

Oleksiy Kandyuk

Ukraine

THE U.S. IMPACT OVER THE FORMATION OF FOREIGN POLICY (USING THE POLISH EXPERIENCE IN UKRAINE)

Summary:

Today the Post-Soviet states are experiencing a very complex and important period of their political history. The majority of these states are on a certain stage of final transformation: cutting off geopolitical forms of the Soviet period and refocusing on one or another form of regional or global integration. A very similar situation took place in the Central and Eastern Europe at the end of the 20th century. In both cases the impact of foreign actors, primarily the United Europe and the USA, whose policy mainly formed further paradigm of development in these regions, was of paramount importance. Drawing such parallels between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe 25-30 years ago and the Post-Soviet countries today, between Ukraine and Poland as locomotives of the respective regions, a comparative investigation of the American factor in the formation of foreign policy of the two states becomes exceedingly interesting. Also, potential possibilities of implementing the Polish experience in Ukraine are extremely topical on Ukraine's way toward its new geopolitical identity.

Keywords:

American foreign policy, European integration, Central and Eastern Europe transformation, post-soviet space

Introduction

Today the region, which is usually called the “Post-Soviet space”, comprising the independent states that have appeared after the collapse of the USSR, are undergoing an overly complex and important period of their political history. The majority of these states are on a certain stage of final cutting off geopolitical forms of the Soviet period and refocusing on one or another form of regional or global integration. In practice it means the wreckage of projects-simulacrum aimed at the imitation of the USSR (the Commonwealth of Inde-

pendent States, Eurasian Union, etc.) and the loss of a major part of its geopolitical influence in Eurasia by Russia.

Certainly, such broad-scale political perturbations are attended by social, economic, and regrettably even military disruptions. However, despite the complex and shaky situation in the region, it is now understandable that these processes are irreversible.

A very similar situation was observed in the Central and Eastern Europe at the end of the 20th century. Inspired by the collapse of the socialist camp, countries of Central and Eastern Europe determined their new foreign policy vector. For the majority of them it was European integration.

In both cases the impact of foreign actors, primarily the United Europe and the USA, whose policies mainly formed further paradigm of development in these regions, was of paramount importance.

Drawing such parallels between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe 25-30 years ago and the Post-Soviet countries today, between Ukraine and Poland as locomotives of the regions, a comparative investigation of the American factor in the formation of foreign policy of the two states becomes exceedingly interesting. Also, potential possibilities of implementing the Polish experience in Ukraine are extremely topical on Ukraine's way toward its new geopolitical identity.

Methods and methodology

Complexity and multidimensionality of the issues preconditioned the theoretical and methodological basis of the research, which covered the objectivity principles, the multifactor nature and consistency. For the solution of the outlined tasks the systemic approach was used, which enabled an integral vision of significance of the U.S. policy in Ukraine and Poland. The method of political analysis and synthesis allowed analyzing specific events and phenomena in the system of the USA-Ukraine-Poland relations to differentiating their practical foreign policy significance on the regional and global level. The use of event analysis and the historical chronology method allowed studying the specifics of the U.S. impact on the policy of Poland and Ukraine from the evolutionary perspective.

Scientific novelty of the received results consists in an attempt to fulfil an integral comparative analysis of the shifts that have taken place in the foreign policy of Ukraine and Poland under the influence of the American factor. The article also contains an attempt to study the possibilities of using the Polish experience in the modern Ukrainian political realities through the prism of discourse analysis.

Experts noted some evidence of independent Polish foreign policy already in the 1950s - 1980s. In particular, its vision of the United States as a support provider, which was unacceptable to the Soviet Union. Small countries in the

first half of the 1960s both in the East and the West feel like hostages of super-power confrontation. Thus, the policy of Poland reflected their increasing desire of autonomy and cooperation beyond the coalition¹.

Analysis of the political discourse inside the country shows that Poland has made a right choice after the collapse of the USSR. Taking into account distant perspectives of European integration and weakness of WEU as a framework of European security, Warsaw has chosen NATO as a major acting European security institute. Such a choice became possible as a result of dissolution of the “Eastern threat” and was necessary to neutralize the “German factor” through co-membership with Germany in the same military and political alliance. Choosing the NATO as the main partner meant choosing the US as a strategic ally at the European and international arena.

It should be noted that priority was given to relations with the NATO and the United States despite the fact that in the 1990s Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Poland, believed that America and Europe simply shared leadership in the region and therefore the task of joining the NATO and the EU were complementary and did not presume any competition. But even then such Atlanticism in the system of objectives of the Polish foreign policy promised serious challenges to the future of Poland's membership in the European Union, and particularly in light of plans to establish an independent European security policy. Domination of the NATO and the U.S. in the foreign policy of Poland in the 1990s was formed due to several factors. First, Polish people considered cooperation with the United States as the most reliable security guarantee because of a very negative European historical experience of Poland: *U.S. holds a distinctive place in the Polish strategic policy. If we refer to history, the idealism of President Wilson, America's involvement in World War II, the Cold War announced to the communism, and the expansion of NATO – all this indicate the U.S. as an advocate of a free and democratic Poland (...) Europe on the contrary has a mostly unattractive historical image: It indulged Hitler, tolerated Stalin's regime, and in 1939 left Poland stand alone. The United States seems to be more trustworthy in terms of security (...)*². That is why Poland believed that the presence of the U.S. and the NATO in Europe should be an essential component of the European security. Poland expected to use the United States as the guarantor of its own security, not only in relations with Russia, but also in its relations with Germany. As an example of typical statements on this matter we can quote Krzysztof Pilawski, an editor of the “Trybuna” newspaper (Warsaw): *Poland is situated between Germany and Russia, and we have a sad*

¹ Vide: *Foreign Policy of the Republic of Poland in 1991, Sejm Expose by the Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski* Warsaw, June 27, 1991, [in:] *Poland's Security Policy. 1989-2000*, ed. R. Kuźniar, Warsaw 2001, pp. 567-569.

² Ł. Kulesa, *Missile Defense Dossier. The Polish Perspective*, “PISM Papers” 2007, <<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lng=en&id=141188>> (4.05.2015).

*experience. Historically, Poland lost its independence several times because of it. And all politicians, right and left, thought and still think that America is the main guarantor of security for Poland*³. Second, the primacy of the NATO in the Polish foreign policy was closely connected with the expectations that the United States will be interested to have additional support in the European Union represented not only by Poland but also by new EU members from the Central and Eastern Europe. Finally, we should take into account almost ten million of the Polish Diaspora in the United States.

The Pro-American foreign policy stance promised to cause problems in the relations between Poland and the EU. The European countries at last found the opportunity to increase its international weight significantly beside NATO, and even in spite of the «superpower» of the U.S. In the context of essential reformation of the international relations the dynamics of integration processes determined the role the United Europe would be able to play by the beginning of the 21st century. The European Union was given a chance to oppose the American concept of the “unipolar world” with its own concept of the “multipolar” world with the EU being one of the “centres of power”. Eastern expansion from the viewpoint of the European leaders was meant to contribute to the implementation of this chance. Thus, the position of Poland, as an ally and an “agent” of the U.S. in the region raised serious concerns in 1990s that echoed in 2007, when a discussion about the deployment of the U.S. missile defence had started in Poland. The opponents of the project in Europe described Poland as a country which is not totally European and wants to betray the unity of the continent in exchange for a promise of closer relations with Washington. The predominant commitment of Poland to the United States, especially in the aspect of European security, provoked speculation that the apparent Poland’s pro-Atlantic position undermines the unity of Europe and thus upsets the plan to transform Europe into one of the “centres of power” that would counterbalance the hegemonic aspirations of the United States.

However, if on the issues of security the USA were stronger, in terms of a possibility to satisfy the longstanding national ambitions in Europe priority was given to the European Union. The desire to join the EU, among other things, was caused by an ambitious goal of Poland to affect the formation of the eastern EU policy. Such an intention seemed quite reasonable – Poland’s eastern border became the longest eastern border of the EU. The new eastern neighbours of the European Union are the old neighbours of Poland, with whom it has been connected by centuries of rather complex relationships. Undoubtedly, Poland had every right to expect that its interests would be considered while forming the eastern policy of the expanded European Union.

³ K. Piławski, *Wypędzona historia*, “Tygodnik Przegląd”, 21.02.2011, <http://www.tygodnikprzeklad.pl/krzysztof-pilawski-wypedzona-historia/> (04.05.2015).

Poland cannot change its geopolitical position and this position alongside with its historical experience left no alternatives for the country in the early 1990s. Survival under the conditions of external and internal instability resulted in both the Atlantic and the European choice of Poland. This choice could really guarantee security and provide a unique opportunity to affect the relations between the West and Russia in a way that does not pose a threat to the interests of Poland. That choice has both challenges and opportunities.

Opportunities of Poland to ensure security and gain influence on the formation of the EU's eastern policy, however, depended on relations between the European Union and the United States, between Russia and the "old" EU member states. In this situation, especially in the case of short-sighted foreign policy decisions, Poland could face a very painful choice between the U.S. and Europe, and the relationship between the European Union and Russia in this case could be formed without consideration of interests of the Polish side.

After joining the NATO, basic directions of the Polish foreign policy, which had been determined back in the 1990s, have become even more evident: reliance on the NATO and the U.S., active support of further NATO expansion to the east, as well as ambitions of becoming a regional leader in the so-called "New Europe". Poland's accession to the EU coincided, on the one hand, with the emergence of new global threats, and the increase of global leadership and unilateralism of the United States, but on the other – with the aggravation of the transatlantic controversy, especially with regard to the U.S. military operations in Iraq. It seriously encumbered Warsaw's ability to maintain balance in the Euro-Atlantic relations, which was the basic principle of its foreign policy. The loss of U.S. interest and weakening of the NATO became Poland's biggest concern because of its inability to adapt to a new situation in the field of international security.

Strictly speaking, Poland's NATO-centrism, Atlanticism and pro-Americanism increased after the events of September 11, and even more – during the war in Iraq. But practically, during this period Poland's NATO-centrism did not correspond either to the U.S. approach, relying on ad hoc coalitions, or to the concept of the European leaders (primarily Germany, France) interested in strengthening the role of the European security structures. These external circumstances, as well as a distinct vision of the situation in the country led to changes in the foreign policy with the advent of the Donald Tusk government. A more open pro-European position and certain warming of relations with Russia did not mean, however, the rejection of the traditional Polish Atlanticism.

Hence, despite the relative dichotomy in the Polish foreign policy, Warsaw has done a lot on the international arena. Poland remained if not the most loyal (considering Baltic States and Romania's position) but anyway the most powerful American ally and lobbyist in Europe. At the same time it managed to engage in the European integration process to the uttermost and earn maximum

benefits, with regional leadership in so-called “New Europe” and the role of a locomotive of the EU's eastern policy to be named among the major ones.

In addition to the traditional objective of restraining Russia and expansion of the Western borders to the East, the priority of the Eastern vector in the Polish foreign policy is also conditioned by the fact that Warsaw is considering Eastern policy as an instrument to restore the Euro-Atlantic balance. Long-term intentions presume that interests of the United States and Europe on the Post-Soviet territory coincide in many respects. Eastern policy, according to the aspirations of Warsaw, will allow taking its place in the NATO and the EU, and also implementing its foreign policy ambitions. Poland is seeking to acquire a special function in the European Union using the “Eastern policy” and the “Neighbourhood Policy” and it largely succeeds in it, despite the fact that the Eastern policy itself is far from ideal.

The interests of the USA in the region of the Central and Eastern Europe consist in broadening the Euro-Atlantic integration and finding new allies – participants of the integration process, which would limit the increasing influence of certain European countries, primarily – France and Germany, that are more and more interested in the decrease of the U.S. presence in Europe. Also the USA is interested in limiting the influence of Russia on the European continent. Therefore, the existence and support of the independent Ukrainian state meets the strategic interests of Washington.

However, long after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Office of the President of the USA was looking for its own foreign policy strategy in relation to Ukraine. First, an approach oriented at Russia, or even the one depending on Russia, was dominating in the Ukraine-USA relations. Washington counted on Russia, hoping that political and economic reformations started in it, would be quickly-achievable. Considering their interests that were objectively similar, although not the same, the USA and Russia increased their pressure on Ukraine to get rid of its nuclear weapons.

Only in 1993 the approach of the American Office to Ukraine started changing. There seemed a certain thaw in the Ukrainian-American relations. Partially it was due to the intensification of antidemocratic tendencies in Russia. A perspective of close cooperation between Russia and the USA was becoming less clear. Partnership between the USA and Russia turned out nondurable and based on a short-term coincidence of wants.

Before the end of 1993 a new policy of the USA in relation to Ukraine and arrangement of bi- and trilateral negotiations laid the foundation of understanding between the two states. Finally, it contributed to signing a trilateral treaty between the presidents Bill Clinton, Leonid Kravchuk and Boris Yeltsyn in Moscow on January 13, 1994, pursuant to which Ukraine assumed a commit-

ment to destroy all the nuclear weapons, located on its territory, within seven years⁴.

The next stage of the Ukrainian-American relations started with declaring 1994 “the year of Ukraine” in the USA. And exactly since then a thaw in the attitude of the USA to Ukraine has become vivid. The Office of Bill Clinton started the policy of active engagement of Ukraine in the world community and its institutions.

A new President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma announced the course of liberal economic reforms right after his coming to power in the fall of 1994. The USA anchored its hopes that Ukraine would quickly and rather painlessly overcome the transition period and would soon become an outpost of the western, and specifically the American impact on the neighbouring Russia. It was during the presidency of Bill Clinton that the concepts of Zbigniew Brzezinski about the geostrategic importance of Ukraine for the Post-Soviet space became popular for securing the national interest of the USA and safety in the region⁵.

During an official visit of the President Leonid Kuchma to the USA in November 1994, one of the fundamental documents of the bilateral relationship was signed – the Charter of Ukrainian-American Partnership, Friendship, and Cooperation.

However, with time the vision of geostrategic importance of Ukraine started changing in the West, and specifically, in the USA. The American party came to understand that the potential impact of Ukraine on the safety of the region was impossible without strengthening the country from within. After a long time of stimulating its «strategic partner» to implement reforms, the USA became annoyed with positive changes being far too slow.

The western attempts to help establishing democracy in Ukraine that took place at the time were conditioned by three major reasons.

First, there was a necessity to consider Ukraine as a state of medium weight and the one having its impact in the region.

Second, without the support of the West, Ukraine would inevitably lean towards Russia, the strengthening of which in the conditions of inner instability of the region might cause unpredictable geopolitical consequences. In the words of Charles Krauthammer: *The support of Ukraine was primarily connected with Russia, and only then with democracy. The Ukrainian episode is a short almost nostalgic echo of the Cold War. Russia is attempting to save the remains of the empire, while the West seeks to finish the case, which started with the fall of the Berlin Wall and continue the European march to the East. This struggle has less to do with democracy than it has with geopolitics*⁶.

⁴ *The US-Russia-Ukraine Trilateral Statement and Annex*, 14.01.1994, <<http://www.atomicarchive.com/Docs/Deterrence/Trilate>> (03.05.2015).

⁵ *Vide: Z. Brzezinski, Ukraine's Critical Role in the Post-Soviet Space*, “Harvard Ukrainian Studies” 1996, vol. 20, pp. 3-8.

⁶ C. Krauthammer, *Why Only in Ukraine?*, “Washington Post” 3.12.2004, pp. A27.

And third, geographically, a relatively democratic Ukraine, was in any case more advantageous to the West, than an authoritarian one, because a big authoritarian country on the border of the EU was unacceptable for the West from the point of view of security. According to Sherman Garnett: *Ukraine is remaining on the crossway geographically. Extraordinary geopolitical changes that enabled the uprising of Ukraine as an independent state, made it at the same time a key state between Russia and the NATO and the EU*⁷. Such a situation, in the opinion of experts, had to force Ukraine into a long and potentially unstable process of reformations that would last until Ukraine has found its place in the Central Europe or the former Soviet Union, or Europe in general. Until then Ukraine will remain unable to determine itself as a European or an Euro-Asian state. Such a situation bears a great danger that consists in the peripherization of the state, which may be caused by the geopolitical indifference of the West to the status of Ukraine. According to the same Garnett: *peripheral and stagnating Ukraine will increase the risk for the NATO and the EU of getting an undefined and unstable neighbour*⁸.

Based on such generalizations, characteristic of the time, Ian Brzezinski, a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, noted in 1999 that Ukraine has three potential scenarios of its development:

- political and economic shift to the East and seeking reintegration with Russia;
- further dependence on the western financial and economic assistance without major reformation of the country;
- appearance of a stable pro-western democracy, which is unlikely in the near future⁹.

Ukraine of that time was more often viewed as a typical country of the Commonwealth of Independent States with a lot of problems of various nature. The desire of Ukraine to become a European State was in violent contrast with reality. The discontent of the West with the uncertainty and unpredictability of Ukraine's "multi-vectorness", which became viewed as a policy of oscillation from the West to Russia, alongside with Ukraine's frequent attempts to improve its relations with one partner at the expense of the other. Although, if previously the hopes for rapid reformation of the country and its democratization were put on the person of the President Leonid Kuchma, the West started seeing authoritarian tendencies in the regime of his rule more and more often.

⁷ S. Garnett, *Kiev and Moscow. Ukraine: Challenges of the Continuing Transition, Conference Report*, http://www.cia.gov/nic/confreports_ukrainechlnge.html#sec_three < (03.05.2011).

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ I. Brzezinski, *Ukraine and the West. Ukraine: Challenges of the Continuing Transition, Conference Report*, http://www.cia.gov/nic/confreports_ukrainechlnge.html#sec_three < (01.05.2015).

Early 2000s promised the improvement of relations between Ukraine and the West. And primarily it was due to a temporary improvement of the political and economic situation in the country, as well as due to a new reformatory government headed by Viktor Yushchenko. The new prime-minister of Ukraine had the reputation of a pro-western politician and right after coming to power started implementing the long-awaited reforms.

However, the hopes of the United States of America for a rapid democratic transformation of Ukraine failed to come true. Regrettably, the political changes leading to positive economic and social shifts turned out temporary. As a result of inner crisis, the leaning of Ukraine's "multi-vector" policy towards Russia, noticed in 2000, had almost reached its top notch. Such a position could not get approval of the USA and caused a remarkable concern about Ukraine's movement away from the European choice, previously declared by the country.

The dismissal of Viktor Yushchenko's government by the Verkhovna Rada on April 26, 2001 also had a negative impact on the relations between Ukraine and the West. The image of Viktor Yushchenko had a calming effect on the West, creating hopes for successful reforms in Ukraine and its further integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic structures. The removal of the reformist prime-minister and his team from power raised serious concerns in the West and in the United States on the issue, which way Ukraine would go next, and whether the next prime minister would continue the course of reforms.

The interest of the USA towards Ukraine was gradually declining. In the U.S. priorities, which was first preoccupied with the presidential election campaign, and then with the change of the President's Office, Ukraine finally faded into insignificance until the events of 2004.

The "Orange Revolution" in Ukraine has transformed it from a state with an undefined economic and political status into a *new hope of Eastern Europe* in the opinion of American politicians, experts and scientists.

Public uproar of the "Orange Revolution" and the success of such processes in a country with a large territory and the same Russian political impact, allowed the western analysts speaking of Ukraine as of a democratic pioneer in the region. *The triumph of Viktor Yushchenko and the Ukrainian people is the most significant victory of democracy in Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall*¹⁰ – wrote Bruce Jackson in 2005, a special representative of the U.S. Senate. The majority of experts shared the general optimism regarding the future democracy in Ukraine and the effect successful democratic transformations would have on the region in general.

However, analysts also outlined a series of dangers on the way of transformations in Ukraine. The experts forecasted the first year to be the most dangerous. This crucial period was supposed to last until the parliamentary election

¹⁰ B. P. Jackson, *The Future of Democracy in the Black Sea Region, Testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on European Affairs*, 8.03.2005, <http://www.newamericancentury.org/blacksea-20050309.htm> (01.05.2015).

of 2006. During this determining twelve-month period Viktor Yushchenko had to develop new civilized rules for the business community, ensure a significant progress in the direction of developing a plan of the European neighbourhood program and intensify the dialogue with the NATO.

But upon completion of this highly difficult and special twelve-month period after the “Orange Revolution” the situation in the country remained undefined. Changes that took place at the time in Ukraine were assessed as ambiguous, and the declared objectives remained elusive.

Even though at the beginning of his rule Viktor Yushchenko had an unprecedented support of the West and the USA, and the declared ideas of the European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine gained immense support in the West, bitter disappointment came very fast. President Yushchenko turned out unable to achieve the declared priorities neither in domestic nor in foreign policy.

Nevertheless there were certain advancements during that period. The major achievement was the elimination of obstacles on the way towards gradual development of bilateral trade and economic relations: a series of preferences for Ukraine’s export were reinstated, the market status of the Ukrainian economy was acknowledged in the antidumping investigations, a bilateral protocol of mutual access of goods and services was signed within the framework of Ukraine’s accession to the World Trade Organization, the Jackson–Vanik amendment was struck down in relation to Ukraine. Completion of the process of Ukraine’s becoming a member of the WTO that took place with major assistance of the USA, made it possible to sign a bilateral Agreement about Trading and Investment Cooperation, and in conformity therewith – to create a bilateral Council on the Issues of Trade and Investment and conduct a constitutive meeting.

After that a number of essential and controversial – in terms of their consequences – shifts took place, which were bound to have an impact on the American vision of the situation in our country. The outcome of the parliamentary election of 2006, which brought the victory of the Party of Regions and resulted in gradual loss of his influence by the President, definitely did not look desirable for the United States. But the United States demonstrated its readiness to accept any situation in the government of Ukraine.

As it was noted then by the leading American experts: *it’s less important, who becomes a prime-minister, it’s more important, what policy the new prime-minister and his cabinet will carry out*¹¹.

Understanding that the period of rapid pro-western democratic transformations in Ukraine has finished without being started, analysts kept expressing muted optimism, noting that *Hopes for fast integration of Kyiv with the West*

¹¹ A. Cohen, *Ukraine’s Parliamentary Elections: What Next?*, <<http://www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/wm1034.cfm?renderforprint=1>> (02.05.2015).

*through membership in the NATO and the European Union evaporate in the light of a new pro-Russian government. Although, despite that, Ukraine has undergone fundamental positive changes, which look irreversible*¹².

However, after coming to power of the President Viktor Yanukovich and his pro-Russian government, the Ukrainian-American relations became colder. The crisis in the relations became even deeper after the arrest of the former Prime Minister and the opposition member Yulia Tymoshenko and representatives of her former government.

On September 22, 2012 the Senate of the USA carried resolution No. 466, in which it condemned the actions of the Office of the President Viktor Yanukovich aimed at politically-motivated imprisonment of the former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. The U.S. Senate called the Office of Yanukovich to immediately release Tymoshenko alongside with other political prisoners.

Despite the expressed leaning of Ukraine's political system towards dictatorship under the rule of Yanukovich, the government of the country did not abandon adherence to the European integration. More than that, after longstanding declarations there began a real preparation to signing the Ukraine-European Union Agreement.

It was the refusal to sign the Agreement and a major swing of the country's foreign policy away from Europe and towards Russia that provoked public antagonism, which later escalated into dramatic events of the Euromaidan.

The short-sighted and cynical position of the President Yanukovich towards the dissidents as well as political pressure of Moscow provoked the transition of protests to the «hot» stage. Through the next three months, the Yanukovich government alternated between attempted crackdowns and conciliatory gestures. On February 18, the government embarked on its most violent crackdown attempt against the *Maidan*, one that quickly resulted in the regime's own demise.

The newly elected President Poroshenko in Brussels signed the Political Association Agreement with the European Union on June 27, 2014¹³, having confirmed the European course of the new Ukraine once and for all. However, coming to power of the new pro-western politicians and the formation of a clearly European paradigm of Ukraine's foreign policy are attended by the Russian aggression, the loss of territories and escalation of the military conflict in the East of Ukraine.

¹² P. Brookes, *Ukraine: A Revolution Recedes*,

<http://www.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ed112006b.cfm?RenderforPrint=1>> (01.05.2015).

¹³ Association Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part, Brussels, 15.05.2013. p. 2228.

The United States together with the European Union have condemned the Russian aggression in Ukraine and supported the formation of a democratic pro-European government and parliament¹⁴.

However, regrettably, it can be stated that the United States, the same as the European Union, do not have a clear strategy in relation to Ukraine for the moment. General vision of their actions with regard to Ukraine mainly comes down to: supporting the integrity of Ukraine, termination of military actions and continuing to draw Ukraine onto the western political orbit. Although, presently Washington has no ready recipes neither for the first nor for the second task.

The situation has several objective reasons. Firstly, the protracted nature of the conflict in the east of Ukraine is obvious both for the American, and for the European parties. Understanding the inability to settle the conflict quickly and achieve positive results in the near future causes the phenomenon of *being tired with Ukraine*, which significantly slows down progressive cooperation with the United States. It would be fair to note that failure to implement reforms and an expressed unwillingness of the Ukrainian government to fight corruption considerably contributes to the situation.

Secondly, the United States still see Russia as an ally in solving a series of other international issues important for the White House. Primarily this refers to Iran, as the situation there has received a chance to be solved in conformity with interests of the USA. But the list of issues goes beyond Iran, and most of them are, regrettably, of greater priority to the USA than Ukraine. The situation will remain a leverage of the Russian influence on the American foreign policy.

Thirdly, an “overly balanced” foreign policy of the Presidential Office of Barack Obama. Considering that this is the second term of presidency for the acting president, he is attempting to conduct an accurate and balanced policy, counting on the role of the “world’s peacemaker”. With all the ambitiousness and potential of such an approach in foreign policy, today, unfortunately, it fails to meet the Ukrainian national interests.

And lastly, in a number of areas of the American foreign policy there is a belief that the issue of the Ukrainian crisis, just like the future of Ukraine in general, is more within the competence of Europe and the European Union. This thought, even being a hyperbolized vision of the Ukrainian situation, has a fair amount of logic in it. In the long run, only Europe can offer Ukraine viable models of integration and cooperation that will constitute Ukraine’s geopolitical future and make further pro-Russian orientation impossible.

Therefore, as a key state, Ukraine has always been a country the position of which the region's future depends on. Trying to manoeuvre between Europe

¹⁴ *Statement by the President on the Ukraine Freedom Support Act*,

<<http://web.archive.org/web/20150122>

042150/<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/12/18/statement-president-ukraine-freedom-support-act>> (1.05.2015).

and Russia, Ukraine is trapped in his own uncertain foreign policy and has become hostage of its geographical position. In addition, it has become the last frontier for Russia. To retain control over Ukraine for the Russian Federation is the question of taking back Soviet Empire or geopolitical collapse.

However, despite the extremely hard geopolitical conditions there are possibilities to unlock Ukraine's national potential and they lie in the area of using the foreign policy resource of relations both with the European Union and the United States.

Key recommendations for Ukraine in this difficult geopolitical situation could be the following:

- While looking for support in foreign policy, priority should be given to the United States. First, because American interests in the region sound more in tune with the Ukrainian ones (restraint of Russia and weakening of the Putin regime); Second, the USA have turned out much more prepared for the Russian aggression than Europe. Third, Ukraine has a chance to become a conductor of American impacts in region of Central and Eastern Europe. The weight of the Ukrainian question is constantly growing in the American foreign policy, however much will depend on the development of the Ukrainian-American relations, formation of hierarchy of the international system in the entire Eurasia, and certainly, specifically on the position and progress of Ukraine itself.
- Ukraine should strongly support and boost the development and institutionalization of relations within the framework of the so-called “New Europe”. This format will allow developing a consolidated position and creating an additional instrument to influence the countries of the “Old Europe” in terms of defending Ukraine's interests. And generally, even now there are processes taking place in the region of the newly joined states, which have a direct impact on the future of the United Europe.
- Nevertheless, the official foreign policy position should be strictly focused on the European integration and becoming a member of the European Union. The more especially as the USA are also interested in further rapprochement and European geopolitical identification of Ukraine. The U.S. by all means encourages Kyiv to build closer relations with the EU as there is finally a consensus in Ukraine to deepen the relations with Brussels. Just like in the West Balkans, the USA wants Europe to help transform Ukraine into a safe and stable state through free trade agreements and association with the European Union. Modern Ukraine has no other paradigm of its development. Discussions on the subject of foreign policy vectors have run their course with the annexation of the Crimea and the beginning of aggression in the East. Simultaneously, there is an understanding that continuation of the non-alignment strategy will result in the creation of a buffer strip between the EU and Russia. Such a situation partially satisfies the European Un-

ion and is partially beneficial to the Russian Federation, but it fails to meet the national interests of Ukraine in every way.

In such a difficult geopolitical situation the most appropriate foreign policy approach for Ukraine as well as for all new democracies of Post-Soviet space is the one of balanced partnership with the U.S. and the EU.

Thus, the experience of Poland is rather useful for Ukraine with regard to determining its foreign policy that would be based on the achievement of its national interests using the balance between the Atlantic and the European components. With a similar paradigm, Ukraine could build a far-reaching foreign policy strategy that would remain relevant within at least a couple decades.

In fact in the first decade of the 21st century the New Independent Eastern European States (the Baltic States, Ukraine, Moldova, and maybe eventually Belarus) have started playing the same role in determining the European foreign policy and security structure, as it was played by Poland and other CEE countries in the 1990s after Soviet Union collapse. Being an object of competition between Russia and the West, the European New Independent States as independent, sovereign entities significantly affect the policy of Russia, the EU and the United States and the relationships between them.

Therefore, the maintenance of democracy and promotion of reforms in the region and specifically in Ukraine is of utmost importance. The way the region is going to look in the nearest 10 years will determine the way the world will look in the XXI century. And then, perhaps, the progress in Ukraine will begin the final stage of creating a truly united and free Europe.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- ✓ Association Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part, Brussels, 15.05.2013
- ✓ Brookes P., *Ukraine: A Revolution Recedes*, <http://www.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ed112006b.cfm?RenderforPrint=1> (01.05.2015)
- ✓ Brzezinski I., *Ukraine and the West. Ukraine: Challenges of the Continuing Transition, Conference Report*. http://www.cia.gov/nic/confreports_ukraine.html#sec_three (01.05.2015)
- ✓ Brzezinski Z., *Ukraine's Critical Role in the Post-Soviet Space*, "Harvard Ukrainian Studies" 1996, vol. 20
- ✓ Cohen A., *Ukraine's Parliamentary Elections: What Next?*, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/wm1034.cfm?renderforprint=1> (02.05.2015)

- ✓ *Foreign Policy of the Republic of Poland in 1991, Sejm Expose by the Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski* Warsaw, June 27, 1991, [in:] *Poland's Security Policy. 1989-2000*, ed. R. Kuźniar, Warsaw 2001
- ✓ Garnett S., *Kiev and Moscow. Ukraine: Challenges of the Continuing Transition, Conference Report*,
http://www.cia.gov/nic/confreports_ukrainechnge.html#sec_three
(03.05.2011)
- ✓ Jackson B. P., *The Future of Democracy in the Black Sea Region, Testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on European Affairs*, 8.03.2005,
<http://www.newamericancentury.org/blacksea-20050309.htm>
(01.05.2015)
- ✓ Krauthammer C., *Why Only in Ukraine?*, "Washington Post" 3.12.2004
- ✓ Kulesa Ł., *Missile Defense Dossier. The Polish Perspective*, "PISM Papers" 2007, <<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lng=en&id=141188>> (4.05.2015)
- ✓ Pilawski K., *Wypędzona historia*, "Tygodnik Przegląd", 21.02.2011,
<http://www.tygodnikprzeglad.pl/krzysztof-pilawski-wypedzona-historia/>> (04.05.2015)
- ✓ *Statement by the President on the Ukraine Freedom Support Act*, <<http://web.archive.org/web/20150122042150/http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/12/18/statement-president-ukraine-freedom-support-act>> (1.05.2015)
- ✓ *The US-Russia-Ukraine Trilateral Statement and Annex*, 14.01.1994,
<<http://www.atomicarchive.com/Docs/Deterrence/Trilate>>
(03.05.2015)