutschland*, then *Sogenannte DDR* – the so-called GDR, then “GDR”, and finally just the official name – GDR. Today it sounds like satire, but this is not Orwellian-speak, or Soviet⁹ propaganda; this was monitored by democratic Germany.

Kowal: Professor, I know of this type of circular from the head of Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski’s secretariat, Zdzisław Rapacki. In January 1990, Rapacki sent a circular to diplomatic posts that I found in the Ministry’s archive, in which he recommended certain terminological changes, such as the total removal of the term ‘comrade’ (*towarzysz*).

Pełczyńska-Nałęcz: But in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs there were more such instructions, and even more recently.

Kowal: Królewiec (Kaliningrad)?

Pełczyńska-Nałęcz: Yes, for example. Returning to the issue of *Sowiecki* or *Radziecki*, I use them alternately, bearing in mind that there are evidently emotional connotations attached, putting aside the historical source of one term or the other. *Radziecki*, in the common perception, is more left-wing, “pro-Russian” ...

Rotfeld: Pro-*Radziecki*.

Pełczyńska-Nałęcz: On the other hand, *Sowiecki* is clearly anti, etc. It is worth using them alternatively.

Rotfeld: In other languages, for example in German, there is ‘*Sovietunion*’, similarly to French and English. In Ukraine, there is *Radyans kyj Soyuz*, and this ‘*Radyans kyj*’ was, I think, an inspiration. So, if in Ukrainian you can say *radyans’kyy*, then we can say *Radziecki*, because it comes from the same root, *rada* (council), as a form of government.

Kowal: So, perhaps this is an “innovation” from Ukraine?

Malicki: I will not exhort others to use the term *Radziecki*. I use *Sowiecki* and I am aware of the fact that what follows is a certain declarativeness, that if someone writes *Sowiecki*, this means something and if they write *Radziecki*, this also means something. I was a member of the editing board of the famous “Obóz”, an underground publication in communist times. Imagine if you will, that at that time, in an underground publication, there was an ongoing discussion whether to use the adjective *Sowiecki* or *Radziecki*, and – of course – most of us supported *Sowiecki*. In that discussion, another member of the editing board, Andrzej Ananicz, only mentioned the matter, that there is only one time when the term *Radziecki* can be used without qualms, namely in the formula “*Radzieckie crimes in Afghanistan*”.

⁹ Here, Professor Rotfeld uses the term “*radziecki*”

The Empire Book That Hasn't Yet Been Written

Kowal: I would like to ask each of you about a book that you would like to read, but which has not yet been written. Twenty-five years after the breakup of the Soviet Union, the empire continues to function in some form, while authors consider what to write about, and the question is can we give them some hint? Is there an area of research which you feel has not been adequately studied or not at all?

Malicki: I feel that there is a book to be written, entitled "How Białowieża Came About". This is very important to understanding everything that happened afterwards.

Kowal: I would like to read a book about what influence the Soviet Union had on the political culture of the entire internal circle of the empire, but also its former republics during the transformation period, and the following 15-20 years. I feel that for many people it would be shocking to read that the Soviet Union still remains in the mentality, and influences the shaping of political and party systems in many countries; remaining like in Sysoev's drawing which Jan Malicki described.

Pełczyńska-Nałęcz: My book would be about Russia, explaining why the Russians really – if they had no other choice – went back in the direction of imperialism. To once and for all strip the West of various illusions of what took place in 1990, when it seemed that the empire had fallen and that foreign capital would be able to invest a bit in Russia, and that we would in fact arrive at a united Europe, with Russia on board. This was a total illusion of the West.

Kowal: So, a book explaining political psychology...

Pełczyńska-Nałęcz: Political psychology, but precisely so that there will be no more of these erroneous illusions.

Rotfeld: There is still the need for a book which will allow us to understand where Russia is heading. How to describe contemporary Russia's strategy – revisionism, revanchism, or searching for its place in the modern world? What are the determinants of Russia's foreign policy? It's main advantages of strength, factors of weakness? Finally, can Russia get on the road to transformation which would allow it normal democratic development? And if not, then why? In a word, what we need is a book of such significance as that written in the USA by Zbigniew Brzezinski at the beginning of his academic career, or in Paris by Hélène Carrère d'Encausse.

Kulick: I would like to read a book dedicated to continuity and discontinuity in the history of Russia, because as a rule, the history of Russia ends in 1917, then there is the history of the Soviet Union, and then it restarts in 1991. I think that many historians have a problem with this: to say to what degree the USSR continued the former policies of pre-revolutionary Russia, and how much today's Russia is a continuation of the USSR, and further, a continuation of pre-revolutionary Russia.

Gawin: I would be interested in a book from the point of view of Poland, which would describe elements of continuity and discontinuity in the strategic thinking of Russia with regard to Poland, by both these imperial forms. For example, some authors

point out that Stalin essentially realised a project of the western border of Poland which was already formed during the First World War. In this sense, in Russia's strategic thinking in relation to Poland, I see some form of continuity, which is realised regardless of whether the Romanovs are in power, whether it is totalitarian Soviet Russia...and what elements of this continuity are clearly visible in Putin's thinking. All the time, there is talk that Putin wants to start a large-scale war. If one was started, I would really like to read a piece about the goals of a Russian war in a strategic-geographic sense – if I may say so, the war's goals, not just that he wants to simply win it. War is always fought for some reason, for example to achieve peace: how would peace look after such a victorious – according to the Russians – war?

Kowal: Thank you all very much.

II
**CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES
OF THE COLLAPSE OF THE USSR**

How the Socialist Economy was destroyed in the USSR (One reason for the collapse of the country)

PROFESSOR RUDOLF PIKHOIA

Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow

On 25 September 1990, one of the first meetings of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Russia was held in the building of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. The agenda consisted of the issue of ensuring the economic sovereignty of Russia in the USSR. Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Yuri Skokov, responsible for industrial policy, spoke with bitterness about his meeting with Minister of Metallurgy of the USSR Seraphim Baibakov: “We spoke to him about our sovereignty, and he said: ‘I’m sorry, but last year I became an owner of property and a legal successor of state property.’ Kolpakov became Krupp. Now he creates 10-15 companies, leaving a small management structure. It is presidential rule in the steel-casting complex.”

Frankly speaking, after I became familiar with the transcript of this meeting, it made me think. When assessing the reforms that took place in the late 1980s and early 1990s it is, perhaps, the only question to which all representatives of Russian political science answer in the same fashion. Both supporters of radical reforms (we shall call them, conventionally, the E. T. Gaidar-Anatoly Chubai school) and their opponents in the wider political spectrum – from former Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers N.I. Ryzhkov, to present Assistant to the President and scholar, S. Y. Glazyev, answer the question about the beginning period of privatisation and destruction of the public sector in the same manner. They are unanimous in recognising that privatisation dates back to the early 1990s, and is concentrated in the period from 1992 to 1996.

The arguments of the supporters of this point of view are simple and straightforward, and based on the legalistic method. The beginning of privatisation was declared in the law of the Russian Federation “On privatisation of state and municipal enterprises in the Russian Federation”, dated 3 July 1991, and in the first state privatisation program of state and municipal enterprises in the Russian Federation for 1992 (approved by the resolution of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation of 11 June 1992). For some, it is a reason to take pride in the results of privatisation, which changed the economic nature of the country, while for others – to accuse its initiators of the destruction of the economy, of “looting the country”.

I will take the liberty of accepting neither the first nor second viewpoint. The study of documents of the supreme authorities of the USSR – the Politburo of the

Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Council of Ministers of the USSR, as well as materials from the State Planning Committee (the Gosplan) of the USSR, allow us to assert that the process of the destruction of the Soviet economy, part of which was privatisation, started much earlier. To begin with, despite the noisy fanfare in honour of the successes of the Soviet economy (the echo of which is heard to this day), the people responsible for the condition of the Soviet economy at the end of the 1970s, saw a serious problem.

On 11 December 1979, the Council of Ministers of the USSR submitted a secret report on the economic situation of the country and measures for its improvement, which was signed by high-ranking officials, including Chairman of the State Planning Committee N. Baybakov, and Chairman of the State Committee on Science and Technology Vladimir Kirillin.¹ It noted a systematic drop in productivity of 6.8% during the eighth five-year plan (1965-1970) to 3.8% during the tenth five-year plan (1975-1980). It also indicated the low quality of the labour force. Manual, mostly unskilled labour was practiced by over 50 million workers in material production, or 50% of their total number. In addition to calls for changes in the industrial structure and accelerated development of the mechanical engineering industry as the locomotive of the economy, the report noted dangerous tendencies in monetary circulation and the threat of inflationary effects. “The solvent demand of the population is not satisfied. It is difficult to identify a group of goods for which demand would be fully met,” the report recorded. The unmet demand was estimated at from 25-30 up to 70-90 billion rubles.

One of the main conclusions that followed from this report was that the state budget did not have enough money. Hence the proposal was to increase the fee for excess housing area by 5-6 times, to reduce state subsidies on housing maintenance and shift to its self-repayment, as well as self-sustained construction. For the first time, a declaration was made about the need to **expand handicraft trades, “seasonal crafts” and small handicraft cooperatives**. The report became a diagnosis of economic prosperity at a time when the price of oil – the basis of Soviet exports – reached almost \$40 per barrel in contemporary prices.² A diagnosis was made, but treatment did not follow. The cure – the rejection of the existing forms of economic management – was deemed worse than the disease. And so, at meetings of the Politburo, there followed fruitless discussions and resolutions, which, in fact, had no mechanism for implementation.³

¹ See more: Pikhoya R. G. *The Soviet Union: History of Power. 1945-1991*. Novosibirsk, 2000. p. 333. Kirillin's report deserves special study.

² See: Neftegaz.ru/analysis/view/526-mirovye-tseny-na-syryuyu-neft-istoria-i-analiz .

³ Resolutions of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers of 12 June 1981: “On measures to increase production of essential goods in 1981-1985 and to better meet the population's demand for these goods”; Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Council of Ministers of the USSR of 14 January 1982 No. 29 “On measures for further development of trade and improvement of trading service of the population in the eleventh five-year plan”.

The situation began to change at the end of 1982, after Y.V. Andropov succeeded Leonid Brezhnev as General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. One of the first decisions of the new Secretary General was to establish an Economics Department at the Central Committee. It was headed up by Nikolai Ryzhkov, an experienced manager and former director of the Ural Heavy Machine Plant in Sverdlovsk, who later worked as First Deputy Minister of Heavy and Transport Machine Building of the USSR, as well as First Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee. By order of Andropov, a group of economist-practitioners was formed under Ryzhkov, which included First Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee of the USSR Stepan Sitryan, Head of the Department of Finance of the State Planning Committee Valentin Pavlov, as well as a number of employees of the Ministry of Finance. Sitryan became the leader of this group. “Our group’s work was not openly publicised,” Sitryan later recalled. “Even the Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee didn’t know what we were working on. (...) Yuri Vladimirovich believed that the existing rigid planning system had exhausted itself. (...) In order to start deep, serious changes in the economy, it was necessary to demonstrate to government officials that cooperative businesses with relative economic freedom were more profitable to state enterprises. In the document drawn up by us, it was not openly stated that there was a need for private property, but the idea that was expressed, along with that of state property, was **to begin the development of co-operative ownership, which was a serious attempt to dilute state ownership as the only form of resource ownership in the country.**”⁴ And he also supported it.”⁵

The government sought to expand the production of consumer goods, while simultaneously trying to solve a social problem – market saturation – and an economic problem – to increase budget revenues. In 1983, the State Planning Committee adopted the resolution “On the implementation of resolutions of the party and the government related to increasing production of consumer goods and improving their quality.”⁶ The military complex was also involved in the production of goods for cultural and household purposes.⁷

An analysis of the documents of the State Planning Committee – the nerve centre of the Soviet economy – leads to the conclusion that by the first half of the 1980s, there **was no longer** any **command-based administrative** system for managing the economy of the USSR. Rather, there was a system based on **planning and distribution**, or a **distribution and coordination system** for organising the economy, in which the interests of the state and the ministries clashed, and, following the ministries, the largest enterprises – monopolists. The State Planning Committee was given the role of a coordinating–persuading mediator among market participants.

⁴ All emphasis added by the author, unless otherwise indicated.

⁵ S.A. Sitryan, *Lessons of the Future*, M., Publishing House “Economic newspaper”. 2010. pp. 71-73.

⁶ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 4372, Finding aid 67, File, Leaf 14-18.

⁷ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 4372, Finding aid 67, File 4693, Leaf 101-102.

With an acutely felt lack of resources and the reduction of incoming oil money into the budget, the task which came to the foreground was that of searching for alternative economic options. A different path seemed much more realistic to the practitioners of the State Planning Committee – the path of including the personal economic interests of the people, as agents of the economic life of the country.

On 23 February 1984, the State Planning Committee presented proposals to the Council of Ministers of the USSR, “On the organization of work on further improvement of the economic management”. On 6 March 1984, after long discussions in the Politburo, the Commission of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee began to work on examining proposals for ways of improving their management. This Commission would play a crucial role in the process of transforming the Soviet economy during the second half of the 1980s.

On 7 June 1984, at the Commission’s meeting a decision was made on the preparation of a decree of the USSR Council of Ministers: “On further development of forms of individual and collective activities of citizens in the sphere of production of consumer goods and services to the population”. This was the beginning of developing a law on individual labour activity. The draft law was developed by the State Planning Committee, in conjunction with the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR and the Estonian SSR, along with the relevant Soviet ministries. In the Protocol of the State Planning Committee of 5 September 1984 it was directly noted that: “Given the limited scope of additional public investment, labour and material resources for the development of the sphere of production of goods and services, at the present stage, it becomes more important to create conditions for the development of the national economy, and flexible forms of individual and collective labour activity of citizens.”⁸

It should be pointed out that reviving self-employment in the USSR, destroyed with the coming of the New Economic Policy at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, had to be done almost from scratch. According to State Planning Committee data, there were only 60,000 craftsmen and artisans in the Soviet Union. In the planned economy existing at the time, there were countless problems with ensuring equipment, raw materials and other materials for future artisans.

The proposals of the State Planning Committee were radical. In their project, enterprises and shops of the territorial bodies of the State Planning Committee were allowed to sell materials, old equipment, tools, waste, recyclables and any other non-conforming products to companies and organisations providing consumer services, trade and public catering, as well as directly to citizens via enterprises and organisations – people involved in self-employment could now obtain loans.⁹

The revenues from sold goods and services were to stay with citizens as a means to pay them and ensure further development of their enterprises. Enterprise managers

⁸ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 4372, Finding aid 67, File 5507, Leaf 152-153.

⁹ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 4372, Finding aid 67, File 5507, Leaf 154-156.

were allowed “to tentatively conclude contracts with citizens’ groups, **employing up to 10 people, on the terms of full-scale cost accounting, with the use of equipment, tools, inventory and premises being in private ownership of citizens or rented by manufacturing companies that had an agreement signed.**”¹⁰

The degree of radicalism of these proposals can be assessed by comparison with the norms of the 1977 Constitution of the USSR. There, Article 11 stated directly that: “The land, its subsoil, and forests are the exclusive property of the state. The state owns the basic means of production in industry, construction and agriculture, the means of transportation and communication, banks, property of trade, communal and other enterprises organized by the state, the main urban housing and other property necessary for the implementation of the tasks of the state.”

On 25 February 1985, these proposals were framed as a decree of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers, entitled: “On further development of forms of individual and collective labour activities of citizens in the sphere of production of consumer goods and services to the population.” In fact, this decree legalised new processes that eroded the socialist economy.

The coming to power of Mikhail Gorbachev was related to an attempt at reviving the old methods of economic management, including: “acceleration” by increasing investment in machinery and introducing state quality control to speed up the development of industry. However, by early 1986 it became clear that these plans were unrealistic. Additional problems for the economy of the USSR were associated with a two to threefold drop in oil prices.

Problems were also sharply increasing in the food market. Evidence of this could be seen in the memo by then-Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Andrei Gromyko, who visited Moscow shops and a hospital in January 1986. He reported his observations to the CPSU Central Committee on 21 January 1986. In grocery store No. 27 in Zhdanovsky District, right in the centre of Moscow, he found that “cheese and dairy products, smoked sausages are deficient. Lamb and pork are rarely available. Beef, for example, was not delivered to the store from 2-9 January, despite claims made to the contrary (...) poultry was available at times. We saw it ourselves”. The worsening economic situation in the country created confusion in the political leadership for some time.

On the one hand, an attempt was made to strengthen the repressive apparatus in order to combat what was assessed as an economic crime. Investigations of the so-

¹⁰ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 4372, Finding Aid 67, File 5507, Leaf 158-160. The draft of this document was prepared by V. V. Sychev, First Deputy Chairman of Gosstandart of the USSR, V. S. Pavlov, Chief of the Department of Finance, Cost and Prices of the State Planning Committee of the USSR, Senchagov V. K., Deputy Head of the Department of Planning and Economic Stimulation of the State Planning Committee, Anikin V. I., supervisor of the Department of Elaboration of Forecasts of the Development of Branches of the Military-Industrial Complex. Materials for the development of the law on self-employment, see: The Russian State Economy Archive Collection R-7523, Finding Aid 145, File 14537, 14538, 14539, 19653.

called “cotton case” against the leaders of foreign trade departments continued with new force.¹¹ The decision of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR, dated 23 April 1986, highlighted the need “to focus on the correct application of provisions of the law and formation of judicial practice, when examining such categories of cases as taking part in forbidden types of self-employment and the unauthorised use of vehicles, machines or mechanisms”. It is easy to see that the Supreme Court’s decision created the opportunity for lateral punitive interpretations, thus creating a danger for **any** business activity based on self-employment. On the other hand, the growing inefficiency of the old management system forced decisions to be made far beyond the limits of the political economy of socialism.

On 9 November 1986, the “On individual labour activity” law was adopted. It differed from the previous decree of the Council of Ministers and the CPSU Central Committee by some degree. Already in the preamble to the law it specified that: “Individual labour activity in the Soviet Union is used in order to better meet **social needs in goods and services**,” which in turn meant that the state considered private entrepreneurship as a legitimate element of the Soviet economy.

People were not only allowed to use their own equipment and raw materials, but also to receive property, equipment, facilities under contracts with enterprises, purchase materials, instruments and other property in the state and cooperative retail outlets and markets, as well as to use natural resources they needed for their activity, in compliance with the rules set. The shameful statement on the prohibition of exploitation was outweighed by granting permission to hire workers. However, the main economic novelty consisted in the development of a draft law “On socialist enterprises (associations)”. On 8 October 1986, the Presidium of the USSR Council of Ministers instructed ministries and departments to prepare proposals for the project. Of particular interest were the commentaries of economists: L. I. Abalkin, A. G. Aganbegyan, Y.M. Primakov, O. T. Bogomolov, A. A. Nikonov, R. G. Yanovsky, A. I. Volsky and V. A. Medvedev, addressed to Mikhail Gorbachev in early December 1986.¹² Below, are a number of them:

L. I. Abalkin:

“The draft law should be viewed not as an isolated act, but as a link in the system of measures for the radical restructuring of the economic mechanism.”¹³

A. G. Aganbegyan:

- To complement the right of the companies with the right to sell and to lease unused resources to companies and **the population** (Aganbegyan’s emphasis);
- To allow the companies to give credits for housing to their employees; the right to transfer individual groups of employees, sites, shops to a collective contract.
- To allow companies to trade with each other;

¹¹ See: Pihoya R. G. *The Soviet Union: History of Power...* pp. 411-413.

¹² The Russian State Economy Archive Collection P-5446, Finding aid 148, File 19, Leaf 1.

¹³ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection P-5446, Finding aid 148, File 19, Leaf 2-4.

- All audits and inspections should be carried out no more than once per year.¹⁴
O. T. Bogomolov:
- To establish uniform regulations for cooperatives and industrial enterprises.

An interesting transcript was preserved of a line-by-line discussion, regarding the reading of the draft law aloud, by two members of the Politburo – Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers N. I. Ryzhkov and the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party G. A. Aliev, on 27-28 December 1986. Heads of key state economic departments and Ryzhkov's advisors – S.A. Sitaryan, P. M. Katsura attended the meeting. During the discussion, from time to time topics came up which were not directly related to the future law, but which noted the condition of the economy. Chairman of the State Planning Committee Talyzin, complained, “now a number of districts have grain, the harvest is very high, they (regional authorities) hold it back, they do not want to distribute it. And no matter how much grain is harvested, there is no grain in the country.” To which Ryzhkov replied: “(...) And if we introduced, as they say, agricultural tax in kind, what would that change? Would there be more grain?”

Ryzhkov also addressed Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR Vorotnikov, who asked for 4.5 million tonnes of grain. “There are districts that are left without grain. Before, we forcibly took from the first ones and passed it to the others. Or maybe we should give nothing, then they will perish, or maybe we should introduce a rationing system, or shift to purchasing grain abroad... And with meat it's the same story. Previously, the Russian Federation had a reserve. Now there is no reserve. And the first one who has been trapped in this situation was the Council of Ministers of the USSR. We are left with the whole country on our shoulders – with the ones who have no meat.”¹⁵

When discussing the articles of the future law, both Ryzhkov and Aliyev were unanimous on one point – state-owned enterprises should not have more rights than cooperatives. For the record, not a single word was uttered about cooperatives in the draft.

From 1 January 1987, many ministries and departments of the USSR and the largest associations and enterprises received the right to carry out direct export and import operations. Self-supporting foreign trade companies could be created within their structures. The activities of these companies were regulated by the “Regulation on self-financing foreign trade organization (association) of ministries and departments” and the “Model regulation on self-supporting foreign trade, research and production companies as well as production associations, enterprises and organizations”, adopted by the Council of Ministers of the USSR on 22 December 1986.

13 January saw the approval of both the resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR “On the order of creation on the territory of the USSR and operation of joint enterprises, international associations and organizations of the USSR and other member countries of the CMEA” and the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the

¹⁴ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection P-5446, Finding aid 148, File 19, Leaf 7-8.

¹⁵ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection P-5446, Finding aid 148, File 19, Leaf 136-155.

USSR “On issues related to the creation on the territory of the USSR and operation of joint ventures with the participation of Soviet organizations and companies of capitalist and developing countries”.

Meanwhile, preparations for the draft law “On socialist enterprises” were underway. By the way, in the course of these preparations, by February 1987, the word “socialist” was removed from the title. The future law became known as “On state enterprises”. In order to examine the proposals of ministries and departments, a working group was established under the leadership of G. A. Aliyev. The working group met once a week. S.A. Sitaryan directly coordinated work on drafting the law, and set the tone there¹⁶.

In early May, a draft law was sent to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. On 5 May 1987, its chairman A. Gromyko ordered the draft sent to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republics and to the standing committees of the Union Council and the Council of Nationalities.¹⁷

Discussions on the draft law began in the Council of Nationalities and the Union Council of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. The main speaker, representing the project, became the First Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee, the Deputy Chairman of the Commission for improving management, planning and the economic mechanism, S. A. Sitaryan. When speaking to the deputies, he stated the future law was the starting point of all economic reforms in the country and that the economic departments had already prepared secondary legislation for the future law. Sitaryan’s statement that the issue of the law would be submitted to the nearest Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, was very meaningful¹⁸. He was asked questions. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers pointed out that in the report that the ministries and departments were mentioned, but what about state employees – teachers, doctors, pensioners, state housing and inhabitants of communal flats? What was to be done with the people who had waited for public housing for 20-30 years? Sitaryan answered by saying that, on the one hand, the situation in the social sphere was getting worse, but on the other hand, it was necessary to make the non-production sphere self-sufficient. He believed that local authorities should be involved in housing issues. Chairman of the Moscow Soviet of People’s Deputies V.T. Saikin objected. He deemed urban agriculture unprofitable and to make it self-sufficient in 1988-1989, would only increase debt.

Sitaryan responded, but his answer did not sound particularly convincing. The “loss-making enterprises will be funded by central funds and ministry reserves (...) Let’s say, we are also going to transfer coal in 1989, and it (the coal industry - R.P.) is a completely loss-making industry.”¹⁹ In the end, “On state enterprises” was adopted. What did this law stipulate? Under a thick layer of arguments about “achieving the supreme goal of social production under socialism - i.e. the fullest possible satisfaction

¹⁶ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection 7523, Finding aid 145, File 875, Leaf 9-14.

¹⁷ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection 7523. Finding aid 145. File 875 Leaf 22.

¹⁸ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection 7523. Finding aid 145. File 875 Leaf 56-83.

¹⁹ The Russian State Economy Archive Collection 7523, Finding Aid 145, File 875, Leaf 92.

of the growing material and spiritual needs of people”, were hidden new radical changes in the economic life of the country.

The first change was the election of company directors at a general meeting or conference of the labour collective. This removed the establishment directors (nomenclature) from direct dependence on the state and the party apparatus, and made them much more independent. Simultaneously, the law granted the directors some rights they had not possessed before. It was stated that “a company operates on the principles of full economic accountability and self-financing”. The law, according to which “the company as an independent producer may act on the securities market and issue shares in order to mobilise additional financial resources, as well as to carry out targeted loans” sounded incredible bearing in mind the socialist reality of the USSR. Note that until that time, there existed no legal act establishing and regulating the securities market.

The companies received the right to “sell, exchange, lease, provide – free of charge – for temporary use or rent: buildings, constructions, equipment, vehicles, inventory, raw materials and other material values,” that is, to engage in activity which was previously punishable as a criminal offence. The companies also received the right “to use products for their own needs, to sell them to other companies, organisations and the general population, or to exchange them with other companies, subject to the fulfilment of contractual obligations,” to purchase material resources without limit (funds), in accordance with their orders on the basis of “contracts concluded with enterprises and other bodies, as well as technical and material procurement agencies or product manufacturers”.

Previously, such activities were classified as crimes; as aiding the activities of “tsekhoviks”²⁰. Each company was allowed to create its own network of products for sale “for unlimited direct orders”, something also prohibited before. The law introduced a truly revolutionary provision – an actual abolition of the state monopoly on foreign trade. Enterprises were allowed to engage in foreign trade activities “on the basis of monetary self-sufficiency and self-financing”, to conduct export-import operations, “to create, should there be a need, self-supporting foreign trade companies, or to commission management of such operations to other foreign trade organisations on a contractual basis”. They were allowed to have foreign currency accounts, to receive “credits in foreign currency for the creation and development of export production, with the condition that they be repaid with foreign exchange earnings from exports”.

But the law went much further. It allowed directors to create business units operating on the basis of self-financing within their enterprises. “A business unit may have a separate balance and accounts in banking institutions.” We will pay special

²⁰ Tsekhovik – shadowy economic “operation” in the USSR, operating typically in the sphere of production of light industry goods. This activity involved the acquisition of raw materials and equipment on the “black market” as well as complex mechanisms of distribution. According to the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, such activities fell under Article 89-93/1 – crimes against public property and were punishable with long terms of imprisonment and up to execution by a firing squad.

attention to this provision and I will return to it later. What tsekhoviks could not previously even dream of was accomplished by the new law “On state enterprises”. The activities for which previously citizens were convicted, put in camps, and even executed, were now permitted by order of the state. Now an important question arises – did the enterprises in question in fact remain state-owned? Judging by the title of the law – yes. But if one looks at the content of the law, then in theory the company belonged to the labour collective. In practice, the role of its leaders increased significantly, since they were given the opportunity to distance themselves from state control. The companies and, accordingly, their directors now had the opportunity to engage in foreign trade activities. On 25 December 1986, the Politburo adopted a decision on creating joint enterprises with the participation of Soviet and foreign organisations, companies and governments.

This law gave the possibility even to transform ministries into state-owned corporations that received assets that they formerly managed as their property. This form of state-owned corporation turned out to be only the initial transition towards their transformation into joint stock companies. The largest industrial ministries in the country took this path. The first to do so was the Ministry of Gas Industry of the USSR. Minister of Gas Industry Viktor Chernomyrdin in 1989, recalled: “We went to the government with a proposal that we would be given the opportunity to leave state ministerial structures and go directly to economic ones. In other words, **that this powerful ministerial structure would be transformed into a system according to the “law on enterprises”. And in the USSR, the “law on enterprise” had just been adopted.**”²¹ The law received full political support at the June 1987 Plenum of the Central Committee. Mikhail Gorbachev called for a radical reform of the management of the economy, which implied the weakening of centralised planning and the need for a price reform. It is worth noting that Gorbachev also raised the question of extending the principle of self-financing to the Federal Republics, as well.²²

The response was immediate. On 26 September 1987 in Tartu, an article was published by four Estonian economists, S. Kallas, T. Made, E. Savisaar and M. Titma, who insisted on the introduction of republican cost accounting, the transfer of all enterprises of the Union to the Republic, the transfer of relations with other republics to market relations and on the possibility of Estonia’s secession from the ruble-zone.²³ But let us return to the immediate consequences of the June Plenum of the Central Committee.

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted on 30 June the resolution, “On

²¹ Cit. ex: URL:

http://www.tadviser.ru/index.php/%D0%A1%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%8C%D1%8F:%D0%98%D1%81%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%8F_%D0%93%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%B0

²² Materials of the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, June 25-26. 1987 M.: Politizdat, 1987.

²³ For details, see: Ostrovsky A.V. Stupidity or Treason? The Investigation of the Death of the USSR. M., Krymsky most, 2011.

restructuring the management of the national economy at the present stage of economic development of the country”. It was noted there, that “the adoption of the USSR law on state enterprises is of key importance to the implementation of the envisaged change. Ministries, state committees and departments were instructed to “decisively change the forms and methods of managing associations, enterprises and organizations, to move from administrative to mainly economic methods, to provide the conditions necessary (...) for the application of full economic accountability, self-financing and self-government”.

In the Politburo a commission “On restructuring the organizational structures of the central economic bodies, ministries and departments of the USSR” was established headed by N. I. Ryzhkov and operated from 1987 to 1989. Many hundreds of pages of transcripts of detailed discussions on economic reforms survived at all levels of government, including ministries and all republics of the Soviet Union, without exception. This topic deserves a special study. I will highlight the most important approaches that were developed during these meetings.

First of all, there was the desire to endow the ministries and departments the rights received by enterprises according to “On labour enterprises”. The ministries insisted on being transformed into territorial associations, functioning on the principles of self-financing and self-government.²⁴ The ministers insisted that the Central Board, or the Central Administrative Board (as it is called today), be a continuation of their central apparatus, not meet the requirements of drastic economic reforms carried out in the construction sector, and not meet the requirements of democratisation in the management of the national economy. The law on state enterprises was to be extended to central boards, as well as the labour payment schedule.

Ryzhkov opposed Minister of Construction A. N. Shepetilnikov in the southern regions of the USSR, stating: “We have the trust and industrial enterprises. They all work and comply with the law on socialist enterprises. (...) The central board is a government body and it is not subject to this law.” But Shepetilnikov nevertheless disagreed: “The central board, in principle, is a continuation of the control apparatus of the Ministry. **Since it is not subject to this law, then it has no right to interfere in the economic activity of state-owned enterprises.** This form of governance should be democratised.” A logical step in such transformations was the emergence of ministries and departments, as well as state-owned holdings, like the above-mentioned Gazprom, previously the Ministry of Gas Industry.

But the economic reforms of the second half of the 1980s were not limited to the implementation of the law “On labour enterprises”. In parallel with it, the law “On cooperation” continued to be developed. S. Sitaryan continues to consider himself a proponent of its adoption: “I was the Chairman of the Committee on its elaboration and argued its case to the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee. I came up with the idea of developing cooperation when we were preparing the reform of 1965. I tried

²⁴ See, in particular, The Russian State Economy Archive Collection 5446, Finding Aid 149, File 8. Leaf 2-9.

to fully articulate the specific assumptions for the development of cooperation when we were preparing proposals for Yuri Andropov in 1983. (...) It so happened that the law on cooperation was passed in the version that we presented.”²⁵ Despite the importance of Sitaryan’s role, it should be noted that the resolutions on self-employment that became the forerunner of the law “On cooperation” were adopted in 1984-1985.

During the preparation of the draft law, ministries and agencies were consulted. Of particular interest is a note written by the People’s Control Committee, entitled “On the results of examination of the situation with the development of cooperative and individual labour activity.”²⁶ The note reported on successful examples of cooperative activities. In Vilnius, almost all taxis in the city (about 3000) – were cooperative. In Vladimir, cooperative photographic studios operated successfully, working two times faster and better than the state versions, while the cooperatives created within the Glavmosstroy system began to build houses for gardeners and repair apartments. Cooperative participants in the Moscow and Vladimir Regions began to grow cattle. But then problems started to appear. The proportion of cooperation in the regional economy was negligible. In the Vladimir Region, noticeably distinguished by the level of development of the cooperative movement, it was only 0.1%, in the Moscow Region – 0.02%, and in the city of Moscow itself – 0.05%.

Cooperatives were primarily meant to provide goods and services directly to the people, but preferred to work with government agencies, not local communities. In the Vladimir Region, the proportion of orders placed by the population was only 6% and the task of fundraising and reducing “inflationary overhang” was not performed – cooperative members preferred to work via bank transfer. The structure of the cooperatives did not meet the initial ideas of its legislators. The number of cooperative members was much smaller than the number of people hired by the cooperatives. In the Vladimir Region, for every one member there were nine employees, while in Moscow, the ratio was 3:67. Between these two categories of workers there was a big difference in salary. In the Polymer Cooperative in Vladimir, the head of the cooperative received – by Soviet standards a fantastic salary – 12,000 rubles a month. His deputy received 11,500, while accountants made 3500 rubles each. In the Gloria Sewing Cooperative in Zagorsk, eleven members of the cooperative received an average of 1200 rubles a month, while the 29 workers received an average of 250 rubles per head. The average salary in the USSR in 1987 amounted to 201 rubles a month.²⁷

Cooperative members were accused of buying large quantities of scarce goods, food products, meat, etc. and reselling them at a large profit.²⁸ In turn, the ministries reported to the Council of Ministers how they were aiding the cooperative movement. The Ministry of Construction in the Urals and Western Siberia informed that there were

²⁵ S.A. Sitaryan, *Lessons of the Future*, M., Publishing House “Economic Newspaper, 2010, pp. 76-77.

²⁶ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 7523, Finding Aid 14, File 888, Leaf 7-12.

²⁷ The materials for the delegate of the XIX all-Union Conference of the CPSU, , 1988, p. 151.

²⁸ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection 7523, Finding Aid 145, File 888, Leaf 7-12.

135 cooperatives operating in subordinate enterprises. They were engaged in harvesting gravel, producing wall panels and cinder blocks. The production of wall panels and cinder blocks at the enterprises was organised to take place on the third shift. The situation was also similar in other ministries. In practice, there was a gradual convergence and merging of state enterprises and cooperatives, or rather, of the part of state enterprises that could be converted to cooperatives by their directors in accordance with the law “On labour enterprises”. It is not hard to see the business leaders’ personal financial interest in the creation of such cooperatives, as well as the obvious danger of corruption. Bearing in mind that the director of a regular production association received a salary of 400 rubles, the earnings of cooperative members were simply enormous.

On 14 March 1988, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet’s decree on the taxation of cooperatives was published. Taxes were raised significantly – up to 10%. This coincided with the discussion on the draft law on cooperation. At the same time, a new socio-political process began to take place – a movement of cooperative members. They strongly opposed the new decree. They had support from the press in such publications as *Literaturnaya gazeta* and *Izvestia*. On 15 May 1988, at a round table organized by *Literaturnaya*, the cooperative members not only demanded the decree be cancelled, but also insisted on being included in the Commission of the Supreme Soviet, which would examine the draft law. Surprisingly, this proposal was accepted. On 13 May, Naberezhnye Chelny hosted a meeting of the cooperative members of the RSFSR, which was organised in order to discuss the draft law. The Vladimir Region members, at their general meeting attended by 178 individuals, not only condemned the decree on taxation, but also had meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Finance and regional financial bodies. They unanimously voted against the decree.

The number of people who were self-employed or working in cooperatives (not to be confused with collective farms) rapidly grew. If in 1984, they amounted to 60,000, by 1 April 1988 they already numbered 369,400.²⁹ By 1990, 3.1 million workers were part of cooperatives, not to mention 300,000 people employed in the private economic sector.³⁰ It was an active, politically involved portion of the population that went out into the political arena. During discussions in commissions of the Supreme Council, it was determined that a great deal of cooperatives existed as business units of the State Supply Office and regional executive committees; they built roads, constructed houses and engaged in foreign trade. This time, the discussion on the draft law in the Supreme Council was very heated. Hundreds of letters for and against the cooperative movement flooded the Kremlin. Some wrote and demanded speculators be punished, accusing cooperative members for the shortage of raw materials, housing, etc. The members themselves insisted on easing taxation.³¹ Even more heated debates unfolded at meetings

²⁹ The materials for the delegate of the XIX all-Union Conference of the CPSU, ., 1988, p. 96.

³⁰ The materials for the delegate of the XVIII all-Union Conference of the CPSU, ., 1990, p. 162.

³¹ The Russian State Economy Archive, Collection P-7523, Finding aid 145, File 889.

of commissions of the Supreme Council.

On 11 May 1988, after making his report, representatives of the farmers attacked S. Sitaryan. The collective farmers (*kolkhozniks*) refused to accept the provision of the draft law according to which the collective farms were required to participate in “voluntary public procurement”. It was its “voluntary” nature that caused the protest. Chairman of the Commission of the Agro-Industrial Complex of the Council of the Union A. F. Ponomarev objected:

Ponomarev – The farms will not be willing to plant crops.

Sitaryan – If they don't plant crops there will be no income, they will not survive. Now everything changes. You're talking as you used to. Now we need to do things differently. Of course, it will be difficult. It will not be easy.

P – If you don't make them plant technical crops, tomorrow they won't plant a single hectare.

S – So we should give them a good price.

V. F. Popov, the Chairman of the Russia Kolkhoz in the Kalachevsky District, Volgograd Region and member of the Union Council of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, stated that the farms did not have to supply their products and accused those that drafted the law, that they “want to hide the plan behind words, by any means.”³² Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Estonia and also the Minister of Agriculture H.T. Veldi proposed abandoning the concept of collective farming once there were cooperatives.³³ In the violent disputes that erupted in the Supreme Soviet, everything was discussed except Article 5 of the law on cooperation, according to which “cooperative unions (associations) have the right to establish self-supporting branches or regional cooperative banks. (...) Under a contract with a cooperative or union which issues securities (shares), the bank may take responsibility for carrying out operations connected with the sale, return and payment of income on securities”.

The emergence of commercial banks rapidly changed the financial situation in the country. On the eve of perestroika in the USSR, there were three banks – Gosbank (State Bank), Stroybank (Bank of Construction) and Vneshtorgbank (Foreign Trade Bank). After the banking system was reformed, there were now suddenly six banks: Gosbank, Vneshekonombank, Agroprombank (the Bank of Agricultural Industry), Promstroibank (Bank of Construction Industry), Zhilsotsbank (Bank of Public Housing) and Sberbank (Savings Bank). The old banks did not carry out – at least domestically – economic activities in which money itself acted as a commodity. Banks distributed the funds in accordance with the state administration's instructions. Industrial enterprises did possess money, but there was another difficulty – in every institution in the USSR, money was distributed according to balance sheet accounts. Limits were set for payroll, capital repairs and construction (with a “subcontracting limit”), routine maintenance, purchases

³² The Russian State Economy Archive. Ф-7523. Finding aid 145. File 885. Leaf 121-122.

³³ The Russian State Economy Archive. Ф-7523. Finding aid 145. File 885. Leaf 136.

of furniture, equipment, all accounted for separately. There was money for “exchange coverage”, distributed by groups of currencies – from socialist country currencies to hard currencies. The state banking system and many inspectors kept an eye out and violently suppressed any unauthorised transfers of money from one balance sheet account to another.

With the advent of commercial banks, everything changed. Businesses and ministries that had been transformed into corporations were permitted to transfer their money to commercial banks. Their number grew rapidly. On 1 January 1989, there were 41. Just six months later, on 1 July 1989, there were 143, including 54 cooperatives. By mid-1991, they were more than 1500.³⁴ The first to appear was Soyuz Bank in Chimkent (Shymkent), Kazakhstan. On August 26, the second to appear was Patent Leningrad Bank, followed by Moscow Cooperative Bank and Credit-Moscow, not to mention later Inkombank (12th), AvtoVAZbank (13th), Avtobank (16th), Aeroflot Bank (20th), and Menatep (25th).³⁵ All large businesses and agencies created their own banks. Enterprises that were financed by the state budget, transferred a part of their funds to the new commercial banks. From there, they came back, “laundered” of their financial classification. At that time, enterprises engaged in granting real loans to commercial banks cared little about receiving interest on the deposits placed in these banks. For them, it was important to save money and use it independently. But commercial banks, when lending to the nascent cooperative commercial structures, were already demanding interest on their loans.

Cashing – the conversion of non-cash money into full-weight cash, became a source of income for commercial banks. For cashing, commercial banks received 10-12% of the total amount, however, as the number of banks and competition among them grew, this profit was reduced to 2-3%. Later, their main source of income became transactions related to buying and selling currencies. Money evolved from a means of payment for goods and the price of credits submitted by state-owned banks was symptomatic in this sense. In 1990, loans were given at an interest rate of under 1%, while by 1991, this number was up to 15%. Agroprombank brought loans to the level of 20-24%, including loans taken out earlier.³⁶

The establishment of commercial banks was qualitatively a new phenomenon, which denied the old planning-and-distribution-based financial system. Simultaneously, the destruction of another component of the Soviet financial system came about – its centralism. Republican banks appeared in the USSR republics and later in its autonomous regions, which quite successfully attempted to pursue policy independent of the Central Bank of the USSR. The previous “On state enterprises” law was revised. It was replaced by “On enterprises in the USSR” in 1990, which granted more rights

³⁴ Kirsanov R. G., *The Restructuring (Perestroika). “New Thinking” in the Banking System of the USSR*. M., 2011, p. 231.

³⁵ Berger M. *The First Banks, or the Origin of Money*, *Izvestiya*, 11 April 1995, No. 66.

³⁶ Kirsanov R. G., *The Restructuring (Perestroika)...* p. 14.

to enterprise owners (both state and collective owners). Quietly, without any discussion in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR adopted “Regulations on joint-stock companies” on 25 December 1990.

All of this had its consequences. The previous establishment was falling apart right before everyone’s eyes. General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev, outraged by the inefficiency of the party apparatus, pounced at an official during a meeting of the Politburo, who had refused to install gas at the railway station of a village in Siberia “And what was the response? Let the Politburo install gas. Listen, why do we keep such bureaucrats? (...) We don’t need such personnel. **We should destroy this establishment!** We have grown bums who cater only to higher officials and remain absolutely deaf to simple people.”³⁷

Gorbachev was unaware of the fact that based on the decision of the Politburo, which was published in the newspapers: gas was not to be installed, funds were required for large and expensive work, money should have been budgeted and that he, the Secretary General, as a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, was responsible for the same state budget that doomed railway transportation, and for the desperate position of railway towns, not to mention who the establishment was comprised of and how it operated. The reaction of the party apparatus to Gorbachev’s innovations was adequate. He started to be quietly hated, since people saw the source of instability to be the activities of the Secretary General... and stability had been a major achievement of the apparatus since the Khrushchev-Brezhnev era. Positions in the state party apparatus began to lose their attractiveness. The position of the chairman of a bank’s board of directors turned out to be more profitable and safer than the post of secretary of a CPSU district committee.

The higher echelons of the state apparatus were also involved in the process of enriching the establishment, although legally, no privatisation in the Soviet Union occurred. These processes were only rarely discussed publicly.³⁸ But in practice, due to the lack of development of Soviet legislation, the possession and disposal of property in fact turned into ownership of property. For new owners, it became important to enshrine the actual possession in law as legally registered ownership. These new owners quickly became wealthy. Through their cooperatives, raw materials such as oil, aluminium, diamonds and timber were sold abroad.

The CPSU, which possessed the party’s property and finances, was also involved in business activities. Using “Komsomol” banks, the party’s money was transferred and invested in businesses in the Soviet Union and abroad. The CPSU Central Committee was in a hurry to conclude commercial transactions using its connections in Eastern

³⁷ AP RF. Working Record of Meetings of the Politburo. 1988 pp. 370–371.

³⁸ Perhaps the only time that discussion took place was in 1990 at the Third Extraordinary Congress of People’s Deputies, when the sale of a dozen brand new tanks through Antey Cooperative caused some scandal. According to some deputies, this deal was supervised personally by Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR N. I. Ryzhkov and his deputies.

European countries. On 16 February 1990, the Administrative Department of the CPSU Central Committee addressed the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. They proposed to explore issues related to the organisation of profitable production and business activities of Communist Party enterprises and institutions. The Administrative Department stated that: “in order to prepare proposals on this issue it would be considered necessary to also study the experience accumulated by a number of Communist and Workers parties. In particular, the communists of Italy, France, Austria, Greece and some other countries effectively use a variety of forms of organising economic activity. These parties have a network of private companies and businesses, the proceeds of which are used to finance party activity.”

On 20 April 1990, the Administrative Department requested permission to buy shares and invest in the acquisition of 15% of the Joint-Stock Innovative Construction Bank in Budapest. “I believe it would be appropriate to entrust the Administrative Department and the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee along with Vnesheconombank of the USSR to hold talks with Hungarian representatives related to a possible placement of the Communist Party’s funds in bank in Budapest.” At the same time, there were hundreds, if not thousands of requests coming from regional Party committees asking for permission to incorporate health resorts, publishing houses, garages, buildings (owned by them), etc. into joint-stock companies. Another interesting subject was the creation of a system where financial experts from the KGB, employees of foreign trade departments, the staff of the Administrative Department of the CPSU Central Committee and others, were involved in the creation of a network of companies and banks, with investment in shares and financing “firms of friends” across Europe, in order to save the Party’s money.

The people of the establishment – whether economic, state-related, or party-related – had lost their dependence on their master, the Central Committee apparatus. The old ideology of communism with its denial of private property collapsed; was killed inside its citadel – the party apparatus. Abandoning the establishment was no longer a tragedy, as it had been before. To the contrary, positions such as chairman of the board of a bank, factory shareholder or publishing house owner were more tempting than working as the head of a department or regional committee. This new ownership was alluring, but it demanded legal protection. Unexpectedly, these aspirations coincided with the desire of the majority of citizens to have their own property and get rid of the dictatorship of the Communist regime. The historical circle came to a close and the political system that denied property ownership collapsed. Among its gravediggers was the “new class”, the previous establishment, which would successfully transform into the old and well-known strata – the capitalist class. For this reason, there were no defenders of establishment values in August 1991.

Contemporary Russia: Authoritarian or Totalitarian?

ROMAN BÄCKER

Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń

and

IVAN FOMIN (MOSCOW)

OLGA NADSKAKUŁA-KACZMARCZYK (KRAKÓW)

NATALIA OLSZANECKA (WARSAW)

JOANNA RAK (POZNAŃ)

Introduction

Questions regarding definitions of authoritarianism and totalitarianism date from the interwar period. This article draws on the classic approaches and argues that the definition of Juan Linz, with changes suggested by Roman Bäcker (2011), and may offer a solid base for understanding the location of each non-democratic regime on a continuum determined by two extreme ideal types: authoritarianism and totalitarianism. The former is defined here by three essential features: bureaucratic sovereignty (or *siloviki*), social apathy and emotional mentality. The latter is identified by references to: state-party apparatus sovereignty, mass and forced mobilisation, and political gnosis. These categories are useful to deal with the research problem considering where Russia is on this continuum, after the annexation of Crimea. It requires, however, carrying out an in-depth analysis on three levels: sovereignty, social behaviour and social consciousness. This article aims to reveal how to identify and approach these analytical levels.

1. Governing Camp in Russia – Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism Indicators

In contemporary Russia, political parties play a secondary role in creating political reality. The most important role is played by clans and networks of hierarchical relationships of the patron-client type that form the power elite [Ćwiek-Karpowicz, 2011, pp. 39-40]. In Soviet times, the party-state apparatus elite was comprised of members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU – the very top of the nomenclature. After the USSR's collapse, this function was initially performed by members of the Security Council, but Boris Yeltsin's presidency was characterised

by frequent personnel changes in the highest positions. Under Vladimir Putin's reign, the elite have been united in the so-called "Politburo 2.0." This model was proposed by Minchenko Consulting [-, *КТО НА САМОМ ДЕЛЕ УПРАВЛЯЕТ РОССИЕЙ*, 2014]. According to Minchenko, the most important decision makers in Russia are the members of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, following the example of the Soviet Political Bureau. Furthermore, in the Minchenko model, there are about thirty people in the Russian Security Council: representatives of the administration, the elite of state power and businessmen. Nevertheless, the power core consists of no more than eleven members of the Council. The others can be considered future candidates. The "Politburo 2.0" scheme represents key stakeholders and policy makers involved in the development of Russia's political system [L. Kasčiūnas, M. Laurinavičius, V. Keršanskas, 2014].

The main research problem focuses on considering the Russian political elite's place on the continuum determined by authoritarianism and totalitarianism. According to the most basic distinction between the regimes formulated by J.J. Linz [2000], one should pay attention to an array of categories in examining political elites:

1. political pluralism (party system, competitive elements, existence of non-systemic opposition and the compatibility of decisions with ruling party policy);
2. auto-creation of leadership (the image of the leader, expression of worship, rhetoric, the leader's characteristics, place in global policy and sacral elements in the leader's image); and
3. power elites (degree of uniformity: structural integration, common recruitment patterns, interactions, group solidarity, ideological integration) [Gerschewski, Johannes, 2013; Gilbert, L., & Mohseni, P., 2011; *Authoritarianism – Overview – Specific Forms of Authoritarian Rule*, 2017]

In the preliminary analysis, several factors indicate that we can currently observe a type of strong authoritarian regime in Russia. After taking into account the issue of political pluralism, one may state that there is undoubtedly the existence of quasi-opposition (systemic and non-systemic) and a high level of conformity between decisions made by the regional and central authorities. These qualities place Russia in the category of an authoritarian state. However, the growing role of the United Russia party and confirmed cases of persecution of the non-systemic opposition suggests that elite competitiveness is disappearing. These are characteristics indicating that Russia is currently in a phase of transition towards a totalitarian system. The second category (auto-creation of leadership) is much more difficult to analyse. While creating ideal types for each characteristic does not cause many difficulties, the placement of the Russian system, on one of the points of the continuum between the two systems, requires further study. So far, research has shown that in Putin's "cult" there are no sacred elements, at least not enough to speak of totalitarianism. On the issue of elites, it is important to point out that they are heterogeneous and the pattern of recruitment is open. We should also look at interactions within the political elite. They are still based on relationships

with the leader, and they are often informal. Within the political elite, there are many infighting clans and pressure/interest groups. In the case of a totalitarian regime, we have a homogeneous level of consciousness, hierarchically centralised elites, and relationships are characterised by a high degree of institutionalisation.

In order to approach the research problem, it is necessary to develop precise research tools in the form of a set of theoretical categories. This will allow researchers to isolate the individual stages of the continuum between these two political regimes, but also to incontrovertibly assign Russia to one of them.

2. Russia Between Apathy and Forced Mobilisation

According to J.J. Linz, a binary opposition of apathy and mobilisation is one of the distinguishing markers of authoritarian and totalitarian systems. In order to classify the Russian political system as authoritarian or totalitarian, the elements of mobilisation, or the lack thereof, should be analysed. Starting with a theoretical base, a method of assessing the scale of mobilisation in Russia should be devised. The results of this method will be thereafter compared and matched with the theoretical framework specified by Linz.

As Linz assumes, authoritarian regimes are based on the apathy of society, while totalitarianism requires mobilisation of the population. However, in the former, weak mobilisation is acceptable, because it can integrate and reinforce the system [Linz, Stepan: 1996: 156].

Most authoritarian regimes do not develop complex and all-inclusive networks of association intended to mobilise the population. They may have brief periods of intensive mobilisation, but these are normally less intensive than in a totalitarian regime. Nonetheless, in totalitarian regimes there is an extensive and intensive mobilisation of society into a vast array of regime-created organisations and activities. Because utopian goals are intrinsic to the regime, there is a great effort to mobilise enthusiasm to activate cadres, and most leaders emerge out of these cadres [Linz, Stepan, 1996: 161].

Russia's place on the continuum can be pinpointed by examining the following aspects of political activity:

- the elements that contribute to the map of civic activity (electoral participation, participation in rites of passage and anniversary rituals, social networking activities, favour the NGOs, activities of so-called “*titushki*” and participation in protests);
- circumstances and political subjects which the population sympathises with (either the ruling subjects or widely understood opponents and critics of the Kremlin); and
- level of activity of *titushki* (members of informal hit squads).

3. Political Language

The Soviet political regime is often characterised as totalitarian, and the language of Soviet propaganda is seen as a kind of real-life totalitarian Newspeak. However, in the period of perestroika, the state's control over language was significantly eased. And in the Yeltsin era, the political discourse, as well as other spheres of life, was liberalised, even though Soviet language habits did not totally die off.

If one were to label the Russian political regime of the 1990s with one phrase, it would probably be Yeltsin's "You are sitting the wrong way." He said so in a meeting in May 1999, ordering new Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Stepashin to change seats and sit closer to Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov. This phrase is iconic for Russia in that period, with its intense public confrontation of elite groups and repeated cabinet reshuffles.

The discursive borderline between Putin's Russia and Yeltsin's Russia was probably drawn by Putin's phrase "we'll waste them in the outhouse" of September 1999 [see more: ЛИТНЬВСКАЯ Е. И., 2010]. This saying became the informal slogan of Putin's first presidential campaign and his whole political career. Pronounced during a press conference, this phrase marked a striking stylistic shift, bringing vulgar, semi-criminal language into the formal political discourse, as well as contributing to Putin's "tough guy" image.

However, usually Putin's personal discourse, as well as Russian official political language in general, was still largely dominated by a dry technocratic style, reminiscent of Soviet bureaucracy. Besides, for the discourse of United Russia – the ruling party – it was typical to exclude any "ideological baggage" [Makarenko, 2012, p. 63]. Both Putin himself and the ruling party tried not to lose their public support, so they avoided any "class" arguments [Ibid.] or any other discursive strategies that might have alienated large groups of people.

The groups that were represented as "them" in the official discourse were quite limited. And Putin usually used his vulgarisms as "special effects" – only when he spoke of narrow groups, like terrorists, Islamic fundamentalists or oligarchs [Gorham, 2014, 131-138]. Comparative analysis of Putin's speeches at Victory Day parades shows that the set of alienated "them" evolved from year to year. In 2000, Putin spoke about vague "forces with geopolitical goals" and "militant Islamic fundamentalists," in 2006 – about the United States, "neo-Nazis," "legatees of the 1990s" and, again, "militant Islamic fundamentalists," in 2012 – about "irreconcilable opposition from the 1990s," "extremist nationalists," and, once more, the United States [ГАЛЯМИНА, 2016: 164].

As a formal continuation of anti-nationalist and anti-extremist discourse in the 2000s, several laws were adopted that imposed control upon public political speech by criminalising "public calls to extremist activity" and "incitement of hatred against a social group" (Articles 280 and 282 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation).

In general, the official political discourse of "Putinism" in the 2000s was characterised by eclectic populist ideology [ГУДКОВ, 2009:18]. Some major parts of that discursive

mosaic, like the elements of imitation traditionalism and the rhetoric of national unity, characterise that regime as authoritarian. But some other components, like the discourse of “great resurgent power,” can be seen as features that are more typical for totalitarian regimes. In the Medvedev era, the official discourse became even more eclectic, with the new rhetoric of modernisation promoted by the current president [Ibid.].

There is no doubt that today, official Russian political discourse is still eclectic and populist, but the question is: Has its totalitarian components become more vivid?

From the point of view of political language, totalitarian regimes are sometimes characterised by the following features: (1) paternalistic rhetoric; (2) sacralisation of power; (3) prevalence of a declamatory style and fervent campaigning tone; (4) propaganda-style triumphalism; (5) common usage of ideologization, attributing symbolic meanings to core political concepts; (6) exaggerated abstraction and scientism; (7) heightened criticism; (8) slogan-like style political mantras; (9) claims to absolute truth; (10) missionary or expansionist ideology; (11) militarist ideology; (12) ideology of “great nation,” “new human,” “new world” [Zusman et al., 2012: 279-280; ГУАКОВ, 2009: 18].

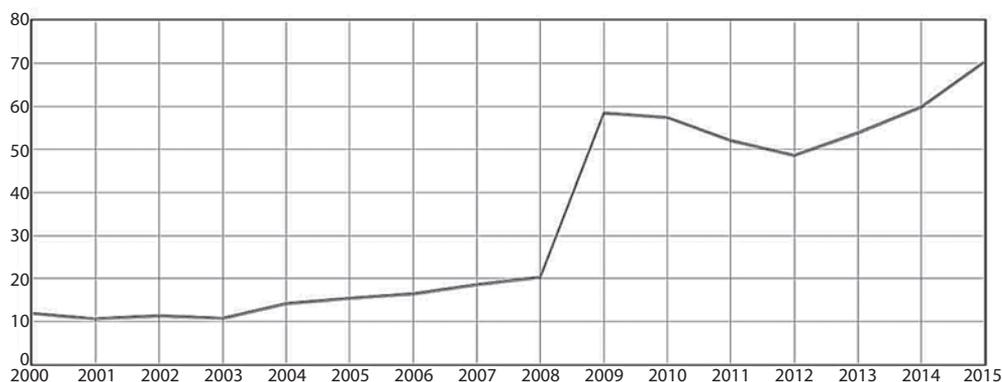
Some of these features can be found in Putin’s Russia discourse of the 2010s, but it is far from encompassing all of them. For example, even though the Russian regime is far from full-scale sacralisation, some elements of it can be found in the recent trends of convergence between the state and the Russian Orthodox Church. Orthodox Christian alarmism triggered by the Pussy Riot scandal of 2012, was one of the major discursive motives that contextualised Putin’s reelection to a second term. Those events were followed by the adoption of a law that criminalised public actions that “defy society and are committed with the express purpose of insulting religious beliefs” (Article 148 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation).

One more symptom of Russia’s swing towards totalitarianism can be observed in the fact that with the annexation of Crimea and with the Kremlin’s support of pro-Russian separatism in East Ukraine, the discourse of Russian expansionism (irredentism) became a part of the official political discourse. And the annual celebrations of the annexation of Crimea can be interpreted as an element of totalitarian-style triumphalist propaganda. Besides, public opposition to the annexation of Crimea was made illegal by a new article of the criminal code that prohibits “public advocacy aimed at the destruction of territorial integrity of the Russian Federation” (Article 280.1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation).

In his Crimean speech on 18 March 2014, Putin drew a picture of a broad all-national consensus, opposed only by a “fifth column,” by a “disparate bunch of ‘national traitors’” [Address, 2014]. And even though the very term ‘national traitors’ was a new element in Putin’s discourse, the concept of ‘traitor’ is said to be one of the key points in Putin’s personal image of the world, according to which ‘traitors’ are even worse than ‘enemies’ [ВЕНЕДИКТОВ, 2015]. In his Crimean speech, Putin used a vivid form to emphasise this concept, but it was not the first time he discursively attributed negativity to “betrayers” [e.g.: ВЫСТУПЛЕНИЕ, 2012; ПУТИН ВЛАДИМИР, 2007]. The search for

betrayers and blaming them for treason are key motives of pro-Kremlin propaganda. Data from the Russian National Corpus shows that the frequency of the word ‘traitor’ skyrocketed during Putin’s third presidential term.

The set of trends outlined above does show that there definitely was some kind of discursive shift in the Russian political discourse of the 2010s. But the question whether it was a shift towards totalitarianism, or just towards authoritarianism, is still open. The answer to that question will require a more detailed analysis of texts corpora with a set of linguistic markers of totalitarianism.



**Frequency of the word ‘traitor’ (per million wordforms) by year.
Russian National Corpus.**

Conclusions

Undoubtedly, from the annexation of Crimea, the contemporary political regime in Russia is typical of hard authoritarianism. This article shows that even though the regime contains some elements of totalitarianism, it would be far-fetched to describe these elements as dominant. For instance, the phrase ‘national traitors’ occurs in the public discourse, but it is not very popular. After 2014, the elements of expansionist and militarist ideology did become a part of official political discourse, but omnipresent slogan-style totalitarian rhetoric is still not typical of the Russian regime. Nonetheless, it is of vital importance to analyse to what extent some elements considered to be totalitarian are indeed totalitarian, and what configuration of authoritarian and totalitarian components in the system, emerges. In general, it is worth studying how regimes change. Let us also pose a question: Is it possible – by employing precise qualitative and quantitative research tools – to verify the hypothesis that after the military engagement in Syria (i.e. after acting on two local war fronts) the hegemony of hard-military authoritarianism will blend with the elimination of the regime’s totalitarian

elements? The authors of this article are very much aware of the introductory nature of the presented remarks and problems. These issues are introduced, however, to offer some research directions and ideas, rather than deliver final conclusions.

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Abstract

We can better understand Russia according to categorical grids that cannot be applied to Western systems – for example, the modified conception of authoritarianism and totalitarianism created by Juan Linz. Russia's political system is dominated by power structures ("silovki") with unclear elements of party-state apparatus, which appeared after February 2014. This has created a completely set totalitarian political gnosis, but fundamentalist thinking has dominated. Mass social apathy co-exists with attempts at subordinating mass mobilization and the effective deprivation of the non-system opposition's ability to organise social protests. The evolution of Russia's political system was never so rapid: hard military authoritarianism was supplemented by lesser or greater marginal elements of totalitarianism.

Keywords: authoritarianism, totalitarianism, contemporary Russia.

III

PUBLIC SPHERE IN POST-SOVIET SPACE

Dispute Settlement Patterns in Polish and Ukrainian Cities

JACEK KURCZEWSKI¹
University of Warsaw

This paper concerns disputes and dispute patterns in Central Eastern Europe. To my knowledge, no previous research has been done on this subject in Ukraine, yet. In Poland, however, the subject had been studied since the 1970s (Kurczewski and Frieske 1977; Kurczewski 1982; Fuszara 1989; Kurczewski and Fuszara 2004; Kurczewski and Fuszara 2016). The Polish line of research on disputes and dispute settlement patterns is linked to the sociology of law, as developed by Adam Podgórecki (Kurczewski 2013), and based on the empirical theory of law and state in relation to morality, as developed in the early 20th century by Leon Petrażycki (Podgórecki 1980-81). Our early research confirmed Leon Petrażycki's theory that disputes brought before a court reflect only a small fraction ("tip of the iceberg") of everyday conflicts that are settled unofficially. The second outcome was that apart from the preference for unofficial methods of private dispute settlement, people prefer conciliatory and compromise settlements, despite the improvement in readiness to go to the courts observed in 2014, compared to 1974. This holds true for disputes and dispute treatment in democratic Poland, as well.

Our surveys raise the question of how various dispute management and, hopefully, dispute settlement patterns, are perceived by people – in other words, what is the popular dispute settlement culture, as part of the living law of society?²

Before we delve into the description of our findings, a note of caution is necessary. Methodologically sound comparison is possible only within a given community, where the construction of sample and interviewing took place. The research teams understood the task differently; we were not able to monitor the process of interviewing in situ, etc. After all, the legal, political and cultural context in each of the localities under study was different. But as for the given locality, these factors are controlled, though, again, the context may be different for different ethnic groups within a given community. Taking all this into account, we begin with the riskiest part, comparing similarities and differences across localities and countries.

¹ j.kurczewski@uw.edu.pl

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A further word of warning concerns the content of the respondents' opinions. The empirical question that law sociologists must ask, is whether in a given society the popular concept of law is dominated by the official legal culture, which we understand to mean that the concept of law is present within the ruling domain of law and justice. This, amongst others, is shaped by direct contact with the official law administration, but also by indirect communication through politics and the media. However, a concept shaped thusly might prove totally false as it is stereotyped by necessity. In general, our research and that of others proves that people's stereotypes of justice are at least independent of personal experiences with the administration of justice, or lack of it. In the Polish case, we have been able to prove that direct court experience enhances readiness to advocate the use of the courts in conflict situations, despite the prevalent stereotype of the unpleasantness of court proceedings (Kurczewski and Fuszara 2016).

The main Polish survey was carried out by CBOS in May 2014, with a representative national random address sample of 1059 respondents. The method used was the CAPI supported individual face-to-face interview, with respondents randomly selected from an all-Polish address base.

The representativeness of the survey allowed us to use the sub-sample of people living in towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants, as this sub-sample is comparative with samples taken in Drohobych and Mariupol. An additional comparison sample was taken by P. Orzechowski in the Ursynów district of Warsaw (1 July – 21 December 2015) with students from the Institute of Applied Social Sciences, University of Warsaw, acting as interviewers. There were 210 interviews collected. Before statistical data analysis in the SPSS program, the size of the sample had to be corrected in order to fit the socio-demographic characteristics of the area. Because of this, the final number of interviews subject to further statistical analysis was lowered to 192 individuals. This correction brought back the distribution of three variables – gender, age and education – in the sample, as compared to the actual official statistical data available. As the interview process had to be completed within one week (during the IASS University of Warsaw students field practice workshop, under our direction), a mixed sampling scheme had to be applied. In one scheme, we used the random address lists (110), while in the second, supplementary per quota sampling had to be used.

In Drohobych – a mid-size Western Ukrainian city of more than 77,000 inhabitants (2001), 361 interviews were conducted between 8 March and 15 December 2014, by "Alter" – a student's association, under the guidance of Professor Svitlana Schudlo (Ivan Franko State Pedagogical University in Drohobych) and Andriy Yurkevych. 140 interviews were conducted, based on the random address sample, and then supplemented by 221 interviews, using the quota representative scheme.

The survey in Mariupol, the large Eastern Ukrainian city of 459,000 inhabitants (2014), was directed by Professor Svitlana Schudlo, Chair of Law, Sociology and Political Sciences at Ivan Franko State Pedagogical University in Drohobych, and Professor Bohdan Sluszcinski, Chair of Sociology, Philosophy and Educational Sciences at Mariupol State

University. 270 interviews were carried out between 3 November 2015 – 4 January 2016, with the inhabitants of Mariupol and the (Greek minority) localities of: Sartana, Stariy Krim, Talakivka, Hnutovo and Lomakyno. Here, the difficulty of completing random address sampling under civil war conditions was extreme, so the snowball method, combined with the purposive quota scheme, had to be used. It is obvious that with a response rate of around 50%, the effective sample is politically biased, as it mostly includes people of non-separatist orientation. In both Ukrainian cities, J. Kurczewski and P. Orzechowski were personally present and took part in instructing the interviewers.

In all the local samples listed above, the questionnaire prepared by J. Kurczewski and M. Fuszara has been used, in conjunction with questions of local interest. Respondents were informed that the interview was anonymous, but in Mariupol, the lack of trust on the part of many participants was evident. The database was then sent to us at IASS (Institute of Applied Social Science), University of Warsaw, to be coded and put under statistical analysis in the SPSS program by Paweł Orzechowski.

For those inclined to accept (as we ourselves are) the collected data as a kind of pilot reconnaissance to direct more detailed and systematic research in future, we begin by presenting the selected indicators of what we label “popular (folk) legal culture” in the region. These socio-legal indicators include reported experience with legal courts, respective assessments of the court’s performance, as well as some general beliefs about justice and law.

Table 1.
Selected indicators of legal culture in the region (%)

	PL Cities	Ukraine	
		Drohobych	Mariupol
Without court experience	48	74	77
Civil court experience	36	18	15
Criminal court experience	16	4	4
Other court experience	7	1	×
Verdict known from experience, considered just	64	65	60
Approached the court on their own	65	19	18
Satisfaction with the effects of contact with court	55	36	43
Court in general unpleasant	69	60	62
Know an expert in law	8	17	16
Local people abide by law	50	36	42
One should obey the law, even if unjust	45	71	59
100% = N =	480	361	270

Note: In the above and following tables:

W-U means Warsaw-Ursynów, D = Drohobych, M = Mariupol.

As presented in the above table, the Polish urban sub-sample is much more experienced with judicial proceedings – almost half of Poles do not have personal court experience, in contrast to about three-fourths of Ukrainian city dwellers, with practically no difference between Drohobych and Mariupol. The structure of experience is similar in Polish and Ukrainian cities, in so far as people have more experience with civil suits rather than criminal proceedings, while the least frequent is experience with other (i.e. administrative) types of court proceeding. There are, however, marked differences in the structure of frequency of different types of court experiences, as Polish urban residents participated in civil cases twice more often, four times more often in criminal cases, and seven times more often than Ukrainians in other cases. This indicates that the court experience in Poland is more diverse than in Ukraine, where (at least, “declared”) court experience mostly pertains to civil law. These differences correspond with the fact that Poles report much more often that they themselves approached the courts in a case – 65% versus about 20%, in both Ukrainian cities.

Whatever the structure, Polish and Ukrainian urban residents do not differ as to the assessment of verdicts from their personal experience. In all cases, the majority (60-65%) assess the pronounced verdict as “just”.

Interestingly, city dwellers from both countries differ slightly as to their reported feelings associated with the court – the majority perceive their experience as unpleasant (60% in Poland, as high as 69% in Mariupol).

Court experience has a different effect on Poles than on Ukrainians. The former more often find the resolution of the case they brought to be satisfactory. The paradox lies, nevertheless, in another point – with all these differences, Poles declare less legalism than Ukrainians, and see their environment as more legalistic than Ukrainians. At the moment, the only comment we dare to say is that Ukrainians seem to be more demanding of the rule of law than Poles. Hopefully, further analysis will help us to substantiate or refute this argument.

For this purpose, the subsequent part of the paper will focus on the patterns of dispute settlement advocated in reaction to the eight case scripts of disputes, as in our book (Kurczewski & Fuszara 2017). The order of presentation of findings will start with a detailed description of the distribution of answers in two urban samples studied in Ukraine, but also utilising Polish data from a sub-sample of respondents – residents in cities with at least 20,000 inhabitants. Then we shall move to the more sophisticated statistical analysis on the aggregate indices of dispute settlement patterns. However, first, we would like to present the Polish-Ukrainian comparison regarding general attitudes towards dispute settlement:

The Polish national urban sample is surprisingly low (12%) with regard to full satisfaction of one party’s legitimate claims in contrast to Ukrainian samples (and all samples studied abroad, including Poles from Daugavpils), amongst whom 30-31% support such a zero-one approach. As for the next question that puts emphasis on following the scripture of the law, the positivist approach is most popular in Drohobych (63%) – less so in Mariupol (58%) – but in Poland, the positivistic legalism is markedly less popular (43%).

Table 2.
Ideal patterns of dispute settlement in the region (%)

Better:	PL	Ukraine	
	Cities	Drohobych	Mariupol
A.1. Full satisfaction of one party's claims	12	31	30
A.2. Mutual agreement	86	69	69
A.3. DK	2	.	1
B.1. Strictly according to law	43	63	58
B.2. Compromise	50	36	39
B.3. DK	7	1	3
C.1. By the court	55	72	68
C.2. By mediators	35	27	31
C.3. DK	10	.	1
Total = N = 100%	480	361	270

In the total of our research, the inhabitants of Ukrainian cities lead in support of authoritative dispute settlement (72-68%), while respondents from Polish cities (55%) are more sceptical about the use of courts and other official authoritative bodies. As those three questions were the centre of inquiry throughout the research, we must look to another possible way of arranging the findings. Until now, the difference in the frequency of a hesitant lack of answer in different samples had been neglected, but these differences may be taken into consideration by counting the simple acceptance ratios (where AR = % of answer 1 - % of answer 2 / % of answer 1 + % of answer 2). Such a recount of variables would allow us to escape the difference in interview technique that might have been responsible for differences in the lack of answers.

Table 3 gives the figure for the three re-calculated variables measured by questions regarding ideal dispute settlement patterns:

Table 3.
Acceptance ratios (AR) of ideal patterns of dispute settlement

Ideal patterns of dispute settlement	PL	Ukraine	
	Cities	Drohobych	Mariupol
A. Full satisfaction of one party's claims/ mutual agreement	-.75	-.38	-.39
B. Strictly according to law/compromise	-.07	.27	.20
C. By court/by mediators	.20	.55	.37
Total = N = 100%	480	361	270

After "don't know" answers were put aside, the differences became clearer, though the basic findings remained pretty much the same – Poles are very much on the side

of mutual agreement, in opposition to Ukrainian urbanites. In contrast with Poles, Ukrainians – in both the Western and Eastern part of the country, equally – prefer full satisfaction of one party’s claims at the expense of the other, with the solution strictly in accordance with the law. As for the use of court and other official settlement bodies, not the informal mediation of third parties, the people of Drohobych are the most authoritative, while Poles are the most informal.

We now move on to aggregate responses to questions about preferred methods of conflict resolution, as described in our eight hypothetical case scripts. First, we present detailed tables of answers to the hypothetical dispute-scripts described in our interview questionnaire. This is followed by a very simple aggregation of specific cases into three sociologically different types.

Table 4.
Intrusive child beaten by a neighbour... (in %)

Noisy child irritates a neighbour, who beats them	Withdrawal	Private compromise		Court	Other Office	DK	Total 100%=N
PL/Cities	2	51	8	20	17	×	367
PL/Warsaw-Ursynów	3	31	21	17	21	2	192
U/Drohobych	4	48	16	27	5	×	361
U/Mariupol	1	17	26	48	7	×	270

In Poland and in Drohobych, compromise between the parents and the neighbour is statistically the dominant solution to the conflict. In Mariupol, the majority would rather go to court; about twice as often as in Polish cities or in Drohobych.

Table 5.
A man gossiping about friend is slapped in the face (in %)

Gossip, leading to a slap in the face	Withdraw	Private compromise	Private pursuit	Court	Other office	DK	Total 100%=N
PL/Cities	7	65	18	3	2	5	367
PL/Warsaw-Ursynów	18	35	32	6	3	6	192
U/Drohobych	5	53	25	15	1	×	361
U/Mariupol	7	39	40	13	1	×	270

Here, unusually, Warsaw and Mariupol respondents agree that such a situation warrants private compromise or a private resolution (understood to mean a reciprocal slap, fist-fight, etc.), while in Drohobych and in the total sample of Polish urbanites, private compromise prevails statistically. Such a result gives reason to suspect that within the large urban (metropolitan) milieu, a direct show of force is appreciated more often.

This can partially be verified by looking into overall correlation between community size and choice of reaction, as Polish survey data covers communities from the outskirts of Warsaw.

Table 6.

TV taken by a friend as collateral on a loan (in %)

Friend takes TV as loan collateral	Withdraw	Compromise	Private pursuit	Court	Other office	DK	Total 100%=N
PL/Cities	6	61	11	12	6	4	367
PL/Warsaw-Ursynów	8	47	17	15	7	6	192
U/Drohobych	2	66	21	7	2	×	361
U/Mariupol	3	44	29	22	1	×	270

In private transactions, the informal execution of debts seems to be accepted, as most respondents assume a compromise approach in such a situation. But again, metropolitan areas seem to be less prone to compromise, while Mariupol residents are certainly more prone to go to the authorities under such circumstances.

Table 7.

Jealous husband beats wife, suspecting her of infidelity (in %)

Jealous husband beats his wife	Withdraw	Compromise	Private pursuit	Court	Other office	DK	Total 100%=N
PL/Cities	5	47	6	16	19	7	367
PL/Warsaw-Ursynów	5	22	16	20	24	13	192
U/Drohobych	5	52	18	20	3	×	361
U/Mariupol	7	26	20	38	8	×	270

An interesting difference between Polish and Ukrainian urbanites is seen in Table 7, as Polish respondents point to another official institution (police), as the referral agency in the case of wife battery, more often than Ukrainians. The difference with regard to the social habitat does, however, seem to be important – in both large city milieu (Warsaw and Mariupol), compromise between spouses/partners is chosen less often than in Polish cities in general and in Drohobych. In Mariupol, the rejection of both compromise and other official agencies is compensated by almost twice as many respondents selecting the court, than in Poland and in Drohobych.

Table 8.

Wife transfers inherited money into her own separate bank account (in %)

Wife keeps money for herself	Withdraw	Compromise	Private pursuit	Court	Other office	DK	Total 100%=N
PL/Cities	24	70	1	3	×	2	367
PL/Warsaw-Ursynów	31	50	7	2	1	9	192
U/Drohobych	14	69	13	3	×	×	361
U/Mariupol	23	57	12	6	×	×	270

This type of case is quite a complicated civil law matter, but in both countries the spouse has this type of exclusive inheritance right, unless otherwise specified in contracts. Thus, compromise and resignation (second choice), and withdrawal from the dispute by the husband, are commonly agreed as the best solutions. Nonetheless, in Ukraine, the minority of those who would advise “self-help” as a private pursuit is slightly larger than in Poland.

Table 9.

Hospital shares privileged information with an employer to the detriment of the patient-employee (in %)

Hospital breaks confidentiality	Withdraw	Compromise	Private pursuit	Court	Other office	DK	Total 100%=N
PL/Cities	3	19	6	58	9	3	367
PL/Warsaw-Ursynów	2	5	8	72	4	9	192
U/Drohobych	1	7	9	79	3	×	361
U/Mariupol	6	10	17	66	1	×	270

Moving to disputes with a public body or corporation, the majority of Poles and Ukrainians would advise approaching the court in cases against a hospital providing an employer with confidential information about the patient.

Table 10.

Police beats innocent bystanders while pacifying a night riot close to a restaurant (in %)

Police brutality	Withdraw	Compromise	Private pursuit	Court	Other office	DK	Total 100%=N
PL/Cities	4	25	4	52	7	2	367
PL/Warsaw-Ursynów	7	7	10	54	17	5	192
U/Drohobych	2	7	3	81	7	×	361
U/Mariupol	6	14	20	57	3	×	270

Here, Drohobych respondents top the otherwise similar level of referral to the court. Nevertheless, on the whole, going to court is the dominant solution in both countries. Re-thinking the results given in Table 10 and Table 7, we are inclined to suspect that in Mariupol (a politically divided city), both police and judges (in disputes with the police) are less trusted than in Drohobych.

Table 11.

Authorities order the demolition of a private home (in %)

Authorities order demolition of a house	Withdraw	Compromise	Private pursuit	Court	Other office	DK	Total 100%=N
PL/Cities	1	27	2	61	4	4	367
PL/Warsaw-Ursynów	5	12	7	60	4	12	192
U/Drohobych	2	18	7	71	1	×	361
U/Mariupol	3	17	13	64	2	×	270

Distribution across samples is similar, with Mariupol inhabitants leading with regard to referring to the court. Going to court is the uniformly dominant solution for 60 to 71% of samples, which is in the line with previous comments on Tables 7 and 10. We see that in Mariupol, going to court is less often chosen than in Drohobych. In Poland, Warsaw metropolitan dwellers, and the general urban sub-sample, do not differ with regard to confidence in the courts.

The above hypothetical dispute-scripts have been further looked at to compare samples of three specific sociological types of dispute: a) private disputes between neighbours or friends (3 cases); b) family disputes involving both spouses (2 cases); c) “public disputes” (3 cases), by which we mean disputes between a regular person and a hospital, the police or municipal authorities (still likely to be public in Poland and Ukraine). For each of these case types, simple arithmetic means have been utilised in calculations, as in Tables 12-14.

It should be mentioned that in Warsaw-Ursynów, the survey list of dispute-scripts was larger than in all other Polish and Ukrainian cities surveys. In Table 12, the mean percentages of those who advocate referral of disputes with colleagues, friends or neighbours were much higher in Mariupol, than in Polish cities or Drohobych. Another interesting difference is that people in the Ukrainian cities under study – in general – more often advocate the private pursuit of their own claims, than Poles. Again, Mariupol has the most remarkable figures regarding this type of reaction to a conflict situation. In general, it is suspected that there is more anomie present in the life of Mariupol citizens, weakening the normal everyday level of respect for private obligations. There, the court is more often seen as the only factor that might ensure that people abide by social rules in private conflicts.

Table 12.
Means (%) for private disputes outside family

	PL		U	
	Cities	Warsaw-Ursynów	Drohobych	Mariupol
Withdrawal	5	15	4	4
Compromise	58	38	55	28
Private pursuit	11	18	21	33
Court	12	10	11	28
Other public	8	7	3	3
DK	6	12	6	4
All public	20	17	14	31
Total = 100%	480	210	361	270

Table 13.
Means (%) for family disputes

	PL		U	
	Cities	Warsaw-Ursynów	Drohobych	Mariupol
Withdrawal	14	15	9	7
Compromise	59	39	60	30
Private pursuit	3	15	9	30
Court	8	9	12	26
Other public	8	7	2	4
DK	8	15	8	3
All public	16	16	14	30
Total = 100%	480	210	361	270

As for family disputes, public agencies are also more likely to be approached in Mariupol, while Polish urbanites in general, and Ukrainians from Drohobych, rather prefer direct compromise.

Table 14.
Means for disputes with public opponents

	PL		U	
	Cities	Warsaw-Ursynów	Drohobych	Mariupol
Withdrawal	2	5	3	5
Compromise	25	8	11	21
Private pursuit	4	8	7	26
Court	56	62	72	46

Other public	6	8	4	2
DK	7	9	3	.
All public	62	70	76	48
Total = 100%	480	210	361	270

It is the opposite in the case of disputes with public agencies – in Mariupol, respondents are less likely to advocate the use of the courts (other public agencies received almost no mention). On the other hand, people from Drohobych – the most out of all samples in the entire region – advocate the use of the courts against other public agencies. One cannot exclude that this reflects the politicisation of local public life in the Ukraine, which in Mariupol has entered the stage of civil war.

The last part of our paper presents regression analysis of the data conducted on Ukrainian urban samples, to be compared later with similar analysis already made on the all-Polish survey data (Kurczewski and Fuszara 2016: Chapter 5).

Table 15.

Drohobych and Mariupol – Multiple Logistic Regression Analysis on Ideal Dispute Settlement Patterns (0- court and other official authorities; 1 – informal mediation of others)

City	Drohobych		Mariupol	
	Odds ratio	P	Odds ratio	P
Predictors:				
Gender (1-woman, 2-man)	0.82	.746	0.35	.290
Age (continuous)	1.54	.546	0.63	.357
Education (1-elementary, 4-university level)	0.13	.999	0.24	.168
Self-assessment of living conditions (1-much better, 5-much worse)	1.72	.205	1.10	.921
Employment (1-full, 4-not)	1.12	.676	0.89	.752
Trust in others (1-distrust, 3-trust)	1.32	.589	2.34	.363
Law abidance (1-other, 2-strict)	0.51	.341	1.51	.677
Civil proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	0.47	.336	1.73	.585
Criminal proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	1.76	.544	0.00	.999
Satisfaction with court (0-not, 2-yes)	0.78	.554	0.41	.171
Constant	0.00	.999	137.92	.389

Chi² Walda (10) = 10.21, p=0.423, R² Nagelkerke = 0.22, Test Hosmera & Lemeshowa p=0.372.

Chi² Walda (10) = 15.23, p=0.124, R² Nagelkerke = 0.45, Test Hosmera & Lemeshowa p=0.395.

In both cities, no statistically significant relationship was established between socio-demographic variables or judicial experience, and the choice between two ideal patterns of dispute settlement – court and informal mediation by third parties.

Table 16.
Logistic Multiple Regression Analysis on Civil Court Experience (0-none, 1 – yes)

City	Drohobych		Mariupol	
	Odds ratio	P	Odds ratio	p
Predictors:				
Gender (1-woman, 2-man)	0.88	.667	0.83	.616
Age (continuous)	1.28	.472	0.77	.177
Education (1-elementary, 4-university level)	6.85	.064	0.89	.754
Self-assessment of living conditions (1-much better, 5-much worse)	0.60	.006***	1.50	.089
Employment (1-full, 4-not)	0.90	.387	0.99	.951
Constant	0.04	.164	0.17	.279

Chi² Walda (5) = 16.40, p=0.006***, R² Nagelkerke = 0.09, Test Hosmera & Lemeshowa p=0.676.

Chi² Walda (5) = 5.44, p=0.364, R² Nagelkerke = 0.04, Test Hosmera & Lemeshowa p=0.796.

In Drohobych, civil court experience is significantly related with higher self-assessment of one’s own standard of living.

Table 17.
Logistic Regression Analysis on Criminal Court Experience (0-none, 1 – yes)

City	Drohobych		Mariupol	
	Odds ratio	p	Odds ratio	p
Predictors:				
Gender (1-woman, 2-man)	1.29	.681	0.92	.902
Age (continuous)	1.10	.890	0.78	.452
Education (1-elementary, 4-university level)	0.85	.878	4.55	.024 *
Self-assessment of living conditions (1-much better, 5-much worse)	0.66	.276	1.98	.129
Employment (1-full, 4-not)	0.89	.651	1.08	.768
Constant	0.19	.557	0.00	.003

Chi² Walda (5) = 1.86, p=0.868, R² Nagelkerke = 0.02, Test Hosmera & Lemeshowa p=0.759.

Chi² Walda (5) = 6.74, p=0.241, R² Nagelkerke = 0.10, Test Hosmera & Lemeshowa p=0.733.

Criminal court experience, in Mariupol, is significantly related to higher education.

Table 18.

Bi-Variate Linear Analysis of Regression of Court Experience on Trust in Others
(1-distrust, 3-trust)

City	Drohobych		Mariupol	
	Beta	p	Beta	p
Predictors:				
Civil proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	0.02	.697	0.003	.965
Criminal proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	-0.04	.523	-0.003	.677
Constant		.000		.000

$F(1,282) = 0.15, p=0.697, R^2 = 0.003$

$F(1,282) = 0.41, p=0.523, R^2 = 0.002$

$F(1,189) = 0.002, p=0.965, R^2 = 0.01$

$F(1,197) = 0.17, p=0.677, R^2 = 0.004$

As Table 18 shows, there is no significant relationship between any type of court experience and trust in others.

Table 19.

Bi-Variate Linear Regression Analysis of Court Experience on Law Abidance
(1 – other answers, 2 – strict legalism)

City	Drohobych		Mariupol	
	Beta	p	Beta	p
Predictors:				
Civil proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	-0.17	.004 **	-0.03	.620
Criminal proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	-0.13	.029 *	0.002	.978
Constant		.000		.000

$F(1,284) = 8.56, p=0.004 **, R^2 = 0.03$

$F(1,284) = 4.81, p=0.029 *, R^2 = 0.01$

$F(1,229) = 0.25, p=0.620, R^2 = 0.003$

$F(1,238) = 0.001, p=0.978, R^2 = -0.004$

In Drohobych, both civil and criminal court experiences are significant predictors of declared adherence to the general principle of law abidance.

Table 20.
Bi-Variate Linear Regression Analysis on Choice of Court by Court Experience
(0-court, 1-informal mediation)

City:	Drohobych		Mariupol	
Predictors:	Beta	p	Beta	p
Civil proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	0.03	.672	0.14	.036 *
Criminal proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	0.03	.664	0.13	.043 *
Constant		.000		.000

F (1,282) = 0.18, p=0.672, R² = 0.003

F (1,282) = 0.19, p=0.664, R² = 0.003

F (1,228) = 4.44, p=0.036 *, R² = 0.003

F (1,237) = 4.15, p=0.043 *, R² = 0.01

On the other hand, in Mariupol, both civil and criminal court experiences significantly predict mediation as the best way to settle disputes, versus court involvement.

The next analysis concerns the satisfaction with the court and court experience, introduced as independent variables in the model:

Table 21.
Bi-Variate Kinear Regression Analysis on Satisfaction with the Court by Court Experience
(0-not, 1-yes)

City	Drohobych		Mariupol	
Predictors:	Beta	p	Beta	p
Civil proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	0.25	.046 *	-0.23	.115
Criminal proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	-0.18	.154	0.20	.159
Constant		.000		.000

F (1,63) = 4.13, p=0.046 *, R² = 0.05

F (1,63) = 2.08, p=0.154, R² = 0.02

F (1,47) = 2.58, p=0.115, R² = 0.03

F (1,47) = 2.04, p=0.159, R² = 0.02

Whatever the previous results in Mariupol with regard to the relationship between court experience, and the choice of court vs mediation, when it comes to satisfaction with court cases brought forward on one's own initiative, in Drohobych, civil court experience predicts significant satisfaction with the courts – while in Mariupol, court experience is not related to satisfaction.

Coming to dependent variable – of major interest to us in Drohobych – the choice

of court is significantly explained by higher education, while worse living conditions notably account for withdrawing from a dispute. These are the only two significant relationships, taking into account all five aggregate indices and eleven independent variables (socio-demographic: gender, age, education, self-assessment of living conditions, employment; general attitudes: trust in others, declared law abidance, ideal dispute settlement pattern; socio-legal variables: civil and criminal court experience, satisfaction with the court).

Table 22.

Multi-Variate Linear Regression Analysis on Aggregate Indices of Various Dispute Settlement Patterns in Drohobych

DROHOBYCH	Court (yes)		Compromise (yes)		Other official (yes)	
	Beta	p	Beta	p	Beta	p
Predictors:						
Gender (1-woman, 2-man)	-0.14	.318	0.24	.087	-0.19	.180
Age (continuous)	-0.21	.148	0.13	.351	-0.21	.148
Education (1-elementary, 4-university level)	0.31	.039 *	0.05	.725	-0.25	.090
Self-assessment of living conditions (1-much better, 5-much worse)	-0.10	.483	0.18	.202	-0.07	.613
Employment (1-full, 4-not)	0.12	.364	0.05	.702	0.14	.303
Trust in others (1-distrust, 3-trust)	0.12	.434	-0.09	.547	0.13	.410
Law abidance (1-other, 2-strict)	-0.06	.715	0.12	.451	-0.11	.464
Civil proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	0.13	.457	-0.06	.717	0.15	.374
Criminal proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	-0.18	.235	0.20	.170	-0.18	.240
Ideal dispute settlement (0-court, 1 - informal)	-0.21	.146	0.24	.089	-0.19	.180
Satisfaction with court (0-not, 2-yes)	-0.03	.826	-0.07	.640	0.01	.942
Constant		.000		.000		.000

$$F(11,46) = 1.37, p=0.218, R^2 = 0.067$$

$$F(11,46) = 1.32, p=0.243, R^2 = 0.06$$

$$F(11,46) = 1.31, p=0.249, R^2 = 0.057$$

DROHOBYCH	Withdrawal (yes)		Private pursuit (yes)	
	Beta	p	Beta	p
Predictors:				
Gender (1-woman, 2-man)	-0.09	.487	0.02	.876
Age (continuous)	0.18	.200	-0.04	.782
Education (1-elementary, 4-university level)	-0.002	.987	0.21	.174
Self-assessment of living conditions (1-much better, 5-much worse)	-0.33	.017 *	0.16	.288

Employment (1-full, 4-not)	0.02	.883	-0.21	.157
Trust in others (1-distrust, 3-trust)	0.15	.312	-0.11	.501
Law abidance (1-other, 2-strict)	0.15	.325	-0.14	.385
Civil proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	-0.12	.475	-0.05	.789
Criminal proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	-0.18	.216	0.15	.343
Ideal dispute settlement (0-court, 1 - informal)	-0.03	.828	-0.03	.841
Satisfaction with court (0-not, 2-yes)	-0.07	.361	0.16	.305
Constant		.280		.624

F (11,46) = 1.72, p=0.099, R² = 0.12

F (11,46) = 0.69, p=0.743, R² = 0.064

As presented in Table 23, in Mariupol, the choice of court and of other official agencies is significantly predicted by better material circumstances, while no significant relationship was found between any of the independent variables, the aggregate indices of informal compromise, nor withdrawal from the conflict or private pursuit of one's claims. As to socio-legal attitudes, anti-legalism is significantly related to preference for the informal and unofficial dispute settlement pattern.

Table 23.

Multi-Variate Linear Regression Analysis on Aggregate Indices of Various Dispute Settlement Patterns in Mariupol

MARIUPOL	Court (yes)		Compromise (yes)		Other official (yes)	
	Beta	p	Beta	p	Beta	p
Predictors:						
Gender (1-woman, 2-man)	-0.25	.138	0.15	.364	-0.30	.131
Age (continuous)	0.21	.251	-0.24	.172	-0.05	.825
Education (1-elementary, 4-university level)	0.24	.178	-0.25	.157	0.09	.725
Self-assessment of living conditions (1-much worse, 5-much better)	0.41	.013 *	-0.25	.117	0.47	.016 *
Employment (1-full, 4-not)	0.25	.120	-0.18	.259	0.14	.462
Trust in others (1-distrust, 3-trust)	-0.07	.671	0.14	.384	-0.04	.859
Law abidance (1-other, 2-strict)	-0.16	.335	0.42	.013 *	-0.14	.465
Civil proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	-0.29	.081	0.16	.826	-0.10	.608
Criminal proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	-0.22	.268	0.04	.138	-0.19	.427
Ideal dispute settlement (0-court, 1 - informal)	-0.08	.613	0.25	.439	-0.18	.396
Satisfaction with court (0-not, 2-yes)	0.04	.801	-0.13	.093	0.16	.451
Constant		.459		.093		.994

F (11,28) = 2.28 p=0.039, R² = 0.27

F (11,28) = 2.52, p=0.02, R² = 0.30

F (11,25) = 1.35, p=0.255, R² = 0.10

MARIUPOL	Withdrawal (yes)		Private pursuit (yes)	
	Beta	p	Beta	p
Predictors:				
Gender (1-woman, 2-man)	0.09	.675	0.06	.785
Age (continuous)	0.33	.139	0.13	.782
Education (1-elementary, 4-university level)	0.11	.671	0.15	.174
Self-assessment of living conditions (1-much better, 5-much worse)	0.05	.789	-0.17	.288
Employment (1-full, 4-not)	0.06	.744	0.07	.157
Trust in others (1-distrust, 3-trust)	-0.22	.290	0.03	.501
Law abidance (1-other, 2-strict)	-0.16	.402	-0.24	.385
Civil proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	0.30	.158	-0.12	.789
Criminal proceedings experienced (0 - never, 1 - yes)	0.34	.177	-0.08	.343
Ideal dispute settlement (0-court, 1 - informal)	0.19	.384	-0.18	.841
Satisfaction with court (0-not, 2-yes)	0.31	.152	-0.11	.305
Constant		.594		.612

F (11,25) = 1.11, p=0.397, R² = 0.03

F (11,25) = 0.69, p=0.734, R² = 0.10

In conclusion, in the datasets collected during the research in Ukraine, we found that there are two socio-demographic variables significantly related to the choice of court vs informal mediation in Ukrainian city populations. In Mariupol, better self-assessment of living conditions explains the preference for informal and unofficial mediation, while In Drohobych, it is better education.

The Mariupol data fit the results of analysis carried out on the entire Polish dataset. One of the recurrent motifs in the statistical analysis of the parameters of choice between authoritative and unofficial (informal) dispute settlement is the social position of the respondents. Whenever the index of social position is in a statistically significant relationship with socio-legal variables, it is in the direction we predicted in the initial set of hypotheses presented in the introduction. That is – the higher the position, the more likely it is that a court or authoritative settlement will be chosen as the proper method of resolution in a dispute. This is not independent of the type of dispute involved, but if there is a difference, then those “better off” are more likely to choose the court, and not the unofficial alternative. This is a crucial point to understanding the relationship between “official” and “unofficial” legal culture. Quite simply, the world of power is the world close to those who have power, even if in life there are “shades” of power and influence. The seemingly trivial correlation between age and the choice of dispute

settlement pattern reflects the same general social fact. The elderly are less confident in their social position and more fearful of the power of the authorities. The further one lives from the societal centre (i.e. in the countryside), the more you are removed from the centre of official power. This makes people of lower social position feel vulnerable to loss, in confrontation with their opponents (Kurczewski and Fuszara 2016: 235).

Comparing Polish and Ukrainian urban surveys on the effects of the court experience on confidence in courts is complex, but very instructive. In Drohobych, like in many instances in Poland, the court experience has no effect, though in Poland under some circumstances, the effect is positive. Here, Mariupol differs, as the effects of court experiences are negative. However, despite the results of the bi-variate analysis in Mariupol (Table 21), when court experience is introduced in the final general model for aggregate indices (Table 23), the experience is not significantly related to any patterns of dispute settlement. This strengthens the overall conclusion that one needs to make the distinction between the overall, emotionally negative stereotype of official justice, based partially on widespread media discourse, suspicion and a critical approach towards the administration of justice, as well as the working image of justice, which is – at least among the better situated in the society – much more positive.

Though on both sides of the Polish-Ukrainian border, going to court is seen as appropriate in conflicts with public bodies, and mutual compromise is recognized as a wholesome victory in disputes that are a zero-sum game, Ukrainian respondents are in general more inclined than Poles to rely on positive official law and authoritative official dispute settlement. The difference between Tables 21 and 23 may be explained as resulting from the fact that even if the court experience is frustrating, incidences of such experiences in Ukraine are much rarer than in Poland, and thus the demand for court action is more widespread. This puts a much heavier burden of expectations on the Ukrainian justice administration, even if the quality of performance is the same as in the Polish case. However, the direct negative correlation between court experience and confidence in courts, at least in Mariupol, undermines such an assumption.

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Abstract

A description of the general aims of the project, includes the study of: 1) patterns of legal culture in time, in order to check if and how they were influenced by change in the political-economic regime; and 2) control of the role of political (various state legal organisations) and ethnic (various national populations) factors in legal culture. The specific issues which the work concerns, is research on dispute settlement in Poland and Bulgaria in the 1970s; research in Poland in the 2000s; the main findings of opinion surveys in Poland and in selected Polish towns, as well as attitudes towards law, assessment of courts, frequency of disputes, declared frequency of use of the court in such places as Daugavpils, Drogobych, Mariupol, Cluj-Napoca and Razgrad in 2014-2016. The author attempts to answer whether or not there is a general pattern of Central-Eastern European legal culture.

Communication of Ethnic Groups in the Public Space: The Case of Daugavpils

VLADISLAV VOLKOV

University of Latvia, Riga

OKSANA RUZHA

Daugavpils University

Formulation of Scientific Research Problems

Interethnic communication is viewed as a form of social communication that happens “between people of different cultures”. Researchers associate the importance of studying such communication with the need to analyse the possibilities for mutual understanding of effective interaction between people of different cultures (Rogers, Hart, Miike 2002, p. 5, 7). Communication between people of different cultures can encompass a wide range of characteristics and goals – from the desire to put forward legitimate claims of ethnic identity to bias against other groups, from the establishment of associative relationships between groups prior to their dissociation (Kim 2006, p. 284, 291), from imposing the dominant culture’s standards and exclusion of non-dominant cultures from public life to the positive recognition of ethno-cultural minorities in the common cultural space (Young 1996, p. 29), etc.

For Latvia, as a traditional multi-ethnic country, the question of influence of different ethnic groups’ identities on the common sphere of public communication, including disputes surrounding issues of the state’s ethnic policy, is extremely relevant. Interethnic communication is a very complex social phenomenon. On the one hand, it is an important way of achieving mutual understanding between ethnic groups when these groups communicate as equal partners. In order to ensure such equal dialogue, ethnic groups are guided by the principles of political equality and universal moral norms (Anderson 1999, pp 302-310; Gordon 2017; Rawls 2005, pp. 60-61, 84, 126-134). Moreover, the appeal to universal moral norms in interethnic communication reflects the interests of socially less protected groups. (Rawls 2005, pp. 395-396)

But on the other hand, interethnic communication expresses the status differences between ethnic groups and institutionalized differences; between the ethno-national majority and ethnic minorities. The expressed ethno-social stratification stimulates the fragmentation of civic culture and enhances the relativity of morality depending on the

evaluation of “us” and “them” (Gert 2016; Freeman, Littlejohn, Pearce 1992, R. pp. 311-329; Harman 1975, pp. 3-22; Waldron 1989, p. 561; Wong 1984, pp. 23-36). However, interethnic communication does not fully reflect these fixed statuses of various ethnic groups. It is dynamic and selective, facilitating only part of the content of the institutional differences between ethnic groups (Barth 1996, pp. 75-82).

This article presents some data on the reproduction of status differences between Latvians and ethnic minorities at the level of interethnic communication between these groups.

Description of Research and Analysis of Empirical Data

The purpose of the article is to show the attitude of different ethnic groups in Latvia (Latvians and some ethnic minorities) to the parameters of the space of public communication that can be used for resolving ethno-political issues. The opinions of respondents from multi-ethnic Daugavpils, the second largest city in Latvia, have been used as the object of analysis. The sociological research was part of the project: “Patterns of Dispute and Dispute Resolution as Elements of Popular Legal Culture” (2014) by Professor Jacek Kurczewski (University of Warsaw).

The number of respondents was 602. The research was aimed at the three largest ethnic groups in Daugavpils – Latvians, Russians and Poles. It should be taken into consideration that the respondents could indicate more than one ethnic identity. As a result, 220 respondents indicated “Latvian” as their only ethnic identity; 202 respondents indicated “Russian” as their only ethnic identity; 180 respondents indicated “Pole” as their only ethnic identity. The inhabitants of Daugavpils in 2014 numbered 87,500 (Russians – 43,900 (50.2% of population), Latvians – 16,500 (18.9%), Poles – 12,200 (13.9%). (Centrālās ... 2016) The overlapping of ethnic and linguistic identities is typical of Latvians and Russians, which is revealed in the absolute dominance of their ethnic group’s mother tongue as a spoken language within the respondents’ families: 85% of Latvians speak Latvian at home on a daily basis, 89.6% of Russians in Russian. 67.5% of Poles speak mainly Russian at home, 13.5% - in Latvian and Polish. (Table 1). The overall majority of respondents in all groups were Latvian citizens (Latvians – 97.7%, Russians – 88.6%, Poles – 88.5%).

People in Daugavpils really value their ethnic identities. Among the types of identities such as territorial (Daugavpils and Latgale residents), ethnic, ethno-linguistic (Slavs), state (a Soviet citizen), and territorial-political (Europeans) offered to the respondents, ethnic identity was ranked as the most important among all ethnic groups. It was ranked the highest for Latvians (52.3%), while ethnic minorities ranked it at approximately the same level (Russians – 44.6%, Poles – 42.5%) (Table 2). The data on the higher level of ethnic identification of Latvians, as compared to ethnic minorities’ identification, correlates with data obtained by other researchers in Latvia, in general. It is also important to note that territorial and ethnic identities of all groups of people in

Daugavpils in total comprise from 70% (Poles) and 80% (Russians) to 90% (Latvians). This provides evidence of the strongest degree of dependence of the collective ethnic identity of citizens in the spheres of their direct daily contacts. However, identification with ethno-linguistic identity (Slavs for Russians and Poles), with the former state identity type (a Soviet citizen), or with the modern type of territorial and political community (Europeans) play almost no significant role.

Table 1.

Language of Daily Communication in the Family. (%)
(Respondents could choose no more than two languages).

Language	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
Latvian	36.2	85.0	9.9	13.5
Russian	58.2	12.7	89.6	67.5
Polish	4.0	-	1.5	13.5
Belarusian	0.5	-	1.0	0.5
Other	0.0	1.4	-	-

Table 2.

Identification of Respondents (in the first place). (%)

	Daugavpils resident	Latgale resident	Latvian	Russian	Pole	Slav	Soviet citizen	European
Latvians	20.5	16.8	52.3	3.6	0	0	1.4	3.2
Russians	35.2	1.0	1.5	44.6	2.5	3.0	2.0	7.9
Poles	22.0	4.5	3.5	5.5	42.5	3.5	1.5	7.5

Positive emotions towards people of different nationalities absolutely dominate in relations between people. It refers to all groups under survey in relation to many other nationalities (Table 3).

Table 3.

Emotions towards people of different nationalities. (%)

Emotions	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
Towards Latvians				
Antipathy, hostility	3.6	1.8	5.5	3.5
Anxiety	4.6	2.3	8.9	2.0
Shame, guilt	3.1	3.6	2.5	3.0
Sympathy, benevolence	67.2	70.9	64.9	68.0
Indifference	12.8	11.8	11.9	15.5

Emotions	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
Towards Russians				
Antipathy, hostility	1.7	4.1	0.5	0.5
Anxiety	4.2	7.3	0.5	4.5
Shame, guilt	0.6	1.4	0.5	0
Sympathy, benevolence	74.6	63.2	87.6	75.0
Indifference	11.5	15.9	5.0	12.5
Towards Belarusians				
Antipathy, hostility	0.5	1.0	0	0.5
Anxiety	1.2	1.8	0	1.5
Shame, guilt	0.3	0	1.0	0
Sympathy, benevolence	72.0	61.4	79.7	76.0
Indifference	18.0	26.8	12.9	14.0
Towards Poles				
Antipathy, hostility	0.9	1.4	1.0	0.5
Anxiety	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.0
Shame, guilt	0.5	0	0.5	1.0
Sympathy, benevolence	67.3	58.2	69.8	78.0
Indifference	21.8	30.0	20.8	11.5
Towards Jews				
Antipathy, hostility	1.4	2.3	1.5	0.5
Anxiety	2.6	2.7	1.5	4.0
Shame, guilt	0.8	1.0	0.5	1.0
Sympathy, benevolence	57.7	48.6	64.9	62.5
Indifference	28.6	35.5	25.2	23.0
Towards Lithuanians				
Antipathy, hostility	1.1	2.3	0.5	1.0
Anxiety	1.2	1.8	0.0	2.0
Shame, guilt	0.6	0.5	1.0	0.5
Sympathy, benevolence	63.6	59.1	67.3	66.5
Indifference	24.9	27.7	23.8	21.5
Towards Estonians				
Antipathy, hostility	0.6	1.0	0.5	0.5
Anxiety	1.2	1.8	0.5	1.5
Shame, guilt	0.7	0	0.5	0.5
Sympathy, benevolence	59.8	55.0	64.4	62.5
Indifference	29.6	33.6	26.7	26.5

The research revealed a rather high degree of the respondents' interest in the use of public communication for emphasizing and resolving ethno-political issues. Latvians, as well as ethnic minorities, expressed this kind of interest. The majority of respondents (50-75%) expressed a desire for this kind of discussion in the public sphere (for example, discussions with representatives of different ethnicities, or politicians) as well as in the private sphere (for example, with relatives or friends). This desire seems more explicit among Russian than among Latvian respondents. Especially large differences can be observed in the desire to discuss inter-ethnic issues with representatives of the government and politicians (74.5% of Russians and 50.5% of Latvians consider it important); in the media (74.5% and 58.2% respectively); with members of political parties that respondents voted for (66.3% and 46.4%, respectively) and even among their friends (73.9% and 58.6%, respectively) (Table 4).

Table 4.

Most Desirable Discussion Types of Ethno-Political Issues in Latvian Society (%).

Kind of discussions and participants	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
within discussions with representatives of different ethnicities	73.8	75.9	77.2	68.5
with relatives	68.9	67.3	72.8	70.5
with friends	66.7	58.6	73.9	70.5
in the media	66.1	58.2	74.5	66.0
with representatives of the government and politicians	59.8	50.5	74.5	57.0
with members of the parties the respondents voted for in the election	55.0	46.4	66.3	54.0
in anonymous comments on the Internet	30.7	25.9	31.0	32.0
not worth to discuss all these issues with anybody	10.7	9.5	7.1	14.0

However, the respondents expressed desires for public communication on the issues of ethnic policy turned out to be more explicit than the real practice of these kinds of discussions. Less than half of respondents have a personal experience with regards to discussing the outcomes of the referendum on providing Russian language the status of the second official language and the initiative of transitioning all education in Latvia to Latvian, as the only language of instruction (Tables 5 and 6). Nevertheless, the index of 30-40% for those who discussed extremely acute issues of Latvia's ethno-political life in their private, as well as public lives, in general reflects the level of political involvement in Latvia and the EU. According to Eurobarometer data, the share of the population who publicly express their opinions on socially significant topics comprises 30% in Latvia and the EU. Eurobarometer recorded these expressions on the Internet and on social networks. (Flash Eurobarometer 2013, pp. 27-29; 2014) Latvian political scientists mention contradictory tendencies in citizens' political participation; mainly its low level and since the mid-2000s, the increased need for mechanisms of direct democracy tied to

the explicit distrust of politicians at the same time. It is especially notable that more than a third of respondents took part in discussions of these issues with Latvians, as well as with Russians, taking into consideration that the mass media discussed these problems only either with Latvian-speaking or Russian speaking audiences separately. (Ijabs 2014, p. 213-214; Nikišins et al. 2014, p. 241; Zepa 1999, pp. 8-10) Therefore, the level of recognition of the need for communication between Latvians and ethnic minorities is similar to the level of discussion on significant social issues in Europe.

Table 5.

Personal Experience of Discussing the Outcome of the Referendum on Giving Russian Language the Status of Second Official Language (%).

Personal experience of discussing	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
with relatives only	47.2	51.8	47.3	42.5
with friends only	39.0	41.4	39.1	35.5
with Latvians and Russians	38.9	36.8	34.8	40.0
with different people, also with colleagues at work	37.3	28.6	42.9	38.0
only within the respondent's ethnic group	13.0	13.6	13.0	11.5
have not discussed with anyone	36.1	38.2	30.0	42.5

Table 6.

Personal Experience of Discussing Outcomes of the Initiative of Transitioning all Education in Latvia to Latvian, as the only language of instruction (%).

Personal experience of discussing	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
with relatives only	35.5	37.7	34.2	35.0
with friends only	34.1	30.0	41.8	31.0
with Latvians and Russians	32.4	29.1	33.2	32.5
with different people, also with colleagues at work	32.2	33.2	34.2	30.5
only within the respondent's ethnic group	13.3	11.8	11.4	17.0
have not discussed with anyone	42.0	45.5	34.2	47.0

In general, these data correlate to the respondents' attitude towards manifestations of xenophobia in relation to their ethnic group that are exposed in mass media. Half of respondents (50.6%) stated that when they come across these facts they just ignore them. This is definitely a kind of habitual response to the state of ethnic hate exaggerated by some mass media. Discussion on this topic in a narrow circle of relatives and friends is characteristic of less than two-thirds of respondents (61.8%). Less than a third of respondents (28.5%) dare to openly debate this issue with representatives of the nationality who often express negative assessments of a national group the respondent belongs to. The share of Russian respondents is even smaller – 23.3%. Respondents tend

to sub-delegate these issues to the political parties they are going to vote for in the next election (58.5%). Russian respondents tend to do this even more often (in 66.8% of cases). What is especially unpleasant is that the negative ethno-political background of part of Latvia's mass media directly negatively affects interethnic relations, and provokes the self-isolation of ethno-linguistic communities from each other. The position: "I try not to communicate with the people of the nationality that expresses negative assessments towards the national group I belong to" was supported by more than a third of all respondents (36.8%), including more than two-fifths of Poles (42.5%) and Russians (41.1%) (Table 7). These figures also give cause to significantly adjustment the real level of interethnic feelings in Latvia.

Table 7.

Attitudes towards the manifestations of xenophobia in relation to their ethnic group that are exposed in mass media (Answer: "Yes") (%).

Attitudes	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
discussing with friends and relatives	61.8	57.7	67.3	62.0
I will vote for the party that protects my nationality	58.5	58.6	66.8	49.5
I try not to communicate with people of the nationality that express negative assessments towards the national group I belong to	36.8	28.6	41.1	42.5
debate with representatives of the nationality who often express negative assessments of a national group the respondent belongs to	28.5	31.4	23.3	29.0

Comparing the data from Tables 5, 6 and 7 shows that about one third of respondents participate in all debates between Latvians and ethnic minorities on the issues of the referendum, transition of education, and xenophobia in the mass media. Apparently, this is the part of Latvia's population that finds the issues of preserving and protecting the collective ethnic identity very significant in their behavioural practices. Moreover, this kind of emphasis on ethnic identity within this part of the population has remained unchanged for a long period.

These data speak not only of the fact that society in general (both ethnic minorities and Latvians) is concerned about the state of interethnic relations (despite the authorities' rhetoric) but also about the fact that beliefs about the need for public debates on these issues are incorporated into the respondents' beliefs about the level of the existing fairness of ethno-political values and institutions, towards Latvians and ethnic minorities. Attitudes towards the opportunity to use the public sphere of communication between Latvians and ethnic minorities, and between them and the state, the main subject of ethnic policy, depends on to what extent these groups consider such public communication to be a prerequisite for the achievement of a fair consensus on ethno-political issues. The research assumed that the attitude of representatives of

the ethno-national majority and ethnic minorities towards issues of ethnic policy reflect their beliefs concerning the degree of fairness of existing legal and political institutions, and – above all – the legal system. The survey data proved this hypothesis.

Respondents think that issues which directly affect the institutionalization of their collective ethnic identities should be resolved by a mechanism of direct democracy such as referendum. The mechanism of referendum turned out to be far more important than court or parliamentary authority. For example, when answering the question on which way of resolving the collision (people's opinions on the issue of providing one of the ethnic groups' mother tongue with the status of second official language alongside Latvian) is more acceptable, the majority of respondents (59.5%) found it important to hold a referendum (Table 8). The data for this research were obtained after the 2012 referendum on making Russian the second official language. Although, the outcomes of the referendum resulted in a considerable split between the Latvian part of society and ethnic minorities, Latvia's population still deems this method of resolving ethno-political issues the most important. A symbolic presentation of their collective identity by means of mechanisms of direct democracy is much more important for different ethnic groups, than the ability of the authorities to resolve ethno-political issues. It is also notable that this opinion was expressed by Latvians in Daugavpils, comprising about one-fifth of the city's population; hence recognizing the possible outcome might be the opinion of the majority that they do not belong to.

Table 8.

Acceptable Ways of Resolving the Collision (the issue of providing the mother tongue of one of the ethnic groups with the status of second official language alongside Latvian). (%)

Ways of Resolving the Collision	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
the issue should be resolved by the court	5.6	3.2	8.9	6.5
find a compromise between parties of collision	16.1	17.7	16.3	16.5
we must wait for new elections for a change in power	2.9	1.8	5.4	2.0
the parliament should decide it	8.7	15.0	4.5	5.5
local authorities should resolve the collision	2.5	1.8	1.5	4.0
hold a referendum in the region	23.4	21.4	24.3	23.0
hold a referendum in the territory	36.1	36.8	39.1	29.5

Compared to Latvians, ethnic minorities more often mention the imperfections of the legal system; 48.4% of Russians and 38.5% of Poles, as compared to 27.7% of Latvians, think that “Latvia's legal system requires dramatic changes”. Statist beliefs about the purposes of the existing legal system are more typical of Latvians than ethnic minorities. 55.9% of Latvians, 44.6% of Russian and 38.5% of Poles recognized the primary purpose of the legal system as “the law must provide order and discipline within the state”. And vice versa, among Latvians there was a smaller group of respondents,

compared to Russians and Poles, who considered the primary purpose of the legal system to be “to provide people with the opportunity to realise their needs and interests” (12.3%, 22.8 and 28.5% respectively) (Tables 9 and 10).

Table 9.

Assessment of the Legal System in Latvia (%).

The assessment	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
legal system requires dramatic changes	38.2	27.7	47.5	38.5
mostly good, but not actually used	20.6	21.8	17.8	20.5
the situation with the law and its application is good	17.6	21.8	14.9	17.0
it's hard to say	23.4	28.6	19.3	11.5

Table 10.

Primary Purpose of the Legal System (%).

Primary purpose	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
to ensure the change and development of our society	20.3	18.2	19.8	21.0
to resolve quarrels and conflicts between people	12.4	13.6	11.4	12.0
to provide order and discipline within the state	46.1	55.9	45.5	38.5
to provide people with the opportunity to realise their needs and interests	20.9	12.3	22.3	28.5

For the most part, ethnic minority respondents perceive the Latvian public environment as open for realising their collective ethnic identities. It refers not only to the real assessment of existing rights for realising collective ethnic identity, in general. A significant number of the respondents attribute their collective rights with more possibilities than they have in reality. A major portion of respondents (78.9%) is well aware of the guaranteed right for the functioning of mass media in the languages of ethnic minorities. There is approximately the same level of awareness of the existence of private education in the aforesaid languages (76.0%). The level of awareness of the right for a portion of state-financed basic education to function in these languages turns out to be lower (68.2%). However, a relatively large share of respondents (approximately 20-30%) was unable to provide a positive answer to these questions. This points to the underestimation of real possibilities that ethnic minorities have for preserving their identity in Latvia. On the other hand, a relatively large share of respondents is almost sure that “higher education financed by the state can function” in ethnic minority languages (38.4%), and among Russian respondents – almost a half (48.0%). The number of respondents that believe “the names of places where national minorities reside can be duplicated” in these languages is strikingly similar (37.9%); Russian respondents (48.0%). Exactly half of all respondents (50.0%) are sure that “it is possible to make complaints and applications to local authorities” in ethnic minority languages, with

more than a third (38.2%) – that “it is possible to make complaints and applications to state authorities” in ethnic minority languages (Table 11).

Table 11.

Rights of National Minority Languages in Latvia (Answer: “Yes”) (%).

The rights	All	Latvians	Russians	Poles
the existence of mass media	78.9	80.0	82.7	74.0
the existence of a portion of basic education financed by the state	68.2	64.6	76.7	61.5
the existence of private education	76.0	75.5	78.2	75.0
higher education financed by the state can function	38.4	39.6	48.0	25,0
names of places where national minorities reside can be duplicated in the minority language	37.9	35.0	48.0	32.5
it is possible to make complaints and applications to local authorities	50.0	48,2	60.9	40.5
it is possible to make complaints and applications to state authorities	38.2	34.1	51.5	30.0
if officials do not answer to requests in languages of national minorities, you can sue these officials	19.7	17.7	22.2	18.0

People in Daugavpils apparently overestimate the framework of ethnic minority rights. However, it is impossible to evaluate this situation without additional research. Nevertheless, a more optimistic view of the capabilities of ethnic minorities in Latvia than is the case in reality, encourages a decrease in the potential for ethno-political conflict and stabilization of the ethno-political situation. This fact might be interpreted as approval of the enhancement of the role of ethnic minority languages in Latvia’s society by a significant share of respondents; as legitimate expectations of part of Latvia’s society. The existing misinterpretations of real ethnic minority rights in Latvia that occur in the public consciousness, apparently reflect the situation within society, where there have been almost no discussions regarding issues concerning these groups of people in recent years. Moreover, even the “Harmony” political party, which the majority of ethnic minority representatives usually vote for in elections, distances itself from these types of discussions.

Conclusions

Democratic multi-ethnic states set themselves a particularly challenging goal: to ensure the integration of society based on the culture of the ethnic majority, all the while respecting the cultures of ethnic minorities. This implies the structuring of ethnic identities. At the same time, Republicanism protects the principle of the equality of citizens with different ethnic identities in all spheres of public and private life. The

functioning of the common public space of inter-ethnic communication without hard barriers is an important criterion for the recognition of multi-ethnic diversity and the equality of all citizens, irrespective of their ethnic origin and cultivated ethnic identity. The study in Daugavpils has confirmed the relevance of this approach. This study has shown the existing untapped reserves of liberal values to create an open space of public communication for all ethnic groups.

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Abstract

The purpose of the article is to show the attitude of different ethnic groups in Latvia (Latvians and a portion of ethnic minorities) to parameters of the public communication space that can be used for resolving ethno-political issues. The opinions of respondents from the multi-ethnic city of Daugavpils, the second largest in Latvia, have been utilised as the object of analysis. The sociological research was part of the project: “Patterns of Dispute and Dispute Resolution as Elements of Popular Legal Culture” (2014), led by Professor Jacek Kurczewski (University of Warsaw).

Keywords: ethnic groups, ethnic identity, public communication, ethno-political life.

The Georgia-NATO Strategic Partnership and Regional Security –The Wales and Warsaw NATO Summits

VAKHTANG MAISAIA

Caucasus International University, Tbilisi

Introduction

The NATO Wales and Warsaw Summits held in 2014 and in 2016, were historic events due to the complex processes associated with them. The Summits have generated much discussion and are comprised of decisive issues and decisions. In the last Warsaw Summit, up to ten documents were adopted, including the final communique, which was for the first time quite “thick” for and more detailed, compared to previously adopted documents (about 139 items). For the first time in the last few decades, the European Union and NATO came to a consensus and adopted a common declaration, where they expressed their united position on common problems within the frameworks of Transatlantic security, and agreed on plans for further strategic cooperation (EU-NATO Joint Declaration 2016). Most importantly, the representatives of both organisations declared a common approach toward threats emanating from the East and South (i.e. Russia and ISIS). At this stage, the Alliance identified three geostrategic special regions for more active operations in the context of strategic defence and deterrence. Those regions became the main issue of the summit: the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea. NATO must boost its support for the Southern flank via crisis management capabilities and strengthened partnerships (Lorenz “NATO at a Critical Crossroads”, 11). In general, NATO has returned to a collective defence strategy. This is a new game where the South Caucasus is becoming a “red frontier” line between the main actors: NATO and Russia. It seems that the priorities of NATO and Russia in the region are evolving within the framework of the so-called “security dilemma”, where both parties are trying to build up their military capabilities and tools of political pressure on the countries of the region, competing with each other in various geostrategic dimensions. This includes intensive NATO military exercises in Georgia and implementation of the Comprehensive Assistance Package, as well as strengthening military potential in the territories of occupied Abkhazia and South Ossetia, not to mention the establishment of a joint air defence system with Armenia, and strengthening the Caspian Flotilla by Russia. However, there are key asymmetrical military and political challenges facing NATO. Cooperation with Georgia could be

very valuable – ISIL and illegal immigration are two challenges facing both Georgia and NATO. Georgia is situated in one of the most important geopolitical areas, which includes: the Middle East, Caucasus-Caspian Sea and, also, Eastern Europe, composed of a part of the wider Black Sea space. The wider Black Sea area is also considered the most important to NATO geostrategic interests since the 2004 Istanbul Summit, and the area is a source of challenges forcing NATO and Georgia to become strategic partners and coordinate their geopolitical goals (Petersen “Black Sea Security”). The challenges certainly include ISIL and cases of illegal immigration.

NATO Wales Summit and New Cold War Prerequisites

In 1990, at a time when the Soviet Union was in a phase of dissolution and NATO leadership was faced with the concrete problem of whether the Alliance should prolong its destiny or dissolve itself along with its counter-part, the pro-Soviet Warsaw Pact, a NATO Summit was held in London. This Summit was once considered a historical event in contemporary international relations and is still considered an area of research interest. The London Summit had to cope with two key geopolitical challenges – notably, how to comply with Article 5 of the Washington Agreement of 1949 and whether or not to continue the Alliance’s existence. By that time, challenges were coming from two geostrategic spaces – from Russia, which while disordered and experiencing political anarchy, still a nation with nuclear capabilities and thus a critical threat to the whole Euro-Atlantic region. Secondly, the political radicalisation of Islamic groups in the Middle East and Maghreb had become key topics of concern. A year later, at the next summit in Rome, the London Summit decisions were reflected in the Alliance strategic document – “The Alliance’s New Strategic Concept”. There, in Paragraph 45 b) and its sub-paragraphs, these challenges were voiced: “that the maintenance of a comprehensive in-place linear defensive posture in the central region will no longer be required. The peacetime geographical distribution of forces will ensure a sufficient military presence throughout the territory of the Alliance; including where necessary forward deployment of appropriate forces. **Regional considerations and, in particular, geostrategic differences within the Alliance will have to be taken into account, including the shorter warning times to which the northern and southern regions will be subject compared with the central region and, in the southern region, the potential for instability and the military capabilities in the adjacent areas**” (The Alliance New Strategic Concept, 1991). Concrete geopolitical threats were mentioned, emanating from a southerly direction up to the Alliance border (i.e. from Algeria, Egypt and the Middle East) including radical Islamic groups, mainly Salafi in origin, and the threat to the northern and southern borders from the newly created Russian Federation. It is important to underline that the London Summit also dealt with issues connected to Alliance expansion.

Almost two decades later, in 2014 in Wales (notably, also in the UK), the NATO incumbent leadership began dealing with the same geopolitical challenges, but in a more dynamic and concrete manner. Certainly, the Wales NATO Summit decisions and thoughts, reflected in the Summit Declaration, were significant in re-thinking the principles of the incumbent NATO Strategic Concept adopted in 1999 at the Washington Summit (not to be confused with the Washington Agreement of 1949). It is highly probable that the new version of the Concept, including contemporary processes of international politics, will be adopted at the forthcoming Warsaw NATO Summit in 2016. At the same time, the Wales Summit did not discuss either the probability of the Alliance's further expansion amidst the decision to invite Montenegro to join the Alliance by 2015, and granting MAP status to Bosnia-Herzegovina – specifically, the long-standing dream of Georgia to gain NATO status since 1999, when the NATO leadership introduced the new four-stage integration model for Alliance membership. Among the concrete challenges, from a geographic perspective, three regions were identified: Eurasia (post-Soviet Space), the Middle East and Africa (Maghreb). As for the Eurasian space, the NATO leadership pointed out protracted conflicts in the South Caucasus and Moldova, and – importantly – military confrontation in Ukraine. Contrary to the London Summit, the Wales Summit clarified two real geopolitical threats, straightforwardly written down in the first paragraph of the Summit Declaration: “We, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, have gathered in Wales at a pivotal moment in Euro-Atlantic security. **Russia’s aggressive actions against Ukraine have fundamentally challenged our vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. Growing instability in our southern neighbourhood, from the Middle East to North Africa, as well as transnational and multi-dimensional threats, are also challenging our security.** These can all have long-term consequences for peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic region and stability across the globe” (Wales Summit Declaration, 2014) – the military aggressiveness of the incumbent Russian authority (Summit Declaration, Paragraphs 28, 29, 30, 31) and the radical Salafi Islamic coalition led by the “Islamic Caliphate” or ISIL (Paragraphs 32,33). The threat of global jihad was primarily configured in the same manner in the Summit Declaration: “The so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) poses a grave threat to the Iraqi people, to the Syrian people, to the wider region, and to our nations. We are outraged by ISIL’s recent barbaric attacks against all civilian populations, in particular the systematic and deliberate targeting of entire religious and ethnic communities. We condemn in the strongest terms ISIL’s violent and cowardly acts. If the security of any Ally is threatened, we will not hesitate to take all necessary steps to ensure our collective defence” (Wales Summit Declaration, 2014). In order to prevent the further advance of the ISIL groups, NATO would deploy Patriot missiles in Turkey to defend the population and territory of Turkey, as a strong demonstration of NATO’s resolve and ability, to defend and deter any potential threat against any Ally. “In these turbulent times NATO must be prepared to undertake the full range of missions and to defend Allies against the full

range of threats,” NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said at the end of the Summit (“NATO leaders take decision”). Moreover, Jordan, the nation closest to the conflict-prone zone, was declared a Distinctive Partner to the Alliance and was to be provided special defence and security support.

In addition, in order to continue to closely monitor the situation, and explore options for possible NATO assistance to bilateral and international efforts to promote stability, and contribute to the response to the growing crisis in, and threats from, the Middle East region, US President Barack Obama sought to use the NATO summit in Wales to enlist allied support in fighting the Islamist militants. He said that his nation was forming a “core coalition” to battle Islamic State militants in Iraq, calling for broad support from allies and partners, but ruling out the commitment of ground forces. At least, ten Allies supported and joined the initiative. Georgia presumably also joined the new coalition, as it was confirmed by Defence Minister Irakli Alasania during an interview on Rustavi-2 TV, on 9 September 2014. It was certainly clear when US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel paid an official visit to Georgia on 7-8 September 2014 (Pitskhelauri, “Alasania’s Gamble”, 6). Here, it is worthy of mention that Georgia, due its geopolitical location, and from a mainly geostrategic assumption – a member of the wider Middle East geopolitical space, almost two thousand kilometres away from Syria and Iraq, and with enhanced military capabilities to deploy the newly formed Coalition Air Force’s combat and transport jets, not to mention the ability to launch special operations and deploy short and medium range ballistic missiles, deploy naval forces in the Black Sea equipped with ballistic cruise missiles to attack ISIL military bases and tactical deployment in Syria and Iraq, preventing the possibility of infiltration from Iraq and Syria to NATO member-states, as well as the other way around by ISIL militants – became a part of the so-called “Middle Eastern Partnership Basket”. As it was agreed, NATO decided to launch a Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative to reinforce their commitment to partner nations and help the Alliance to project stability without deploying large combat forces, as part of the Alliance’s overall contribution to international security, stability and conflict prevention. The Initiative built upon NATO’s extensive expertise in supporting, advising and assisting nations with defence and related security capacity development. Building on NATO’s new proposal, a Defence Capacity Building Initiative was launched, aimed at fostering close cooperation and addressing strategic partner requests. Alliance leaders agreed to extend this initiative to Georgia, Jordan, and the Republic of Moldova. Under the aegis of the initiative, very similar assistance was provided to Libya. Certainly, the initiative was sought to address the concrete asymmetric warfare challenge from the Middle East, with regard to ISIS (Bastian Giegerich, NATO’s Strategic Adaptation, 63). It is true that five field commanders who have high positions in the “Islamic Caliphate’s” military command are Muslims of Georgian origin, including Abu Omar al-Shishani (Tarkhan Batirashvili), a former Sergeant in the Georgian Armed Forces (Maisaia, “Pankisi Gorge and Second Generation ISIS Leadership”, 5). The Alliance considers Georgia and

Moldova those strategic partners with whom an intelligence information partnership is to be coordinated, reaffirming its readiness to provide defence and related security advisory support to nations preventing the reinforcement of ISIL forces through any transit corridor (by the way, Transnistria-Abkhazia-North Caucasus were intensively used by Chechen rebels throughout two periods (1992-96 and in 1999-2003) to transport weapons, mercenaries, sabotage special groups, etc.). Therefore, inclusion of post-Soviet countries on the list of the “Middle Eastern Basket” is not so strange or unusual – especially in light of obtaining aspirant EU status and signing Association Agreements granting visa-free travel. Moreover, Georgia is a strategically important country from the Alliance’s perspective, namely as a key geostrategic hub for providing secure transit capabilities with proper logistic and military sanctuary opportunities for ISAF forces, evacuating Afghanistan since 2014. ISAF will conclude at the end of 2014 as planned, and has demonstrated political solidarity among participant nations, and improved their ability to act and operate together. Thus, Georgia can make a positive contribution to the wider Black Sea region, including through fighting against narcotics trafficking, illegal immigration, terrorism and crime (three tons of liquid heroin, named “Allah’s Tears”, discovered and seized on 11 July 11 2014 in Georgia, originated from Afghanistan and belonged to the Afghan Taliban Kandahar narco-cartel) and by doing so, secure stability and peace for the entire Euro-Atlantic area. In conjunction with achieving this task within the framework of the Summit, it was decided to set up the second NATO PfP Training Center in Georgia (its location is yet to be established) for Allies and Partner-nations with third party involvement, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, for developing security capabilities and ensuring peacekeeping operations of the NATO leadership.

Hence, Georgia is already transforming from a security consumer to a security provider nation, and is being considered for the role of “Distinctive Strategic Partner”, matched in the so-called “NATO Eventual Membership Candidate Basket” group with the former Yugoslavian Republics of Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina. It was also highly probable that Georgia would finally be granted MAP status by the NATO leadership in Warsaw in 2016. In respect to Georgia’s aspiration to becoming an eventual member of the Alliance, Paragraph 93 of the Declaration pointed out that: “We note that Georgia’s relationship with the Alliance contains the tools necessary to continue moving Georgia forward towards eventual membership. Today we have endorsed a substantial package for Georgia that includes defence capacity building, training, exercises, strengthened liaison, and enhanced interoperability opportunities. These measures aim to strengthen Georgia’s defence and interoperability capabilities with the Alliance, which will help Georgia advance in its preparations towards membership in the Alliance” (Wales Summit Declaration, 2014). What is more crucial to understand in relation to the concrete threat coming from ISIL, is indicated in Paragraph 34 of the Declaration: **“Additionally, Allies will seek to enhance their cooperation in exchanging information on returning foreign fighters”** (Wales Summit Declaration,

2014). This is very important to impede the development of the most dangerous scenario for the whole Euro-Atlantic area, where Georgia and Republic of Moldova are key interim transit providers. In addition to the fact that in a German city, Sharia police-Islamic religious police appeared, backed by the local Jamaat representatives, seeking to enforce so-called “Islamic Sharia” order. this is a very serious and inclusive challenge (“German court lets off “Sharia Police”).

Apart from global threats and challenges, the NATO leadership defines trans-regional threats and challenges that can endanger security provisions for Alliance reliability in providing security in the responsible area in accordance with Article of 5 of the Washington Treaty. At the Wales Summit on 5 September 2014, the Alliance’s twenty-eight leaders agreed on a Readiness Action Plan to strengthen NATO’s collective defence, and to ensure the Alliance is ready to deal with any challenges (“Readiness Action Plan”). These trans-regional challenges are considered to be as follows:

- Cyber-Warfare or Cyber Defence – a special Enhanced Cyber Defence Policy was endorsed contributing to the fulfilment of the Alliance’s core tasks. According to the NATO authority, cyber-attacks can reach a threshold that threatens national and Euro-Atlantic prosperity, security, and stability (Novak, NATO, 334). Their impact could be as harmful to modern societies as a conventional attack. The NATO authority has affirmed, therefore, that cyber defence is part of NATO’s core task of collective defence. A decision as to when a cyber-attack would lead to the invocation of Article 5 would be taken by the North Atlantic Council on a case-by-case basis;
- Energy Security - A stable and reliable energy supply, the diversification of routes, suppliers and energy resources, and the interconnectivity of energy networks remain critically important (Kalicki, “Energy Security”, 605). While these issues are primarily the responsibility of national governments and other international organisations, NATO closely follows relevant developments in energy security, including in relation to the Russia-Ukraine crisis, and growing instability in the Middle East and North Africa regions. Further developing NATO’s competence in supporting the protection of critical energy infrastructure; and continued work towards significantly improving the energy efficiency of military forces, and in this regard, we note the Green Defence Framework. Therefore, energy security is still dominating as an added value and, in that framework, the Caucasus-Caspian Region is being developed, where Georgia will play the role of an energy transit hub. The government is hoping to attract enough investment to build a 250 million cubic meter gas storage facility in Tsalka region in southern Georgia, or in the Iori Field in Kakheti region in eastern Georgia. This would enable Georgia to survive for a period of 20-30 days without gas supply under extreme circumstances, such as the Georgia-Russia war of 2006, and keep almost all strategic facilities running (Chitadze, “Geopolitics”, 627). Hence, diversification of energy supplies will enable Georgia to enhance economic development, in

general. In the same context, “energy hub status-quo” is defined by three key features: energy resource reserves, energy transit communication flow and the possibility to provide political stability;

- Terrorism – how the NATO authority perceives the military aspect of terrorism is demonstrated in the final Summit Declaration, as well as in conjunction with the case of Afghanistan and the suspension of ISAF in 2014. Terrorism from the Middle East is a very serious challenge and could really harm the security environment of the Euro-Atlantic Community, and it is time to combat terrorism by military means and finally destroy it;
- Hybrid Warfare – a new type of military threat that has been demonstrated in Ukraine in its South-East regions, when Russia covertly provided special military assistance to separatist forces. By doing so, Russia also unofficially enacted measures to deteriorate the geostrategic situation in NATO-controlled territories –deploying the medium and short-range ballistic missile system – ISKANDER-M with a strike capability of up to 1000 km; a simulated nuclear tactical aerial attack demonstrated during the massive military exercise in Altai Region of the Central-Operational Command “Center” operational zone, involving MiG-31 fighter-interceptors and Su-24MR reconnaissance aircraft. The following is information provided by Reuter’s on 3 September 2014: “The forces responsible for Russia’s strategic nuclear arsenal will conduct major exercises this month involving more than 4,000 soldiers, the Defence Ministry said. In an announcement a day before the start of a NATO summit in Wales, RIA news agency quoted the ministry as saying the exercises would take place in Altai in south-central Russia and would also include around 400 technical units and extensive use of air power. During the drills, troops would practice countering irregular units and high-precision weapons, and “conducting combat missions in conditions of active radio-electronic jamming and intensive enemy actions in areas of troop deployment.” (Maisaia, “The Role of NATO and Russia in World Order”, 656-666). This exercise took place in an adjusted period of time and was claimed to have been successful by the Kremlin. In response to such geostrategic challenges stemming from the Russian Federation AR High Command, NATO decided to reiterate nuclear coalition deterrence strategy implications for the first time since the end of the Cold war. This was done very openly, as written in Paragraph 49 of the Summit Declaration: “Deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defence capabilities, remains a core element of our overall strategy” – a very strong message at strategic military level as set out in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty (Wales Summit Declaration, 2014). As for operational-tactical military level, NATO’s response also became evident – after forming the NATO Response Force, a multinational force which brings together land, air, maritime and special operation forces that can be deployed anywhere in the world, for

collective defence or crisis management. Having considered how to rapidly react to concrete threats from the East, Wales Summit participants decided to create a spearhead force within the Alliance Response Force – a high readiness force able to deploy at very short notice. This spearhead will include several thousand land troops, ready to deploy within a few days with air, sea and special forces support. In case of facilitating reinforcements, it is envisaged to establish an appropriate command and control presence in eastern Allied territory, including reception facilities, pre-positioned equipment, supplies and planners. The spearhead will include to 4000 military personnel deployed in Romania, Poland and the Baltic states (Robin Emmott and Phil Stewart “NATO to Send Troops”). This is quite a serious step to reinforcing the level of Alliance combat readiness in the shortest possible time.

Considering the above, it is interesting what direct responses on these global challenges from other international organisations will be – for example, at the UN General Assembly in the second half of September of 2014 – and how this will impact the development of the “New” Cold war between “East” (Russia-China) and “West” (US-EU), not to mention Georgia’s place in relation to such dangerous geopolitical competition between two high-level forces.

NATO Warsaw Summit: Pros and Cons in the Area of World Politics

For the first time in recent decades, the European Union and NATO came to a consensus and adopted a declaration, where they expressed their united position on common problems within the framework of transatlantic security, and agreed on plans for further strategic cooperation between the two organisations. Most importantly, the representatives of both organisations expressed a common approach towards threats emanating from the East and the South (i.e. from Russia and DAESH). At this stage, the Alliance identified three special geostrategic regions for more active operations in the context of strategic defence and deterrence (defence and deterrence). In general, NATO returned to a collective defence strategy. This is a new game where the South Caucasus is becoming a “red frontier” line between NATO and Russia (Maisaia “NATO Warsaw Summit”, 2). It seems to me that the priorities of NATO and Russia in the region are evolving within the frameworks of the so-called “security dilemma”, where both parties are trying to build up their military capabilities and the tools of political pressure on the countries of the region; competing with each other in geostrategic dimensions. On the one hand the intensive NATO military exercises in Georgia and implementation of the Comprehensive Assistance Package, and on the other hand strengthening of its military potential in the territories of occupied Abkhazia and South Ossetia as well as the establishment of joint air defence system with Armenia and strengthening of Caspian flotilla by Russia.

What the Summit participants failed to achieve is an interesting area for analysis. Here are the points, summarised:

- 1) So-called “Black Sea Synergy” – forming an Allied Fleet in the Black Sea similar to the Soviet 5th Squadron, which operated in the Mediterranean Sea during the Cold war – was not adopted. The Romanian side spoke about this initiative prior to the Summit and was immediately supported by the Americans and the British. However, Bulgaria suddenly spoke against this initiative. Though later Bulgaria changed its position, then Turkey suddenly spoke against the initiative, putting forward the Montreux Convention of 1936. Previously, Turkey remained silent and did not oppose the initiative. This happened just after President Erdogan apologised to President Vladimir Putin for downing a Russian aircraft. The geopolitical context is clear here. Moreover, after the coup in Turkey, information appeared that the Turkish pilots who shot the Russian plane were arrested, and even tortured (“Turkey Arrests and May Executes Pilots”, 2016). Either way, NATO officials defined the Black Sea as a “special responsibility zone” in the final document. However, the Black Sea was declared an “internal part of the NATO operational combat zone”, but without any real means to achieve this provision (Chachanidze, “New Cold War Starts from Black Sea”, 8-9);
- 2) The concept for the fight against terrorism was not adopted during the Summit, though prior to the Summit, experts were working on the concept’s text and a working draft of the document was developed. It remains unknown why the document was not adopted;
- 3) The parties were undecided on NATO’s further expansion and the acceptance of new members on the example of Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and could not come to a consensus on the issues of Georgia and Ukraine, despite of the attempts to include this issue in the agenda;
- 4) The participants of the Summit could not formulate a new strategic concept for the Alliance, nor formulate new visions on the probable construction of a new world order. This is an interesting indication with regard to the Summit’s final results. One of them implies that there was no decision to invite Ukraine and Georgia to join the Alliance, which can be explained by caution on an issue of great importance to Russia. Considering all this, we can say that NATO is attempting to isolate and deter Russia, whom it regards as its main enemy, but at the same time considers it premature to provoke a new international political crisis which will necessarily arise should these two states join the alliance. As for Armenia, the country was mentioned along with a number of former Soviet republics, the territorial integrity and sovereignty of which NATO urges others to respect in its final communique. This is certainly good for Armenia, if not for one important thing: Azerbaijan also appears on the same list, which means that if NATO were to choose between the two conflicting parties, it would be Azerbaijan. Of course, the wording seems harmless, but the proposal holds the support of the organisation.

The following is a comment by well-known Russian political expert and analyst Dr Sergey Markedonov, on NATO's policy toward the post-Soviet space: "NATO and individual Allies are not prepared to consider the territory of the former USSR as a region where Russia dominates. And this standpoint has not changed. Concerning NATO enlargement, I do not think that Georgia and Ukraine are cases with nearest prospects" ("Challenges to the Security of South Caucasus", 2016, 6). This comment clearly indicates how the Kremlin leadership considers its further geopolitical developments toward NATO, and the whole Western community. However, the new Cold war era, started by the annexation of Crimea, is at its initial stage and is being developed further (Spohr and Reynolds "Putin's Revenge", 2017). That is why the last communique of the Summit contained many mentions of two key enemies for Euro-Atlantic security provisions: ISIS and the Russian Federation ("Warsaw Summit Communique"). New relationships between actors are giving fresh shape to the contemporary world order, which could be elaborated by the formula: USA+EU vs. Russia+China. It was wondered whether the Caspian Summit, held on 7-8 August of 2016, between three regional powers: Azerbaijan, Iran and Russia, was just was an attempt to elaborate new perspectives of regional security in favour of Russian interests ("Azerbaijan-Iran-Russia Trilateral Summit"). The next Summit is expected to be held in Tehran in much the same fashion. Moreover, Russia has officially invited Iran to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

The present European security system should be revised, as it already does not meet the realities of present day international relations. The factors that radically influenced the modification of the conceptual basis should be highlighted, generated during the Yalta and Potsdam conferences in 1945, and modernised within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (Helsinki, 1972-1975). After the Cold war, the OSCE Istanbul Summit developed a new European Security formula within the framework of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). This is the basis on which European security was build. However, this system is now falling apart ("Challenges to the Security of South Caucasus", 2016, 20).

Georgia and the NATO Warsaw Summit

The forthcoming NATO Warsaw Summit is being considered a significant meeting. The Warsaw Summit will be held in July of 2016, and many "hot" issues with regard to global politics are to be discussed. A new Cold war is underway and Russia's expansionist policy is causing NATO's leadership a geopolitical "headache" (Richard Sakwa "New Cold War", 250). NATO is absolutely unprepared to meet policy missions and goals set out in the latest version of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation. According to the Doctrine, NATO was considered an indirect threat. Later, revised versions of the Doctrine named the enlargement of NATO a direct "military danger" to Russian

security (Военная Доктрина Российской Федерации, 2014). Despite the fact that the NATO-Russia Council has resumed its activities, despite the ongoing crisis in Crimea and Russia's aggressive geostrategic stance, relations between the parties (NATO-Russia) are still tense and the Council's agenda will be number one on the list of Summit business. It makes clear that the Summit will not discuss the possibility of further NATO enlargement, and will reiterate its old defence strategy from the ultra-nationalist Russia authority. Unfortunately, the Open-Door Policy and its enlargement strategy would have been more important for Georgia's national security environment improvement, and any possible debates on that issue would have further promoted Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration aspiration. Hence, the EU and NATO should develop their initiatives in the South Caucasus and, in Georgia, present a vision for further deepening the country's integration with respective organisations (Zasztowt "Russia in the South Caucasus", 1). In that perspective, the first time that enlargement policy and post-Cold war enlargement were elaborated by the NATO leadership was in 1999, when only three Central European nations – Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic – were invited to join NATO. Only after the Cold war period was it possible to add to Article 10 of the Washington Agreement, based on which a new policy was launched in 1995, together with a new Partnership Policy launched a year before. Since then the Alliance has grown to 28 members (now 29), traversing the post-Cold war geopolitical transitional period and, since 9/11, a unipolar world order. Thanks to unipolarity with the USA's global hegemony provision, all NATO nations remain committed to the Open-Door Policy ("Time to Act", 13). The policy has been defined as the following:

- European nations that are not members of NATO, if willing to, can move closer to the Alliance and eventually join;
- They must first fulfil membership criteria;
- Finally, backed by a political decision of NATO nations, they are allowed to become members of the club.

The relative value of these considerations has evolved over time. While the first post-Cold war round of enlargement was driven by political motivations, all subsequent rounds were based on a more systematic approach. This was embodied in the elaborate structure of the Membership Action Plan (MAP), which was inaugurated at the 1999 Washington Summit that marked the entry of the first three nations from "new Europe": the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. MAP, covering political, economic, defence, resource, security and legal aspects, reflected the understanding that the growing number of applicants had to be better prepared for membership, particularly in reforming the defence sector and enhancing interoperability, based on systematic feedback from NATO (Maisaia, "Black Sea Geostrategy", 259). In the technical logic of MAP, the political aspect, while present, was less obvious. Perhaps it was also perceived as less necessary in a more benign strategic environment, which called for out-of-area "wars of choice", rather than territorial wars of survival. However, MAP still remains a key instrument for reinforcing enlargement policy, and, without politicising the process,

it will continue to be an instrument to prepare candidate nations towards eventual membership. Most importantly, at the NATO Warsaw Summit, Georgia needs a vision – a qualitative improvement over the “substantial package” it received at the Wales Summit, which included defence capacity building, training, exercises, strengthened liaison, and enhanced interoperability opportunities. The Summit in Warsaw should proactively address the issue of MAP for Georgia; it is questionable whether any other compensation measure, such as a new NATO military training and evaluation centre, would provide the necessary momentum. However, it seems that Georgia is still being deprived of the ability to be granted MAP status and any possibility to be regarded as a potential candidate for further enlargement. The Summit will discuss and debate more geopolitical sensitive topics linked with general questions, such as: “How to defend NATO member-states from Russia and cope with new asymmetric geostrategic threats emanating from ISIS and the Taliban in the Middle East, and in Central Asia?” In addition, there are concrete spheres of strategic partnership promotion of Georgia-NATO relations. These include:

- Protection of Critical Energy Infrastructure
- Cyber Warfare Defence – Smart Defence
- Information and Intelligence Share

NATO is attempting to transform form itself into a global security organisation, still focused on the protection of the interests of the United States, and its Canadian and European partners, but engaging non-member states as global partners, like in the case of Georgia.

Summary

There is no doubt that NATO has to maintain its “Open-Door” policy, where Georgia is to be one of the leading “aspirant” nations. Georgia’s aspiration to eventually become an Alliance member is very logical and based on nation-wide consensus – according to some polls, in 2015, about 69% of Georgia’s population supported becoming a NATO member (“NDI: Number of EU and NATO membership supports increases” accessed on 26 December 2015, <http://www.georgianjournal.ge/politics/32023-ndi-number-of-eu-and-nato-membership-supporters-increases.html>). This strategic cooperation should rest on various specific directions. It should more clearly define areas in which cooperation promotes security provisions at the regional level. One of the directions could be Energy Security and Cyber Warfare Defence, even though it is already underlined, and declared a priority for the NATO Warsaw Summit in 2016. The identification of new spheres of security arrangement, like the Black Sea Security Synergy, promotes further global stability and could foster security provisions for littoral states – including Georgia and Ukraine – whose territorial integrity is under attack. In summary, it is critical to the security and stability of Europe and the Euro-Atlantic region to keep the door of the Alliance open

(Czulda and Madej, *Newcomers*, 26). All NATO expansion since 1952, and especially in 1995, has strengthened NATO and the security of the whole Transatlantic community, while simultaneously promoting democratic values at its periphery.

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Abstract

In the post-Cold War period, some new security arrangements have been emerged where NATO's involvement has become decisive and omnipotent. Regional security provisions are to be transposed into new reality and international organizations are involving intensively. NATO and EU simultaneously reached a consensus with regard to ensuring security in the times of financial crisis and reduction of military budgets, realising NATO "Smart Defence" and the EU's "Pooling Sharing" initiatives (Spasov, Security Architecture, 237). Regional security initiatives promoted lately by the NATO, including in aegis of "Open Door" policy, such as "Black Sea Security Synergy", Caucasus-Caspian regional security is boosting in its origins and merits from international security fora, at least from various retrospect, including energy security.

Keywords: Wales Summit, Warsaw Summit, energy security, hybrid warfare, cyber defence, "Open Door" policy, terrorism, Black Sea Synergy, Trans-Atlantic community

Virtual Social Networks in Post-Soviet and Western Societies (Analysis based on Facebook, VK and Odnoklassniki)

KATERYNA NASONOVA

University of Warsaw / Kharkov State Academy of Culture

Nowadays virtual social networks have become the most frequently visited Internet resources. Although the Internet space exists as an open area of communication – overcoming linguistic, spatial and temporal barriers – certain internet products, like social networks, are gaining popularity in particular geographical areas. For example, Facebook, which is popular all over the world, failed to gain much of a foothold in countries of the former USSR. There, the Facebook niche is dominated by such networks as VKontakte and Odnoklassniki. It shows that virtual social networks are a reflection of the community functioning in real-time, space and area. Social network users are not relieved of the burden of group, religious or ethnic identity, nor the ideology of the dominant society in the process of virtual communication. Such virtual activity becomes an expression of the system of coordinates and philosophical orientations that emerges during the process of socialization. Further, we can presume that the unpopularity of Facebook in former countries of the USSR is due to the impact of the post-Soviet mentality on the formation of virtual social networks, like VKontakte and Odnoklassniki. To confirm this thesis, we conducted a comparative analysis of three virtual social networks: VKontakte, Odnoklassniki and Facebook. These sites are quite similar in structure and function. However, they distinguish themselves from one another through the conceptual framework around which their user audience communication is built.

The Facebook audience is diverse – aged 18-60 years old, most of it English-speaking. Odnoklassniki embraces an older post-Soviet audience, aged 25-60 years old, where the average user is around 40-45 years old. The VKontakte audience is mostly made up of youth (high school/university age) that are looking for dating, communication and entertainment. Odnoklassniki allows users to find and restore contacts with former classmates, students, alumni, friends, schools, etc. Nostalgia, reminiscence and sentimentality are the conceptual basis of the Odnoklassniki website. Nostalgia operates on a personal, collective and social level. On a personal level, it connects personal memories and experiences of the past to a wider socio-cultural and historical context, embedding its own biography in this context through personal experiences of the past, oral narratives and perceived media images. This personal level is closely linked to individual emotional experiences regarding the lost past and reconstructions of one's

personal memory of it. The collective level implies memory and nostalgia, localised within groups of similar biographical personal experiences: it may be family history or other local groups, such as a graduation class, labour team, army unit, domestic company or religious community. On a societal level, nostalgic waves combine significant social groups and can encompass whole societies. Nostalgia acts as the collective memory of users; a system with unique memories of events, people and material objects that are similarly interpreted and emotionally perceived by representatives of the local community. On a societal level, nostalgia is often a reaction to a situation of cultural change; changes in the world or the transition to new forms of existence, where masses of people are faced with feelings of loneliness and alienation. According to Abramov, this kind of nostalgia touches countries with many historical fractures – for example, communities with a strong post-imperial syndrome, like the UK in the 1930-50s. Also, countries of the former socialist bloc, many of which entered the 20th century as part of the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman or Russian Empires. This is connected to the fact that powerful ideological systems were the functional basis of these communities. Systemic changes resulted in catastrophic feelings of mental discomfort affecting individuals, caused by a collision of conflicting views, ideas, beliefs, values, etc. in their minds. A prime example of such a large-scale cultural change is the disappearance of the Soviet bloc in Central and Eastern Europe. This period was marked by powerful, institutional, economic and socio-cultural gaps, reflected in the biographies of the inhabitants of the Soviet Union. It is exactly during such periods that nostalgic waves usually appear to alleviate phantom pains of the lost recent past. The Soviet world collapsed very rapidly and the trauma was so deep that nostalgia for all Soviet peoples appeared a decade later, becoming a truly mass phenomenon with significant effects on popular culture. This includes the users of social networks today, and the functioning of these networks. Nostalgia becomes a part of the collective search for identity that looks rather backward, not forward, calling on tradition, not novelty, and which tend to be certain, with no new discoveries. We can observe this impact on Odnoklassniki. There, user experiences of reality tend to turn to the past, and the present is only evaluated in comparison with it. The past is deemed more stable than the present. Therefore, images of the past are removed in order to cope with the effects of cultural changes and lost identity. Post-Soviet nostalgia in the former USSR became a kind of social and cultural phenomenon in the so-called “Soviet retro-fashion” – an effective instrument of political propaganda and tool to gain popularity among voters. Marcos P. Natali shows its relationship with the political thinking of nostalgia, where nostalgia is a special way of mythologizing history.¹ Nostalgic projections sentimentalize the past and create the invention of tradition. Longing for a lost “golden” Soviet age turns into a key factor of political manipulation and Soviet retro-fashion became an effective political propaganda tool. The “walls” of Odnoklassniki are full of pro-Russian slogans praising the actions of Russian politicians

¹ **Marcos P Natali.** 2004. History and the Politics of Nostalgia. *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies* 5. pp: 10-25

and the Russian military in Ukraine. As a result, there is a gradual superimposition and substitution of concepts – the successor of the Soviet Union becomes Russia, and thus it is associated with all the hopes and dreams of a return to the golden period.

It should be noted, that interaction on Odnoklassniki is different from VKontakte and Facebook. In addition to standard messaging features, the site offers the function of “exchanging gifts”. You can get them free or purchase them online. Gift services have already been around on social networks for more than five years. According to the observations of the support team of the site, users get upset when they do not receive “gifts” during the holidays. The creators of the site are not wrong with their choice of functionality. It is precisely this exchange of gifts that brings the lion’s share of their income. This function has not gained as much popularity on VKontakte and is generally not available on Facebook. Thus, this option can be considered the basic idea of the site – focusing on post-Soviet thinking. How can we identify the post-Soviet thinking of this group of people? The present phenomenon is quite versatile and goes back to the concepts of “gift”, “donation” and “archaic sacrifice”. Gift exchange is regarded as one of the pillars of the functioning of traditional and pre-state societies. Gift categories, thanksgiving and sacrifice are present in different cultures.² The concept of the “gift” operates on a collective and personal level in Soviet culture. The necessity of “gifting” was discovered by every Soviet citizen; as a victim in the name of the collective, the State, the Leader. The Soviet citizen was always ready to sacrifice the personal for a common cause. In fact, the Soviet period can be referred to as a time of total aspiration to self-sacrifice. Such strategy inevitably virtualizes the gift, deprives it and turns it into the mainstream of energy exchange. Gifts and thanks also function as an integral part of Orthodox Christian culture, which was manipulated by the Soviet system. In a certain sense, the process of a private donation has turned into a particular destination exchange. From the perspective of the Soviet household, it was simply vital – without a gift it was impossible to get a prestigious job, healthy food and so on. Odnoklassniki leads this gift idea and introduces it into the process of communication, putting the user in the position where they become vulnerable to receiving a gift, while simultaneously they are forced to give and receive something in return. This “something” is not just an electronic image of a particular object and the status of implementation. Often, inscriptions such as “Best Mom” or “Best Daughter” are also available. Gifts become visible to each user and are imposed in the lower right corner of the user’s photo (in the first few days after it is “given”). Users feel the pressure of “public opinion”, and feel flawed without a gift. It also “increases” the status of the user in the eyes of others. Gifts are deprived of the material substance and provide a compensatory function. However, within a network of relations, the goal of such an exchange is not only the receipt of a gift, but also the maintenance of stable relations between network users.

² **Cheal D.** The Social Dimensions of Gift Behaviour, *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. 1986. pp. 423-439.

Similar to the gift function, this site also provides the option of evaluating a user's photos. Users have the ability to subjectively evaluate the proposed criteria of a photo of another user on a five-point scale. User photo ratings appear as a sublimation of active social actions. Making an assessment, the user feels socially active and runs the circle of "*samsara*" – exchanging gifts for ratings.

The Odnoklassniki interface is as simple as possible. For convenience, the page provides icons indicating the position of music, videos and games. Every guest visiting the page remains visible to the user. For users of the site, it enables an escape from routine problems. Most forums are devoted to various hobbies, discussions of cooking recipes, competitions, television and movie stars. Odnoklassniki does not claim to be an active social platform. It is dominated by rather simple online games which do not require any particular skill. Most of the games require the assistance of "friends" and are predominantly agriculturally themed such as the growing and cultivation of potted plants, livestock breeding and farm management. Odnoklassniki exists as a vivid expression of popular culture.

Unlike Odnoklassniki, communication on VKontakte is directed towards the present. It is interested in the "here and now". Many users have little or no memory of the Soviet period. Nevertheless, the post-Soviet space has left its mark. As a project, VKontakte was conceived as a Russian analogue of Facebook. The creators never concealed this objective. For this reason, both sites have a lot in common, but VKontakte is not a direct copy. What sets them apart? First of all, the user's personal page on VKontakte and its inner space behind the "high wall". It can be argued that post-Soviet users build high opaque fences and transfer them to virtual communication. Such large, tall fences are often very noticeable on the border between Europe and post-Soviet countries. Each home is separated by a high fence of dense material preventing the penetration of prying eyes. This architectural solution can be regarded as the embodiment of post-Soviet thinking – the private space of boundaries, borders, fences and hedges. Soviet people wanted to create their own interior spaces. They wanted to be sure their own personal space was beyond the control of outsiders. The solid fences of modern houses (analogous on VKontakte user profiles) fully demonstrate that their owners do not want to see anything outside, while, at the same time, not being observed themselves.³ The same can be said of the design of all profile pages on VKontakte. The central theme of the page is the user's photos. The avatar (main profile photo) can be a user picture or the image of an imaginary person. It is very important to fill the user profile with all your personal information – date of birth, place of work, education (like on Facebook), as well as information on marital status, children, names of parents, sisters, brothers and languages. This is the only information that is constantly visible.

³ **Kaganski V. The post-Soviet culture: kind of landscape/** Каганский В. Постсоветская культура: вид из ландшафта // Обсерватория культуры. Журнал-обозрение. — 2006. — № 3. [Electronic resource]. — Access mode: <http://www.russ.ru/layout/set/print/pole/Postsovetskij-chelovek-vid-iz-landshafta.-2>

By clicking on the option “show full information”, we see a huge flow of information, which reveals education, favourite music, movies, books, games, as well as favourite quotes. Accordingly, when filling in the profile, the user must spend some time creating an image of themselves that they would like to present to others. On the left side, there are your “favourites” – music, films/videos, photos, groups, games and news. By creating a profile on VKontakte, it is like you are creating or designing your own bedroom, filling the space with “components” of your life, enabling you to say “this is who I am”. The personal page is a projection of the user’s identity. Even if it is not exhaustive, it gives an idea of how they want to appear or appear to be. “Who am I? How do I feel? What am I doing/going to do? What are my latest photos and impressions?” That is why, the visible wall – which does not require instantly switching to another page – is the user’s “wall of action”. They control what it is filled with; either they or other users can participate in filling the wall. All user actions on VKontakte only become visible to others when the user so desires. Even just a couple of months ago, the user’s main page on VKontakte was their profile page, and only when they wished to do so, they could go to the news tab or other equivalent tabs (music, video) in the left pane. On Facebook, the wall has a central position on the page. On the VKontakte page, the central position is occupied by the news tab, where you can also see new photos, articles, videos, comments. All user actions on VKontakte become visible to others only when you wish, but do not become just a part of the news stream. According to researchers, unlike VKontakte, Facebook users spend most of their time observing the news stream. On Facebook, the user’s profile is hidden on other pages – you need to jump to another screen to find it – and there is a flow of messages on the main page, which is an important means of communication.

Some ego-centric themes on VKontakte should also be noted. The social network does not focus on the process of interaction with society and human involvement in social activities, nor a deep involvement in the process of “filling-in” of image. Almost during the whole period of its existence (except the last few months) the main page of VKontakte was the user profile page, with no news feed. Now the user can see the news feed as soon as they open the page, but the main page is still the user’s profile, photo and interests. The news feed design of VKontakte is not defined as the main page, in contrast to the news feed on Facebook. Navigating the social network is connected to the profile. If we were to use a metaphor to describe VKontakte’s premise, the user can imagine VKontakte as his own apartment, looking through the window on the community and entering into communication. On Facebook, the effect is different – it is a very public place that you become a part of.

Based on differences in the user interface and the positioning of feeds, Dmitry Soloviov tried to explain the differences between Facebook and VKontakte with the help of Marshall McLuhan’s classification in his book “Understanding Media”, where basically, all means of communication are divided into “hot” and “cold”. According to McLuhan’s theory, user involvement fulfils a special place. “Cool” means that communication has a low degree of certainty, but a high degree of audience participation, so it has to “finish

building” whatever is missing. “Hot” communication administers human feelings in a state of complete fullness of data, while “cold” leaves space for personal participation, inviting the user to finish building images of the senses and their imagination.⁴ Thus, according to Dmitry Soloviev, we can say that VKontakte is a “cool network”.⁵ Previously, this social network did focus on communication, as the user was immediately taken to the profile page. Now the first thing the user sees is the news feed page. The person and their personality are a “cool” communication tool, because you can create a profile, so that the observer sees only what is external. But notice that there is something much deeper that is not expressed in the network. On Facebook, a user’s profile details are hidden on other pages. You need to jump to another screen to find them. On the main page, there is the message stream, which, as a means of communication, is “hotter” than a person, because it defines and limits a person much easier than a silent image. (Soloviev D. 2012) This theory is controversial. On the one hand, we can take advantage of McLuhan’s theory to analyse networks, but the Internet itself is based on a concept that can be interpreted as a “cold” means of communication. The use of the phrase “a means of communication to virtual communities”, with regard to social networks, also seems quite controversial. Media is the only tool in the transmission of information. Can society itself and its realization of social networking be a means of communication in its virtual dimension? If so, then it turns out that a virtual social network – as a reflection of society – is able to serve as a means of communication in a particular society. In this context, it dissolves and mixes the statement of the concept of communication tools proposed by M. McLuhan.

In fact, the difference between VKontakte and Facebook is that VKontakte prompts the user to complete the construction of images with his imagination. This feature, as well as the interface for viewing updates (VKontakte is full of various ‘news’, ‘answers’ and ‘commentary’ tabs) pushes the user to take a “walk” along the profiles of other users and attempt to discover updates. On Facebook, updates are all gathered on one central information highway, and it is the key to giving life to the social network. This statement means that it is not possible to compare these two networks along the line of “hot” and “cold”. Rather it confirms the idea that these virtual networks are reflections of the community members and they are based on different ideological orientations, as well as the way the process of communication is treated.

Thus, after analysis of social networks like Facebook, VKontakte and Odnoklassniki we can conclude the following – the audience interacts with different principles according to its mental structure. These social networks have accumulated social and mental conflicts which can prove to be analogous to real society operating on virtual media.

⁴ **McLuhan Marshall.** 1964. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY, pp. 24-36

⁵ **Soloviev D.** The difference between Facebook, “VKontakte” from the perspective of McLuhan’s theory. Соловьев Д. Различие Facebook и «ВКонтакте» с точки зрения теории Маклюэна [Electronic resource]. — Access mode:<http://www.cossa.ru/234/17269/>

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Abstract

As the title implies, the article deals with analysis of the functioning of Virtual Social Networks in post-Soviet and Western societies. Much attention is given to virtual social networks: Facebook, VK and Odnoklassniki. It should be emphasized that having sprung from the depths of virtual worlds, social networks have sweepingly permeated into various fields of human activity and recently begun expansion from virtual worlds to the real world, gaining speed with each passing year. The Internet space exists as an open area of communication, overcoming linguistic, spatial and temporal barriers. But certain internet products, like social networks, are gaining popularity in particular geographical areas. This may be explained by the influence of mentality and tradition in the process of virtual communication. It is especially noted that a virtual social network is a reflection of the community functioning in real-time, space and territory. The aim of the article is to prove that users of social networks are not relieved of the burden of the group, religion, ethnic identity and ideology of the dominant society in the process of virtual communication. Much attention is given to the impact of post-Soviet mentality on the formation of the virtual communication field of social networks like VKontakte and Odnoklassniki. We can also presume that virtual action has become an expression of the system of coordinates and philosophical orientations that emerged during the process of socialization.

Keywords: virtual social networks, **Western** societies, virtual community, post-Soviet mentality, nostalgia

Public and Private Hate Speech in Poland

MAGDA STROIŃSKA

McMaster University, Canada

GRAŻYNA DRZAZGA

University of Groningen, the Netherlands

Introduction

“Words can be like tiny doses of arsenic: they are swallowed unnoticed, appear to have no effect, and then after a little time the toxic reaction sets in after all,” wrote Victor Klemperer in his study of the language of the Third Reich (Klemperer 1946/2000: 15-16). The importance of language for effective persuasion has been acknowledged by the teachers of rhetoric and orators since the age of antiquity. In modern times, there were both politicians who practiced deception through language for political or other gains, and also those who studied the effects of language-based manipulation. Among the most profound research on the mechanisms and effects of propaganda, one could name the writings of George Orwell, Friedrich Hayek, or Michał Głowiński. In this paper, we focus on one particularly disturbing aspect of propaganda: the use of hate speech. The reason for this choice of topic is the unprecedented explosion of populism all over the world, and the spread of perhaps its strongest weapon – hate through political and social fearmongering and use of what Klemperer referred to as ‘poisonous language’.

Both political discourse in general and political propaganda in particular, tend to use a number of linguistic mechanisms in order to maximize the way they affect their target audiences and stir up hostility towards certain minorities. The most effective techniques, proven throughout history, include stereotyping for the purpose of singling out individuals or groups as the proverbial “other” and, making that “other” out to be the scapegoat (cf. Stroińska 1998), as well as *ad hominem* attacks and redefining the meaning of certain keywords.

This paper attempts to look at recent changes in the Polish public discourse and discuss the changes that make it appear more violent and offensive, both at the lexical level and in terms of discourse patterns. We focus on political discourse that expresses negative emotions and, in particular, that found on Internet *hejt* forums. We compare the Polish Internet language of *hejt* with similar phenomena finding their way into the English language media discourse in recent years. Based on our previous research on

political propaganda and discourse regarding minorities (Stroińska & Popovic 1998, Drzazga et al. 2012), this paper looks specifically at the use of lexical means, as well as discourse level phenomena in the Polish political discourse concerning the opposition, as well as ethnic, sexual and religious minorities.

The power of words

In 1944, Friedrich Hayek wrote that “the most efficient technique [of persuasion] is to use the old words but change their meaning... (Hayek 1944: 117). Victor Klemperer, in a diary kept during World War II, expressed a similar opinion with relation to the propaganda of the Third Reich: “...the most powerful influence [of Nazism] was [...] not achieved by things which one had to absorb by conscious thought or conscious emotions. [...] Instead, Nazism permeated the flesh and blood of the people through single words, idioms and sentence structures which were imposed on them in million repetitions and taken on board mechanically and unconsciously. (Victor Klemperer 1947/2000: 15). Klemperer stressed the importance of repetition. As the popular saying goes: a lie repeated often enough becomes the truth. This statement, variously attributed to Lenin or Goebbels, simply sums up modern era propaganda and it has never been as true as it is now with the spread of social media.

The increasingly populist political ideologies and social movements, and, most recently, the influx of refugees from North Africa and the Middle East to Europe, have all been affecting political discourse and testing many of the core values and principles declared by Polish society. Nevertheless, in the context of Polishness and the declared adherence to Christian values, as well as the strong influence of the Catholic Church, it is surprising to see, for example, no moral obligation to aid those who are less fortunate and in dire need of assistance. When in 2015, the Civic Platform government agreed to accept a number of Syrian refugees according to the quota system proposed by the European Union, Polish public opinion polls showed that 21% of the country's population was opposed to admitting refugees to Poland (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej CBOS, May 2015). The result was not surprising because of the general mistrust towards people of different ethnic, racial or religious background in a country that, due to losses suffered during World War II, became ethnically homogeneous. The October 2015 general election brought to power Law and Justice, an openly nationalistic right-wing party, who ran their election campaign based on anti-refugee and anti-European Union sentiments. It must be admitted that Poles were never particularly enthusiastic about the idea of accepting refugees from the war-torn Middle East because of fear of the unknown ‘others’ who would bring with them a different religion and foreign customs. However, under the Law and Justice government, these xenophobic sentiments transformed into a pronounced rejection of the very idea of letting in any refugees, even children. The results of a poll conducted in May 2016 show

that in just one year the percentage of those in Poland opposed to accepting refugees had climbed to 55% (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej CBOS May 2016). The anti-immigrant policies of the new government were soon accompanied by criticism of those social groups and organizations that were perceived as not supportive of the newly elected government and its banner policy of “good change”. The ruling party, with its parliamentary majority, swiftly took control of the state-owned media and started to shape the flow of information. With the unprecedented support of the Catholic clergy and its media network – in particular radio and TV channels – the Law and Justice government is now responsible for mass media that transmit racist, xenophobic and misogynistic messages to Polish audiences, not only with impunity but, in fact, with tacit approval and encouragement. As we shall see, some (albeit not all) of the hate speech available in the public sphere is based on the use of so-called “fighting words” – aggressive and offensive expressions. Other messages need to be deconstructed or their interpretation needs to be assembled by the audience, thus making it complicit in producing the offensive meaning. The poison of this language cannot be ignored because of “the toxic reaction” that follows (Klemperer 2000: 15-16).

What is hate speech?

According to the American Constitution, freedom of speech allows free expression of any thoughts, no matter how offensive they may be to some audiences. The First Amendment clearly states that “Congress shall make no law [...] abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press” (Amendment 1 - Freedom of Expression and Religion, U.S. Constitution). Thus, hate speech is protected in the United States, unless it can be demonstrated that it has been used to incite to commit unlawful actions (c.f. Ruane, 2014). Canada, on the other hand, like the European Union, adopted the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Updated in 2000 in Rome, the Convention spells out in Article 1 (pp. 48-49) the general prohibition of discrimination. It reads:

1. The enjoyment of any right set forth by law shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.
2. No one shall be discriminated against by any public authority on any ground such as those mentioned in paragraph 1.

In this context, hate speech could be defined as language use that contains aggressive expressions – the so-called “fighting” words – that are used to attack people based on the above listed “prohibited grounds”. The “prohibited grounds of discrimination” are features that are mostly independent of a person’s will and therefore require legal protection. In Canada, the concept of “hate speech” is used as a legal term and hate

crimes are prosecuted. In the US, however, hate speech is protected by the First Amendment, which ensures the free exercise of the freedom of speech. Butt (2015) argues that the “Canadian freedom of expression law, like so many things Canadian, embodies compromise. In the United States, even the most hateful, virile and destructive speech is constitutionally protected. In many other countries, expression is suppressed if politically problematic. We walk between those extremes.” Despite different legal frameworks, most people on both sides of the US-Canada border would likely agree that hateful language constitutes a form of violence and may be used to further incite physical violence against others. The fact that hate speech would not normally be prosecuted in the US explains why it was possible for the 2016 US presidential election to turn so nasty. But “legal” is not always the same as “acceptable”; there is a growing opposition to the hateful and aggressive tone introduced recently into American politics and the popular support for demonstrations organized by groups such as “United Against Hate” shows that many Americans feel alienated by this message of hate. The United Against Hate group declares on its website: “When dangerous and divisive leaders have come to power in the past, it has been in part because those of goodwill failed to speak out for themselves or their fellow citizens. Some of us come from the groups Trump has attacked. Some of us don’t. But as history has shown, it’s often only a matter of time before the “other” becomes “me” (<http://unitedagainsthate.com>). The group describes itself as united in its opposition to violence, sexism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, and fascism.

The Polish situation, on the other hand, shows that what is illegal may become acceptable if it meets with the approval or acquiescence of the authorities. As part of the European Union, Poland is obliged to follow EU conventions that prohibit discrimination, and, as a consequence, also makes inciting hatred a criminal offence. The Polish legal system still does not have proper regulations regarding some aspects of discrimination and, for example, does not include sexual orientation in the protected category. Nevertheless, discrimination based on race, skin colour, ethnicity or religion is against the law. However, very little is done to prevent it and even less is done to prosecute hate speech when it occurs.

Waldorn (2012) points out that the very presence of hate speech in the domain of public life harms all those who come into contact with it. When graffiti proclaims that some group of people is not welcome in a given neighbourhood, it affects (albeit in different ways) anyone who sees it. Those who belong to the targeted minority may feel threatened and insecure; those who oppose the presence of the targeted group in their community may feel vindicated in their views; and those who have nothing against the said group may feel that they themselves might in fact become a targeted minority because of their sympathies.

What is *hejt*?

To be fair, we must mention here that the widespread use and omnipresence of social networks, internet news sites and various other forms of computer-mediated communication makes it very difficult for authorities to monitor hate speech online and to bring hate speech perpetrators to justice. In May 2016, Facebook, Twitter, Google, YouTube and Microsoft signed a special code of conduct to work against the use of hate speech on their respective platforms. They were to eliminate instances of hate speech within 24 hours. This joint action was in response to the demands of the European Union to fight online hate, in particular following the terrorist attacks in Brussels in March 2016 and in Paris in November 2015. In the words of Věra Jourová, the EU Commissioner for Justice, this agreement could be seen as “an important step forward to ensure that the internet remains a place of free and democratic expression, [...] where European values and laws are respected.” (European Commission press release, 31 May 2016).

The Polish word *hejt* is very often perceived as equivalent to the English term *hate* because the former clearly derives from the latter. A closer look, however, shows that modern Polish has two words to refer to hatred: *nienawiść* and *hejt*. The Polish verb *nienawidzić* and the noun *nienawiść* serve comparable semantic functions to the English *hate*. The recently introduced noun *hejt*, on the other hand, refers to offensive language used on the Internet. As presented in Niepytalska-Osiecka’s (2014) morphological analysis, the neologism *hejt* has already been adapted to fit the Polish morphological system; it appears in all grammatical cases and constitutes the base for numerous derivatives (e.g. *hejtować* or *hejcić* – to hate, *hejter* – a hater).

Hejt, or verbal aggression online, is not a new phenomenon, but it has become significantly more visible in the ever-growing sphere of public media and social networks. Particularly aggressive instances of *hejt* can be seen in the comments sections of online news articles, even those of respectable news websites. Erjavec and Kovacic (2012) analysed Internet hate speech and found that those engaging in online commenting could be divided into several types. Particularly interesting are what the authors labelled ‘players’. Erjavec and Kovacic then describe the behaviour patterns of players and observe that “[b]y starting to use hate speech, someone wants to rag the other, who then gets back at him or her in the same manner, and then the third one joins, and so on [...] they just want to have fun by humiliating others.” Players do not seem interested in the issue being discussed. *Hejt*, therefore, appears to be an act of linguistic impoliteness, defined as “(an attempt) to exercise power over one’s interlocutors whilst simultaneously ensuring that one’s interlocutors are (overly) offended in the process” (Bousfield 2008: 141). This very specific purpose of *hejt* is clear, as most of the aggression is directed at other users of the website and has nothing or very little to do with the articles that the comments are linked to.

Challenges of measuring *hejt*?

The most commonly used definition of hate speech comes from the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, Recommendation No. R (97) 20, which states: "the term 'hate speech' shall be understood as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin" (Weber 2008: 3). Weber further observes that *hate speech* defined in such a way "covers comments which are necessarily directed against a person or a particular group of persons" (Weber 2008: 3). As mentioned in the previous section, the aim of Internet *hejt* is often to trigger further aggression and does not target a specific person or a group of people. Therefore, it appears that Internet *hejt* only partially fits the definition of hate speech.

With no clear definition of *hejt*, identifying or prosecuting instances of it can prove difficult. The level of difficulty is clearly seen from one attempt to measure the effects of *hejt* or, to be more precise, to measure the culture of offending others on the Internet which was made in *Internetowa kultura obrażania* (Krejtz and Kolenda 2012), a study conducted in two stages. First, the participating Internet users completed a questionnaire which provided the researchers with a general overview of what the participants saw as hate speech on the Polish Internet. In the second stage, trained linguists assessed the level of offensiveness of some chosen Internet entries. This laborious project highlighted the specific linguistic nature of Internet communication. It was observed that the analysed samples of online writing closely resembled spoken language. The researchers also pointed out that when Internet users perceived the language used online as a relatively colloquial variety of Polish, they were more likely to assume more freedom to post contents breaking the norms of written language.

On the surface, the results of the analysis can be seen as very encouraging: they suggest that the use of hate speech on the Polish Internet is quite rare. Participants considered 97% of the analysed samples as being focused on the content of the discussion, not on offending other users or specific groups of people (Krejtz 2012: 28). Aggressive tone and offensive words were found in only 5% of posts (Jonak 2012: 58). However, Krejtz points out that more research is needed, due to the fact that the hate speech may be defined in a much broader way than the definition used for the study (Krejtz 2012: 28). Most importantly, the study is now five years old and the use of *hejt* on Polish websites has increased significantly.

Polish studies conducted by Krejtz and Kolenda (2012) and Krejtz (2012) demonstrate some of the major complexities of Internet hate speech and also illustrate the challenges of measuring its effects. What can be regarded as *hejt* is not necessarily based on lexical choices or the high frequency of "fighting words." While overt aggression, vulgarity or negative emotional tone of expression may be easier to notice for readers, there are also

all kinds of more subtle shades of *hejt* that may be left unnoticed by participants in a linguistic study. Such participants may be unaware of words or comments that are very offensive for those targeted by online hate speech.

Polish hejt: lexical phenomena

In the process of gathering preliminary data for our study, we noticed a disturbing trend of using very strong fighting words (in the literal sense) and expressions, in contexts which did not deal with physical violence. For example, we have found many examples of the verb *miażdżyć* (to crush) or even *masakrować* (to massacre) used to mean “to criticise”, as illustrated below (1):

- (1) *Prezydent Duda „zmasakrowany” przez... Lecha Kaczyńskiego. Jeden cytat, którym były prezydent miażdży swojego ucznia.* (‘President Duda “massacred” by Lech Kaczyński. One quote with which the former president crushes his disciple’). (<http://natemat.pl/164101,prezydent-duda-zmasakrowany-przez-lecha-kaczyńskiego-jeden-cytat-którym-były-prezydent-miażdży-swojego-ucznia>)

The verb *masakrować* and the related noun *masakra* are popular slang expressions of criticism or dissatisfaction in Polish. The online Polish *Urban Dictionary of Slang and Colloquialisms* reports the noun *masakra* as an expression of exaggeration of a problem or issue, illustrating its usage with the following example:

- (2) *Ale miałem dziś dzień, masakra!* (‘What a day it was, a massacre!’) (<http://www.miejski.pl/slowo-Masakra>)

The fact that this slang expression found its way into the journalistic discourse of mainstream media can be interpreted as a symptom of the general rise in verbal aggression that society is willing to tolerate. As noted above, the colloquial nature of the terms *masakrować* and *masakra* may obscure their violent and aggressive power, and their offensive nature. However, the fact that speakers no longer register the brutality of the language they are exposed to or use themselves does not diminish the problem of verbal aggression.

To better understand the usage of these aggressive expressions, we used the National Corpus of Polish and the Monco PL search engine. The National Corpus of Polish is the largest corpus of the Polish language available and its creators continuously strive to maintain a representative sample of the current Polish language. However, spoken language constitutes only 10% of the corpus (Pędzik, 2012: 38), and so it may lack some of the common colloquial expressions that are mostly used in face-to-face and online conversations. For the current study, the biggest disadvantage of the corpus was the fact

that the newest texts included in it were from 2012; thus, the most recent developments of the Polish language in general, and the phenomenon of the virtual explosion of online *hejt*, could not be observed. Monco PL, on the other hand, is updated daily, therefore it shows the newest trends in Polish language usage. Comparing the results obtained from these two search engines shows significant differences in the usage of fighting words, replacing direct objects with human referents.

The first verb that seems to appear very frequently in most recent Polish media debates and online *hejt* is the previously mentioned *miażdżyć* (to crush). A search of *miażdżyć* in the National Corpus of Polish, using the PELCRA search engine (Pędzik 2012), suggests that this word is used most often in fiction writing. When used in non-fiction texts, the verb seems to be used in its literal meaning, as illustrated in example 3.

- (3) *Tir zmiażdżył skodę, zabijając dwóch mężczyzn.* ('An eighteen-wheeler crushed the Skoda, killing two men.') (Super Express, 2006)

Using Monco PL and viewing the most recent search results first, we find examples that illustrate the usage of the verb *miażdżyć* with a non-literal meaning, as in examples 4-6.

- (4) *Prezes Kaczyński zmiażdżył infantylną propagandę PO w swoim wystąpieniu.* ('Chairman Kaczyński crushed the PO's [Platforma Obywatelska – Civic Platform political party] infantile propaganda in his speech.' (User's comment, wprost.pl, 16 September 2015))
- (5) [...] *Lis znów miażdży obóz rządzący.* ([...] 'Lis again crushes the ruling camp.') (tok.fm, 22 January 2016)
- (6) *Kukiz miażdży Nowoczesną i Platformę* ('Kukiz crushes [the two opposition parties] Nowoczesna and Platforma.') (wpolityce.pl, 21 January 2016)

The usage of another verb that took on a new and violent meaning, *zaorać* ('to plow'), follows a similar pattern. While the National Corpus of Polish consistently shows the word used in its literal meaning (example 7), on Monco PL, one may find examples of the recent semantic shift of the word (examples 8 and 9).

- (7) *Można na polu niczego nie zasiać, wystarczy zaorać.* ('You don't have to plant anything [in the field], all you have to do is plow.') (Polityka, 2008)
- (8) *Jak zaorać posła Platformy podczas dyskusji?* ('How to plow a Civic Platform MP during a discussion?') (P. Witwicki, 300polityka.pl, 3 January 2016)
- (9) *Ale prezes wszystkich prezesów Jarosław Kaczyński postanowił politycznie zaorać PSL i zaloty odrzucić* ('But the boss of all bosses, Jarosław Kaczyński, decided to politically plow PSL [party] and rejected their courtship.') (P. Gadzinowski, onet.pl 20 November 2015).

It appears that the shift in the meaning of these verbs points to a more general trend of the brutalization of the Polish language. This process has been a cause for concern for the Polish Language Council since at least 2007, when the Council discussed this issue of “brutalization of the language of public debates” during its 25th plenary meeting (Rada Języka Polskiego 2007). Sentences 10 and 11 provide additional examples of this tendency, utilising expressions ‘to run over someone with a steam roller’ and ‘run over someone’.

- (10) *PiS właśnie rozjechał walcem polską szkołę* (‘PiS [Law and Justice] just ran over the Polish school system with a steam roller.’) (User’s comment, wp.pl, 9 January 2017)
- (11) *Danuta Wałęsa ostro przejechała się po Andrzeju Dudzie i jego żonie.* (‘Danuta Wałęsa brutally ran over Andrzej Duda and his wife.’) (natemat.pl, 12 October 2016)

Of course, the growing aggression of newspaper headlines and online comments is not just a Polish phenomenon. The recent debate concerning the privatization of garbage disposal in Toronto was discussed in an article in the *Toronto Sun*, entitled:

- (12) “Mayor John Tory trashes Bob Rae over privatization comments.” (*Toronto Sun*, 22 January 2017)

We see here the same process of replacing a prototypically inanimate direct object with a human referent. This gives the line an aggressive and violent interpretation, somewhat softened by the pun based on using the verb *to trash* in a discussion about garbage.

Before drawing any conclusions, we must note that our investigation of how to measure and evaluate the linguistic aspects of *hejt* revealed the weaknesses of corpus linguistics methodology in the investigation of Internet hate speech. The National Corpus of Polish lacks the most current linguistic data, therefore no conclusions about the recent development of the Polish language can be made on the basis of the frequency of words or expressions. On the other hand, the reliability of Monco PL should be approached with caution, as there is no information on the methods of selecting texts included in the corpus. Thus the representativeness of the search results may be called into question. These corpora provide a tool to find evidence for language developments that have been identified by the researchers beforehand, as was done in the current study. However, they do not provide means to define or capture the actual nature of Internet *hejt*.

Ad hominem attacks

Personal attacks are a form of passing judgment, and the judgmental nature of the discourse used by the new government in Poland is one of its most striking features. Judgement and evaluation, instead of description, have already been pointed out by Michał Głowiński as characteristic features of communist Newspeak (Głowiński 1991: 38). The same can be observed with regard to the language used by media that have found themselves under government control after the October 2015 election. The mechanism of putting people into labelled categories (e.g. the infamous “lesser sort of Poles” – *gorszy sort Polaków*) is a new phenomenon in the post-communist political discourse and, as such, requires a thorough analysis. Over the course of the last year, many specific groups of people became – for various reasons – targets of government criticism. Those who oppose the Law and Justice government are often collectively labelled as “communists and thieves” – an invective introduced by Jarosław Kaczyński, leader of the ruling party and *de facto* puppet master of Polish politics, though without any official government position. These “enemies” of the government include supporters of the Committee for Defence of Democracy, the European Union and its politicians, those who watch or read non-government media, refugees, people of different ethnic, religious or racial backgrounds, teachers who oppose the education system reform proposed by the government, sexual minorities, those who speak foreign languages, cyclists, vegetarians, women standing up for their right to choose, etc. One might ask: if all of those people are enemies of the government, who then constitutes its electorate?

The acquiescence of the authorities and the silent consent of the Catholic Church allows ordinary people to assume that calling people names (and other forms of verbal aggression) is acceptable. A particular group of haters actively courted by the government are football “fans”, who are allowed to use offensive slogans during games and in online forums with the tacit approval of the authorities. An example of this was a banner used during a match in Warsaw in May 2016, where certain opposition parties and journalists were warned: “For you there will be gallows, not whistles.” This could be interpreted as a direct death threat or a threat to the personal safety of the targeted individuals, and yet no action was taken against those who produced and displayed the banner. On the contrary: there was an outcry of support for these football fans, even in the government-sponsored official media, as well as a wave of internet *hejt* blaming the said journalists for spreading lies about patriotic football supporters. Only opposition newspapers, such as *Gazeta Wyborcza*, commented on the punishable nature of such threats and suggested that they should be reported to the authorities (“Skandaliczny transparent na stadionie Legii: ‘KOD, GW, będą dla was szubienice’.” *Gazeta Wyborcza*. May 8, 2016, <http://wyborcza.pl/1,75398,20040440,skandaliczny-transparent-na-stadionie-legii-kod-gw-beda.html>).

The level of aggression and vulgarity of such online discussions is high and online comments are mostly aimed at offending others, rather than commenting on the issue at hand. This leads us to believe that many of the comments come from professional

Internet *hejters*, the so-called “players” – i.e. people who are paid to write comments and are not especially invested in any particular political option. The very phenomenon of Internet *hejt* for hire is highly disturbing as it is difficult, maybe even impossible, for most readers to distinguish between authentic political arguments and the staged acting of paid *hejters*. The very fact of being constantly exposed to such high levels of verbal aggression affects audiences of online discussions and readers of comments sections. It is difficult to understand why so little effort is put into moderating such websites: offensive comments remain in place months after they have been written. The fact that hate speech affects everyone, as Waldorn (2012) points out, no matter whether they are supporters or enemies of its target, is a very strong argument for better control of online discussions.

“Some assembly required”

Another interesting phenomenon that we are observing in hate speech, both in online *hejt* and in slogans and banners displayed at rallies and demonstrations, is leaving it to the reader/hearer to actually put the message together and decode the somewhat-hidden meaning. This is also clearly not just a Polish phenomenon. In November 2016, a photo taken by a Reuters reporter at a Donald Trump rally in Minnesota went viral. The picture shows a man in a black T-shirt with the text: “Rope, tree, journalist: some assembly required.” It has been left to the intended reader to put the message together and come to the conclusion that journalists should be lynched; hanged from trees. Apparently, the idea for that slogan goes back about a decade (c.f. Zadrozny 2016), indicating that this is not a new phenomenon. However, the interactivity of political and commercial slogans has certainly been gaining popularity in recent years. Examples of Polish interactive political slogans can also be quoted here. In September 2015, during a football match between Lechia Gdańsk and Korona Kielce, a banner could be seen, which read: “Witajcie w piekle zbłąkane owieczki 12.09.1683 Jan III Sobieski 2015” (‘Welcome to hell, lost sheep. 12.09.1683 Jan III Sobieski 2015’). For Poles, this is a reasonably clear reference to King Jan Sobieski’s victory over the Muslim Turks at Vienna in 1683. The intended interpretation suggests that Muslim refugees who enter Poland would be welcomed the way King Sobieski welcomed the Turkish armies at Vienna. (*Dziennik Bałtycki*. 16 września 2015¹.) A similar sentiment could be seen in another banner seen at an anti-immigrant rally: “W 1683 pomogliśmy Muzułmanom. Pomozemy i teraz” (‘In 1683, we helped Muslims. We’ll help them now, too’). Here again, one needs to know the significance of 1683 – the year of the victory at Vienna – in order to decode the meaning of the slogan. Yet another slogan seen at an anti-immigrant

¹ “Lechia Gdańsk ukarana przez Komisję Ligi za transparent” *Dziennik Bałtycki*. 16 września 2015. Retrieved on December 10, 2016 from <http://www.dziennikbaltycki.pl/artykul/8015765,lechia-gdansk-ukarana-przez-komisje-ligi-za-transparent,id,t.html>.

demonstration “invited” refugees claiming that “we already have the infrastructure” (*Infrastrukturę już mamy*), with the intended message that the Nazi concentration camps and possibly other detention centres from the past could be used to keep the immigrants in isolation from Polish society.

Writing of metaphors, Cohen (1978) suggested that the very fact of engaging jointly in the process of meaning-making and interpretation instils a feeling of closeness between the speaker and the receiver. Being able to figure out the implicatures and arrive at the indirect interpretation of a metaphorical or other figurative expression, assumes a certain level of familiarity and mutual understanding. Thus, the hearer or reader of the indirect message becomes an accomplice in producing the intended interpretation, even if they disagree with the message. This may be of particular importance and usefulness in political discourse, where the speaker’s goal is to attract an audience. One could compare this to the situation of someone hearing a racist joke and being able to understand what makes it funny. Even though he or she may be offended by the views of the speaker, by seeing the point the joke was supposed to make, they become an accomplice in deriding the racial minority. Understanding a hateful message used by another person makes the hearer or reader share that person’s point of view, if only for an instant (cf. Stroińska & Cecchetto, 2014: 232).

Classifying like insects...

In his “Notes on Nationalism” (1945), George Orwell suggested that one of the defining features of nationalism was “the habit of assuming that human beings can be classified like insects and that whole blocks of millions or tens of millions of people can be confidently labelled ‘good’ or ‘bad’”. He then explained that “[n]ationalism is not to be confused with patriotism. Both words are normally used in so vague a way that any definition is liable to be challenged, but one must draw a distinction between them, since two different and even opposing ideas are involved.” While patriotism is love and devotion to a country with no desire to wish any ill to others, the goal of nationalism is securing more power for one’s group of people or one’s country *at the expense* of others. If one’s supremacy necessarily hinges on the inferiority of others, language is used to put down potential competitors, label them as enemies, and take away their humanity. This is, in our view, the extreme stage of *ad hominem* argumentation and hate speech. History demonstrates how this dangerous strategy was used in the past.

Both Russian communist and Nazi propaganda used medical language to create metaphors that described those who were deemed undesirable as parasites, pests, virulent bacteria, diseased, etc. Dehumanising language was an important factor in the Kosovo war (Stroińska & Popovic 1999). When a group of people is perceived as vermin, dangerous parasites, a threat to health or even the life of one’s nation, destroying the enemy becomes an action of cleansing; elimination of a health risk. It is no longer a question of morality, but of hygiene.

Already in October 2015, this language began to appear in the public speeches of Jarosław Kaczyński, when he said that refugees may bring parasites and diseases with them that had not been seen in Europe in a long time. He suggested that there have already been cases of cholera on the Greek islands and dysentery in Vienna. He then added that refugees may be the carriers of “various kinds of parasites, protozoans, which may not be dangerous in the organisms of those people, but may be dangerous here. This is not intended to discriminate against anyone, but it must be checked out.” (Kaczyński on 12 October 2015, at an election meeting in Maków Mazowiecki, reported by *Gazeta Wyborcza* on 13 October 2015; Polish version: ‘Są już przecież objawy pojawienia się chorób bardzo niebezpiecznych i dawno niewidzianych w Europie. Cholera na wyspach greckich, dyzenteria w Wiedniu. Różnego rodzaju pasożyty, pierwotniaki, które nie są groźne w organizmach tych ludzi, a mogą tutaj być groźne. To nie oznacza, żeby kogoś dyskryminować, ale sprawdzić trzeba.’)

For anyone aware of the mechanisms of hate propaganda, this is a very dangerous development. Atrocities usually start with words used to strip the enemy of their humanity. Once this happens, people will stand by and observe the elimination of the enemy with the indifference of someone watching the extermination of bedbugs.

Conclusions

Our analysis of the use of language in present-day media debates in Poland points to a marked shift in Poland’s political discourse. We observe a tendency towards stereotyping, based on those characteristics of individuals that are independent of volition and not a matter of choice. The language used in public debates is markedly rude and unapologetically offensive. It spreads from the topic of ethnic and other minorities, to political and public discourse in general. Hatred and fear are the strongest of emotions and, as such, they play an important role in the creation of media stories that capture the attention. Human nature needs to impose some kind of order on the surrounding chaos of social and political reality. People need a narrative; a story that would tell them who is good and who is bad. Unfortunately, Internet *hejters* provide that narrative and the tacit approval of hate speech by the authorities allows this verbal aggression to spread in an uncontrolled manner. We believe that this shift is a very strong indication of a dangerous change in social attitudes. In the past, such changes led to violent conflicts. We see similarities in the use of stereotyping characteristic for ethnic conflicts in general, and we compare them to the linguistic mechanisms of ethnic and religion-based stereotyping characteristic for political discussions in Poland today. Using linguistics as a diagnostic tool, we were able to identify specific mechanisms of exploiting language for the purpose of creating propaganda which targets the political opposition and minorities.

As freedom of speech is not protected in Europe in the same way as it is in the US, hate speech should be considered a violation of social norms of behaviour and should have no place in the mainstream media. Unfortunately, since the 2015 electoral

victory of the Law and Justice party, this common-sense approach no longer applies. The state controlled media regularly attack the political opposition and the opposition is outspoken in its criticism of the government. There is plenty of verbal aggression on both sides, but it is really the online comments of readers on news websites and on social network political discussions that provided the material for our study of Polish Internet hate speech. During this populist turn in world politics, it is very questionable whether – in the words of Věra Jourová – “the internet [will remain] a place of free and democratic expression, [...] [w]here European values and laws are respected.”

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Abstract

The unprecedented current worldwide turn towards populism is reflected by changes in political discourse, with hate speech becoming ubiquitous in the media. In particular, the Internet, with its anonymity, has become a platform for expressing negative views without the risk of direct confrontation with the offended party or the threat of punishment. In Poland, which has a longstanding tradition of tolerance, the current changes in public discourse and the omnipresence of *hejt* (hate) are atypical and worrisome. This paper focuses on the most recent Internet *hejt* in order to establish how to classify it and how to measure its effect on people.

Keywords: hate speech, Internet, *hejt*, political discourse, stereotyping, corpus linguistics

President Putin's Internet and "Information Warfare"¹

KAZIMIERZ WÓYCICKI

Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw

The war that Russia is conducting against Ukraine today is not only related to breaking the post-World War II rules of engagement, but is also being run in a new way, which was to a certain degree unknown before. This phenomenon had been named "hybrid warfare", initially mainly paying attention to the military aspect of the issue, symbolically represented by "little green men". The focus of attention has been shifting to what military actions of hybrid-war are often accompanied by intense propaganda activities, with the Internet as the main tool. They are planned and carried out in Russia, possessing extensive resources in Russian literature on so-called "information warfare".

The leading theoreticians of this war include Aleksander Dugin, one of the prominent ideologists of Russian nationalism, and an ex-KGB officer from the "information front", Igor Panarin. Joanna Darczevska, an analyst from Warsaw's Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich (Centre for Eastern Studies), writes: *Russian authors describe "information warfare" as influencing the consciousness of the masses as part of the global rivalry between systems of civilizations in the arena of information (...) Therefore, in some measure, by definition, mixing military aspects with the non-military; technological (cyberspace) with social (information space), directly referring to the Cold War and psychological wars between the East and the West.*² According to Panarin, information warfare should imitate military operations and should be a planned manipulation. This propaganda war machine follows rules of: mass and long-term action, desired effect (irrespectively of the facts, the information desired by the propaganda is to be spread and repeated), the rule of emotional awakening (making people act irrationally, without thinking), the rule of intelligibility (the message is simplified, shown in black and white) and the rule of reputed obviousness (contains associations with well-known stereotypes and myths).

¹ Lecture from WEEC 2016, based on the report of *Grupa Analityczna* (since 2014, functioning as an independent group of analytical experts), fragments of which were utilized and cited in <http://cepa.org/reports/winning-the-Information-War>. Polish translation of the report: <https://wordpress.com/post/azwoy.wordpress.com/6968>.

² Joanna Darczevska, *Anatomia Rosyjskiej Wojny Informacyjnej. Operacja Krymska – studium przypadku*, Warszawa 2014. p. 12. The author reviews Russian literature of the subject and describes activities, performed by Russian authorities on the internet.

In other words, it is about fabricating information and fragmenting public opinion; intimidating, and creating the impression that the minority is the majority, introducing chaos to the channels of communication of any open, pluralistic society, viewed as the main threat by Putin's Russia.³

The modern Russian war on information is largely composed of well-known propaganda tactics of totalitarian regimes. Consequently, it is not an overstatement to compare Putin's propaganda methods to those of Goebbels, although earlier propagandist standards of the Bolsheviks and Stalinists seem to be more influential. Use of the Internet is a brand-new addition to "information warfare". It is not in the least about the mere ability to share information (in this case, disinformation). The Internet created completely new structures of social communication, deeply changing the structure of society in a way not yet fully explored, and creating new psychosocial mechanisms. "Information warfare" is a propaganda project involving much deeper mechanisms.

In opposition to those Internet theoreticians who idealistically believe in cyber-utopianism (picturing the Internet as a giant forum of ideas, with free-spoken public opinion), it can be used for aggression, escalating disintegrative tendencies and as a tool for questioning the democratic order of open societies. Any of the Internet theoreticians' accomplishments so far are used as tools for mass disinformation (e.g. the hive rule). The Internet is used as an instrument for essential content, dictated by "leaders of opinion" through modelled "web hubs". One can say that Russian propagandists are creating an alternate conception; of using the Internet as a weapon, completely opposite to how cyber-utopianism views it.⁴

The internet environment of Alexandr Dugin is a perfect example of such a web and its system of hubs. It consists of a few dozen mutually connected Internet websites. This is a very powerful tool of influence on the Russian Internet and, consequently, in Russian society. Its intoxication with nationalism and post-Soviet revisionism (the desire to reclaim the empire with its areas of influence and dominance) demonstrates the Kremlin's great success in "information warfare"⁵. Similar methods of "information warfare" are being introduced throughout the countries of the European Union, with Poland as a main area of focus.

³ <http://wszystkoconajwazniejsze.pl/klaus-bachmann-igor-lyubaszenko-czy-rosyjska-kampania-propagandowa-w-internecie-jest-skuteczna>.

⁴ American-Belarusian theoretician Evgeny Morozov was one of the first to describe Russian activity on the Internet in: "The Net Delusion. How not to Liberate the World", 2011.

⁵ It should be noted that modern day Russia does not have an ideology similar to the old communist system, and that a blatant lie (denying obvious and recognized facts) is an open public policy of the Russian authorities. It is intended to serve a psychological effect (frightening, by demonstrating no space for compromise), rather than a persuasive one (convincing of one's own position) of the "information warfare", waged against one's own society, which is to manipulate as opposed to indoctrinate.

This very particular propaganda method has been given the name "trolling"⁶. Although the phenomenon of trolling has been widely noticed, its methods of functioning are yet to be properly studied and analysed. The most superficial understanding of trolling views it as a lie, which can be shared with the masses, thanks to the Internet. In fact, trolling is incomparably more complex and cannot be fully understood outside a broader social context, nor without proper understanding of its psychosocial mechanisms.

On the rudimentary level, trolling is sharing "memes"⁷ – it could be one sentence, a picture or symbol – as content units are called in Internet sociology. Trolling appears to be the technical act of using the Internet for reaching out to a vast amount of people with propagandistic, and therefore false, information. For example, supporters of the French right receive memes about defending Christianity, the post-communist German left gets memes about defending peace, pacifism and resisting American militarism, while Slovaks receive content warning about German dominance in the EU. The goal is not to convince all recipients to one, consistent set of content.

That is why no old-style ideology, like communism, is the content of memes. The primary objective of trolling is the disorganisation and manipulation of the enemy's public opinion, and to unsettle society, without promoting any specific ideas.⁸

While traditional propaganda referred to a consistent and uniform ideology in order to persuade the targeted social group to support the chosen idea(s), trolling's main objective is social disintegration. Propaganda content aimed at different groups, often of contradicting contents, are intended to build divisions, cause conflicts (e.g. a "Volhynia Massacre" meme is for strengthening Polish-Ukrainian antagonism and to create the impression that the authorities are trifling with the memory of the victims).

Therefore, the task of a "toxic meme" is more complicated than an ordinary lie. They are shared throughout various places and can often reach groups of contradicting values. Toxic memes are made to be greatly differentiated, so that they can perform/serve different goals, with different variations dedicated to different recipients.

It must be noted that trolling in principle does not offer new content, only strengthening that which is already existing; emphasizing some content over other content. Disintegrating public opinion is meant to cause insecurity and distrust – the anonymous, frustrated, lonely, part of an easily-controlled mob (the mob being a crucial

⁶ "Troll" and "trolling" were first introduced into common speech by Internet users. Due to the great speed of the Internet's growth, many of the terms and phrases describing this area of human activity are an effect of spontaneous social processes, rather than being formed in scientific writings. However, in their deeper analysis, these phrases and terms, ought to refer to informal terms which are already intuitively known. Added to the list are newly introduced Internet-based terminology, like "sharing," "friending," "liking," "following," "trending," and "favouriting", etc. For more on this see: Dijck, Jose van, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, UK 2013.

⁷ I use the term "hybrid meme" here, using an analogy to "hybrid warfare". Since sharing memes is a common practice on the Internet, this called for a special term.

⁸ Evgeny Morozov, *The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom*, Morozov Evgeny: To Save Everything, Click Here: Technology, Solutionism, and the Urge to Fix Problems That Don't Exist, UK 2014

conception of Hannah Arendt's theory of totalitarianism). The main objectives are breaking the structure of democratic discourse and destroying open society.⁹

While we will not find an old-type, consistent ideology behind "information warfare", it does come as part of a clearly presented view of the world. Democracy and the West are seen as decadent and nearing their end, and they inevitably have to be replaced with a new civilizational order. Escalating all tensions and conflicts (e.g. traditionalism-modernism, centralised state-regionalisms, social identity-individualism, etc.) is to lead to disintegration and destruction. It is to be a world of uncertainty faced with the resilience and strength of the "Russian project". Only in this context can one see the importance of the role of the demonstrative lie used by Putin, Lavrov and other Kremlin representatives. A lie is a demonstration of force and decisiveness showing doubters the inevitability of what is coming (one can see a similar pattern in the strategy of ISIS).

Information warfare conducted via the Internet is an important – perhaps the most important – element of hybrid warfare. Military force is part of the propaganda of fear and can be fully used when "an advantage in information war is reached, causing uncertainty, divisions, and defeatism".

From Propaganda Content to the "Infected Recipient"

The Kremlin's propaganda activities can most easily be noticed through the activity of anonymous commentators on all kinds of websites and blogospheres. On websites such as onet.pl, all publications on matters concerning Ukraine are immediately met by aggressive, hateful anti-Ukrainian comments as soon as they are posted, and all publications critical of Russia are met with indignation. The same pattern can be observed on Salon24.pl, the largest Polish blog forum.

Many such comments are created by organized groups, with the use of fake internet and social media profiles. One internet user working for the propaganda machine can create hundreds of fake profiles, and with the help of proper software, can distribute their posts with great efficiency. Russian soil creates a safe ground for such troll groups to be created and organised. It is harder for them to exist abroad, in Poland or other countries, as it is harder for Moscow to operate there freely.

Creating fake or only seemingly existing organisations, and using their websites is another method which is utilised. They often refer to Russian websites and are mutually connected, which should raise eyebrows, considering they are often run by the same

⁹ Vasily Kostickyj, the head of the Central Commission for the Ethics of Public Life, believes that the ultimate goal of Russia's information war on Ukraine is the annihilation of Ukrainian national identity <http://www.radiosvoboda.org/content/article/26600158.html>.

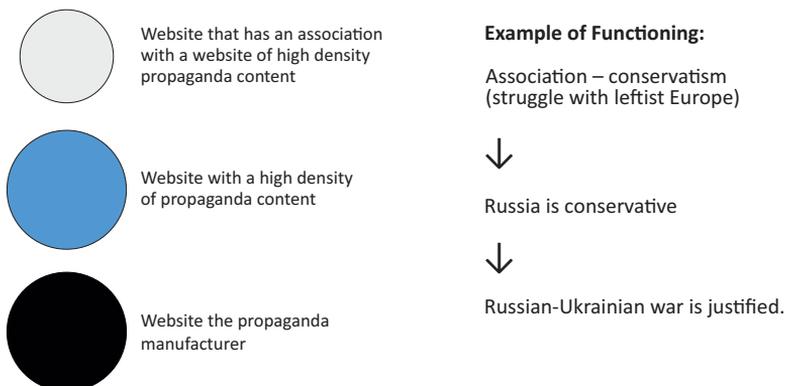
In this context, it is worth mentioning the seemingly unrelated remarks of Robert W McChesney in "Digital Disconnect: How Capitalism is Turning the Internet Against Democracy", UK 2013. The author notes how deeply the internet serves commercialisation, not only not helping, but also endangering democracy.

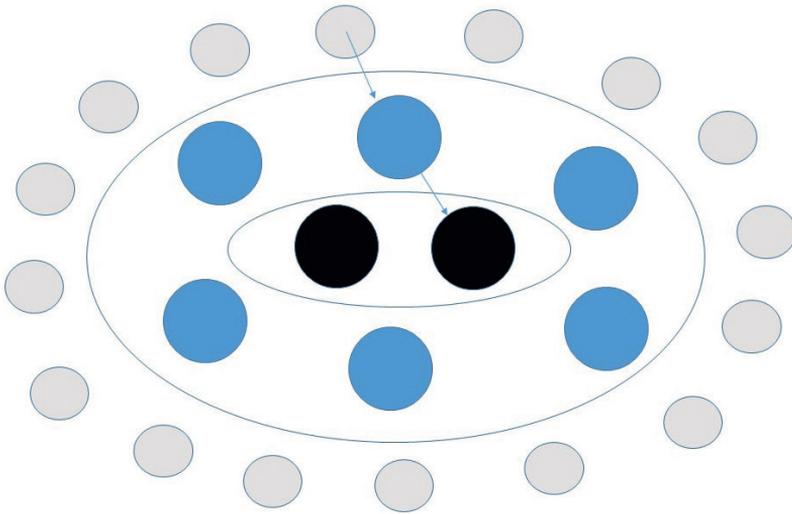
small groups of people. A small amount of Internet-active pro-Russian propagandists, considering how hard it is to recruit them in Poland, are masked with the appearance of diverse political views; from nationalism, conservatism, religious fanaticism, to even anti-communism. These websites quickly receive many likes, which can easily disorient recipients. Those likes are the effect of purchasing add campaigns, something offered by Facebook and other social media platforms. Even a very superficial observation points out the hive that is at the core of how those pro-Putin websites and websites are organised. It is very similar from a pattern common on the Russian internet, where one can observe Dugin's hive.

The first group of those websites must be classified as peripheral. Their propaganda content is diluted and most often mixed with information that has nothing to do with Russia, Putin or his politics. Yet they do link to other websites with more intensified propaganda. The second group consists of websites with highly intensified propaganda content. They can be called masks. Finally, there are websites where the desired substance is being manufactured. These are in fact closely related to Russian websites, and their posts are often translated into Polish through the use of mask-websites. The deciding factor is the sheer number of these websites; sometimes they are named very differently, sometimes they seemingly deal with a different area of interest, but they are always linked to those websites important for the objectives of propaganda. Googling for "cursed soldiers", a search that should be associated with anti-communism, it is highly probable you will arrive at pro-Putin propaganda within two or three mouse-clicks (for instance through Falanga's website). The described structure is simplified in the following scheme.

Hive Principle

From websites with faint or weak associations with propaganda content the path leads to websites with strong densities of propaganda content, and from there to the website of the manufacturer of the propaganda content (hive centre). Of course, there may exist more intermediary levels. The essence of the "hive principle" is creating connections through linking.





It should not be concluded that this Polish pro-Putin hive was designed in Russia. Nothing could be more wrong. Some knowledge of the Polish political background, certain properties of the Internet and some inspiration were used. Some groups unwittingly gave in to this inspiration, ending with huge portions of the Internet sharing toxic memes. With time, however, the meme obtained from a propaganda source begins to spread throughout websites and individual internet users. Such work needs good intelligence and an understanding of the targeted society's mentality, as much as close observation of its internal policies (for example Washington claiming that Moscow was fuelling internet hate after the shooting of a black teenager by a white police officer; Moscow also organised much of the internet activity around the secession of Scotland).

Trolling, as a tactic, goes beyond simply sharing memes. In fact, the Internet, while skilfully used, is of secondary importance to knowledge of another society, its culture, problems, symptoms or hang-ups that can be used.¹⁰

The first step in spreading a toxic meme is not editing it, but finding the right target group. It is the groups job to share and popularise it. The recipient will often become an unaware "meme sower". When the meme producer begins to operate, even in the smallest of target groups, a snowball effect will be initiated. A bigger or smaller crowd will then begin sharing, out of conviction, curiosity, perversity, or just for fun.¹¹

It must be noted that the toxic meme's main goal is to reach its target group (for instance the Volhynia Massacre meme is mainly intended to reach people from the

¹⁰ Brooke, Heather, *The Revolution Will be Digitised: Dispatches from the Information War*, UK 2012

¹¹ When a friend of mine used links to pro-Putin websites in a Facebook discussion, he was accused of being a troll. While his line of defense was to say that everyone understands these websites to be unbelievable, there are many who are ready and willing not to recognise them as threats.

kresy (borderlands). That is why reconnaissance, understanding and properly crafting the appropriate contents, recognizing the target groups and the potential "meme sowers" is an essential part of trolling.

The Internet particularly offers great opportunity for influencing young and immature individuals. We hear stories in the media of teenagers travelling to Syria to become the sexual assets and future wives of ISIS terrorists. This phenomenon should not seem very exotic to us. Social networks create great opportunities for manipulating unshaped personalities almost imperceptibly.¹²

Questions about the psychological effects of toxic memes do not concern its producers and main "sowers", but the recipients, who in the end are the victims of manipulation. A passive "toxic meme sower" can be someone who has been directly contacted (although he or she might not be aware of who recruited them or for what purpose), but might just as well be completely unaware of their own part to play.

The Internet is a relatively new communications platform that creates radically new mechanisms of influence. The generation of those over forty today may not sense or appreciate this, treating Internet only as a communications tool. Younger representatives of the "digital generation" not only utilise the Internet on their PC, but also on their smartphone, tablet, etc., placing them in a new cultural-civilizational situation. This transition from the society of spectacle to this web society has a tremendous effect on politics and power relations. It seems trolling and toxic memes mostly reach out to and appeal to young, frustrated, and subservient individuals. It can also appeal to those of unfulfilled dreams of power, who dream of leading without open competition.¹³ To a certain degree, one can speak of the antisocial character of such personalities, because values of liberal democratic society are not internalised for them.

Toxic meme-susceptible recipients do not trust democracy, because they believe the world to be manipulated (by great capital, American imperialism, political elites, world Jewry, a Vatican mafia, etc.)

These types of individuals suspect hidden agendas and look for the "elite truth". It is similar to the mentality of a sect member, who can feel important, present and active in public life, while at the same time existing only on its periphery. It must be realised that in all cultures and civilizations, each society contains a large amount of people with such attitudes.

¹² This phenomenon has already been described in literature. See Howard Gardner and Katie Davis, *The App Generation. How Today's Youth Navigate Identity, Intimacy and Imagination in a Digital World*. Unfortunately, while studies of personality-shaping on the Internet have been broadly recognized, such literature is virtually unknown in Poland.

¹³ Many authors point out that using the Internet excessively effects and shapes the personalities of many of its users. See: Lanier Jaron, *You are Not a Gadget: A Manifesto*. It must also be noted that the Internet creates an artificial image of the world, causing some individuals to spend more time in it, than in the real world. See: Loving Gert, *Networks without a Cause: A Critique of Social Media*, UK, 21 February 2012.

In “Society of the Spectacle”, centralised mass media – like TV or radio – play a crucial role, leaving little space for the public recognition of those people. The properties of the Internet, search tools, and social media must also be recognized. Today, search tools base their friend suggestions on your very first moves – who and what you “like”. Should someone who has just created a social media profile keep looking for, say, “cursed soldiers”, or other, similarly patriotic slogans and terms, they will receive website suggestions with similar areas of interest, but not prepared by historians or anyone who is concerned with historical truth. We are always just a few clicks away from finding ourselves in the company of the most advanced toxic meme-sowers.

Russian Trolling – Polish Internet

The presence of Russian influence on the Polish Internet, similar to Internet networks in other EU states, is widely visible and has been confirmed many times, although it is much more difficult to determine its extent and the methods used in this process.¹⁴

Initially (i.e. in mid-2014), we could see websites/blog zones linked to Russian websites and edited translations of texts by Dugin and other similar authors (Xwebsite, <http://www.usopal.pl/>, or references to Russian sites: Falanga, <http://rebelya.pl/>). For example, this website reposted, without any comment, the platform exposed by Alexander Dugin, “The Name of the Russian Myth”, where we read: “We need to understand that Igor Strielkov’s role is pivotal. He is an example of the Russian idealist, conservative, and true patriot, who has overcome the abyss between ideals and actions; that abyss is a paralyzing curse of our patriotism.”¹⁵ Subsequently, we can see the activity of mostly anonymous bloggers, who add their aggressively pro-Russian content wherever the topic of contemporary Russia or the Russian-Ukrainian conflict appears. This can be seen very clearly on Onet.pl and Salon24.pl.

Further intensification of trolling was related to the appearance of numerous web pages in support of such quasi-political creations as the “Donetsk (quasi) People’s Republic”¹⁶ or “Poles Support the Donetsk Republic,”¹⁷ not to mention virtual and

¹⁴ It is beyond dispute that Internet bulletin boards (forums) of several Polish national portals have been bombarded with a massive number of pro-Russian posts for the last year or so. It is also undisputed that special software and algorithms are being used – this is evidenced, among others, by how fast posts are published and in what number. However, it is difficult to say clearly with who we are dealing. With such low “entry threshold” for effective “whispering”, it could be a small political group operating within Poland, but it could also be an organised group operating outside the country. The most important question to consider is: What is the purpose of such activities – are they only to misinform forum users, or are they to impact/direct opinions? <http://niwserwis.pl/artykuly/informacyjna-czwarta-wojna-swiatowa.html>
<http://niwserwis.pl/artykuly/forum-internetowe-forum-propagandy-czy-forum-publicuma.html>

¹⁵ <http://rebelya.pl/forum/watek/75453/>.

¹⁶ “*Doniecka (pseudo) Republika Ludowa*”.

¹⁷ “*Polacy wspierają Republikę Doniecką*”.

propaganda-oriented sites such as the "Vilnius People's Republic,"¹⁸ that raise concerns that the Polish minority in Lithuania is – according to the Kremlin's plans – going to support Putin's "little green men". The website, *Europejskie Centrum Analiz Geopolitycznych* (European Centre of Geopolitical Analysis)¹⁹, practically a part of Dugin's network, is particularly active.

This Internet propaganda is performed on two levels, one of which is the promotion of Putinist ideology in its broadest tenets. However, it is the second level that is more important; making references to specific content intended for Polish audiences. We need to notice here that at this second level, activities primarily consist of adding to information already available on the Polish Internet. Those that can be, are expanded with fresh propaganda content or new meaning, not to mention new content. Below we describe such collocations and associations, which should be invoked by a correctly formed toxic meme.

Association: "Radical Critic of the West"

Putin's propaganda is interested, first of all, in inspiring dislike of the West. To this end, diverse, often unrelated threads are picked up, with the aim to reach circles whose views often differ a great deal. On the one hand, the West is supposedly weak and decadent, "rotting" from "gay" ideology, deep in financial crisis, and a place where only the egoistic interests of the richest and strongest are pursued. A particular thread appears here that the West will not help Poland and is, in fact, Poland's enemy. The memory of 1939 is used, when Poland was "betrayed", which should lead to "conclusions being drawn once and for all from history". On the other hand, however, the West is also supposedly aggressive, duplicitous and brutal, carrying out its own interests, which incidentally are supposedly divergent from Polish interests.²⁰ Consequently, the only resort against the West can be Russia. Russia is not even presented as particularly friendly. Russia is powerful, even dangerous, and since the insecure and treacherous West is unable to protect Poland against Russia, then it is better to succumb to Russia, thus at least ensuring peace and safety.

We find a good example of anti-Western content merged with Russian propaganda slogans in the post of an anonymous pro-Putin blogger under the nickname "Election Boycott" in the comments section of Salon24: *I used to explain to the Russkies that they have phobias and act hysterically by viewing the West as a deadly enemy. Today, I'm beginning to feel ashamed that I told them such nonsense, because it turns out that it was the Russkies who were right all along.*

¹⁸ "Wileńska Republika Ludowa".

¹⁹ <http://www.geopolityka.org>.

²⁰ *Polskie Towarzystwo Geopolityczne* (Polish Geopolitical Association), Dr Andrzej Zapalowski <http://ptg.edu.pl>.

Observing the West's recent actions (...), we can clearly notice how aggressive, murderous and rottenly false the whole West ideology is. The West murders, kills, attacks and invades whoever it pleases and wherever it wants, without as much as asking the opinion of the UN and the like. It murders –, without blinking an eye – anyone it doesn't like (in the original, the initial Polish spelling was preserved).

There is no way to avoid the impression that these kinds of arguments refer to a certain collective subconscious of the Polish society, connected with the sense of being isolated, betrayed etc. It is difficult to say whether the blogger who wrote those enunciations was a direct tool of Putin's propaganda. We think it would be more interesting if the inspired person wrote so only at his own initiative. This would be evidence of how far Polish deep-rooted complexes can be used in favour of pro-Kremlin propaganda.

Association: “Nation, Nationalists”

Pro-Russian propaganda combines in a particularly sophisticated way with content coming from Polish “nationalists” and the “nationalist movement” or “patriotic” slogans. It seems that websites with nationalist content are used in a particular way to spread Putinist propaganda, imitating nationalist content. It is interesting that here content and symbols, which generally should unequivocally denote anti-Russian views (e.g. Cursed Soldiers), serve emotional mobilisation which is supposed to end with opposition to what “is going on in Poland” and acceptance of transition to the other, Russian side. It is surprising how many edited pages there are where “patriotic” symbols and rhetoric are accumulated,²¹ making possible the manipulation of emotions involved.

The best picture of this surprising merger of pro-Putin propaganda with manipulation of Polish nationalist content is the site, *Kronika Narodowa* (National Chronicles).²² It contains the image of Roman Dmowski as its patron. Putin's propaganda is particularly intense in feeding off the tradition of the pre-war Polish National Democratic Party, making use of the apparent consistencies between Roman Dmowski politics and the contemporary pro-Moscow politics that are promoted. This is manifested *inter alia* by recalling the figure of Bolesław Piasecki and his organization, PAX, which collaborated with the communists.

A good example is the no longer functioning website *Falanga. Polska! Młodość! Rewolucja!* (Phalanx! Poland! Youth! Revolution!) <http://falanga.org.pl/> This website supports extreme Serbian nationalism, speaks against NATO, supports Assad in Syria, but

²¹ Samoobrona Patriotyczna (Patriotic Self-Defence) includes, among others: Bohdan Poręba, Eugeniusz Sendeki, Zbigniew Witaszek, Anita Edyta Zabroś, Zdzisław Jankowski (four-term MP from the Samoobrona Party) http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zbigniew_Witaszek multiplication of names (*Polska Patriotyczna* (Patriotic Poland), *Samoobrona Odrodzenie* (Self-Defence – Revival), *Samoobrona Ruch Społeczny* (Self-Defence – Social Movement). There is also an interesting website at <http://narodowikonserwatysci.pl>.

²² <http://www.kronikanarodowa.pl>.

at the same time actively organises a march of "cursed soldiers". The following text, to a certain extent the platform of this site, provides for interesting analysis:

We are living in a post-modern era, and this brings far-reaching consequences for the purposes and function of holding discourse. The imminent truth, so hard to capture, gives way to various truths derived from even the most original views, creating an infinitely large grid of equal positions which – despite contradiction – can exist alongside each other, or even permeate each other. The deconstruction of all "absolute truths" (including liberal truths) in the post-modern spirit creates good conditions for establishing a "laboratory of ideas" of sorts, where various points of view can confront each other and exert mutual influence to create, sometimes, a new whole. Putting these wholes in order and systemising them can end up contributing towards a new doctrine. <http://falanga.org.pl/>

This introduction most certainly was not written by any of the men with shaved heads you can see on the Falanga website. It is, however, close to the pseudo-intellectual style of Alexander Dugin's writings and his quasi-intellectual babble about "the fourth political theory". The Falanga site does not contain any direct pro-Russian content (apart from an important link to the "Open Revolt" site, where we can find a reference to Dugin, Euro-Asian doctrine etc.

The *Ruch Suwerenności Narodu Polskiego* (Polish National Sovereignty Movement) site also does not directly promote any aggressively pro-Russian activities, but the chauvinistic agitation pursued on this website ultimately leads there. We find Novorossiya flags there and such comments as: "My regards to Russian TV, at least they can speak the truth."²³

An interesting example of this type of site is located at www.konserwatyzm.pl. It is difficult to tell what joins most of those who write, however, it is most certain that it contains content that corresponds almost word for word to the Kremlin's current propaganda slogans. Yet that does not seem to stop the flow of declarations for Polish nationalism, attachment to patriotic symbols etc. There is also a surprising mix of ideas connected to Dmowski's writings, sympathy for the period of the Polish People's Republic (e.g. the figure of Wojciech Jaruzelski), anti-Semitism, sympathy for Lefebvrists, "conservative monarchic" ideas, ideas associated with nostalgia for Poland's pre-war Eastern borders etc. The English collectively call such phenomena the lunatic fringe, but it is these circles that are very active manufacturers and propagators of toxic memes.²⁴ By tracing the Facebook friends of these circles, we can reach anonymous Internet users who send pro-Putin memes, full of hatred towards the Polish state and its authorities, as well as towards Ukraine and its people.

²³ We mean both the association under this name and the website: <http://suwerennosc.blogspot.com/>. It is run by Jerzy Rachowski. Sławomir Andrzej Zakrzewski, *Ruch Suwerenności narodu polskiego* <http://eugeniusz-sendecki.neon24.pl/tag/80003> Eugeniusz Sendeci, *ruch-suwerennosc-narodu-polskiego* <http://eugeniuszsendeci.neon24.pl/tag/80003>, *ruch-suwerenność-narodu-polskiego flagi Noworosji Bandera Stop*.

²⁴ <http://www.konserwatyzm.pl/> These circles also publish printed books. I found the following book interesting: Engelgard Jan, Meller Arkadiusz, Wielomski Adam, *Stefan Bandera w Kijowie. Kulisy rewolucji na Ukrainie* (*Stephan Bandera in Kiev: The Inside Story of the Revolution in Ukraine*), Warsaw 2014. Wydawnictwo Capital.

Ultimately, however, these Polish “national conservatives” could perhaps reach the following conclusion: “*The optimum scenario for Poland now would be to leave NATO and stay neutral at the decisive stage of any potential war. Because if Russia is easily brought to its knees as a result of military confrontation, the hegemonic leader – the United States – would not let us get back Vilnius and Lviv anyway. If for no other reason than because Lithuania and Ukraine are also “allies” (vassals) of the United States*”.²⁵

Nationalism turns out to be a hot topic, which merges with content that is entirely opposite to the stereotype that in Poland, nationalism is primarily anti-Russian. Another sphere of the Internet where propaganda memes appear is religious fundamentalism and, also, neo-paganism in its Slavophile edition.²⁶ Considering that neo-pagan sites are openly anti-religious, this example also shows how “flexible” the manipulation of propaganda and toxic memes is. An interesting example of intentional or accidental manipulation can be found on the page with a very welcomingly named “patriotic list of sites”. Among the content that is patriotic and raises no objections, there are also links to sites, where patriotic and nationalist symbols and rhetoric smoothly transitions to a pro-Putin propaganda campaign²⁷

The Association: “Volhynia, Banderivitsi”

Putin’s propaganda strives to discredit both the Ukrainian state and Ukrainian nationality. Ukraine is supposedly not only a quasi-state (it is easy to recall anti-Polish propaganda after World War I, which referred to the “bastard” of the Treaty of Versailles or “seasonal state”), but the Ukrainians are not a fully-fledged nation, either. All this on the back of claims that the Ukrainian authorities, after Yanukovich’s fall, are supposedly illegitimate, and made up of fascists and *Banderivitsi* – this is a frequently repeated motif in Kremlin propaganda.

A strictly Polish thread is the constant invocation of the history of Volhynia in 1943, referred to as the “Volhynia Massacre”. Ukrainians are depicted as wild, cruel animals that absent-mindedly murdered Poles, not sparing women and children. A special role is played by Stepan Bandera, who has become something like the chief architect for those crimes (even though at the time, he was a prisoner in a German concentration camp). On the one hand, the figure of Bandera is a negative symbol created by Soviet propaganda, while on the other (for a portion of contemporary Ukrainian public opinion), he has become a symbol of the struggle for independence that continues to be the subject of constant attacks. His presence in the Ukrainian discourse is to determine the negative assessment of contemporary Ukrainian society and prove that extreme nationalism is still present there.

²⁵ <http://narodowikonserwatysci.pl/2014/06/27/wojna-nato-z-rosja-a-polityka-polska/>.

²⁶ <http://opolczykpl.wordpress.com/> promotes Slavic and neo-pagan ideology, so it is anti-Christian and, at the same time, openly pro-Putin.

²⁷ <http://patriotyczna.listastron.pl>.

Putin's propaganda also adds – with its content and through the thread of Bandera" and "Banderivitsi" – to the so-called *kresy* ideology.²⁸ Kresy.pl is a website with relatively broad impact, presenting at the same time a near model pattern of how Putin propaganda and anti-Ukrainian propaganda can merge with *kresy* matters.

The topic of Bandera and Banderivitsi and Ukrainian nationalism is omnipresent on the Polish Internet and constitutes one of the primary methods of anti-Ukrainian persuasion and attempts to drive a wedge between the societies of Poland and Ukraine. Through the description of cruelties and crimes of the "Volhynia Massacre", those issues are intended to stoke up emotions, to prevent practically any Polish-Ukrainian dialogue. A good example of raising these emotions, are the blogging circles gathered around www.konserwatyzm.pl/ and <http://prawica.net/39503>. The pictures from the past are also transposed to contemporary times and the present situation in Ukraine.

One of the bloggers, Konrad Rękas, writes, *inter alia*: "*How the Kiev Junta Violates Human Rights*" (*Jak Kijowska junta gwałci prawa człowieka*)²⁹, as well as "*Human Rights in Ukraine After Euromaidan*" (*Prawa człowieka na Ukrainie po Euromajdanie*) where he writes: "*Paradoxically, however, the time to talk about respect for human rights in Ukraine, eight months after Euromaidan, is particularly good. This is because despite censorship attempts by Gazeta Wyborcza, TV stations or the Western owners of the capital city hotel themselves, new facts constantly appear in the world and outside Poland regarding crimes and violations of basic rights and freedoms committed under the aegis of the Kiev authorities.*"³⁰

And finally, a quote we cannot resist citing:

*"Remember – EVERY LIKE IS ONE RUSSIAN MISSILE SENDING A DOZEN BANDEROVITSI TO ATLANTIST HELL."*³¹

Association: "Be a Patriot – Mind Your Own Business!"

Fear of war is most certainly a strong component of the Polish consciousness, and as such is often used to seed propaganda memes. It is related to a strong complex (we might call it the "September 1939 Complex") of being left alone and betrayed by the international community. It is also not without importance that presently in Poland

²⁸ <http://wmeritum.pl/ukraina-parlament-zalegalizuje-oun-upa/http://www.krs-online.com.pl/fundacja-miedzynarodowy-institut-nowych-krs-817242.html> (Martynov Aleksei, Mateusz Piskorski, Jacek Cezary Kamiński). <http://www.klubinteligencjipolskiej.pl/2014/09/przestancie-popierac-ukraine/>.

<https://www.facebook.com/PRLbezcenzury?fref=photo> (community of 11 thousand), a video about Mr Szpakowski, a separatist, was clearly fabricated in Donbas.

<http://www.nacjonalista.pl/2014/07/09/wolyn-43-pamietamy/>.

²⁹ <http://prawica.net/39514>.

³⁰ <http://prawica.net/39503>.

³¹ <https://www.facebook.com/adam.wielomski.3>, post by an anonymous Internet user, Katon Najmłodszy, accessed on 12 September 2014. The Facebook page of that anonymous Internet user is a classic example of pro-Kremlin and pro-Putin trolling.

there is an on-going discussion about the sensibility of many armed acts and operations (e.g. the Warsaw Uprising), with expressions of their futility and senselessness. This internal Polish discussion is being disturbed by interference from outside. Pro-Putin trolling does not always directly refer to this emotional complex, but rather merges it with the “battle for peace” thread, so typical for communist propaganda. A pro-Ukrainian approach is primarily presented as inciting war, with the perpetrators of the conflict being, firstly, the Ukrainians (fascists, Banderovitsi) themselves or the West (the Americans, NATO, the Pentagon).

A blogger using the name Marek Błaszowski writes on the Salon24 site: *“It speaks badly of the EU that it supports order-wreckers. Furthermore, it puts Poland on the front line, and when push comes to shove, no one will help us. You will need – my dear author – to grab the blade yourself to stop Putin. It is also worth noting that the Ukrainian army and various troops from Kolomoyski and UPA (the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, formed in 1942) regularly committed massacres of civilians, including burning them alive, as happened in Odessa. Such crimes are atrocious.”*

However, the most important conclusion of this text, repeated in various forms, in many places, is: *“The Polish raison d'état is to mind its own business, not to support various order-wreckers, not to muscle in on the first line of the fight with Russia, not to support genocide.”*³²

War is to be a tool primarily used by the West, which never takes Polish interests into account. For the anti-Semitic demagogue Grzegorz Braun, the war is the action of Jews supporting the Americans who need to maintain influence in Central Europe. This includes the conflict in Ukraine. Polish immature political elites are unable to stand aside, because it is a Polish habit to “pull the bell rope to hear the Polish anthem”.³³ However, this “minding of one’s own business” is intended to take a quite specific form as a further consequence. Whereas the starting point is about not irritating Russia, normalised relations should accompany it (regardless of what Russia does)³⁴, and finally Poland will have to stand beside Russia.

The website of *Obóz Wielkiej Polski* (the Great Poland Camp)³⁵ proclaims: “We already have a war” and publishes a map of Novorossiia with the slogan “History, Peace and Truth”. This cannot be surprising, since one of the group’s main activists (piggybacking on a historical name from the interwar period) is Bartosz Bekier, one of the most active pro-Putin activists in Poland.

³² <http://marekblaszkowski.salon24.pl/comments>.

³³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCZuPqdCd5I>.

³⁴ E.g.: Dawid Łasut http://polish.ruvr.ru/2014_09_02/Wielu-Polakow-zyczy-sobie-unormowania-relacji-z-Rosja-9824.

³⁵ www.owp.org.pl.

The Association "Contempt for the State and Disputing the 'System'"

The next unit of content, to which toxic memes and Russian propaganda attach themselves is disputing the political system in Poland, depreciating opinions about Poland, Polishness, and references to all kinds of social injustices, forming an image of the state's impotence. We must emphasise here that most threads used in this aspect of trolling were already present in the Polish discourse in the 1990s: criticism of the 1989 Round Table, disillusion with economic reforms, power grabs. The line between justified/possibly understandable expressions of social discontent and propaganda actions is hard to determine. The Kremlin propaganda machine supports and encourages actions disavowing Polish statehood and political life, and can be found on such sites as: www.oburzeni.pl/, *Dziennik Gajowego Maruchy* (the Diary of Ranger Marucha),³⁶ <http://www.usopal.pl/> (where we can find direct references to Russian sites), and the Youtube channel run by Max Kolonko³⁷ (who is, at the same time, a pundit for *Superstacja*). For Kolonko, "the situation in Ukraine leads to the revision of Polish borders; Polish politicians pursue a messianic policy by supporting the Ukrainians, while forgetting about Polish graves" (Kolonko's TV station is paid for by commercials of Polish companies).³⁸

The Association "Don't be a Russophobe!"

There are more threads to which propaganda and toxic memes are attached on the Polish Internet, and it is difficult to give a full list of them. Such a list is most likely redundant because we are primarily concerned with understanding mechanisms and not with a detailed description of the phenomenon. However, it is absolutely necessary to mention one more thread. It is related to a special type of moral blackmail that is an attempt to claim that any criticism of today's Russia is a result of an unhealthy anti-Russian obsession.

At a demonstration in support of Putin in front of the Russian embassy in Warsaw, the following words were spoken by the organiser and agitator: *Enough of antagonising Russia against us, it is all too well that Crimea joined Russia. Obama and Merkel should stay away from Slavic affairs, the Polish media do not reflect Polish public opinion.*³⁹ While this statement is obviously extreme, in other places, the Russophobia thesis is expressed more cautiously, and propaganda memes appear on the Internet where concern that criticism of the Kremlin could turn into anti-Russian xenophobia is authentic. The essence of this operation is an attempt to identify Putin with Russianness, and the Kremlin's current policy with progressive Russian politics.

³⁶ <http://marucha.wordpress.com/>.

³⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/user/Media2000Corp>.

³⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnA2fEhqq-I&list=TLmqy0naOAB-FdM0LVToIRZTr6dNVm7n8H>

³⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UScaMsr2Uk>.

Putin's Politics of Influence in Poland

Operations on the internet, such as trolling, do not exhaust actions in support of building Russian politics of influence in Poland. It is enough to recall such magazines as *Gazeta Warszawska* and *Mysł Polska* radio station, the influence of the “Russia Today” TV station, or, finally, official websites such as “Sputnik”. At the same time, we cannot forget that actions in the virtual world of the Internet lead to specific consequences in the real world.

As an example of such consequences, we would do well to recall four Polish MEPS who voted against the Association Agreement with Ukraine. The fact that Korwin-Mikke's nearly vanished party was able to get in the European Parliament is a result, among others, of the strong support provided by extremely nationalist websites where Putin's trolling was omnipresent.⁴⁰ Janusz Korwin-Mikke, by his participation in the political arena and use of the Internet, plays a considerable role in supporting the Kremlin's propaganda to ensure his presence. Korwin-Mikke, who sustains his public presence through scandalising statements, has recently begun openly and aggressively speaking in Putin's favour. In the campaigns now in progress for presidential and parliamentary elections, pro-Putin Internet advocates are voting for selected small parties. This promotes the concept that mainstream Polish political life, from PiS to PO to SLD, is totally corrupt and compromised.

Anti-Ukrainian street demonstrations are being held in front of the Ukrainian embassy in Warsaw⁴¹ or the Ukrainian consulate in Lublin, all in support of Russia.⁴² Real world activities include attempts at penetrating paramilitary circles⁴³ (invitations extended to members of sport shooting associations to “train” in Russia). It is visible that Putin's propaganda intends to transform the annual “Independence March” into the Polish (or rather, anti-Polish) Maidan, by penetrating a number of “nationalist” circles. We also see Polish citizens serving in Russian terrorist units in Donbas. They are such people as Dawid Hudziec, who fights in Donbas, or Dariusz Lemański, who fights in the “Novorossiya” forces.

Internet presence and activity on social networks are often mutually complementary. We can observe the same people we encounter in the Internet in real life, even though being anonymous, they are often less visible. It is worth mentioning some of them as examples.

Perhaps the most visible pro-Putin supporter in public life is Mateusz Piskorski, even more so since he became one of the leading organisers of the political party *Zmiana* (Change). Piskorski, associated with *Polskie Towarzystwo Geopolityczne*, acts as Polish political scientist and international observer in “missions” to Moscow-annexed Crimea.

⁴⁰ http://polish.ruvr.ru/news/2014_09_07/Korwin-Mikke-Polska-powinna-uznac-aneksje-Krymu-2928.

⁴¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UScaMsr2Uk>.

⁴² Those demonstrations were organised by Sławomir Andrzej Zakrzewski.

⁴³ <http://www.psww.com.pl>.

He travelled to Syria several times, supporting Assad's regime. *Zmiana* advocates a total overhaul of the political system in Poland and for Poland's withdrawal from NATO.

Adam Wielomski belongs to the most pro-Russian section with the "nationalist" movement. He is also the founder of the armchair *Kongres Zachowawczo-Monarchistyczny* (Conservative Monarchy Congress) and *Obóz Wielkiej Polski* (OWP) - equally armchair-like, but with slightly more reach. Adam Wielomski is also a contributor to "nationalist" magazines, like *Mysł Polska* (Polish Thought) and Korwin-Mikke's *Najwyższy Czas* (About Time) as well as *Konserwatyzm.pl*. Next to Korwin-Mikke, Wielomski was considered to be the eminence grise in *Konferencja Polski Niepodległej* (KNP – Confederation of Independent Poland). He also penned two subservient letters to the Moscow ambassador and Putin, as well as some vitriolic texts on Polish statehood.

Yet another activist on the pro-Putin Internet is Ronald Lasecki, a member of the editing team of *konserwatyzm.pl/*, *xwebsite.pl/* and other pro-Putin websites. His ambition is clearly to be the community's ideologist and he is under the strong influence of the Russian extreme right. We can name other figures in pro-Putin circles, such as Adam Danek or Bartosz Bekier, who openly collaborate not only with the Russian media, but also with the media of terrorist Novorossiya⁴⁴, not to mention Konrad Rękas, who openly throws accusations against Polish political life in "Voice of Russia". In the past, he was an activist member of the so-called "nationalist right", then *Samoobrona*, and nowadays he is a member of *Klub Zachowawczo-Monarchistyczny*. This activist's example is major proof that there are many threads in various figures' actions in favour of the Kremlin's politics of influence.

It is puzzling, naturally, that Polish citizens can become propagators of propaganda that is openly and clearly hostile towards Poland. What is the political and psychological profile of these people? What, in turn, is the profile of the gullible audience of pro-Putin content spread by them, especially when the conflict in the East has become much more heated, and the threats against Poland made by the Kremlin are increasingly audible? In every country there is political folklore, political extremities and fringes, and to a certain extent this is the phenomenon we are dealing with here in Poland. However, we cannot ignore the fact that there can be direct ties between such fringes and the activities of a power that is unfriendly to Poland today (i.e. Putin's Russia). There are examples of Internet users who are already facing prosecution charges of committing subversive activities for a foreign government.

Political Culture and the Information War

The use that propaganda makes of the Internet needs to be evaluated against the broader context of both culture and civilisation.

⁴⁴ Bartosz Bekier on situation in Ukraine and Novorossiya <http://xportal.pl/?p=16661>.

The use of the Internet and social networks for political and propaganda purposes to a great extent took the democratic West by surprise. Naturally, the opportunities the Internet provides for election campaigns were noticed, and an innovative example of this was Obama's first election campaign. This was also grasped by Polish politicians, who often use Twitter. The importance of the Internet was also noticed during the Arab Spring, and an optimistic conclusion was hastily drawn; namely that no dictatorship can remain standing in the world of text messages and Twitter.⁴⁵ We can also add that Euromaidan itself and the dignity revolution owe much to the Internet, starting with the fact that it began with Ukrainian journalist and blogger Mustafa Mayyem's call on Facebook to come to Freedom Square in Kyiv.

Only a few years ago, discussion regarding the Internet were completely optimistic. The Internet was to become a new tool of democracy and facilitate democratisation where it was deemed insufficient. The only opponents of this view were those who saw universal networking as an opportunity for total control. The only danger for the network was deemed to consist of hackers (a phenomenon that is somewhat complicated culturally) or in quasi-monopolistic companies, such as Google or Facebook.

The first person to notice and extensively describe the threat the Internet could pose as a tool of propaganda against Western democracies was Evgeny Morozov. A few years ago, he already described Russian attempts in this respect and Putin's fascination with this new way of communication, and the fact that Putin won the favour of an entire group of young Russian bloggers. It is no accident that Morozov is Belarussian and very knowledgeable regarding Soviet/post-Soviet propaganda in his own country.⁴⁶

The Kremlin was able to combine older elements of psychological warfare with the new opportunities the provided by Internet. The Kremlin experts carried out their first experiment on their own society. The propaganda material used consisted, in great part, of Dugin's views which identified the gist of many complications in the Russian ailing identity, and recommended a neo-imperial treatment. The second propaganda operation concerned the annexation of Crimea and included international references. It was then decided to continue applying this tested recipe on external politics. The Kremlin's experts on Internet propaganda assumed from the start that in each country the shape of trolling had to be formed differently.

We could say that just like Dugin – with his schizophrenic theories – does not understand Russia, but is undoubtedly a medium for “Russian soul” ailments, that such

⁴⁵ Castell Manuel, *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age*, UK 2012, Shirky Clay, *Here Comes Everybody: How Change Happens When People Come Together*. UK 2009. The Internet's opportunities in the area of political influence were noted during the Arab Spring. A number of network experts were enthusiastic. Even more so, since the 'Occupy' movement and other new forms of protest have already noticed the opportunities of social influence through the Internet, as “alternative politics”. Ghonim Wael *Revolution 2.0*, UK 2012, Hands Joss@ is for Activism: Dissent, Resistance and Rebellion in a Digital Culture, UK 2010, Gerbaudo Paulo, *Tweets and the Streets: Social Media and Contemporary Activism*, UK 2012. Van Dijk, Jan A.G.M, *The Network Society*, UK 2012.

⁴⁶ Evgeny Morozov (2012), *The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom*.

mediums need to be found in every country. They usually exist on the fringes of society, like a lunatic who disjointedly discloses all indiscretions of the society he came to live in.

Thus, this "fringe political folklore" became a medium of sorts for Kremlin propaganda in Poland. In many instances, we do not have to look for any spying roots to explain pro-Putin attitudes. Some fringe public opinions or specific circles were ready for this, regardless whether they had any connection to the Russian side. Everyone who is neo-pagan will accept Russian pan-Slavic content with a much greater likelihood than average. A monarchist will be more likely to seek any vision of the future which might be an alternative to democracy. Those who have a negative or highly negative approach to the system they live in are more likely to take up radical criticism of the system, with no heed paid to the source. Those that believe that the West will only betray Poland, assume that conflict with Russia should be avoided. Those who hate Germany, will accept Russia more easily, while anti-Semites will believe that Ukraine is ruled by Jews.

Polish political folklore, made up of such exemplary figures as the right-wing quasi-liberal Janusz Korwin-Mikke, journalist and anti-Semite Stanisław Michalkiewicz, quasi-historian Waldemar Łysiak⁴⁷ or popular book author and essayist Waldemar Ziemiński, is susceptible for penetration by trolling. Here, we can also add the representatives of academic circles, such as for instance professor of Jagiellonian University Bronisław Łagowski⁴⁸ or Andrzej Romanowski professor of Warsaw University,⁴⁹ who condemn the allegedly common and irrational Russophobia of Poles, or even those who write subservient letters to Putin, like Anna Rażna professor of Jagiellonian University, the co-author of the letter to Putin asking him "to defend all Slaves". It would be overly simplistic and unreasonable to hastily seek the influence of Kremlin agents in such actions. Conspiracy theories are generally the least useful for better understanding political life, or even political folklore. However, this builds an atmosphere where a troll can speak "their" mind and not be considered or recognized as a troll. At the same time, one could argue that the fronts of many public discussions and the very strong polarisation of those discussions were and are favourable for penetration by trolling.

The vision of the alleged "Third Republic salon" – the favourite rhetoric figure of right-wing journalism – allows every idiot to present himself as not being allowed to take part in public debate. The black legend of the "Round Table" and "Magdalenka" (the Solidarność – Communist negotiations 1989) helps question the value of the Polish state and facilitates speaking about its decline. In turn, presenting the Polish right-wing solely as irresponsible "loonies" and a threat to democracy, helps feed negative stereotypes that this is the true state of Poland; nationalistic, dark and uncomprehending of democracy.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Press article: "Prześciancie popierać Ukrainę" (Stop Supporting Ukraine).

⁴⁸ <http://wiadomosci.onet.pl/tylko-w-onecie/prof-bronislaw-lagowski-rusofobia-to-jest-obecnie-ideologia-panstwowa/51vhw>.

⁴⁹ http://wyborcza.pl/1,75968,16529003,Polska__Rus_i_racja_stanu.html.

⁵⁰ <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21646756-europe-belatedly-waking-up-russias-information-warfare-aux-armes-journalistes>.

In fact, most Russian trolling can already be observed in the emotional disputes between the two camps: PiS versus PO and PO versus PiS. After all, “Pisiory” (a colloquial and slightly derogatory term for PiS followers), in the eyes of “Platformers” (PO followers), are continuing the tradition of the Polish National Democratic Party (although Kaczyński is rather a follower of Piłsudski) – they are xenophobes, inclined toward anti-Semitism, nationalists who become emotional over the Cursed Soldiers, etc. In turn, the “Platfusy” (colloquial and slightly derogative term for PO followers), in the eyes of the “Pisiory”, represent the “Magdalenka crew”, “Round Table fraud”, propaganda of gay culture, etc. According to “Platformers”, Poland is under constant threat from the PiS “loonies” coming to power. At the same time, according to the “Pisiory”, Poland is a disaster caused by unvetted supporters of the former military intelligence organisation (WSI).

The Polish media only strengthen these divisions. TV Republika is allegedly pro-PiS, and TVN is pro-PO; *Gazeta Wyborcza* is for the “Platformers”, while the daily *Rzeczpospolita* is for PiS. The media copy the political party division, and even replicate it in a way, because it is the media, more often than the politicians, that manufacture ideas. The often chaotic and emotional tone of public debate makes propaganda manipulation from outside easier.

This also makes it possible to attempt building new front lines, which would facilitate the disintegration of Polish society. Such attempts are currently taking place. Allegedly, PO-PiS is to stand on one side, as part of massive interference with the Polish Internet, and the pro-Russian alternative, on the other side. PO-PiS supports Ukraine, so therefore it is xenophobically anti-Russian and pushes the country towards war. Standing on the other side are supposedly those who promise “change” and rejection of the “old system”. They promise this to everyone who felt equally bad whether it was PO or PiS in power, because they are the same clique (“Tusk is a Jew and Kaczyński is a Jew”). Therefore, a radical change is necessary. The need for such change was advocated already by PiS, but PiS was unable to carry it out. Now it will be carried out by those who understand that a war with Russia is unnecessary; that Bandera and the “Volhynia Massacre” need to be remembered.

It seems that in the 1990s, the Russian politics of influence sought contacts primarily with post-communist circles. We also cannot forget that it was the Yeltsin period when at least some of the Russian political elite attempted to build closer ties with the West.

With time, Russian intelligence’s interest in *Samoobrona* became visible. When this formation collapsed, their interest moved on to *Nowa Prawica* (New Right) and nationalist circles who were perceived as easy to manipulate. This is consistent with propaganda activities in other EU states where the extreme right enjoys the Kremlin’s support.

The *Zmiana* party, currently gathering activists who are unequivocally pro-Moscow, is the expression of yet another trend of Russian propaganda, namely its eclecticism. When we analyse the biographies of leading activists and the journalistic activity of those circles, we find a broad array of ideas from neo-paganism and pan-Slavism, to twisted

references to Polish nationalism, as well as nostalgia for the People's Republic of Poland and "leftist" slogans – all this seasoned with quasi-intellectual gibberish taken from Dugin. Ukrainian historian Ihor Hrycak ironically called this type of quasi-ideological mix "post-communist modernism". Ridiculing this phenomenon or demonstrating its irrationality is not only pointless, it means we do not understand it. This seemingly chaotic form has a clear and obvious purpose. This mix of contradicting slogans is to disintegrate political thinking and contribute to the general confusion.

These comments let us draw the conclusion that is important, albeit difficult, to translate specific and practical actions; namely the conclusion that the weaker the political culture is and the worse the quality of the media, the easier it is to infect a given community with a toxic propaganda meme.⁵¹

Social Reactions to Trolling and Pro-Putin Propaganda

The belief that propaganda activity on the Internet can pose a threat can be countered with two arguments. Firstly, the Internet is too big to let anyone manipulate it freely. The sociology of the Internet speaks in this case about the so-called "crowd effect". Secondly, every intensified activity on the Internet also causes the intensification of counter-activity. As a result, the spread of views in a given community does not differ from the spread of views held by that community regardless of such external actions. When describing this phenomenon, some sociologists speak of "crowd wisdom", though perhaps we should rather speak of "statistically averaged wisdom".

When we look at how the circles supporting Ukraine and groups monitoring Putin's propaganda lies, such as the "Russian Fifth Column", "Poles Together with Ukraine", "Help Ukraine" and many others, spontaneously organise themselves over the Internet, we can reach the conclusion that the crowd effect operates with sufficient strength. The Polish Internet community noticed the manipulative actions of Russian propaganda and started reacting to those actions with increasing intensity.

However, we need to raise several important objections against excessive optimism. Russian propaganda's objective is not to have influence over the entirety of Polish society or even the majority. It is highly unlikely to happen for a society with such a heavy burden of past experience in relations with Russia to become widely pro-Russian. The Kremlin's actions are instead aimed at creating appropriate social niches which can be manipulated. Russian propaganda also has the chance to influence selected youth circles. Ultimately, it is not about convincing someone, but about stirring up feelings of uncertainty and confusion. Such partial "success" is well within the Kremlin propaganda's reach with the

⁵¹ Taylor Astra, *The People's Platform: Taking Back Power and Culture in the Digital Age* UK 2014 – the author analyses the demise of serious journalism, which she refers to as "churnalism". The phenomenon in Poland pointed to in this report is of a wider nature and can be observed elsewhere as well.

help of the Internet. Since the Kremlin's trolling is institutionalised and well financed, any social and spontaneous opposition may prove insufficient.

Western countries are already undertaking counter-initiatives, supported by the state, and there are many calls for such actions. Such decisions should be made in Poland, as well.

Author's Recommendations

1. The "information war" is a threat parallel to the military threat and requires appropriate reaction from the state authorities and government.
2. The definition of cyber-security, used by institutions and government agencies responsible for this security, should be significantly expanded. Apart from the risk of hacking attacks, it should include the matter of hostile propaganda activities on the Internet.
3. It is necessary to make the public aware of the phenomenon that is political trolling, and to keep it informed about threats related to it.
4. Systematic research of Kremlin propaganda contents is important for the assessment of the Kremlin's political intentions. This is why "psychological warfare" should become an important part of research conducted by analytical centres.
5. It is necessary to recognise the sociological and psychological processes which are connected with Internet activity, in order to take effective actions against the Kremlin's "information war". This matter requires international co-operation.
6. Those circles, which produce *toxic memes*, must be identified. These are the circles of potential pro-Putin political activity, which would not only be virtual should Russian aggression expand.
7. Law enforcement, the prosecutor's office and courts should pay attention to new types of risks and crimes where the Internet is a tool.
8. We urgently need new legal regulations concerning Internet activity. In particular, anonymity cannot protect against liability for words, especially in the case of slander, mobbing and punishable threats.
9. Counteracting the "information war" requires innovative working methods of properly prepared, multi-disciplinary teams. Those teams should include, among others, IT specialists, sociologists and social psychologists, as well as historians. The security agencies' task should be to determine the connection between the politics of influence, carried out on the Internet, and traditional agent networks and the acquisition of main propagators of toxic memes.
10. It is an illusion that nothing can be done, but the "collective wisdom", manifesting itself on the Internet as the crowd effect, may prove misleading (i.e. the rule that the Internet as a mass phenomenon will always express what the network society represents on a statistical spread basis, making it difficult to manipulate the Internet).

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Abstract

The war, which Russia is currently waging against Ukraine today, is not only related to breaking the post-World War II rules of engagement, but is also being run in a new way, previously unknown to a certain degree. Internet and social media are often its main tool. It is planned and carried out in Russia, with the help of deep sources on so-called "information warfare", found in Russian literature.

The Crimean Crisis Through the Perspective of Russia-NATO relations

RICHAT SABITOV

University of South-East Europe, Bucharest

Russian foreign policy and European security is continuing to receive special attention in light of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. An analysis of Russia-NATO relations is necessary to understand Moscow's behaviour in the so-called "near abroad" – the territory of the former Soviet republics. It is, therefore, important to study Russia's reaction to Ukrainian aspirations towards Europe and the implications it holds for the Crimean Peninsula's status.

1. Russia-NATO Relations

Cooperation with NATO started in 1991, when Russia joined the Partnership for Peace program in 1994. At the 1997 Paris NATO Summit, Russia and the North-Atlantic Alliance signed the "Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security", stating they did not view each other as adversaries. In 2002, in Rome, the Russia-NATO council was created in order to reinforce cooperation between the two sides in such sectors as fighting terrorism, military cooperation, cooperation on Afghanistan, industrial cooperation, non-proliferation, and others. Russia was not to hinder the integration of former Soviet Baltic republics into the Alliance with which it had common borders. Russian Federal Law N99-FZ, ratifying the accord with NATO on 19 June 1995, and among other measures, allowing for a special transportation base near the city of Ulyanovsk in central Russia, was adopted on 7 June 2007.

However, starting in 2007, Russia started expressing an increasingly negative attitude towards the US and NATO. In February 2007, during the Munich Conference on Security Policy, President Vladimir Putin mentioned the principal issues threatening Russian security, including a unipolar international system, NATO expansion and the placement of military bases near Russia's borders.¹

¹ Speech and Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, 10 February 2007, official website of the Office of the Russian President, http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/10/0138_type82912type82914type82917type84779_118123.shtml (accessed on 26 May 2014)

On December 2007, Russia withdrew from the “Adapted Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty”. The arguments of Russian officials for this decision included progressive NATO expansion waves in 1999 and 2004, that “no longer responded to the balance of power” established by the “Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty” in 1990. Another source of anxiety for Moscow was the development of the American missile defence system in Europe. Consequently, Russia refuses to completely withdraw its forces from Moldova and Georgia, insisting on the continued existence of men and equipment holding its “flanks”. This distancing from NATO is also related to Russia’s domestic situation, where the Kremlin’s grip on political power has been considerably strengthened since 2000.

The growing anxiety concerning NATO corresponded with the change of power in domestic matters/policies in Russia. Kremlin authorities started giving clear signals to the West that foreign policy would not change despite whatever eventual outcome of the presidential elections.

In December 2007, Dmitri Medvedev’s candidacy was officially backed by Vladimir Putin. On 2 March 2008, Medvedev won the election. However, two weeks earlier, the Kosovo authorities declared independence, which Russia opposed from the very start of the conflict in Serbia. The August 2008 war with Georgia and the recognition of breakaway republics was a warning to NATO that Moscow’s anti-Western stance would only escalate under the seemingly more liberal Medvedev. With this in mind, the cultural concept of the “near abroad” was developed and further politicised.

2. The “Near Abroad”

The “near abroad” is an area of interest of special importance to Russia. As Zbigniew Brzezinski notes, it is “the entire space of the former Soviet Union as a zone of the Kremlin’s special geostrategic interest, from which outside political—and even economic—influence should be excluded.”² From this point of view, any exterior, especially military, influence would concern Moscow. Russia strongly opposes NATO expansion close to its borders, namely Ukraine and Georgia’s aspirations to join the military alliance. Russia is determined to weaken any military reinforcement on post-Soviet territory.

In 1999, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic joined the organisation, which was further enlarged in 2004, with the accession of seven Central and Eastern European countries: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania. Albania and Croatia joined on 1 April 2009.

² Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York: Basic Books, 1997, p. 136.

In March 2008, newly elected President of Russia Dmitri Medvedev said in an interview: “No state would be pleased about having representatives of a military bloc approaching close to its borders.” During the Russia-NATO meeting at the NATO summit in Bucharest in April 2008, Vladimir Putin made clear that if such countries as Ukraine and Georgia were to join the Alliance, Russia – in order to “create a buffer-zone” – would officially recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and would “start to tear away Crimea and Eastern Ukraine”.³ Any Western military force near the Russian border would thus be viewed by Moscow, according to its military doctrine, as a “violation of the principle of equal security and balance of power”. This demonstrates that for Russia, state security is a matter of national identity building in opposition to the West. In military aspects, Russia’s security approach corresponds to balance-of-power theory, as described and defended by Kenneth Waltz (1979) and Stephen Walt (1987), where the balance of military potential is vital to a state’s foreign policy.

If the “Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation” from 21 April 2000 did not mention NATO expansion as the principal threat to Russian security, nine years later, the “National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation to 2020” of 12 May 2009, qualified the “global and regional architecture oriented to NATO” as “inadequate”.⁴ The current “NATO-dominated international structure represents an ever-increasing threat to international security” (Article 8). Russia sees the Collective Security Treaty Organization as the main interstate instrument for responding to regional threats and challenges of a military-political or military-strategic nature (Article 13). By its military intervention in the South Caucasus in August 2008, Russia demonstrated its determination not to let NATO get close to its borders, and made clear to what extent the area surrounding Russia is important to Moscow.⁵ As well, the establishment of quasi-states in a buffer zone is seen as an effective tool to preserve the balance of power in the region, or even change it in Russia’s favour

3. Ukrainian Aspiration to NATO Membership

NATO-Ukrainian relations were formally launched in 1991, when Ukraine joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (succeeded by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997). In 1994, Ukraine became the first of the Commonwealth of

³ *Kommersant*, 8 April 2008.

⁴ Text of the “National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation to 2020”, Official Website of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Russia, <http://www.mid.ru/bdcmp/ns-osndoc.nsf/e2f289bea62097f9c325787a0034c255/8abb3c17eb3d2626c32575b500320ae4?OpenDocument>. (accessed on 26 March 2014). Unofficial translation of the “Strategy”: <http://rustrans.wikidot.com/russia-s-national-security-strategy-to-2020> (accessed on 26 March 2014).

⁵ Maxime Henri André Larivé, Roger E. Kanet, “The Return to Europe and the Rise of EU-Russian Ideological Difference”, *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, No. 1, 2013.

Independent States to join the “Partnership for Peace” program. The country supported the NATO-led peacekeeping operations in the Balkans during the 1990s. According to the “Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances” signed on December 5, 1994, Russia, the United States and the United Kingdom agreed to respect Ukrainian independence and sovereignty within its existing borders, and to refrain from the use of force and economic pressure.⁶ In accordance with the agreement, Ukraine was to destroy all nuclear weapon on its territory two years from the date of its signature. The adoption of the “NATO-Ukraine Action Plan” in November 2002 supported Ukraine’s reform efforts on the road towards Euro-Atlantic integration. An intensified dialogue regarding Ukraine’s aspirations of NATO membership was launched during the NATO-Ukraine Commission meeting of foreign ministers in Vilnius, Lithuania, in April 2005. At the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, Alliance leaders agreed that Ukraine might become a NATO member in the future.

In August 2009, the “Declaration to Complement the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine” was signed. In 2010, newly elected President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich made it clear that his country would not pursue NATO membership. However, the Ukrainian president did maintain the existing level of cooperation with the Alliance. In 2013, Ukraine became the first partner country to contribute to NATO’s counter-piracy operation off the coast of Somalia, sending the Ukrainian frigate UPD *Hetman Sahaydachniy* to the region.

4. Russia and Ukraine

In general terms, during the past two decades, relations between Russia and its “new” neighbouring states have been determined by domestic policy. As state power in Russia has continued to increase, so has its opposition to the West. A degree of cooperation between the former Soviet republics and Moscow determines bilateral relations in economy, energy and/or military issues. Any state willing to cooperate closer with Moscow receives extra privileges in these areas and vice-versa. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian political leadership’s foreign policy orientation oscillated between pro-Western and pro-Russian. This, in turn, affected Russian-Ukrainian relations. To simplify, Russia-Ukraine relations can be qualified as follows: during Kravchuk’s presidency (1990-1994) – good, Kuchma’s presidency (1994-2005) – good, Yushchenko’s presidency (2005-2010) – bad, and during Yanukovich’s presidency (2010-2014) – good. Following this pattern, the pro-Western oriented Euromaidan and the Ukrainian revolution were immediately met with hostility from Moscow.

⁶ United Nations Multilingual Terminology Database, <http://unterm.un.org/DGAACS/unterm.nsf/8fa942046ff7601c85256983007ca4d8/4fe5ea3e98fbff4e852569fa00008aae> (accessed on 25 March 2014).

4.1. Russia and Crimea

As mentioned earlier, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia carried on volatile partner relations with Ukraine. A number of visits took place by Russian political leaders to Crimea, including several cities. For example, during his first two presidential mandates, Putin visited Crimea a total of twelve times and once as prime minister in 2009.⁷ President Medvedev never officially visited the Crimean Peninsula. The official status of the peninsula was never challenged by Kremlin officials during that time.

4.2 Status of Crimea

The status of Crimea has undergone changes throughout the 20th century. In 1919, it obtained the status of an autonomous republic of the Russia Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR). After the deportation of Crimean Tatars, Crimea became an ordinary oblast by decision of the Supreme Council of the RSFSR in 1946.⁸ Due to the initiative of First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev, the Crimean Oblast was transferred to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. The oblast preserved its status until the referendum on sovereignty, held on January 1991, according to which the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was re-established. The Crimean Supreme Council declared the republic's sovereignty on 5 May 1992. Two years later, on 21 September 1994, the Verkhovna Rada (parliament) of Ukraine, renamed the Republic of Crimea the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC), and – in March 1995 – abolished the constitution and presidency of the Republic of Crimea. The new constitution of the ARC was approved by the Ukrainian parliament on 23 December 1998. These transformations in status reflected the political situation in Russia and Ukraine.

Since the independence of Ukraine, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia and Yury Luzhkov, Mayor of Moscow, were the main political figures publicly calling for the “return of Crimea”, while officially, Moscow has always avoided this subject.

4.3 The Black Sea Fleet

The Black Sea Fleet – established as a sub-unit of the Russian Imperial Navy in 1783 – is of special importance to Russia; since the 17th century, it has focused on the expansion of its southern borders, dominance over the Black Sea and superiority in the region.

⁷ Vizity prezidenta RF Vladimira Putina v Krym. Khronologiya, 13 August 2014 <http://tass.ru/info/1377151>

⁸ By the same decree of the Supreme Council on 25 June 1946, the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic was abolished.

While still under unified command and a “disturbing political factor”⁹ for both countries after the collapse of the Soviet Union, use of the Black Sea Fleet, established by an agreement from June 1995,¹⁰ was regulated by three bilateral agreements signed in Kyiv on 28 May 1997. The documents, ratified two years later,¹¹ created two fleets – Russian and Ukrainian – based on the existing Soviet naval facilities. Starting from that date, 70% of the entire infrastructure of the Russian Black Sea Fleet located in Crimea with 25,000 navy personnel was stationed in Sevastopol, Feodosia and the Russian city of Novorossiysk. The annual rent of the Russian naval presence in Crimea was fixed at 97.7 million US dollars and was considered repayment of Ukrainian government debt to Russia. As stipulated in the agreement, the terms of use of the Crimean Peninsula were fixed until 28 May 2017.

Another document determining the Russian presence in Crimea was signed during the Yanukovich presidency. On 21 April 2010, in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, newly elected President Viktor Yanukovich signed a treaty with President Medvedev that extended the 10-year Russian lease of naval facilities in Crimea until 2042. The rent for military bases was raised to 100 million US dollars a year, and the price for natural gas supplied to Ukraine was reduced to 30% of its market value.¹²

5. Crimean Crisis

5.1. Events on the Peninsula

As Euromaidan broke out, Russian officials started putting forward a different view, treating Ukraine as a “failed state”. In this sense, Russia took further steps to protect its borders and, naturally, its political regime, acting in accordance with realist theories of international relations, in accordance with Russia’s particular brand of logic.

After months of street demonstrations by the Ukrainian population, new leaders came to power in Kyiv in February 2014. President Viktor Yanukovich was deposed by the Ukrainian parliament after his flight from the capital. Ukraine turned out

⁹ Юрий Дубинин, “Как была заложена правовая основа российско-украинских отношений”, *Международная жизнь*, 2008, № 7, С. 57-76, online version at <http://www.mgimo.ru/files/44903/33824.pdf> (accessed on 22 March 2014) (Yuri Dubinin, “How the Legal Basis for Russian-Ukrainian Relations was Established”, *Mejdunarodnaya jizn*, 2008, N 7, pp. 57-76).

¹⁰ “Дипломатический вестник”, N 7 Июль 1995, online version at the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada archive, http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/643_082 (accessed on 26 March 2014) (“Diplomatic bulletin”)

¹¹ By Federal Law N°123-FZ on 3 July 1999, *Бюллетень международных договоров*, 1999, № 9, Database of Russian legislation, online version on <http://www.szrf.ru/doc.phtml?nb=edition02&issid=1999010000&docid=2630> (accessed on March 22, 2014) (“Bulletin of the International Treaties”).

¹² *Бюллетень международных договоров*, 2010, № 10, стр.74, Database of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, online version on http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/spd_md.nsf/0/4BB819181AF1626344257CB300321255 (accessed on 26 March 2014).

to be unprepared for the coercive stand of Russia. The unexpected disappearance of Yanukovych created favourable conditions for Russia to increase its political influence over the Crimean population. In spring 2014, with its underbalanced power, Ukraine was unable to protect its sovereignty in the short-term. This fact is perfectly explained by the neoclassical realist Randall Schweller (2006), who argues that the more fragmented and diverse a state's various elite and societal groups are, the less we can expect it to appropriately respond to external strategic pressures. The pro-Russian population and militia groups – first in Crimea and later in South-East Ukraine – started to openly question and disobey the newly appointed Ukrainian central administration. Ukrainian officials affirm that the Russian authorities were behind these acts of disapproval that shattered the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The situation in Ukraine at the end of February 2014, gave occasion for Russia to take steps to bring Crimea under its control. The political turmoil in Ukraine was declared a direct threat to Russia's core strategic interests. In a film released on Russian federal television in March 2015, Putin admitted his personal engagement in the evacuation of Yanukovych and in the organization of the Crimean referendum. He also said that he had considered the use of nuclear weapons "if necessary".

On 11 March 2014, the Supreme Council of Crimea and the Sevastopol City Council adopted a Declaration of Independence. On 16 March, a referendum was held regarding the status of Crimea. The population of the Crimean Peninsula was asked whether it wanted to join Russia as a federal subject, or to restore the 1992 Crimean constitution and Crimea's status as a part of Ukraine. With 83% voter turnout, 96.8% of the population of Crimea and 95.6% of the population of Sevastopol voted to join Russia.

5.2 Moscow and the Contested Crimean Referendum

Russia immediately recognized the plebiscite on the peninsula. The day after the referendum, the parliament of Crimea requested that the Russian Federation "admit the Republic of Crimea as a new subject with the status of a republic". The same day, the Russian president issued a decree formally recognizing Crimea as an independent state. On 18 March, representatives from Russia, Crimea and Sevastopol signed the "Treaty on the Adoption of the Republic of Crimea to Russia", ratified by the Russian Federal Assembly and signed by President Putin on 21 March. This is the first time when Federal Constitutional Law N6 "On the Procedure of Adoption to the Russian Federation and Forming within it a New Subject of the Russian Federation" from 17 December 2001, was implemented. On 31 March 2014, Russia cancelled the Kyiv Agreements and the Kharkiv Treaty governing the Russian fleet's presence in Sevastopol.

During his so-called "Crimean speech" in March 2014, Putin mentioned the violation of the balance of power, the need for a bipolar international system and his negative attitude towards containment policy, also stating political instability in Ukraine

to be a threat to Russian security.¹³ This reveals different understandings regarding European security between Russia, Europe and the U.S.

Officials from the Republic of Tatarstan participated in convincing the local Crimean Tatar population to accept living under Russian control¹⁴. As a result of the crisis, in terms of geopolitics, Russia took control over a territory rich in cultural history, diversity, scenic nature and natural resources, at relatively low cost to itself. The incorporation of Crimea gives Russia control over both more coastal territory and a larger maritime zone. The Crimean secession from Ukraine has shaken the balance of power and changed the dynamics of international politics in the region. If Russia pursues military build-up on the peninsula – namely, its air and naval forces – this would lead to a sort of arms race between the coastal countries on the Black Sea.

John Mearsheimer, known for his offensive neorealism works, explains Russian behaviour as follows: “Because there is no world government to protect states from one another, major powers are sensitive to threats — especially near their borders — and they sometimes act ruthlessly to address potential dangers. International law and human rights concerns take a back seat when vital security issues are at stake.”¹⁵ However, it still has not been demonstrated what exactly it was about Euromaidan that threatened Russian security and interests. Furthermore, if we sum up the consequences of the Ukrainian revolution, it becomes evident that Russia benefitted from it, as it was able to enlarge its territory and reinforce its geopolitical advantage in the Black Sea region.

5.3. Consequences of Crimean Separation

There is a double interpretation of the Crimean secession of 2014. The Russian official position calls the event an “incorporation” or “return”, whereas the West (including NATO, the EU and a number of UN members) calls it “annexation” or “occupation”.

Ukraine disagrees with the legitimacy of the referendum. Kyiv sees the organization of the plebiscite as contrary to the Ukrainian constitution. Moscow’s official position consists of pointing to the “Kosovo precedent” – that is, the declaration of independence of 2008 – as justification for its actions in Crimea. After victory in the Ukrainian presidential elections of May 2014, Petro Poroshenko declared that he would never

¹³ Speech of Russian President Vladimir Putin from 18 March 2014 to both chambers of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation in connection with the request for admission of the Crimean parliament into the Russian Federation, official website of the Kremlin, <http://www.kremlin.ru/news/20603>. Unofficial translation: <http://praguepost.com/eu-news/37854-full-text-of-putin-s-speech-on-crimea> (accessed on 30 March 2015).

¹⁴ Richat Sabitov, “Paradiplomatic Activity of Tatarstan during Ukrainian Crisis”, *Crimean Historical Review*, Kazan, No.1, 2014, pp. 68-77.

¹⁵ John Mearsheimer, “Getting Ukraine Wrong”, *NYT*, 13 March 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/14/opinion/getting-ukraine-wrong.html?_r=0

recognize the “illegitimate referendum and occupation of Crimea”.¹⁶ One year later, at a press conference held ahead of a G7 summit, Poroshenko reiterated his vow to “retake Crimea”.¹⁷ The loss of Crimea made Russia’s former “brother” hostile towards Moscow. Having lost control over part of its territory and following the parliamentary elections in October 2014, the new Ukrainian government made joining NATO a priority. On 23 December 2014, the Ukrainian parliament renounced Ukraine’s non-aligned status.

The Crimean crisis negatively affected Russia’s political and economic relations with NATO and the West. In March 2014, the NATO Secretary General condemned Russia’s move to incorporate Crimea into the Russian Federation, while in April, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization froze its relations with Russia. The UN General Assembly affirmed its commitment to the territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and rejected the validity of the 2014 Crimean referendum. In response to Russian moves in Ukraine, the US, EU and several European countries, as well as Canada, Japan and Australia, imposed sanctions against the Russian Federation. Russia, in turn, applied import bans which, together with Western sanctions, led to the collapse of the ruble in 2014.

Conclusions

The freeze in relations between Russia and NATO occurred firstly, within the context of the formal transfer of political power in Russian domestic policy from one president to another, and secondly, as the aspirations of two former Soviet republics, Georgia and Ukraine, to join the European Union and NATO started taking shape.

As events and official declarations show, the Crimean separation was possible due to the political instability of the central authorities in Kyiv and the resignation of Yanukovich, in connection with military power, paramilitaries and the local pro-Russian population already present on the peninsula. The Crimean crisis led to a change of borders, which in turn created a complicated political issue for decades to come in the region. Russia acts as a classic realist state, cynically protecting its interests; Ukraine is weakened, whereas Russia has secured its geopolitical position on its southern maritime border.

¹⁶ *Euronews*, 25 May 2014, <http://www.euronews.com/2014/05/25/ukraine-poroshenko-claims-presidency-will-never-recognise-crimea-referendum/>

¹⁷ *RFE/RL*, 5 June 2015, <http://www.rferl.org/content/poroshenko-ukraine-will-do-everything-retake-crimea/27055170.html>

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Abstract

The paper aims to analyse Russian foreign policy towards Ukraine during Euromaidan in the context of Russia-NATO and Russia-Ukraine relations. The article explores Russia’s attitude regarding the political instability in Ukraine in 2013-2014, as well as in what manner and to what extent it took advantage of this situation in terms of modifying Crimea’s status.

Keywords: foreign policy, national interests, European security, Ukraine, Russia

Using Public Space in Kharkiv by Protesters in 2013-2014

DENYS KUTSENKO

Pultusk Academy of Humanities

Public Spaces in Post-Soviet Cities

The space of post-Soviet city centres used by protesters was especially analysed by Ukrainian and Russian scholars after the Orange Revolution, Euromaidan and Russian anti-election protests in 2011-2012. There were also works devoted to the Tahrir Square (Cairo, Egypt)¹ and Taksim Square (Istanbul, Turkey)², which appeared after Egyptian Revolution of 2011 and wave of demonstration and civil unrest in Istanbul in 2013. After protests in Russia and Ukraine city movements like coffee urbanism or hipster urbanism became more active and ideas of new urbanism spread with new strength. This brought about the creation of street design standards in Moscow by the Strelka Institute,³ and attempts by the Kyiv authorities to include the term “public space”⁴ into the city’s bylaws. After Euromaidan, city movements and urban social movements started to speak out about their rights to city and public spaces, often connected with such organizations as Strelka in Russia and CanAction in Ukraine. Maidan as a space of protest was analysed by Kateryna Churikova.⁵ Public spaces in Russia after the protests of 2011-2012 have been analysed by Anna Zhelnina⁶. This article is devoted to the Kharkiv public space and how it was utilised by protesters in 2013-2014. The term ‘public place’ here is understood to be accessible open space, access to which is not limited by various social or physical barriers.⁷

¹ Asef Bayat, *Life as Politics. How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*, Amsterdam, 2010

² İlay Romain Örs, Alessandro Ferrara, Volker Kaul, David Rasmussen, “Genie in the bottle Gezi Park, Taksim Square, and the realignment of democracy and space in Turkey”, *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, Vol 40, Issue 4-5, pp. 489 - 498

³ How it works: The new standard of street design in Moscow, accessed 28 August 2016 <http://strelka.com/en/magazine/2016/04/12/new-standart>

⁴ Юридичне оформлення публічного простору Києва дасть містянам важелі впливу на його естетичний вигляд – Олександр Резніков, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://uacrisis.org/ua/42561-oleksij-reznikov>

⁵ К. Чурікова, Майдан як простір протесту, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://old.korydor.in.ua/spectema/33-yevromaidan/1581-maidan-iaak-prostir-protestu>

⁶ A.A. Zhelnina, “Hanging out”, *Creativity, and Right to the City: Urban Public Space in Russia Before and After the Protest Wave of 2011-12*, *Stasis*, 2014, No. 1, pp. 228-259

⁷ A.A. Zhelnina, Learning to use the public space”: perception of the urban spaces in the post-Soviet context, RC 21 Conference “The Struggle to Belong. Dealing with diversity in 21st century urban settings”/ Amsterdam, 7-9 July 2011.

Public spaces in Soviet cities were supposed to be places of collective action organised by the authorities. Uncontrolled gatherings of people in central open spaces were undesirable, and the everyday social interactions of residents were pushed into the private domain, including such places as kitchens, garages and backyards.⁸ These characteristics are common to all authoritarian regimes, not only to Soviet cities. Now, post-Soviet public spaces often face other kinds of problems, such as: extreme privatisation, exclusion of citizens from decision making regarding urban space, and control of spaces by businesses together with the authorities.⁹

When Euromaidan started in Kyiv, Kharkivians were not active – that night, only ten individuals went to the Office of Regional Administration and spent the night there.¹⁰ However, when the first large meeting was held in Kyiv, about one thousand people gathered in front of the Shevchenko monument in the centre of Kharkiv.¹¹

The Unintended “Ukrainisation” of Kharkiv

The Kharkiv authorities possess their own specificity, and are often associated with pro-Russian movements and pro-Russian sympathies. Few can argue that current Mayor Gennadiy Kernes and Head of the Regional Administration in 2010-2014 Mykhaylo Dobkin are Ukrainian patriots,¹² but during the time they headed the city and oblast of Kharkiv the central part of the second Ukrainian capital was partly “Ukrainianised”, which had an effect on manifestations in Kharkiv in 2014-2015.

The central part of Kharkiv was partly Ukrainianised between 2005 and 2015, when Mykhailo Dobkin and Gennadiy Kernes were in power.¹³ First, a massive national flag was raised in Pravda Street in 2010.¹⁴ After that, the monument in honour of the proclamation of Soviet Power in Ukraine¹⁵ (V.I. Agibalov, M.F. Ovsyankin, unveiled in 1975) was removed from Constitution Square. The Kharkiv city authorities decided to create a square with some monuments dedicated to Soviet Ukraine in the less central

⁸ Ibidem

⁹ The main square of Kharkiv – Svobody Square, is now under reconstruction, but the plan for this reconstruction was passed by city authorities without public consultations, as well as for a new luxury hotel built there in 2011, just before Euro 2012, Обнародован проект реконструкции сквера на площади Свободы, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.objectiv.tv/120816/131483.html>

¹⁰ Д. Неймырок. Євромайдан – начало, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.mediaport.ua/evromaydan>

¹¹ Т. Федоркова, Євромайдан в Харькове, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.mediaport.ua/evromaydan-v-harkove-obnovlyayetsya>

¹² Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine, Democratization, Corruption*, Santa Barbara, 2015, p. 102

¹³ Кутенко Д.А., Українізація простору середмістя Харькова в 2006-2015 рр., in: Наука і вища освіта : тези доповідей XXIV Міжнар. наук. конф. студентів і молодих учених, Zaporizhzhya, 2016, ed. Ogarenko M.W., pp. 237-238

¹⁴ У Харькові встановлено найвищий флапшток для українського прапора, accessed 28 August 2016 <http://for-ua.com/article/428746>

¹⁵ Monument in Honour of the Proclamation of Soviet Power in Ukraine, Kharkiv, 1980

KhTZ district.¹⁶ Before that, on 3 July 2012, the monument for the 10th anniversary of Ukrainian independence (Oleksandr Ridny, 2001) was demolished by decision of the city council.¹⁷ It was unveiled in 2001, but the site where it stood was difficult to get to because of the wide boulevard in Pavlivska Square. Whether Kharkivians regarded it as a Ukrainian symbol is hard to say, but most manifestations did not use this monument as a marker of identity. The city council had decided to overhaul Pavlivska Square,¹⁸ but the monument prevented this, so the city authorities decided to build a new monument in Constitution Square. A competition was announced and it was won by Oleksandr Ridny.¹⁹ Thus, the monument to the anniversary of Ukrainian independence was pulled down. The monument in honour of the proclamation of Soviet Power in Ukraine was also pulled down, while in its place, Yanukovych unveiled a new monument to Ukrainian independence in 2012.²⁰

Today there is a monument to the goddess Nike, in honour of independent “Flying Ukraine”. Interestingly, “Glory to Ukraine” is written at the base of the monument. In 2013, this slogan was unknown in Kharkiv and was not associated with the Ukrainian nationalist movement. But thanks to this motto, the monument became an attraction for protesters. They also wanted to protest here because of the large space in front of the monument (30,563 m²). The second attraction for pro-Ukrainian activists is the Taras Shevchenko monument (M. Manizer²¹, 1935), the traditional place for pro-Ukrainian manifestations.²² When Euromaidan started, protesters began to travel between these two monuments. When they did, Sumska Street – the main street in Kharkiv – was closed, so many people noticed these protesters. A very important factor is that Constitution Square was renovated in the Soviet tradition; when there is an empty space, even without trees, there is also an anomalous wide street in front of the monument, so the square can hold many people – more than the square in front of the Shevchenko’s monument, but less than Svoboda Square.

¹⁶ KhTZ area – the district in the east of Kharkiv, built in 1930, when the tractor plant was located there. This district is an example of Soviet socialist city planning, Погрудя героїв-комсомольців перенесуть до скверу Радянської України, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://otb.com.ua/programs/inform-analit/novyny/pohruddja-herojiv-komsomolciv-perenesut-do-skveru-radjanskoji-ukrajiny.html>

¹⁷ У Харкові знесли пам’ятник незалежності України, accessed 28 August 2016, http://gazeta.ua/articles/life/_u-harkovi-znesli-pamyatnik-nezalezhnosti-ukrayini/443841

¹⁸ Реконструкція площиди Павловской: новая траектория движения трамваев, пешеходная часть, парковки, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://izvestia.kharkov.ua/tv-proekty/hi/1940/1201456.html>

¹⁹ А. Войццикий, Ю. Тарасова, На площади Конституции установят памятник греческой богине Нике (дополнено), accessed 28 August 2016, http://www.sq.com.ua/rus/news/obschestvo/25.06.2011/na_ploschadi_konstitucii_ustanovuyat_pamyatnik_grecheskoi_bogini_niki/

²⁰ Янукович у Харкові відкрив пам’ятник незалежності російською, accessed 28 August 2016, <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2012/08/22/6971257/>

²¹ А. Лейбфрейд, В. Реусов, А. Тинц, Харьков. Архитектура, памятники, новостройки, 1985, pp. 51-52

²² Language, Maidan and protests connected with closing the TBi TV station were held here. В Харькове поддержали ТБі, несмотря на запрет, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://kharkov.comments.ua/news/2012/09/08/143446.html>

If we compare public spaces in Kyiv, Berlin, Warsaw, Moscow and Kharkiv, we see that the area of Kharkiv's city centre and the length of its representative axis (between the Ukrainian flag and the Nike monument, or even Heavenly Hundred Square) are comparable with these four cities.²³ As in Warsaw, Kyiv, Berlin and Moscow, the central part of Kharkiv was reconstructed in the Soviet period in the 1930s, or the 1950s as in Kyiv, Warsaw and Berlin. Because it was the capital of the Soviet Republic of Ukraine, it required a large space for manifestations and demonstrations. We can agree with Cherkes that the consolidation of the totalitarian regime, and the social identities connected with it and city centre planning, fail to conform to any regularity. Firstly, the regime tried to locate its representative public spaces in historical city centres, destroying national identity. This is confirmed by the fact that the main site of Soviet manifestations in Kharkiv was Sumska Street, with its pre-revolutionary buildings, and Constitution Square (Mykolayiska Square, Teveleva Square, Soviet Ukraine Square). The area of new public spaces is two-three times more than it was before reconstruction. Kharkiv is a good example, because building Svoboda Square enlarged the central city space more than two times over. According to plans from the 1930s, Kharkiv city centre had to be destroyed to build a new city centre.²⁴ Thirdly, after the regime failed, and in the process of consolidating the new post-totalitarian national identity, the city population treated city space in a new way, and its area decreased (Kharkiv cannot prove Cherkes' postulate, but we cannot say that this happened due to weak consolidation of national identity in Kharkiv).

Table 1.Area of central public space (m²)

City	Area of public space
Berlin	367,200
Warsaw	229,000
Kyiv	137,200
Moscow	232,800
Kharkiv	173,766 ²⁵

This was a mistake in the logic of the city authorities, as they were not interested in pro-Ukrainian manifestations near city hall, especially since they were members of the Party of Regions. But that mistake seemed to be part of their de-Sovietisation strategy. The square's original purpose was altered and it became a place for anti-regime manifestation – from a place where people in the Soviet Union demonstrated loyalty,²⁶ to a place where people demonstrated their opposition to those in power.

²³ Б.С. Черкес, *Національна ідентичність в архітектурі міста*, Lviv, 2008, pp. 210-211

²⁴ А.М. Касьянов, *Реконструкция центра Харькова*, *Архитектура СССР 1934*, №, 2 pp. 52-53

²⁵ Data from Google Earth, <https://support.google.com/earth/answer/148134?hl=en>

²⁶ *Вісті ВУЦВК*, No 257 (3358), 10 November 1931

Table 2.
Length of the main representative axes (m)

City	Length of the main representative axes
Berlin	2550
Warsaw	2100
Kyiv	1800
Moscow	2000 ²⁷
Kharkiv	1800 (between Svoboda Square and the Monument to the Ukrainian Independence) 3850 (between the Ukrainian flag and Heavenly Hundred Square)

Traditionally, demonstrations on 1 May and 7 November started at Constitution Square (Teveleva Square, Soviet Ukraine Square) and finished at Svoboda Square (Dzerzhinsky Square). But now, manifestations proceeded in a different direction. Thanks to the Kharkiv city authorities, protesters received two monuments (symbols) – the third became the monument to the glory of Ukrainian sovereignty (built in 1991, renovated in 2012). Protesters could also move between these symbols, but they did not, because there were meetings in front of the Lenin monument.²⁸ The other proof of the de-Sovietisation strategy of the city authorities is the destruction of the “Alley of Komsomol Heroes” in front of the Kharkiv Opera.²⁹ The Ukrainian Orthodox church of the Moscow Patriarchate was built there,³⁰ but in the Ukrainian style.³¹ This church is neither a Ukrainian symbol, nor a Soviet symbol. In this way, pro-Russian/pro-Soviet/anti-Maidan protesters lost their “markers” in the city. Their last remaining marker was the Lenin monument (Oliynyk, Vronskii, 1963). For this reason, they attempted to protect it and marched with a protest to the regional administration, passing city hall, the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland and the Consulate General of the Russian Federation, without travelling along the main street.³² Thus, the second thesis is that pro-Russian citizens lost their symbols in the centre of Kharkiv. They no longer have a place to gather. But not because of de-communisation laws,³³ but because of the Kharkiv authorities’ actions and decisions.

²⁷ Черкес, p. 207-211

²⁸ А. Лейбфрейд, p. 26

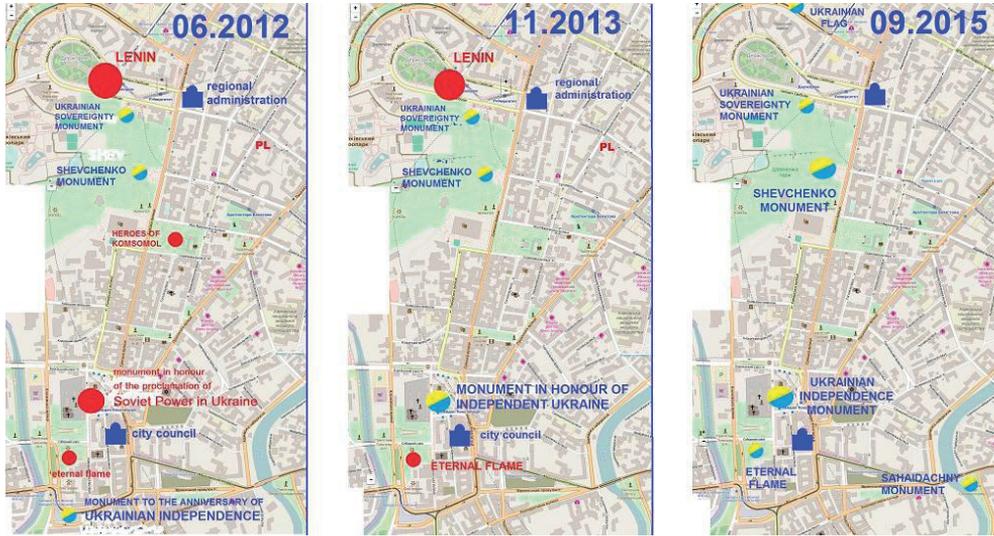
²⁹ А. Лейбфрейд, p. 50

³⁰ Actually, here, in 1930, the new Kharkiv Opera was projected by the Vesnin brothers, thought it wasn't entirely built according to the original plans in the 1930s, but only in the 1980s, when the new opera was built from the other side of Sumska Street. More in: С.О. Хан-Магомедов. 100 шедевров советского архитектурного авангарда, in М. Вильковский, Социология архитектуры, Moscow, 2010

³¹ Этот храм будет однозначно слобожанским, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://timeua.info/post/kharkov/etot-hram-budet-odnoznachno-slobozhanskim-01118.html>

³² Т. Федорокова, И. Вареница, Митинг у горсовета. Кернес пообщался с протестующими, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.mediaport.ua/miting-u-gorsoveta-kernes-poobshchalsya-s-protestuyushchimi>

³³ De-communisation laws were passed by the Ukrainian Parliament on 9 April 2015, and signed by the president on 15 May 2015, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-32267075>



Map 1. Monuments in Kharkiv city centre, 2012-2015³⁴

They lost Lenin because of Euromaidan³⁵, because of the Russian invasion and because of a struggle between the mayor of the city, the head of the regional administration and the minister of internal affairs.³⁶ Also, the monument dedicated to those who fought for Soviet power (Gurova, 1957)³⁷ was repurposed by protesters to honour those who fought for Ukraine. In fact, there is also a tomb, but most Kharkiv citizens do not know of its existence, so such macabre practices do not face resistance from fellow Kharkivians, despite statements from the deputy mayor to the contrary.³⁸

And there is a paradox, that two places of (Soviet) memory by Pier Nora,³⁹ specifically connected with Soviet history – the Soviet monument where Soviet Ukraine was proclaimed (House of Nobility Assembly – Central Executive Committee) and the Tomb of Bolsheviks – became Ukrainian places of memory.

It is hard to say whether anti-Maidan and pro-Russian protesters were the same people, but they often used Soviet symbols, so this article considers them as one group. We can, however, imagine that there were people who did not accept Euromaidan, but accepted a pro-Ukrainian position after the Russian invasion to Crimea, but this demands more sociological data, and is not the object of this research.

³⁴ Map based on: <http://streets-kharkiv.info/kharkov-podrobnaya-karta-goroda-openstreetmap>

³⁵ Памятник Ленину в Харькове. Попытка штурма, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.mediaport.ua/pamyatnik-leninu-v-harkove-popytka-shturma>

³⁶ Т. Федоркова, Обманули, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.mediaport.ua/obmanuli-0>

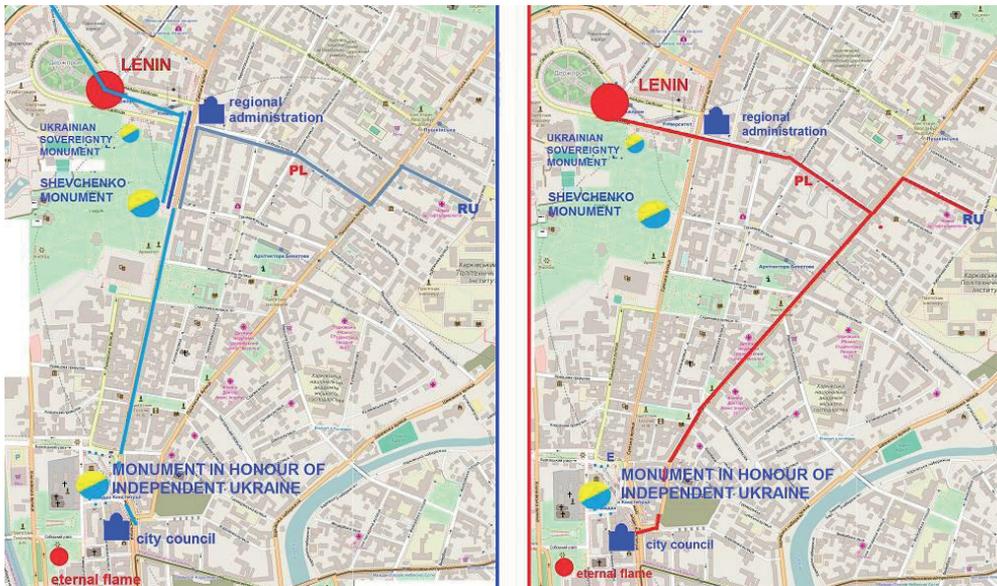
³⁷ А. Лейбфрейд р 35

³⁸ Т. Федоркова в сквере «Вечный огонь» дважды раскрасили памятник, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.mediaport.ua/v-skvere-vechnyy-ogon-dvazhdy-raskrasili-pamyatnik>

³⁹ Пьер Нора, Проблематика мест памяти, Sankt Petersburg, 1999, p. 17

Using Kharkiv City Centre by Protesters in 2014-2015

As was previously mentioned, pro-Ukrainian protesters received new identity markers in Kharkiv city centre and when Euromaidan started, they utilised them. Map 1 shows the main routes of Euromaidan and anti-Maidan protesters. As demonstrated, Sumska Street was mainly used by Euromaidan (and starting in March by pro-Ukrainian) activists because of the two main Ukrainian markers, while other streets (Ivanova, Pushkinska) were used by anti-Maidan and (after 22 March 2014) by pro-Russian protesters.



Map 2. Paths of pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian protesters

For example, in March 2014, there were three pro-Ukrainian demonstrations between the Shevchenko monument and Constitution Square (as well as meetings under the Shevchenko monument and in front of the Russian consulate and city council⁴⁰). For these demonstrations, the local authorities blocked Sumska Street, so they were noticed by inactive Kharkivians. Also in March (the month Crimea was annexed), there were four demonstrations by pro-Russian protesters between the buildings of the Regional Administration, Polish consulate and Russian consulate.

⁴⁰ Г. Пырлик, Пикет у Генконсульства РФ: «О, Пу, война не нужна никому» accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.mediaport.ua/piket-u-genkonsulstva-rf-o-pu-voyna-ne-nuzhna-nikomu>

Using Kharkiv's Main Square

The second case worthy of mention is Svoboda Square. This square was planned as a place for mass Soviet meetings, parades and demonstrations, and as the administrative centre of the Soviet Republic of Ukraine. For this reason, it is enormous. It is a good place for mass protests like in Kyiv or Kharkiv in 2004, when the Orange Revolution took place. Both pro-Yushchenko and pro-Yanukovych protesters organised meetings on Svoboda Square, because only it could contain large numbers of people (sometimes close to 80,000), while other squares in the city centre went unused.⁴¹ As Owen Hatherley states, most central Soviet and Soviet-satellites squares were copies of Palace Square in St Petersburg, but the central square in Kharkiv was intended to be the “dream of a new world, when the Soviet Union was to become the new America.”⁴² The capital city of Ukraine moved to Kyiv in 1934, so Kharkiv was left with its masterpieces of constructivism (sometimes rebuilt in the Stalinist “imperial style”), with no idea of what to do with these buildings and squares. Svoboda Square was not used by protesters in 2013-2014, probably because there were not enough active Euromaidan supporters in Kharkiv to fill the square, and these activists had other places to demonstrate.⁴³ There is a third thesis, that Soviet squares can be used by protesters, as in Moscow, Kyiv, and Warsaw, but they are poorly constructed for everyday city life. City authorities often want to commercialise these spaces, which can provoke exclusion, but this is hard to realise because Soviet squares were built with a different set of purposes in mind, and they are often unfit to serve as commercial spaces. For example, Maidan (Independence Square) in Kyiv stands on top of an underground mall (which houses luxury stores that excludes some people⁴⁴). However, Constitution Square⁴⁵ in Warsaw (also a post-socialist space) – like Svoboda Square in Kharkiv – is empty or used for parking. Maidan in Kyiv, Constitution Square in Kharkiv and Parade Square in Warsaw are good places for protests because:

⁴¹ С. Шекера, Сторонники Ющенко с площади Свободы уходить не собираются, accessed 28 August 2016, http://www.mediaport.ua/news/city/19108/storonniki_yuschenko_s_ploschadi_svbobody_uhodit_ne_sobirayutsya

⁴² Оуэн Хатерли, На площади. В поисках общественных пространств постсоветского города, Стрелка, 2012

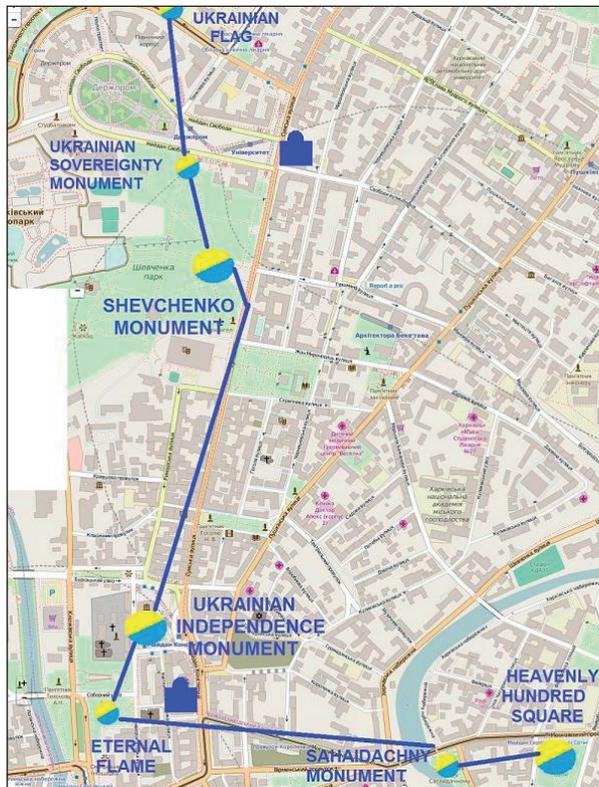
⁴³ Svobody Square was fenced-off for a period in 2013-2014 because of a flu epidemic, Т. Федоркова, «Свободу площади Свободы». В Харькове прошёл флешмоб, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.mediaport.ua/svobodu-ploschadi-svobody-v-harkove-proshyol-fleshmob>

⁴⁴ After Euromaidan, the main architect of Kyiv suggested building a parking lot in place of the underground mall. Подземный ТЦ «Глобус» на Майдане предложили превратить в паркинг, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://vesti-ukr.com/kyiv/42187-podzemnyj-tc-globus-na-majdane-predlozhili-prevratit-v-parking>. Maidan in Kyiv is a good example, because before 2001, it was rather empty and it began to be renovated when people started gathering for demonstrations against Kuchma.

⁴⁵ Constitution Square in Warsaw was used as a place for KOD demonstrations on 4 June 2015, J. Nizinkiewicz, 4 czerwca marsz KOD dopiero po pracy, accessed 28 August 2016, <http://www.rp.pl/Komitet-Obrony-Demokracji/305189866-4-czerwca-marsz-KOD-dopiero-po-pracy.html#ap-1>

1. People can easily get there;
2. These squares have historical and symbolic significance;
3. They are close to mass transportation network/hubs;
4. They are surrounded by streets that can allow people to flee from police⁴⁶.

Svoboda Square does not meet these features. Euromaidan in Kyiv was held amongst Soviet decoration (all buildings in the Maidan were built after the Second World War, creating symbolic tension between protesters and Soviet architecture), but most events in Kharkiv Euromaidan took place amidst Russian Imperial architecture; the difference between the Kyiv and Kharkiv protests. Kharkivians mostly supported soft de-communisation provided by the local authorities, but they are strongly against what is now being realised after the signing of de-communisation laws. Recently, only 24.7% answered “yes” with regard to a question about renaming the city’s streets.⁴⁷



Map 3. Kharkiv central axis

⁴⁶ Asef Bayat, *Life as Politics. How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*, Amsterdam, 2010, pp. 167-168

⁴⁷ А. Грищенко, Харьковчане не хотят переименовывать улицы: экспресс-опрос, accessed 28 August 2016, http://www.sq.com.ua/rus/news/obschestvo/10.09.2015/harkovchane_ne_hotyat_pereimenovyvat_ulicy_ekspress_opros/

Conclusions

Thus, we can conclude that thanks to the Kharkiv authorities, the city's space was de-sovietised before Euromaidan, and was used by protesters, thus further continuing de-sovietisation. Today Kharkiv, like Kyiv, possesses a large symbolic space (central axes) containing Ukrainian symbols, as interpreted by the citizens of the city. For everyday practices (not for revolutions) the city squares of Kharkiv are inconvenient (they have lost their Soviet symbols and symbolism, but they are still Soviet and empty). It is hard to rethink Soviet spaces and find ways of renovating them, though this becomes impossible without public consultations, focus groups, and without huge investments. The Kharkiv authorities are not yet ready for this. The reconstruction of Moscow's streets and squares is now taking place. This is an interesting case for post-Soviet spaces – how to renovate and modernise streets and squares still currently utilising Soviet standards. As well, new standards for Moscow streets designed and set by the Strelka Insititue can be a good example for research and implementation in other post-Soviet space cities.



Abstract

This article is devoted to the transformation of public space in the centre of Kharkiv, the largest city in Eastern Ukraine and the first capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. The central part of Kharkiv includes three distinct parts: Russian Imperial, Soviet and New Ukrainian. These parts have changed over the last twenty-five years and now they are utilised in the everyday lives of citizens, as well as by protesters, such as from November 2013 to May 2014. Kharkiv city centre was partly “Ukrainianized” during the 2005-2014 period, so there are some Ukrainian markers and defining routs for “pro-Ukrainian” protesters and demonstrators. Thus, their protest actions were perhaps more evident to their fellow citizens and this may have been a factor (admittedly minor) as to why Kharkiv did not became a focal point of any of the so-called “People’s Republics”. It is also interesting to observe how local activists tried to change Soviet markers in the city into Ukrainian markers, and how they have impacted the “toponymic” Cold war between regional and city authorities, especially after the singing of de-communisation laws by the President of Ukraine.

Keywords: Ukraine, Kharkiv, public space, Euromaidan

CONTRIBUTORS

Roman Bäcker is a Professor, lawyer, publicist, political scientist, historian and, since 2010, president of the Polish Political Science Association. From 2009 to 2016, Dean of the Faculty of Political Sciences and International Studies at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. He is also the author of seven books and more than one hundred articles, mainly concerning Russia and political theory.



Grażyna Drzazga (MA Lublin and York) received her PhD in Cognitive Science of Language from McMaster University. She is currently a lecturer at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. Her main areas of interest include translation studies, cognitive aspects of grammatical gender, sociolinguistics (hate speech and language used in reference to minorities), instructional discourse of non-native English speakers, negotiation of identity of international students, English as a medium of instruction, and cross-cultural communication.



Jacek Kurczewski – Polish sociologist and professor specialising in sociology and anthropology of custom and law. He is head of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of Customs and Law at the Institute of Applied Social Sciences of the University of Warsaw (ISNS). During the period of the People's Republic of Poland, he was an adviser to Solidarity, and from 1987, a member of the editing board of *Res Publica*. He also took part in the Polish Round Table Talks. In 1991-1993, he served as MP and Deputy Marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland. He continues to work with the Stefan Batory Foundation and is a member of the Polish Helsinki Committee. He has sat on the Council of the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS). From 2014 until 2015, he was an adviser to the secretary of state of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland (KPRM). In 2007, he was awarded the Officer's Cross of the Order of *Polonia Restituta*.



Denys Kutsenko is a participant in doctoral seminars at the Faculty of Political Science, Pultusk Academy of Humanities. His research interests include identities of Eastern Ukraine, city identities, urban movements, aspects of using public space. Currently he is working on his PhD thesis about identity of Kharkiv city dwellers and identity policies of Kharkiv local authorities in 2010-2015. He also completed a Master's degree in mathematics at V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University and degree in political science at Pultusk Academy of Humanities.



Vakhtang Maisaia holds a Ph.D. in Political Science and a Master's Degree in Public Administration. He is an USA alumni and chairman of the Georgian Institute for Geostrategic and Euro-Atlantic Integration Studies. He is a member of the Independent Expert's Club of Georgia. He was adviser to the President of Georgia on Caucasus Regional Security Affairs (1997-1999), main advisor to the head of the Military Intelligence Department of the Georgian Ministry of Defense (1999-2003), and councillor to the Georgian Diplomatic Mission at NATO HQ (2004-2008). Currently he is Associate Professor and head of the MA program on international security studies at Caucasus International University (CIU). He is a visiting professor at Tbilisi State University, as well as at International Black Sea University (IBSU), and deputy director of the IBSU Black Sea Region Geopolitical Research Center. He is also Adjunct Professor at Lodz University in Poland. He is the author of six monographs (two in English) and 200 academic and scientific articles.



Kateryna Nasonova received her Doctorate of Philosophy in Cultural Studies in 2010 (Theory and History of Culture). She graduated Cultural Studies at the Kharkov State Academy of Culture in 2007. From 2010-2015, she was Senior Lecturer in the Department of Culture and Media Communications at Kharkov State Academy of Culture. In 2015, she participated in the JANUS post-doctorate project, part of the ERASMUS MUNDUS program. In 2015-2016, she was a recipient of the Polish Government Scholarship Program for Young Scientists. Her research interests include virtual social networks; problem of individual and group identity; globalization and traditional Slavic culture; the phenomenon of authorship in culture; gender representation in the media space; casual culture of European city and modern urban subculture.



Rudolf Pikhaja, Russian professor, historian, archivist, the former director of the State Archive of the Russian Federation. On 14 October 1992 year as a special envoy of the President of Russia Boris Yeltsin handed the President of Poland Lech Walesa copies of documents concerning the Katyn massacre stored in the so-called “special folder”. These included a copy of the so-called *Katyn decision*, and *Shelepin notes* - the resolution of the Political Bureau of the CPSU(b) form 5 March 1940 ordering the killing of Polish prisoners of war and political prisoners. Author, *inter alia*, the academic synthesis of the history of the apparatus of power in the Soviet Union, the publication entitled ‘Советский союз. История власти’. 1945-1991, 2000, 684 pp. also published in Poland.



Oksana Ruzha is a researcher at the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Director of the Economic Program of Daugavpils University at the Faculty of Social Sciences. She received her PhD (2013) and MA (2008) degree in Economics, as well as her BA (2005) in Financial and Bookkeeping Administration. She is the author and co-author of more than one hundred scientific publications. Her current research interests are focused on sustainability development problems of the real estate market and on cross border cooperation of small and medium enterprises. She is an expert at the Latvian Council of Sciences of Economics. She has participated in various research projects for the Ministry of Education, including the Comenius Project; part of the Lifelong Learning Programme.



Richat Sabitov is a visiting lecturer in Paris, Bucharest and Kazan. Some of his teaching disciplines include: Theory of International Relations, Theory of Political Science, International Conflicts, Negotiations and Geopolitics. He received his Master’s degree in Political Science from the Université Panthéon-Assas in Paris. He completed his PhD thesis in Political Science at the Sorbonne. It was published by the Varenne Foundation and officially recognize by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Based in France, his main areas of research cover domestic and foreign policy, federalism and energy security in Europe and the post-Soviet space. He is a member of a number of political science associations in France and Belgium, as well as an active participant at academic conferences all over Europe. Sabitov’s most recent article on language policies was published by Peter Lang Academic Publishing Group.



Magda Stroińska (MA Warsaw, PhD Edinburgh) is Professor of German and Linguistics at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Her major areas of research include sociolinguistics and cross-cultural pragmatics, in particular cultural stereotyping, theory

of translation, language and politics, propaganda, the issues of identity in exile, aging and bilingualism. More recent areas of interest and research focus on language and psychological trauma. She has co-edited and edited a number of books, including: on stereotypes with Martin Loeschmann (1998, Peter Lang), on linguistic representations of culture (2001, Berghahn Publishers), on exile, language and identity (with Vikki Cecchetto, 2003, Peter Lang), on international classrooms (2006, Peter Lang), and on narratives of trauma (with Vikki Cecchetto and Kate Szymanski, Peter Lang 2014). She also translated Victor Klemperer's book on language of the Third Reich (*Lingua Tertii Imperii*, Polish Publishing Fund in Toronto, 1993) into Polish. She is currently studying the phenomenon of hate speech in totalitarian regimes, and its effects in post-communist Eastern Europe and beyond.



Vladislav Volkov received his PhD in Philosophy (1989) and a Doctorate in Sociology (1986) from Urals State University (Yekaterinburg, Russian Federation). Since 1992, he is Senior Researcher at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the University of Latvia. He is chief editor of the interdisciplinary scientific journal "Ethnicity", and a member of the board of the scientific journal "Regional Review". He has published over one hundred scientific publications, including four monographs and two textbooks. Since 2009, he is the head of the Latvian Council of Science project: "The interconnection of individual and collective identities of ethnic groups in Latvia as a factor of the development of civil society".



Kazimierz Wóycicki – PhD, Polish historian and journalist. In the communist times, he cooperated with democratic opposition circles and was an editor and publicist in underground press and an active member of the Club of Catholic Intelligentsia (KIK). He was the director of the Polish Institute in Düsseldorf and Leipzig in 1996-1999 and 2002-2005. He was the director of Szczecin branch of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance. He teaches at the Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw. His scientific interests and publications are concentrated on Central Europe and Germany.