

Geopolitical Subjectness **OF UKRAINE**

In the Context of Global Challenges



**TARAS SHEVCHENKO NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF KYIV
RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF UKRAINIAN STUDIES**

**GEOPOLITICAL SUBJECTNESS OF UKRAINE
IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES**

Kyiv 2025

Reviewers:

- *Khamitov N.V.*, Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Professor, Corresponding Member of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
- *Hai-Nyzhnyk P.P.*, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor
- *Sudakov V.I.*, Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Professor

Geopolitical Subjectness of Ukraine in the Context of Global Challenges: a monograph / I. Hrabovska, S. Hrabovskyi, R. Dodonov, S. Kahamlyk, R. Marutian, K. Nastoiascha, L. Chuprii. Kyiv: Milenium, 2025. 224 p.

ISBN 978-966-8063-75-6

The monograph is dedicated to one of the most pressing issues for Ukraine — the study of the state and prospects of the country's geopolitical subjectness in the modern world. This research is an attempt to conceptually answer the question of how Ukraine's centuries-long latent subjectness is transforming into an actual one. The conceptual and methodological foundations of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness under modern threats are examined, as well as the geopolitical aspects of the country's subjectness in the context of global challenges. The axiological foundations for strengthening Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness are identified; the information resilience of Ukrainian society under contemporary threats and challenges is analyzed; the religious component of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness is highlighted. For political scientists, philosophers, historians, ethnologists, cultural scholars, and all those interested in Ukrainian studies.

ISBN 978-966-8063-75-6

© Hrabovska I., Hrabovskyi S., Dodonov R., Kahamlyk S.,
Marutian R., Nastoiascha K., Chuprii L., 2025

© Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, 2025

Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
 CHAPTER 1.	
CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF GEOPOLITICAL SUBJECTNESS OF UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN THREATS	
1.1. Waves of globalisation, decolonisation and geopolitical subjectness	15
1.2. Latent geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine as a reality and a scientific problem	29
1.3. The historical formation of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness from the initial stages to the end of the 19th century	37
1.4. The turn of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness from the latent form into the relevant one	56
 CHAPTER 2.	
CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE STUDY OF THE GEOPOLITICAL SUBJECTNESS OF UKRAINE IN THE CONDITIONS OF MODERN GLOBAL CHALLENGES	
2.1. Peculiarities of the geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine in the conditions of globalisation	69
2.2. The endeavour of the Russian Federation to deprive Ukraine of the status of a geopolitical subject	86
2.3. Civilisational tasks of Ukraine in the light of modern geopolitical challenges	108
2.4. Prospects for the collapse of the Russian neo-empire and its geopolitical consequences	124
 CHAPTER 3.	
INFORMATION RESILIENCE OF SOCIETY IN THE FACE OF MODERN CHALLENGES AND THREATS: GLOBAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS	
3.1 The concept of national resilience of society and state	160
3.2. Responding to threats to information resilience: the experience of European countries	172

CHAPTER 4.
THE RELIGIOUS COMPONENT OF UKRAINE'S GEOPOLITICAL
SUBJECTNESS IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES

4.1. The path to Tomos and its Role in Establishing Ukraine's Geopolitical Subjectness	182
4.2. Counteracting the influence of the Moscow Patriarchate as a guarantee of Ukraine's victory in the war against the Russian aggressor: ways and forms	187
4.3. Building the Orthodox Church of Ukraine in the face of global challenges	196
4.4. The international mission of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as a factor in strengthening the geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine	206
AFTERWORD	217

INTRODUCTION

‘Ukraine has tremendous potential, but is unable to realize it properly.’

Steven Pifer, former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine

‘The decline of Russia as an empire is inevitable. Now, due to the war in Ukraine, the final phase of a long historical process is taking place – the final collapse of the Russian Empire.’

Anne Applebaum, historian, writer and journalist

Today, the global community is facing a range of challenges that must be addressed. In particular, geopolitical threats are now intensifying: international terrorism, unauthorised proliferation of technologies of mass destruction, acute situation in the ‘countries of the axis of instability’ (Israel-Palestine, North Korea, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, and others), transnational crime and corruption.

The risks associated with the technological advancement of mankind, such as man-made disasters, cyber wars, systemic information infrastructure glitches, loss of databases, interference in the private information sector, etc., are rather serious.

Globalisation leads to an increasing number of threats. According to many experts, the flip side of world unification is stiff competition, particularism, instability and disorganisation of the personality. All the above can only intensify, given the prospects for the transition to a post-industrial society, as some countries are capable of this, while others are not; thus, inequality between them is expected to grow.

In the context of growing global challenges, the world's geopolitical landscape is undergoing transformation. Russia, which unleashed a full-scale war against Ukraine, seeking to revive the Soviet Union and strengthen its geopolitical role in the world, on the contrary, weakened it and practically became a vassal of China. The balance of power in the world is constantly changing, with a redistribution of spheres of influence among key global players. The influence of Asia, especially China, has recently been intensifying, while the United States and the European Union have somewhat lessened their positions. Notably, today

the incumbent US President, D. Trump, adheres to a position of international isolationism, calling primarily for the solution of domestic problems (illegal migration, crime, bureaucracy, etc.), though domestic and foreign policy are always interconnected. The EU countries are likewise forced to solve some of their internal problems (external migration, Islamisation, centrifugal tendencies (the separation of the United Kingdom from the European Union, Catalonia's desire for independence). In Europe, contradictions between the centre and the periphery are scaling up (Poland and Hungary are trying to dictate their terms to Brussels). Therefore, the US and EU economies are weakening compared to the Chinese economy. The deindustrialisation of the USA and Europe led to job cuts and an increase in underemployment, as well as a decline in average incomes. Over the past 30 years, middle-class wages in the West have hardly grown, and in some segments, even decreased. Migration problems have intensified, which, to some extent, also causes a rise in crime. As a result, internal tensions began to grow in the United States and Europe, leading to the increasing influence of populists on different flanks of the political spectrum, who began to win elections. In particular, D. Trump enunciated the resolution of the migration problem and the fight against crime as the key themes of his programme. In the European Union, right-wing forces are strengthening their positions.

Meanwhile, China has been doubling its GDP every 8 years over the past 30 years. Although there has been a slowdown in economic growth in recent years, especially after the coronavirus pandemic. The welfare level of Chinese citizens is increasing every year. Today, the middle class amounts to 800 million people there, and the average salary in developed regions is about \$600 per month. In India, where the population has already exceeded 1.5 billion, the middle class has also grown to 250-300 million people, and it continues to build up as India boosts the pace of economic growth and turns into the 'new China' of South Asia before our eyes.

It should be noted that there is a gradual strengthening of eastern countries, especially in Asia, where at the beginning of the 21st century, more than 60% of the world's population lived. At the Asian Financial Forum in Hong Kong, it was stated that the East is forming a new growth paradigm. A BRICS group of potential superpowers was formed (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), which, in their claims to a more significant influence on the global state of affairs, relied on accelerated economic development. However, the decline in the Brazilian and Russian economies, particularly after the latter invaded Ukraine, and the crisis in South Africa, do not allow us to render this group of countries as the

main growth driver in emerging markets. Instead, TICS (an alliance of Taiwan, India, China and South Korea) has become more attractive to international investors. In general, re-orientalisation, in other words, the rise of the East, is one of the leading trends in the development of the modern world. The main megatrends of its transformations are globalisation, modernisation, individualisation, virtualisation, and hybridisation. Yet, during the spread of the coronavirus, regionalisation and isolationism trends intensified.

The situation implies that Ukraine must clearly determine its global place and strengthen its geopolitical role on the European continent in the face of increased global challenges. The Russian-Ukrainian military confrontation has stood as one of the key difficulties in the contemporary global security system. During the war, Ukraine has suffered losses of more than 700 billion dollars; in addition to the mass destruction of housing infrastructure, the occupiers have not stopped obliterating historical and cultural heritage: according to the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine, 664 monuments of historical and cultural heritage have been destroyed or damaged on the Ukrainian territory since the outbreak of the war. Among the other pivotal components of this war's mechanics has also been Russia's powerful information aggression against Ukraine, aimed at disinforming the Ukrainian population, at amplifying internal political tension within the country and at undermining the Ukrainian state; numerous Russian information influences have been and are still trying to stigmatise the national state, to diminish its geopolitical subjectness and to portray it as weak and ineffective, simultaneously falsifying, or rewriting the Ukrainian history and desecrating the Ukrainian language and culture. The nation must counter the aggressive imperialist aspirations of the Russian Federation and be a stronghold of the democratic world.

In the difficult geopolitical conditions of the constantly changing world, Ukraine has long been an object of geopolitical 'games'. Due to the weakness of the Ukrainian political elite, lacking strategic thinking, and the absence of a positive foreign image, accompanied by the classification of the country as mostly underdeveloped and corrupt, the Ukrainians have been losing their geopolitical subjectness for many years. Only after two revolutions and the aggression of the Russian Federation, European and Euro-Atlantic orientations were enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine and the National Security Strategy of Ukraine: for example, the National Security Strategy of Ukraine under the name 'The security of a human is the security of a country' (adopted by Decree of the President of Ukraine No.392/2020 dated September 14, 2020) noted that at

the present stage the key tasks of the Ukrainian state were to uphold its independence and state sovereignty; to restore its territorial integrity within the internationally recognised state border; to strictly focus the foreign policy of Ukraine towards primarily the European Union countries and the future entry into the NATO bloc. In this regard, the relevance of this study is above all justified by the lack of science-based research into factors of or barriers to strengthening Ukraine's geopolitical position amidst modern challenges, since it is important to study both internal and external determinants constraining the potential of geopolitical subjectness. After analysing internal factors, it is thus worth noting that today's Ukraine remains the poorest country in Europe, whose economy is predominantly resource-based; its social system structures are weak; the judicial system, as well as most institutions, are crippled by corruption. Such a situation has created mistrust in the authorities among Ukrainians and has contributed to the marginalisation, criminalisation and impoverishment of the population amid the general media illiteracy. These given factors, in turn, should predestine the low level of social consolidation, cohesion, inclusion and tolerance within the Ukrainian society. A distinct intricate problem has been the protracted transformation of the post-Soviet mentality of a part of the nation's population, creating socio-psychological discomfort and requiring public services to deal with collective traumas of the shared Soviet past; the same can be said about the extremely poor standards of information hygiene and of media literacy among the citizens, which in the light of the total distrust in the state institutions has fostered the emergence of new forms of deviations and of antisocial behavior, also undermining the image of the country in the eyes of the civilised world. Only with the systematic reform of most sectors of public life, with the formation of critical thinking among the people and with the greater trust in the Ukrainian authorities can conditions be met for both internal economic growth and attraction of external investments, with the result, respectively, being the strengthened geopolitical subjectness. Special attention should be paid to conducting the research into the influence of worldwide trends of civilisational development on the formation of the Ukrainian subjectness, which permeate all social systems of modern humanity as total systemic tendencies. To be more specific, these trends in the main have been virtualisation, hybridisation of cultures, individualisation and hypermobility. Specialists from different fields of science continue to argue about the pros and cons that globalisation brings with it, but they have a shared stance on at least one thing - the manifestations of the globalisation process keep taking place in all spheres of social life, so follow-up changes will be inevitable.

These manifestations concern a set of all-pervading innovations, the process of total unification and the erasure of cultural borders, which cannot help but affect cultural traditions and transform the algorithms for the development of geopolitical sovereignty. While a trend is usually believed to be a system of determined, consistent changes in the form of a set of tendencies, from this work's perspective, it can be considered as an undeniable changing factor that constantly presses and catalyses the transformation of social life; in turn, the trends generate ambivalent tensions. To illustrate this practically, it would be better to have a deeper look into the systemic tendencies mentioned earlier. Individualisation, absolutely trending globally, has generated a whole range of new risky tendencies such as alienation, atomisation, reclusiveness, etc. The analysis of the attributive characteristics of cultural hybridisation gives grounds to assert that it has been the determining factor in the emergence of new value orientations and of various forms of cultural processes; culture is no longer tied to a geographical area and, at the same time, can no longer maintain cohesion there. Virtualisation as a global trend has determined a number of propensities and phenomena diversely scaling in different aspects of life, the most common of which include technologisation, robotisation, cyberculture, cyberbullying, 'clip thinking', ideology of transhumanism, etc. The basic expressions of the virtualisation's effects have involved the change in traditional, expected practices and generation of their new patterns; the emphasis on technologisation; the disappearance of boundaries between the private and the public; the acceleration of communication; the saving of time; the technical algorithmisation of interactions, as well as the options to manipulate or to create artificial identities. Hypermobility on its part has provoked several things that, in turn, translated into a whole range of novel global practices such as deterritorialisation, diffusion of identities, proliferation of the civic identity, creation of 'terminal communities', superfast growth of the tourism industry, revitalisation of academic mobility and so forth. Both of these axiological and cultural, or habitual, and organisational and spatial, or algorithmic, vectors are the coordinate axes of transformation in the space of global trends; in this sense, they act as directions of changes and of corresponding trends and set the frame of reference as a modus of the reinvention process of geopolitical subjectness in external space.

Through analysing the key vectors of Ukraine's geopolitical activities, it should be noted that they have gravitated towards developed European and North American (the USA, first of all) democracies, which have built a welfare state. The latter is characterised by the following features: the considerable middle class

with a relatively high standard of living; absence of extreme income differentiation among different segments of the population; social security backed by the state (free medical care, education, provision of social housing, decent pensions, etc. existing alongside private mechanisms); a significant role of the state in income redistribution; practices of public-private partnership; effective forms of democratic order and civil society. Developed countries are sometimes labelled as 'two-thirds societies' because it is the exact proportion of the population that has more or less financial independence and forms the basis of the middle class, with the rest requiring social protection. There are, however, certain problems in these countries: in particular, the active state regulation of economic processes, the large-scale redistribution of funds and the growth of social spending have gradually led to the serious bureaucratisation and regimentation of the economy, weakening its dynamism; to the rise of 'refraining' sentiments and to the increasing budget deficits. In this context, M. Marynovych correctly noted that it must be clearly decided whether the Ukrainians are taking the path to a 'Europe of values' or to a 'Europe of bureaucratic rules'. Recently, the demographic problem has also been intensifying among European countries: the depopulation is taking place; the number of the elderly population is increasing, and the number of the working-age population is decreasing; the active migration of refugees, who require significant assistance from the state, is happening; and the crisis of family values is apparent.

In these conditions, Ukraine must continue European and Euro-Atlantic integration and strengthen its cooperation with regional neighbours, which have actively been helping throughout its confrontation with the Russian aggressor and which will definitely help in the post-war reconstruction period. Today, one of the primary directions of Ukraine's foreign policy should be regional cooperation and extensive partnership with the countries of the nation's immediate environment, accompanied by the following acts: establishment of equal and friendly relations based on the recognition of each other's territorial integrity and the inviolability of existing borders; and creation of appropriate contractual frameworks. Furthermore, the process of Ukraine's European integration demands establishing good relations with neighbouring European states; for their part, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are interested in developing mutual relations with and in comprehensive support of the nation, since they have deemed supporting the democratic development of the Ukrainian state as an important factor in their own security.

For these reasons, Ukraine should enhance its economic and military cooperation with Poland, the Baltic countries, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Türkiye, Georgia and other regional neighbours in order to geopolitically strengthen the so-called Baltic-Black Sea Axis, or the Intermarium bloc. The above-mentioned countries could possibly combine their total economic and military potential in the event of increasing expansionism by the Russian Federation; although we hope that after the defeat in the Russian-Ukrainian war, Russia will lose its imperialist aspirations and, in the long term, will disintegrate altogether. Additionally, the nation should intensify cooperation or join existing regional projects: in particular, among those are the Visegrad Four founded in 1991 (the membership of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary); the Three Seas Initiative founded on economic interests in 2016 (including such countries as Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia); the Bucharest Nine founded on security interests in 2015 (uniting such Eastern European countries as Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Romania, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Bulgaria).¹ In fact, Ukraine should also strengthen ties with Belarus, which will have every chance to choose a democratic and pro-European path of its rise after the defeat of the Russian Federation. Arguably, the connections should be tightened within the Organisation for Democracy and Economic Development (known as the GUAM), which, besides Ukraine, includes Georgia, Azerbaijan and Moldova. In short, the Ukrainian government is facing the need to develop multilateral cooperation with the CEE countries on an economic and security basis since they can become potential objects of Russian aggressive policies in the future.

Obviously, Ukraine is interested in the commitment of the United States of America to assist the nation, given that America is a major power, the status of which has been defined by its military power, by its rates of economic growth and by the leadership in development and introduction of the most modern high technology in all sectors of the American economy. Objectively, the United States of America is also interested in the rise of Ukraine as a democratic country entering European multinational structures as a partner state; it is important to recall that the U.S. has constantly declared support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and has been one of the main initiators of tightening

¹Rotaru, V., & Umland, A. *How Romania and Poland Can Strengthen NATO and the EU: Two New Cooperation Initiatives Could Improve Regional Security*. [Accessed 10 November 2017]. [in Eng.]

economic sanctions against Russia. Similarly, Ukraine should also seek to strengthen cooperation with Great Britain, which has similarly demonstrated clear respect for the territorial integrity of the state and has been followed by other pro-Ukrainian countries, in particular Canada, with the powerful Ukrainian diaspora.¹ Even some Asian countries, including Japan, are interested in cooperation with Ukraine on weakening the Russian Federation, since the issue of the Kuril Islands remains open for Japan. Therefore, in the conditions of modern geopolitical realities, it is necessary to strive for the creation of a powerful alliance of developed countries in support of Ukraine.

Today, Ukraine faces an enormous civilisational role to resist the Russian expansion in Europe and in the whole world. For some time, leading Western powers have hoped that Russia would choose a democratic path of its development. Indeed, certain positive trends were observed under the reign of B. Yeltsin; during that period, Russia was even receiving considerable assistance from the West. Despite the efforts, its priorities began to change after V. Putin came to power. Although at the beginning of his reign the future dictator still tried to somehow cosy up to Western states by putting forward ideas even about the possible accession to the NATO bloc, the head of the Kremlin gradually began to portray Western liberal democracies, especially the U.S., as 'external enemies', which had allegedly prevented 'great Russia' from thriving. The central idea, which V. Putin became simply and completely obsessed with, was the idea of recreating the Soviet Union, the collapse of which the Russian leader has considered the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century. Under those conditions, the re-entry of the post-Soviet countries into the Russian zone of influence turned out to be a must for V. Putin; and on the path of achieving it, Russia went on to violate any legal, moral and international norms and ultimately ended up launching the full-scale aggression against Ukraine.

For quite a while, Ukrainian and Western politicians have been underestimating the level of threats coming from the Russian Federation. In this context, I would like to recall the words of experienced experts who have always seen serious dangers in Russian policies. For instance, Vitalii Portnikov, while assessing Russia's geopolitical ambitions, once referred to the words of the former

¹Klimkin, P., & Umland, A. *Brave New World... Reflections on the Security of Humankind, the Reboot of the International System, and the Destiny of Ukraine After the Pandemic*. [Accessed 15 April 2020]. [in Ukr.];

Klimkin, P., & Umland, A. *Grey Zone Politics: Why Ukraine Needs Creative International Cooperation*. [Accessed 16 April 2020]. [in Eng.]

CIA director James Comey, who had called Russia ‘the greatest threat of all on the Earth, given its intentions and capabilities.’ According to J. Comey, the Russian state structures have consistently generated instability, simultaneously backing radical and terrorist organisations: without the Russian helping hand, there would be neither the Islamic State, nor the migration crisis in Europe, nor the war against Ukraine – all that we today name as challenges.¹ V. Portnikov considered that statement by J. Comey ‘historic’ as it could be then compared to the Iron Curtain speech by W. Churchill.²

Comey's words were echoed by the speech of the 13th world chess champion, Garry Kasparov, after Russia invaded Georgia. The latter rightly compared the toothless political reaction of the world community to Putin's military aggression against Georgia, which had paved the way for new military adventures of the ‘Kremlin Führer’ and had left no stone unturned in the international security system, with the policies of É. Daladier and of N. Chamberlain, which earlier had led to the catastrophe of World War II with tens of millions of deaths; moreover, the Russian oppositionist warned about the following: ‘Sooner or later, to escape from reality will no longer be possible, so the civilised world will be forced to respond to this challenge, but with the price of the response increased many times over by that moment.’³

The core geopolitical objectives of Ukraine in the context of looming external challenges and of a new configuration between international powers on the world stage are as follows afterwards: to protect and defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity; to enhance the external and internal security; to strengthen the nation's position in the European civilisational space by intensifying efforts for comprehensive integration into European and Euro-Atlantic political and social structures; to forge the strategic partnership with the United States of America and tighten ties with the countries of Western Europe; to strengthen and consolidate special relations with strategically important neighbours, namely Poland, the Baltic countries, Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan; to promote the formation of a ‘belt of stability’ in the form of regional security structures from the Baltic and Black Seas to Transcaucasia and Central Asia; to establish and

¹*FBI Director Labels Russia as ‘the Main Threat’.* [online] Available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/03/05/2017/5909f9aa9a79472e4d7530a2> (03.05.2017). [in Rus.]

²Portnikov, V. *Why May the Whole World Perish Because of Russia.* [online] Available at: <https://spektrnews.in.ua/news/pochemu-iz-za-rossii-mozhet-pogibnut-ves-mir---vitaliy-portnikov/45189> [Accessed 4 May 2017]. [in Rus.]

³Kasparov, G. *The Odessa Milestone.* [online] Available at: <http://newsonline24.com.ua/odesskij-rubezh-kasparov/> [Accessed 3 May 2017a]. [in Rus.]

advance cooperation with Asian countries, whose global geopolitical role has been growing for every year.

However, strengthening Ukraine's geopolitical position in the world will be possible only when genuine and effective reformation of most spheres of public life, domination of the rule of law, defeat of corruption, support for the development of civil society, formation of the middle class, creation of appropriate conditions to attract foreign investments contributing to the country's economic growth further take place. Above all, the future of Ukraine's subjectness will be determined either by presence or absence of the statesmanlike, responsible, professional, patriotic political elite to be guided not by their narrowly selfish interests and the desire to gain power and wealth, but by the famous slogan of D. Kennedy 'Ask Not What Your Country Can Do for You, but What You Can Do for Your Country!'

The chapters of the monograph were prepared by the following authors:

- **Iryna Hrabovska**, PhD in Philosophy, Senior Research Fellow (Chapter 1, Afterword).
- **Serhii Hrabovskyi**, PhD in Philosophy, Senior Research Fellow (Chapter 1, Afterword).
- **Roman Dodonov**, Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Professor (Section 2.2).
- **Svitlana Kahamlyk**, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Senior Research Fellow (Chapter 4).
- **Ruzanna Marutian**, Doctor of Public Administration, Associate Professor (Chapter 3).
- **Kateryna Nastoiiascha**, Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Associate Professor (Sections 2.1, 2.3, 2.4).
- **Leonyd Chuprii**, Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor (Introduction, Sections 2.1, 2.3, 2.4).

The authors express their gratitude to the reviewers – **Nazip Khamitov**, Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Professor, Corresponding Member of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine; **Pavlo Hai-Nyzhnyk**, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor; **Volodymyr Sudakov**, Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Professor – for their valuable comments and recommendations that contributed to improving the text.

CHAPTER 1.

CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF GEOPOLITICAL SUBJECTNESS OF UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN THREATS

1.1. Waves of globalisation, decolonisation and geopolitical subjectness

A common shortcoming of most studies devoted to this or that aspect of the Ukrainian reality is their narrowness in terms of the scope of the reflected areas; the topic of Ukraine has been associated only with such spatial locations as Russia, Poland, Germany, Western Europe, the USA and Canada, at best with the Caucasus and the Middle East. On the contrary, Ukraine should be considered in the context of world history and all its dimensions.¹ It may be the only way to build conceptual explanatory models of real processes, to understand the algorithms of sociocultural transformations, and to predict long-term development trends, etc. Unfortunately, this entire field of Ukrainian Studies has largely been left to the mercy of not only Putin's propagandists, but also of 'good Russians' who, even if they want to remain objective, nevertheless impose on Ukrainian narratives the typical clichés, combined with ignorance of certain facts and the standard Moscow-St. Petersburg's bluster. Therefore, we deem it is urgently needed to form Ukrainian Studies applying synthesis, so it will be woven into the contexts of world history, based on the facts and figures from a wide variety of fields, while using an efficient and appropriate research toolkit instead of a 'fashionable' one. This necessity is especially true when it comes to geopolitical subjectness in the dimensions of globalisation.

To reveal the problem of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness in the context of globalisation, it is first necessary to turn to the range of scientific ideas foundational for this study.

Much has been written about globalisation, as there are, after all, many different definitions of it, from an article in the *Oxford Dictionary of Politics* to a lengthy text in the *English Wikipedia*.^{2,3} Nevertheless, we believe that the following understanding of this phenomenon is the most thorough:

¹Geopolitics. *Brief Glossary*. [online] Available at: <https://politike.ru/termin/suverenitet.html> [Accessed 12 January 2023]. [in Rus.]

²Globalization. (2005). *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics*. Kyiv, pp. 127–130. [online] Available at: https://shron1.chtyvo.org.ua/Maklin_Ien/Korotkyi_Oksfordskyi_politychnyi_slovnyk.pdf [in Ukr.]

³Globalization. *Wikipedia. Free encyclopedia*. [online] Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Globalization> [Accessed 14 January 2023]. [in Eng.]

‘GLOBALISATION’ (from the French *global* – general, worldwide; derived from the Latin *globus* – ball) is the latest transformational process (or rather, a series of interrelated processes) in the spatial organisation of local, regional and global economic ties and corresponding social relations. The main features of globalisation are: 1) social, political and economic activity transcending the borders of individual states in massive and large-scale way and moving to regions and continents; 2) growing intensity of interconnections in the sphere of trade, investment, finance, as well as in migration, religious and cultural processes; 3) unprecedented acceleration of the spread of ideas and information, turnover of capital, movement of goods, and population migration due to the development of comprehensive transport and communication systems; 4) blurring of the boundaries between local and global events.’¹

This definition, provided by the *Encyclopaedia of the History of Ukraine*, can be accepted as a working one for further consideration of the stated issues with a single important clarification: globalisation began not in recent decades, but earlier. This is reflected in the texts of the researchers, as B. Demianenko states: ‘The term “globalisation” in the sense of “intensive international trade” was first used in the late 1850s by K. Marx in a letter to F. Engels. <...> In 1961, the term was recorded in the English-language dictionary. The modern popularity and widespread use of the term is attributed to a professor at Harvard Business School (Boston, Massachusetts, USA), T. Levitt (1925-2006; Germany – USA), who published in 1983 the article *Globalisation of Markets*.’²

It is hard to disagree with the statement that globalisation is ‘a central element of the rhetoric of contemporary world politics and the subject of a growing number of scientific analytical studies.’³

The problem of periodisation of the main stages of globalisation processes in relation not only to political and economic factors but also to interpersonal

¹Globalisation. (2004). *Encyclopedia of History of Ukraine*. Vol. 2. Kyiv, 688 p. [online] Available at: <http://www.history.org.ua/?termin=Globalizaciya> [Accessed 12 January 2023]. [in Ukr.]

²Demianenko B. Globalisation. *The Great Ukrainian Encyclopaedia*. [online] Available at: <https://vue.gov.ua/Глобалізація> [Accessed 12 January 2023]. [in Ukr.]

³Globalization. (2005). *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics*. Kyiv, pp. 127–130, p. 127 [online] Available at: https://shron1.chtyvo.org.ua/Maklin_Ien/Korotkyi_Oksfordskyi_politychnyi_slovnyk.pdf [in Ukr.]

relations and exchange of ideas is discussed in the article *Globalization and History: Is Globalization a New Phenomenon?*¹

By geopolitical subjectness of a country, we mean the degree of its influence on the rollout and development of world (global) and regional processes, the ability to be self-sufficient as an actor of international politics.² And the above ‘depends on the power and structure of the national economy, financial capacity, the level of the country’s combat readiness, etc. When it comes to the level of subjectness of a country, we mean, primarily, its characteristics and criteria, i.e. the ability of a particular state to comprehend and generalise trends in its development, to formulate national interests, while consistently implementing and enforcing them, to draw up a national goal and a strategy for achieving it.’³

National elites play a special role in this process.⁴

It is worth noting that in most Ukrainian and quite often in Western texts devoted to the phenomenon of globality and modern globalisation, it is seen as something forced, largely negative, which entails the leveling of national cultures, ethnic affiliation, regional peculiarities, etc. However, it is as if the authors of these texts are consciously, and more often subconsciously, guided by the thought pattern stating the subjective and voluntarist origins of globalisation itself and its direction against nation-states and national economies. They say that it is a process caused by the intentional rational activity of social groups/strata/classes localised in quite specific countries (most frequently the so-called ‘golden billion’, followed by the versions of ‘the small people’, ‘world Jewry’ and ‘Freemasonry’), and is beneficial primarily or even exclusively to the initiators of the formation of global world and global humanity. For all other world actors, this process is coerced, and it has not been tamed in time.

¹Steger, M. *Globalization and History: Is Globalization a New Phenomenon?* [online] Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/actrade/9780199662661.003.0002> [Accessed 21 January 2023]. [in Eng.]

²Political subjectivity. *Wikipedia. Free encyclopedia.* [online] Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_subjectivity [Accessed 14 January 2023a]. [in Eng.]

³Maiboroda, O., ed. (2020). *Subject of Ukraine in the Modern World: Assessments, Strategies, Forecasts: An Analytical Report.* Kyiv, 88 p., p. 7. [in Ukr.]

⁴See more about this, e. g., in: Hrabovska, I., Nastoiashcha, K., Talko, T. (2022). The Role of the Ukraine-Centric Elites in the Context of the Philosophy of Ukraine's Subjectness (Dedicated to the 300th Anniversary of Birth of Hryhorii Skovoroda). *Ukrainoznavchyi almanakh* (Ukrainian Studies Almanac), Issue 31, pp. 72–81. [in Ukr.]; Chuprii, L. (2020). Peculiarities of the Formation of the Geopolitical Subjectness of Ukraine in Conditions of Globalization. *Geopolitics of Ukraine: History and Modern Times: A Collection of Scientific Articles*, Issue 2 (25), Uzhhorod, pp. 29-40. [in Ukr.]

The global itself here sounds like the antithesis of the national; the maximum that can be discussed here, at least at the level of declarations, is certain regional associations of related ethnic groups and religious confessions that would resist the current trends in global development ('East Slavic Orthodox unity'). But, if we look more closely, such confrontation, denial, and opposition turns out to be either an alternative project to globalisation and an attempt by its adherents to successfully 'ride' global processes (the case of 'global Islamic jihad') or to create their own, more local project ('East Slavic Orthodox') that would set the rules of the game in the entire global space.

In addition, in the post-Soviet area (and not only there), it is often articulated that the restoration of Ukraine's independence, as well as the emergence of new independent states in the space of the former USSR, contradicts the objective trends of the modern world, which provide for the increasing globalisation of the life of individual nations. One example of a quite honest defence of this position, without diverting to the latest Black Hundreds, the apologetics of the 'liberal empire', or neo-communist rhetoric, is the book *The Union Could Have Been Preserved* published by The Gorbachev Foundation. In the preface to this book, one of its compilers, the former assistant to the USSR president and de facto co-author of the 'new thinking' concept, the professional historian A. Cherniaiev noted: 'Time has vigorously reaffirmed both the justification of the dramatic struggle to save the Union as well as the warnings and predictions regarding the consequences of its collapse. <...> The Union needed radical reform. But simultaneously it needed to preserve, having digested in the cauldron of modernity, everything valuable that had been created over 70 years by a new, unique civilisation - tragic, cruel, sometimes inhumane... It was that which had a huge, sometimes decisive impact on the content and meaning of the entire twentieth century. It yielded numerous creative discoveries and helpful stimuli. It is never too late to use this heritage, though not in spite or at the expense of the independence and sovereignty of the new states, but together with them, and free from imperial subordination, for the benefit of themselves and the former 'metropolis' - Russia.'¹ The book also goes about the evil will of the participants in the 'Belovezha Conspiracy', who, as it is portrayed, destroyed the Union against the wishes of the peoples of the USSR, causing 'pain of losing a great country'. At the same time, A. Cherniaiev denies the negative attitude of the

¹Cherniaiev, A. (2007). Preface to the Second Edition. *The Union Could Have Been Preserved*. In: Loginov, V., ed. *The White Book: Documents and Facts about the Policies of Mikhail Gorbachev to Reform and Preserve the Multinational State*. Moscow, pp. 2-7, pp. 3-4. [in Rus.]

compilers and Gorbachev himself to the fact that ‘the former Soviet republics have become independent, sovereign states.’¹ On the one hand, such ambivalence is typical not only for many Russian politicians and intellectuals using supposedly objective approaches to analyse the collapse of the Soviet empire (the same Cherniaiev recognised the imperial character of the USSR), but also for a large number of Western public figures. On the other hand, subjective and objective factors, etc, imply the following conclusion: it would have been better to avoid the collapse by achieving the evolutionary transformation of the Soviet Union into a non-colonial democratic entity.

It seems that the latter was impossible as a matter of principle because the USSR was at one time created on a mixture of authoritarian and totalitarian foundations, and during the Stalin period it turned into a rigidly centralised totalitarian empire with the Russian people playing the dominant role; the prevailing language of this empire was the ‘Soviet sociolect of the Russian language’ (A. Novikov), and the entire population was repeatedly sifted through with social selective filters, which resulted in the degeneration of the common people. The ‘decaying totalitarianism’ of the Brezhnev era further intensified many of the negative trends of imperial existence, thus leveling the decolonising achievements of the Comintern from the first decade of the USSR. In addition, the collapse of the Soviet Union fit into another wave of colonies gaining independence, directly linked to the processes of globalisation, i.e. objective processes intensified by the activity of national agents.

The first stage of decolonisation was preconditioned by the emergence in the second half of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries of a phenomenon that was called the ‘world market’ with some exaggeration (since China and its satellites, Japan, central Africa and parts of the Middle East were not covered by it). At least it was pertinent to Europe, America, as well as to European and Russian colonies. ‘Marx argued that, despite their shortcomings as instruments of capitalist exploitation, new technologies that expand the possibilities of human interaction across borders ultimately constitute a progressive force in history. They provide the necessary infrastructure for the future cosmopolitan socialist civilisation, at the same time functioning in the present as indispensable organisational tools for the working class destined to carry out the revolution.’²

¹Cherniaiev, A. (2007). Preface to the Second Edition. The Union Could Have Been Preserved. In: Loginov, V., ed. *The White Book: Documents and Facts about the Policies of Mikhail Gorbachev to Reform and Preserve the Multinational State*. Moscow, pp. 2-7, p. 3. [in Rus.]

²Globalization. (2023). *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. [online] Available at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/globalization/> [Accessed 14 January 2023]. [in Eng.]

Meanwhile, only a few European states and two particular Eurasian empires, Ottoman and Russian, possessed geopolitical subjectness (given the speed and specific power of communications at the time).

Marx was right about the connection between new technologies (both industrial and social) and revolutions on a global scale, though it was not actually about proletarian revolutions, but about anti-colonial and national liberation revolutions. The struggle within the already established common market for resources and sales areas, with the spread of Enlightenment ideas, resulted in the independence gained by the 13 British colonies in North America and the formation of the United States, which influenced further events in Europe. Then the political crisis of the ‘civilised world’ caused by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars led to the first wave of successful anti-colonial uprisings. First, the Polish revolution (several stages, starting in the late eighteenth century and ending in defeat in 1830-31), followed by the Second American War of Independence, the liberation of the Latin American colonies of Spain and France (a series of revolutions and wars over a quarter of a century), and finally, the restoration of independent Greece and attempts at revolutionary liberation of a series of ‘European-type colonies’ during 1848–49 are the milestones of this period. However, none of the new states, not even the United States of America (or, more precisely, the Northern United States), acquired geopolitical subjectness at this stage of development. After the Second War of Independence, the latter focused on internal advancement.

The second wave of the anti-colonial movement and corresponding emergence of independent states was a consequence and accompaniment of the ‘first globality’ (J. Maynard Keynes), i.e. the developments of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Keynes wrote: ‘The inhabitant of London could order by telephone, sipping his morning tea in bed, the various products of the whole Earth, in such quantities as he might see fit, and reasonably expect their early delivery upon his doorstep.’¹ It was no longer a world market, but a real globality (the term ‘globalisation’ appeared later) which started with the telegraph, allowing to talk live to Tokyo from London, then radio (‘spark-gap transmitter’), next – transboundary IP telephony, and in addition – the free movement of skilled labour, international social and political organisations, national, and, afterwards and simultaneously, world literature. All of this created

¹Keynes, J. (2001). Global Man, Circa 1913. What Was the Heyday of the Globalized Economy of the Early 20th Century Like? *The Globalist*. In: Keynes, J. (1920). *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. New York, 298 p. [online] Available at: <https://www.theglobalist.com/global-man-circa-1913/> [Accessed 21 January 2023]. [in Eng.]

the basis for mature liberation movements in both the ‘European-type colonies’ and the classical colonies outside Europe. At this development phase, the United States gained geopolitical subjectness, first expanding its borders in America to the north and south, then acquiring the Hawaiian Islands, and later defeating Spain, thus depriving it of its last colonies in the Americas and the Pacific. In Europe, the unified Germany and Italy not only increased their economic potential but also actively intervened in colonial disputes and acquired large-scale possessions in Africa (both) and the Pacific (Germany) – at that time, geopolitical subjectness was impossible without such possessions. Japan has also achieved a geopolitical level of influence by defeating China and Russia in wars. In contrast, the Russian Empire lost its domains in America, Africa, Manchuria and southern Sakhalin, and earlier in Oceania.

Anti-colonial liberation in this period began with Cuba; then came the inherently anti-colonial Balkan Wars. Afterwards, the First World War was unleashed, and two European and two Eurasian empires collapsed, with their former territories passing under the control of a number of independent states created and restored there. As Germany was no longer a relevant geopolitical actor for the next 15 years, and the Ottoman Empire ceased to exist, a new type of geopolitical subjectness emerged on the territory of the former Russian Empire - an idiocratic totalitarian state. At the same time, there was considerable ideological and political resistance to the emergence of new independent states, both on the left wing (‘the agenda of the world revolution’) and on the right (‘the interests of state stability’). As a result of all-embracing pressure (from the Reds, Whites, and Entente) after the First World War, a number of restored and established independent states failed to maintain their status, either turning into autonomies or protectorates of Russia itself, that was also the case within the USSR (‘Union Republics’), or disappearing altogether (independent Kurdistan, conquered by Turkey).

The period between the world wars was characterised not so much by rivalry between imperialist colonial powers, but, on the one hand, by economic protectionism, and, on the other, by competition between political globalisation projects that were largely supranational in nature (the Entente, the USSR and the Comintern led by it, and then the totalitarian states of the new Axis). Let’s just mention the official anthem of the Comintern: ‘Die Parole: Welt-Sowjetunion!’,

‘Our slogan is Worldwide Soviet Union!’.¹ During this period, the United States pursued a policy of isolationism, closing itself off to the boundlessness of America until 1940-41. At the same time, economic processes in the leading countries influenced other countries, although this relationship was not linear. The creation of the Anti-Hitler Coalition (the Allies) in late 1941 became a specific form of globalisation.

After the Second World War, the world was split into ‘two systems’, and concurrently, India, Pakistan, Korea, and the Indochinese states became independent. A new wave of globalisation became a fact in the second half of the 1950s, when inconsistent de-Stalinisation began in the USSR, resulting in greater openness of Soviet society, which had a significant impact on global processes. At the same time, denazification of West Germany and the rejection of imperial ideology and political practice as anti-democratic by most Western societies was indicative of this new wave. With its beginning, the global collapse of the colonial system constructed by the West in the past took place. At the same time, geopolitical subjectness was acquired (even before the formal declaration of independence, during the struggle for self-government in the 1930s) only by India. Moreover, the vast majority of former colonies at the time of their formation did not bear basic political subjectness; they had not formed nations, tribalism dominated, and, in addition, the borders of most of these colonies were artificially carved, which led to ‘hot’ conflicts. The USSR and its colonies, both ‘external’ (Warsaw Pact, Comecon) and ‘internal’ (the so-called ‘national’ union republics), were inviolable. Communist China, with its ‘internal’ colonies (Tibet, Inner Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan or Xinjiang), also proved to be unalterable.

A new wave of globalisation began after the 1970s global energy crisis, and especially after the first stages of perestroika in the USSR. It eventually led to the independence of both the ‘external’ and ‘internal’ Soviet colonies. However, some of the latter were not fully prepared for independent life, and Russia did not cease to be, in effect, an imperial power.

It is worth noting that the independence of the ‘internal’ and ‘external’ USSR colonies was accompanied by references to the principles of democracy. The linkage between decolonisation and democratisation (at least declarative) has always existed. Not least because colonial rule a priori has to be based on methods far from democratic ones, even if the metropolis is itself a democracy (as was the

¹Busch, E. (1928). *A Chronicle of the 20th Century in Songs*. [online] Available at: <https://sites.google.com/site/ernstbush/pesnii-ih-istoria-mp3-file-1/spisok/gimn-kominterna-1928> [Accessed 12 January 2023]. [in Rus.]

case in Britain's relations with India in the 1920s and 30s). Furthermore, the formation processes of a world market and subsequent globalisation are based not only on the exchange of goods, but also on the spread of knowledge and cultural values, including those directly related to democracy. In the eyes of the participants of mass anti-colonial movements, democracy has long been associated with social progress. However, when measures of 'storming and stressing' failed to achieve quick results on the path of national progress, post-colonial states (starting with the Latin American republics) often moved from democratic rule to authoritarianism, and sometimes to totalitarianism.

The Ukrainian issue in this context is related to the fact that, firstly, from the very beginning of globalisation, the Ukrainian society has been figuratively 'swaying' on its waves. Simultaneously, at the very beginning of these processes, the Russian Empire forcibly eradicated even the limited political subjectness of Ukraine and stopped the organic growth of the early modern (Cossack) Ukrainian nation. However, another factor was also in place. The development of the steppes of the Black Sea and Azov regions by Ukrainian settlers, and the Kuban by former Cossacks, together with the production of high-value grain on the occupied lands and its export through the Black Sea ports, were signals of Ukrainians entering into the world market. At that time, Ukrainians were also involved in the global trend of Freemasonry. This ideologically controversial yet progressive movement had a significant impact on political, legal, and sociocultural processes in Western Europe and North America, thereby leaving its mark on modern civilisation. 'Ukrainian Freemasonry cannot be considered without looking at the bearers of its secrets – the so-called Brothers Masons. It was these brothers who created cities and laws, Ukrainian literature, universities, parties and scientific theories in Ukraine. And the 'Ukraine project' itself is also presumably a Masonic invention (after all, the founders of the new state were Masons: Hetman Rozumovskiy, Kotliarevskiy, Hulak-Artemovskiy, Franko, Hrushevskiy, Petliura, and possibly Skovoroda and Taras Shevchenko). <...> Many things regarding the emancipation of a European man were their idea.'¹ Though seeming to be an exaggeration, at the very least, the precept of European Masons (and Ukrainian ones as well) to create an educated community, to print books on a much larger scale than before, while encouraging the development and formation of a literary language based on the living vernacular – which was carried out in Ukrainian culture by the orator (called 'vytiia') of the Poltava lodge Ivan Kotliarevskiy – seems undeniable. The initial Ukrainian political projects

¹Savchenko, V. (2008). *Masonic Ukraine*. Kyiv, 336 p., p. 5. [in Ukr.]

and organisations of the first half of the nineteenth century were also launched not without the influence of Freemasonry; therefore, the phenomenon of Taras Shevchenko arose. Generally, a lot has been written about the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, but for some reason, though, almost no attention is paid to Mykhailo (Michał) Czajkowski's attempt to revive the Cossack army (during the Crimean (Eastern) War) for warfare against the Russian Empire. The interval between the globalisation waves is filled with attempts to constitute Ukrainian culture-promotion, educational, economic (via cooperation), and political structures that operated in the all-Russian context, but this is a different subject matter. What is noteworthy is that the new wave of globalisation and anti-colonial revolutions in the world synchronise with the emergence of Ukrainian informal and formal communities in both the west and east of the country, focused on cultural independence and political subjectness of Ukraine. It was at this time that Larysa Kosach wrote to her uncle, the political emigrant Mykhailo Drahomanov, that 'we rejected the name "Ukrainophiles" and call ourselves simply Ukrainians, because that's who we are, free from all the "philia" stuff.'¹ And while Drahomanov's pseudonym 'Ukrainian' was situational, his niece became precisely Lesia Ukrainka. The 1890s saw the rise of Ukrainian political parties in Galicia and the Brotherhood of Taras in the Dnipro Great Ukraine region, followed by the turbulent events of the early twentieth century, among which the printing of Gospel translations is still underestimated, as a literary language that can adequately convey the meaning of the Holy Scriptures is capable of expressing all other meanings. The events of the First World War and the Ukrainian Revolution are likewise a separate topic. This was followed by the independent UPR, ZUNR, and the Ukrainian state (i.e. the Second Hetmanate), the nominally independent Ukrainian SSR, and the Kremlin, tactically forced to introduce Bolshevik Ukrainisation. Since 1918-19, Ukraine has become a geopolitical factor, and none of the major world and European powers could ignore the Ukrainian Question, and those who tried to do so, such as the Second Polish Republic and later the USSR, failed. However, it was a factor, still not being an actual, full-fledged subject, albeit some manifestations of an actor and a genuine national subject were in place to a larger or smaller extent, depending on the circumstances of a particular era.

In this sense, the Act of Unification of January 22, 1919, was of great symbolic significance, with a symbol being 'a reality that is greater than itself'

¹03/17/1891 Lesia Ukrainka to M. Drahomanov. (1978). *Collection of Works in 12 volumes*. Vol. 10. Kyiv, pp. 82–86, p. 86. [in Ukr.]

(P. Florenskyi). From that moment on, politicians of Moscow, Warsaw, and Berlin had to take into account the issue of the unity of all Ukrainian lands. An ethnic Russian, Bolshevik Khrushchev, who was at the head of Soviet Ukraine, persistently sought to annex not only Galicia, Bukovyna, and Transcarpathia, but also Beresteishchyna, Kholmshchyna, and some other territories in the late 1930s and early 1940s. And Khrushchev's argument in his dispute with Stalin was that these were the Ukrainian borders defined in 1919 during the period of the Ukrainian People's Republic. In general, the Russian Bolsheviks were the most successful of the forces external to Ukraine in exploiting the idea and symbolism of unity. For example, in 1940, when demanding that Romania 'return' Bessarabia to the USSR and hand over Northern Bukovyna to it, the Kremlin claimed that this was due to the 'centuries-old unity of Bessarabia, inhabited mainly by Ukrainians, with the Ukrainian Soviet Republic' and the demography of Bukovyna, 'whose population is overwhelmingly linked to Soviet Ukraine by a common historical destiny, as well as by a common language and ethnic composition.'¹

Secondly, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Ukraine had a specific status of a 'European-type colony', noted and studied by Yu. Bachynskyi (1895) and M. Volobuiev (1928), and its division first between two empires, then between four states gave Leon Trotsky, who in the second half of the 1930s actively defended the idea of Ukraine's independence – especially from the 'imperial and chauvinistic' Soviet Union – the grounds to compare it to Poland, the 'crucified Christ of Europe' of the nineteenth century: 'Crucified by four powers, the Ukraine now occupies in the fate of Europe the same position that was once occupied by Poland.'^{2,3} The above accounts for the fact of not only 'belated nation-building' (M. Riabchuk), but also belated decolonisation.

As a result, Ukrainians are often misunderstood in the Western world. Moreover, Ukrainians often misunderstand themselves when trying to copy developed countries, while in many dimensions, Ukraine should leave aside the

¹*Telegram of the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR V. Molotov to the Plenipotentiary Representative of the USSR in the Kingdom of Romania A. Lavrentiev, dated June 27, 1940.* [online] Available at: https://www.hrono.ru/dokum/194_dok/19400627lavr.html [Accessed 12 January 2023]. [in Rus.]

²Hrabovskyi, S. (2018). Post-Colonial Studies and Ukrainian Marxism. *Filosofska dumka* (Philosophical Thought), Issue 4, pp. 53-70. [in Ukr.]

³Trotsky, L. The Problem of the Ukraine. [online] Available at: <https://www.marxists.org/russkij/trotsky/works/trotm465.html>. [Accessed 12 January 2023]. [in Rus.]

most modern Western management technologies and use the methods of successful postcolonial countries, including those of past decades and even centuries. It is relevant to the basics of statecraft, from creating a coherent and structured national economy, which is impossible without the leading role of institutional structures, to state promotion of the transition to an equally structured and coherent national culture. As Anne Applebaum noted just after the Russian invasion in 2014, ‘In the nineteenth century, no sensible freedom fighter would have imagined it possible to create a modern state, let alone a democracy, without some kind of nationalist movement behind it. Only people who feel some kind of allegiance to their society - people who celebrate their national language, literature, and history, people who sing national songs and repeat national legends - are going to work on that society's behalf.’¹ And these were already the times of the ‘world market’ and ‘first globality’; the situation has not fundamentally changed in the future, so Applebaum clearly emphasised that democratic nationalism is exactly what Ukraine needs, and one should not pay attention to those Western politicians and intellectuals who denounce nationalism, because in fact they also profess it, albeit replacing it with the words ‘national greatness’ or ‘national pride’.

All the more reason not to pay attention to Putin & Co., who launched a large-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, hiding behind the hobgoblin of a desperate need to destroy ‘Ukrainian nationalism and Nazism’. Meanwhile, Russia itself is now an imperialist fascist state, with all the signs of one, as historian Timothy Snyder (USA) has convincingly proved.² And it should be noted that national-state and, especially, geopolitical subjectness cannot be acquired without the ‘enzyme’ of nationalism. This has been proven in practice: the unification of Germany in the nineteenth century, the restoration of Poland in the twentieth century, and, finally, the creation of Israel (all the cases took place under not very favourable external circumstances), and their transition to the status of geopolitical powers cannot be imagined without the dominance of the pertinent nationalism. At the same time, for example, it is nationalism in the form of Zionism that allows Israel to withstand many of the negative effects of

¹Applebaum, A. (2014). Nationalism Is Exactly What Ukraine Needs. Democracy fails when citizens don’t believe their country is worth fighting for. *The Atlantic*. [online] Available at: <https://www.anneapplebaum.com/2014/05/12/nationalism-is-exactly-what-ukraine-needs/> [Accessed 14 January 2023]. [in Eng.]

²Snyder, T. (2022). We Should Say It. Russia Is Fascist. *The New York Times*. An Opinion. [online] Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/19/opinion/russia-fascism-ukraine-putin.html> [Accessed 04 February 2023]. [in Eng.]

globalisation. Of course, the question of the type of nationalism is important, as this concept includes both left and right-wing ideological currents.

For a long time, Ukraine has been trying to balance between globalisation projects, each of which has sought to 'ride' objective processes in the world in its own way: Russian ('Russian world'), European continental (EU), and transatlantic (US-Britain-Canada), which is preferred by a slew of post-totalitarian states that are members of the EU and NATO. There is also the Islamist project of a 'global caliphate', with various forces claiming leadership over, and which directly affects Crimea. In this context, the issues of socioeconomic, cultural and humanitarian development of a post-colonial country, even a fairly developed one, turn out to have great specificity. In such a country, the primary tasks do not lie in eliminating state property or restructuring the economy according to the canons of liberalism, but rather in resolving the question of which capital dominates: efficient or inefficient, national or comprador (subordinate) capital. Therefore, for a post-colonial country to develop properly, redistribution of large property is objectively essential, so that it is in the hands of a) global civilised (not adventurous, or venture) capital; b) efficient domestic national capital; and c) not bribable state managers.

In a post-colonial reality, the state must strictly control the information business and corner the national radio and television, as with such leverage, it is necessary to change the public perspective. After all, a significant part of the masses in such a nominally independent country still perceives itself through the eyes of the metropolis, taking its own image from there, and therefore, it needs to be helped to see itself adequately, with all its real virtues and vices.

The concepts of 'information imperialism' and 'postcolonial culture', *inter alia*, are fundamental to the study of the current social climate in Ukraine and the country's overall modernisation. We should take into account the correct remark of Anthony Smith, who stated that the newly emerged 'global culture is without time. Forever pursuing an elusive present, an artificial and standardized universal culture has no historical background, no developmental rhythm, no sense of time and sequence. Contextless and timeless, this artificial global culture may quarry the past for illustrative purposes or cynically use motifs from particular pasts with eclectic caprice, but it refuses to locate itself in history. Stripped of any sense of development beyond the performative present, and alien to all ideas of 'roots', the genuine global culture is fluid, ubiquitous, formless and historically shallow <...> These trends are, in all likelihood, here to stay, at least for some decades. But what do they add up to? Can large numbers of men and women live by them,

as well as with them? Do they amount to a new culture, a new lifestyle that is also a way of life, one that can inspire as well as comfort human beings for loss and grief and death? What memories, which myths and symbols, values and identities, can such a global culture offer?’¹ This remark seems highly reasonable not only in the context of general realities of social life but also in interpersonal relationships of the human ‘selves’. After all, the question is whether both a sane human self and national communities are possible at all when there is a lack of roots, historical timelessness, and when only a purely momentary and pragmatic approach to a large sum of values of both local and national, and indeed global significance does exist?

Let us note one more factor related to the place of Ukraine in contemporary globalisation processes. The Russian Empire (even if it was called something else) always pursued an aggressive policy towards Ukrainians whenever it could, which in many cases escalated into armed violence and colonial wars, be it ‘cold’ (information and cultural), ‘hybrid’ or ‘hot’. This cannot be ignored. One of the main tools (and, at the same time, goals) of all types of such warfare in relation to Ukraine has always been and still is an attempt to deprive Ukrainians of their identity. The mythologem of ‘one people’ was clearly outlined in Vladimir Putin’s keynote article *On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians* published a few months before Russia’s large-scale invasion. In fact, it is a mythologem rooted in imperial times, which was pushed to the margins during the Bolshevik era and transformed into the concept of ‘three brotherly peoples’. Later, it was recreated to some extent as the mythologem of the ‘one Soviet people’, and, following the collapse of the USSR, first through the efforts of amateur Black Hundreders, and then the authorities, it was converted into the latest mythologems of the ‘Russian world’ and ‘one people’. Putin’s article refers not only to the historical unity of Russians and Ukrainians, but also narrates as if Ukraine were a Russian periphery, so it could be independent only in partnership with Russia, while the imperialist West are said to be ruling and manipulating Ukraine against the interests of its people. ‘Little Russians in many ways helped build a big common country – its statehood, culture, and science. <...> not just complete dependence but direct external control, including the supervision of the Ukrainian authorities, security services and armed forces by foreign advisers, military “development” of the territory of Ukraine and deployment of NATO infrastructure. <...> And we will never allow our historical territories and people close to us living there to be used against Russia. <...> I am confident that true

¹Smith, A. (2006). *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*. Kyiv, 320 p., pp. 40-41. [in Ukr.]

sovereignty of Ukraine is possible only in partnership with Russia.’¹ It is a large-scale war and mass murder of Ukrainians that became an instrument of non-allowance.

Therefore, finding efficient means to fight fascist Russia and defeating it are among the conditions for the survival of the Ukrainian nation and state. The hard times of the country’s existence also call for an unprecedented ‘mobilisation’ of social and humanitarian academic and university science, as such a ‘mobilisation’, addressed to the broad masses, will have an effect equal to hundreds of tanks and aircraft.

The current stage of globalisation, which is defined by both the clash of its development projects as well as by numerous full-scale ‘hot’ conflicts between them, requires special research. Nevertheless, one can already state that much in the victory of certain projects depends on Ukraine. At the same time, it is about the completion of the anti-colonial revolution in Ukraine and a number of other post-Soviet states, overcoming Russian neocolonialism in the information, cultural, social and economic spheres, and about the acquisition of geopolitical subjectness by the state of Ukraine and the Ukrainian nation in a world dominated by globalisation. Finally, we are also talking about the relief of the national trauma caused by the genocide of the early 1930s, followed by the Soviet terror of the ensuing decades, with the help of all-encompassing heroic feats.

1.2. Latent geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine as a reality and a scientific problem

The issue of geopolitical subjectness has recently become increasingly acute in world science, including in Ukraine. The main reasons for this lie not so much in theoretical as in practical terms. After all, instead of the imminent ‘end of history’ predicted in the early 1990s and the ‘global triumph of liberal ideology’, the struggle of various scenarios of globalisation, be it complementary or mutually exclusive ones, has become progressively evident with each passing year. Furthermore, totalitarianism has once again transformed from a ‘fossil’ ideology and state formation to one of the leading geopolitical forces of our time, though Western political science and philosophy have managed to cast aside the tools for understanding it, considering them ‘outdated’. In fact, it is not this toolkit that is outdated, but the inability/unwillingness to ‘call a spade a spade’, as French

¹Putin, V. (2021). *On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians*. [online] Available at: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181> [Accessed 12 January 2023]. [in Rus.]

intellectuals demanded in the underground publications. Being members of the Resistance Movement (La Résistance), they fully experienced the consequences of the French political elite's avoidance of an adequate assessment of Nazi totalitarianism and the substantial desubjectification of most of the French nation. At that time, the French managed to overcome these hardships in general, not least thanks to intellectual reflection, embodied in political practice and mass consciousness. And the difference between authoritarianism (which is now fashionable to refer to when implying all non-democratic states and regimes) and totalitarianism can be observed with the naked eye, through just comparing the Second Polish Republic of the early 1930s to the USSR of the same period, for their governments and the personalities of Piłsudski and Stalin.

At present, both returning to the classical concepts of totalitarianism, developed primarily in the West, with their reflection in terms of new geopolitical architecture, as well as discovering effective ways to overcome (neo)totalitarianism in various forms of chaotic combination of the archaic and postmodern, seem urgent. One of these ways leads through the 'rehabilitation' of the geopolitical subjectness of the nation, the country and the state. All of this directly concerns Ukraine, so the urgent need today is to independently reassess the world's and our own experiences, linking them to the military realities of today. In this regard, analysing the intrinsic characteristics of the country's latent geopolitical subjectness as a theoretical and practical component of Ukrainian reality is a necessary element of the study of the problem of geopolitical subjectness. Moreover, the problem of the latent subjectness of Ukraine as a separate topic is virtually absent in the scientific works of domestic authors.

As mentioned in the previous subsection, by geopolitical subjectness of a nation we mean the degree of its influence on the rollout and development of world (global) and regional processes, the ability to be self-sufficient as an actor of international politics.¹ At the same time, we can talk about a stable geopolitical subjectness as a *fait accompli* (the G7 states), or an incomplete, unsustainable geopolitical subjectness, sometimes not very steady, and occasionally even on the verge of collapse (some states of G20, not to mention nations less powerful in terms of financial capacity, economy, military might and politics, albeit with a population of several hundred million people and considerable supplies of mineral resources). Of course, considering certain historical circumstances, geopolitical subjectness may be newly formed or only emerging, while the very

¹Subjectivity and objectivity (philosophy). *Wikipedia*. [online] Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subjectivity> [Accessed 14 January 2023]. [in Eng.]

fact of its existence provokes discussions where the main argument should not be theoretical concepts but significant practical actions.

In contrast, the term ‘latent geopolitical subjectness’ refers to the hidden, potential or unrealised aspects of a country’s geopolitical position or role. The scope of its meaning can include not only current, actual components, but, above all, future potential.

Among the diverse aspects of latent geopolitical subjectness, the distinguishable ones are as follows: economic (significant factors of production, technological capability, transit opportunities that can play an important role in the global economy in the future), power (strong mobilisation potential and strategic location empowering a country to influence the world arena), scientific and educational (investments in science and education, scientific schools that are actively involved in the creation and implementation of innovative technologies), energy (control over considerable energy resources, both existing and potential), demographic (subject to the formation of a strong domestic market and impact on global demographic trends). Latent geopolitical subjectness can be linked to the long-term development strategies, realisation of reforms, as well as global developments and changes in the international political and economic environment.

The transformation of latent geopolitical subjectness into authentic subjectness depends on various conditions and factors, both internal and external. There are several key conditions under which a country can become a real geopolitical actor.

First of all, it is economic development. Sustained economic growth, both quantitative and qualitative, and the introduction of innovations help to strengthen the country’s position in the global economy and, consequently, on the political scene. The next factor is the stability of the political system, either democratic or authoritarian, with a modernisation leaning. Totalitarianism can also, under certain circumstances, contribute to the acquisition of geopolitical subjectness, but whether such agency has a historical perspective or leads to the self-destruction of this state is the question. Another factor, related to the previous ones and no less important, is the ability to guarantee its security and protect its interests, including the possession of sufficient power potential. At the same time, the aptitude for forging interstate alliances (including defence ones) and strategically interacting with other geopolitical players is important. The geographical location of a state, its resources and access to key regions of the world can significantly strengthen its geopolitical subjectness. Finally, science,

education and human capital play an important role, as high-quality education, development of science and technological innovations, professional staff, and growth of human capital provide the basis for sustainable development and strengthening of the nation's geopolitical role. The combination of these factors and their successful implementation both domestically and at the foreign level may cause the latent geopolitical subjectness to become a reality and be realised in the country's active and noteworthy participation in global events and processes.

The phenomenon of latent geopolitical subjectness in relation to Ukraine is virtually unexplored. Instead, in the first half of the 1990s, a related phenomenon, called the latent era of Ukrainian statehood during the second half of the 14th to late 16th centuries, associated with the Lithuanian-Ruthenian state, became the subject of scholarly attention: 'Latent statehood is a state of existence of a people whose sovereignty is externally limited, and whose internal autonomy is extended only to the structure of government, administration, courts, etc. In this case, latency implies outer control over the interior situation, but it also allows for a certain degree of autonomy, which is exercised in a self-governing mode. Thus, latent statehood is a form of political life that is carried out both with the help of and based on national traditions, concurred with the intervention of an external force that assumes legislative, military and political supremacy. Statehood turns into a latent one when the government is unable to establish its own indivisible sovereignty over its ethnic lands, but shares it with other states in various proportions, be it forcibly or voluntarily.'¹ Notwithstanding the foregoing, it was the Lithuanian-Ruthenian state as a whole that possessed geopolitical subjectness, cleared the Northern Black Sea region of nomads, and founded the city and port of Kotsiubiieve (later known as Hacıbey and today's Odesa). However, it was forced to retreat from the steppes because it lacked sufficient forces to control them. It is worth noting that at the end of this book, Ukraine is discussed as a subject of geopolitics. The authors note that in the case of orientation towards Russia, such subjectness is unattainable, but when it comes to Western inclination, it is achievable. 'Leonid Kravchuk and his entourage have attempted to make Ukraine a subject of geopolitics, primarily by joining pan-European political structures.'² The authors went on to outline the possibilities for Ukraine to become a regional geopolitical actor, having a weighty say in

¹Hrabovskyi, S., Stavroiani, S., Shkliar, L. (1995a). *Essays on the History of the Ukrainian State Formation*. Kyiv, 608 p., pp. 115-116. [in Ukr.]

²Hrabovskyi, S., Stavroiani, S., Shkliar, L. (1995b). *Essays on the History of the Ukrainian State Formation*. Kyiv, 608 p., p. 481. [in Ukr.]

European, Mediterranean and Eurasian geopolitics in general. These ideas were further developed in a series of articles in the mid- and second half of the 1990s.

Historically, latent and sometimes manifest, clearly defined geopolitical subjectness is not necessarily directly related to statehood. For example, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, with its early modern gentry nation, had a strong geopolitical subjectness for several centuries, but was gradually losing it during the seventeenth century. As a result, in 1795, the Poles lost their statehood altogether, but yet remained a geopolitical subject, and even more so, they strengthened their role in Europe, which was engulfed in revolutions. A permanent insurgency broke out, controlling large areas, and Polish armed forces took part in the wars of the French Republic and then the Empire. In 1807, Napoleon I restored Polish statehood, which had been dependent on France, in the form of the Duchy of Warsaw (in Polish sources, *Księstwo Warszawskie*), which existed until 1815. After that, Napoleon's victors were forced to leave the autonomous Free City of Kraków (until 1846) and the Congress Kingdom of Poland, which was part of the Russian Empire (until 1831). Although even after the loss of its parts of autonomy, which is also considered a form of statehood, Poland was a subject of geopolitics as the 'crucified Christ of Europe' (a popular formula of the time). It could be evidenced by the participation in the all-European Revolution of 1848-49, the uprising of 1863-64 in the Russian Empire, active creation of Polish culture on its historical territory and in exile (Fryderyk Chopin, Stanisław Moniuszko, Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Jan Matejko, Adam Mickiewicz, Stefan Żeromski, et alii., culminating in the 1905 Nobel Prize for Henryk Sienkiewicz for his epic historical novels glorifying the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), the armed struggle in the Russian Empire in the form of partisan attacks led by the future leader of the restored state, Piłsudski, and the constant struggle for independence. In 1849, even Friedrich Engels, who was rather unfavourably disposed towards the Slavic peoples, including Ukrainians, recognised Poland's geopolitical subjectness. In other words, Poland was a significant geopolitical actor in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, while being, what is more, a global actor (given its influence on several leading empires and large-scale Polish emigration). At the same time, this subjectness had a quite specific and paradoxical character, as noted by Eva Thompson, a US scholar of Polish descent, positing: 'Poland was, and in a sense remained, a

colonising country (referring to Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus) that was itself colonised.’¹

At the end of 1918, the Second Polish Republic emerged as an independent state, which immediately unleashed aggressive wars with the similarly newly formed Czechoslovakia, the Ukrainian People’s Republic, the Western Ukrainian People’s Republic and the Republic of Lithuania, claiming to be the leading geopolitical actor in Central and Eastern Europe. In 1920, the Polish Army, with the support of the UPR’s Efficient Army, thwarted Soviet plans to bring the Bolshevik revolution to Western Europe at the point of the bayonet. The situation of the late eighteenth century was to a large extent repeated after the division of the Second Polish Republic between the Third Reich and the USSR in 1939. An ‘underground state’ emerged with its own institutions, including the armed forces (Armia Krajowa), and large Polish formations continued to fight the Nazis and their allies on all European fronts. After the Second World War, Poland lost its geopolitical subjectness for a while. Still, in 1956, the new anti-Stalinist communist leadership took the plunge to enter into a conflict with Moscow. Consequently, the latter was forced to allow Warsaw some political and economic autonomy, at the same time keeping on Polish territory the so-called ‘Northern Group of Troops’, with its number ranging from 200,000 to 60,000 ‘bayonets’ (each such group of troops significantly depleted Soviet resources). 1968 was the year of student protests demanding ‘socialism with a human face’, and 1970 in Poland was marked by massive labour strikes that resulted in the rotation of the party leadership. In 1980, ‘Solidarność’ was launched based on a combination of the mass labour movement and groups of dissident intellectuals, which gained worldwide resonance. Ultimately, in the late 1980s, with a peaceful transition of power from the Communists to the democratic parties, the ‘Polish miracle’ began, i.e., a comprehensive economic reform that yielded rapid positive results. And finally, the Third Polish Republic, which emerged after the overthrow of the Communists, was the farther, the less critical of the legacy of interwar Poland, which led to a range of acute geopolitical problems.

One more example of a European country with latent geopolitical subjectness is Ireland. Back in the thirteenth century, it was almost completely conquered by England. Though, by the beginning of the nineteenth century London had not established full control over Ireland: there were constant armed

¹Thompson, E. (2008). Postcolonial Reflections. *Porównania. Komparatystyka i Studia Postkolonialne* (Comparisons. Comparative Literature and Postcolonial Studies), Vol. 5, pp. 113-126., p.114. [in Pol.]

uprisings, proclamations restoring independence (up to the declaration of a republic in 1798 under the influence of revolutionary France), and concurrently a certain autonomy existed, which was abolished in 1801 by incorporation of Ireland as part of Britain into the newly created United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Throughout the nineteenth century, there was a struggle for Home Rule (self-government), sometimes armed, which had a significant impact on the life of the British Empire, Europe, and America (Irish emigration became a weighty factor in the political life of the United States). ‘Among the exiles both in the United States and in Britain, the Fenian movement spread widely. A secret revolutionary society named for the Fianna, an Irish armed force of legendary times, it aimed at securing Ireland’s independence by exploiting every opportunity to injure British interests and, ultimately, to break the British connection.’¹ In 1914, the British Parliament voted in favour of the Home Rule Bill, but its implementation was postponed until after the First World War. In 1916, the Irish did not wait for this; instead, they rebelled and declared a republic. The uprising was suppressed after fierce fighting. Nevertheless, the republic was proclaimed again in 1919. Two years of war with the British Empire ended with an agreement on the establishment of Ireland as a British dominion. As for World War II, Ireland remained neutral, though a part of the British Empire. Eventually, the republic was proclaimed for the last time in 1949. The culture created by the Irish, if we take the pre-independence period (Swift, Shaw, Yeats, Wilde, Joyce, Beckett), had a significant impact on the culture of the metropolis (even, for example, on the work of the famous rock band ‘The Beatles’, two of whose members had Irish roots) and became a factor in world culture. However, we can hardly speak of Ireland’s manifest geopolitical subjectness.

The Czech Republic demonstrates a rather intermediate option in this regard. In the fifteenth century, the Kingdom of Bohemia, which became the centre of the Hussite movement, was one of the political centres of Europe. Yet in the early seventeenth century, it fell into a state of extreme decline, losing not only its independence but also its autonomy. Under the influence of the French Revolution in the late eighteenth century, a national revival unfolded throughout Czechia, thanks to the efforts of Josef Dobrovský, František Palacký, Pavel Josef Šafařík, and others. This movement essentially formed the basis of a modern nation, intertwined with pan-Slavism. The question of national independence was not raised until the twentieth century, but the Czechs had a significant impact on

¹Ireland. *Britannica*. [online] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ireland/The-rise-of-Fenianism> [Accessed 02 March 2024]. [in Ukr.]

European political developments. The ‘counter-revolutionary nation’ (or Völkerabfälle, according to Engels) significantly hindered attempts to unite Germany and Austria into a single state by revolutionary means, which would have crushed and dissolved the Slavs within its borders. The Pan-Slavic Congress in Prague in 1848 was a manifestation of the existence of Slavic peoples with their potential, including Ruthenian-Ukrainians, divided between the two empires. During the second half of the nineteenth century, Czechia built up its national identity. Eventually, it raised the question of transforming the dual ‘Danube Monarchy’ (Austria and Hungary, with their own parliaments, governments, and armies) into a triple monarchy with the addition of the Czech Republic. With failure, the question of independence arose, promoted by the philosopher and politician Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. Czech regiments on the front lines of the First World War did not simply surrender; instead, they joined the Entente, thus forming the Czechoslovak army. In 1918, the Czechoslovak Legion in the east caused serious problems for the Russian Bolsheviks, who tried to disarm it. As a result, the Czechs became one of the factors in the dismantling of the Austro-Hungarian empire, with their latent subjectness turning into an actual one. Twenty years later, Czechoslovakia became the first state to give an armed rebuff to the Nazis, and it was successful. Thus, on September 13, 1938, local Nazis launched a rebellion in the Sudetenland, inhabited by a German-speaking minority; in response, the Czech government imposed martial law and sent police units and regular troops against the insurgents. After two days of fighting, the armed uprising was suppressed. Then, the 20,000 Sudeten German Free Corps (SFK), formed of SS men, moved out of the Third Reich and launched hostilities and terrorist attacks in the border areas of Czechoslovakia. While the Czech soldiers were fighting with dignity, ‘the Western press, including the liberal outlets, was racing to ‘put pressure on Czechoslovakia’ and ‘ensure the rights of the German people to reunite with the country of their origin’... On September 19, the ambassadors of Britain and France conveyed to [President] Beneš the demand of their governments to withdraw the Czechoslovak troops from the conflict zone and cede to Germany the territories inhabited by their ‘fellow-countrymen’. After all, though the inhabitants of the Sudetenland were never actually part of Germany, with a large number of Czechs, they were handed over to the Third Reich as a result of the Munich Agreement. Ultimately, Czechoslovakia ceased to exist on March 15, 1939, with a significantly reduced Slovakia becoming a nominally independent ally of Hitler. The Czech Republic was made part of Germany as the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, being

exploited as a powerful armoury of the Third Reich. The disillusionment of ordinary Czechs with Western democracy was so strong that nothing resembling the Polish Resistance Movement arose there. Separate Czech and Czechoslovak formations fought on different fronts (the largest of them, 1st Czechoslovak General Svoboda's Army Corps, consisted of Volhynian Czechs and Transcarpathian Ukrainians). Neither the Slovak National Uprising of 1944 nor the Prague Uprising of 1945 changed the strategic situation. After the war, Czechoslovakia became a reliable constituent of the Soviet bloc until the Prague Spring of 1968, when an attempt was made to transition to 'socialism with a human face', which threatened the Kremlin's geopolitical ambitions and led, therefore, to Soviet occupation. A year later, resistance to the occupiers was, by and large, suppressed, and the so-called 'normalisation', or 'soft restalinisation', began. Later on, defiance against 'normalisation' was primarily exerted by small groups of dissidents and emigrants, the most famous of whom were the writers Václav Havel and Milan Kundera. However, despite 'normalisation,' the USSR was forced to keep over a hundred thousand troops of the Central Group of Forces in Czechoslovakia. In the autumn of 1989, the Velvet Revolution was set in motion in Czechoslovakia, becoming a symbol of a non-violent transition to another socio-political system. A few years later, the 'good divorce' of Czechs and Slovaks was agreed, which also turned into a symbol, especially against the backdrop of warfare and genocide in Yugoslavia. Subsequently, the Czech Republic has become a 'standard' wealthy state that has successfully modernised its economy. Today, Czechia is consistently and without any fuss aiding Ukraine to repel Russian aggression. It seems that the Czechs simply do not aspire to a permanently manifest geopolitical subjectness.¹

Ukraine was no exception among the countries where controversial and dramatic processes took place. In terms of history, at certain times, its geopolitical subjectness fluctuated between a latent and an unstable manifest one, while in other periods it dropped to almost zero.

1.3. The historical formation of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness from the initial stages to the end of the 19th century

As noted above, Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness after the Middle Ages and in the Modern era (in historical terms) oscillated between latent, unstable and

¹Hrabovskiy, S. (2018). *Pact that Started the War. Episodes of the Great History of 20th Century*. 2nd ed. ext. Nizhyn, 72 p. [in Ukr.]

actually relevant; sometimes, it fell close to zero. In the era of Kyivan Rus, the situation was fundamentally different: as Karl Marx wrote in the work banned in the USSR *Secret Diplomacy of the 18th Century*, the former ‘empire of the Rurikids’ had been an Eastern European equivalent of the Carolingian Empire, serving the role of the basis for the emergence of about ten future states.¹ Therefore, Rus was a real geopolitical subject, competing with the Eastern Roman Empire, i.e. Byzantium - in general, one can agree with this conclusion. In the 13th century, the leading position of Kyiv moved to the Galician-Volyn Kingdom (the Kingdom of Ruthenia) and the Novgorod Republic, which later became the main enemy of Muscovy; however, the former lost its statehood in the 14th century, while the role of the latter significantly declined and came to naught after the destruction of Novgorod and the extermination of most Novgorodians by Muscovites in the 16th century. In the 15th and 16th centuries, the core of Ukraine's latent geopolitical subjectness included the possessions of the Ostrogski princes, whose house offered numerous prominent military leaders and patrons of religious and cultural processes. In the end of the 16th century, the role of the bearer of latent geopolitical subjectness (which occasionally acquired the features of relevancy under Hetman Sahaidachnyi) passed to the Ukrainian Cossacks, both the Zaporozhian and the Registered ones.

Can it be assumed that the times of the Khmelnytskyi Uprising and the periods of the hetmanship of Ivan Vyhovskyi and of Petro Doroshenko witnessed the emergence of Ukraine as a relatively independent geopolitical subject? In our opinion, the answer is that it is possible as well as necessary. Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, who began the rebellion merely as a Cossack leader, quickly turned into a national one, with unification of all territories of Ukraine-Rus up to the San river as his determined goal; in the words of the hetman, the border would have become ‘as it was under the ancient princes of Rus.’ It is worth noting that the uprising began in the year of the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which marked the transition from the Europe of monarchs to the Europe of nations characterized by the equal rights of religions and the state sovereignty over certain territories (at least in Western Europe). It was not only about monarchies, but also about republics: as stated about one of the treaty’s decisions, ‘this peace legitimised the United Provinces of the Netherlands and the Swiss Confederation in the form of independent republics, formally recognizing the

¹Marx, K. (1857). ‘Chapter IV’, *Revelations of the Diplomatic History of the 18th Century*. [online] Available at: <https://marxists.architexturez.net/archive/marx/works/1857/russia/ch04.htm> [in Eng.]

status that these two states had actually had for many decades'¹; moreover, the English parliament agreed on the execution of the king of England and proclaimed a republic in the following year. The Khmelnytskyi uprising embraced those main trends of the time, but the state of belonging to Southeast Europe was dictating the necessity to combine the internal republican system with one or another dynastic 'umbrella', and the negotiated Pereiaslav Treaty of 1654 implied the same goal on the part of the Ukrainian state; Moscow, in contrast, interpreted the agreement as the complete subordination of Ukrainian lands to the tsar, so it de facto lasted only a year. After Khmelnytskyi's death, Hetman Ivan Vyhovskyi sought another way to legitimise the *Patria Cosacorum* than an accord with the despotic Kremlin. Accordingly, Hetman Vyhovskyi's chancellor Yurii Nemyrych secured the conclusion of a treaty 'between, on the one hand, the estates of the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland and of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and, on the other one, the most noble Hetman and the Zaporozhian Host,'² which the official and the Cossack elite were deeming as a way out of the difficult geopolitical situation.

The treaty envisaged the transformation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth into a confederation of the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Grand Principality of Rus, i.e. Ukraine. According to the agreement, the Ukrainian state would consist of the Bratslav, Volyn, Kyiv, Podolsk, Chernihiv and partly the Ruthenian voivodeships (the same as Galicia). The political body was stipulated as follows: 'The National Assembly, that is the elected parliament, would be declared the legislative body on the territory of the Grand Principality of Rus, while the executive power would be to belong to the hetman having been elected for life and having been approved by the king.'³ The Ukrainian state was recognized the future right to have the treasury, a mint located in Kyiv, a tribunal, the 60-thousand-strong registered and the 10-thousand-strong mercenary armies (which resulted in one of the most powerful armed forces in the Old World). The goal of the federation was outlined

¹Augustyn, A., ed. (2025). *Peace of Westphalia*. In: J. Abella, S. Aikerson, M. Anderson, eds., et al. *Britannica* [Website]. Chicago. [online] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Peace-of-Westphalia> [in Eng.]

²The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Cossack Hetmenate. (2010a). *The Treaty of Hadiach*. Translated by V. Shevchuk. *The Internet Archive*. San Francisco. [online] Available at: <https://surl.li/rkrjbs> [in Ukr.]

³Yakovenko, N. (2006). *An Outline of the History of Medieval and Early Modern Ukraine*. Kyiv, p. 373. [in Ukr.]

in the lines of the agreement: 'The collaborative council and the shared forces of the peoples should be prepared against any enemy.'¹

However, the Sejm of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was unable to approve the equality of Ukraine and of the Ukrainians, with the both sides losing a chance, thus Moscow consequently hastened to formalize an 'eternal peace' with Warsaw (1667), under which the factual division of Ukraine was agreed upon. The last hetman with the authority over both banks of the Dnipro river Petro Doroshenko tried to restore the *Patria Cosacorum*'s status of an independent geopolitical subject; unfortunately, he failed to do so. Subsequently, Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness acquired the latent character under the hetmanship periods of Ivan Mazepa, of Pylyp Orlyk, of Danylo Apostol and of Kyrylo Razumovskyi: Mazepa's attempts to restore the independence of the Cossack state went down in history and could have succeeded under certain circumstances; the Constitution of Pylyp Orlyk was a significant document that declared the foundations of Ukrainian democracy; Danylo Apostol's military reforms demonstrated the *Patria Cosacorum*'s desire for modernisation; Kyrylo Razumovskyi was guided by the European Enlightenment and attempted to convene the permanent General Assembly parliament in 1763. Each of those endeavours marked certain moments in the development of the early modern Ukrainian nation. Nevertheless, the historical potential of Ukraine had been exhausting itself throughout the 17th century, with the potential of the Polish szlachta nation running the same course - then only a modern nation integrated into the European context could have complete subjectness. Certainly, at that time there were powerful geopolitical entities without a national basis such as the Russian and Ottoman Empires, but it was no coincidence that they were called the 'sick men of Europe'; yet this is another topic to discover.

Just like in the cases of a number of other Central and Eastern European countries, the Ukrainian transition from an early modern nation to a modern one was spurred by the French Revolution. Speaking in general terms, it was a more or less long-term transformation of the entire ethnic group into a civil community with equal rights and responsibilities, whereas earlier only a part of the group had such rights and responsibilities, be it 5%, 10% or 20% of its total number. Almost simultaneously, the existing early modern nation was put to an end by Catherine II's abolition of the Hetmanate along with its autonomy, with a self-governing

¹The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Cossack Hetmenate. (2010b). *The Treaty of Hadiach*. Translated by V. Shevchuk. *The Internet Archive*. San Francisco. [online] Available at: <https://surl.li/wngmdx> [in Ukr.]

protectorate (the self-governance level varied, but never neared zero) substituted for a colony, where the authorities took measures to ‘russify the land’; the Cossacks (including the starshyna) rapidly transformed into the same lieges of the autocracy as Russians without regard to Ukrainian traditions; the absolute majority of the population (namely the peasantry) began to endure the enslavement, while a number of towns eventually turned into disenfranchised villages, where the serfs were in an actual state of servitude since an owner could easily sell and buy them, relocate and punish them, etc. Let us recall the words of T. Shevchenko:

‘We trade or sell,
And sometimes lose in cards as well,
Live souls... not Negroes... our own stock,
And Christians, too... *but common folk.*’¹

If earlier there had been some social lifts, opportunities for acquiring the Cossack estate by peasants and townspeople and, more importantly, by foreigners (which meant belonging to the early modern nation), then it became impossible. Suffice it to recall how difficult it was for Taras Shevchenko to obtain the position of being a personally free man - a situation that would have been impossible under the Cossack Hetmanate. Add to this the ‘voluntary and forced’ resettlement of the most active part of the Cossacks to Kuban, the inevitable ‘pumping out’ of Ukraine's most talented people by both Russian capitals under the imperial conditions, the ‘sealed lips’ of Galicia, which found itself in the Habsburg Empire after the Partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and we get an image of the situation in its main features.

The complete deprivation of Ukraine of elements of even latent subjectness could not but provoke resistance. Multiple riots broke out on the part of the serfs, but, above all, the rioters resorted to the massive exodus towards the Black Sea and Azov lands that had just been conquered by the empire (with the help of the Cossacks, by the way). Internationally, a part of the Cossacks moved to the territory of the Ottoman Empire’s authority, marked with the creation of the Danubian Sich; there also was an attempt to find European allies in the struggle to restore Ukraine's independence, which was the purpose of a trip to Prussia by a member of the Novgorod-Siverskyi Circle Vasyl Kapnist. However, even the latent form of Ukraine’s subjectness had to be reconstructed under the new

¹Shevchenko, T. (2003). *The Caucasus*. A Collection of the Works. In 6 Volumes. Vol. 1. Kyiv, pp. 343-347, 734-736. [online] Available at: <http://litopys.org.ua/shevchenko/shev139.htm> [in Ukr.]

historical conditions. In this regard, a truly significant contribution of the Novgorod-Siverskiy Circle to this cause was the *History of the Rus People* written by its members; its authorship has not been precisely established, although most researchers are inclined to name Hryhorii Poletyka as the author of the *History of Rus People* (other options include his son Vasyl, Opanas Lobosevych and Oleksandr Bezborodko). As O.Yas claimed: 'In conceptual terms, the *HRP* advocated the ideas of independent state development of Ukraine and of the continuity of the Ukrainian history from the days of princes, representing the ideology of the late 18th century Ukrainian autonomists.'¹ In the *History of...* written in the 'ancient' book lexis, it was argued that the direct successor of Kyivan Rus had been exclusively Ukraine (not Russia), that the Ukrainians were a separate nation with their own traditions dissimilar to those of the Russians (first of all, the former could coexist without slavery, which 'to the highest degree prevailed among the Moscow folk'); thus, it was Ukraine that had had all the rights to regain its subjectness. The author of the book chose the Lithuanian-Ruthenian era as a model to emulate, when Ukraine had entered into relations with Lithuania and Poland the same way as 'the free would deal with the free and the equal would behave with the equal.' In his opinion, the National Liberation War led by Bohdan Khmelnytskyi was a just struggle of the people for their 'existence, freedom, properties'. The leading motives of the *History of the Rus People* also included description of the Cossacks' glorious past, apologetics for truth, for justice and for freedom as well as assertion of impossibility for any government to base its activities on tyranny and on slavery. *The History of...* had secretly been circulating among the Ukrainian nobility, and not only among them, for several decades; although several events mentioned in the work have lacked believability, its overall value in shaping the modern Ukrainian identity and, thereby, in forming the sociocultural basis of latent and subsequently real subjectness has been massive.

In general, there have been 3 main distinct stages in the evolution of national movements in Central and Eastern Europe. At the initial stage marked by nostalgic sentiments for what was executed in the past, small groups of intellectuals are collecting historical documents, folklore and antiquities, believing that those items can still help prevent the disappearance of their people's identity under the invasion of imperial culture; the second, cultural stage is

¹Yas, O. (2005). 'History of the Rus People'. In: V.Smolii, ed., et al. *Encyclopaedia of the History of Ukraine*. Vol. 3. From the Letter 'E' to the Letter 'Й' [Website]. NAS of Ukraine, Institute of History of Ukraine. [online] Kyiv, p. 672. Available at: http://www.history.org.ua/?termin=Istorija_Rusiv. [in Ukr.]

usually a period of the revived importance of local languages and of their wider usage in literature and education; the third, political stage sees the formation of national organisations and the formulation of nationally oriented demands based to a greater or lesser extent not only on the desire for self-government, but also on the desire for state sovereignty. These stages can be combined, can be ‘woven’ into a coherent flow or can be replaced by certain retreats, seemingly returning to what has already been passed. In the Russian Empire, national movements and cultural revival, or rather the birth of modern cultures, intensified (or, more precisely, in some cases emerged) under the influence of the ideas of the Enlightenment and of the French Revolution. Ukraine has experienced the overlapping stages as well since the formation of the modern national identity, as it has been seen, began in the last days of the early modern Cossack nation; in addition, the latent subjectness could not emerge again without the national self-awareness of an Ukrainian and without the spread of the concept of ‘being the Ukrainian’ to all segments of the population.

A huge ideological impact on the moods of the educated classes of that time was caused by French encyclopaedists and theorists of the political revolution, who proved the subjectness of the people rather than of the monarch and the nobility in the historical process, and even more by the works of German cultural philosopher Johann Herder. The latter proved the nation-building role of languages and folklore and of folk customs and the peasant lifestyle, which he contrasted with the deadness and artificiality, with the impersonality and cult of foreign languages that had prevailed in the courts of European rulers. At the same time, the orientation towards free self-governing nations ‘is accompanied by the strongest condemnation of military conflicts, of colonial exploitation and of all other forms of evil against other nations’; it meant that ‘genuine national diversity is positively valuable because it provides people with a vital sense of territorial affiliation and of something self-sustaining.’¹ Herder did not want nations to fence off each other's influence or to remain static because he considered interlingual and cultural exchange, linguistic and cultural development normal and welcomed them; in fact, Herder brought the ideas having been laid down in the Peace of Westphalia to their logical conclusion by replacing the history of kingdoms and empires and of crowned rulers with another history of nonimitative peoples and of national and ethnic entities. With that approach, the map of Europe

¹Forster, M. (2001a). *Johann Gottfried von Herder*, substantive rev. In: E.Zalta, U.Nodelman, eds. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* [Website]. Stanford. [online] Available at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/herder/#toc> [in Eng.]

immediately took on a completely different appearance. The contemporary artificial borders having been formed as a result of the redistribution of territories between monarchs certainly did not coincide with the real borders of countries, and it was enough to turn to the history of nations to understand that the actual state and territorial structure of Europe had been unjust: some peoples such as, for example, the Germans had been divided between dozens of 'their' power-holders, while others such as the Poles, the Ukrainians, and, to a large extent, the Italians had been divided between a few alien ones. There is no coincidence that Herder's ideas further gained enormous traction among those Slavic peoples who had been stateless at the time; there is no accident as well that the West have noted Herder's considerable influence on the 'political thought of Slavic nationalists.'¹ At last, it should be noted that the elite that led the nation-building process was not necessarily autochthonous by ethnicity or origin, but was rooted in the ethnic reality of one's 'own or not own' people. This was perhaps most clearly realised in Finland, where the elite was almost exclusively of Swedish descent, but consciously turned to the ethnic culture, to the study of folklore and to the creation of the Finnish standard language and art; the same was also true of Ukraine as among cultural men of quality of that time were Russians (I. Sreznevskiy, M. Vilinska aka Marko Vovchok), Georgians (N. Tsertelev) and Poles (B. Zaleski, S. Goszczyński).

A common feature of that period was the formation of a new literary language based on vernacular, and here comes an interesting phenomenon. Vadym Skurativskiy wrote: 'A very competent and, at the same time, never suspected of any "Ukrainophilia" expert on the Kyivan Rus period academician V. Kliuchevskii once answered the question about the language having been spoken in that period, when asked by his university audience: "It was approximately the same language that is now spoken by the Little Russian peasants near Kyiv"'.² Furthermore, the population not only spoke it, but also wrote in it as numerous graffiti on the Saint Sophia Cathedral of Kyiv have attested the Ukrainian character of the vocabulary there. In contrast, this character was much less pronounced in the literary language. That state of things had been

¹Forster, M. (2001b). *Johann Gottfried von Herder*, substantive rev. In: E.Zalta, U.Nodelman, eds. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* [Website]. Stanford. [online] Available at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/herder/#toc> [in Eng.]

²Skurativskiy, V. (2014a). Mystagogue of National Identification. From the Notes on 'Ethnology' by Taras Shevchenko. *Filosofska Dumka (Philosophical Thought)*, Issue 1, p. 8-23. [in Ukr.]

continuing until the early 17th century, in particular, when Ivan Mazepa was writing poems and letters in the vernacular, even though those moments were rather exceptions. Vadym Skurativskyi earlier noted: 'The "vernacular" had broken through into the former writing only sporadically; seething somewhere in the "depths of the lines" of the texts of that time, it had still been on the periphery of both Old East Slavic and, generally, all pre-Romantic literatures. Only after Kotliarevskyi's travesty, after the experiments of the "linguistic laboratory" of the Kharkiv Romantic School representatives, after the works of "St. Petersburg enclave" of this laboratory (represented by Orest Somov, Yevhen Hrebinka and a handful of others) the gradual entry of the "vernacular" into the contemporary literature began and, respectively, did so the lexical and grammatical, stylistic, orthographic and other types of its institutionalisation as a genuine literary language.'¹

On the eve of the 19th century (in 1798), two books were published in St. Petersburg, symbolising the above-mentioned intertwining of two national epochs and of two stages of the modern national rise: those were the *Notes on Little Russia* by Yakov Markovych and the *Eneida* by Ivan Kotliarevskyi. Having been written by the grandson of a famous memoirist of the first half of the 18th century General under-treasurer Markovych, the first work was a small encyclopedia of information about Ukraine and about its population, history and language; although it has not been referred to as a scientific work, the *Notes on Little Russia* opened the series of publications that later became widespread in the 19th century and promoted the Ukrainian culture, thus shaping patriotic sentiments. The second one, the famous *Eneida*, gave rise to the new Ukrainian literature and established the new Ukrainian standard language.

The 'travested *Eneida*' has been momentous not only for the development of a new literary language, but also for the inception of the entirely restructured modern Ukrainian culture: it shifted towards the vast expanse of folklife as a universe with the own language, customs, cooking, history and geography, which included a wide variety of classes such as the Cossacks, the townspeople, the peasants, etc. Certainly, the *Eneida* unfolded in a burlesque and humorous way; yet the further it went, the more romantic and heroic and anti-tyrannical messages came to the fore.

¹Skurativskyi, V. (2014b). Mystagogue of National Identification. From the Notes on 'Ethnology' by Taras Shevchenko. *Filosofska Dumka (Philosophical Thought)*, Issue 1, p. 8-23. [in Ukr.]

In the early 19th century, Kharkiv became the centre of contemporary Ukrainian national and cultural movement. In 1805, a university was established there owing to the efforts of Vasyl Karazin, which had been financed by the local nobility, by merchants and by bourgeoisie. D.Doroshenko earlier noted: 'The university gathered the greatest cultural forces of the Ukrainian citizenry, brought together figures in the field of Ukrainian culture, history and ethnography. For a long time, the rector of the institution had been famous Ukrainian poet Petro Hulak-Artemovskiy. The city began to witness the new periodicals such as *The Ukrainskii Vestnik (Ukrainian Journal)*, *The Ukrainian Magazine* and others, which by their very name were showing their dedication to the native country and its interests. The Kharkiv literary movement was led by the creator of the Ukrainian novella Hryhorii Kvitka. Additionally, Kharkiv was the point of I.Sreznevskiy, M.Kostomarov, and A.Metlynskyi commencing their activities of extending their literary interests to the pan-Slavic scale, meanwhile voicing the spiritual reciprocity and brotherhood among all Slavic peoples.'¹ At the same time, as it has already been noted, the first and the second stages of the national genesis were to some extent 'compressed' in time, with political ideas not disappearing from the consciousness of a part of the national elite.

In the first quarter of the 19th century, the Ukrainian gentry was active in Russian secret societies, which historically have been known as the Decembrists. They did not, however, constitute an independent political force and did not even aim to be one; the maximum, which a part of the Ukrainian members of those societies were seeking to achieve, was the transformation of the Russian Empire into a republican federation. Speaking of political independence, both eastern and western Ukrainians acted in such a way on the eve of and throughout the European springtime of the peoples: for instance, the republican ideals underlie the ideology of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the core which in 1846-47 were the historian Mykola Kostomarov, the writer Panteleimon Kulish, the ethnographer Opanas Markovych, the mathematician Mykola Hulak, the teacher Vasyl Bilozerskyi, and the poet and artist Taras Shevchenko; also, Kostomarov's programmatic work *Book of the Genesis of the Ukrainian People* discussed the ideas of social justice, of an estateless society, of freedom of thought, conscience and speech, of mass distribution of education, etc. and was summarised with the line: 'And in a future Slavic union Ukraine will not remain an inferior Rzeczpospolita [means the same as 'republic' – the authors' remark]

¹Doroshenko, D. (1992). *Outline of the History of Ukraine*. Vol. 2: From the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century. 2nd ed. Kyiv, p. 274. [in Ukr.]

anymore.’¹ It was at this time that Ukrainian political thought radically split ways with Russian one, although both had been concerned with the Slavophilic concepts. Pushkin's admonition described in the lyrics ‘...slav wellsprings will be the Russian one...’, combined with the rejection of ‘people’s chosen’, i.e. parliamentarism, was conceptually incompatible with the recognition by the Brotherhood’s members of the rights to the own states and their democratic systems of each of the Slavic peoples. In fact, it is hardly possible to speak of ‘Slavophilia’ as of the ideology that aimed to turn the Slavic peoples into provincial residents of the ‘Third Rome’; it is rather possible that ‘empirophilia’ was the exact ideology in question. Thus, an important ideological milestone was then reached on the way to acquiring latent Ukrainian subjectness.

After the defeat of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, only a year passed when, amidst the ‘springtime of nations’, Ukrainians in Galicia and in Bukovyna were often presenting themselves not only as a latent geopolitical factor, but as an actual and self-acting one.

The Ukrainian factor was so strong that Marx and Engels later wrote about it as a force that thwarted the pan-European socialist revolution of 1848-49, mentioning the Ruthenians-Ukrainians among the peoples to ‘fade in the whirlwind of the revolutionary storm’ through the ‘struggle for annihilation and merciless terrorism.’² What caused such a reaction from the ideological leaders of radical German revolutionaries? Why was there so much hatred for the Ruthenians (as some Poles and Germans had called Western Ukrainians)? Why did Engels' invectives against the Ruthenians allegedly ‘invented’ by the Austrian State Chancellors coincide in the wording with invectives of the Russian leaders (both former, imperial and current ones) against the Ukrainians similarly ‘invented’ by the Austrian Imperial and Royal General Staff, with the only difference that the Ruthenians had supposedly been a part of the Polish people, while the Ukrainians had formed a part of the Russian people? And, finally, why did the Ukrainians happen to be so-called ‘enemies’ of the German revolutionaries and, along with that, of certain circles of their Polish counterparts?

To answer these questions, we should take a look at the former social and economic situation. The corvee had just been abolished in Western Ukraine, with

¹Kostomarov, M. (1990). *Books of the Genesis of the Ukrainian People*. In 3 Books. Vol. 1. Kyiv, pp. 152-169. [online] Available at: <https://www.ukrlib.com.ua/books/printit.php?tid=1051&page=3>. [in Ukr.]

²For more details, see: Hrabovska I., Hrabovskyi, S. (2024). The Historical Formation of Ukraine’s Geopolitical Subjectness from the Initial Stages to the End of the 19th Century. *Ukrainoznavstvo (Ukrainian Studies)*, Issue 2(91), pp. 207–223. [in Ukr.]

hundreds of thousands of free peasant households (though mostly small-scale ones) emerging and the national intelligentsia being formed as well; consequently, there had been someone to organise the Ruthenian-Ukrainians as an autonomous force advocating its own interests. In April 1848, the aforementioned submitted a petition to the Emperor of Austria, which stated that the Ruthenians were the Galician autochthons and a part of the great Slavic people who once had had statehood, so, therefore, they deserved the rights to Ukrainian schools, to conduct business in the Ukrainian language, and to be represented in government; on 2 May 1848, the Supreme Ruthenian Council was founded, calling on the Ukrainian people to awaken and to secure a better life for themselves; eventually, Ukrainian delegates took full part in the Prague Slavic Congress of 1848, while serving as members of the Austrian Imperial Council - all those happenings were indisputable forming elements of the Ukrainian political subjectness. What did, in contrast, the German, Hungarian and Polish revolutionaries offer the peoples of the Austrian Empire under the above circumstances? The latter were aiming to restore the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth within its old borders, that is to say to return Galicia under the Polish rule, which the Ruthenian-Ukrainians were not pursuing at all as it had been harsher than the Austrian authorities; Hungarian revolutionaries were seeking to proclaim 'Greater Hungary' with the incorporation of Slovak, Slovenian, Croatian lands and inclusion of Ruthenian Transcarpathia alongside the assimilation of their populations; at last, German revolutionaries were trying to make Austria and the Czech Republic with Moravia a part of the unifying republic they had newly proclaimed; thus, all of those Slavic peoples in question were to 'disappear in the whirlwind of the revolutionary storm.' It is clear that such 'imperial revolutionism' did not appeal to the Slavic peoples of the Austrian Empire, and that was why the Austrian Ukrainians chose the protection of a relatively liberal monarchy rather than the 'revolutionary whirlwind' that would lead to emergence of modern imperialisms - not because of their 'bumpkinly narrow-mindedness' or 'religious and national fanaticism'. Even though the 'springtime of nations' was brutally suppressed with the active participation of the Russian Empire's troops and, as a result, the national progress of both 'revolutionary and imperial' and 'reactionary and provincial' peoples was set back by decades, that era was the real beginning of the geopolitical subjectness of Western Ukrainians.

To add one more important detail, democratically-minded participants of the 1848 Slavic Congress committed to the goal of fighting for the freedom of the

Slavic peoples without exception; on the contrary, Marx and Engels denied the subjectness of all Slavs other than the Poles and the Russians. In other words, any Slavic subjectness apart from the Polish one, not to mention their probable geopolitical subjectness, was considered a challenge to the German revolution, and therefore those Slavic people must have been destroyed. Undoubtedly, Adolf Hitler had worthy predecessors as the leader of the so-called 'national German revolution'; likewise, Joseph Stalin merely substituted the Germans for the Russians, again destroying the subjectness of the Ukrainian nation along with its characteristic representatives and ultimately turning the survivors into so-called Little Russians.

Nevertheless, we should go back to the middle of the 19th century. The liberalisation of political life in the Russian Empire after the defeat in the Crimean War of 1853-56 contributed to the revival and, most importantly, the institutionalisation of the legal Ukrainian movement: in 1859, the first Ukrainian hromada (the oldest legal Ukrainian public association in the Russian Empire) was founded in St. Petersburg by former members of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius Taras Shevchenko, Panteleimon Kulish, Mykola Kostomarov and Vasyl Bilozerskyi; moreover, the earliest Ukrainian monthly *Osnova* was published there.

Two years later, hromada communities were incrementally established in Kyiv (with the number of its members exceeding about 200), Odesa, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Poltava, Yelisavethrad and other cities of Great Ukraine; in addition, the first Sunday school for adults in the Russian Empire was opened in Kyiv in October 1859. Members of the hromada were teaching in Sunday schools, writing and publishing textbooks in Ukrainian for their purposes (in particular, previously mentioned Taras Shevchenko and Panteleimon Kulish engaged in that type of activities). In general, a third of the Sunday schools opened in the Russian Empire in those years were located in the Ukrainian governorates. Yesterday's serf-bound peasants and residents of suburban sloboda settlements made up the bulk of the school students. Unlike the Russian nobility, the Ukrainian gentry and *raznochintsy* did not have to 'go to the people': there had been no unbridgeable gap between them and the Ukrainian peasantry, which had not felt centuries of serfdom, with Shevchenko's name and poems being a kind of password understood by all strata of society. Add to that the fact that Pylyp Morachevsky prepared a Ukrainian translation of the Gospels in 1861, which was subsequently recognised and highly praised by the Imperial Academy of Sciences.

Anton Chekhov's letters of 1888 and his colleagues' memoirs about the Ukrainian peasantry on the territory of the former Cossack Hetmanate have shown that educated 'khokhols' were reading Shevchenko's works and often had the *Kobzar* at home; that their children were taught the Ukrainian language by local 'lordly' youth; that those peasants could not only sing well, but also play violins, etc. Furthermore, it was not only peasants that Chekhov was talking about as he had also talked to workers of a sugar factory owned by the Kharytonenko family, who had lived mostly in the same villages of the peasantry or in Sumy; their customs, as it was noted by the author, had been generally similar without common traits of the Russian or Soviet 'proletariat' of later times. There came a logical conclusion: 'There has been no antagonism between the peasants and the lords.'¹ Although the newer times have been described here, it is clear that those pieces of evidence constituted a tradition having been established decades before.

To put it another way, the late 1850s and early 1860s were the time when the cultural and educational subjectness of Russian Ukraine was being established (in Austrian Ukraine, on the other hand, there was almost a quarter-century pause in this regard); obviously, such subjectness is a component of the overall national sovereignty, so we can still speak of latent subjectness when other components are absent or almost so. The reaction to that fact on the part of the imperial authorities came quickly: in the autumn of 1862, the Russian government closed all Sunday schools in accordance with the accusation of the Ukrainian movement leaders of intending to 'revive the Little Russian nation'; soon afterwards, the Poltava and Chernihiv hromada communities were defeated; the newspaper *Chernihivskiy Lystok* (*Chernihiv Sheet*), originally published by the fabler Leonid Hlibov, was closed; a string of members of the Kyiv and Kharkiv hromada communities were arrested, with some of them exiled to northern Russia; finally, on 20 June 1863, Minister of Internal Affairs P.Valuev signed a departmental circular banning the publication of press and of school and religious literature in Ukrainian.

Figures of the prohibited societies further resorted to other activities mainly of economic cooperation. The article on the Ukrainian cooperative movement stated the following: 'The first consumer association in Ukraine was established in 1866 by professors of the Imperial University in Kharkiv. The well-known public figure of Mykola Ballin stood at its origins. <...> Professor of chemistry Garnich-Garnitskyi was elected its chairman. M.Ballin would extensively travel

¹Letter from A.Chekhov addressed to N.Leikin dated June 21, 1888. [online] Available at: <http://book-online.com.ua/read.php?book=1571&page=112>. [in Rus.]

in Europe to study the experience of French, German and English colleagues, while paying attention not only to the technical side, but also to organisational issues. <...> In his opinion, cooperation was capable of changing society, of re-educating people since the cooperative idea has been based not only on economic interests, but also on mutual assistance, on love and on friendship. <...> Two years later, on 6 October 1868, the statute of the Kyiv Consumer Association, which had been founded by scholars and public figures as well, was approved.’¹

As of 1870, there were 20 consumer co-ops in the Ukrainian governorates, being one third of the total number of the co-ops in the Russian Empire (with the inclusion of the most economically developed Poland, Finland and the Baltic region). Once again, the authorities on their part had a good reason to find in such activities the sedition: Ukrainians had engaged in economic self-organisation, which truly unites all social strata, i.e. creates a national community; at the same time, three issues of the political, of the national and of the social must have explicitly or implicitly been linked together. Eventually, what was not allowed in autocratic Russia was done in the more liberal (though rather provincial by European standards) Habsburg monarchy. In 1873, the local hromada members founded the Shevchenko Literary Society in Lviv with the financial support of an aristocrat Yelizaveta Skoropadska-Myloradovych and of a sugar baron Vasyl Symyrenko, which a few decades later became an unofficial Ukrainian academy of sciences under the name of the Shevchenko Scientific Society, or the SSS, uniting intellectuals on both sides of the border.

The 1870s in the Russian Empire have traditionally been defined as the Narodnism era. The trend also applied to the Ukrainian governorates, with the only correction that narodnism and Ukrainophilia de facto stood synonymous because the ‘narod’ (as the peasantry and the suburbanites were usually called at the time) had to be communicated with in their inherent vernacular. Hence, it was not only about social problems, but also about national ones; and where there have been national problems, there have been political ones even in a democratic state – not to mention a colonial empire. A new generation was joining hromada communities, which has been called as the ‘Moloda hromada’ (younger members of the hromada society) and was the more radical and less fearful version of former leaders; besides that, hundreds of students, of gymnasium seniors, of young graduates of universities, seminaries and colleges, were taking the path of

¹Sava, A. *The foundation of the cooperative movement in Ukraine*. [online] Available at: <https://agroelita.info/zasnuvannya-kooperatsijnoho-ruhu-v-ukrajini/> [Accessed 20 December 2016]. [in Ukr.]

educational, cultural and economic activities ‘for the sake of the people’ without the participation in special organizations; activists, as they are referred to today, were writing and translating books and brochures into the Ukrainian language, were establishing medical and educational institutions, and were continuing to develop economic cooperation. During this period, Ukraine became a ‘promoter’ of changes in the Russian Empire, one important aspect of which was noted by Ivan Dziuba: ‘Contrary to the notion that the Ukrainian labour movement was belated and secondary to the Russian one, let me recall the facts: the first labour organisations in the Russian Empire were the South Russian Workers’ Union established in Odesa in 1875 by E. Zaslavskii and F. Kravchenko and the South Russian Labour Union formed in Kyiv (1880). <...> In Ukraine, there were more different shades of the local labour movement than in Russia as the ideas of anarchism, syndicalism, ethical socialism, utopian socialism, a ‘cooperative society’, and so forth had been quite widespread. This was probably at least partly due to the national mentality and to the traditional inclination towards pluralism in public life, to the less willingness to fanaticism and dogmatism.’¹ The underground structures might seemingly be pan-imperial or to some extent ‘cosmopolitan’ with the following impartiality, but the facts have shown otherwise: for example, one of the organisers of the South Russian Workers’ Union Sofia Bohomolets (from the ‘same’ famous Bohomolets family) was arrested and wiped out by prisons and exile, only leaving her family a heritage of a book of the *Kobzar* sheathed with prison burlap. Postcards in Ukrainian to the workers also made sense.

In the mid-1870s, the entire Narodniks movement in the Russian Empire was subject to severe repressions. Thousands of people were arrested and exiled without trial, dozens of young men and women died or went mad in prisons, with the repressions against everything Ukrainian paralleled. On 18 May 1876, Alexander II signed the Ems Ukaz banning theatre performances, public speeches and schooling and even the printing of texts to musical notes in the Ukrainian language; importation of Ukrainian books from abroad also came under prohibition, Ukrainian literature was to be removed from school libraries. The Kyiv branch of the Russian Geographical Society (the core of which had been built upon Ukrainophiles) was closed, and the publication of the newspaper *Kiev Telegraph* was indefinitely suspended. As a result of the government repressions, the total membership of the largest Kyiv hromada community dropped to 55 individuals. The repressions were aimed against the cooperative movement

¹Dziuba, I. *The Trap: 30 Years with Stalin, 50 Years without Stalin*. Kyiv, p. 27. [in Ukr.]

either, which, in consequence, went under decline up to the end of the 19th century. In this situation, some prominent figures of the Ukrainian national movement fled abroad, while others were restricted to merely conduct scientific and cultural work. Despite the pressure, Ukrainian educated youth, having experienced dissatisfaction with the moderation of the older generation, went on to look for other wayouts.

It was young Ukrainians who took up arms in the second half of the 1870s for the purpose, firstly, of defending and, secondly, of attacking the power structures. The list of precedents can go as: the separate cases of the Debahorii-Mokriievych brothers, Bokhanovskyi, Stefanovych, Kuliabko-Koretskyi, Kravchynskyi, Kovalevska, Podolynskyi, Rashevskyi, Malynka, Kovalskyi, Frolenko, Korba, Makarevych; the ‘Chyhyryn Conspiracy’ of 1877, when thousands of peasants were involved in the preparation of an armed uprising; mighty underground circles in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Yelisavethrad, Chernihiv, Poltava, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Nizhyn, Odesa, Kamianets-Podilskyi, and other cities. The heir to a huge fortune Dmytro Lyzohub was the main financier of the partisans (as they used to name themselves), while Valerian Osynskyi secured the position as the main ideologist. Clearly, 1878 was the turning point in the process of political violence appearing; the same exact year, Ukrainian Narodniks were responding to the state terror with their own against those in power involved in crimes against youth. The year has regularly reminded explorers of an assassination attempt on the Kyiv deputy prosecutor; of the murder of gendarme officer Baron Heiking in the same city, in both previous cases Valerian Osynskyi being the organiser; of attempts to recapture with arms the Narodnik Voinaralskyi, who was imprisoned near Kharkiv, and the Narodnik Kovalskyi, who was convicted in Odesa; of the simultaneous elimination of spies who were constantly sent to underground organisations by the Third Department (the secret police of the Russian Empire). 1879 followed the way with even more evident vengeance: the governor Prince Kropotkin was murdered by the underground in Kharkiv; the same year, a real battle took place between, on the one hand, the undergrounders and, on the other hand, the gendarmes and a called backup company of the Starooskolsky regiment in Kyiv; each of those recalled happenings had occurred before the official creation of the Narodna Volya organization. All of the events were described in detail in the work of one of the authors of the section of *Geniuses against Idiots: Algorithms of the Ukrainian History* (the section is called *The Ukrainian War with the Russian Autocracy: 1879-1881*) published under the government programme ‘Ukrainian Book’ and

included by the Russian occupiers in the literary censorship list.¹ Moreover, the struggle against the autocracy reached the level of attempting to dismantle the empire: 'In the third issue of the underground magazine *Narodnaya Volya*, among the seven programme points of the eponymous party can be seen the thesis of "broad regional self-government"; it related to the historical regions of the then Russian state, i.e. implying its federalisation. The de facto leader of the *Narodnaya Volya* Andrei Zheliabov (who was a student activist, later worked with his father-in-law and the father of his first wife Semyon Yakhnenko in the civic movement, consequently becoming disillusioned with the ineffectiveness of liberalism under autocracy and, like many, taking up arms) labelled his colleagues at the executive council as "convinced autonomists" and spoke of "the disintegration of the empire into autonomous parts". While Zheliabov wanted to realise the idea by striking at the centre of the imperial bureaucracy, overthrowing absolutism and, respectively, electing a constituent assembly, the Ukrainophilic Narodniks desired to accomplish the goal through long-standing, painstaking, evolutionary work in the turf of education and charity – that was the only difference between the approaches. There were still years and years to go before the proclamation of the idea of Ukraine's state independence first by Yulian Bachynskyi and Ivan Franko and then by Mykola Mikhnovskyi. Nonetheless, the ideology of the *Narodnaya Volya* members was developing rapidly, and the 1880 party's programme in the field of state building was additionally specified: an "All-Russian union", divided into internally independent regions, was meant to be created on the wreckage of the empire.'²

In short, politically active young Ukrainians (not only those of purely Ukrainian ethnic origin) were imposing their own agenda within the resistance even without the distinct discrimination of themselves from the general stream of opponents of the autocracy (yet having already identified their own peculiarities, including cultural ones). Ukraine's latent political (and even geopolitical, since the essence had been about dismantling the Russian Empire) subjectness was combined in these years with the actual political actions of the Ukrainian group of the *Narodnaya Volya*. However, in the words of O. Zabuzhko, this 'Ukrainian mission aimed at Moscow,' like the previous and subsequent ones, after all failed

¹Hrabovskyi, S. (2019a). *Geniuses against Idiots: Algorithms of the Ukrainian History*. 3rd ed., rev. and suppl. Kyiv, pp. 48-64. [in Ukr.]

²Hrabovskyi, S. (2019b). *Geniuses against Idiots: Algorithms of the Ukrainian History*. 3rd ed., rev. and suppl. Kyiv, pp. 48-64. [in Ukr.]

to modernise and democratise the renewed Russia that had to emerge on the ruins of the former dismantled colonial empire.

The years after 1882 were a period of a certain pause in political and social life in Ukraine; the cultural activity was instead developing under the surface, like the water flowing under the ice. At the same time, the Ukrainian intelligentsia, having been divided between the two empires, came to embrace themselves as a single cultural and even to some extent political entity. Eventually, new political parties and public organisations started to rise as among the Ukrainian parties that emerged in the late nineteenth century were the Ukrainian Radical Party (1890), the Ukrainian National Democratic Party (1899), the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party (1899), the Catholic Ruthenian People's Union (1899) in Galicia and the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (1900) in Great Ukraine, with the latter forced to go underground under the Russian despotism.

In 1891, a group of students, including future prominent figures of the Ukrainian national movement, formed the deeply secretive Brotherhood of Tarasivtsi in Kharkiv, which soon expanded to other cities. Two years later, the 1893 Brotherhood's programmatic document *Profession de foi of Young Ukrainians* was published in Lviv, in which its authors mordantly criticised Ukrainophiles for their intellectual derivative nature and their dependence on Russian culture. The Tarasivtsi brothers proclaimed their intention to become what the older generation had not managed to achieve, that is to say to be a truly Ukrainian intelligentsia, which would spread the Ukrainian language in families, institutions, schools; would teach Ukrainian children literacy; and would cultivate Shevchenko's ideas. Speaking of the political sphere, the aim was to gain the Ukrainians a recognition of an original people and to restructure Russia into a federation of equal nations.

Revolutionary, in 1895 the Western Ukrainian socialist Yulian Bachynskyi was the first to scientifically substantiate the idea of complete political subjectness, or the unity and independence of Ukraine. In his book *Ukraine Irredenta*, which was based on his study of the general socio-economic advancements of Europe and, in particular, of Galicia and other Ukrainian lands under the Russian Empire, he outlined the objective need to overcome the enslaved status of the nation and to create a Ukrainian independent united state. The author emphasised that the socio-economic development of both western and eastern parts of Ukraine had been slow and deformed, and it had lagged far behind the leading European economies, causing, as a result, the impoverishment and suffering among the peasantry and the proletariat. The primary reason for that

was the position that Ukrainian lands objectively had landed on in the Habsburg and the Romanov empires: it was about the actual colonial status with all its consequences, involving the mass emigration of the working class in search for a better life, which, in turn, had made it increasingly impossible for Ukraine to expect a normal future amidst the losing of its best labour resources. Yu. Bachynskyi emphasised that steady economic development had taken place in Europe through the formation of nation-states, in which the bourgeoisie had found the most possibly optimal conditions for the growth of their businesses since their own states would absolutely provide ‘their’ bourgeoisie with all the protection it had demanded. If cited directly from the work: ‘The bourgeoisie, the national idea and the nation-state are the influence of economic evolution, the child of capitalist production.’¹ That was a breakthrough to a fundamentally deeper understanding of the ways to achieve complete Ukrainian political subjectness than it had been before.

1.4. The turn of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness from the latent form into the relevant one

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the formation of both the modern Ukrainian nation and its political subjectness reached a fundamentally higher level than ever before. Lesia Ukrainka's words put down in the letter to her uncle Mykhailo Drahomanov, which was dated 17 March 1891, has become a kind of symbolic definition of the beginning of this period: ‘I will tell you that we have rejected the name “Ukrainophiles” and called ourselves simply “Ukrainians” as we have never been any part of that “philia”.’² Although the word ‘Ukrainian’ has been used since the early nineteenth century in literature and in private correspondence (in fact, Larysa Kosach's pseudonym of Lesia Ukrainka was no coincidence since Khrystyna Zhuravlova, whose last name in marriage was Alchevska, had completed her writings with the same pseudonym even before the legendary writer), Shevchenko, for instance, on his part did not use the term. From the end of the 19th century, the word spread on both sides of the Zbruch river; yet L. Kosach shrewdly warned again in the next letter to Drahomanov three years after the first one the following: ‘We have a great trouble with that many think that it is enough to speak Ukrainian (even more when someone begins writing a little bit) to be entitled to the name of a patriot, of a workingman in his

¹Bachynskyi, Yu. (1924a). *Ukraine Irredenta*. 3rd ed. Berlin, p. 71. [in Ukr.]

²Ukrainka, L. (1965). *A Collection of Works in 10 Volumes*. Vol. 9. Kyiv, p. 63 [in Ukr.]

native field, of a man with certain convictions, etc. <...> Now you can hear the phrase: "How is it that you said that N.N. was a fool and a dumbass, when he speaks our language so well!" "To speak our language" has immediately made you qualify! Sometimes, if you listen to what someone says, it would be better if he spoke Chinese.'¹ National subjectness (more so a geopolitical side of it) has required a complex and effective structure of the subjectness bearer, especially, when it comes to a statelessness nation quite common in the former Europe: most European nations were actually not used to their own statehood after having lost their independence in the past centuries upon the expansion of empires, which have been now fashionably referred to as either 'classical' and 'non-classical' ones. For instance, Yaroslav Hrytsak and Yuriy Shapoval earlier wrote: 'Classical empires include those in which the centre and colonies are usually separated by seas and oceans, so it is relatively easy to geographically determine what is the colony and what is the metropolis. The "land-based" Ottoman or Austro-Hungarian empires did not fit the pattern though; the Russian Empire was also a "land-based" one, in which the boundaries between the centre and the periphery were highly blurred.'² However, in our opinion, the division has been more an intellectual fad than a genuine scientific conclusion: after all, the 19th century Russian Empire possessed a number of 'overseas' colonies such as Alaska, Fort Ross in California, Russian Fort Elizabeth in Hawaii, Sagallo in the Horn of Africa,³ even retaining Port Arthur in the early 20th century; Germany, on the other hand, had actively been engaged in the colonisation of a large part of Poland before mastering the 'overseas' colonies in Africa, Asia and Oceania; even the 'classical' British Empire had a nearby colony in Ireland, which hardly could acquire any self-government. In as early as 1928, Mykhailo Volobuev devoted a significant part of his article *On the Problem of the Ukrainian Economy* to the inadequate understanding of colonies only as 'overseas territories' somewhere in Asia or Africa.⁴ Anyway, 'non-classical' colonial empires have oppressed almost

¹Letter from L.Ukrainka addressed to M.Drahomanov dated February 9, 1894: *A Collection of Works in 10 Volumes*. Vol. 9. Kyiv, p. 175.[in Ukr.]

²Hrytsak, Ya., Shapoval, Yu. *Was Ukraine a Russian colony?* [online] Available at: <https://uamoderna.com/history/chy-bula-ukraina-rosiyskoiiu-koloniieiu/> [Accessed 20 July 2023]. [in Ukr.]

³*Former Russian Colonies: A Category*. Wikipedia [Website]. [online] Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Former_Russian_colonies (30.04.2024). [in Eng.]

⁴Volobuev, M. (2013). *On the Problem of the Ukrainian Economy. Vpered (Going Forward)*. WordPress [Website]. [online] Available at: <https://vpered.wordpress.com/2013/02/04/volobuev-ukrainian-economy/> [in Ukr.]

more peoples and nations than 'classical' ones and have proved to be more resilient as several of them still exist to this day and continue the practice of exploiting ethnic groups with the 'wrong orientation'. Thus, it would be more correct to operate on those two types of colonial empires, which differ in some respects, but have a lot in common either.

In the 'European-type colonies' alike Ukraine and other nations as well, the issue of national organising accompanied by the creation of what Oksana Zabuzhko later described as 'all-Ukrainian national consciousness and an independent, developed, structurally "complete" professional culture (not only with its own artistic or religious dimensions risen before, but also with scientific, political, ideological "subsystems") being as a spiritual analogue of the nation'¹ was rather substantial. Such culture cannot possibly prosper without having a socially existential background. Therefore, notwithstanding all the difficulties, civil society development then resumed in both Russian and Austrian parts of contemporary Ukraine. Certain positive changes in Austria-Hungary and the forced political liberalisation by the leadership of the Russian Empire can be tracked from the end of the 19th century onwards, the reason for which was the impossibility of effective economic development without such liberalisation. The new decisions gave rise to emerging forms of self-organisation among the Ukrainians, a basic example of which has been the underground Brotherhood of Tarasivtsi (1891). Formed prior to the liberalisation process, the brotherhood gathered some well-known figures such as Ivan Lypa, Borys Hrinchenko, Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, Volodymyr Shemet, Yevhen Tymchenko, Volodymyr Samiilenko, Mykola Voronyi, Mykola Mikhnovskyi and others. The list containing the full Tarasivtsi Brotherhood's membership has still been unknown as we should recall that the community remained well-secreted; overall, the total of ten branches of the society included about a hundred dedicated activists who were promoting the ideas of Ukrainian national identity and its independence. The key self-organising efforts of the Ukrainians in those years were focused on the zemstvo. Being a local government institute, the institutions had operated on the Left-bank Ukraine and in Southern Ukraine since 1864 and on the Right-bank Ukraine since 1911. Because the imperial government had controlled the activities of the zemstvo bodies much less than ones of other state institutions and public organisations, loads of the Ukrainian national movement leaders served in the zemstvo offices, while a number of zemstvos in return supported the

¹Zabuzhko, O. (1991a). Philosophy of the National Idea: Ukraine and Europe. *Meetings*, Issue №2, p. 100. [in Ukr.]

Ukrainian endeavour in the early 20th century. To showcase that, Symon Petliura was working as deputy commissioner of the All-Russian Zemstvo Union throughout the First World War; future members of the Central Rada of Ukraine Pavlo Chyzhevskiy, Volodymyr Leontovych and Mykola Kovalevskiy as well as Mykola Biliashivskiy and Illia Shrag also ended up working in the zemstvo bodies; a member of the Central Rada of Ukraine and ambassador of the Ukrainian State to Germany Baron Fedir Shteingel, future Ukrainian foreign ministers Andrii Nikovskyi and Dmytro Doroshenko and a member of the General Court of the Ukrainian People's Republic Andrii Viazlov were engaged in the zemstvo movement either; finally, the prime minister of the Ukrainian State Fedir Lyzohub (brother of a member of the above-mentioned Narodnaya Volya Dmytro Lyzohub) held the position of the head of the Poltava provincial zemstvo in 1901-1915. Only a part of the zemstvo movement leadership has just been named here, but the primary factor in the public self-organisation was thousands of employees at the zemstvo structures in Russian Ukraine. Besides that, the cooperative movement stepped on the path of revival from the end of the 19th century. The difference was that organisations had taken up not only purely economic affairs: in much of Ukraine the cooperative movement had acquired a national character manifesting itself in attempts of co-op members to split off with all-Russian cooperative unions, to form their own all-Ukrainian cooperative centres and to be the backbone of material support of national and cultural forces; the cooperative associations eventually established their own publishing houses and reading rooms, assisted the Prosvita enlightenment organization and theatrical groups, etc. On the eve of 1917, there were 7,000 cooperative societies in various fields of activity and about 50 unions between them in the Ukrainian governorates. Consumer cooperative societies served approximately 9 million people. A plenty of renowned cooperators later took a direct part in the creation of the Central Rada of Ukraine, in the holding of the All-Ukrainian National Congress and of the All-Ukrainian Peasants' Conference, and held key positions in the Ukrainian government (one of the cooperators Borys Martos even topped it temporarily) and in many local administrations. The cooperative movement had become the environment from which nationally conscious and managerially experienced specialists started to be recruited to work in the newly established supreme institutions and grassroots offices during the Ukrainian War of Independence. Moreover, in 1921, the Bolsheviks were forced to legalise Ukrainian co-operative societies for the duration of the New Economic Policy (NEP).

The national cultural, educational, and scientific movements should be noted, which separated from the civil movement in the late 19th century, although both certainly were simultaneously influencing each other. The Shevchenko Scientific Society, amateur theatrical circles, a vast network of the Prosvita organisation, women's organisations, trade unions, benefit societies and more were developing on both sides of the Zbruch river. Not every public entity could be characterised as demonstrably Ukrainian, but there was no coincidence that, for instance, the leader of the uprising on the battleship Potemkin Under Officer Opanas Matiushenko and the leader of the uprising on the cruiser Ochakiv Lieutenant Petro Schmidt had been active members of an amateur theatrical group with the Ukrainian repertoire in the People's House of Sevastopol before 1905. If paraphrasing, the two sailors had been involved in organised centres of what was then called 'pure Ukrainianness'; thus, the uprisings in the Black Sea Fleet in 1905 have illustrated that the actions progressed under not just numerous seamen and under officers with Ukrainian surnames (even a portion of such officers), but under members of certain communities, including cultural ones, which had acquired a distinctly political colouring by the logic of the circumstances in the empire.

Another significant thing was that after lifting the prohibition on printing the Holy Scriptures in Ukrainian in 1906, translators of the Gospels subsequently sold over 100,000 copies of their work, which constituted a huge number at the time. Moreover, the Most Holy Governing Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church then authorised the printing of the Gospels translation, thereby de facto recognising the public usage of the Ukrainian language.

Certainly, it would be important to recall that the newspaper *Rada* (*Council*) and its circle of authors played an important role in transforming the latent subjectness into the following actual one. First of all, when the revolutionary events in the Russian Empire in 1905 led to the loosening of censorship, a group of public figures and litterateur registered two newspapers *Hromadska Dumka* (*Public Opinion*) and *Rada*. The first one had been published for a short time until the summer of 1906 before getting 'strangled' by censorship authorities; in that case, the second one took the position of being the voice of the Ukrainian community. The de facto editor of the publications was Serhii Yefremov, although those editing positions were nominally held by other people. As the well-known public figure, philanthropist, agronomist, landowner, publisher and journalist Yevhen Chykalenko wrote about the editor: 'He was the only person among us who could be considered a real journalist. He was a

talented, educated man with a healthy, sober mind, who, most importantly, could write very quickly... I could not imagine the newspaper without his involvement. Every time I had a thought about a new literary work, Yefremov's name would be associated with it... He constantly put the work above his personal interests, above his ego, and so forth.'¹ An assessment of such a pragmatist as Chykalenko can be considered as a high praise, especially since the '*Rada* circle' included Borys Hrynchenko, Olena Pchilka, Dmytro Doroshenko, Mykola Voronyi, Mykhailo Hrushevskyy, Archyp Teslenko, the Rusovs (Sofia and Oleksandr), Volodymyr Samiilenko, Levko Yurkevych and others. In one of the leading articles, the editorial board formulated their objectives as follows: 'Since being the only daily newspaper in Russian Ukraine, we consider it more useful... not to be bound by the programme or tactics of any political party, but to try to cover both the questions of the day as well as the more general and more fundamental issues of the Ukrainians from the point of view of various progressive parties. While making it the immediate task to serve the Ukrainian cultural, social and political interests under the Russian government, our newspaper will simultaneously try to keep its readers informed within the interests of the entire Ukraine.'² Afterwards, the newspaper became a centre for the crystallisation of civil society structures in all the Ukrainian lands; the literary language was polished on its pages; the ideas of Ukrainian autonomy were 'tested' by its writers as the *Rada* was defending Ukraine's rights under the Pereyaslav Agreement to build an autonomous state (there could be no discussion on independence on the pages of a censored publication). The personnel, authors and readers of the *Rada* actively participated in the Ukrainian War of Independence; subsequently, after having been banned under the First World War, the newspaper resumed publication under the name of *Nova Rada* (*New Council*) in the spring of 1917.

The massive cultural activities and recent development of civil society led to the emergence of political parties. In the virtue of objective circumstances, they first emerged in Galicia and Bukovyna since the national question within Austria-Hungary had been a priority for all parties and movements, even those of the Marxist orientation; for example, local social democracy was conceived as a federation of parties formed on the national principle. Among the Ukrainian parties that emerged in the late 19th century, we can distinguish the Ukrainian Radical Party (1890), the Ukrainian National Democratic Party (1899), the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party (1899) and the Catholic Ruthenian People's

¹Chykalenko, Ye. (1955). *Memoirs (1861-1907)*. New York, pp. 446-447. [in Ukr.]

²Zhyvotko, A. (1999). *History of the Ukrainian Press*. Kyiv, p. 198. [in Ukr.]

Union (1899), which were active in Galicia and Bukovyna. All of the parties emphasised the unity of the Ukrainian people and the need to contribute to the struggle of the Russian Ukrainians for their national and political rights; speaking about details, the programme of the Ukrainian National Democratic (People's) Storonnnytstvo [the last term was used at the time as a synonym for the term 'party' - the authors' remark] stated aim of the 'reaching the point when the entire Ukrainian-Ruthenian people would gain cultural, economic and political independence and would eventually unite into a single national organism, in which the national masses would manage all cultural, economic and political affairs for their common benefit.'¹ The first person of the modern Ukrainian political thought to raise the question of Ukraine's independence and to scientifically substantiate the need for this independence was the Galician socialist Yulian Bachynskyi, who was one of the founders of the Ukrainian Radical Party and, after that, the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party. In 1895, he published the book *Ukraine Irredenta*, in which the author justified the thesis that the socio-economic development of both Galicia and Great Ukraine had been extremely slow, deformed and had lagged far behind the leading European countries, causing the impoverishment and suffering of the peasantry and proletariat. The main reason for that, in the socialist's belief, was the place that Ukrainian lands objectively had occupied in the Habsburg and Romanov empires and their factual colonial status with all the consequences. In Europe, the normal economic development had taken place through the formation of nation-states, ensuring 'its' bourgeoisie the best possible conditions for the rise of their business and providing the class with all the necessary protection measures. Thus, Yu.Bachynskyi emphasised: 'The bourgeoisie, the national idea and the national state are the influence of economic evolution, the child of capitalist production'²; the national bourgeoisie, then, had to embrace the role of the leading stratum in finding Ukraine's independence. As Bachynskyi argued, all the Ukrainian lands potentially constituted an economic whole and, in that way, 'the economic unity must be matched by political unity.'³ To that end, there was a need for the Ukrainian national contest in Galicia to be transferred from the cultural area to the political one, while intellectuals from another side of contemporary Ukraine should have worked hard to raise the national spirit; the author also elaborated on

¹Slusarenko, A., Husiev, V., Korol, V., eds., et al. (2000a). *Ukraine in the Twentieth Century (1900-2000): A Collection of Documents and Materials*. Kyiv, p.9. [in Ukr.]

²Bachynskyi, Yu. (1924b). *Ukraine Irredenta*. 3rd ed. Berlin, p. 71. [in Ukr.]

³Bachynskyi, Yu. (1924c). *Ukraine Irredenta*. 3rd ed. Berlin, p. 146. [in Ukr.]

the latter: 'Despite the struggle against Russian absolutism, it is necessary now for the small handful of conscious Ukrainians to goad the Ukrainian community in Russia, as far as it may be possible, to promote the idea of Ukraine's political independence.'¹ That argument seemingly made the sense not least because of the threat of 'a possible European war in the near future,'² which would result in the collapse of both Russia and Austria-Hungary out of revolutions against the royal courts, so it would be better for public activists to be as prepared as possible for that outcome. However, one should not assume that the author implied that a future mono-ethnic state should have been built: 'The struggle for Ukraine's political independence does not apply exclusively to the Ukrainian people, but to all who reside in Ukraine, whether they may be the autochthonous Ukrainians or such colonists as the Great Russians, the Poles, the Jews or the Germans. The mutual interest will unite them and make all of them belong to Ukrainian "patriots".'³ It was as if only through Ukraine's independence would its working masses be able to win a prosperous and free life for themselves.

In contrast, the first real Eastern Ukrainian party known as the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (RUP) was formed only in 1900. The party's members composed its manifesto of a speech delivered by Mykola Mikhnovskyi, which was soon published under the title *Independent Ukraine*; the proclamation was about founding a free Ukrainian state as the only possible chance to exist nationally. Mikhnovskyi aptly noted in the publication the ongoing: 'As a scrappy party, as a party that has come up on the soil of history and as a party of practical activities, we are obliged to determine the immediate goal that we have in mind, which is the return of the rights defined by the Pereiaslav Treaty of 1654 and the extension of its effect to the entire territory of the Ukrainian people under Russia. We declare that we will take by force what is rightfully ours - just like it has also been taken from us by force. Our nation has been sick for a long time, but now it is on the way to fight. It will surely obtain complete freedom, and the first step is to enforce the Pereiaslav Treaty again.'⁴ At the same time, the author of the manifesto was advocating the armed path of Ukraine's self-determination, but it was the same path that previously had been referred to in the text of the Ukrainian national anthem (its 1865 version): 'Brethren, let's join in a bloody fight, from the Sian to the Don / Never shall we allow others to rule in our native land.'

¹Bachynskyi, Yu. (1924d). *Ukraine Irredenta*. 3rd ed. Berlin, p. 162. [in Ukr.]

²Bachynskyi, Yu. (1924e). *Ukraine Irredenta*. 3rd ed. Berlin, p. 88. [in Ukr.]

³Bachynskyi, Yu. (1924f). *Ukraine Irredenta*. 3rd ed. Berlin, p. 95. [in Ukr.]

⁴Mikhnovskyi, M. (1967). *Independent Ukraine. Programme of the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party since 1900*. Introduced by Professor V.Shayan. London, p. 28. [in Ukr.]

Unfortunately, the RUP soon split into so-called ‘independents’ and ‘autonomists’. A number of other parties found their foundation, yet stayed committed to federal or confederative relations with Russia; we will show that by what was written in the programme of the Ukrainian Radical Party (1904), which, contrary to its name, gathered liberal intellectuals: ‘Concerning the rule on the territory of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Elected People's Council should be in charge of all affairs here. <...> The Elected People's Council would itself draft the country's constitution, which cannot hypothetically be cancelled nor nullified by the national parliament. The constitution should give the right of broad self-government to rural and urban communities as well as to those districts into which communities could unite. Every such district should have its own district diet potentially possessing the right of self-government within the district.’¹ In 1905, a revolution broke out in the Russian Empire, in reaction to which the imperial government was forced to make concessions; one of them was the October Manifesto published on 17 October of the same year granting ‘civil liberties’ (thus, paving the way for legal political activities) and convening the State Duma with legislative functions in the near future. That resulted in Ukrainian deputies of the First and the Second State Dumas creating the so-called ‘Parliamentary Hromada Communities’. The first of the parliamentary groups, which was founded by Illia Shrag, Volodymyr Sheremet and Pavlo Chyzhevskyi, included notable public figures such as Baron F. Shteingel, M. Biliashivskyi, O. Sviechyn, M. Kovalevskyi as well as almost all peasant deputies from the Ukrainian governorates - the grouping involved 44 members in total. With their efforts, a Ukrainian centre was subsequently established in St. Petersburg; also, the socio-political and economic weekly *Ukrainskii Viestnik (Ukrainian Gazette)* was started. Once even Mykhailo Hrushevskyi arrived in St. Petersburg in order to solemnly proclaim a declaration of Ukraine's autonomy prepared with his participation at the First Duma session, but the idea failed because the legislature was ahead of time dissolved by Nicholas II. After the dissolution of the First Duma, most of the deputies travelled to Vyborg (Finland) and signed a protest against the actions of the autocratic government; each Ukrainian representative left the signature under the appeal, for which they were, among other things, sentenced by the regime to different prison terms and lost the right to be elected to the next Duma. In February 1907, the Second Duma began its work, having been elected on the basis of the less democratic law. Nevertheless, the Ukrainian

¹Sliusarenko, A., Husiev, V., Korol, V., eds., et al. (2000b). *Ukraine in the Twentieth Century (1900-2000): A Collection of Documents and Materials*. Kyiv, pp. 15-16. [in Ukr.]

Parliamentary Hromada Community consisting of 47 deputies still remained really forceful, with its activities concerning extremely important matters of the Ukrainians' life too: the legislative association was bothered about the introduction of the Ukrainian language in school education, about the imposition of Ukrainian-language court proceedings, about church services and also about the improvement of self-government; the press organ *Ridna Sprava* (*The Home Cause*) was launched; a revised draft law on the autonomy of Ukraine was prepared again. Similar to the fate of the First Duma, the democratic Second Duma ceased to be active upon a coup d'état carried out by the Prime Minister of Russia Pyotr Stolypin and by the Tsarist court after having existed for only 107 days. Those upheavals then saw the electoral law changed so that the majority in the Duma would be reserved for the Russian pomeshchik class; the amendments were compounded by the creation of a virtually united front of the regime and of the absolute majority of Russian political organisations directed against Ukrainian parliamentary forces (even those that had not demanded Ukraine's independence). As Dmytro Dontsov noted in his work: 'The rapid spread of the Ukrainian idea, which not only had begun to entertain the masses of the Ukrainians, but had also found numerous adherents among the russified and semi-polonised upper circles, has caused serious worry first in the Tsarist government and second in all segments of the Russian society. <...> For Russian supporters, possible implementation of the Ukrainian autonomists' programme would mean, on the one hand, consistent ousting of Russian cultural influences beyond the Don and the Seim rivers and, on the other hand, a loss of the colossal exploitation area that has fed the modern Russian state. These corollaries of the sequentially thriving Ukrainian movement have driven all the most prominent Russian parties into the camp of the government and nationalists in regard to everything related to Ukraine.'¹ All of those factors were multiplied by the realities of the First World War in the period 1914-1918, and the reason for the phenomenon to be noted was that Ukraine, first of all, stood as one of the major military theatres. The war was accelerating the formation of a modern nation since the modern world had made the largest invasion into the traditional life of the peasantry in the role of the vast majority of the Ukrainian population: peasant soldiers learnt how to handle military equipment (which used to be quite modern in the Russian Empire's army) and underwent a rigorous school of military drill, giving them an understanding of the benefits of organisation and of discipline; moreover, it has

¹Dontsov, D. (1991). *The History of the Development of the Ukrainian State Idea*. Kyiv, p. 30. [in Ukr.]

been no coincidence that it was the former 'men with guns' (soldiers and junior officers) that were the most respected in the rural Ukrainian under the Russian Revolution and further staffed the Ukrainian army. Apart from that, the hostilities were accelerating the process of national formation in another supplementary way: keeping in mind that the Imperial Russian army had been multiethnic in its composition, the daily encounters with representatives of other ethnic groups in the trenches helped Ukrainian peasants to become aware of their identity, especially when being subjected to ridicule, prejudice or enmity on ethnic grounds; on the other hand, in 1914-1917, the Russian army, in which many Ukrainians from Great Ukraine were serving, controlled Galicia and Bukovyna with the population speaking the same language, singing the same songs and cherishing the same traditions and customs, despite having been incorporated by the Habsburg Empire. Such direct contacts between Ukrainians on both sides of the front catalysed the crystallisation of a national identity; for example, the future playwright Mykola Kulish (who had been agronomist in civilian life and subsequently took up the military profession of an artillery officer) afterwards noted that he had first realised he had been a Ukrainian when in Galicia, where he had served in the Russian army; it was in Lviv when he had first picked up Shevchenko's uncensored *Kobzar*. 'The choice "to be or not to be a Ukrainian?", having been foisted on the mature soul by course of history itself, was made both as an ethical and, what is especially interesting, as a "life-defining", or existential one. <...> There is an extremely important and, in fact, decisive moment for the purpose of comprehending the evolution of the Ukrainian idea that the national was not any supra-individual abstraction, but "a natural expression of the soul", or "the need of the soul", as Franko often emphasised in loads of the works; the national remained an immanent manifestation of the individual spirit in its self-development, without which a person would inevitably become fractured.'¹ After the military defeats of 1915, the authorities of the Russian Empire were forced to make certain concessions by involving the public, primarily the zemstvo bodies, in the organisation of the home front; just to illustrate, almost all zemstvo organisations in the rear of the Southwestern Front had been Ukrainianised without governmental approval by 1917, while Symon Petliura, one of the most prominent figures of the Ukrainian War on Independence, held a responsible position in the zemstvo services at the time. In addition, due to the labour shortage (at the beginning of 1917, only 40% of the pre-war number of able-bodied men

¹Zabuzhko, O. (1991b). Philosophy of the National Idea: Ukraine and Europe. *Meetings*, Issue №2, pp. 100-101. [in Ukr.]

in agriculture worked in Russian Ukraine), prisoners of war and refugees were employed, including thousands of Galicians and Bukovynians and foreign activists of Ukrainian political parties and public organisations. All of the above ended up as a simultaneous outbreak of the Ukrainian revolution 'within' the Russian one, in turn strengthening and deepening consequences of the all-Russian Revolution.

It is generally accepted that the 1917 overthrow of the autocracy in the Russian Empire was an act of the purely all-Russian Revolution, with the Ukrainian revolutionary efforts launching somewhat later. Contrary to the statement, here the authors will provide a part of the document published in Petrograd on the same day of the signed abdication of Emperor Nicholas II: 'In the liberation struggle of the last days, the Ukrainian demos has played a major role, being represented by the Ukrainian soldiers of those regiments that joined the uprising. <...> The number of the troops, which have fought for freedom together with the broad democratic masses of Petrograd, largely consists of sons of Ukrainian citizens and workers and of representatives of the democratic strata of the Ukrainian nation. <...> The slogan of a democratic republic put forward by the Russian democracy ensures the civil rights of every individual. In the struggle for these rights, we wish the new regime every success. However, the Ukrainian democracy as well as the Ukrainian masses require ensuring not only their civil rights, but also protecting their particular national rights, which the Russian people have had for a long time. This is the slogan of national liberation that should be raised by the Ukrainian masses in Petrograd. The fullest expression of the national liberation idea is embraced by national state independence, and only the creation of the own sovereign state organism can guarantee the broadest possible cultural development of the Ukrainian people. In the light of this ideal and as the closest stage to it, the Ukrainian masses in Petrograd must put forward the slogan of restructuring the Russian state into a federal democratic republic, of the widest possible rights for individual nations and, especially, of the widest possible national territorial autonomy for Ukraine as the today's practical task to be done together with the democracies of the other peoples of Russia.'¹ Those were the lines taken from the Appeal of the Petrograd Provisional Ukrainian Revolutionary Committee of 2 (15) March 1917. S. Hrabovskyi additionally painted the picture with the thesis: 'As we can see, the Appeal clearly stated about the special role of the Ukrainian community in the revolution and about its special

¹Sliusarenko, A., Husiev, V., Korol, V., eds., et al. (2000c). *Ukraine in the Twentieth Century (1900-2000): A Collection of Documents and Materials*. Kyiv, pp. 26-27. [in Ukr.]

tasks, which included the strategic course towards national and state independence. Besides that, the fact that this committee had had real weight was evidenced by the demonstration in Petrograd on the occasion of the anniversary of Taras Shevchenko's birth a few days later, which was attended by tens of thousands of people; the participants were carrying portraits of the poet, banners with the watchwords "Long Live Free Ukraine in Free Russia!" and dozens of national blue and yellow flags. Alongside students, intellectuals and workers, soldiers and officers also took part in the solemn march as it was led by a squad of Kuban Cossacks, wearing picturesque black jackets accompanied by the Sich flag and by Zaporizhzhian bunchuks; notably, the Volyn Life Guards Regiment, the first to jump on the side of the Revolution, marched under the blue and yellow flags of the Life Guards forces (witnesses later wrote about the manifestation with the words "two Ukrainian regiments overthrew the Russian tsar"). Representatives of other peoples earlier oppressed by the empire such as Finns, Poles, Estonians, Latvians, Belarusians, Tatars marched in the ranks of Ukrainians with their national flags and slogans too.¹

To put it short, the Ukrainian political subjectness of those days was vividly concretised in the very act of armed overthrow of the tsarist regime. Moreover, the subjectness has since acquired a geopolitical dimension, transforming from its latent form to an actual one. The next stages of the evolution such as the formation of the Ukrainian Central Rada and the proclamation of its Universal, the emergence of Ukrainianised units and associations (being sometimes spontaneously and sometimes involuntarily sanctioned by the Russian Provisional Government), the proclamation of the UPR and its participation in the Brest peace negotiations with the Central Powers, and, finally, the proclamation of Ukrainian independence would become natural stages in the formation of the actual sovereignty of Ukraine. Nevertheless, these are other subjects and topics related to the theoretical problematics of how to characterise that subjectness, which has hardly fit into the standard dichotomy of coming as 'latent or actual' and, consequently, requires a more complex conceptual and categorical apparatus.

¹Hrabovskyi, S. (2017). *The Russian Revolution of 1917: A Portrait in the Interior of the Historical Era*. Nizhyn, p. 12. [in Ukr.]

CHAPTER 2.

CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE STUDY OF THE GEOPOLITICAL SUBJECTNESS OF UKRAINE IN THE CONDITIONS OF MODERN GLOBAL CHALLENGES

2.1. Peculiarities of the geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine in the conditions of globalisation

Analysing the essence of geopolitical, or civilisational, subjectness, it should be noted that it stands for a particular quality of a country's social existence, when the latter becomes not the object of influence of 'the powers that be', but through the efforts of its political, scientific, artistic and religious elite, constructs its civilisational future and way of life, is aware of its own, not externally imposed, values, and formulates genuine national interests. Such construction and awareness, which are carried out by the elite of a state, is a factor of the authenticity of civilisational subjectness, and therefore of its effectiveness.¹

In difficult geopolitical conditions, in a world that is constantly globalising and changing, Ukraine has long been the object of geopolitical games. As a result of the weakness of its political elite, lacking strategic thinking and a positive foreign policy image, when our state was mostly associated with an underdeveloped, corrupt and, in recent years, warring country, we have long been losing our geopolitical subjectness. For a considerable period, we had no clear foreign policy course and fluctuated between Russia and Western countries. And only in recent years, especially after the aggression of the Russian Federation, European and Euro-Atlantic orientations have been enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine. However, even today, Ukraine remains one of the poorest countries in Europe, with its economy remaining mainly resource-based. Foreign investments that could strengthen Ukraine's economy before the war amounted to 10% of GDP, although for tangible growth and economic jump-start, it should be at least 25% of GDP. Of course, in the conditions of war, the investment rate in Ukraine will not increase. However, some other reasons could be overcome with the appropriate political will of the state leadership, i. e. primarily, a significant level of corruptibility in various spheres of social life, ineffective protection of private property, a weak judicial system, etc. Only with the systemic

¹Kasparov, G. *The Odessa Milestone*. [online] Available at: <http://newsonline24.com.ua/odesskij-rubezh-kasparov/> [Accessed 3 May 2017b]. [in Rus.]

reform of most branches of social life can conditions be created in our country for both internal economic growth and attracting external investments.

Recently, Ukraine has been front and centre for the international community (full-scale Russian invasion), so we must use all means to enhance our credibility in the world, strengthen our statehood and have tougher sanctions imposed against the Russian Federation, which employs every trick in the book, starting with direct armed intervention and ending with forceful informational influences, to weaken or annihilate Ukraine. Even some of our European neighbours, particularly Hungary, feeling our vulnerability, dictate their vision on how we solve our internal problems (issues of language, historical memory, national minorities), accusing us of violating international law while impairing communication with the European Union or inhibiting cooperation with NATO.

For a long time, Ukraine had a limited geopolitical subjectness, being largely dependent on the actions of powerful international actors. When analysing the main reasons for Ukraine's geopolitical weakness, it should be highlighted:

External factors:

1) Full-scale aggression by Russia, which is trying to destroy the Ukrainian state as an independent subject of international relations.

2) Transformation of the world political system, where supranational entities, multinational corporations, and international organisations begin to play an increasingly important role, and Ukraine becomes contingent upon these influences.

3) Redistribution of the power of world political players (USA, European Union, China, Russia). Ukraine ended up at the intersection of the vested interests of those actors, each of which tries to drag it into its sphere of influence.

4) Strengthening globalisation processes, which is dialectically linked to the growing importance of regional centres.

5) Development of information and other new technologies that characterise the transition to the information society, with the insufficient level of development of these technologies in Ukraine.

6) Low level of hard and soft power of the Ukrainian state, inadequate information presence of Ukraine in the world.

7) Weakness of Ukraine's international authority, particularly the paucity of its support from the countries of the Global South.

8) Undercapacity and a lack of a network of foreign diplomatic missions, particularly to the Global South states.

Internal factors:

1) Insufficient reforms in most spheres of social life. The reforms that were initiated were never completed. Judicial reform and reform of the prosecutor's office, which were allegedly implemented but did not yield tangible results.

2) Immaturity of a law-governed state. Equality before the law, which is proclaimed by many politicians, remains declarative for the time being. Although depriving deputies of their immunity is already a certain positive step in this direction.

3) Lack of economic potential and modernisation of the country, predominance of extensive growth technologies over intensive ones. The level of innovation in industry, which in developed countries amounts to 60-80%, in our nation reaches the level of about 20%.

4) The resource-based orientation of the Ukrainian economy and export dependence: 50-60% of Ukraine's GDP is formed by exports, with the export of primary raw materials and that of agricultural products, which has been growing recently, prevailing. For comparison, in 2002, we exported 42% of metal and 20% of agricultural products, whereas in 2021, the numbers changed to 20% and 42% respectively. While the world has been modernising all this time, most of our industrial enterprises, including metallurgical ones, have worked according to the old schemes.

5) Incompleteness of privatisation processes. Notwithstanding that strategic industries should remain the property of the state, there are about 3,500 state-owned enterprises, half of which do not work effectively. Therefore, the privatisation of most of them will contribute to attracting funds to the state budget and enable investors to reorganise these enterprises and enhance their efficiency.

6) High level of oligarchisation of the country. Financial and oligarchic groups, even in the context of war, remain an organised social group that controls part of the spheres of Ukrainian society through such levers as power, money, and mass media. Experts assess that corruption rent-seeking nowadays reaches about 20 billion dollars per annum. Therefore, the international community perceives Ukraine as a corrupt country, and although in the conditions of external aggression by the Russian Federation, most developed countries support Ukraine, in the absence of an effective fight against corruption, this aid will not be effective enough.

7) Insufficient level of development of the Ukrainian political nation and national self-awareness; certain regional differences that strengthen centrifugal tendencies.

8) Lack of the Ukrainian national idea, the absence of powerful Ukrainian-centric myths.

For quite a while, one of the main reasons for Ukraine's geopolitical weakness was the inertia of the Ukrainian mentality, the inferiority complex, and the strong stances of post-imperial Russian Soviet myths, in which Ukraine was positioned only as the younger brother of the great Russian people. During the long stay under the rule of the Russian Empire, and then the Soviet Union, Ukrainians were subjected to a powerful myth of inferiority, mistrust of their own power, which was greatly beneficial to the Russians, who always tried to avail of our creative potential, our thrift and industriousness. For the most part, it was Ukrainians who held many important administrative economic posts in the USSR, fulfilling the duties assigned to them in good faith. Had been deprived of Ukraine and its fertile chernozem (black soils), the Russian Empire and then the Soviet Union would not have been able to accumulate their power. A significant contribution to increasing the defence capability of the USSR was made by the Southern Mechanical Engineering enterprise Pivdenmash (Yuzhmash), aircraft manufacturing Antonov Plant (Aviant), Mykolaiv Shipyard, and other companies. Actually, Zbigniew Brzeziński stated that 'it cannot be stressed enough that without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be a Eurasian empire'. Therefore, even today, Russia imposes its imperial myths on Ukrainians to turn them into indifferent and passive 'gray mass', 'inert Little Russians', which would blindly fulfill the will of the Kremlin. However, its manipulators miscalculated, for we always cherish and are blessed with the powerful underlying spirit of passion in ourselves, a spirit of liberty, a desire for freedom, and for the championing and defence of justice.

Ukraine, which occupies an important geopolitical position at the intersection of many trade routes, quite often suffered aggression from neighbouring states seeking to seize these fertile lands. And it was during the most unfavourable times that stirred an irresistible will to freedom and upholding justice in Ukrainians, which is true today in the conditions of Russian aggression. Since the time of Kyivan Rus, the princes undertook successful campaigns against Byzantium to force it to recognise Kyivan Rus as a worthy and deserving partner, to allow Kyiv merchants to conduct trade on lands subordinated to the Byzantines. During the national liberation struggle of the 17th century, the Cossacks rebelled against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth under the leadership of Bohdan Khmelnytskyi and won a number of resounding victories at Zhovti Vody, Pyliavtsi and Batih, practically defeating the Polish army, as they

fought for the freedom of their land and their Orthodox faith, with exactly this motivating them. In fact, throughout the struggle for independence of the 20th century, Ukrainians also fought for their freedom and for Ukrainian statehood against the onslaught of Russian Bolshevism. But the lack of unity among the Ukrainian national elite, the inertia of a large part of Ukrainians and the lack of consolidating values and powerful Ukrainian-centric myths never turned this dream into reality.

Most countries have a puissant national myth that unites society. Great Britain is pooled around the figure of an English Queen or King, who are the bearers of deep cultural traditions and mores, the main consolidating factor not only for Great Britain, but for other countries of the Commonwealth (formerly - British Commonwealth), which have already gained independence, still English monarchs are their formal leaders with the authority to appoint a governor-general for them. For the US, the key is the myth of freedom, for the cause and victory of which many Americans laid down their lives. For Israel, the myth of divine chosenness of the Jewish people remains pivotal. It was guided by this myth, along with the desire for freedom and defence of its independence, that in the Six-Day War the Israeli army defeated the fairly powerful armies of the five Arab nations that strived to destroy the young Israeli state. Most Muslim states are steered by the myth of the supremacy of Islam, of the God-chosenness of Muslim countries, which must carry this faith to other peoples. That's why they loathe Israel, which has a similar myth. Muslims quite successfully promote their ideas in European states, where excessive political correctness, insufficiently effective family policy, and state support for sexual minorities leads to a population decrease. Muslim families, as a rule, have many children, thus carrying out a creeping expansion into the European world, which is shrinking in size. In these conditions of global threats and challenges, Ukrainians must devise a powerful system of national values and myths that would increase both the self-respect of Ukrainians as well as respect for Ukrainians by other peoples, as the myths of inferiority, and of the younger brother have already been used up. Arguing whether Ukraine has the opportunities and resources to build geopolitical capacity, it should be stated that it is the largest country in Europe with a total area of 603,628 square kilometres.

In geopolitical perspective, Ukraine is a limitrophe, i.e. a country that is positioned between powerful states or associations of states, each of which wants to strengthen its influence here. To provide an example, such states or associations of states are Russia, the United States and the European Union.

Ukraine is located between the despotic Russian milieu and the legal civilisational space of Europe.

The non-recognition and condemnation by the countries of the European Union and other democratic states of the altered status of annexed Crimea and of the temporary occupation of part of the Donbas region by the Russian Federation testified to the perception of Ukraine as a sovereign state and a subject of international legal relations. This was also approved by the UN General Assembly Resolution 68/262, adopted on 27 March 2014, affirming the territorial integrity of Ukraine as an independent European state and a subject of international relations. As regards the importance of the geopolitical position of Ukraine Ivan Kuras stressed that Ukraine and other post-Soviet states are in many ways focal points of stability and geographical and political balance in the global space.

In addition, on the eve of the second solemn anniversary of the Russian invasion, on February 23, 2024, a meeting of the UN General Assembly was held, where Ukraine's resolution condemning Russian aggression was discussed. The meeting, which was supposed to take place in one day, lasted several days, as about 40 countries signed up for speeches. This confirmed the fact that this issue is key to the world community, since tackling it is vital for most nations of the world. The majority of the democratic countries of the world actively supported Ukraine in their speeches, condemning Russian aggression. As always, Russia once again lied to the whole world, repudiating Ukraine's just accusations. Belarus, as a submissive vassal, backed Russia by making amendments to the Ukrainian resolution to weaken it and offset the claims against Russia; still, these amendments certainly did not pass. The crucial thing was the attitude towards the resolution of the countries of the Global South (the countries of Asia, Africa, and South America), holding predominantly neutral positions, with both Ukrainian and Russian delegations working with them. In particular, the latter tried to convince these countries that Russia had attacked Ukraine to rescue its country from Western powers and NATO; it also called on the Global South to unite in the fight against the colonial collective West. It should also be mentioned that Russia held quite strong sway in many African countries, where Russian capital is highly concentrated and where the Russian Wagner Group calls the shots as well.

But all Russia's hopes were in vain. The final vote resulted in 141 countries voicing support for the Ukrainian resolution, which is a significant success for Ukraine. Some of the countries of the Global South also supported our resolution,

including the countries of the Middle East, which previously took a neutral position. There were only seven countries against, namely, such authoritarian and totalitarian countries as North Korea, Syria, and Belarus, with marginal states – Eritrea, Mali, Nicaragua, assisted by Russia. Among the countries that abstained are China and India, which benefit financially from cooperation with Russia, in particular, from the purchase of energy carriers at reduced prices. Majority of those who abstained during the vote are African countries: South Africa, CAR, Zimbabwe, Angola, and others where Russia still enjoys a strong stance. Some Asian nations, such as Pakistan and Viet Nam, opposed the resolution as well, with the latter, as we know, nostalgic for the Soviet Union. Several countries of the post-Soviet space did not vote in favour of the motion either, particularly, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, which still retain certain Russian influences. However, they were most influenced by the position of China, which strengthens ties with Central Asia. Interestingly, even Iran did not oppose the resolution, taking a neutral position, still furnishing Russia with combat drones.

The key provisions of the resolution were, primarily, the condemnation of Russian aggression, the reiteration of the demand for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of all of Russian military forces from the territory of Ukraine, the complete exchange of prisoners of war, the release of all unlawfully detained persons, the cessation of the attacks on the critical infrastructure of Ukraine, and the condemnation of Russian war criminals. As for the last point, Ukrainian diplomacy is actively working among all countries of the world to gather a powerful coalition of states that will vote for the establishment of the Special International Tribunal to hold Putin and other Russian individuals responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity accountable so that they receive a fair punishment for all their crimes.¹

The strengthening of Ukraine's international authority is also proven by the EU nations' support for Ukraine's European integration. As we know, the President V. Zelenskyi of Ukraine applied to join the European Union on February 28, 2022, emphasising that our country is worthy of becoming a Member State of the European Union because we protect democratic European values at the cost of the lives of our best sons. On June 23, 2022, the European Council decided to grant Ukraine and Moldova EU candidate status.

¹Chuprii, L. (2023). Geopolitical Support for Ukraine in the Conditions of Full-Scale Russian Aggression. *Geopolitics of Ukraine: History and Modern Times: A Collection of Scientific Papers*. Issue 1 (30). Uzhhorod, pp. 22-32. [online] Available at: <http://geopolitics-of-ukraine.uzhnu.edu.ua> [in Ukr.]

Another of the key modern trends in Ukrainian foreign policy is Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations, which are supported by many Western analysts. Thus, in 1999 the American researcher Robert Hunter opined that Ukraine is a keystone in the future of NATO. If Ukraine becomes a free and united state in 15 years, this will testify to NATO's success in implementing transformations in the European security system. But if not, it could mean NATO failure.¹ Another analyst from the West, Sherman W. Garnett, pointed out that 'leaving Ukraine on the periphery and in a state of stagnation, the threat of an uncertain and unstable border could increase for NATO and the EU'. He underscored the need to use the unusual opportunity provided by modern independent Ukraine to build a new European security system that will exclude the possibility of large-scale military conflicts on the continent.²

The importance of Ukraine for security in the European Union and in the world was presented by Zbigniew Brzezinski. In 1997, he argued in his book 'The Grand Chessboard' that deepened collaboration in the Weimar Triangle (France, Germany and Poland), with Ukraine drawn into the special relationship, could become the core of any wider European security arrangements.³ Since Ukraine's declared intention to become permanently neutral and be out of military blocks has not succeeded to guarantee its security and ensure the efficient protection of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity, the urgent need is to incorporate our defence capabilities into the existing system of Euro-Atlantic security.

It goes without saying, in 2022 Ukraine applied to join NATO, reflecting the experience of Finland and Sweden, which quickly became members of the North Atlantic Alliance. Ukraine's neighbours from Eastern Europe (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania) and the Baltic countries actively support this path. However, in the conditions of fighting a defensive war with Russia, to proceed with it is currently impossible, but after the end of the conflict, it becomes quite real.

Analysing the importance of Ukraine's accession to NATO, it should be noted that this can contribute in securing an atmosphere of geopolitical pluralism in the region of Central and Eastern Europe, where the interests of Ukraine as an active player in the international arena can be adequately ensured. In NATO, all

¹Hunter, R. E. (1999). Ukraine, NATO and the United States. *Ukraine in Europe: Collected Papers. Occasional Reports in European Studies*. Washington, DC, pp. 41-44. [in Eng.]

²Garnett, Sh. W. (1999). Ukraine and Russia. *Ukraine in Europe: Collected Papers. Occasional Reports in European Studies*. Washington, DC, pp. 49-53. [in Eng.]

³Brzezinski, Zb. (2000). *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*. Kyiv, p. 16. [in Ukr.]

states, even such as Luxembourg with an army of 500 people or Iceland, which has no military forces at all, have the right to vote. Taking into account the size and geopolitical significance of Ukraine, which prevails in terms of area in comparison to its western neighbours, it has the opportunity to actively influence decisions within the institutional framework of the military-political alliance.

It is important to highlight that, in addition to the geopolitical location, a serious advantage of Ukraine is once again its size. For example, one of the discussions about the admission of the Baltic states to NATO was that their territory does not have the necessary 'strategic depth', so it is quite difficult to 'protect them technically'. Ukraine has a much larger territory and a corresponding strategic depth that can contribute to its effective defence. If allied relations with neighbouring countries are ensured, the strategic depth of Ukraine's defence will increase even more.¹

In order to speed up the process of joining the North Atlantic Alliance, Ukraine has to deal with its internal political problems, such as reforming the judicial and law enforcement systems, anti-corruption reform, etc. Evaluating the security aspect of relations with NATO, it is important to note that these ties provide Ukraine with a favourable security climate on its borders with Russia. This is of great importance, especially in the context of ending the war with Russia and preventing further possible aggression from this side. Ukraine's accession to NATO will also contribute to strengthening the Alliance's defence capabilities, as the Ukrainian Armed Forces, which are successfully fighting the 'second world army', can share their significant service experience with the military staff of NATO countries.

It was these steps that enabled Ukraine to gradually change its role from an object of geopolitical games to a proactive force in international relations and a champion of its interests on the world stage.

In the conditions of strengthening the geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine, we must continue to work in this direction, fully using the powerful political, economic, agrarian, and cultural potential of our country.

Ukraine has a rich heritage and is among the five European leaders in terms of the number of historical and cultural monuments, of which we have about 150,000. In more than 5,000 state-owned and private museums, there are 12 million exhibit artpieces. Among the national monuments inscribed on UNESCO

¹Bielov, O. *Our Country Needs to Find Its Own Place in the Multidimensional World of International Relations and New Security Structures*. [online] Available at: <http://www.niss.gov.ua/Tasko/001.htm> (Accessed 20 July 2023). [in Ukr.]

World Heritage List there are Saint-Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv, Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, the ancient city of Tauric Chersonese, primeval beech forests of the Carpathians. Also, one of these objects is one of the 34 obelisk station points of the Struve Geodetic Arc – a chain of survey triangulations stretching across the territory of ten European countries from Hammerfest in Norway to the Black Sea. In addition to world heritage sites, there are many of the grandest Orthodox cathedrals here, including St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery, Lavra, Sophia, St. Andrew's Church, Vydubetsky Monastery.

Ukraine, occupying about 6% of the territory of Europe, contains 35% of its biological diversity. The great endowments of nature and the home area of many biological species is related to the location of the country, as there lie a range of bird migration routes and a number of natural zones. There are more than 70,000 species in Ukraine, including many rare and relict species of plants and animals.

Ukraine has *significant agricultural potential*, it owns humus-rich chernozem, which make up a third of the world fund. According to One Soil Map, Ukraine ranks second in the world in terms of agricultural land area after the US. It possesses 35.9mln of hectares of fertile land. In third place was France, which has 25.7mln hectares. Our country has a favourable climate, which creates all the conditions for becoming one of the world leaders in the export of vegetables and fruits. Today, Ukraine ranks fifth in Europe in terms of production of fruit, vegetable, and berry products and is the eleventh of 45 European countries in terms of organic farming. In 2021, the total volume of organic production in Ukraine was estimated at \$25 million. At the same time, many factors, in particular the average return on investment at the level of approximately 300%, make organic farming one of the most attractive areas for investment in Ukraine.

Until 2050–2060, Ukraine can become the largest producer of food products in the world, while only 10% of the population will work in the agricultural sector. The share of exports of agricultural products will account for about a third of all Ukrainian exports. Advanced logistics, cheap fodder, integrated enterprises for the production of finished products will enable Ukraine to become a major player in the world market of meat and dairy products, delivering them to more than 100 countries of the world.

Our country is increasing the manufacturing of agricultural products every year. Most of all, Ukraine supplies grain and oil crops to the EU, as well as sunflower oil and oil cake. Europeans have a significant demand for Ukrainian honey, wheat, corn, barley, oats, barley groats, flour, sugar, processed tomatoes,

apple and grape juice. Of course, in the conditions of the war, the volume of supplies decreased, but when it comes to an end, the release will increase significantly, since the demand for Ukrainian agricultural products in European countries is high.

Nevertheless, the productivity of the Ukrainian agricultural sector compared to foreign countries is not high enough. According to experts of the Ukrainian Institute for the Future (UIF), Ukraine made a profit of \$17 billion from 42 million hectares of land, while, for example, the Netherlands made a profit of \$92 billion from 1.9 million ha. That is, 1 ha of not very fertile Dutch lands generates 48 thousand dollars, and that of Ukrainian chernozem generates 420 dollars. Concurrently, state support for the agricultural sector is not effective enough. In 2021, about 4bln hryvnias were allocated from the state budget to support farmers, which was obviously not adequate to the needs of the agricultural sector.

Although Ukraine is associated mainly as an agrarian country, we are also actively developing cutting-edge technologies, in particular *the IT industry*. According to the IT Ukraine Association, the export of IT services from Ukraine in 2021 amounted to about \$4bln dollars. IT ranks third in terms of export volume, after agriculture and metallurgy. Today, about 116,000 Ukrainians are employed in the IT sector, with representatives of this industry having one of the highest salaries in Ukraine. The average wage in the industry reaches \$1,600. If the state was at the appropriate level to support this industry and improve the relevant legislation, experts project the revenue from this field to double in our country by 2030. It should be stressed that the development of IT technologies is quite promising, as it does not require significant investments, instead demanding high-quality personnel that could actually be found in Ukraine. The leaders in the development of IT technologies today are the US, Japan, Hong Kong, China, and India. Accordingly, for example, in India, the IT industry has attained income of 100 billion dollars and continues to evolve rapidly.

It should be noted that a number of face men of leading IT companies have Ukrainian roots. In particular, one of the co-founders of the Apple company, Steve Wozniak, noted at a speech at the OLEROM FORUM 1 in Kyiv: ‘Many people ask me: Steve, are you a Pole? Because my last name is Wozniak. I answer: No, I am Ukrainian’. Let us recollect that the future engineer was born in 1950 in California. Steve's dad's parents came from Bukovyna; in April 1976, Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs founded Apple.

Among modern Ukrainians, we should mention Max Levchin (emigrated with his family from Ukraine to Chicago as Jewish refugees in 1991), one of the original co-founders of PayPal. In 2002, eBay acquired the payment system for \$1.5 billion. Today, the 50-year-old man from Kyiv is one of the most famous Silicon Valley programmers who served on the board for Yahoo! Inc. Another well-known Kyivan, Jan Koum (left Ukraine in 1992), co-founded the world's biggest mobile messaging WhatsApp, the startup he sold to the Facebook social network for at least \$16bln in 2014. Today he is a member of Facebook's board of directors.

Ukraine also has certain successes *in the development of robotics*. The robot, invented by the company Wawerley Software, Lviv, was included in the Top 25 best inventions of 2017 according to TIME magazine. It can recognise voice, movement, and remember emotions. A Ukrainian product has advantages over similar devices produced by Google and Amazon, as it is mobile and can even dance. It should be mentioned that in 2016, Ukrainian student Anton Holovachenko won first place at an international Robot Launch global competition in the US for elaborating an exoskeleton with UniExo technology. The war also caused considerable interest in drones, so Ukraine ranks first in the world in terms of the level of development of drones.

Ukraine is also successful in spreading blockchain. The world's first agreement to sell real estate for cryptocurrency using a smart contract and a full cycle of blockchain technology (Ethereum) was carried out in Kyiv in 2017 by Ukrainian-American businessman Mark Ginzburg. After that, he was invited to famous universities of the world to give lectures. Mark is also famous for the fact that he actively invests in Ukrainian startups. He notes that today Ukraine is the largest exporter of software in all of Europe. But 95% of our programmers are hired by outsourcers, selling their talents to foreign companies.

Moreover, Ukraine has successes in other fields, particularly *in aircraft construction*. The largest AN-225 'Mriya' aircraft was developed in Ukraine, which, unfortunately, was destroyed by the Russians.

At the same time the *domestic space industry* has serious potential. The first and so far the only Ukrainian spaceman, Leonid Kadeniuk, stated in his interview with Hromadske Radio (Community/Public Radio) that we avail from only 5% to 7% of the capabilities of our space industry. In his opinion, the political will of Ukrainian leaders is needed for the development of the industry. Another expert, Valerii Borovyk, noted that about 20,000 people work in the space industry of Ukraine today. Still, this number is decreasing by 10% per

annum, since there is no market demand as well as no state support for the industry. In some institutions of higher education of Ukraine, space-oriented specialties are closed, while other countries understand the strategic importance of the space industry.

Thus, in general, about 700,000 specialists work in the space industry in the world. Such developed countries as the US, along with China, invest significantly in the development of space technologies; even our immediate neighbours (Poland and Türkiye) are actively boosting the space industry. And Ukraine, which has been significantly capable in terms of space since Soviet times, does not support this industry today, although it is extremely profitable. Over the years starting from the renewal of independence, Ukraine has not been able to elaborate an articulate space strategy that would define Ukraine's tasks and objectives of space exploration. Notwithstanding, it should be mentioned that even under the presidency of L.Kuchma Ukrainians planned to build a joint spaceport in Indonesia together with the USA, Israel, Singapore and Argentina. However, a coup d'état blocked the project.

A little later, L. Kuchma signed a Treaty on Long-Term Cooperation in Utilisation of the Cyclone-4 Launch Vehicle at the Alcântara Launching Center, designed for launching rockets and satellites, where 50% of the cost of the spaceport was equally paid by Ukraine and Brazil. When the spaceport was constructed at 30%, anti-government demonstrations took place in Brazil. Consequently, in 2015, Ukraine received an official document that due to the difficult socio-political situation in the country, Brazil is forced to unilaterally terminate the contract with Ukraine without returning the funds invested by it – but not without a Russian trace involved. It was in 2015 that V. Putin visited Brazil a month before the Brazilians forwarded a withdrawal document to Ukraine. Most likely, he agreed with the Brazilian authorities to stop the Ukrainian-Brazilian project. The Russians were afraid of competition with Ukraine, as they were building their spaceport in neighbouring Guinea. Therefore, Ukraine was forced to reserve to international arbitration, as the Brazilian side owed the Ukrainian party \$200,000.

Therefore, we have the appropriate potential, but we cannot fully realise it, since quite often the political will of the top leadership is absent and an effective state strategy for the country's development in various spheres of social life has not been devised. In this context, it is necessary to study the experience of other countries. It is noteworthy that over the past half century, breakthroughs in economic growth have been achieved by those countries whose economies were

focused on export and the development of the emerging technologies. It is this strategy, and not the promotion of consumption and the increase of the growth of the domestic market, that has proven effective for ‘countries in pursuit of development’. Domestic consumption as a driver of advancement succeeded in those countries that were sufficiently developed – the US and Western Europe. Even 30 years ago, the economy of South Korea was at the level of the economy of Ghana, and today it is one of the ten most developed economies in the world, outnumbering the economy of Ghana by 15 times.

In order to introduce cutting-edge technologies and successfully reform most spheres of life, we must also change the worldview and mentality of people, who quite often live in the grip of old extensive traditions. We must become a contemporary modern nation. According to S. Hrabovskyi, the main problem of Ukrainians is the absence of social consolidation, the lack of comprehensive formation as the Ukrainian political nation, which should include all social strata and groups. Although in the researcher’s view, we are most likely at the final stage of this process. In this context, S. Pyrozhkov notes that social consolidation acts not only as the basis of the stability of any society, it is the driving force of its development and, essentially, serves as the way out of any crises. At one time, it was social consolidation that empowered the United States of America to end the civil war with an effective civilisational transformation, as well as to overcome the Great Depression; Finland – to defend its identity and reach economic and social prosperity; Japan – to be revived after the defeat in the Second World War and embark on the path of world leadership in a number of innovative fields of science and technology. Today, there is a need to consolidate, based on the consensus of all social, ethno-cultural and political groups of Ukraine for the sake of joint victory at the crisis stage of bifurcation and for a dignified life today and in the future.

In order to achieve social consolidation and self-organisation, we must contribute to the development of civil society, since it rescued Ukraine in fateful moments. Let us pay tribute to the volunteer battalions and the enthusiastic civil volunteer movement that practically stopped Russian aggression in the east of the country. It is a powerful civil society in balance with the state, – which supports the creative self-realisation of the individual and is itself supported by it, – that is a condition of civilisational choice, which will not only strengthen the subjectness of Ukraine, but also bring the Ukrainian state to the world level. The state, with the support of civil society, should create uniform ‘rules of the game’ for all in a society where a person is of supreme value. It is also to ensure the effective

functioning of vertical mobility mechanisms, so-called social elevators, when talented youth from below can rise to the ruling elite and effectively reform the national state. This will contribute to the actualisation of civic trust both in the authorities and among people, enhance joint responsibility and form a positive social climate. Everything else will be furnished by the free self-organisation of self-actualised citizens restrained only by law. Such self-organisation will shape Ukraine as a successful subject in a globalised world.¹

We must support the nationally oriented, statesmanlike elite, which, unlike the currently ruling kleptocratic 'elite', which is mostly preoccupied with its own enrichment, will truly manage to develop our country and raise it to the world level, by the reason that it thinks not only tactically – such national elite ponders strategically. The main features of this elite should be: professionalism, the cult of responsibility, duty, patriotism and sterling character.

In our opinion, for the formation of modern Ukraine, today we need, first and foremost, state patriotism and modern nationalism, which is aimed at forging a highly developed modern nation. Regarding the definition of the latter, we rely primarily on the research of Anthony Smith, who understood nationalism as a sociopolitical movement and an ideology of the nation, 'that places the nation at the centre of its concerns and seeks to promote its well-being.'² So that there is no speculation on this topic, since a number of modern politicians put all possible labels on nationalists, comparing them even with fascists, we shall also turn to the definition of another famous researcher, Ewa Thomson, who in her work 'Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism' clearly indicated the positive role of nationalism in the processes of decolonisation of territories and peoples. She also emphasised that a distinction should be maintained between defensive nationalism, which is poised to defend identity, and aggressive nationalism, which strives to export identity and acquire land on which Others live. In this context, Ukrainians are characterised by defensive nationalism, but the Russian Federation, which accuses us of raging and militant nationalism and Nazism, itself shows aggressive Nazism, seeking to wipe out Ukrainians as a nation.

It is worthwhile to mention the words of M. Mykhalchenko, who pointed out that the self-identification of Ukrainian regional civilisation is restrained not

¹Pyrozhev, S., Khamitov, N. (2017). Ukraine: from Artificial and Real Confrontation to Consolidation. *Dzerkalo tyzhnya* (The Mirror of the Week), Vol. 22. [online] Available at: https://dt.ua/internal/ukrayina-vid-shtuchnoyi-ta-realnoyi-konfrontatsiyi-do-konsolidatsiyi-249197_.html [in Ukr.]

²Smith, A. D. (2004). *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*. Kyiv, 170 p. [in Ukr.]

by an excess of nationalism, but by its lack. At the same time, the scientist emphasises its balanced and rational character; such conservative nationalism as is characteristic of conservative parties in Europe. According to the apt expression of O. Sych, while defending Ukrainian national identity, Ukrainian nationalism thereby exerts a positive influence on the process of civilisational determination of Ukraine.¹ Although, we argue that the most optimal ideology for modern Ukraine is nationalist conservatism, which, on the one hand, ensures the formation of a Ukrainian political nation with a Ukrainian ethnic core, the support of Ukrainian language and culture, along with the formation of historical memory. On the other hand, such an ideology promotes the implementation of market relations and the development of the middle class and civil society, which will perform a socially consolidating and stabilising role.

It should be stated that Ukraine lives in a world that is constantly changing and the main problem of Ukraine is that it does not want to modernise, really assess its position in the world, as well as determine its goal and strategy for achieving it. Today, Ukraine's mission is to create a new civilisational model capable of creatively combining the best features of Eastern and Western traditions.

In conclusion, it should be noted that in the context of full-scale Russian aggression, weakening and transformation of the world security system, significant institutional changes are needed at the international level, since this war has shown that a number of international organisations do not perform the functions assigned to them. Thus, the UN, which should ensure peace and stability throughout the world, although it condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine, cannot stop the Russian Federation, as it does not have effective levers of influence. In addition, Russia remains a member of the UN Security Council until now, although as an aggressor country it should have been excluded from it immediately after the start of the aggression. Therefore, the UN needs a radical reboot. As a result, we must get a powerful international organisation characterised by the following key elements: 1) the absence of the right of veto as regards to any state, and therefore the impossibility of blocking a decision supported by the majority of states; 2) devising a mechanism for the automatic deprivation of the right to vote of any country that systematically and consistently violates the norms of international law, and even more so if it shows aggression;

¹Sych, O. (2018). *Nationalism and the Civilizational Definition of Ukraine*. [online] Available at: <http://ukrnationalism.com/publications/3358-natsionalizm-i-tsyvilizatsiine-vyznachennia-ukrainy.html> [in Ukr.]

3) strengthening the powers of the UN to make decisions in the economic sphere, ecology, security, climate, human rights; 4) forming a powerful international peacekeeping military contingent that could really stop conflicts and be subordinated only to the UN (at least 200–300 thousand professional servicemen who must comply with the decisions of the UN General Assembly alone).

As for the role of Ukraine in the new world order, it can become a powerful regional player, a model for other countries of the world to fight for their freedom, for democratic values and human rights. Ukraine did not agree to the role of a victim in this unjust war of aggression, although even the US and European countries initially did not believe that Ukraine would stand up and managed to stop the ‘second army of the world’. Therefore, it proves that Ukraine is a full-fledged leading member of the civilised democratic world. Therefore, the victory of Ukraine is the victory of civilisation over barbarism, since the Russian armed forces are absolutely barbaric, they have no moral or legal restrictions, as to killing, raping, and robbing Ukrainian citizens. And their leader and chief barbarian V. Putin, who threw them into this carnage, also has neither moral nor legal restrictions and is guided only by the manic misanthropic idea of reviving the greatness of imperial Russia and destroying everyone who disagrees with it. However, by digging a hole for another, you will definitely get into it yourself. V. Putin, destroying and enslaving other peoples, turned the whole world against him and will soon lead Russia to decline and complete isolation or even final disintegration and collapse. But Ukraine, having won, will only get stronger and rise. After the Ukrainian victory, democracy and freedom will triumph, and autocratic countries will significantly weaken their positions. Most of the countries of the world will help Ukraine in the reconstruction of infrastructure both on an irreversible basis and with economic investments, and this will become not only a moral obligation of developed countries, but also a successful marketing ploy. This will enable states and global business structures to feel involved in the victory of civilisation. Therefore, a large and rapidly growing market with a qualified and relatively inexpensive labor force will be formed in Ukraine, which will require gigantic volumes of investments, unprecedented since the Second World War. Most countries of the world, even China and Arab countries, which did not always support Ukraine, will seek to enter the Ukrainian market.

2.2. The endeavour of the Russian Federation to deprive Ukraine of the status of a geopolitical subject.

The Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine exposed all previously hidden contradictions, making them visible and accessible to ordinary citizens. All the things that for centuries had been disguised as legal formulations, as moral sermons of the Russian Orthodox Church and as the image of a 'global superpower' have lately been embodied in an ultimate expression: 'there is a war going on'.

When characterising Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness prior to the Russian invasion, analysts used to disagree about its maturity and finality. The first half of the authors simply equated subjectness and statehood: if Ukraine is an independent state, it automatically becomes a subject of international relations; the other one referred to the 'external governance path' that Ukraine had entered after the collapse of the USSR. It is appropriate to cite renowned scientists in this regard: 'The current spot of Ukraine in the globalised world is characterised by the fact that it is still mainly perceived through a paradigm of an object of world politics and civilisation. Its subjectness has been minimised due to internal destructive transformations and constant pressure from the Russian Federation (up to armed aggression). In the wake of ineffective political governance and public administration, of growing corruption and oligarchic clientelism, Ukraine fell under the influence of more powerful actors that try to defend and to realise their national interests, in particular at the expense of the state's subjectness.'¹

However, even Ukraine's 'compromised subjectness' had not satisfied Russia, which was why it attacked its southern neighbour in order to seize the territory, to change the current government and to annex subsequently occupied lands. In this section of the collective monograph, we aim to demonstrate that Russia has consciously, deliberately and continuously made efforts to discredit Ukraine's subjectness and to reveal the means used for it.

To begin, I will define the central concept of this study. According to S. Pyrozhkov and N. Khamitov, subjectness of a country means 'the ability to independently develop its civilisational project and translate it into reality, while choosing suitable partner nations and allied powers along the way.'² The aforementioned authors believe that the subject is primarily a civilizational one: 'Civilisational subjectness is a socially existing attribute of a country when the

¹ Maiboroda, O., ed. (2020). *Subject of Ukraine in the Modern World: Assessments, Strategies, Forecasts. An Analytical Report*. Kyiv, p. 23 [in Ukr.]

² Pyrozhkov, S., Khamitov, N. (2020). *Ukraine As a Civilisational Subject: From Potencies to a New Worldview and Human Existence*. Kyiv, p. 14 [in Ukr.]

latter, instead of becoming an object of influence of the ‘powers that be’, constructs its civilisational future and way of being, recognises its own values over those imposed from the outside and determines actual national interests with the effort of its political, scientific, artistic and religious elite. Such construction and recognition by the national elite is a factor of the authenticity of the civilisational subjectness and, therefore, a determinant of its effectiveness.’¹

I will not delve into the details of lengthy ‘civilisational discourse’, which is being fruitfully discussed in the Ukrainian humanities. I should only note that the object of the study is not understood as a separate ‘local civilisation’ such as the West, the Islamic world or the Buddhist-Confucian civilisation; nor is the ‘regional Ukrainian civilisation’ of M. Mykhalchenko meant here. In this case, civilisational subjectness implies the unrestricted and cohesive realisation of national economic, political, spiritual and cultural interests, which respectively constitute ‘making history’.

Yet Ukraine’s right to ‘have its own say in world history’ is exactly what Russia does not recognise. It is fundamentally important for Putin that Ukraine disappear from the world map as a subject of history and of international relations. Russian government officials and opinion makers have repeatedly articulated this idea, even though it has usually been concealed behind the ‘nobler’ excuse of the so-called ‘special military operation’ in the official media. So, for what reason did Russia wage a war against Ukraine?

For a long time, Ukrainian political scientists have been paying attention to the fact that the initially proclaimed goals of the war were too abstract and vague, so they cannot be quantified, i.e. measured to what extent they have been realised. Moreover, the goals have constantly been changed, which indicates that the Russian leadership desires to cover up, or ‘disguise’, the genuine intentions of completely occupying Ukraine and of destroying its state independence. The endeavour to deprive Ukraine of its subjectness is reinforced by the circumstance that Ukraine had long been a part of the Russian Empire and, later, an area of the Soviet Union; the Russian ruling elite got used to Ukraine's colonial status and the absence of its subjectness, with Moscow having spoken on the nation’s behalf. Even after the collapse of the USSR, which the Russian president considers ‘the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century,’ the aggressor did not give up on Ukraine and, as Hennadii Burbulis aptly put it, only temporarily ‘let it

¹ PyrozHKov, S., Khamitov, N. (2020). *Ukraine As a Civilizational Subject: From Potencies to a New Worldview and Human Existence*. Kyiv, p. 14 [in Ukr.]

go on a long leash' in order to later draw it back into the empire by using energy system dependence, finance and corruption¹.

In the post-Soviet period of its history, Ukraine had previously accepted the supremacy of its 'elder brother' and stayed in the 'quagmire' of Russian domination for many years, unlike, for example, the Baltic states. The Western world had not denied that Ukraine belonged to the sphere of interest of the Russian Federation; thus, every time Ukrainians had raised the issue of European integration, it had invariably irritated Moscow and caused discreet confusion in Brussels. O. Kondratenko once wrote: 'Ukraine began to exponentially lose its geopolitical and geoeconomic subjectness on the international arena almost immediately after gaining independence. This crisis was accelerated by a dramatic pejoration of its international image triggered by the 'Cassette' and 'Kolchuga' scandals under the second presidential term of Leonid Kuchma, by internal political squabbles between different political branches under the term of Viktor Yushchenko and by an attempt of the Yanukovich regime to curtail the pro-European foreign policy vector and to practically abandon Ukraine's rapprochement with the EU and the NATO.'²

The Euromaidan of 2013 was a radicalised response of the civil society to the lawlessness of the then pro-Russian Ukrainian government. One of the outcomes of the Revolution of Dignity was a significant reduction in Russia's influence on Ukrainian politics, which explains why post-Maidan Ukraine has resolutely refused to hitch its wagon to Moscow; Putin's plans to recreate the empire in the form of the USSR-2 were on the verge of failure at the time. Taking advantage of the temporary weakening of the Ukrainian state institutions, Putin, in return, decided that it was Russia's 'kairotic hour' and annexed the Ukrainian Crimea. After that action, the chain reaction was enacted, in which each subsequent step of the 'game of chicken' brought the countries ever closer to a major war.

The 'Iron Chancellor' Otto von Bismarck is credited with an aphorism, which goes as follows: 'Woe betide any statesman who does not bother to look for the reason to wage a war that would still be important afterwards.' The Russian president 'did bother' to look for such a reason; correspondingly, 'restoration of historical justice', 'protection of the Russian-speaking population' and 'liberation' of former compatriots from the 'illegitimate neo-Nazi Kiev junta'

¹ Stetskiv, T. (2022). *From Independence to Subjectness*. [online] Available at: <https://zbruc.eu/node/112914> [in Ukr.]

² Maiboroda, O., ed. (2020). *Subject of Ukraine in the Modern World: Assessments, Strategies, Forecasts*. An Analytical Report. Kyiv, p. 23 [in Ukr.]

were determined as the motivation for the Crimean annexation and the outbreak of the war in Donbas.

It is not superfluous to note that the Russian propaganda has developed a considerable arsenal of tools aimed at ‘whitewashing’ the dirty intentions of its rulers. In the historical past, the following techniques have been most commonly practised to conceal aggression:

- **Portrayal of the object of aggression as inferior, underdeveloped, unprogressive, ‘incapable of making history’ and insignificant on the scale of world culture.** This was the case with the small and large peoples of the Volga region, of Siberia, of the Far East and the Far North; their forced accession to Russia has always been worded as a great boon for the conquered ethnic groups, even though no one is interested in the opinion of those groups on this matter.

- **Organisation of demonstrative appeals to Russia by local elites, asking to be incorporated as a part of the empire, to be taken under protection, to be liberated, etc.** In this scenario, a well-known imperial tactic of ‘divide et impera’ has been exploited, when a fraction of the elite is lured by bribes and promises and later do those appeals.

- **Creation of fake authorities and simulacra governments usually consisting of Russian ‘lieges’ of the corresponding ethnic origin,** in cases where the elite of the victimised people are unwilling to cooperate and express solidarity in opposing the aggressor. In the twentieth century, the formation of ‘democratic governments’ and ‘people’s republics’ alternative to the legitimate authorities, whose function was to publicly substitute the nation of an external invasion with a merely internal and civil war, was a widely practised phenomenon.

- **Exaggeration of the threat of extermination (such as genocide, ethnocide) by another empire.** For example, in most cases, the excuse for Russia’s territorial gains was messages about oppression (mentioning real oppression and sometimes a fictitious one) of the local population by the Ottoman Empire, Persia, China, etc.; it assisted in legitimising the straightforward expansion at the international level.

- **Accusations of violated rights of co-religionists, compatriots and the Russian-speaking population made against a neighbouring state,** which is a slightly milder version of the previous technique. The method involves the meticulous collection of facts regarding the intolerant behaviour of certain authorities towards national minorities, representatives of certain faiths, language groups, etc. Speculations of such kind have made the situation appear to be a

dead-end one, where the enemy ‘leaves no choice’. To provide historical evidence, in particular, the protection of the rights of the Orthodox population in the Balkans was a justification for the occupation of the Danubian principalities in 1853; the protection of the Russian-speaking population in Ukraine was the same reason for the outbreak of hostilities in Crimea and the Donbas in 2014. ‘Our country,’ Vladimir Putin promised, ‘will continue to vigorously defend the rights of Russians and of our compatriots abroad, using the entire arsenal of available means: from political and economic measures to actions available in accordance with international law, e. g. invocation of the right to self-defence.’¹

- **Arguments about the ‘primordially Russian lands’**, which imply a search in the historical past for fragments and centres of Russian culture in a particular territory (ancient Slavic settlements, trade routes, emigrants’ activities, etc.). The use of this argument has turned aggression into an act of ‘restoring historical justice’, as the annexation of Crimea vividly illustrates.

- **Outright falsification of incidents that lead to an escalation of tensions and, consequently, to an outbreak of war.** To support this point, it is now known that the Mainila incident of November 26, 1939, in which the Finnish side allegedly shelled Soviet border guards, was a provocation organised by the Soviet secret services by the order of the Kremlin to form a pretext for the so-called ‘Winter War’ of 1939-1940; as a result, there was an absurd narrative as if the giant USSR had been attacked by much smaller Finland. Notwithstanding, Stalin had good teachers because, less than six months before the Mainila shelling, something similar had happened in the town of Gleiwitz, where the Nazis dressed in Polish uniforms staged an attack on a German radio station, seizing it and broadcasting through it Poland’s declaration of war against Germany.

- **Cultivation of the eternal ‘image of the enemy’ confronting the Russian state.** This method has usually referred to a powerful geopolitical power that envies the wealth of Russian mineral resources and dreams of taking control of them, tries to capture and dismember Russia, or, at least, to weaken and harm it by any means; the ‘enemy’ has been alternately represented by the Tatar Mongols, the Ottoman Turks, the Teutons, the Poles, the French, the British, the Germans, the Americans, etc. The resistance against their influence has to become a sense of purpose, while Russia’s expansionist plans appear as only preventive actions aimed at averting the implementation of hostile projects, which is

¹ *The Statement by V. Putin at the Meeting of the Russian Ambassadors.* [online] Available at: http://www.dialog.ua/news/7715_1404218825 [Accessed 1 July 2014]. [in Rus.]

illustrated by the following expressions: ‘had we not sent troops to Afghanistan, the Americans would have done it’; ‘had we not annexed Crimea, NATO ships would have been there’.

- **Elaboration of a certain ideological base above Russia’s aggressive plans.** Nikolai Danilevskii resorted to this approach in the book ‘Russia and Europe’, and Lev Trotskii repeated the technique in his articles on the World Revolution. In such a context, Russia is no longer justifying itself, but is implementing a program that takes on sacred or almost religious significance; the seizure of foreign lands turns into a kind of ‘crusade’, or ‘holy war’.

This list of techniques is non-exhaustive; nevertheless, it is clear that the empire has had vast experience in the distortion of facts, in information and propaganda support of military plans and in the manipulation of historical consciousness. All the theses about the ‘All-Russian nation’, the ‘fascist junta’ or the absurdity of the very Ukrainian subjectness are elements of an integrated system that has operated to legitimise the territorial gains. The most important thing, however, takes a back seat to manifold variations of the above-mentioned techniques: the Russian aggression has, in fact, destroyed the system of European collective security established after World War II. Global security presently remains in a state of turbulence, where the previous trend of a bipolar world transforming into a unipolar one and then into a multipolar one is being reversed.

It is worth recalling that the sustainability and viability of the international security system are based on the observance of norms of international law by all states, which prevents dispute resolution through the use of military force or the threat of it. All actors of international relations must ideally have equal rights and responsibilities, but even in today’s reality, the ‘power factor’ is taken into account when concluding international agreements, just as 100-200 years ago; nations are still outspokenly divided into strong ones and weak ones. Back in the middle of the nineteenth century, the author of the term ‘Realpolitik’, Ludwig von Rochau, viewed the interaction of a particular state with its environment as a system of influences caused by multi-vector forces, either of neighbouring countries or of some major actors, which affect the state at different angles and with various amplitudes. Theoretically, it is possible to imagine a reduction of the entire set of interactions to a universal ‘power model’; that being said, one should take into account not only the military and economic potential of the country, but also the attractiveness of its culture and the values produced by its society. American political scientist Joseph Nye Jr. designated the first component of the model as ‘hard power’ of the nation and labelled the second one as its ‘soft

power'; in his belief, both hard and soft power components affect the image of the state on the world stage, conditioning the attitude of allies, partners, rivals, and adversaries towards this state.¹

It is unlikely that anyone would deny the fact that international policy subjects are not equal; the 'heavyweights' of world diplomacy being the main players on the 'grand chessboard' is one thing (the United States, China, Russia, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, etc.), while the 'third world' countries presented by postcolonial states that try their best to survive and to preserve their sovereignty is quite another. According to a quoteworthy expression of the ex-Ambassador of Ukraine to Japan Serhii Korsunskyi, the international relations system is confidently moving towards the era of Realpolitik 2.0.² Even though this assessment was made before the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the general conclusion remains correct: both China as a 'civilisation that calls itself a state' and Russia as a 'state that dreams of becoming a civilisation' have claimed to revise the international relations system that emerged after World War II, together with its security dimension. Under these conditions, the issue of Ukraine's subjectness status and Russia's endeavour to negate it requires a thorough theoretical reflection involving internal and external challenges, the hard and soft power of a state and various forms of subjectness itself. Having already mentioned the typical techniques used by Russia to legitimise its territorial claims, I further proceed with an analysis of the mythologems that underlay the imperial worldview and have served as the foundation of the Russian conviction that the Ukrainians are subjectless. What should be done to prove the subjectlessness of the people? Obviously, it is necessary to demonstrate the inability of its representatives to establish social institutions entrusted with self-governance and political public design; for this reason, it is the state of a specific nation that is primarily touched upon, as it has been identified with the main subject of international relations.

In the view of neo-imperial ideologues of Russia, the best argument in favour of the thesis about the a priori incapability of the Ukrainian nation to have its own state is the history itself, which is claimed to lack successful examples of a more or less long-lasting Ukrainian state - as the saying goes, 'it cannot make the case because it could never do so'; by manipulating historical facts, they seek to prove that the Ukrainian people are merely a passive 'ethnographic resource'

¹ Nye, Jr., J. (2003). Propaganda Isn't the Way: Soft Power. An Opinion. *The International Herald Tribune*. [in Eng.]

² Korsunskyi, S. (2020). *Foreign Policy in the Era of Transformations*. Kyiv, 256 p. [in Ukr.]

of the Russian empire. This discourse originated in the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth centuries due to the activity of authorised Russian historiographers such as M. Karamzin, S. Solovyov and V. Kliuchevskiy. As it is well known that history is written by the victors, the past of Ukraine was correspondingly incorporated into the general historical narrative of Russia after the inclusion of its lands into the empire, while the early, or pre-Moscow period of its history has been since presented only as a stage of the civilisational relay race that Moscow had taken up from Byzantium via Kyiv; Ukraine itself was anticipated to dissolve into thin air among the numerous ‘peripheries’ that previously became parts of the empire. The Muscovite metropolis assimilated the colonised provinces, depriving them not only of the right to sovereignty, but also of the right to their historical and cultural heritage; that was why the entire historical heritage of Ukraine-Rus, including material items and intangible endowments of culture, was proclaimed to be exclusively Russian. This sentiment has been repeated with noticeable regularity in the works of authorised Russian historians of the imperial era and in the writings of the ‘White movement’ ideologues during the Russian Civil War, in the manifestos of Eurasianists and neo-Eurasianists and, finally, in Ukrainophobic articles of modern Russian politicians.

It is evident that the primary manipulative technique constantly applied in the referred messages is to emphasise the stateless status of the Ukrainians throughout the entire historical period of their existence – the above-mentioned article ‘On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians’ of July 12, 2021, by V. Putin is no exception. When preparing, what is now clear, the full-scale invasion of Ukraine (bearing in mind that Crimea and the Donbas had already been separated from the country), the Russian president tried to provide an ideological basis for his actions, so there is no coincidence that the Western media have compared Putin’s article to Hitler’s ‘Mein Kampf’.

‘To have a better understanding of the present,’ the initiator of the aggression against Ukraine wrote, ‘and look into the future, we need to turn to history. Certainly, it is impossible to cover in this article all the developments that have taken place over more than a thousand years. But I will focus on the key and pivotal moments to remember that are important for us both in Russia and Ukraine.’¹ What moments of Ukraine’s history does he consider to be pivotal ones?

¹ Putin, V. *On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians*. [online] Available at: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66182> [Accessed 12 July 2021]. [in Rus.]

For Ukrainians, these include the stages of the formation of the Ukrainian statehood as follows: Kyivan Rus; the Cossack Hetmanate of Bohdan Khmelnytskyi; the state-building practice in the twentieth century during the Ukrainian War of Independence (the Ukrainian People's Republic, the Ukrainian State of the hetman P. Skoropadskyi, the Directorate); the Act of Unification concluded between the UPR and the WUPR; and the restoration of the statehood in 1991. V. Putin managed to 'overlook' these stages and to ignore such milestones. Instead, he has revived and cultivated the outdated imperial myths, namely:

- **The myth of the Ancient-Rus ethnicity**, based on which Great Russians, Little Russians and Belarusians emerged as the three branches of one Russian nation. The neo-imperial circles in modern Russia have actively used the 'one nation' thesis to justify its territorial expansion; at the same time, these claims do not contain any reference to the initial peripherality of Muscovy, which was founded by the Prince of Kyiv Yuri Dolgorukii. Characteristically, V. Putin has never mentioned the Kyivan principality when using the terms 'Ancient Rus' or 'Ancient Russian state'. This is hardly accidental: anything that might hint at the capability of Ukrainians to be empowered with their own state was carefully removed from the Russian president's vocabulary. Putin believes that 'Rus' means 'Russia', the latter sometimes with the addition of the word 'historical'. 'Slavic and other tribes across the vast territory from Ladoga, Novgorod and Pskov to Kiev and Chernigov were bound together by one language (which we now refer to as the Old Russian), by economic ties, by the rule of princes of the Rurik dynasty, and by the Orthodox faith after the baptism of Rus. The spiritual choice made by Saint Vladimir, who was both Prince of Novgorod and Grand Prince of Kiev, still largely determines our affinity today.' It is noticeable that the author was trying to make light of Kyiv among many peripheral principalities; the capital city and the centre of the largest medieval state in Europe was presented as 'one of' the great cities of Ancient Rus, which had been destroyed by the Mongol invasion of Rus.

- **The myth of the 'saintliness' of Prince Alexander Nevskii**, who ostensibly allied with the Mongols for the intentional purpose of preserving the Orthodox faith. His figure has been contrasted with the 'traitor' Danylo Halytskyi, who accepted the crown from the Pope. 'At a new stage of historical development,' Putin wrote, 'both Lithuanian Rus and Moscow Rus could have become the points of attraction and consolidation of the territories of Ancient Rus. It so happened that Moscow became that center of reunification, continuing the

tradition of the Ancient-Rus statehood. Moscow princes as the descendants of Prince Alexander Nevskii cast off the foreign yoke and began gathering the Russian lands.' In reality, Alexander Nevskii used the Golden Horde to strengthen his despotism: he, in contrast, extended the Khan's power to the Novgorodian land, which had not been conquered before. It would also be useful to recall the historical fate of Velikii Novgorod, when it was brutally destroyed by Ivan the Terrible's oprichnina in the 16th century.

- **The myth of the toponym 'Ukraine'**, which, in the words of V. Putin, is not derived from the word 'country', but from the single-root word 'borderland' – that is to say, outskirts, periphery, margins. 'The name "Ukraine",' he pointed out, 'was used more often in the meaning of the Old Russian word "okraina" (meaning periphery), which has been found in written sources from the 12th century with reference to various borderline territories. The word "Ukrainian", if judging by archival documents, originally signified frontier guards who protected the external borders.' He therefore implied that the population of any border areas of Muscovy, of the Volga region, of Siberia and of the North Caucasus can all be designated as 'Ukrainians' regardless of their ethnic origin. Hence, the conclusion here is that Ukrainians as a separate ethnic group might not exist – 'we are one people'.

- **The myth of Bohdan Khmelnytskyi**, whose greatest historical achievement was claimed to be not the formation of a Ukrainian state separated from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but the conclusion of the Pereiaslav Agreement, under which Ukraine supposedly lost all its rights and freedoms. 'In a letter to Moscow in 1654, Bohdan Khmelnytsky thanked tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich for "taking the whole Zaporizhian Host and the whole Russian Orthodox world under his strong and high hand". It means that the Cossacks referred to and defined themselves as the Russian Orthodox people in their appeals to both the Polish king and the Russian tsar.' Obviously, the nuances between the terms 'Ruthenian' and 'Russian' were not taken into account in the above translation.

- **The myth of the inferiority of 'quasi-entities' like the UPR and of the 'external nature' of their governance.** 'The example of the UPR shows that different kinds of quasi-state formations that had emerged across the former Russian Empire at the time of the Russian Civil War and its turmoil were inherently unstable. Nationalists sought to create their own independent states, while leaders of the White movement advocated indivisible Russia; many of the republics established by the Bolsheviks' supporters did not consider existing

outside Russia either. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks Party leaders sometimes basically drove them out of Soviet Russia for various reasons.’ It seems paradoxical, but Putin, who talked about the ‘weakness’ and ‘instability’ of the Ukrainian state in the article, is the leader of the same country that throughout its history has done everything for the Ukrainian sovereignty to fail from the very beginning; just to showcase, every season from 1918 to 1921 Moscow sent the Red Army to occupy the Ukrainian lands and to establish Soviet rule upon them. Meanwhile, Kyiv’s attempts to pursue an independent foreign policy and to receive military assistance from Europe were extensively condemned. ‘For those who have today given up the full control of Ukraine to external forces,’ the Russian president threatened, ‘it would be instructive to remember that, back in 1918, such a decision proved fatal for the ruling regime in Kiev. With the direct involvement of the occupying forces, the Central Rada was overthrown and the hetman P. Skoropadskyi was brought to power, proclaiming instead of the UPR the Ukrainian State, which was essentially under the German protectorate.’ In other words, it might be perfectly fine to stay under Moscow’s rule, which cannot be said about potential Berlin’s rule, which was regarded as the ‘external forces’.

- **The myth of Lenin, who ‘gave rise to Ukraine’.** This thesis is perhaps the apogee of Putin’s myth-making and an ideological basis for the revision of borders and for the territorial claims made by the Russian Federation against modern Ukraine. V. Putin distinguished between the policies of the Bolsheviks from those of the Communists of CPSU, stating that the latter had not been responsible for the radicalism of the former. In the opinion of the Russian ruler, Lenin had made many mistakes in his national policy by recognising the right of a nation to self-determination (including secession from the Soviet Union), which Putin named a ‘time bomb’ that had exploded in 1991. Recalling the territorial acquisitions of the Ukrainian SSR, the dictator concluded: ‘modern Ukraine is entirely the product of the Soviet era. We know and remember well that it was shaped on the lands of historical Russia, for a significant part. To make sure of that, it is enough to look at the boundaries of the lands reunited with the Russian state in the 17th century and compare them with the territory of the Ukrainian SSR when it left the Soviet Union.’ He further continued: ‘The Bolsheviks treated the Russian people as inexhaustible material for their social experiments. They dreamt of a world revolution that would wipe out national states; that was why they were so generous in drawing borders and in bestowing territorial gifts. It is no longer important what exactly the idea of the Bolshevik leaders, who were chopping the country into pieces, was. We can disagree about minor details, about

the background and about the logic behind certain decisions. One fact, however, remains crystal clear – Russia was robbed, indeed.’ The text argued as if the ‘voluntarist mistake of the leader of the world proletariat’ could be corrected, historical justice could be restored, and the Great Russian Empire could be resurrected. The words of V. Putin about ‘the persistent weakness of state institutions and the position of a willing hostage to someone else’s geopolitical will’ were also addressed to modern Ukraine.

The content of Putin’s article in question is not exhausted by the foregoing myths. Despite the internal contradictions that the author preferred to ignore, the paper is a vivid example of the neo-imperial discourse, the spread of and adherence to which led, in no small part, to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. In the context of our topic, I should highlight a conscious desire of the Russian president to present the Ukrainian history as a complete anomaly, as the state of statelessness and subjectlessness – a kind of ‘Brownian motion’, in which Ukrainian national leaders have invariably been caught unless they agreed to ‘dance to the Kremlin’s tune’.

Putin labelled those who remember the independent Ukrainian statehood and its destruction by Red Moscow as well as the millions of lives taken by Stalinist cleansings, by the Holodomor and by the wars as ‘radicals and neo-Nazis’ who ‘began to mythologize and rewrite history, to edit out everything that united “us”, and to refer to the period when Ukraine was within the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union as an occupation.’ ‘The common tragedy of collectivization and famine of the early 1930s was portrayed as the genocide of the Ukrainian people,’ Putin additionally put down. Nowadays, it is unlikely that anyone can be misled by Putin’s calls for unity between the Russians and the Ukrainians; when he says that the two peoples have constituted a single entity, he implies that there is no room for the Ukrainians and Ukraine itself. The Russian leader recognises Ukrainians only as citizens of the Russian Federation with a corrupted national memory and a destroyed identity, acting as a demographic raw material and as a mobilisation resource. Despite the self-evident fact of the existing Ukrainian state with all the pertinent attributes and institutions, the Kremlin has stubbornly insisted that Ukraine is a historical misunderstanding to be fixed. In response to this accusation, it is worth reminding that the functions of a state as a subject of international relations described by the classical political philosophy do not remain unchanged once and for all; even if there had really been no Ukrainian state in history (although this does not make the case), this would not have meant that such a state could not arise in the future.

All things change; just as forms of ownership have been transforming (in our times of large joint-stock companies, the typical nineteenth-century figure of a bourgeois factory owner has almost disappeared), the ethnonational sphere has also been undergoing significant changes. New nations are constantly emerging worldwide, fighting for their right to subjectness and sovereignty. The conservative mindset is initially unable to perceive this zeitgeist, consequently sparking diverse philosophical, both historiosophical and metaphysical interpretations and schemes, which will be analysed below.

Even before Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, I happened to hear a colleague, a highly educated and intelligent man, saying that ‘there is no Ukraine in the world of the subtle.’ The spiritual leader of modern Russian imperialism, A. Dugin, expressed something similar to that phrase. The ideologue has been justifying the right of Russians to ‘civilisational expansion’ with utmost directness, while, at the same, calling to deprive neighbouring nations of this right: ‘This expansionism has been “an integral part of the historical life of the Russian people” and is an internal “need for the creation of an Empire”, whose boundaries have constantly been expanding and embracing an ever larger conglomerate of peoples, cultures, religions, territories, regions.’ This quote indicates the messianic role of the Russians performing as a ‘common denominator’ that ‘allows Russians to integrate the most diverse cultural realities into their Empire.’¹

The expressions about ‘historicity of the Russians’ and ‘non-historicity of the Ukrainians’ conceal not only a supercilious and dismissive attitude toward the latter, but also a deeper tradition of equating the being and the good, which goes back to Plato’s theory of ideas. As we know, the Athenian philosopher considered sensually reachable things to be only ‘shadows’ of ideas; on the other, the perfect, side of the world, there are various ideas to which the specific earthly things are connected. The ‘ideal’ nature implies that the ideas are non-material and incorporeal, serving as the essence (or the ‘forms’) of the things; and even if there were not a single square-shaped object left in the world, the idea of a geometric shape of a square would still exist. Moreover, ‘ideality’ signifies perfection, a good or the highest quality. In other words, the idea of the being is intertwined with the idea of the good, with the ontological dimension of Plato’s theory of ideas being complemented by the axiological one. If physical things do not correspond to the idea of the good, it means that they are not perfect and do not have the ideas

¹ Dugin, A. (2000). *Foundations of Geopolitics. The Geopolitical Future of Russia. Thinking Spatially*. Moscow, p. 107 [in Rus.].

to which they are related. As a result, a paradox arises: dirt exists, but there is no idea of the dirt; a crime of, for example, murder exists, but there is no idea of the crime.

When modern imperial-minded philosophers repeat that 'Ukraine is out of the world of the subtle', they argue that the idea of Ukraine as a state does not exist, whereas an entity that appeared in political reality is a temporary and senseless anomaly – an analogue of the 'dirt' and the 'crime' situation, necessitating its elimination. Accordingly, the absence of the 'idea of Ukraine' indicates the lack of Ukraine's self and, respectively, of the missing subjectness understood as 'self-identity'.

The Platonic rationale of the ideal state migrated to Christian patristics via the Neoplatonists, interpreting subjectness as the realisation of God's plan. That is why, in the Christian worldview, some nations were granted the right to become subjects of history by the will of God, while others were denied this right. A concrete manifestation of such an understanding is represented by the thesis about the divine source of monarchical power, which goes as 'the powers that be are ordained of God.'

In the Middle Ages, a suzerain personified the whole state; he was the only source of power, and his individual interests aligned with the state's interests. It is important to recall a part of the story of Nestor the Chronicler about Prince Volodymyr's decision to baptise Kyivans: 'If any inhabitant, however rich or poor and however old or enslaved he may be, did not betake himself to the river, he would risk my displeasure.' It means that a refusal to fulfil a political decision then turned into a personal enmity with the prince; that was the reason, by the way, why dynastic marriages were not seen as an intimate affair, accounting instead for a diplomatic act that determined foreign policy, in particular the formation of military alliances and the conclusion of trade agreements.

This 'personalistic' interpretation of subjectness was, in most cases, an effect of the understanding that the monarch is 'the anointed of God'. However, did any ruler automatically become a subject of international politics? The classicist of Russian historiography, V. Kliuchevskii, specified that this was typical not for all of them, but only for those who 'did not pay a tribute.' In his work, 'The Course of Russian History', he referred to the etymology of the word 'tsar' to build a hierarchy of the relevant political subjectness. 'After the Tatar yoke withdrew from Moscow, Ivan III titled himself "Tsar of All Russia", which he used in his relations with insignificant foreign rulers; he acted in such a way with, for example, the Livonian magister. This term is known to be a shortened

South Slavic and Ruthenian form of the Latin word “caesar” or of the word of the ancient spelling “цѣсарь”; the German word “Kaizer” also originated from the more ancient “кесарь”. Sometimes, in the acts of internal administration under Ivan III (and more commonly under Ivan IV), the title of tsar was combined with the title of autocrat, which is a Slavic translation of the Byzantine imperial title “Βασιλεύς”. In Ancient Rus, both terms did not have the same meaning as they would later come to have, as they expressed the notion not of the sovereign with unlimited internal power, but rather that of a ruler independent of any external power and not paying a tribute to anyone. In the political language of those times, both these terms were opposed to what we understand now by the word “vassal”. Tsars in Ancient Rus had been called predominantly Byzantine emperors and khans of the Golden Horde as the most famous and the most independent rulers until the second half of the fifteenth century, so Ivan III could accept the title only when he ceased to be a tributary of the khan.¹ The implication here is that subjectness is the ability to pursue one’s policy, to make decisions independently, not to rely upon anyone, and not to consult with anyone. The subjectness requires a certain institutional maturity, where a subject represented by the state and its ruler can dictate and impose its will upon other actors at lower levels of the political hierarchy.

When it comes to empires, the status of a subject was only applied to the metropolis; colonies did not possess such rights by default. The ‘divine position’ of the emperor legitimised the subjectness of his state, which had usually consisted of many conquered peoples and annexed territories. Russia had essentially been such an empire long before the Russian nation was formed, but unlike European nations that could earlier take the form of colonial empires, it still cannot exist as a true nation-state. The events around the perimeter of Russia’s borders in recent years have demonstrated that the desire to restore imperial greatness did not go the way of the dodo. ‘To be a great power,’ Dominic Lieven noted, ‘an empire obviously demands resources and ideologies, yields to the temptation of expansion and uses cultural styles that are expected in the imperial concept within the historical framework.’²

Russia started to justify the imperial ideology long before Peter the Great, which was due to the emergence of the concept of ‘Moscow, Third Rome’ proposed by the monk Philotheus. Apparently, after feeling a lack of autocratic

¹ Kliuchevskii, V. (2005). *The Course of Russian History*. In the book: *Ivan the Terrible. His Personality and Fate*. Moscow, p. 562 [in Rus.]

² Lieven, D. (1995). The Russian Empire and the Soviet Union as Imperial Polities. *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 30, p. 608 [in Eng.]

legitimacy, Moscow tsars put an effort to present themselves as direct successors of Byzantium, thus emphasising the continuity and ‘chosenness’ of the tsarist authority. The stable connection between, on the one hand, the appearance of claims to the legacy of the ‘Imperium Romanum’ and, on the other hand, the territorial expansion of newborn empires has been a universal historical pattern. Provinces under metropolitan occupation have had no subjectness; colonies have not produced and only have implemented decisions made somewhere far away, probably across the ocean at the royal palaces in Madrid and Lisbon, in Paris and London, in Istanbul and Saint Petersburg. The struggle for independence by the colonies thereby has been nothing else than the quest for their own subjectness.

The refusal to recognise Ukraine’s subjectness marks, at the very least, that Russian ideologues have not gone beyond the imperial and colonial discourse, as they are still in the grips of the illusion that decisions taken in Moscow genuinely determine the life of the Ukrainian population. The fantasies of restoring Russia’s global superpower status will remain unfulfilled without Ukraine’s return to the bosom of the Kremlin’s influence. By operating with philosophical categories within the ‘metropolis-colony’ coordinates, neo-imperialists are blind to the fact that not only have most of the colonial empires of the past disappeared in the twenty-first century, but simultaneously, the functions of nation-states have significantly changed.

To put it another way, if in its early stages the subjectness of a state directly depended on the power and reputation of the monarch, today subjectness lies in the ability of a democratic nation to take initiatives and to propose an ‘agenda’ to the world community. Identification of the state with the persona of its ruler is an anachronism these days, although it seems to be natural in the context of understanding the phenomenon of subjectness.

In most Western societies of the twenty-first century, subjectness has been defined by representative democracy, where the leader of a nation no longer speaks on his own behalf and advocates on behalf of all citizens of the state who have delegated such authority to him. The democratic model stands as the opposite of the imperial one, with the ruler only expressing the interests of its voters. He or she may go against their will, but it is unlikely that after that he or she will be re-elected. The negative aspects of such depersonalisation were discussed by J. Ortega y Gasset in the work ‘The Revolt of the Masses’; also, the decline of elitism, prevalence of popular culture and erosion of the aesthetic taste have been consequential to the generally progressive democratic transformations.

The tendency to replace an individual subject with a collective one and afterwards with a mass one has managed to illustrate a universal pattern of social management, when the shift from authoritarianism and from totalitarianism leads to a revision of the necessary functions of the government.

Indeed, the ‘mighty’ state, which supporters of the Marxist paradigm defined as a mechanism of one class’s domination over another, has been gradually losing its might. Some functions of national governments are being taken over by local authorities, while other ones are being transferred to supranational organisations such as the European Union in accordance with international agreements. The declining role and importance of nation-states can be a global and general historical trend; furthermore, the futuristic predictions about the disappearance of the institution of the state have resonated from the authors belonging to the most varied ideological camps.

Although the complete vanishing of the state as such is hardly possible even in the long term, we have already seen how a hierarchy of states can build up on the world stage by the degree of their influence on international politics. As G. Yellinek noted in his teaching of the ‘three elements’, the state is a full-fledged unit if it possesses the following: a) a sovereign territory, b) a nation (the totality of citizens), c) state power. It is the public authority that ensures the cohesive functioning of all three components, so the might of the state ultimately depends on the capacity of its government.¹

It is clear that such a gradation of influence correlates with the political regime and the form of government, i.e. with the founding principles of the establishment of the higher authorities and their structure, and with the ability to ensure civil rights and freedoms. In monarchies as well as in authoritarian and totalitarian states, the importance of central governments has traditionally been higher than in alternative republican and democratic regimes. There are nations with powerful civil societies and weak governments; in contrast, there are nations with strong governments and feeble civil societies.

Even against this background, some states have stood out since, for certain reasons, they cannot fully or even partly fulfil all the pertinent functions. Unlike only ‘weak’ states, such states are referred to as ‘failed states’. By definition, those are unable to sustain their existence as sovereign political and legal entities.

Such nations bear a significant risk of the collapse of government institutions, which is why they lack controllability and legitimacy in the eyes of

¹ Jellinek, G. (1914). *General Theory of the State (The Law of the Modern State)*. 3rd. ed., ext. Berlin, 837 p. [in Deu.]

the international community. The transition from a weak state to a failed one is a consequence of the degrading administrative system impaired by internal crises and characterised by the formation of a ‘power vacuum’ while passing from authoritarian and totalitarian regimes to democracy. The failed state loses the ‘monopoly on violence’ as it simultaneously experiences erosion of the legitimising mandate necessary for the implementation of collective decisions and suffers a significant deterioration of the ability to provide public services. The threat of the aforementioned transition has been documented over recent years in Somalia, Venezuela, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Pakistan, Yemen, Kyrgyzstan, Palestine (the Palestinian Authority), etc.

The next phase after a failed state is a government failure, i.e. the state’s demise. International practice shows that state entities have been quite resilient and can exist as ‘membranes’ as long as people have at least some hope for the restoration of the fully functioning state apparatus. Examples of such nations include Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Sudan, South Sudan, Rwanda, Haiti, Cambodia, Lebanon, Iraq, Sierra Leone, Chad, Guinea, and others. In general, these types of countries are weakened by prolonged military conflicts, by numerous revolutions and coups, as well as by civil wars.

Hence, the concepts of ‘weak’ states and ‘failed’ ones should be clearly distinguished in the political science terminology. Although the terms are meaningfully similar, they indicate fundamentally different trends; a weak state is a consequence of the generally natural processes of delegating power from the state to the civil society institutions, local authorities, and international institutions, while a failed state is evidence of the state power’s collapse and is a dangerous moment of destruction, with the nation losing its subjectness.

It is the last-mentioned moment that does not differ much from the results of an external aggression: in both cases, the first two elements coined by G. Yellinek (the territory and the population) become incorporated into another state, and the third element (the state power) simply vanishes. Trying to look attractive in the eyes of the international community, an aggressor is tempted to present the case in such a way that the disappearance of a certain state from the world map has been the result not of the external military intervention, but of an unforced decline of the failed state, which has finally degraded.

A vivid illustration of this is the fate of Poland, which was torn between Hitler’s Germany and Stalin’s USSR in September 1939. The secret agreements enshrined in the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, which was concluded between the aggressors, were not known to other European nations; therefore, Germany was

later declared to be the only one fully responsible for the outbreak of the war. The Soviet Union seemingly stood aside since it made excuses as if the Polish state as ‘an ugly offspring of the Versailles system’ had been weak and, consequently, had ceased to exist solely ‘by itself’; the Red Army had only protected ‘the lives and properties of the Belarusian and Ukrainian population’ by occupying half of the territory of the neighbouring country. ‘The Polish state,’ the *Pravda* newspaper stated on September 18, 1939, ‘and its government have de facto ceased to exist. For this reason, the treaties concluded between the USSR and the Republic of Poland will be terminated. Left alone without the government, Poland has turned into a convenient field for all sorts of incidents and surprises that can pose a threat to our country. Having been neutral before, now the Soviet government cannot be neutral about these facts anymore.’¹

V. Putin tried to imitate something similar in his speech of February 24, 2022, when he announced the start of the so-called ‘Special military operation’. Even behind his stubborn reluctance to call the war a ‘war’ still lies the arrogance previously touched upon. Again, the dictator does not see Ukraine as a subject equivalent to Russia; that was the reason why the full-scale invasion involving tens of thousands of troops using armoured vehicles, aircraft, missiles, and artillery strikes and involving the navy as well was named as ‘SMO’, as if meaning something local and insignificant. The significance of a ‘special operation’ lies in neutralisation of a group of terrorists or criminals, by no means realising a plan to occupy one of the largest countries in Europe. The same can be said about the ‘counterterrorist operation’ (‘CTO’) of August 2024, announced in Briansk, Kursk and Belgorod oblasts after Ukraine’s successful attempt to transfer the hostilities to the sovereign territory of the Russian Federation. To a certain extent, Russia’s military failures were due to the pathological unwillingness to accept reality as it is: V. Putin and his entourage have become hostages to their own speculative constructions and to the excessive emphasis on controlling the discourse instead of taking concrete actions.

Nevertheless, the question of the assessment of the Ukrainian state’s subjectness remains open. Does it belong to the category of ‘weak states’? Or is it possibly a ‘failed state’? How effective are its state authorities and its civil society institutions?

In order to answer this question, it is necessary to look from the outside at the processes that have taken place in Ukraine since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

¹ *Pravda*. (September 18, 1939). [in Rus.].

The area of the Ukrainian territory set in the Constitution of Ukraine is 603,549 km². Even after Russia annexed Crimea and occupied certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts in 2014 (the total of 46,200 km²), Ukraine remained the largest country to be located entirely in Europe. Transport corridors connecting Russia with Central and Eastern Europe and linking Turkey with the Scandinavian and Baltic nations still run through its territory.

In 1991, the population of Ukraine, always being one of the integrative criteria of the nation's hard and soft power, amounted to 51.9 million people, the number only behind Russia, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Italy. Over the next two years, Ukrainians from all over the post-Soviet space were returning to their homeland. As a result, despite the negative birth rate, the country's population reached its peak of 52.24 million people in 1993. Afterwards, a demographic decline began and consequently left only 41.9 million people living in Ukraine in 2020. Over the years of the state's independence, those among the Ukrainians who died have outweighed the born population by 7.3 million people.

On the eve of the collapse of the USSR, Ukraine's economic potential was one of the most powerful among the Soviet republics, being ranked 60th worldwide. While campaigning for secession from the Soviet Union in 1991, several political forces were distributing leaflets with the argument that Ukraine was then the European leader in a number of industrial sectors. Furthermore, the nation's economy was more powerful than those of its neighbours, Poland and Belarus. A quarter of a century later, the situation, however, was radically different: domestic production had been reduced, entire industries had vanished, while Ukraine itself had been outrun by its neighbours. Unemployment had visibly increased, so qualified personnel were forced to look for a job in other European countries; the outcome was, as estimated by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine in 2019, as follows: '3.2 million Ukrainian citizens are currently working abroad on a permanent basis and from 7 to 9 million Ukrainians are working there periodically.'¹

As of January 31, 2021, Ukraine's state and state-guaranteed debt amounted to \$90.74 billion, including the state and state-guaranteed external debt

¹ *The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine: More than 3 Million Ukrainians Are Working Abroad on a Permanent Basis.* [online] Available at: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-trudovi-mihranty-z-ukrainy/30087119.html> (01.08.2019). [in Ukr.]

of \$53.44 billion and the state and state-guaranteed internal debt of \$37.30 billion.¹

Undoubtedly, the negative dynamics of economic development could not help but affect the military sphere. The Armed Forces of Ukraine were created on the foundation of Soviet Army units stationed in Ukraine, which constituted 700,000 soldiers in 1991 (being the second largest army in Europe after the Russian armed forces). Ukraine deliberately gave up its nuclear and missile weapon ordnance in exchange for guarantees of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Subsequently, before the outbreak of the latent Russia-Ukraine war in 2014, the Armed Forces of Ukraine totalled 125,000 soldiers; additionally, after the annexation of Crimea, the Ukrainian Navy lost 80% of its assets and capabilities, having been accompanied by a massive betrayal among Ukrainian military servicemen who defected to the Russian side. This indicates that the army and the navy at the time had to be reconstructed from scratch after 2014.

Unfortunately, the statistics show that prior to the invasion, Ukraine's position in major international rankings had been deteriorating year after year. For example, in terms of average wages, Ukraine's 278 euros were in the penultimate place before Moldova's 212 euros in 2018. Even now, Ukraine is ranked 132nd in the Human Freedom Index (the worst result in Europe); ranked 138th in the rating of the happiest countries in the world; ranked 130th in the rating of the road quality (out of 137 positions); ranked 101st in the annual World Press Freedom Index concluded by a human rights organisation 'Reporters Without Borders' (out of 180 countries). Since 1996, the country has been included in the assessments of the 'Worldwide Governance Indicators', the dynamics of which prove that the level of national governance has either remained unchanged or even deteriorated over these years. An integrative indicator that analyses a particular country with such metrics as standard of living, influence on the world stage, economic growth, cultural leverage, openness to business, human rights protection and so forth determines its position in the 'happiness ranking'; accordingly, Ukraine is currently placed 69th among 80 countries.

The above arguments signify a rapid negative trend. Obviously, the war has only worsened the main indicators in virtually all areas: Ukraine has already lost more than 20% of its territory; more than 10 million people have fled from the country; and it is safe to say that very few of these millions will come back

¹ *Fact Sheet About State and State-Guaranteed Debt of Ukraine*. [online] Available at: <https://mof.gov.ua/uk/derzhavnij-borg-tagarantovanij-derzhavju-borg> (31.01.2021). [in Ukr.]

after the end of the war. Experience shows that it takes three years for a person to finally adapt to a new living environment. Since most European countries are not interested in the return of Ukrainian migrants to their homeland, an upcoming personnel hunger and demographic crisis should be forecasted. Also, Ukraine's foreign debt is likely to skyrocket as the state has been forced to take out loans for military purposes on any terms, with the country's survival critically depending on them.

At the same time, it would be a mistake to deduce that the Ukrainian state is 'failed' or 'weak' pursuant to the aforementioned negative trends; the best argument against such conclusions is Ukraine's ability to resist Russian invaders. Russia's intentions to take Kyiv 'in three days' turned into a long positional struggle with rather uncertain prospects and elusive successes of the aggressor.

Moreover, the presence of a strong and brutal external enemy mobilised the Ukrainian nation. There have been jokes on the Internet that 'Ukraine was created not by Lenin, but by Putin,' implying that the Russian aggression posed such a complex challenge to Ukrainian state-building. Political scientists have observed that the strength or weakness of a state is not necessarily expressed exclusively in economic indicators. According to Taras Kuzio, post-colonial states, which include the post-Soviet countries as well (with Ukraine being one of them), are better characterised not by two dimensions of transformation (democracy and market economy), but by four ones. He built a hierarchy of those indicators, in which the transformation consistently begins with the reformation of state institutions, later continues with the formation of a nation and of a market economy, and ultimately finishes with the achievement of democracy. Therefore, attempts to invest in the democratic development of a 'weak state' are unlikely to meet the overall goal. The reformation of state bodies usually takes place over several decades under normal conditions, while nation-building processes suggest several alternations of generations.¹

The war accelerated changes in the functioning of state institutions, demonstrating their ability to operate with greater efficiency. The Ukrainian nation also became more homogeneous; the scope of the Ukrainian language usage significantly expanded among the population. At the time of the restoration of statehood in 1991, Ukraine was not a monoethnic state; today, we can witness a genuine nation-state that has confidently responded to the existential challenge from Russia. The state has been confidently going down the path of European

¹ Kuzio, T. (2018). *Putin's War Against Ukraine: Revolution, Nationalism, and Crime*. Kyiv, 560 p. [in Ukr.]

integration, having already met the requirements for EU membership in many criteria.

In the end, Ukraine can hardly be called a ‘weak state’ regardless of all the negative tendencies. The nation withstood the attack of the ‘second most powerful armed forces of the world’ in 2022 and eventually transferred the war to the territory of the aggressor country in August 2024. Ukraine has definitely proved its ability to be an international relations subject by promoting its own ‘peace formula’ and by taking initiatives on the leading expert platforms; the comprehensive support of the international community for Ukraine in its existential struggle should also be taken into consideration. On the other hand, the inability of the Ukrainians to be a subject as well as their alleged ‘non-historicity’ and ‘statelessness’ are largely brought up by exactly the same side that for centuries has regularly obliterated the slightest movement of the Ukrainians towards nationhood.

2.3. Civilisational tasks of Ukraine in the light of modern geopolitical challenges

Today, humanity faces a number of global challenges, one of the main ones is the decline of the spiritual-value sphere and the dominance of nihilistic and inhumane rationalism that breeds radicalism, terror and war. In their perspectives, J. Stiglitz and P. Freire support prophetic reasoning of famous thinkers of the past – O. Spengler, T. Mann, M. Heidegger, E. Fromm, G. Orwell et al who foresaw the decline of modern civilisation, which will manifest itself in the crisis of rational tradition, the weakening of value foundations and the decline of morality. This idea also manifested itself in the theological concepts of culture, which supported the thesis that human culture has generally completed its progress and is now slowly rolling towards extinction. Since the core of any culture is religion and the foundations of morality produced by it, they also feel a severe crisis from the invasion of excessive rationalism.

No less dangerous is the other crime of excessive clericalisation, which manifests itself separately in the formation of Islamic and Orthodox fundamentalism, when religious ideas sugarcoat the pursuit of the dominance of all spheres of common life, as well as the politicisation of religion, which leads to the justification of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, and in international relations to the striving of certain states to foreign expansion and imposing of its value system by coercive methods. If power comes from God, as the Islamic and

Orthodox fundamentalists indicate, then we must submit to it, while for the authorities in power, anything goes, which leads to a massive violation of human rights and freedoms by the empowered. If religious institutes serve the state or government, then they reflect their sociological knowledge. A typical example is the Holy Church of the Russian Federation, which forfeits its Christian mission, as it supports the intervention of the Russian military in the territory of Ukraine, allegedly under the pretext of salvaging the Russian-speaking environment, perfectly understanding that this leads to armed confrontation and bloodshed, which clearly does not follow Christian commandments.

In this context, M. Heidegger clearly pointed out that people are threatened not by external factors: the threat lies in the very essence of a person, who trusts only his own, quite often primitive, mind and forgets about faith and morality. 'But where there is danger', – he opined with a quote from 'Patmos' of Friedrich Holderlin, – 'A rescuing agency grows as well.'¹

Most of the above researchers note that the crisis of the value and spiritual characteristics of the people in the visual world is due to the excessive rationalism of the people, which led to the formation of the cult of nihilism, pragmatism and consumptionism. Naturally, the pursuit of knowledge, which lies at the core of rationalism, led to the development of human civilisation. And this rationalism lies in the basis of the scientific worldview, the main purpose of which is the practical study of the world. But rationalism should not be blind and immoral, that is, one that would use any, particularly destructive, methods in order to achieve the goal. Today, it is necessary to recognise that by transforming the world, a person precisely manages only his consumption needs and neglects norms of morality and genuine values. As a result, he or she severely exploits nature, producing mountains of waste and destroying the environment, which ultimately leads to the loss by humanity of its habitat, which is nature.

It is rationalism that exalts the mind as the main instrument of the cognition of the world and places a person as its bearer on the highest pedestal. Starting from the times of R. Descartes, the mind became the main measure of human existence (the Cartesian 'Cogito, ergo sum'), and faith and morals began to lose ground.

In the social perspective, excessive rationalism and value-spiritual crisis led to the emergence of one of the first forms of terrorism, i.e. the Jacobin Reign of Terror. It became the philosophical basis of the Jacobin dictatorship, as he

¹Heidegger, M. (1993). *Being and Time* (Sein und Zeit): Articles and Speeches. Moscow, 447 p. [in Rus.]

denied all forms of the transcendental or divine side of a man. Consequently, an imperfect person became the measure of all things and itself established the criteria of good and evil. In addition, guided by disproportionate rationalism, they began to interpret history in another way, rejecting its sacred and divine dimension. If in the middle of the century history had an eschatological direction and stimulated a person's movement towards self-conclusion, through overcoming sins and approaching God – as in the end of the time everyone will take responsibility repent for his or her sins – then after the New Time, a person himself became a history maker and led the history in proportion to his forces and moral beliefs.

Also, unreasonable rationalism called for the triumph of abstract and immoral ideas over definite and moral ones. The abstract ideas of freedom, justice, and the commonweal, as basic values of the French and other revolutions, were higher than any moral requirements. And since God died, according to material and nihilistic teachings (Nietzsche, Diderot, d'Holbach), the revolutionary masterminds no longer had any moral restrictions and for the cause of common good annihilated thousands of innocent people. Robespierre delivered before the National Convention his well-known formula 'virtue and terror.' He believed that virtue and terror are absolute in their chastity. Prominent philosopher I. Fichte stated: 'Fiat iustitia, pereat mundus.'

The Russian revolutionaries took traditions of Jacobin terror into their arsenal, rejecting religious morals and creating their own concept of good and evil, justifying the crimes committed with the idea of building a bright future of universal good.¹ Ideological inspirer of the October Revolution K. Marx mentions such words of M. Bakunin, noting the importance of destroying the old world: 'For us, the idea is valuable only as it can serve the great cause of radical and general destruction all round'.²

The good, from the point of view of the Bolsheviks, is what contributes to the construction of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the formation of socialist and, soon, communist society, with everything that impedes this construction declared evil. Marx, and later Lenin stated that any universal human morale was fiction, and there is only a class morale. Each class (slaveholders, slaves, feudal lords, serfs, capitalists, proletariat) enforces its own morals and ethical values. The moral of the proletariat is what ethically corresponds to the interests of the

¹Chuprii, L. (2013). Moral Foundations of the New Security Paradigm in the Context of Global Challenges. *Young scientist*. №4 (51). Moscow, pp. 437-439. [in Rus.]

²Marx, K., Engels, F. (1961a). *Writings*. Vol. 18. Moscow, p. 396. [in Rus.]

proletariat ('our morality is totally subject to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.')

¹ From this point of view, any cruel actions are morally defensible, given that they are directed to the liberation of the proletariat from the exploitation and facilitate the victory of the proletarian revolution, as the main thing is the class morale. Therefore, if there is no religion and no universal human morality, then in order to carry out a communist revolution - with the further construction of a classless community, free from exploitation, - it is justified to use any means, even criminal and immoral ones. And Lenin, and then Stalin, fully utilised these devices. To confirm the above we should consider some quotes from Lenin. 'What is needed is merciless mass terror', – telegraphed Lenin in 1918, recommending the suppression of a peasant uprising, – 'all dubious individuals are to be closed in a concentration camp outside a town.'² It should be underscored that Lenin was the mastermind over the construction of concentration camps. Firstly, they were based in destroyed churches and monasteries, then on the Solovets Islands, and later on the territory of the huge northern 'GULAG archipelago'.

In fact, it was disproportionate and immoral rationalism that led to the disasters of two world wars. Already in the early 20s of the foregoing century, O. Spengler unmistakably indicated serious changes in the mass consciousness: 'We have learned since the last years that we no longer pay attention to tragic events that would have already paralysed the world before leading to war.'³ Departure from God and faith causes the fall of morality and the flourishing of nihilism. There is only one step from Nietzsche's reported death of God towards the ontology of nihilism and permissiveness: if 'God is dead', then 'all is allowed', and if 'all is allowed', therefore 'everything is possible'. This simple formula characterised the essence of the XX century, filled with wars and catastrophes.

In such a way, the architects of gas chambers and other methods of destroying millions of people, who put the massive death on the conveyor, were very intelligent people, but soulless. How can one explain the fact that the descendants of such masters of high culture as Goethe, Herder, Kant, Hegel could callously eliminate millions of similar ones? Again, they were guided only by the rational pragmatic mind, which justified their superiority and freed them from any faith and moral requirements. Therefore, they easily carried out the criminal

¹Marx K., Engels, F. (1961b). *Writings*. Vol. 18. Moscow, p. 395. [in Rus.]

²Lenin, V. (1974). *Complete collected works*. 5th ed., Vol. 44. Moscow, p. 398. [in Rus.]

³Spengler, O. (1924). *The Decline of the West*. Vol. 2. Munich, p. 535. [in Ger.]

will of the Führer, who claimed to bear any moral responsibility from all the scourge himself. Today, Russian servicemen are also blindly and thoughtlessly carrying out the villainous will of the Kremlin dictator, who is guided by a rational, manic idea of returning the imperial greatness of Russia through targeting the Ukrainian civilians and destroying the cities and villages of Ukraine.

All this proves that the human life of this century is in a deep value-spiritual crisis, one of the most dangerous manifestations of which is the collapse of morality, the spread of extremism and terrorism, the disappearance of any true meanings.

If meaning perishes in a society, favourable conditions arise for the ascendance of nihilism, anarchy, the evisceration of any obligations and duties before society, and the denial of all norms. As a result, a person in such a society is less and less aware of his or her self-worth, uniqueness and haecceity. Moreover, this person ceases to feel like the image and likeness of God or the small universe ('microcosm') and progressively transforms into an easily manipulated cog in the great social mechanism of the state. M. Mamardashvili calls this phenomenon an anthropological catastrophe. M. Foucault supports this opinion, noting that in our time a person loses his deep theological and existential origin and becomes a mere product of social manipulative technologies, which are most fully utilised in totalitarian states. It can be clearly observed with the example of modern North Korea or the Russian Federation, where the population is consciously indoctrinated with a distorted and crooked picture of reality and where the image of external enemies is imposed. For the leaders of totalitarian states, a person is not a goal, but only a means of achieving a goal, and therefore the value of human life is nullified and thousands or even millions of people are obliterated for the sake of the interests of a totalitarian state. But the greatest problem is that the distorted picture of reality in totalitarian states is becoming a true reality for millions of people. The phenomenon of resentment, which is total rejection of reality, arises, directly implying the feeling of helplessness of people who are unable to make at least a meager change in the life of their country.

Another of the most tragic manifestations of the spiritual-value crisis is the emergence of wars, since the leaders of mostly totalitarian and authoritarian states are completely unconcerned with the value of human life. Without the slightest hesitation they start wars, throwing their citizens into the slaughterhouse as 'cannon fodder', as the Russian neo-empire, for which people have always been expendable, has always done and continues to do.

It was the callous, inhumane, immoral and criminal rationalism of the Russian dictator Putin, whose mind is blinded by the idea of reviving the Soviet Union, that gave rise to the desire to destroy all those peoples who will prevent him from realising this manic idea. And that is why in his weak mind he believes that the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian nation have no right to exist. Without the tiniest remorse Putin gives criminal orders to destroy the civilian Ukrainian population, sparing neither children and women, nor elderly people. But history will put everything in its place, Ukraine existed and will exist, and the ugly Russian neo-empire is already approaching its disintegration.

Modern wars are quite often caused by clashes along the fault lines of the countries of Western civilisation, Arab-Muslim, and Russian-Asian spheres. Ukraine is at the crossroads of these civilisations being an object of such a confrontation. Therefore, the Russian-Ukrainian war is precisely the civilisational confrontation, where Ukraine, at the head of Western civilisation, is fighting barbaric and anti-human Russian-Eurasian anti-civilisation.

Analysing the essence of the civilisational approach, which is quite popular today, it should be noted that within its framework, the interaction of countries is considered in the context of their civilisational affiliation. Nowadays, three semantic accents of the concept of 'civilisation' prevail. The first positions civilisation synonymous with culture; the second likens civilisation to the level of development of a society, its material and spiritual culture (civilisations are classified as ancient, modern, etc.); the third connects civilisation with such a state of society, which embodies the most rational and humanistic forms of human existence. Thus, Spengler considered civilisation to be a certain stage of human development, during which the decline of culture occurs. And in his opinion, European civilisation is going through just such a stage. One can only partially agree with Spengler's opinion, because although today there are certain negative trends in European civilisation, it remains quite powerful. Although if it does not provide effective answers to modern challenges, its weakening or even decline may become quite obvious. We agree more with the concept of Samuel Huntington, who considers civilisation to be a cultural community of the highest quality and the widest scope of cultural identity of people.

According to the researcher, in the conditions of the modern world, relations between countries will be determined not so much by economic or political factors as by civilisational values. Huntington believes that civilisations are groups of historically related countries that are united in a competition with their neighbours by a common destiny, culture, language, religion and traditions.

In the scientist's understanding, today there are no grounds to talk about the existence of a single universal civilisation of humanity. He argues that in the modern world, there are eight world civilisations – Japanese, Confucian (Chinese), Islamic (Muslim), Latin American, Indian, African (which is just forming), Western Christian and Orthodox Slavic (Eastern Christian). Each civilisation is characterised by a certain historical and spiritual integrity and goes through its own life path. According to Huntington, these civilisations are fighting for living space, which can lead to disastrous conflicts between them. Therefore, the main factors determining the life of a nation are the geographical environment and the means of ensuring its existence and self-reproduction. Therefore, a nation has a duty to protect its 'living space' from encroachments by other nations in any reasonable way, however, civilisations are not always in struggle. For example, although there are strained relations between the Western and Muslim worlds, some Muslim countries, such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, are allies of the United States. Sometimes the boundaries of civilisation cover one or more countries (Chinese, Indian, Japanese). Regarding the inevitability of clashes between civilisations, about which Huntington wrote, one cannot fully agree with this opinion either, since everything cannot be too unambiguous and different civilisations are not always in constant confrontation with each other. On the contrary, in the context of a globalised world, when we are all very interdependent, the desire for cooperation and mutual exchange is an important condition for the survival of the entire human civilisation.

Huntington's reasoning that sometimes the borders of certain civilisations pass through the territory of one country, as happens with Ukraine, was also quite important.

Therefore, it should be noted that according to representatives of the civilisational approach, Ukraine occupies a unique position, it is a kind of bridge between the West and the East. From the point of view of the global distribution of forces, Ukraine also has a unique position to be an important player in ensuring an effective balance of forces in Eurasia and the world.

As noted by S. Huntington in his speech at a round table in Ukraine at the National Institute of Strategic Studies held in 1999: 'From the point of view of the civilisational factor, Ukraine occupies a unique position, is a kind of bridge between the Western and Orthodox worlds. From the point of view of the global distribution of power, Ukraine also has a unique position, which is to ensure the balance of power in Eurasia. From my point of view, these challenges are the

most important tasks that Ukraine will face at the beginning of the 21st century.’¹ Ukrainian society has formed a special system of values that acts as a synthesis of various civilisational paradigms.

Ukrainian researcher L. Zalizniak supports the concept of Huntington. He wrote: ‘Ukraine belongs to the split countries of the post-Soviet space, where there is a fierce struggle between pro-Russian forces and Westerners. Despite certain fluctuations in the political sentiments of Ukrainian citizens, time works in favor of our full and final entry into the family of civilised European countries.’²

Ukraine has always been a space for the meeting of different cultures and different civilisations, and this feature was repeatedly noted by those researchers who contemplated the civilisational originality of Ukraine. This idea was expressed by M. Drahomanov, and then by a number of such thinkers as D. Dontsov, I. Lysiak-Rudnytskyi, Ya. Pelenskyi, Yu. Lypa et al.

The meeting venue of cultures and civilisations should not become the arena of their ‘clash’, but of connection and interaction. Although some researchers believe that a full-fledged dialogue between civilisations is impossible, since certain values of these civilisations are opposite (individualism or collectivism, human priority or state priority, etc.), a mutually beneficial dialogue between civilisations is possible in principle, but it requires significant reciprocal efforts from partners in the civilisational dialogue and middle ground steps towards it. The global challenges of the modern era, generated by megatrends in key spheres of life of modern societies, should be recognised as the main reason for establishing an inter-civilisational dialogue. The need to find adequate and timely answers to the existing challenges of contemporaneity forces us to turn to dialogue as a productive way of communication and interaction.

The constructive response to the hardships of modernity can only be the unification of humanity around a common goal, and the only possible practical method of resolving existing contradictions is to establish an inter-civilisational dialogue. Dialogue in this case should be understood as communication interaction that contributes to the solution of current common problems based on the principles of tolerance and preservation of the cultural and civilisational diversity of the world.

¹*The New World Order in the 21st Century: Trends and the European Dimension: A Speech by S. Huntington at a Round Table at the National Institute for Strategic Studies on October 18, 1999.* [online] Available at: http://xyz.org.ua/strategy/hunt_world.html [in Ukr.]

²Zalizniak, L. (1997). Ukraine in the System of World Civilisations. *Pamiat Stolit (Memory of Centuries)*, Issue 1, pp. 4–10. [in Ukr.]

The establishment of inter-civilisational dialogue is quite often facilitated by border-type countries or limitrophes. As we know, modern states are divided into tellurocratic (land) and thalassocratic (maritime). And a special position is occupied by countries of limitrophe type, to which Ukraine belongs. Civilisation countries of the border type differ from others in a specific way of solving fundamental problems of the way of life, and in its more diverse culture. This can be both positive and negative, as the mechanisms of coexistence of cultures, religions, languages, etc. may become more complicated. The dominance of diversity can act as a force destabilising the integrity of society.

Ukraine is a limitrophe to Russia and Europe, a median inter-civilisational space between Western European and Russian-Eurasian civilisations. However, we cannot constantly be at the crossroads of civilisations, we must make certain choices, and Russian aggression has aggravated our worst fears that if we do not make a civilisational choice of our own, it will be made for us by external geopolitical players. And so we have to opt for either the market economy of the West or the oligarchic clan economy of the Eurasian type. Politically, we must choose either an authoritarian Eurasian model, when ‘tsar-father’ decides everything for the people who blindly obey him, or a democratic model, where the Ukrainians have real levers of influence on the political elite. However, today in the conditions of Russian aggression, the choice becomes absolutely obvious. And the European values that we defend today at the cost of the lives of our best sons are key for us. For Ukraine, as the geographical centre of Europe, through the territory of which traditionally pass transcontinental trade routes, rapprochement with the EU is considered one of the priority directions.¹

Quite often, states in the form of civilisational limitrophes became bargaining chips in large geopolitical combinations. Ukraine on its part gave up its nuclear weapons and suffered aggression from one of the guarantors under almost ‘empty’ promises under the Budapest Memorandum without clearly defined mechanisms for guaranteeing the territorial integrity, which has been a negative experience in connection with dealing with great powers. Today, the nation must very carefully prepare for the adoption of its strategic geopolitical decisions, with the cost of error being very high facing the possibility of losing statehood.

Nevertheless, it should be positively noted that present pro-European and pro-Atlantic trends have been key in Ukraine. Yet the ‘European choice’ involves

¹Chuprii, L., Bohdanovskyi, I., Leovkina, O. (2021a). Civilisational Role of Ukraine in the Modern Globalized World. *Regional Studies*, Issue 24, pp.13-19. [in Ukr.]

a number of systemic changes in the politics, economy and legislation of other social spheres; it also envisages a change in the worldview of the Ukrainian people, seismic shifts in the very social practices and forms of interaction among citizens at all levels (relations with each other, with central authorities and with local representations). Together with the implementation of European norms, the lifestyle of Ukrainian citizens should be reorganised by developing an adequate culture of social engagements, which makes it absolutely necessary to elaborate and bring about measures of promoting the new forms of public communication and social dialogue.

However, it is also necessary to take into account a number of risks on the European path of development, among which can be singled out the following:

(a) the continuation of the functioning post-Soviet economic-political model (a model of resource distribution within a semi-authoritarian political system), which has exhausted Ukraine's economic potential (multiple economic crises, growing poverty of the population) and denied political opportunities (a high percentage of mistrust of the authorities), increasing the danger of total collapse of the System altogether;

(b) the partial loss of the Ukrainian territories with the risks of further de-sovereignisation; under the existing conditions, even partial de-sovereignisation and the priority 'of external governance' will imply losing historical subjectness and close the European civilisational project of Ukraine for a long time.

It is also necessary to overcome a number of current threats and challenges. One of the most important has been the challenge of the complexity of the modern world as the greatness of the state in the 21st century is determined not by the number of nuclear warheads, but by the standard of living and, most importantly, the ability to innovate; in today's world, those who produce the latest technologies and export them will benefit. The modern economy is generally based on knowledge and innovation results, considering that it demands free, educated and independent thinking personalities; at the same time, more opportunities have been created for the selection of the most capable and honest leaders, for the development of effective policies based on taking into account the arguments of 'for' and 'against', and for the disclosure of the creative potential of society: meritocracy becomes especially important under the conditions of the managerial revolution, which began in the last century. There is a concept/system of social relations/management principle, which prescribes that power be exercised by people differing in their abilities, achievements, professional competence, but regardless of their social origin or attributed status. The founder of the theory of

meritocracy was the English sociologist Michael Young, who believed that social progress depended on the degree of combination of power and intelligence as well as that the success of the entire society's advancement hinged on the use of human potential and talents. Apparently, the purpose of meritocracy has been the intellectualisation of social life with natural gifts of a person disclosing.

Another challenge has been posed by the issue of transhumanism: it is related to the desire of a modern man both to gain power over social and personal processes through information technology and to transform his corporeality through technological developments. The moderation between the national specific lifestyle and the general leveling trend of globalisation allowing the coexistence of various value-normative societal formations has constituted another problem, which theoretically undermines the basic norms and values of society in general, thus touching upon its interpersonal and systemic integration: particularly, the question arises about the time limits required for the population to transcend from liberal democracy (delegation of power functions through elections) to deliberative one (personal participation in the discussion of draft decisions).¹

According to a couple of Ukrainian researchers, namely S. Pirozhkov, O. Maiboroda, Yu. Shaihorodskiy, Ukraine must implement a kind of civilisational project, which has to play the role not of a regional civilisation buffer between the West and the East, but of a humanistic innovative civilisation with decent human self-realisation, in order to take a worthy place on the world's geopolitical map; the slogan should be: 'decent self-realisation of a person equals a strong nation'. After all, according to a study of 192 countries of the world completed by UN experts, modern economic growth is determined by the availability of capital in 16% of cases; natural resources in 24% of them; and human and social potential in 64% of them.² Effective support of education and science through mechanisms of efficient incentives of empowering creative students, teachers and scientists should become a national development priority for Ukraine as it is crucial to stop the mass outflow of talented students and scientists abroad; it has been time to finally understand that such deintellectualisation of Ukraine contains a strategic threat to the nation's security.

¹Chuprii, L., Bohdanovskyi, I., Leovkina, O. (2021b). Civilisational Role of Ukraine in the Modern Globalized World. *Regional Studies*, Issue 24, pp.13-19. [in Ukr.]

²United Nations Development Programme. (1996). *Report on the Development of Human Potential for 1996*. New York, p. 6. [in Rus.]

Within the framework of a civilisational project, Ukraine should act as an innovative information society.¹

The most developed countries that manufacture and export the latest technologies have surplus profits. Afterwards, visible positions have been taken by states producing goods. Lastly, the smallest incomes fall on those who are forced to specialise in the export of raw materials (with the exception of countries exporting oil and gas). By monopolising control over information and advanced technologies, the West has ensured information technology dominance throughout the globe and thereby made all other countries dependent on it.

The primary role in the future breakthrough, as already noted, belongs to the brand-new scientific and technical fields, especially the field of electronics and informatics; the more traditional knowledge-intensive industries (such as aircraft construction, weapons manufacturing, etc.) retain their importance for Ukraine as well. The potential can be sufficiently actualised only under the conditions when the relevant industries start being effective and expand their production volumes, with the latter being possible only under the conditions of predominant industrial orientation onto foreign markets.

Interestingly, only Western countries cannot be such markets; also, we must consider first and foremost the states of Central Asia and the Middle East as well as China, India, African countries, etc. as potential buyers of Ukrainian goods; under such conditions, the strategic directions of Ukraine's foreign policy strategy towards the countries of the Caspian-Central Asia-Middle Eastern region and other states of Asia and Africa becomes vital since it is there that the products of domestic aircraft construction, tank construction and others could find the proper demand. Consequently, the cooperation with Asian countries has to be strengthened; a fundamental partnership with Asia offering new models of development and promoting alternatives to the latest modernisation as a counterweight to Islamic fundamentalism can bring significant dividends to Ukraine.

The important role of Ukraine in the European and world contexts was definitely emphasised by Volodymyr Horbulin, who insisted that 'we need to show that we are the solution to the problem, not the problem itself.'² The researcher importantly emphasised that the world was gradually realising that

¹Pyrozhev, S., Maiboroda, O., Shaihorodskiy, Yu., etc., eds. Institute of Political and Ethnonational Studies of the NAS of Ukraine. (2016). *Civilisational Choice of Ukraine: The Paradigm of Understanding and Strategy of Action: A National Report*. Kyiv, 284 p. [in Ukr.]

²Horbulin, V. (2021). *How to beat Russia in the War of Future*. Kyiv, 248 p. [in Ukr.]

Ukraine was geopolitically fighting not only for itself, but also for 'European democratic values'. In this context, we fully agree with Volodymyr Pavlovich and want to note that today's Ukraine continues to stand as an outpost of European civilisation and keeps saving the continent and the world in large from Russian expansion at the cost of the lives of many of its sons and daughters. It should be remembered and reminded that the country historically has repeatedly prevented European civilisation from experiencing various kinds of invaders. Let us remember that the Tatar-Mongol invasion, when Kyivan Rus largely exhausted the Tatar-Mongol troops, not allowing them to further capture the territories of European countries; the Battle of Orsha in 1514, when joint Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian troops led by Prince Konstantin Ostrogkyi defeated the troops of the Muscovy and stopped its encroachment on shared Ukrainian-Lithuanian-Polish territories; a little later in 1621, Cossack troops led by Hetman P. Sahaidachny, together with the Poles, repelled the Turkish invasion near Khotyn and stopped the Ottomans' expansion into central Europe; the feat of Stepan Kulchytskyi, whose heroism saved Vienna, bringing the Muslim aggression against the continent; the contribution to the victory over Nazi Germany should also not be forgotten since about 10 million Ukrainians gave their lives for that purpose, without mentioning economic losses, which the Ukrainian territory along with the Belarusian one suffered the most from Hitler's invasion.

As for the number of Ukrainian victims of various wars, it has reached 200 million, according to V. Musienko. Unfortunately, everyone is silent about the primordial extermination of Ukrainians on various scales, while being surprised that the Ukrainian nation still lives on its lands. No one except the Ukrainians themselves will solve this issue.

In the philosophy of history, Ukraine has begun to occupy a prominent place since it is becoming a full-fledged participant in global integration processes. Hence, the issue of protecting the national-state identity, which has been acquired relatively recently due to centuries of dependence on other countries, is particularly acute now; the self-identity has yet to establish itself as monolithic and inviolable.

The Revolution of Dignity, the Orange Revolution, the Euromaidan, and the repulse to Russia's aggression each proved that the Ukrainian people are freedom-loving and fair, capable of self-organisation and ready to defend high democratic values as the basis of Western civilisation. They have shown the whole world that democracy is key for the nation being an outpost for the protection of Western civilisation – not the Eurasian values of paternalism,

statism, obedience to power, which have been most manifested in the Russian under-empire. Most of democratic countries have actively helped in the country's development. However, the Ukrainians should not hope only for external assistance: first of all, they should rely on internal resources and their own forces. One of the most important resources is the human potential and strength of the Ukrainian social organisation, with the national goal being to build a strong, modern national state capable of guaranteeing the security of the nation from external aggression and of carrying out internal socio-economic transformation. Ukraine must show the ability for large-scale social and administrative restructuring under the new conditions of the hybrid world and for countering a forthcoming Russian aggression. The reforms of most spheres of social life must be completed, and those industries that will be able to bring Ukraine to the forefront in the world must be actively supported in their development.¹ Current conditions demand, as Serhii Datsiuk wrote, that Ukraine not so much carry out modernisation (as borrowing and copying the best decisions of other peoples), but introduce an innovative model of national advancement based on knowledge, intelligence and invention. Given that Ukraine still secures the appropriate intellectual potential, the basic thing today is to stop the brain drain and to create an enabling environment for educators and scientists to turn Ukraine into a highly developed country on a global scale.

The political and civilisational nature of the Ukrainian statehood opens up unique opportunities for realising the potential of the cultural dialogue both to stabilise its social development and to utilise the possibilities of restoring global balance as a decisive condition for humanity's survival. It is crucial to fill the national Ukrainian idea not only with political content (independence), but also with economic one of a real increase in the material standard of living for the majority of the citizens (not only for 'new Ukrainians').

Therefore, the main current geopolitical objectives of Ukraine are: ensuring its sovereignty and territorial integrity, namely the return of the temporarily occupied territories; strengthening the external and internal security of the nation; reinforcing the country's position in the European civilisational space by intensifying efforts for comprehensive integration into European and Euro-Atlantic political and social structures; building the strategic partnership with the USA and the ties with the Western European countries; enhancing the relationships with strategically important neighbours, primarily Poland, the Baltic states, Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan and others; promoting the formation of a

¹Horbulin, V. (2019). *My Way to the Looking-Glass*. Kyiv, 264 p. [in Ukr.]

‘stability belt’ and regional security structures encompassing the area from the Baltic and Black Seas to Transcaucasia and Central Asia; fostering cooperation with Asian countries, whose geopolitical role world-wide has been growing every year.

The key foreign policy trends of Ukraine have been and continue to be the European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

For the last several years, Ukraine has actively cooperated with a large number of democratic countries on cutting mutual security arrangements. It should be noted that Ukraine has already made about 17 bilateral security agreements as of mid-2024.¹ Among those agreements, we should, first of all, mention the Ukrainian-French and Ukrainian-German bilateral security arrangements since these countries are the leaders in the European Union.

In the context of increasing international challenges, the large-scale Russian aggression and the spread of the idea of the ‘Russian world’, the issue of more in-depth research and practical introduction of the ‘Intermarium’ concept has become more relevant than ever before; its official adoption would definitely contribute to the emergence of a powerful geopolitical union between the nations of Central and Eastern Europe (Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, etc.), in which Ukraine would play an important role of restraining the Great Russian imperial ambitions or even leading to the collapse of the Russian state. An active supporter of the idea has been the former Polish President Andrzej Duda, who claimed in an interview with the Polish Press Agency (Polska Agencja Prasowa SA) as follows: ‘I am considering the creation a partnership bloc of states, which would stretch from the Baltic Sea to the Black and Adriatic ones’; besides that, such a project was discussed by A.Duda at the meeting with former President Poroshenko of Ukraine at the international summit of the countries of the European Partnership. It is worth noting that the first-ever meeting of the countries from the Adriatic, Baltic and Black Seas regions took place under the 70th session of the UN General Assembly; at present, new steps have been taken to unite those countries. Similar suggestions were also supported before by the former Polish president Lech Kaczynski, who advocated the creation of a coalition of Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in 2008 to politically

¹*Security Agreements: With What Countries They Have Been Signed and What Military Aid Ukraine Will Receive.* [online] Available at: <https://www.slovoidilo.ua/2024/06/17/infografika/polityka/bezpekovi-uhody-yakymy-krayinamy-pidpysano-ta-yaku-vijskovu-dopomohu-otrymaye-ukrayina> (17.06.2024) [in Ukr.]

support Georgia in the face of the Russian military aggression against the Caucasian nation. Famous Polish activists Jerzy Giedroyc and Juliusz Miroszewski and the Ukrainian diaspora activist Bogdan Osadchuk also proved the importance of supporting the independence of Ukraine and creating a strong alliance with Poland for the latter on the pages of the Parisian iconic magazine *Culture*.

The fulfillment of the 'Intermarium' project would undoubtedly provide significant geopolitical, economic and socio-cultural advantages. Powerful and independent Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine and other countries of the region could create a regional alliance based on the best traditions of the historical heritage of such European states as Kyivan Rus, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In today's geopolitical situation, that could be an extremely valuable initiative: a strong union negotiated between independent states of Central and Eastern Europe would be an adequate response to the dangerous expansion of an Eurasian aggressive empire to all countries of Europe and, especially, Ukraine since Russian geopoliticians have denied the existence of an independent Ukrainian state, emphasising that its emergence was random.

After keeping the focus on the historical aspects of the problem, it should be noted that the 'Intermarium' concept was developed at the beginning of the 20th century by Ukrainian, Lithuanian and Polish researchers and politicians. One of its active supporters was Jozef Piłsudski. The First Marshal of Poland understood that the security of his country largely depended on the formation of an alliance between strong independent states that would perform the function of a 'sanitary border' between Poland and Russia, stopping Russian expansion to the west. J. Piłsudski's strategic goal was to form a geopolitical union of independent countries between the Baltic, Adriatic, Black, and Caspian Seas. Piłsudski wanted to create a federation of Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Belarus, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, and possibly Finland, which would also be based on the three Caucasian republics, namely Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia. The unification of these countries in a single geopolitical union would create a territorially strengthened community in Europe. The key element of this alliance should have been an independent Ukraine: practically, in 1920 the head of the Polish government issued a decree to restore and strengthen an independent Ukraine, friendly to Poland. 'There is no point in having illusions: even if we sign peace, we will always remain a target for attacks from Russia,' Piłsudski said in an interview with the *Kurier Poranny* newspaper after the victory over the Bolsheviks in the Battle of Warsaw in 1920. The concept

of the Intermarium was complemented by another geopolitical doctrine of Piłsudski called Prometheanism: according to Piłsudski's plan, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was to become the core of a confederate state that would gather, on the one hand, all the European 'fragments' of the Russian Empire from Finland to Azerbaijan and, on the other, all European non-Russian Slavs from the Don to the Balkans.

The understanding of the joint Polish-Ukrainian intelligence forces prompted Piłsudski to prepare the Kyiv offensive of the Polish-Ukrainian forces on the Bolsheviks. Before the start of the operation, Piłsudski had several scenarios. The most desirable one should have ended with the complete destruction of the Bolshevik Party; its implementation, unfortunately, was possible only under the condition of getting assistance from the independent Ukrainian state, insofar as Russia would not pose a threat to Poland and Europe without Ukraine under its belt. If this scenario were to come true, the Second World War would gain a valuable ally in the East and would be isolated from aggressive Russia by a reliable 'sanitary border'. But, unfortunately, without strong international support, Independent Ukraine fell under the blows of the Bolshevik troops.

Today, Ukraine is going through difficult times, repelling the aggression of the Russian Federation, whose leaders decided that our country had no right to exist. However, they brutally miscalculated as Ukrainian defenders, fighting for the freedom and independence of their country, continue to successfully oppose 'to the second army of the world'!

2.4. Prospects for the collapse of the Russian neo-empire and its geopolitical consequences

If we analyse the key features of any empire, we can distinguish, first of all, the following ones: 1) the metropolis as a strong political and historical center seeking to extend its power over large territories; 2) the powerful ideology that dominates the entire territory of the empire; 3) mostly, the single religion imposed on the conquered peoples; 4) the presence of a glorious past (myths about outstanding politicians of the past or about legendary victories; for Russia specifically, the myth of the Great Patriotic War should be mentioned, which was won primarily by the 'great Russian people'); 5) the teaching containing a great purpose and a bright future ('Russia protects traditional family and Orthodox values and, thus, saves the world'); 6) the desire to expand its territories by

conquering neighbouring countries; 7) mainly, the territorial access to the sea or ocean coast, thereby broadening its economic and trade ties.

One of the key imperial tendencies is the desire for expansion. As the last neo-empire, Russia has constantly created sources of tension in the post-Soviet space by seizing foreign territories. If viewing the attack against Ukraine through such lens, the main reasons of the outbreak of the conflict were as follows: 1) geopolitical considerations attempting to revive the Soviet Union, the collapse of which Putin called 'the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the last century': Russia has had eyes on becoming one of the leading world powers with the seizure of Ukrainian territories contributing to achieving these goals, and that is why the Russian dictator Putin has planned to seize the territories of neighbouring countries by 2030 and to hold presidential elections on the territory of the former Soviet Union in its territorial entirety; in early 2025, Kremlin ideologists directly stated that there had been no collapse of the Soviet Union, with the Belavezha Accords signed on December 8, 1991, officially ceasing the existence of the USSR, being illegitimate, insofar as the Russian dictator's plan stipulates that countries having become independent after 1991 will either form a part of the Russian Federation (in cases of Ukraine and Belarus, for example) or be additional pieces to a new confederal state controlled by the Kremlin; 2) economic efforts to seize critical resources under the Ukrainian state and direct them to strengthen the Russian economy; 3) food interests since Ukraine has been one of the main global suppliers of grain: after seizing the fertile Ukrainian black soil, Russia would become the largest supplier of food in the world; 4) energetic concerns in the forms of full inclusion of Ukrainian energy into the Russian energy system and of full control over oil and gas pipelines, through which energy has been supplied to European countries, making the latter even more dependent on Russian energetic resources; 5) demographic crisis management to solve own demographic problems at the expense of the Ukrainian population; to prove this argument, Russia increased its population by 2.6 million people in the aftermath of the occupation of Crimea as well as managed to incorporate about 3.2 million Ukrainians living in the temporarily occupied territories after the beginning of the very full-scale invasion; 6) military mobilisation reasoning to use Ukrainians as a powerful resource revitalising the Russian armed forces for the subsequent capture of European countries.

But no matter how many reasons we give, they do not justify Russia's shameful and treacherous attack on Ukraine, which was a gross violation of international law; in return, Ukraine gave the aggressor state a fitting rebuff.

Desirous of capturing Ukraine just in three days, V. Putin backed the wrong horse: Ukraine not only survived, but also inflicted significant losses on the 'invincible Russian army'. Actually, the dictator made several serious mistakes: 1) he did not take into account the strength and defense capabilities of the Ukrainian army and, most importantly, the freedom-loving spirit of the Ukrainian people, who had successfully fought to preserve their freedom for several centuries, continuing to do so today; in particular, it should be remembered that the Ukrainian Cossacks at the time of the national liberation struggles of the 17th century were considered one of the most trained warriors in Europe; the history of the OUN-UPA, which continued to heroically fight both Hitler's troops and the Soviet army in the underground, should also receive a praise; 2) the head of the Kremlin overestimated the power of the Russian army, thoroughly permeated with corruption; in addition, the morale of the personnel remains very low while fighting on the foreign territory, where the local population does not support them much; 3) the Kremlin leadership also did not pay enough attention to the Western consolidation quickly imposing severe sanctions against Russia, which further weakened the economy of the occupying country; 4) the criminal authorities also miscalculated and overestimated the role of their own allies: for example, Beijing, whose military assistance Putin initially relied on, refused to provide considerable military assistance to Russia, although economic cooperation between these countries is only increasing, while China continues to support Russia on the international stage and has yet to condemn its aggression against Ukraine; Belarus, from whose territory Russian troops attacked our country, has never sent its forces into the Ukrainian territory since 'Bat'ka' understands that such an action will proceed with the final collapse of his regime.

However empires may have tried to hold their ground for a long time, history teaches us that empires rule only for a certain time followed by the decline and collapse that can be either slow and gradual or sudden. When scrutinising the reasons for the disintegration of most great empires, among them should be distinguished an economic decline, a defeat in war, inefficiency of government, corruptibility at all levels, a moral and spiritual degradation, etc.

The analysis of the history of essential empires of the past collapsing details that the Austro-Hungarian and German Empires broke up after the First World War: even before Austria-Hungary signed the surrender, most of the latter's colonies announced the establishment of their own national councils and secession from the empire from October to November 1918; the German Empire, which had a number of colonies in Africa, Asia and Oceania, also lost all of them

after the defeat in the war; besides that, Hitler's Third Reich fell apart after the Second World War either. On its part, the crumbling of the tsarist Russian Empire began after its defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, ending with the rise of the Bolsheviks to power in 1917.

Let us take a closer look at the collapsing process of the former Russian imperial entity. The decay of the Russian Empire was similar to the one of the Ottoman Empire, which intensified significantly in the 19th century. For a while, the breakdown of the Ottomans had been, however, prevented by France and Great Britain believing that they would counteract the strengthening of the Russian rival: specifically, owing to the British influence on and support of the Ottoman Empire, Russia did not dare to capture Constantinople during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878. Yet the preparations to the First World War saw the Ottoman Empire becoming an ally of Germany and a member of the Quadruple Alliance, so the eastern power had already been doomed even before its defeat in the Great War.

Just as the Ottoman Empire was dubbed the ‘sick man of Europe’ in the late 19th century, Russia today can be defined as such. In fact, Russia has been in a state of ‘feeling sick’ almost since the beginning of 1917 and has been losing its territory for a century, which is similar to how the Ottoman Empire gradually shrank during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Since 1917 afterwards, the Soviet Union has reigned in the Russian territories, seeking the same imperial world domination and disseminating the ideas of communism all over the planet; despite the ambitions, the socialist hegemon also lasted a little more than 70 years. Among the factors that led to the cessation of the existence of the Soviet Union in 1991 can be distinguished the degradation of management personnel, a prolonged economic crisis, an ineffective model of a centrally planned economy, uneven development in different regions, the totalitarian nature of the government and man-made disasters. One of the reasons was also the unsuccessful war in Afghanistan (1979–1989): Soviet troops were withdrawn from the country only in 1989, just before the collapse of the gigantic state.

As for today's Russia, it is actively demonstrating its imperialism in the pursuit of seizing the territories of neighbouring states. After the dismemberment of the USSR, the largest post-Soviet nation has provoked 8 armed conflicts on the territories of the former socialist empire. War has become an important component of Russian ideology: Russian officials often reminisce about ‘doing it again’ and hint at attempts to return ‘historically Russian’ territories (which has

actually come true in cases of the conquest and occupation of the territories of independent states of Moldova, Georgia and, since 2014, Ukraine). Previously, the world community had generally turned a blind eye to war crimes and aggression committed by the Russians, but the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 turned out to be the last straw, after which Russia could not annex the land of other states with impunity. It was the invasion that will most likely be considered in the future as the beginning of the breakdown of the present Russian Nazi-like quasi-empire.

When analysing the geopolitical aspects of this problem, we should specify that the West occasionally assisted the Tsarist and Soviet empires at evading a potential collapse, guided by geopolitical calculations. The joint opposition to Hitler can be an example of that: thanks to the help of the Western nations, especially the large-scale Lend-Lease program, the Soviet Union was able to withstand the confrontation with Nazi Germany. Today, the Russian dictator speculated in front of the whole world about how only the Russians defeated the Nazis without recalling the role of the West and, primarily, the USA at all. We can essentially assert that without that significant help, the victory of the USSR would have been impossible: if only turning to the facts, the USSR received under the Lend-Lease Act 622.1 thousand tons of the rail track (56.5% of its own production), 1900 steam locomotives (2.4 times more than those produced during the war by the USSR), 11.075 wagons (10.2 times more than the Soviet-produced ones), 3 million 606 thousand tires (43.1%), 610 thousand tons of sugar (41.8%), 664.6 thousand tons of canned meat (108%); the USSR received 427 thousand cars and 32 thousand army motorcycles, while only 265.6 thousand cars and 27,816 motorcycles were produced by itself from the beginning of the war to the end of 1945; the United States supplied 2 million 13 thousand tons of aviation fuel (together with the Allies it amounted to 2 million 586 thousand tons imported), which is almost two-thirds of the fuel used by Soviet aviation in military actions; even the famous Katyusha, so praised by Russians, used to be exploitable only when operating on consigned Studebakers (specifically, Studebaker US6) – while the United States provided about 20 thousand cars for the Soviet Katyusha, the USSR produced only 600 trucks for that purpose.¹

When M. Gorbachev came to hold the position of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, he initiated the perestroika, which the West

¹Krechetnikov, A. *Franklin Roosevelt's 'Garden Hose'*. [online] Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20070922222308/http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/russia/newsid_6248000/6248720.stm [Accessed 29 June 2007]. [in Rus.]

supported. It was then believed that a ‘democratised’ and ‘westernised’ Soviet Union/Russia could become a reliable partner and play an active role in protecting the world order. The idea of preserving the status quo in the relationship prevailed in Western circles: Russia was seen as a ‘stultifying child’ that needed to be convinced of the rightness of the counterpart and be ‘taught to behave correctly’, and it was genuinely believed that everything would work out. As we know, even on the eve of the collapse of the USSR and just before the declaration of independence by Ukraine in 1991, American President Bush Sr. visited Kyiv and tried to convince the Ukrainian elites to abandon ‘suicidal nationalism’ and not to secede from the USSR; he argued it would be better to contribute to the restructuring of the latter and, consequently, to the formation of a new federal union again headed by Moscow. All of those considerations were embraced in his famous speech, now also labelled as ‘Chicken Kiev speech’.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the West supported Russia under the leadership of B. Yeltsin, believing that the emerging nation could follow the path of democratisation. At that time, numerous centers of Western humanitarian aid were opened in loads of cities of Russia, and the latter was, in consequence, saved from potential famine owing to the assistance of the United States: the famous ‘Bush legs’, which were massively supplied to Russian territories, remains a memorable piece of those historical times.

The West expected that Russia could be democratised or, if that was to fail, at least made its own ally to confront China strengthening its military and political potential as opposed to the former’s interests. Yet the West repeated its previous mistakes since China’s economic growth has largely been prompted by the foreign support, with American policymakers viewing it as a certain counterweight to the USSR. Now that China has become stronger, the USA and other Western countries see Russia counterbalancing the rising Eastern power. Notably, that still worked to a certain extent with Russia enjoying the spot among the top ten countries in the world since the Kremlin sought to dominate in its exclusive sphere of influence and to actively change the course of political processes in other regions, thereby competing with China. However, at present Russia has been weakened by the war against Ukraine, practically fallen into the arms of and becoming a vassal of China. Although the USA and other Western countries have not wanted an alliance of authoritarian countries between Russia, China, Iran and North Korea to be formed, it has already turned out to exist, so it is useless to anticipate that Russia will at last go over to the side of the West. Instead, the USA must on its part strengthen its regional alliances and help Ukraine in the fight

against the Russian aggressor: if Ukraine wins, Russia will no longer have the capacity to attack NATO countries as it planned earlier; in addition, the bloc of authoritarian countries will also take a blow after the defeat of Russia, and China will no longer dare to attack Taiwan. However, the West keeps dragging out with the final decision on the victory of Ukraine and on the defeat and, in the long term, dissolution of Russia too much.

Obviously, it was the West that had long wished that Russia could become its ally: it actively tried to politically reinforce B. Yeltsin, especially during his confrontation with the Russian State Duma, which at the time could have led to a civil war in Russia steadily disintegrating it. The same West had hopes for B. Yeltsin strictly as a democratic ruler who would direct Russia into its arms. However, the expectations did not come true after the coming to power by B. Yeltsin's protégé V. Putin. B. Yeltsin still tried to 'flirt' with the West by carrying out some democratic reforms; even though the arrangements were mostly fictional, and Yeltsin's actual decisions, especially the First and Second Chechen Wars, clearly demonstrated his imperial nature. When V. Putin swept to power and formed a rigid vertical of power, he consequently began to oppose himself to the West and to demand the treatment of an equal, even considering himself better and more brilliant than all Western leaders, who, in his opinion, were weak, lazy and corrupt; specifically, the Russian leader managed to bribe some of them, as in examples of S. Berlusconi or G. Schroeder. The Kremlin dictator's demand that the NATO return to the 1997 borders has also been memorable. Moreover, V. Putin has despised the West, considered it as decaying and degrading and been used to perceive the desire of Western countries to negotiate with him as their weakness.

Only after that the Russian attack on Ukraine showed the country's true bestial face, the West finally understood that Russia will never become an ally of the West in its current unitary imperial form, although even today there are several politicians who still hope for this to happen. Just as the Ottoman Empire once became an ally of Germany, a then enemy of the Anglo-Saxons, today's Russia has formed a union with China, which is at present the primary competitor of the USA and its allies. Despite the realisation, the West has not finally decided whether it needs the defeat and dismemberment of Russia or only its partial weakening. Western governments want Putin as the only capable one, although he is a dictator, to keep these territories from collapsing, which is supposedly beneficial. V. Putin's aggressive and criminal activities clearly demonstrate that he is the leading catalyst of the existing chaos and instability in the world, with

russia having become a major global sponsor of terrorism. It is primarily russia rather than Iran that was behind the Hamas militants' attack on Israel as they resorted to the tactics used by Russian troops in the conflict with Ukraine; besides that, Hamas militants earlier paid a friendly visit to Moscow. Currently, the Kremlin maintains intensive relations with Iran and North Korea, which are likewise totalitarian and terrorist countries defining the West as their biggest enemies.

Now, the West should finally realise that a unitary imperial russia will always constitute a constant adversary, so preserving the country in its current state will not lead to any positive consequences; conversely, a geopolitical disintegration of russia could be much more beneficial for the former.

New states created in the post-Russian space are almost guaranteed to be friendly and appreciative to the West. In the event of such developments, the Western civilisation may acquire new members to its family or, at least, reliable allies. It is these states, not a unitary imperial Russia, that will probably choose the side of the West in its possible confrontation with China either. However, we should not underestimate the role of China in the Russian question since the PRC has practically developed areas of Siberia and the Far East transferred to it on a long-term lease by russia, and it is only natural that China wants to fully control them; accordingly, it is necessary for South Korea and Japan to intensify their activities in those regions by investing. Today, however, this is impossible in the conditions of the war. Previously, Ukraine promulgated a recognition of Japan's claims to the Kuril Islands (the Northern Territories), which russia, obviously, is not eager to return; for that reason, Japan's relations with russia have been quite cool. In the case of South Korea, Russia signed a strategic partnership agreement with North Korea in June 2024, so South Korea will not implement any tangible projects with the aggressor state supporting its enemy. Therefore, it is important that national movements in eastern regions of the empire be augmented and, in the event of russia's dissolution, take power into their own hands, while opposing Chinese interests with the support of Ukraine and the West.

Drawing historical parallels, it should be remembered that in World War I the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers, and those states that had previously gained independence from the Ottomans such as Serbia and Greece joined the Entente; their contribution to the eventual victory of the Entente forces was indeed important. It is also worth paying attention to the national awakening among the Arabs leading the uprising against the Ottoman Empire during World

War I; it came natural that they fought on the British side in the Middle Eastern theater of operations.

Consequently, the United States and Europe should finally abandon the notion of a unitary Russia. Instead, they should as soon as possible develop close relations with representatives of the regional opposition within Russia, thus weakening the central government. It would be important as well to support the national and regional independence movements emerging on the Russian territory. This will secure necessary conditions for the future growth of independent states in the post-Russian space in reliable allies fighting China's ambitions.

Such a scenario of the emerging independent states on the former Russian territory would be a huge win for the West from various points of view. First, it would expand European civilisation by reclaiming the natural members, who were forcibly separated from Europeans by Muscovy-Russia at different periods of history; this would concern first and foremost the northwestern regions of Russia matching the historical Ingria, the Novgorod Republic and the Pskov Republic. Such an anti-colonial triumph can be compared to how the Greeks and South Slavs returned to Europe after 500 years of the Turkish yoke in the 19th century or how Eastern European countries approached Europe again after centuries of Russian-Soviet rule.

Second, new states gaining their foothold in the Far East and Siberia could model the successful experiences of East Asian countries such as Japan, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan. This would most definitely signify that the West forms an additional alliance in Eurasia in forms similar to the cooperation with East Asian countries in developing.

Therefore, the Western countries should discuss not whether they need the breakdown of Russia, but how to accelerate and control the process given that it is, as we believe, inevitable and only a matter of time. History finds that empires cannot exist forever, with their time coming when the internal contradictions begin to intensify and trickle down into a further collapse. As of now, we can observe a number of such factors.

In the pursuit of elaborating feasible scenarios for the future of Russia, the following should be highlighted:

- 1) Preservation of Putin's criminal authoritarian political regime. This may happen under conditions of Western countries deliberately stopping their financial and military support of Ukraine, which would result in the Ukrainians not being able to return all of the temporarily occupied territories. Putin would

present such an outcome to the Russian population as a victory, with the majority of Russians continuing to legitimise him. Additionally, the corruption would essentially corrode Ukraine from within if the country could not overcome its internal problems, leading to instability playing into Moscow's hands. A failed mobilisation campaign would not replenish the personnel resources of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which would only deny carrying out an effective offensive to liberate the Ukrainian territories. The preservation of Putin's criminal authority can also pave its way given the continued uncertainty of Western countries regarding the fate of Russia, especially when a part of Western politicians is still afraid of its possible implosion and the fall of the Putin regime; in their belief, it is better to have one dictator whom they have already known than many dictators who will arise unknown after the collapse. Unfortunately, these political groups do not understand that little dictators would fight for power among themselves, wanting the support of the West and not pose a threat to it. Ultimately, the present dictator of Russia sees the weakening and collapse of the West as the top goal of his life, so hoping for his loyalty and ability to negotiate is in vain and pointless.

2) A rise to power of even more militant and radically minded politicians like I. Girkin or Ye. Prigozhin. Despite the fears, Ye. Prigozhin has already been eliminated by Putin, while Girkin is detained in prison and, at all desire, will not be able to gain the necessary number of supporters to gain power since there are merely approximately 10-15% of 'radical hurray patriots'; a significant part of the Russian population wishes the bloody massacre end, even if they do not openly talk about it.

3) A rapid or gradual breakdown of Russia and uncontrolled chaos, when subjects of the federation would break away from the center and fight each other in a struggle for power. In those conditions, the objective of the West and Ukraine would be to establish contacts with such subjects as quickly as possible in order to turn uncontrolled chaos into controlled one, so that the governments be legitimised and the post-colonial situation begin to stabilise. This would also be highly important in order to prevent the loss of control over nuclear weapons, especially in case of their theft. The emerging states would need external support, which would be beneficial as well for them to make contact with external countries: some subjects of the federation would focus on Western powers, and others would bet on China. As it is important that on that basis they would not aspire to conduct hostilities among themselves, preliminary agreements with China would be needed either of not provoking some subjects of the federation prior to the natural disintegration. Future powers would be offered such terms of

cooperation and investing promises outweighing possible suggestions by China; the West is still technologically superior to China, hence that might be used to drag post-Russian states into its orbit.

4) A lifting of pro-Western Russian democratic political forces after the fall of the Putin regime, gradually democratising the political system. Their government, nevertheless, would not be able to change Russian society quite rapidly and rely mainly on Western support in their efforts simply by the fact that the majority of Russian citizens are so zombified by Putin's many years of propaganda that they are incapable of democratic transformations. It should be noted that if Russia even held transparent democratic elections after the fall of Putin, the middle-level political elites with imperialist and chauvinistic thinking, which were formed at Putin's time, would most likely be massively supported since the true level of support for the liberal path of development among Russians is no more than 5-10%. Additionally, as we know, the majority of liberal-minded citizens of Russia have already fled from the country, and only the 'Russian common people' have remained there, who are completely zombified by Russian propaganda. In consequence, it is necessary to carry out among the locals denazification and to start a powerful educational information campaign in order to highlight the crimes of the Putin regime, convey truthful information to the population, form an objective picture of the world; this can take from 10 to 30 years, hence it is critical for a change of generations to occur. For instance, the German denazification took place in several stages. The first stage began immediately after the end of World War II: in particular, German courts had considered 3.6 million cases involving 'ordinary' Germans in the crimes of National Socialism by 1949¹; yet some court cases ended in acquittals with ordinary Germans found innocent because, as it was believed, they were forced to survive and collaborate with the Nazi authorities. This was not entirely true because the majority of the German population supported the Nazis and did not change their views for the most part after the war; furthermore, although the top echelones of the Nazi regime were condemned, Nazi ideas did not disappear from the German public consciousness immediately: more than 70% of Germans believed that Hitler had been a good leader and made Germany a great country, regrettably surrounded by 'bad people', who had ruined everything. They denied

¹Shevtsova, S. *The Actual Denazification: How Germany and the Germans Were Purged of Hitlerism*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-ato/3493708-denacifikacia-pospravznomu-ak-nimeccina-i-nimci-ocisalisa-vid-gitlerizmu.html> [Accessed 27 May 2022]. [in Ukr.]

joint responsibility for the war and did not want to remember the past, so denazification encountered hostility and resistance from German society.

True denazification was realized only in the 1960s, when twenty years had passed after the defeat of Hitler's Nazi regime and an entire generation had changed with German youth, who had learned the whole truth about Nazi crimes and been to concentration camps (specifically, Auschwitz and Buchenwald), reconsidering their past in large. Young people accused their parents of silencing problematic episodes of the German history and of concealing support for National Socialism. As a result of the changes, the German authorities were forced to react and take steps of discussing the Nazi times. This issue has been actively highlighted by German intellectuals: the Nazi past of the nation was condemned in the works of Ingeborg Bachmann or in Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum*; the famous philosopher Karl Jaspers emphasised in his work *The Question of Guilt* that the Germans had criminal, political, moral and even metaphysical guilt, and even argued the following: 'Every person is responsible together with others for how they are governed' (not everyone supported his ideas, but public awareness was very wide); his follower J.Habermas underscored that the Germans were obliged to remember the suffering of those who had been killed by their predecessors and offered the Germans a project of post-national 'constitutional patriotism' connected with the universal values of freedom, human rights and democracy; finally, German schools' teachers have finally begun to provide objective knowledge and been forced to acknowledge the crimes of the Nazi regime in the course of German history.

At that time, the Central Office of the State Justice Administrations for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes was established, initiating the consideration of new trials of former Nazis. For example, the Frankfurt Trial of the Auschwitz administration was held in 1963-1965, ultimately convicting new Nazi war criminals. In that period, more than 37 thousand trials occurred, most of which ended in guilty verdicts against war criminals; only after that did German society finally started to reflect on itself and condemn the crimes of National Socialism. In the outcome, when the Social Democrats (SPD) led by Willy Brandt came to power in West Germany in 1969, the program of 'overcoming the past' was proclaimed at an official level, becoming the basis for the democratisation of German society.

Interestingly, those processes had different features in the FRG and the GDR. The Federal Republic of Germany on its part proclaimed itself the legal successor of the Nazi Reich and was forced to pay considerable compensation to

Jews whose relatives died in concentration camps. The East Germans, in return, considered themselves innocent of anything because, in their opinion, the crimes were committed by the higher Nazi leadership, while ordinary Germans, workers and peasants, were not responsible for the crimes; they were firmly convinced that most of them were anti-fascists who themselves suffered from the Nazi regime. Apparently, there has been no deep cleansing from the legacy of National Socialism in the east of Germany, and those ideas have continued their rooting; no wonder why it is the eastern regions of Germany that certain neo-Nazi groups regularly emerge in. Lastly, it should be mentioned that the right-wing radical Alternative for Germany, which professes pro-Russian and anti-Ukrainian views, has also kept a majority of voters precisely in East Germany.

Therefore, the threats against Ukraine will remain even after the simultaneous fall of Putin's authoritarian system and subsequent preservation of the Russian Federation. Even if liberal or democratic Russian politicians are in power, they will be incapable and dependent on Western countries, while the Russian people, 'poisoned by Putin's propaganda,' will strive for imperial revenge. Only the final collapse of imperial Russia will make potential aggression against Ukraine impossible as future post-imperial states on its territory will fight for their survival, not for imperial conquests.

What factors can ensure the collapse of Russia?

Let's outline the key ones:

1) The absence of a clear goal and of a development strategy among the leadership of the state and the Russian people.

In order for a state to actively develop, it must have a goal that would unite its population, including those ethnic groups that live on its territory. As for Russia, the main goal of Putin and his clique is to maximise their power and enrich themselves, while the Russian people are doomed to poverty and destitution; it is 'ordinary' Russians that Putin keeps deliberately killing by throwing into the meat grinder of the war against Ukraine. The Russian dictator always talks as if he cared about the well-being of the Russian people and about the return of Russia to its 'past greatness', seeking to realise his own maniacal idea of the revival of the Soviet Union; however, at all desire, this idea will not be brought to life, inasmuch as history cannot evolve in the opposite direction. For some time, Western politicians hoped that Russia could be democratised and that, as soon as transparent democratic elections were held, liberal values would quickly spread throughout the Russian territories. Yet the population of imperial Russia had been enslaved for a long time, were accustomed to paternalistic

thinking and have always wanted to be ruled by a ‘strong ruler, a king-father,’ who would solve all their problems. As such, the ‘Russian common people’ are not ready for democratic values. In this context, a researcher Alfred Koch once wrote: ‘What will happen if, in a gathering of peoples who are strangers to each other, all this democracy is diluted, everyone is unfettered, and you have released the reins? Russia will be in ruins: everything will be dragged away, robbed, and the country will fall apart into dozens of separate principalities.’ ‘Russia,’ as A.Koch noted, ‘is unviable because it has not been a voluntary association of peoples on the basis of some prospects and values. The peoples incorporated by the state have no reason or desire to live together.’¹

2) The lack of unity and the missing common values by the peoples of Russia.

As an empire, Russia has captured hundreds of ethnic groups, each of which cherish its own language, culture, history and traditions. For some time, Russia has been trying to bring them together spiritually by forming a narrative about a single ‘Russian people’. Yet the Russian state mostly used harsh forceful methods, so when small and large ethnic groups were driven into the ‘prison of peoples’, no one was interested in articulating the common interests shared between the enslaved and the enslavers. Understandably, the violence did not give the desired result. Under the tsarist Russian Empire, people were subject to the unification under the slogan of ‘Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality’: Orthodoxy was recognised as the state religion, while other religious groups were all prohibited and persecuted. In those days as well as today adherents of differing religions have lived on the territory of Russia, namely the same Muslims, Buddhists and Jews, not accepting Orthodox ideas and oneness under their auspices. The idea of ‘Slavic unity’ had also been widespread for a while, but, if repeating again, the Russian Empire was mostly inhabited by non-Slavic peoples. The Soviet Union had attempted to build a new social community referred to as ‘Soviet people’, which would profess socialist and communist ideas; the aggressive methods used in the process did not, nonetheless, yield the desired results since anyone who had not agreed with the slogans of the leading CPSU would have been persecuted or even killed. In modern Russia, there is still no societal cohesion in religious, ethnic or regional issues. Today, the Russian Orthodox Church plays an important role in forming the togetherness of the

¹Yakunov, Ye. *Seven Scenarios For the Collapse of Russia*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/2346389-sim-scenariiv-rozpadu-rosii.html> [Accessed 18 November 2017]. [in Ukr.]

Russians, so even Putin can sometimes stand in a church holding a candle, showing Russians what a devoted Christian he supposedly is; nevertheless, he is more reminiscent of Antichrist in his actual actions. A century ago, several famous philosophers, notably A. Toynbee and S. Huntington, used to speak of 'Russian Orthodox civilisation'. However, in modern Russia, the number of adherents of Islam has been increasing, first and foremost owing to Chechnya, Dagestan and other Caucasian republics. According to the latest information, about 20 million Muslims live in Russia, that is about 15% of the population of Russia; since Muslim families have many children with the birth rate from 3 to 5 children per woman (for ethnic Russians, the birth rate has been 1.4 children per woman, which leads directly to depopulation), they will quantitatively outweigh the Orthodox population in some time. Not to mention that Muslims are much more organised than Orthodox: for example, the Chechnyan leader R. Kadyrov, who has wanted to play the role of a defender of Muslims world-wide, organised thousands of Muslim rallies in support of the distant faithful Rohingya in Myanmar, who have been persecuted by local authorities. The oppositionist Russian journalist A. Nevzorov joked in this context that a Muslim R. Kadyrov could become the leader of Russia in the near future, saying: 'Would I like to see Kadyrov as the president of Russia? Well, solely to look at Gundyayev in a turban.'

A Russian opposition figure Andrei Piontkovsky once openly said that 'Russia has long paid tribute to Kadyrov', and that 'Putin is the last khan of the Golden Horde.'

Overtly Nazi ideas of 'Russia only for Russians' have become quite popular either today, but they generate resistance in many ethnic groups living in Russia; in a sign of opposing unification, they spread their slogans 'Chechnya for Chechens' or 'Tatarstan for Tatars'. This leads to increased intolerance, radicalism and xenophobia; ironically, the Nazism that Moscow has accused Ukraine of is flourishing in Russia itself. Let us recall the bustling anti-Jewish protests in Dagestan, when Islamists tried to hijack a plane arriving from Israel and carried out pogroms at the airport. In addition, Russia has actively supported Hamas militants who are used to destroy the peaceful Jewish population. When accusing Ukraine of Nazism, it should be remembered that President V. Zelenskyi is an ethnic Jew. Moreover, Ukraine has one of the lowest rates of xenophobia in Europe, making the argument by the aggressor state even more ridiculous.

Throughout its history, Russian empire has never developed a single set of values that would unite all the inhabitants of these territories. The Russians tried to develop a common national idea, but it is a rhetorical question whether it is possible at all to find one for more than a hundred ethnic groups living in the country. As the famous researcher Benedict Anderson wrote, the Russians tried to ‘stretch the small tight skin of the nation over the giant body of the empire.’

3) Excessive centralisation of power and fragility of the management system.

Any management system can be stable only when it is open and when there is a change of elites in it, as one of the founders of elitology V. Pareto wrote about in the last century. Russia is all over pseudofederalised and systematically centred on the only leader V. Putin. In such a system, there are no mechanisms for mutual restraint of the three branches of power (executive, judicial, legislative) not promoting the monopolisation of power, as observed in democratic countries; on the contrary, there are also no mechanisms for discussing and making key decisions in a system of centralised power considering that they are made unilaterally. Such decisions can often be unreasonable and ineffective, as was the case with V. Putin's decision to attack Ukraine made on the basis of the information provided to him by his closest entourage, which only tried to feed him the information he could bear hearing – we can recall the notion believed by the Kremlin that ‘Ukraine will meet the "liberators" with bread and salt.’ In a top-down society, truthful information is often unable to pave its way to the decision-making center because the leader himself chooses what information to accept, limiting truthful and objective information that he does not like and rewarding those with false, but pleasant, one. That is why Shoigu has given him misleading information that all Ukrainian planes have been destroyed, all Patriot systems have been eliminated, and the Ukrainian army is on the verge of collapse; that is not true, but Putin is pleased to hear it.

In the system described above, there are also no clear mechanisms for succession and career advancement, so positions are held not by candidates with high professional qualities, but only by officials loyal to the leader; certainly, the management system then becomes permeated with cronyism and corruption. In a concrete manner, regional leaders are not interested in the loyalty and support of the local population and in effective local problem-solving, which has been intensifying over time, considering that their rule depends not on local elections, but only on the will of the Kremlin dictator.

In the event of a weakening of the leader's position, a fierce struggle for power begins. The system does not envisage that there are transparent mechanisms for resolving conflicts; only the leader can do this alone, based on his subjective (basically, biased) judgments, making this system more unstable. Again, in the event of crisis situations, especially in the regions, everyone will wait for orders from the center because they are afraid to make any decisions on their own, which makes the management system unstable and ineffective. Even a wrong decision by the leader will not be criticised or corrected by anyone, but, conversely, it will cause new wrong decisions, further deepening the crisis. One of those complex situations, the erroneous decision to attack Ukraine led to the destruction of part of the Russian army and a decrease in its combat capability, a weakening of the Russian economy, a pejoration of Russia's international prestige; regardless of any negative consequences, the Russian dictator still continues the war because he is absolutely convinced of his genius and the correctness of the made decisions, which could not have been criticised, let alone challenged. In a rigidly focused on the central decision-making political body, even a partial weakening of the leader's legitimacy (especially in the case of his defeats in the war, which will obviously happen in Ukraine) will lead to his entourage perceiving this as weakness and naturally planning to overthrow him. Only mighty, tightly controlled power structures under the direction of the leader will prevent such an outcome; on the other hand, that can merely postpone the fall of rigid centralised authority since ineffective decisions have weakened the state system at all levels. Notably, we are observing these features in today's Russia, where some regions froze from the cold in the winter of 2023–2024 because heating systems failed, funds for housing and communal services were reduced and directed to the war; additionally, a string of regions suffered from floods in the spring of 2024 because dams could not withstand the water pressure as the money allocated for their revitalisation had been stolen. This infrastructural disgrace is observed in most areas of Russian social life, with the negative trends only intensifying.

4) The gradual deterioration of the legitimacy of the government. Although the Russian dictator won the next presidential election with a result of 87%, most democratic countries in the world did not recognise them as transparent and legitimate as there had been massive violations at polling stations with ballots thrown in support of the Russian dictator. According to independent experts, the number of fake votes in support of Putin could be from 30 to 50%; besides that, various elections were also held in the temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories,

which is undisputedly a gross violation of international law. The European Union criticised the Russian presidential ‘elections’, which took place at the end of March 2024 because they were held against the background of increasing violations of civil and political rights, with many candidates deprived of the opportunity to run for president; notably, that was referred to B. Nadezhdin, who could have received a part of the opposition votes. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe did not recognise the legitimacy of the Russian President during its session on April 18, 2024 due to the massive falsification of results and intimidation of voters.¹ On April 25, 2024, the European Parliament condemned the process of holding presidential ‘elections’ in mainland Russia and in the occupied territories, calling on the EU not to designate Vladimir Putin as a legitimate leader after the end of his term on May 7.² All those statements indicate that the leading democratic countries do not recognise the legitimacy of the current Russian government, although, right now, they are forced to put up with the fact that Putin remains the current head of the empire. The legitimacy of the current Russian government is also waning and has been held together only by a stable economic situation and tough enforcement; nevertheless, the level of dissatisfaction will begin to grow with emergence of significant financial problems among the population and a significant deterioration in the material well-being of Russians. If the country suffers defeat in the war, this will further increase the dissatisfaction of the population, potentially leading, in the event of the power structures caught in the rift, to a ‘bloody and merciless rebellion’. Russians are able to endure any hardships for a rather long time, but they are proud of their ‘great and glorious Russia’ as well: when the latter suffers defeats, all the rage and hatred of the Russian people can pour out against the government that allowed these defeats.

5) The boost in regionalisation processes. Although Russia has a rigid vertical of centralised power, certain regions have a special position and receive significant subsidies from the center. This refers to Chechnya, whose leader R. Kadyrov monopolises the regional authorities, not allowing even representatives of the FSB and GRU security agencies, who are in confrontation

¹Alexei Navalny's Death and the Need to Counter Vladimir Putin's Totalitarian Regime and Its War on Democracy. Res.2540 (2024). Council of Europe, Assembly debate on 17 April 2024 (11th sitting). [online] Available at: <https://pace.coe.int/en/files/33511/html> [in Eng.]

²The European Parliament Called For Not Recognising Putin as the Legitimate President of the Russian Federation. [online] Available at: <https://www.slovoidilo.ua/2024/04/25/novyna/polityka/yeвроparlament-zaklykav-ne-vyznavaty-putina-lehitymnym-prezydentom-rf> (25.04.2024). [in Ukr.]

with his henchmen in Chechnya, to enter. R. Kadyrov can even influence central authorities: for example, at the latter's request, Russian activist N. Zhuravel, who publicly burned the Koran in Volgograd, was sent to Chechnya by order of the Investigative Committee of Russia A. Bastrykin. In a Chechen prison, he was brutally beaten by the son of the Chechen leader Adam Kadyrov, who did not suffer any punishment for that; on the contrary, the heads of Tatarstan and Kabardino-Balkaria presented the latter with awards for defending Islamic values. The intensification of protest sentiments in the Caucasian republics, and primarily in Dagestan, should also be mentioned: for example, at the end of October 2023, Islamic activists staged mass riots at the airport in Makhachkala, trying to find Jews who allegedly arrived from Israel. It should be recalled that after the attack by Hamas militants on Israel, xenophobia against Jews increased significantly among Russians and, especially, among the population of Russia's Caucasian republics. The security forces of Makhachkala showed inaction, which led to the partial destruction of the airport's property. Only after the pogroms did the security forces try to arrest the participants of the pogroms individually. Thus, this is evidenced by the fact that the authorities in many republics are not ready for mass riots of the population and, if they occur, will not be able to effectively counteract them; that was also confirmed by the Prigozhin riot since no significant resistance from the security forces was observed in those Russian regions where his march took place, with the local population, surprisingly, supporting Prigozhin's militants marching on Moscow. Therefore, if the central government weakens, centrifugal processes will immediately intensify in Russia, with a number of republics fighting for their independence.

It should also be noted that if the Putin regime were to weaken, most Russian subjects would secede, inasmuch as many regions of Russia have significant natural resources such as gas, oil minerals, and others, which are key to the Russian economy and are mercilessly taken away by the federal government. For example, the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug has deposits with 40 trillion cubic meters of gas, and the Astrakhan Oblast has 4 trillion cubic meters of gas; the largest number of oil deposits is located in the Khanty-Mansiysk, Yamalo-Nenets Oblasts and Tatarstan; there are 64 gold deposits in Kamchatka; Yakutia has rich diamond deposits, owing to which Russia supplies a third of all diamonds to the world market - all these resources are directed to the center, that is Moscow having unlimited financial savings. Characteristically, 1.5 trillion rubles were allocated to urban projects in Moscow from 2010 to 2019,

while 1.7 trillion rubles were spent on similar projects in other Russian regions in the same period of time.¹

This imbalance in budget expenditures and revenues in the regions creates discontent among local elites and the population and may prompt them to consider secession from Russia or seeking greater autonomy. Also, the earmarked budget expenditures for Moscow and expenditures on federal projects may cause discontent among regions feeling that their resources are used to benefit the capital.

The problem can have important implications for political stability of Russia as well as encourage regions to engage in political activism, orienting on alternative ways to ensure their development and well-being.

It should also be mentioned that a number of republics declared their state sovereignty during the collapse of the Soviet Union, namely Komi, Bashkortostan, Chuvashia, Tatarstan, Sakha, Tuva, Buryatia, Kalmykia, Udmurtia and others. Most of them have constitutions that stipulate the right to secede from the Russian Federation; if the Center loses its weight, they can use this right. Some of these entities have already formed their regional territorial armed formations, as in the case of the Tatar battalion 'Alga', which may turn into the future army of Tatarstan.

6) Intensification of economic problems, growing economic gap between regions.

The Russian federal authorities have declared that their GDP is growing, and, thus, the economic well-being of the population is improving. This is by no means true because, although Russia's GDP may have grown slightly, it has been primarily due to increased spending on the defense industry, particularly on tanks, aircraft and other weapons that the Armed Forces of Ukraine are successfully disposing of, so it does not not affect the bolstering of the economy and the improvement of the lives of 'ordinary' Russians.

If the Russian economy was previously profitable, it has recently become increasingly costly. Energy sales have declined as their main consumer, the European Union, has largely abandoned Russian gas and oil, with Russia selling energy mainly to Asian countries, especially China and India. As for war spending, it is growing every month: on the eve of 2023, the Kremlin dictator V.Putin signed a budget law that provided for 4.98 trillion rubles, or \$52 billion

¹Sumlennyi, S. *How Will Russia Disintegrate and Is It Worth Expecting?* [online] Available at: <https://tyzhden.ua/iak-rozpadatymetsia-rosiia-ta-chy-varto-tsoho-ochikuvat/> [Accessed 14 February 2023]. [in Ukr.]

at the then exchange rate, for ‘national defense’ in 2023, which was slightly more than last year’s spending; a little later, this forecast was doubled by Reuters to 9.7 trillion rubles (\$101 billion) – that was almost three times more than Russia spent on defense in 2021 before its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

On top of that, economic sanctions are not rapidly, but steadily weakening the Russian economy, with the standard of living of ‘ordinary’ Russians gradually deteriorating. It should be remembered that one portion of the Russian middle class was forced to flee Russia for the purpose of escaping mobilisation, while other one of the workers, peasants and other employees were mobilised, resulting in the Russian economy dealing with a significant shortage of personnel in many industries. Some industries have significant problems right now: to be exact, we can mention the shortage of some food products, in particular chicken eggs, which Russia was even forced to buy abroad; the deficit of gasoline, which the Russian authorities even banned from exporting abroad; and such trends will only continue. Besides that, the gap between the central regions (Moscow, St.Petersburg) and the outskirts, which previously have received minor subsidies from the center, is increasing; with an increase in military spending, these financial revenues from the center will decrease by an order of magnitude or even stop altogether, exacerbating economic problems and increasing social tension there. A certain economic stability of the Russian economy in 2024 is observed due to the fact that the spending on the regions has been reduced, with fiscal pressure on the population and private business becoming more evident: particularly, a tax on excess profits for large companies in the amount of 10% was introduced from January 1, 2024, with about 318 billion rubles devolved into the Russian budget; the corporate income tax was also raised to 25%; a recent increase in the VAT rate could bring, in belief of Russian analysts, an additional \$14.2 billion to the Russian budget, which will only temporarily support the economy now that some enterprises go into the shadows and do not declare their profits. Most of the funds received go to military needs, which are only spent and do not manufacture a product that can improve the economy, leading to an increase in inflation having amounted to about 15% in 2024; in order to contain inflation, the Central Bank of Russia has regularly raised its discount rate, usually in turn leading to an increase in the price of loans not profitable for companies, which will not try their best to receive the funds. The Russian economy is gradually receiving less and less financial revenues supported by tactical temporary financial schemes; with every month passing, its stability and resilience has been tested more and more, and sooner or later the state will find it

impossible to support the economy without a financial collapse. Even the oil and gas industry, historically profitable, is now becoming subsidised: an expert of the Institute of the Future V. Denysenko in this regard highlighted that, according to the Russian Ministry of Finance, subsidies to the oil refining industry have already amounted to 1.7% of GDP; simply put, the industry is increasingly turning from a budget donor into a budget recipient.¹ Consequently, the weakening of the Russian economy and its possible collapse will most likely occur in 2026–2028, if economic sanctions continue to operate, oil prices do not increase, and the Armed Forces of Ukraine keep striking oil refineries and other strategically important Russian enterprises. Undoubtedly, it is very important that the Ukrainian economy, suffering significant losses from the war, survives in the coming years. Ukraine's economic stability is largely supported by its partners: for instance, the United States allocated a tranche of \$61 billion for military and economic assistance to Ukraine by the end of 2024; the European Union allocated 20 billion euros for 4 years; other Western countries intensively help the nation as well. It should be remembered that the total GDP of Ukraine's allies is 25 times greater than that of Russia, Iran and North Korea combined. However, Russia has been preparing for war for a long time and still surpasses Ukraine in the number of shells, drones, etc., while the European economy has only recently begun to shift to increased military-industrial complexes, operating at full capacity only in 2026 with Ukraine receiving the necessary quantities of weapons, ammunition, artillery, etc.

7) Diversity and multidirectionality of identities.

As we have already noted, an empire can exist for a long time if it has a single goal, single values or a single identity. Modern states consolidate their own society either on the basis of national identity (if the country is predominantly mononational, as in the cases of Japan, Thailand and others), or on the basis of civic identity (like the USA articulating the idea of a 'melting pot' and the greatness of America as the bulwark of its democracy and liberalism). As we know, the Soviet Union tried to form a single identity of the 'Soviet people' and even partially succeeded in doing so, but the newly formed identity crumbled, with national identities beginning to actively manifest themselves and fighting for freedom and their own statehood as soon as the central government weakened.

¹Denysenko, V. *Putin's Swiss Statement, North Korea and Russia's Relations with China: What the Russian Dictator Is Counting On*. [online] Available at: <https://news.obozrevatel.com/ukr/abroad/shvejtsarska-zayava-putina-pivnichna-koreya-ta-stosunki-rosii-z-kitaem-na-scho-rozrahovue-rosijskij-diktator.htm> [Accessed 19 June 2024]. [in Ukr.]

Russia is trying to artificially construct a notion of Russia as 'a great original civilisation that saves family and Christian values against the decaying West.' Unsurprisingly, all that is another lie given the fact that all the 'being a civilisation', or rather being an opposition to the civilisation, has actually manifested in Russian attempts to depreciate all the most defining civilisational achievements such as democracy, human rights and freedoms, social justice, etc: the protection of Christian values by Russia has turned into the ban on all other Protestant Christian beliefs and into the religious sanctification of Russia's imperialist aspirations, including the war against Ukraine, which has been declared 'holy'; moreover, the number of Russian Muslim population has increased every year; the protection of family values has led to criminal prosecution of the LGBT community and the growth of domestic violence. The attempts to unite the entire population under the names 'Russki' and 'Russian' has yielded nothing, insofar as a Chechen, or a Dagestani, or a Kalmyk, or any other representatives of the peoples of Russia do not call themselves Russians, with the original ethnicity being pivotal for them. Even the appeal to the alleged Slavic roots of Russians has no real scientific basis since indigenous Russians were mainly of Finno-Ugric origin and had very little Slavic blood in them; besides that, the word 'Russian' is just an adjective, which equals with a resident of the European Union calling himself a European or a Ukrainian saying that he is Ukrainian. Eventually, no matter how hard the Kremlin's political strategists try, there is no shared Russian identity, which is why the country is doomed to disintegration.

8) The nonexistent rule of law, violation of human and civil rights and of freedoms, endangered rights of ethnic groups, etc.

Any state can exist only as long as the laws are observed in the state, otherwise chaos and destruction begin. Speaking of Russia, there is a legislative body, namely the State Duma, but any of its decisions, including laws, are made only after the dictator's permission since the dictatorial regime with its cult of Putin's personality have reigned here for more than 20 years. The courts make only those decisions that are beneficial to the regime. Hence, no one even dares to talk about the rule of law and the protection of human rights and freedoms by the Russian state since any person can find himself behind bars at any time under a far-fetched pretext, very difficult or even impossible to appeal later. Righteous Russian politicians, lawyers and human rights activists are persecuted or even physically eliminated – A. Navalny, V. Novodvorskaya, B. Nemtsov, S. Magnitsky speak volume in this regard. For another instance, Western

countries once adopted the law named ‘*Magnitsky Act*’ containing a list of Russian officials who had committed fraud, persecution and human rights violations, especially those related to the company ‘Hermitage Capital Management’ and the corresponding death of Russian lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who had tried to protect the truth. At present, there have been massive violations of the rights and freedoms of Ukrainian citizens: according to the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, 125 thousand crimes of the Russian Federation against Ukrainian citizens were registered as of the beginning of 2024¹, with the statistics increasing every day.

9) The lack of desire for innovation and modernisation.

Empires begin to lose their grip and disintegrate in conditions where achievements of modernity are rejected, and the modernisation of the country is slowed down: the Ottoman Empire, a typical case of those, disintegrated because Western countries actively implemented modern scientific achievements and developed their own economies, while the Ottoman economy model was extensive and did not anticipate the use of new technologies, which led to its reduction and decline. We can also recall the fall of the capital of Byzantium Constantinople: its leaders were offered the most modern powerful cannons for defense by engineers of that time, but the city's leadership refused to accept the proposal, considering it too expensive. Ironically, those cannons were purchased by the Turks, who surrounded Constantinople and broke through the powerful walls of the fortress with the help of the latter.

Just like the preceding Soviet Union, Russia mostly does not develop technologies, but buys or even steals them from Western countries. Honestly speaking, today's Russia is not able to create powerful breakthrough technologies in multiple industries, so what Russian propaganda tells about the great achievements of Russia for the most part does not correspond to reality: if proving the argument, the Russian Caliber and Zircon, which supposedly cannot be shot down by any modern air defense system, were successfully shot down by the MIM-104 Patriot system.

The famous question whether it is at all possible to modernise Russia with its heterogeneous regions and the huge difference between the center and the outskirts again arises. To modernise such depressed regions as Altai, the Jewish Autonomous Region, Kalmykia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Transbaikalia, etc. requires

¹*The Number of War Crimes Committed by the Russian army in Ukraine Has Reached Almost 125 Thousand Cases.* [online] Available at: <https://armyinform.com.ua/2024/02/06/kilkist-voyennyh-zlochyniv-armiyi-rosiyi-v-ukrayini-dosyagla-majzhe-125-tysyach/> (06.02.2024). [in Ukr.]

huge funds that Putin's totalitarian regime will never allocate to them. The very idea of modernisation does not suit the Russian mentality, which is very conservative and to which Russian bast shoes or monuments built in several regions with crap are much closer.¹ Not to mention that Putin's propaganda has turned Russian citizens into a gray mass, a herd of obedient sheep who do not like the Western and only support the unprogressively Russian. The Russian people in the hinterland, on the periphery, have become so zombified that even without the minimum amenities of gas (half of Russia is still not gasified), hot water, heating or even a modern toilet (the Russian toilet is often located outside and broken), they believe that 'the situation in Russia is stable, life is wonderful and the country's leadership cares about the people.' The 'Russian common people' continue to put their faith in the 'bright ideas of the Kremlin', still giving Putin some credit; they are often conditionally happy simply because they do not understand to what extent they are zombified and unhappy.

Even some Russian scientists, who should support the development of new technologies, believe that modernisation can harm Russia. For example, the pro-Putin head of the Institute of Dynamic Conservatism economist Andrei Kobiakov believes that modernisation can lead to the destruction of Russia as it would increase 'socio-economic differentiation, alienation of elites from the people, opposition of the so-called creative class to other groups of the population.' His 'Russian Doctrine' also noted that modernisation would bring transnational companies to Russia, further buying up all key industries and turning the country into a conglomerate of 'banana republics'.

10) Moral, spiritual anomie, which has covered all spheres of life of Russian society.

Corruption permeates all spheres of Russian society: the typical situation is, when appointing personnel to certain positions, personal loyalty to the governor and the Russian dictator is taken into account, but not the level of education and professionalism. The judicial system works only to protect the interests of the criminal regime, so one cannot even dream of justice and protection of the rights of 'ordinary' Russians. Even the education system, which should educate the younger generation on humane values, is dominated with militarism and xenophobia: Russian schoolchildren are taught to hate Ukrainians and representatives of Western peoples from childhood; the Russian youth army

¹Makohon, K. *In Russia, a New Year's Sculpture Has Been Molded out of Manure: People Rejoice, Believe that It Will Bring Happiness*. [online] Available at: <https://news.depo.ua/rus/news/na-rosii-zlipili-novorichnu-skulpturu-z-givna-radiyut-shchoprinese-shchastya-202112281407143> [Accessed 28 December 2021]. [in Rus.]

was created, resembling the Hitler Youth, whose members are constantly taught military skills in the use of weapons and the killing of Ukrainians; it has even got to the point that the Russians are recruiting kidnapped Ukrainian children into this youth army, trying to eradicate everything Ukrainian in them, turn them into *mankurts* and force them to fight against the Motherland.

Russia quite actively uses the mechanism of indoctrination, which can be characterised as a constant process of repeating an idea or a belief to a certain group or the entire population of the country until the recipients accept the imposed statements without any criticism or questions.’¹ The indoctrination is actively used predominantly by repressive regimes in the field of education to turn children that do not have a clearly formed belief system into fanatics, blind executors of the criminal orders of repressive regimes, one of which is the current Putin regime. Earlier, the UN Human Rights Council qualified the ideological training of children in madrasas of Pakistan and Afghanistan for further involvement in military operations as indoctrination; yet a similar system has been actively used by Putin's Russia, having kidnapped from the territory of Ukraine from 507,000 to 707,000 children up to this date.² The United Nations has clearly called these deportations war crimes, stating that the facts are ‘credible’³ and that the Russian forces were sending Ukrainian children to Russia within a large-scale program, as stated on public television by the Russian dictator himself. It was for these facts of the criminal deportation of Ukrainian children that the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Putin on March 17, 2023. The particular danger of indoctrination is that children ‘quickly demonstrate loyalty and are easy to direct as they have fewer pre-formed concepts and beliefs that recruiters would need to refute or change.’

Lies at all levels are the basis of Russian propaganda, maximally supported at the state level. Since the law is not protected in the state, crime has spread massively. Criminals are recruited into the ranks of the Russian army, after serving in which, if alive, they receive the rights and privileges of a combatant

¹Schluß, H. (2007). *Indoctrination and Education: The Other Side of Pedagogy*. Wiesbaden, p.127. [in Ger.]

²*Deporting Ukrainian children and ‘Russifying’ them is jeopardising the future of Ukraine*. Le Monde, Op-Ed. [online] Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20230317175343/https://www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2022/08/05/deporting-ukrainian-children-and-russifying-them-is-jeopardizing-the-future-of-ukraine_5992568_23.htm (05.08.2022). [in Fr.]

³*UN Says ‘Credible’ Reports Ukraine Children Transferred to Russia*. Al Jazeera. [online] Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/8/un-says-credible-reports-ukraine-children-transferred-to-russia> (08.09.2022). [in Eng.]

and quite often return to their criminal activities after returning to a peaceful life. Various social deviations are widespread. Alcoholism has become a national issue in light of the fact that Russians living in most depressed regions simply get drunk without a deserving job and a decent level of well-being.

11) The spread of resentment. In totalitarian and authoritarian states, a person becomes a pure product of social manipulative technologies and, above all, massive state propaganda consciously forming a distorted and distorted picture of reality among the population and instilling the image of external enemies, which can be most clearly observed in the example of modern North Korea or the Russian Federation; for Russia specifically, the Ukrainians and residents of Western countries are those to blame for all the troubles of the Russians. For the leaders of totalitarian states, a person is not a goal, but only a means to achieve it; the value of human life is leveled, and thousands or even millions of people pay the price with their lives for the sake of the interests of the totalitarian state. Yet the biggest problem is that the distorted picture of reality in totalitarian states becomes the true reality for millions of people: in such a way, the phenomenon of resentment arises, which is essentially a total rejection of reality directly related to the feeling of helplessness of people who are unable to make even a little change in the life of their country. Resentment is a characteristic of carriers of the enslaved consciousness, of a person who is unable to critically assess the surrounding reality and does not have a stable system of moral or religious values, thus being an ideal object for zombification and social manipulation. If we look even deeper into the current situation in the Russian Federation, it is noteworthy that the Russian authorities are trying to form a new imperial community on the territory of Russia and the entire post-Soviet space by carrying out, according to researcher T. Gundorov, the process of 'recolonisation' with powerful humanitarian and informational influence spreading the ideas of the 'Russian world'. Particularly, pro-Russian imperial historical memory, ethnocultural symbols, language and communications have spread quite actively in the east and south of Ukraine, in the temporarily occupied territories, having involved the removal of any alternative sources of information for the population of these regions. The dissemination of separatist sentiments has led to the creation of local zones of conflicts along the entire perimeter of the former imperial border: the idea of the revival of 'great Russian empire' takes so much possession of the consciousness of the highest political elite of Russia that it has caused a degradation of critical and strategic thinking and a rejection of the 'principle of reality', followed by the construction of a distorted imaginary reality through the

constant information expansion and the establishment of lies as a key principle of politics; in conditions when the state policy starts to be built on total lies or a denial of obvious facts, we are faced with a completely special type of policy, having been successfully engaged in by previous totalitarian regimes. In such a line of behaviour, the 'special military operation in Ukraine' became a noble war against imaginary 'fascists', while the isolation of Russia is seen as if it was an affirmation of belonging to the rank of great independent states; and the decline of the economy and the fall in incomes as simply temporary difficulties, the rapid overcoming of which will lead to an increase in the well-being and happiness of all Russians. The alienation from influencing reality in Russia has been associated with the deep crisis of institutions. For the average citizen, the institutional crisis is expressed in a total perversion of the functions of law enforcement agencies and government bodies and in the transformation of the humanitarian sphere, education and science aimed at consolidating a distorted picture of the world in the mass consciousness. The distorted picture of the world, however, cannot be long-lasting as it denies the true reality, leads to the undermining of the economic and political well-being of the country for the sake of meeting bizarre ideals, faith in one's own invincible strength and power, not essentially corresponding to the same reality. The rejection of the truth and defactualisation prospering with Russian society has entered the stage of self-destruction and can be stopped now only by a mass enlightenment of the Russians in the aftermath of the fall of the Putin regime, of a severe economic crisis or of a loss in the war.

All the above factors indicate that the collapse of the Russian neo-empire is inevitable, just a matter of time. In order to delay the collapse of the empire for a little, its leaders have often resorted to a scenario of seizing territories and increasing resources: Putin had tried to follow the path by seizing Transnistria, Ossetia, Abkhazia, but could not suppress Ukraine, which will definitely liberate its territories. With the first option failing, the scenario of tightening the screws remains, and Putin has already begun to empower the power structures even more, intensifying repression against his fellow population. However, if the economic sanctions of the West continue; if Moscow's money invested in the war does not have the desired effect as Ukraine grind the Russian troops and be able to liberate its territories with the active help of the West; if the Russian economy declines, with the level of welfare deteriorating, Russia, in consequence, will begin to fall apart in the case of certain black swans arising (the question may even be when they will ultimately arise) in the complicated conditions of rigid, centralised and ineffective governance.

Certainly, we cannot specify the exact time when this will happen, but the process itself can be quite sudden: it happened with the Soviet Union, even when some Western leaders had not believed that something alike could happen. Accordingly, both Ukraine and Western countries need to prepare for Russia's plausible failure and foresee all possible risks in order to prevent them. Among those uncertainties are as follows:

1) The nuclear risk associated with the uncontrolled proliferation of nuclear weapons, which might end up getting in the hands of leaders of newly created state entities. In that case, it would be crucial to prevent the spread of these weapons and nuclear technologies beyond Russia and falling into the hands of terrorists. The special services of Western countries should analyse those risks right now and form their own agent network inside the decaying empire in order to utilise it, if necessary, and evade negative scenarios.

2) The risk of significantly strengthened China at the expense of Russian territorial and raw materials resources. The PRC has already stated that a part of Russian territories, particularly regions of Siberia or the Far East, previously belonged to China, so it has the full right to return them. There are even Chinese maps where these regions are depicted as Chinese territory; besides that, it is notable that the Chinese side is actively engaged in colonisation even today since Chinese businesses feel quite free there and control a significant part of the economic life. To fill the existing gap, Western countries and their allies Japan and South Korea should strengthen their ties with and intensify economic investments in these regions in order to counter China's influence. It is also necessary to intensify ties with the leaders of the Turkic peoples who are opposed to the current government and have pro-Chinese sentiments. At last, there is a very powerful Ukrainian diaspora living in the Far East, which can create a Far Eastern Ukrainian republic with the support of the mainland.

3) The strengthening of Islamic influences in the regions. With the dissolution of Russia, all the Caucasian republics are likely to secede and form their own states: for instance, Chechnya would become independent, and R. Kadyrov would stay in power by appealing to the fact that he managed to preserve the Chechen people's identity, with Russia having even paid him a significant tribute. To exploit this vulnerability of power vacuum, other Chechen groups should be preparing both financial and military resources to fight R. Kadyrov, who will not give up his power just like that. Western countries need to work with the diaspora and representatives of these republics either so that they can quickly handle situations in their regions and prevent the spread of radical

Islamic groups usually desiring to intensify their activities in the Islamic republics in the event of Russia's disintegration.

4) The peril of possible uncontrolled conflicts between possible newly formed state entities on the territory of the empire, resulting in significant casualties and a huge wave of migrants (up to several tens of millions of refugees). In such a scenario, the proactive participation of Ukraine and Western countries, of the UN (contributing with a possible deployment of a UN peacekeeping contingent), and of other international organisations is required in order to preempt military conflicts or, especially, their escalation into local nuclear wars.

5) The danger of ethnic cleansing as newly created states will protect the interests of their titular ethnic group and treat representatives of other ethnic groups negatively. Without the proper participation of Ukraine, Western countries and international organisations in the way we have mentioned in the previous paragraph, it could erupt in a ethnic cleansing or even a genocide against certain ethnic groups.

Hence, Ukraine and Western allies must calculate these hazards, develop mechanisms to counter them and endeavour by all possible means to neutralise the Russian neo-empire so that it does not pose a threat to the civilised world. For that to become true, it is necessary to first and foremost use hybrid and asymmetric methods: particularly, the optimal way to overthrow the criminal Putin regime may be the actions of opposition armed formations such as the Russian Volunteer Corps, the Freedom of Russia Legion and other similar armed formations, which would be able to destabilise the situation inside Russia by force, showing the weakness of the Putin regime and leading to an acceleration of centrifugal tendencies and of a separation of certain regions. In addition, it is almost vital to support the opposition movement in the subjects of the Russian Federation by all possible means since they will be ready for an open armed struggle against the criminal Putin regime only after getting genuine assistance from Ukraine and Western countries. If the West continues to claim that it does not seek to overthrow the Putin regime, will the oppositionists want to overtly speak out against the totalitarian political system, thus risking their lives and the lives of their families? Recalling the outcome of the First and Second Chechen Wars with Dzh. Dudaiev and his advocates getting defeated, when the civilised world did not want to support the struggle of the Chechen people for their independence, is a telling example of that. After the overthrow of the totalitarian regime, it would be advisable to establish a government of Russian democratic

oppositionists, who would carry out the denazification and deimperialisation of the Russian population with the participation of international experts, freeing the society from the misleading Putin myth, which that have been planted for decades. Only after that will it be feasible to hold transparent democratic elections in these territories.

If searching for key measures that need to be implemented to finally neutralise Russia as an aggressive imperial entity, the following should be highlighted:

1) A prosecution of Russian war criminals Putin, Shoigu, Naryshkin, Lavrov, Bortnikov, Patrushev, Gerasimov, Gundiaev and other powerful figures by the Special Tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine.

2) A conclusion of an absolute and unconditional surrender of Russia with a clear definition of the conditions therein.

3) A compensation to Ukraine in the form of post-war contributions and reparations, the terms of which will be discussed.

4) A creation of a temporary transitional government administration under the supervision of an international control commission under the patronage of Ukraine.

5) A demilitarisation and denuclearisation of the former Russian Federation, including international control over nuclear facilities.

6) A formation of a new democratic state entity on the territory of the former Russian Federation, possibly designated the Confederation of Eurasian Sovereign Republics (CEASR).

7) A constitutional recognition by Russia of the right of nations to self-determination and the right of territorial units to withdraw from the CEAS (former Russian Federation) doubled down with a formation of sovereign national republics on the former territory of the Russian Federation.

8) A creation of sovereign national Ukrainian republics, namely Kuban, Bilyi Klyn, Zelenyi Klyn on the territory of the former Russian Federation, with guaranteed Ukrainian language and special status within the framework of regional inter-republican associations in the CEASR under the governance of the supervisory representation of Ukraine.¹

¹Hai-Nyzhnyk, P. (2023). *The War with Muscovy: Its Goal, Character and Relation with the World or What Victory Will Truly Be the Victory of Ukraine // Khmelnytskyi Region in the Conditions of Russia's War against Ukraine (Viina z Moskoviiu: meta, kharakter i Svit abo yaka peremoha bude spravdi peremohoiu Ukrainy // Khmelnychchna v umovakh viiny rosi proty Ukrainy)*. Materials of the All-Ukrainian Scientific Conference. Khmelnytskyi, p.31. [in Ukr.]

One of the key conditions for victory over totalitarian imperial Russia should be a clear desire of the West to take down the Putin regime, whereas a certain part of Western countries is at present very cautious about the prospects of Russia's collapse; a number of Western politicians believe that the main problem of today for the US and the West is not so much Russia as China because the latter has strengthened its current geopolitical importance, striving to return Taiwan by force. Yet it is Ukraine's victory over Russia that will show the eight authoritarian countries, primarily China, that a country fighting for its freedom and independence can provide worthy resistance to a powerful enemy even with less powerful weapons and fewer human resources, eventually defeating its adversary with the prominent help of Western countries; China then will be very careful when planning a forceful seizure of Taiwan or, after Ukraine's victory, will postpone the aggression for an indefinite period. That is why, respectively, the US and Western countries are also weakening China's geopolitical role by supporting Ukraine at various levels. Moreover, European countries are increasingly strengthening their defense potential in the face of the Russian threat: for example, Poland has planned to extend its Armed Forces up to 300 thousand soldiers, also purchasing the latest military equipment; other European countries are also working to strengthen their own defense potential as well. In these conditions, the United States will be glad and able to pay more attention to the Pacific region, where it focuses on strengthening its Asian allies.

It seems that the main obstacle to the overthrow of the criminal Putin regime is the West's uncertainty about the future fate of Russia. The well-known New Yorker journalist and researcher (who wrote the books *The Kremlin Uprising*, *The Man Who Ruled Washington*) Susan Glasser argued in this context: 'We will not build a stable European order until we clearly understand what will happen to Russia in the future.'¹ It should be pointed out that, as of now, many Western experts still do not want the defeat and collapse of Russia as, in their opinion, that would lead to chaos and anarchy in the territories controlled by the empire; considering that Russia possesses nuclear weapons, such a disarray would lead to their unauthorised seizure or even a use against Western countries.

To strengthen her argument, a professor of political science at Rutgers University (New York, the USA) Alexander Motyl indicated that 'although the world would be better off with a significantly weakened Russia, its fall may not

¹*The Ukraine War might really break up the Russian Federation – The Hill*. [online] Available at: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/ukrayina-viyna-maybutnye-rosiyi/32548701.html> (15.08.2023a). [in Ukr.]

be that smooth.’ He believed that the instability and ungovernability of the Russian state would lead to mass migration processes that Russia’s neighbouring countries would have to face; the greatest threat, nonetheless, would be the loss of control over nuclear weapons, which could have unpredictable consequences for the entire world.¹ A representative of the Carnegie Endowment Tatiana Stanova pointed out that the events in Ukraine would deconsolidate Russia, turn it into a volatile and unpredictable entity, saturated with internal contradictions and conflicts. A Washington Post columnist David Ignatius noted in this regard as well: ‘A fragmented and demoralised Russia is a devil’s playground... The internal disorder of Russia poses a serious dilemma for Putin himself, but it is also very dangerous for the West.’²

Some Western top politicians do not seek to destroy the bloody Putin regime as well. Notably, when German Chancellor O. Scholz was asked whether he sought to overthrow the regime of V. Putin, he replied that Germany could not decide who sat where and that such a decision should have been made by the Russian people only. He stated in his defense: ‘Of course, one can understand their fears, but, in my opinion, they are too pessimistic, cautious and moderate’. The arguments by some Western high-ranking officials, for instance the NATO Secretary General's Office Chief Stian Jenssen, that Ukraine could become a member of NATO in exchange for a part of its territory are totally unacceptable, although such a decision should be made only by Ukraine itself. Doing so would be a direct violation of international law since Ukraine voluntarily leaving its territories to Russia would imply that the right of force prevail and, thus, any state will be justified in seizing foreign territories by armed means and legitimising their occupation; the world security order would be in a complete disarray, with chaos and anarchy dominating. Fortunately, Stian Jenssen later denied his claims, arguing that he had been misunderstood.

However, certain negative trends are evidently intensifying. The world-wide security situation has recently become increasingly tense: several European countries are observing the rise to power by right-wing populist forces with pro-Russian and anti-Ukrainian sympathies (National Rally, Alternative for

¹Silicon Curtain (Silikonovyi Zanaves) (2022). *Alexander Motyl - Is the Idea that Russia is Too Big to Fail Holding Back Western Strategic Support?* [online video] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wuUZ5-mb0Mk>. [Accessed 13 November 2023]. [in Eng.]

²*The Ukraine War might really break up the Russian Federation – The Hill*. [online] Available at: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/ukrayina-viyna-maybutnye-rosiyi/32548701.html> (15.08.2023b). [in Ukr.]

Germany, Confederation of Poland, etc.); in the USA, D. Trump paved his way to the White House again, calling for peaceful negotiations between Ukraine and Russia and legitimising territorial concessions by Ukraine. Hence, it should be stated that the pressure on Ukraine about the importance of negotiations with Russia will only increase, so the Ukrainian authorities must show principle and perseverance in this case and not succumb to proposals harmful to Ukraine: only if they correspond to Ukrainian national interests, then can certain agreements be made.

As for Western pressure, it is worth mentioning here the speech of US President George H.W. Bush, Sr. called the 'Chicken Kiev speech' delivered on August 1, 1991 in Kyiv just a few weeks before Ukraine gained independence. While performing, he called on Ukrainian politicians not to resort to 'suicidal nationalism', secede from the USSR and continue the support of the progressive policy of M. Gorbachev; he definitely feared that the collapse of the USSR would create very serious security problems for the USA and Western countries. Yet the Soviet Empire collapsed anyway by the unstoppable wheel of history, and the West then successfully resolved security issues with the post-Soviet republics.

In our opinion, the stance of Janusz Bugajski from The Jamestown Foundation, who believes that it is necessary to bring about the disintegration of Russia, after which it will be subject to international control and not pose a threat to its neighbours and the whole world in large by lacking the economic and military resources for its imperialist goals, is more rational. In the belief of the expert, Russia should be limited to the territories of Moscow, St. Petersburg and Nizhny Novgorod, after which the country would cease to be a significant geopolitical player and not threaten its neighbours.¹

Quite objective and rational is also the stance of the professor of European studies at Oxford University Timothy Garton Ash, who clearly indicated that Western countries should give Ukraine the opportunity to win the war and overthrow Putin as soon as possible; moreover, that would be the best option for the Russians themselves. The researcher recalled a speech in the German Bundestag in 1985, where it had been claimed that 'the defeat was the best thing that happened to Germany' because it had opened the gates for building democracy, the rule of law, freedom, prosperity in the country; and now today's Germany is one of the leading countries in Europe. Only by destroying the Nazi

¹Bugajski, J. (2022). *Failed State: A Guide to Russia's Rupture*. Washington, DC, 450 p. [in Eng.]

Putin regime as such can we create the prerequisites for establishing a democratic and free Russia.

T. Ash also recalled his personal meeting with V. Putin in 1994 at a scientific conference in St.Petersburg, who even back then had had an imperial and chauvinistic mindset and discussed the importance of returning territories that historically belonged to Russia, primarily mentioning Crimea and other Ukrainian regions. V. Putin called the entire Russian-speaking population living in other countries as 'Russians', so he planned to liberate them in order to revive 'Great Russia' even then. It is also worth mentioning V. Putin's main idea that wherever the Russian language sounds and the foot of a Russian soldier steps, the borders of Russian empire lie there.

Timothy Garton Ash also emphasised that V. Putin had single-handedly destroyed the 'Russian world' and leveled Russian culture with his reckless, shameful and criminal actions. He recalled that the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology had reported in 2013 that the vast majority of Ukrainians (80%) had had a positive attitude towards Russia, but then only about 2% of Russian supporters remained among representatives of the nation after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.¹

We deem it as necessary to mention that even some researchers from China, Russia's ally, believe that the latter will inevitably lose. For example, an expert on Russia Professor Feng Yujun of Peking University believed that the following factors would cause Russia's defeat: 1) the enormous level of Ukrainian resistance and national unity; 2) the constant international support for Ukraine, albeit with certain delays; 3) the insufficient use of modern technologies mostly developed and used by the West, having recently been poorly accessible to Russia; 4) the lack of truthful objective information in the hands of the country's top leadership, especially V. Putin, who has found himself trapped in an information cocoon due to his long dictatorship by, in particular, giving him the information he wants to hear. Regarding China's position, Professor F. Yujun noted that although the latter had not joined the Western sanctions against Russia, it did not provide systematic military assistance to Russia; in addition, the PRC advocated a peaceful and diplomatic resolution of disputes, while Russia only used forceful methods violating the norms of the world order. Basically saying, the union between China and Russia might be situational.

¹Mustafa, M. *Timothy Garton Ash: The War in Ukraine and the Future of Democracy in Central Europe*. [online] Available at: <https://democracyinstitute.ceu.edu/articles/war-ukraine-and-future-democracy-central-europe> [Accessed 7 April 2022]. [in Eng.]

In conclusion and all things considered, we should believe that Ukraine only increases its geopolitical subjectness in the conditions of full-scale aggression by having formed the coalition of countries to support it. The Russian neo-empire, on the contrary, has been doomed by now, insofar as the collapse of Putin's totalitarian regime is only a matter of time. Therefore, Western politicians and analysts should not think about how to save the Russian bloodthirsty monster from its collapsing and fear tragic consequences, but actively work on its weakening and complete destruction since Putin's stay in power brings constant destruction and suffering to both Ukraine and the world, provoking further instability and chaos; by having committed the atrocities, he has signed a final verdict for himself and his associates as war criminals. Leaving them in power will be a sign of the West's weakness, seeing that Putin will perceive this inaction as further connivance with his crimes.

CHAPTER 3.

INFORMATION RESILIENCE OF SOCIETY IN THE FACE OF MODERN CHALLENGES AND THREATS: GLOBAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

3.1 The concept of national resilience of society and state

Ideas of global and regional development in the intellectual space of the world community began to dominate from the middle of the 20th century, with their basis laid down in the principles of social priority, resilience, security, and balanced socioeconomic progress.

The concept of national resilience has entered the security theory from crisis management as a tool for countering emergencies and natural hazards. Its essence is that a social system must be able to accept a challenge, solve a problem, eliminate a threat and quickly restore its functioning. According to the documents of the European Commission, in the context of providing humanitarian assistance, warning and preventing crises in connection with natural disasters, resilience is defined as ‘the ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, adapt and quickly recover from stresses and shocks, such as violence, conflicts, droughts and other natural disasters, without detriment to long-term development.’

In today’s context of nonlinear threats, a clear understanding of the transformation of the nature of modern conflict, created and fuelled via unconventional methods, is central to countering hybrid attacks. All the above require rapid response and recovery from a crisis.

The concept of resilience is part of a comprehensive approach to constructing national security and has already been integrated into the terminology of security and foreign policy. The policy of supporting civil society as the core of democratic values requires that this sector become a foundation for all organisations concerned in the security sphere.

Resilience is a universal feature of different types of systems (economic, technical, biological, including territorial) and consists of their ability to effectively perform internal and external functions, despite the negative impact of exogenous and endogenous factors. According to A. Haponenko, the stability of systems is defined as the relative immutability of the main parameters of the socioeconomic system, its ability to maintain them within given limits, notwithstanding the internal and external influences.

An analysis of the main and most researched contexts of resilience allows us to assert that the category of 'resilience' is not static, simple in its internal nature; moreover, its understanding should not be reduced only to the ability to absorb negative impacts and recover from their consequences.

The 'resilience' category reflects individual characteristics and aspects of various phenomena and processes in the environment, ecosystems, economy, society, and state. In this regard, the resilience of the system can be interpreted as:¹

- the number of disturbances of a certain system that can be absorbed by it while maintaining the system within the given state;
- a measure of the system's ability to self-organise (compared to the lack of organisation or forced organisation under the influence of external factors);
- a measure of the ability of the system to create and increase the capacity for improvement and adaptation.

The new essential traits of the 'resilience' category include survivability (the ability to maintain the constancy of system-forming parameters), reliability (the ability to maintain the constancy of vital functions), and adaptability (the ability to change parameters and functions under external influences to ensure the very existence of the system).

At the same time, the stability of a system does not exclude its variability, non-linearity of functioning, and states of instability; instead, it determines the ability to maintain its pivotal qualities in the process of changes in the external environment.²

Within the framework of the term 'resilience', used in this context, I imply the activation of full-fledged cooperation between the state, its security and defence sector and civil society in times of crisis as a holistic and comprehensive system of national security. The ability to 'rebound' (from the Latin *resilio*) means that all sectors will return to normal functioning after mobilisation, to bring together all available resources to deter aggression without losing or breaking social and civil-state ties and relations. The listed ties can develop after the crisis, unless they are completely broken (e.g., military-civilian cooperation).³

¹Folke, C. (2006). Resilience: The Emergence of a Perspective for Socio-Ecological Systems Analyses, *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 16, pp. 253-267. [in Eng.]

²Marhasova, V. (2014). *System of Ensuring the Resilience of the National Economy and Its Security: Theory, Methodology, Practice of Management*: A Monograph. Chernihiv, 416 p. [in Ukr.]

³Bulakh, A. (2018). Security Sector Reform, Resilience Building and Civil Society in Ukraine. [online] Available at: <https://icds.ee/en/security-sector-reform-resilience-building-and-civil-society-in-ukraine/> [in Eng.]

In the light of modern hybrid threats, when we see that an external aggressor is trying to unbalance the domestic political situation in the country through attempts to organise acts of disobedience by citizens, discredit the activities of state authorities in the eyes of society and doubt the correctness of state and administrative decisions, civil society has the opportunity to speak out in support of the state. This requires cooperation between the state and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which is why the **concept of national resilience** is closely tied to the development of the public sector. Within the framework of this concept, the non-governmental sector should not be isolated from state institutions existing in a parallel reality. Thus, it is important that, against the backdrop of current threats, when we see attempts by an external aggressor and its *fifth column* in the state to discredit the state sector in the eyes of society, the activists of civil society and society itself, which follows the leading influencers, act professionally and cohesively.

The involvement of society and its individual members in ensuring security in various spheres of public relations (information, environmental, social, humanitarian, etc.) is a form of gaining national resilience to national security threats. Protecting the country's security is not only the cause of the government or the institutions of the nation's security and defence sector, but also of all its citizens and civil society organisations.

Thus, Article 17 of the Constitution of Ukraine states that protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, ensuring its economic and information security, shall be the most important functions of the State and a matter of concern for all the Ukrainian people.¹

American researchers Joi Ito, director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Media Lab, and professor Jeff Howe, in their book 'Whiplash: How to Survive Our Faster Future', identified nine key principles that are needed to survive in the future, one of which is the principle of resilience against force. They explain this principle through an allegory of a steel-strong oak tree that cannot withstand a gust of wind, and a stable, flexible reed that only sways in the wind. The wind of change, which carries both technological breakthroughs and new dangers, constantly tests the modern world for strength. The authors believe that today it is not those who carry the baggage of resources, plans, and security systems (strong and cumbersome companies and networks) who are to survive,

¹Constitution of Ukraine (1996). *Vidomosti Verkhovnoi Rady Ukrainy* (The Official Bulletin of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (BVR)), No. 30, p. 141. [in Ukr.]

but organisations that are ready to adapt, that move without excess and will be able to quickly recover after the next ‘hurricane’.¹

In 2015, the book by American General Stanley McChrystal, ‘Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World’, was published in the United States. In it, the author identified five main areas for reforming the US Special Operations Forces, including the term **resilience**, which the general understands as the ability of a system to cope with challenges and threats to its integrity while maintaining its basic functions and structure. In the resilient paradigm, managers take it for granted that they will encounter unpredicted threats. But rather than erecting strong, specialized defenses, they create systems that aim to roll with the punches, or even benefit from them. It’s like the principle of aikido – turning the enemy’s strength against itself. Or like an immune system that becomes stronger from fighting a virus.²

The opposite of resilience is mechanistic systems, which at first glance seem very strong, but if one small element breaks, the whole system collapses. In the modern military command system, the core issue is not forecasting, but adaptability to new challenges and threats.

The state of sustainable development of the social system can be monitored using a holistic information array (information subsystem). Monitoring and assessment of the state of national sustainability will allow for determining its level (integrated assessment, which is the output of the management system). Based on data on the level of sustainability of the system, the public administration system can identify areas that require priority attention and implement effective public policy capable of changing the conditions of functioning of the managed social system towards increasing the level of its sustainable development, and therefore, improving the quality of life and security of the population.

A key link in the information array is indicators of sustainable development. According to some authors (V. Smirnov, N. Flud, N. Tarasova, et al.), indicators of sustainable development should meet the following requirements:³

¹Ito, J., Howe, J. (2018). *Whiplash: How to Survive Our Faster Future*. Kharkiv, 352 p. [in Ukr.]

²McChrystal, S. (2018). *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World*. Kharkiv, 416 p. [in Ukr.]

³Tarasova, N., Kruchina, E. (2006). *Indices and Indicators of Sustainable Development*. [online] Available at: https://cawater-info.net/ecoindicators/pdf/tarasova_kruchina.pdf [in Rus.]

- comprehensively reflect various areas of development of the social system;
- rely on the available information base of official statistics;
- have a quantitative expression and a fairly simple and unambiguous interpretation
- be comparable internationally, both in statics and dynamically.

Development of indicators for sustainable development of Ukraine is necessary at three levels: national, regional and local. These three levels can provide their own systems of indicators; however, for effective assessment, it is advisable to have 'end-to-end' indicators that can be aggregated from the local level to the regional or national level.

A clearly organised system of monitoring and assessment of sustainable development of the managed subsystem will allow for more accurate identification of areas that require priority attention of authorities at all levels. In turn, the government bodies, using the data received (level of national sustainability), will be able to make effective management decisions and form a list of measures that will change the conditions (prerequisites) of the functioning of the managed subsystem (feedback) toward sustainable development.

It can be undoubtedly stated that stability is not just a property or state of a system, but a property that manifests itself in the state of the system, which depends on its relations with the external environment. It is impossible to talk about the stability of an object in isolation from the environment in which it is located. Accordingly, it makes no sense to talk about the stable state of an object; the state of the entire macrosystem – the object and its environment, considered together – can be stable (or unstable). In other words, the most important characteristic of stability is the relationship between the object and the environment. However, this does not prevent us from comparing the level of stability of different objects, understanding their behaviour not in a uniform but in the same environment. Unfortunately, a significant difficulty arises here: it is impossible to introduce different objects into the same environment, which is constantly changing over time. Therefore, such comparisons are rather nominal, which must be taken into account.

In the classical theory of system stability, its three main embodiments are distinguished:¹

¹Marhasova, V. (2014). *System of Ensuring the Resilience of the National Economy and Its Security: Theory, Methodology, Practice of Management: A Monograph*. Chernihiv, 416 p. [in Ukr.]

1) inertia (resistance) – the ability of a system to maintain its state unchanged for a certain period of time under external influences;

2) elasticity (recoverability) – the capability of a system to return to its default state after the cessation of external influence;

3) plasticity (flexibility) – the endowment for several normal or permissible states of the system and its ability to transition from one state to another under the influence of adverse factors, while maintaining the necessary invariant of *modus operandi*, the trajectory of development, structural connections, etc. At the same time, the principles of cybernetics posit that for the successful adaptation of the system to changes in the environment, it must have a sufficient margin of variability, which allows it to change at the same speed as the environment. The same applies to the internal diversity of the system, which must correspond to the diversity of influences on it; otherwise, the system is in an unstable equilibrium and may collapse.

The term ‘resilience’ in the context of ensuring national security should be understood as efficient, active and full-fledged cooperation among state institutions, the security and defence sector and civil society in crisis conditions of conducting hybrid warfare. In English, the word ‘resilience’ has several meanings, namely, flexibility, elasticity, agility, resistance (to external actions), the ability to quickly restore the previous physical and mental state, from the Latin *resilio* – ‘to rebound’. That is why, in our context, the aptitude for resilience stands for the ability to be resilient, the capacity to resist and adapt to external challenges and threats in conditions of uncertainty.

Ukraine's traditional neutrality and social inactivity, the lack of contemplation and discourse on security in society, as well as faith in a ‘big brother’ and a ‘reliable’ eastern neighbour were all keeping the Ukrainian nation in a state of peaceful calm and blindness not only to external threats, but also to internal ‘diseases’ of the social system, such as corruption and the inviability of state institutions. Russia effectively exploited weak social cohesion in Ukraine, the absence of a nation-state narrative, and the lack of trust and cooperation between the state and civil society, as well as among citizens within the society itself. After four years of military aggression, it is time to elaborate a system of national resilience, building on lessons learned from its identified weaknesses.

In 2014, Ukrainian society mobilised to replace and fulfil the functions of state institutions. Ideally, civil society should support and complement the state sector, building cooperation on full trust. But at the moment, we can observe an incomplete system in which institutions lack operational capabilities, and active

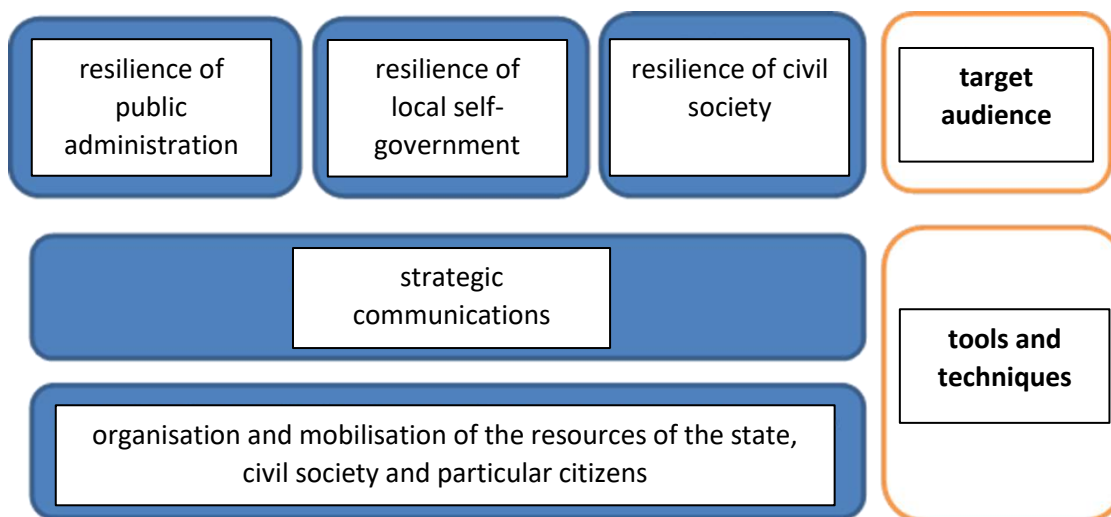
civil society actors miss the tools and knowledge to provide coordinated support to state authorities. Social ties and relationships between the state and civil society can be mobilised during a crisis, provided that they collaborated and were fully active in peacetime. To create a cohesive and comprehensive national security system, it is necessary to establish an ‘embedded society’ between state institutions and citizens as a tool for confidence-building.

However, speaking about the embedding of civil society actors in the matter of ensuring national security, it is worth remembering that this phenomenon may have another, reverse or a dark side, where the vacuum resulting from an inefficient system of public administration is filled not only by responsible civil society organisations, but also by aggressive players with an utterly reactionary and extremist agenda, possibly even created by hostile foreign structures to manipulate public opinion and create social instability. Unfortunately, in modern Ukraine, there is a risk of the emergence of such organisations and their transformation into political players. There are already cases of the establishment of paramilitary structures that violate the right of the state to legitimately use coercion and endeavour to take the protection of public order into their own hands. All this can lead to the discrediting of the civil sector's reputation and a reduction in trust among the population. Moreover, this can cause difficulties in the interaction of the state security sector with the private sector in matters of ensuring national security.

Based on the above-mentioned, we can define the concepts of national resilience and threat to national resilience.

National resilience is the state of a social system in which its sustainable development, protection of national values and realisation of national interests are ensured. National resilience characterises the ability of a social system to respond to external influences and internal changes and adapt to them, to show resistance to new challenges and threats in order to ensure the goals and objectives of national security.

Threats to national resilience are phenomena and processes that lead to the rupture of social ties and derail the interaction within the social system between society and state institutions, which have destructive consequences for ensuring national security and realising national interests.



Structure of the resilience of the social system

National resilience is ensured by existing mechanisms of state regulation and self-regulation in various spheres of public life (economic, political, social and humanitarian). In the context of each component, national resilience is characterised by optimal parameters, compliance with which provides the most favourable conditions for socio-political development. Therefore, national resilience reflects not only the level of protection of national values from various threats and the realisation of national interests, but also the ability of state institutions to introduce and ensure the efficient functioning of mechanisms for ensuring national security and maintaining socioeconomic and political stability, as well as operative social progress.¹

The purpose of implementing the Concept is to create favourable organisational and managerial, normative legal, financial and economic, along with information and analytical conditions to ensure national resilience and national security, and to prevent possible disruption of the normal functioning of the social system due to the impact of various threats.

Thus, the updating of the scientific solution to the problem of ensuring national resilience and the sound development of the social system necessitates studying the evolution of both theoretical concepts of the essence of national resilience and of its ensuring.

Maintaining effective partnerships between government agencies and civil society organisations at the local, regional, and national levels, as well as strong

¹Marutian, R. (2018). National Resilience as the Main Instrument of Confrontation in Hybrid War. *National Resilience of Ukraine to Hybrid War Threats: Materials of the Scientific and Practical Workshop*. Kyiv, pp. 3-5. [in Ukr.]

connections between these authorities and other members of society, are essential components of Ukraine's national resilience.

Information resilience is the state of a social system, in which its information security, the security of information and communication systems and the national information space are ensured. Information resilience characterises the ability of a social system to respond to external and internal aggressive information influences and adapt to them, to demonstrate information and psychological resistance to new challenges and threats.

Information resilience is also the ability of an organisation, society, or individual to effectively deal with information threats, such as disinformation, fake news, and manipulation. This includes the ability to preserve and protect critical information in the face of crises or attacks, while maintaining the integrity and reliability of information systems.

The main components of information resilience:

- o *Critical thinking*: the ability to analyse information, assess its credibility, and detect possible bias or manipulation.
- o *Media literacy*: understanding how the media works and the ability to use different sources of information efficaciously.
- o *Data protection*: the competence to protect sensitive information from unauthorised access and cyberattacks.
- o *Communication in a crisis*: effective communication of information in times of crisis to reduce panic and ensure public safety.
- o *Adaptability*: the capacity to quickly adapt to changes in the information environment and respond to new threats.

The result of ensuring information resilience is:

- **Defence of democracy**: countering disinformation and propaganda that may influence political processes.
- **Social stability**: providing access to reliable information helps reduce social tension.
- **Business stability**: organisations that manage to protect their data and respond to information threats have a competitive advantage.

The tools for ensuring information resilience are:

- **Education**: increasing media literacy through educational programmes and workshops.
- **Technologies**: implementing advanced technologies for data protection and threat detection.

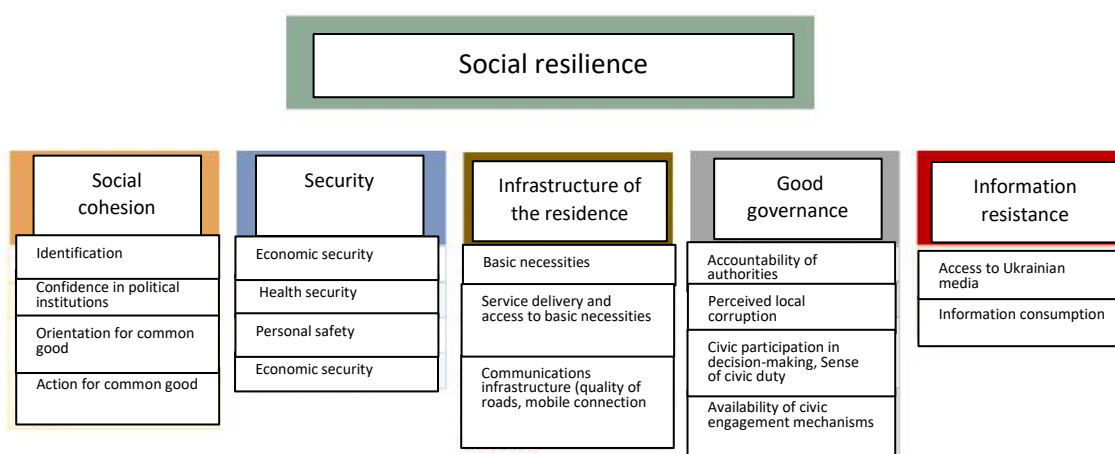
- **Policies and legislation:** drafting laws that contribute to securing the information space and combating disinformation.

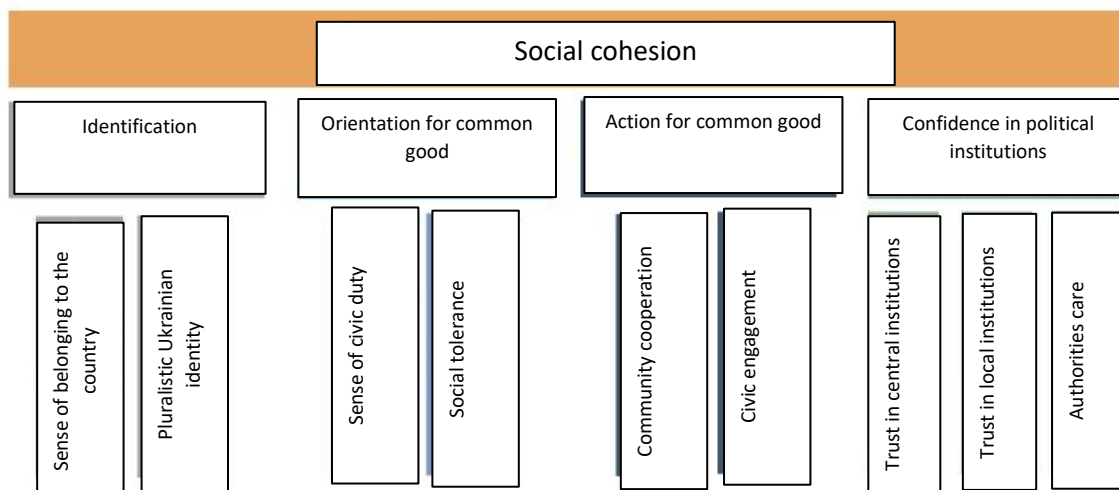
Information resilience is becoming increasingly important in today's world, when the volume of information is constantly growing, with threats becoming ever more complex. It is a critical factor in ensuring security and stability in various areas of life.

Sociological surveys of Ukrainian citizens enable us to get the lay of the land in the state of social and informational resilience of Ukrainian society.

The Partnership Fund for a Resilient Ukraine (PFRU), in cooperation with the Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development (SeeD), the USAID-funded Democratic Governance East (DG East), USAID's Transformation Communications Activity (TCA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), conducted three waves of assessment of population resilience at the national level from November 2022 to April 2024. Data collection was carried out by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS).

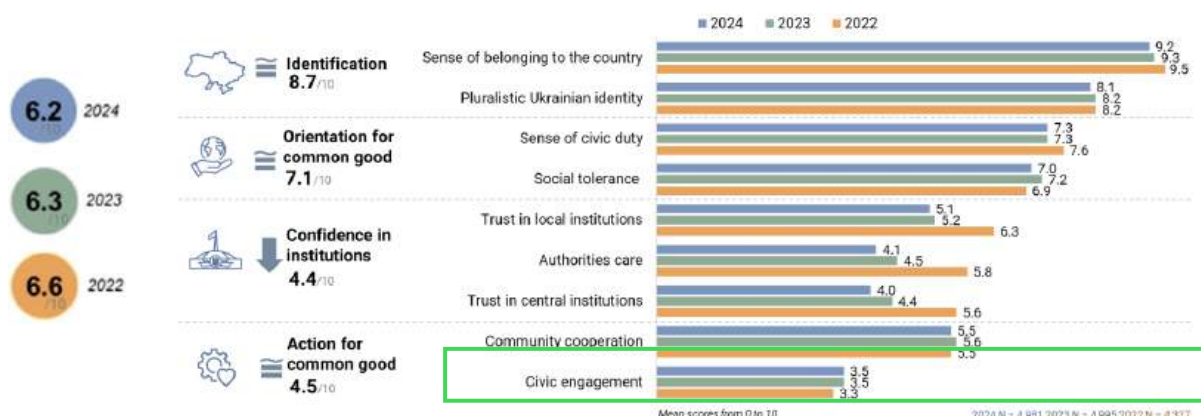
Among the indicators for studying the societal resilience of Ukrainian society, the following were identified: Sense of belonging to the country, Pluralistic Ukrainian Identity, Sense of civic duty, Social tolerance, Trust in local institutions, perception that Authorities care, Trust in central institutions, Community cooperation, Civic engagement.





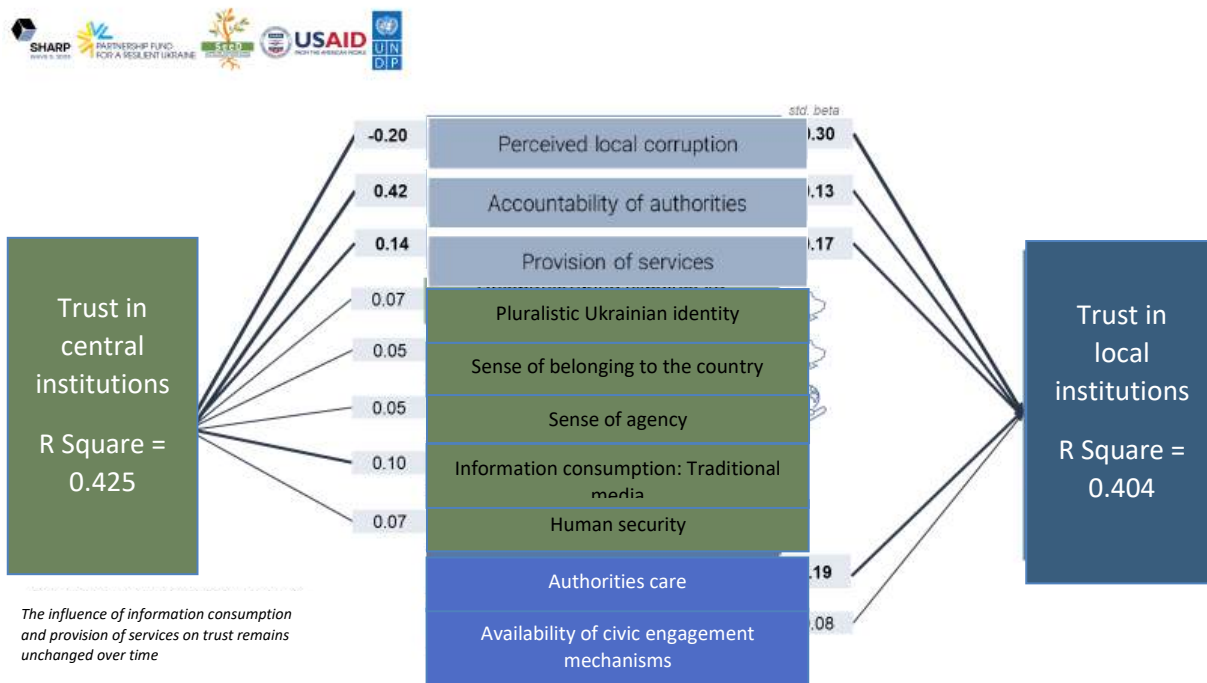
Some research findings

Scores of the components of Social cohesion



Identification remains the most pronounced dimension of social cohesion, with an average score of 8.7 out of 10 for this indicator.

Orientation for common good is also a relatively strong indicator, with a mean of 7.1 out of 10, while the indicators Action for common good and Confidence in institutions are assessed to be in the middle, with values of 4.5 and 4.4, respectively.



Factors of trust in institutions

According to Volodymyr Lupatsii, co-founder of the National Platform for Resilience and Social Cohesion, it is crucial to adopt a comprehensive approach to resilience.¹ Taking part in the public discussion ‘Resilience measurement: tools for crisis management and security’, organised by the CSO ‘Resilient Ukraine’, the expert spoke about the Ukrainian formula of resilience. It is based on the Ukrainian political culture of the last thirty years and has five dimensions.

First, these are values that have been demonstrated by all Ukrainian revolutions. It is about anti-authoritarianism, anti-colonialism, and anti-fundamentalism. The motto ‘Freedom is our religion’ embodies this dimension.

The second dimension is self-defence in the broad sense of the word. Ukrainian political culture over the past thirty years has allowed its society to gain experience not only in advocating for its values, but also in defending them.

Thirdly, this is self-organisation in various forms. ‘The decentralisation reform, which created a separate, autonomously functioning component of power or social order, was especially important. In conditions of war, when there was a

¹*Sociologists Have Assessed the Impact of War on Various Manifestations of Resilience: Materials of the Public Discussion ‘Resilience Measurement: Tools for Crisis Management and Security’*. [online] Available at: <http://surl.li/atsajv> (30.07.2024). [in Ukr.]

loss of continuity of management at the central or regional levels, the local level continued to function', emphasised Volodymyr Lupatsii.

The fourth constituent stands for social cohesion. The key point in the Ukrainian model of social cohesion is engagement, which has the greatest effect.

And the last component is social innovation. 'In extreme conditions, the society, as well as the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Defence Forces, were compelled to create something out of nothing. And this is a whole set of innovations in the use of weapons, the use of scarce resources, interaction with each other and with the world', the expert explained.

3.2 Responding to threats to information security: the experience of European countries

Before Russia launched the war against Ukraine, the issue of European Union resilience was not raised in the conceptual documents of the EU related to general security issues (the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS), 'A Secure Europe in a Better World', and the Report on its Implementation from 2008). At that time, the EU defined resilience as 'the ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, to adapt, and to quickly recover from stresses and shocks'.¹

The illegal annexation of Crimea and the events leading to the armed conflict with the Russian Federation in eastern Ukraine have led to a significant activation of the EU in its search for a solution to the problem of ensuring the resilience of the state and society in the face of modern challenges and threats.

Analysis conducted by the specialists of the National Institute for Strategic Studies, A. Misyura and V. Palyvoda², provides an insight into how the EU's attitude towards resilience issues has been transforming.

In May 2015, the Foreign Affairs Council of the European Union, expressing concern over the situation on the continent and in the world, called for 'actionable proposals to help counter hybrid threats and foster the resilience of

¹*The EU Approach to Resilience: Learning from Food Security Crises: A Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council.* Brussels, 13 p. [online] Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/resilience/com_2012_586_resilience_en.pdf (03.10.2012). [in Eng.]

²Misiura, A., Palyvoda, V. (2018). *NATO and EU Conceptual Approaches to Ensuring State and Society Resilience in the Field of National Security: Analytical Note.* National Institute for Strategic Studies. 15 p. [in Ukr.]

the EU and its Member States as well as partners'.¹ This signalled the start of the development of a new ESS. At the same time, the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) published a report entitled 'Towards an EU global strategy – Background, process, references', which, based on an analysis of the pertinent EU documents, NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept and the 2015 US National Security Strategy, stressed the importance of resilience for ensuring security both at the level of individual states and international associations.²

The Annual Report on the European Union's development and external assistance policies and their implementation in 2014 proposed transforming humanitarian aid into a tool for strengthening resilience, reducing disaster risks and making development cooperation more efficient. The EU is particularly interested in seeing its neighbours more resilient, democratic, prosperous, secure and well-governed.

In April 2016, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini, submitted to the governing bodies of the organisation a document entitled 'Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats: a European Union response', which explicitly stated the need to build **resilience capacity** as one of the EU's main objectives. The communication noted that the resilience of the European Union as a whole depends on the resilience of its Member States. Most of the 22 announced actions call for enhanced resilience in ensuring energy and cybersecurity, as well as in countering radicalisation and violent extremism, including through cooperation with external partners.³

In June 2016, the EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy 'Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe' was presented, which stated that strengthening the resilience of democracies of the European Union is one of the paramount principles of the organisation. The list of strategic priorities for the EU's activities includes ensuring cyber infrastructure and energy security, strategic communications and components of the European digital space. Another

¹*Council Conclusions on Common Defence and Security Policy (CSDP): An Outcome of Proceedings.* Brussels, 16 p. [online] Available at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/24520/st08971en15.pdf> (18.05.2015). [in Eng.]

²Missiroli, A., ed. (2015). *Towards an EU Global Strategy: Background, Process, References.* Paris, 158 p. [online] Available at: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/193931/Towards_an_EU_Global_Strategy.pdf [in Eng.]

³*Joint Framework on Countering Hybrid Threats: a European Union Response: A Joint Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council.* Brussels, 18 p. [online] Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52016JC0018#footnoteref2> (06.04.2016). [in Eng.]

important strategic priority of the European Union is supporting the resilience of neighbouring societies, to which section 3.2. 'State and Societal Resilience to our East and South' is wholly devoted. The main provisions of this section are as follows:

Fragility, even beyond the EU borders, threatens its vital interests.

The ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises (i.e., their resilience to threats), benefits the European Union and countries in its surrounding regions.

Together with its partners, the EU will therefore promote resilience in its surrounding regions.

A resilient state is a secure state, and security is key to prosperity and democracy.

To ensure sustainable security, it is not only state institutions that the EU will support, but the whole of society, which, featuring democracy, trust in institutions, and sustainable development, lies at the heart of a resilient state.¹

By declaring resilience a strategic priority for the EU, not only for countries participating in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), but also for those beyond it, the EU plans to adopt a multifaceted approach and support different paths to resilience. The strategy sets out a roadmap for implementing its plans, which includes, inter alia:

continuing to pursue tailor-made policies to support inclusive governance, critical for the fight against terrorism, corruption and organised crime.

promoting human rights through dialogue and support, including in the most difficult cases.

supporting fragile states in reforming the justice, security and defence sectors, and in building capacities, including cyber.

strengthening societal resilience by deepening relations with civil society, notably in its efforts to hold governments accountable.

fostering pluralism, coexistence and respect by deepening work on education, culture and youth.

enhancing energy and environmental resilience in the EU surrounding regions, properly managed to avoid fuelling social tensions.

To develop the provisions of the Strategy, in December 2016, the European Council approved the Implementation Plan on Security and Defence, prepared by

¹*Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe: A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy.* Brussels, 56 p. [online] Available at: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf (2016). [in Eng.]

the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini. The document identified three strategic priorities for the EU's activities:

- Responding to external conflicts and crises.
- Capacity building of partners by contributing more systematically to their resilience and stabilisation.
- Protecting the Union and its citizens.

To this end, the following concrete actions were planned:¹

- Establishing the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD) to enhance defence cooperation among Member States.
- Launching of the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) to improve crisis management structures.
- Strengthening the EU's rapid response tools, including the Battlegroups and civilian capabilities.
- Creating Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) to strengthen defence cooperation between willing EU member states.

Thus, since 2015, the strategic documents of the European Union have identified the need to boost national resilience as one of the key priorities of this union.

All of them equally focus on ensuring the protection of critical infrastructure and civilians, but spend less effort on intensively involving the active civil sector in monitoring and supporting state institutions in the security and defence sector. Such a strategy, unfortunately, does not increase the level of support and trust between the state and civil sectors.

Strengthening resilience requires capacity-building and comprehensiveness. Only a societal approach to security issues and the formation of a sense of responsibility for security from the bottom up, at the level of public communities, can ensure a rapid response to military aggression. If society can independently organise, mobilise and provide a solid foundation for the public sector in times of crisis, then the crisis response and resilience mechanism is efficient. The sense of responsibility for ensuring security spreads at different levels. State institutions become one of many operating actors responsible for reaction during a crisis. Trust between the state and civil sectors is of primary

¹*Implementation Plan on Security and Defence*. Brussels, 2 p. [online] Available at: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf (18.05.2017). [in Eng.]

importance, though this is precisely what Ukraine has failed to achieve during the years of independence.

In 2017, the International Organization for Standardization introduced the concept of 'Organizational Resilience' into the 'Security and Resilience' section of its Standards catalogue, which also contains recommendations for enhancing the suitable type of resilience for any size or type of organisation.

In 2017, the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania published and distributed a training manual for its people with materials on non-violent resistance. Citizens can use a range of non-military means in times of crisis to respond to aggression in the context of unconventional, hybrid threats. This approach recognises that the state has constraints in using military methods and state institutions to counter hybrid threats, as shown by the experience of Ukraine. Civil resistance, considering the phenomenon from the point of history of military conflicts, has now become a more complex system in which citizens can create a functional network capable of listing and encompassing all layers of socioeconomic activity of the public. Civil society organisations cooperating with law enforcement agencies and local administrations, with voluntary rescue teams and neighbourhood watch associations, as well as with other active citizens, can increase the sense of security and control at both the local and regional levels.

For Ukraine, the study and use of positive foreign experience in ensuring the resilience of the state and society in the field of national security is primarily determined by the need to form a new quality of the domestic security and defence sector, which must have the features inherent in stable systems:¹

- uninterrupted functioning in normal (regular) mode, adaptation to changing conditions

- ability to withstand unexpected impacts

- recovery after the destructive consequences of phenomena/actions of any nature to the desired equilibrium (at the previous or new level), provided that the continuity of the management process is maintained

Security reforms in Ukraine began to gain new momentum and vigour after the dramatic events of the Maidan Revolution in 2013, followed by the Revolution of Dignity, and the outbreak of the undeclared Russian-Ukrainian war. One of the key issues of this reform: how to ensure that a strong civil society, as an active participant in the country's self-defence against Russia's hybrid war in Crimea and Donbas, has proper recognition and an authoritative role in

¹Reznikova, O. (2017). Urgency of Building of State and Public Resilience to Terrorist Threat in Today's Environment. *Strategic Priorities*, No. 3(44), pp. 22-28. [in Ukr.]

Ukraine's national security. Maintaining effective partnerships between state government bodies and public organisations at the local, regional and national levels, as well as a firm link between the authorities and the rest of society, are necessary components of the national resilience of Ukraine in a broad sense.

There is a constant risk for Ukraine: while the state tries to restore its monopoly on the legitimate use of force and authority, the aforementioned malicious actors will try to take justice and the protection of public order into their hands, which means that the entire civil sector may suffer a serious concomitant blow to its reputation and trust. This makes the task of developing synergy between the civil sector and state power in the sphere of national security in Ukraine even more challenging.

Project ‘Resilient Ukraine’ is the Estonian-Ukrainian programme, the implementer of which in Ukraine is the International Centre for Defence and Security (ICDS), the leading analytical centre in the Baltics, founded by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Estonia <https://www.icds.ee/>. The goal of the Project is to provide a platform for Estonian and Ukrainian experts to exchange experience in countering new external challenges and threats posed by the Russian Federation's hybrid war and to provide useful networking for further cooperation. Within the framework of discussions and conferences, the main topic is ‘What role can and should civil society play in the security sector?’. The civil sector has long been a significant part in building societal resilience and national security in Estonia; its government, together with executive and local authorities, supports the activities of the civil sector, creates a favourable legal environment, and recognises the value of volunteers in the homeland security system.¹

The ICDS research project ‘Resilient Ukraine’ examines the role of civil society in ensuring the security of Ukraine and the impact of this phenomenon on national resilience. The project aims to generate new knowledge, conduct analysis, and develop policy recommendations on the elimination of critical gaps in the field and better collaboration between the state and civil society in goal and value setting, motivation, obtaining and allocation of resources, and communication.

This project is based on the notion that greater embedding of civil society in national security provides significant benefits in strengthening the overall

¹Marutian, R. (2018). National Resilience as the Main Instrument of Confrontation in Hybrid War. *National Resilience of Ukraine to Hybrid War Threats: Materials of the Scientific and Practical Workshop*. Kyiv, pp. 3-5. [in Ukr.]

resilience of a country. However, it is worth keeping in mind that this phenomenon may also have a downside, where the vacuum resulting from the weakness of state management of the information sphere is filled not only by trustworthy civil society organisations, but also by aggressive actors with highly reactionary and extremist agendas, perhaps even crafted by hostile foreign forces.

In August 2024, Dmitri Teperik, ‘Resilient Ukraine’ Programme Director, presented findings of the study ‘Examining Societal Resilience in the Baltics’ in Kyiv.¹



Surveys



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
GOVERNMENT OFFICE

Trust in state institutions	National identity
Trust in state electronic services and e-elections	Sense of belonging to Estonian society
Attitude to current issues	Life satisfaction
Support for NATO membership	Economic confidence
Support for EU membership	Security
Trust in media and disinformation	Survival in crises
Information channels	Attitude to war in Ukraine
Anxiety and stress due to various issues	Attitude to supporting Ukraine
Perception of unfair treatment	

¹*Sociologists Have Assessed the Impact of War on Various Manifestations of Resilience: Materials of the Public Discussion ‘Resilience Measurement: Tools for Crisis Management and Security’*. [online] Available at: <http://surl.li/atsajv> (30.07.2024). [in Ukr.]

Surveys



Complex indices

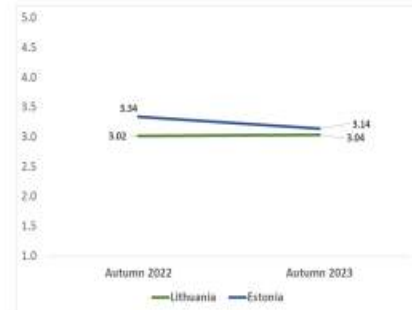
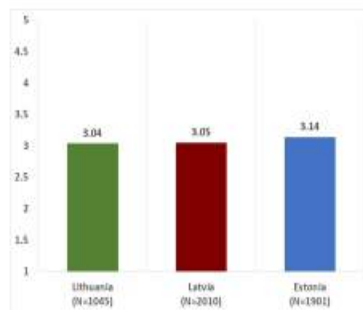
Hope

Perceptions of threat

Symptoms of distress

Community resilience

Societal resilience



Crisis simulation exercises



Measurement - gaps and resources

Cross-sectoral cooperation

Preparedness for crises

Communication flows

Safety and Security culture/perception

The evaluation of the study is that ‘intelligence-based situational awareness provides inputs into assessing threats assessment about adversary’s liabilities and strong points. Resilient citizens of the Baltics have respective competences and are sufficiently trained to implement the skills of self-analysis and self-learning in order to evaluate the effectiveness of, preparedness for and responses to civil contingencies. Furthermore, evaluation-based capacity of transformation leads to making constant improvements in emergency policy planning and trainings’.

In the conditions of the hybrid war waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, the central place in countering hybrid threats is a clear understanding of the transformation of the nature of modern conflict, its nonlinearity and nontraditionality. In these circumstances, rapid response to such

menaces and crisis recovery is imperative. The concept of resilience is part of a comprehensive approach to building national security and has already entered the terminology of security and foreign policy. The crisis in the regions included in the European Union Neighbourhood Policy has shown that the priority today is not only ensuring democratisation and economic growth, but also the ability of partners to confront emerging threats effectively and promptly.

The policy of supporting civil society as the core of democratic values requires that this sector become a beacon of support for all other responsible organisations in the security sphere. All the above signifies a change of perspective at all levels (and in all sectors of socioeconomic activity) in the face of nonlinear threats. The change was possible thanks to a comprehensive consideration of all socioeconomic, political issues through the prism of security. This led the EU to implement and adopt a pragmatic approach in its foreign policy. Potentially, this trend may be regarded as a step backwards from a policy built on values to pragmatism, though this mode can generate an adequate response to growing uncertainty and complex threats. It is impossible to foster the development of democracy where national security itself is in jeopardy.

The methods used by Russia were aimed at the weak link, which was the lack of trust between society and state institutions. By delegitimising state power, the aggressor garners public support for its military actions. This indicates the need to strengthen the national and societal resilience of the EU's neighbouring partners under external pressure.¹ On its part, Ukraine necessitates boosting its agency by extensively representing Ukrainian culture on the world stage through public diplomacy. We should actively offer the world our picture of the end of the war and the postbellum order, explaining and promoting the benefits of Ukraine's victory for the whole world. A strong Ukraine, as a sovereign subject of world politics, is much more important for Europe and the world than a weak and dependent one.

Thus, by studying the societal information resilience, we can draw a general conclusion about the agency of the country and its society. Agency, or subjectness, is the most critical category that connects the individual and society; in fact, this concept describes the ability of people to make decisions that form and transform their surroundings. The same applies to a state; its subjectness is the ability to conduct independent domestic and foreign policies, to protect

¹ Lebrun, M. (2018). *The Challenge of Projecting Resilience — the EU and the Advancement of the Rule of Law in Ukraine: An Analysis*. Tallinn, 11 p. [online] Available at: https://icds.ee/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/ICDS_Analysis-Challenge_of_Projecting_Resilience-Maxime_Lebrun-February_2018.pdf [in Eng.]

national values and interests. As a rule, decisions (including managerial ones) are made by a person out of input information, and therefore, the credibility of this information is crucial. If it is false, unreliable or distorted, the decisions will be ineffective and even death-defying. In this context, ensuring the information resilience of a person and society is substantial.

CHAPTER 4.

THE RELIGIOUS COMPONENT OF UKRAINE'S GEOPOLITICAL SUBJECTNESS IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES

4.1. The path to Tomos and its Role in Establishing Ukraine's Geopolitical Subjectness

The creation of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine has been one of the most important foundations for the geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine. As the experience of the formation of other local Churches shows, the solution to the issue of autocephaly goes far beyond confessional boundaries and is connected with political, ideological, economic and other problems of social life. The long absence of a single local Orthodox church in Ukraine undermined the country's international prestige. Until recently, only the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate could have been an indirect Ukrainian representative at the assemblies of the World Council of Churches. The Orthodox community and the rest of the world have identified the entire Ukrainian Orthodox Church as part of the Moscow Patriarchate; that is, the solution to this problem acquires civilisational significance.

The idea of creating the united Ukrainian local orthodox Church has gone through a long and difficult path of development. Its origins date back to the First National Liberation Struggle of the Ukrainians for their own statehood in 1917-1922 as the first attempt to establish an independent Ukrainian orthodox Church was made under the Second Hetmanate and the Directorate more than 100 years ago: in January 1919, the '*Law on the Supreme Authority in the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church*' was issued, laying the legal foundations for the autocephaly of a separate orthodox Church in Ukraine; for that purpose, even an embassy was established in Constantinople.¹ Unfortunately, the mission proceeded to be unsuccessful, while the law on autocephaly was never implemented due to internal and external circumstances.

Another attempt to institute the Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephalous Church was made by the First All-Ukrainian Church Council of 1921 in the times

¹Shvydkiy, V. (2005). The Embassy of Oleksandr Lototskyi and His Measures to Gain Recognition of the Independence of the Ukrainian Church (Constantinople, 1918–1920). *Problemy Istorii Ukrainy: Fakty, Sudzhennia, Poshuky (Problems of Ukrainian History: Facts, Judgments, Searches): An Interdepartmental Collection of Scientific Works*, Issue 14, pp. 33–44. [in Ukr.]

of the First National Liberation Struggle, confirming the autocephaly of the UAOC and consecrating bishops through the ordination of the priests themselves.¹ However, almost the entire membership of the UAOC was eliminated by the NKVD in the 1930s.

The process of creating autocephaly resumed with the establishment of Ukrainian independence, but Moscow had managed to block it for many years. Its efforts were facilitated by the 1990 split in the Ukrainian Orthodoxy into 2 branches (the UAOC and UOC), and, subsequently, into 3 branches in 1994 (the UAOC, UOC-MP and UOC-KP). At the same time, the ROC tried to secure special rights in Ukraine, which it has continued to consider its 'canonical territory'.

In early November 1991, the Local Council of the UOC was held in Kyiv, deciding on the need for full canonical independence to appeal to the leaders of the ROC with a request to grant the UOC the status of autocephaly. However, the ROC, categorically disposed not to lose its ideological and economic interests in Ukraine, offered such a mechanism of 'autocephaly', under which the UOC would have forever remained a part of the Moscow Patriarchate. Naturally, granting autocephaly status to a Ukrainian orthodox Church would seriously affect the balance of power in universal Orthodoxy: the ROC would lose a significant number of parishes on the territory of Ukraine, while the spiritual tradition of the Kyiv Metropolis has provided the Moscow Patriarchate with the authority of one of the oldest Orthodox churches throughout the Slavic world. That was why granting the UOC autocephaly did not correspond to the geoconfessional and geopolitical interests of the Russian power structures.

In the mid-1990s, a negotiation process began between the 3 branches of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine known as the UOC-MP, UOC-KP and UAOC. However, a number of obstacles arose on that path from the leadership of each of the Orthodox Churches existing in Ukraine, and the negotiation process often reached a dead end. In addition to the opposition of the ROC to the unification of all branches of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, the lack of effective agreements between the leaders of the Orthodox Churches on the issue of creating the single Orthodox Church of Ukraine was primarily due to their different visions of the principles of the unification process.

In contrast, the Head of the UOC-KP Patriarch Filaret outlined the conditions for the unification of Ukrainian Churches in March 2014, namely

¹Kagamlyk, S. (2000). The First All-Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephalous Council. *Ukrainoznavstvo (Ukrainian Studies): Annual Calendar - Year 2001*, pp. 107–110. [in Ukr.]

support for the integrity of the Ukrainian state and a course for Ukraine's European integration. The leadership of the UOC-MP, in referring to sociological research of one of its religious structures, claimed that such a union was possible only on their basis given that their Church had been the most representative one across Ukraine.¹ The model of that 'union' would consist in an appeal to the UOC-KP basically saying 'repent and join'.

Another 'stumbling block' on the path to the unification of the Churches was their understanding of canonicity. The leadership of each of them declared its canonicity, denying the truthfulness of the other Church. To showcase, in the Statement of the Bishops' Council of the UOC-KP of May 13, 2016 *'On Some Issues of the Canonical Position of the Kyiv Patriarchate and Ways of Overcoming Church Division'*, it was stated as it follows: 'In our state there is currently one truly Ukrainian Orthodox Church – it is the Kyiv Patriarchate that has been the canonical and historical successor of the ancient Orthodox Kyiv Metropolis of the Constantinople Patriarchate, which had existed until 1686. The religious organisation that calls itself the "Ukrainian Orthodox Church" is a non-canonical creation of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine, the fruit of the self-proclaimed Kharkiv pseudo-council of 1992 and the special services that organised and conducted it.'² However, that thesis was denied by the leadership of the UAOC, considering itself not only a canonical structure, but also the sole heir of the ancient Kyiv Metropolis. For its part, the UOC-MP, having appropriated a monopoly on the canonicity of Orthodoxy in Ukraine, positioned itself as the only legitimate and canonical Orthodox Church in Ukraine.³

At the end of 2017, a new opportunity appeared to resume the negotiation process between the UOC-KP and UOC-MP. It was connected with the fact that the Bishops' Council of the ROC, which was held throughout November, 30, 2017

¹*Patriarch Filaret Has Explained the Position of the UOC-KP Regarding Russia's Aggression and the Prospects and Conditions For the Unification of Ukrainian Churches*. [online] Available at: https://www.religion.in.ua/news/ukrainian_news/25204-patriarx-filaret-rozyasniv-poziciyu-upc-kp-shhodo-agresiyi-rosiyi-ta-perspektivi-j-umovi-obyednannya-ukrayinskix-cerkov.html (03.14.2014). [in Ukr.]

²*The Statement of the Council of Bishops of the UOC-KP dated May 13, 2016*. [online] Available at: <http://church.net.ua/detalno/uapc/korotka-replikashchodo-zvernennja-arkhijereiskogo-soboru-upc-kp-vid13-travnja-2016-roku-v-chastini-istorichnoji-takanonichnoji-spadkovosti.html> [in Ukr.]

³For more information, see: Kagamlyk, S. (2019). *The Activities of Ukrainian Churches in the Context of the Consolidation of Ukrainianism. Consolidation of Ukrainianism in the Postcolonial Era*. Kyiv, pp. 212–213.

- December, 2, 2017, made quite sensational decisions: it confirmed the independence of the UOC-MP administration and appealed to the Primate of the UOC-KP Patriarch Filaret with a proposal to end the hostility and reconcile. Regarding the prospects of the negotiation process with the UOC-MP, Archbishop Eustratius (the secular last name of Zoria) noted in December 2017: 'Unfortunately, despite certain opportunities, the dialogue on this issue has not progressed. After all, both sides have different visions of the future of the Church in Ukraine. For the Kyiv Patriarchate, the full administrative independence of the Church in Ukraine from foreign religious centers is of fundamental importance. For the Moscow Patriarchate, the only way for the Church to exist would be subordination of the Orthodox laity in Ukraine to the Russian Patriarchate. As long as the Moscow Patriarchate insists on such a model, the dialogue will not advance, because we, as the Kyiv Patriarchate, do not agree and will never do to come under the authority of Moscow.'¹

The agreements between the UOC-KP and UAOC have become more effective. In April 2015, the UOC-KP called on the UAOC to engage in dialogue and unite into the single Orthodox Church of Ukraine. The call was made in a statement by the press center of the Kyiv Patriarchate on the eve of the UAOC Bishops' Council declaring that the Kyiv Patriarchate supported the position of the locum tenens of the Primate's Throne of the UAOC Metropolitan Makarii of Lviv in regard to the urgency of church unification.² At the end of June 2018, as a result of the work of the relevant commissions of both Churches, a joint decision was made to hold a joint Unification Local Council. At the same time, the principled position of the Kyiv Patriarchate on the issue of church unity was declared, namely, 'the preservation of all actually existing structures of the UAOC such as dioceses, vicariates, deaneries.'

Realising the importance of the creation of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine for church and social unity, the leaders of independent Ukraine also made efforts to implement that idea. Ultimately, the goal was achieved by the fifth President Poroshenko of Ukraine, who achieved consent of the Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to grant the Ukrainian Orthodox Church a Tomos of

¹*'We will not agree to go under the rule of Moscow,' - the Spokesman of the UOC-KP Archbishop Yevstratii (Secular Last Name of Zoria) spoke on the Creation of the United Orthodox Church of Ukraine.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/ne-pogodimosya-piti-pid-vladu-moskvi-rechnik-upc-kp-pro-stvorenniya-yedinoji-pomisnoji-pravoslavnoji-cerkvi_n88475 (12.30.2017) [in Ukr.]

²*The UOC-KP Officially Called On the UAOC to Unite.* [online] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21c8asbwFs8> (04.23.2015). [in Ukr.]

autocephaly. The Head of State called on parliamentarians to support an official appeal to the Ecumenical Patriarch with a request to grant autocephaly to the Ukrainian Church. The document was signed by all bishops of the UOC-KP and UAOC as well as by 10 bishops of the UOC-MP. The episode convinced Bartholomew of the seriousness of the intentions of the Ukrainian state and the Church.¹

In his Statement in October 2018, the President of Ukraine emphasised: ‘The Tomos has been, in fact, another Act of Proclamation of Independence of Ukraine. The empire is losing one of the last levers of influence over its former colony.’² The announcement of the decision of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of October 14, 2018 to grant the Tomos on autocephaly to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was described by Petro Poroshenko as having significance on a civilisational scale: ‘The issue of the Tomos and autocephaly goes far beyond church life. This has been a question of our independence; of our national security; of our statehood; and of world geopolitics... the autocephaly is definitely a part of our state-owned pro-European and pro-Ukrainian strategy, which we have been consistently implementing for the past 4,5 years.’³

The procedure for granting autocephaly to the OCU was completed on January 6, 2019 with the act of presenting the Tomos by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Metropolitan Epiphanius of Kyiv and All Ukraine in Istanbul at the Patriarchal Church of St. George and with the divine liturgy jointly celebrated by the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and the leader of global Orthodoxy.

The things surrounding the granting of the Tomos have provoked fierce resistance from the Russian Orthodox Church and Russian government officials. Federation Council Speaker Valentina Matviyenko called the creation of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine a ‘crime.’ In order to stop the process of granting the Tomos to Ukraine, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church Patriarch

¹*The OCU Celebrates the Third Anniversary of Receiving the Tomos.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/pcu-vidznachaye-tretyu-richnicyu-otrimannya-tomosu_n124857 (01.06..2022). [in Ukr.]

²*Statement of the President of Ukraine in connection with the Decision of the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople regarding the UOC-KP dated October 11, 2018.* [online] Available at: <https://www.president.gov.ua/news/zayava-prezidenta-ukrayini-u-zvyazku-iz-rishennyam-sinodu-vs-50346> [in Ukr.]

³*Speech by the President of Ukraine at the Praying Meeting for Ukraine dated October 14, 2018.* [online] Available at: <https://www.president.gov.ua/news/vistup-prezidenta-ukrayini-pid-chas-uchasti-u-molitovnomu-za-50446> [in Ukr.]

Kirill later even arrived in Istanbul and tried to change the mind of the Ecumenical Patriarch for that purpose.¹

While assessing the situation of a year ago in December 2020 on the occasion of the second anniversary of the establishment of the single Orthodox Church of Ukraine, the Primate of the OCU Metropolitan Epiphanius stated that the recognition of the Ukrainian Church had changed not only the course of the history of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, but also expressed confidence that it would determine the course of the history of the entire Orthodoxy in the future. 'The future depends on our Church: the question is whether there will be peace or not in the Orthodox Church,' the First Hierarch emphasised.²

Thus, the granting of the Tomos of Autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine was a milestone of civilisational significance affecting the course of Orthodoxy not only in Ukraine, but also on a global scale. First of all, it meant official recognition of the OCU as one of the 15 local Orthodox Churches of the world. In addition, the accusation of non-canonicity against its bishops was lifted, as well as the anathema imposed personally on Patriarch Filaret. The creation of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine was a historical event that strengthened the foundation of our statehood and restored the long-standing connection with universal Orthodoxy. The Tomos put an end to the colonial state of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, initiated by the uncanonical act of 1686, and became one of the most important foundations for establishing the geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine.

4.2. Counteracting the influence of the Moscow Patriarchate as a guarantee of Ukraine's victory in the war against the Russian aggressor: ways and forms

Russia's military and ideological aggression has become a marker of the social identity and civilisational choice of Christian denominations and has completely declassified the position of the UOC-MP of being an organisation that formally positions itself as the only orthodox Church of the whole Ukraine (actually, only by the fact that it is located on the territory of the nation), but in

¹*Russia Calls the Creation of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine 'a Crime'*. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/u-rosiji-nazvali-zlochinom-stvorenniya-pomisnoji-ukrajinskoji-cerkvi_n95373. (12.25.2018). [in Ukr.]

²*Metropolitan Epiphanius: The Future of the Global Orthodoxy Depends on Our Church*. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/mitropolit-epifanij-vid-nashoyi-cerkvi-zalezhit-majbutnye-svitovogo-pravoslavya_n114359. (12.15.2020) [in Ukr.]

essence represents the interests of the ROC, since it adheres to its principles that Ukraine be within the sphere of Russian geoconfessional interests.

This has been evidenced by the dominance of the Russian language in worship, sermons, educational institutions, and the publishing sector of the UOC-MP. Regularly, the Church's activities do not meet the interests of the Ukrainian state; on the contrary, the theory of the 'Russian world' has been actively introduced into the Ukrainian religious and information space, the idea of the need to revive 'holy Russia' under the guise of the unity of the Orthodox faith. The UOC-MP opposes the real autocephaly of Ukrainian Orthodoxy and does not recognise the newly created structure of the OCU as canonical, hindering its position in various ways.

Since the beginning of the Russian invasion in 2014, the UOC-MP has not even formally condemned the Russian intervention or recognised Russia as an aggressor. Instead, repeating the words of the Moscow Patriarch, its clergy continued to insist on some kind of 'internecine warfare in Ukraine', thereby actually supporting the actions of the Russian invaders, acting in their favor.¹

It is worth noting that the position of the UOC-MP regarding the Russian military intervention has evolved to some extent. If at the beginning of the military confrontation in eastern Ukraine, its leaders mostly remained silent, trying to avoid public statements, then over time the UOC-MP developed an official position. In general terms, it amounted to calls for a ceasefire and support for its believers on both sides of the conflict. At the same time, there has been evidence that individual priests of the UOC-MP openly beat the drum for the Russian aggression and called for the violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine. The churches of the UOC-MP in Donbas served as weapons depots for Russian troops, and Russian terrorists openly served the Moscow Patriarchate.^{2,3} Individual religious communities under the jurisdiction of the UOC-MP not only

¹Pavlenko, P. (2016). Hybrid War on the Church Front (or the 'United Local Orthodox Chain' as an Operation of the UOC-MP). *Relihiina Svoboda na Perekhresty Epokh, Svobod i Kultur (Religious Freedom at the Crossroads of Eras, Liberties and Cultures)*. Scientific Yearbook, Issue 19, p. 137. [in Ukr.]

²Tymchuk, D. *The UOC-MP churches in the Donbas Have Served as Weapons Depots for Russian troops*. [online] Available at: <https://apostrophe.ua/ua/article/society/2016-07-04/hramy-upts-mp-na-donbasse-slujili-skladami-orujiya-dlya-rossijskih-voysk/5939> [Accessed 4 July 2016]. [in Ukr.]

³*Russian Terrorists in the Service of the Moscow Patriarchate*. [online] Available at: <https://informnapalm.org/ua/roshyski-terorysty-na-sluzhbi-v-moskovskogo-patriarhatu/> (07.11.2016). [in Ukr.]; See also: Kagamlyk, S. (2021). The Ukrainian Church in the Face of Modern Threats: Reaction to the Russian Military Aggression. *Almanac of Ukrainian Studies*, Issue 29, pp. 79-84. [in Ukr.]

supported separatism, but also provided shelter to Russian military personnel, ‘blessed’ them for the war with Ukraine, stored weapons, distributed separatist literature, etc.¹

A lot of eloquent testimony about the position of the UOC-MP regarding the Russian military aggression was contained in the appeal, or the petition, of the OCU regarding the transfer of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra to its jurisdiction.² The arguments in favor of that were a number of discrediting actions committed by the UOC-MP.

The apotheosis of the odious position of the UOC-MP as a Church of pro-Russian orientation was the statement of its Primate Metropolitan Onufrii (the secular last name of Berezovskyi) about the inadmissibility of divine services in the Ukrainian language³ as well as the demonstration of the leaders of the denomination at the time of honoring the names of the Heroes of Ukraine.⁴

The above reasonably confirms the position of the UOC-MP in the conditions of the Russian aggression as a structural part of the ROC and a powerful tool for implementing the policy and ideology of the ‘Russian world’ in the territory of Ukraine.

With the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war, affiliates of the UOC-MP became significantly polarised. On the one hand, part of the UOC-MP has retained its pro-Russian positions. For example, Metropolitan Lazar in Crimea, who from the very beginning of the occupation had been a consistent supporter of the Head of the Republic of Crimea Aksenov, also supported the full-scale invasion of Russian troops into Ukrainian lands. Metropolitan Iosif of Romny and Buryn visited Russia in the midst of the war in Ukraine and became one of

¹Vovk, D. (2016). Religious Freedom against the Background of the Ukrainian-Russian War: Some Legal Aspects. *Relihiina Svoboda na Perekhresty Epokh, Svobod i Kultur (Religious Freedom at the Crossroads of Eras, Liberties and Cultures)*. Scientific Yearbook, Issue 19, pp. 111-112. [in Ukr.]

²Electronic Petition No. 22/092966-en ‘To Terminate the Use of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate by Withdrawing from the Lease Agreement and Transferring the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra to the use of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine’. [online] Available at: <https://petition.president.gov.ua/petition/92966> (04.15.2020a). [in Ukr.]

³Metropolitan Onufrii Categorically Opposed the Use of the Ukrainian Language at the Religious Service. [online] Available at: http://ipress.ua/news/mytropolyt_onufriy_vystupyv_kategorichychno_proty_ukrainskoi_movy_v_bogosluzhinni_149842.html (12.30.2015). [in Ukr.]

⁴Moroz, V. (2016). To Kill the Dragon: Postcolonial Challenges for the Orthodox Church in Ukraine. *Relihiina Svoboda na Perekhresty Epokh, Svobod i Kultur (Religious Freedom at the Crossroads of Eras, Liberties and Cultures)*. Scientific Yearbook, Issue 19, p. 139-140. [in Ukr.]

Patriarch Kirill's trusted men. Social networks have seen photos where the Ukrainian Metropolitan prays together with the ministers of the ROC for the speedier mobilisation of Russian soldiers.¹

The current realities of Ukrainian church life prompt an active search for ways to counteract the leverage of the Moscow Patriarchate in general, and the activities of the UOC-MP religious organisation in particular, as an important factor and guarantee of Ukraine's victory in the war against the Russian aggressor. Let us name possible ways and forms of this counteraction implemented at the national, confessional and civil levels:

State legislation in the religious sphere. We mainly touch upon here the Law of Ukraine '*On the Protection of the Constitutional Order in the Sphere of Activities of Religious Organisations*' (No. 8371) adopted on August 20, 2024 and entered into force a month after its publication on September 23, 2024.² Immediately after the publication of the Law, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine began preparing secondary legislation, in accordance with which the draft law norm should come into force in nine months, empowering the State Service for Ethnopolitics and Freedom of Conscience to file a lawsuit with the court to terminate the activities of a religious organisation if the service has established its connection with the ROC.³

The adopted Law had been long-awaited; his project appeared on March 22, 2022.⁴ It is noteworthy that the leadership of the UOC-MP immediately declared its separation from the ROC, but very cautiously. In order to stop the schism of the Church and the increasingly frequent transitions of church communities to the OCU, the Council of the UOC-MP on May 27, 2022 adopted a decision on the so-called 'autonomy and independence' from the Russian church. However, the resolution of the Council did not condemn the position of

¹Gruzdiev, S. *High-profile Scandal Has Erupted At the UOC-MP: The Metropolitan Had Received a Russian Passport and Gone to Pray for the Military Mobilisation in the Russian Federation.* [online] Available at: <https://glavcom.ua/news/huchnij-skandal-v-upts-mp-mitropolit-otrimav-rosijskij-pasport-i-pojikhav-molitisja-za-mobilizatsiju-do-rosiji-880656.html> [Accessed 8 October 2022]. [in Ukr.]

²*The Law on the Prohibition of the Activities of Churches Associated with the Russian Orthodox Church Has Come Into Force.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/zakon-pro-zaboronudiyalnosti-povyazanih-iz-rpc-cerkov-nabuv-chinnosti_n151099 (09.23.2024a). [in Ukr.]

³*The Law on the Prohibition of the Activities of Churches Associated with the Russian Orthodox Church Has Come Into Force.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/zakon-pro-zaboronudiyalnosti-povyazanih-iz-rpc-cerkov-nabuv-chinnosti_n151099 (09.23.2024b). [in Ukr.]

⁴*The Draft Law of Ukraine No. 7204 'On the Ban of the Moscow Patriarchate on the Territory of Ukraine' dated March 22, 2022.* [online] Available at: <https://ips.ligazakon.net/document/JI07172A> [in Ukr.]

Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and all Russia regarding the war in Ukraine, but only contained a disagreement, while in regard to the OCU the resolution noted that the institution ‘only deepened the misunderstanding and led to physical confrontation.’¹ As Archbishop Yevstratii Zoria of the OCU put it, ‘it is actually a smokescreen aimed at satisfying very different groups.’² In fact, in the canonical sense, the status of the UOC has not changed, which was confirmed by the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnopolitics and Freedom of Conscience on January 27, 2023 by providing a religious expert examination of Statute on the Management of the UOC on the subject of the existence of a church-canonical connection with the Moscow Patriarchate.

Activities of the Security Service of Ukraine. The organisation reveals numerous facts of collaboration with the Russian Federation by clergy of the UOC-MP. In early December 2022, the SSU published a list of 10 main figures on the ‘church list’ of NSDCU sanctions, most of them being representatives of the UOC-MP or persons closely associated with the organisation. Among them are UOC cleric Vadym Novynskyi; Metropolitan of Vyshgorod and Chornobyl and Vicar of the Holy Dormition Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra Pavlo (the secular name and last name of Petro Lebid); Metropolitan of Simferopol and Crimea Lazar (the secular name and last name of Rostyslav Shvets), and others.³

In general, as the results of the SSU's activities indicate, 52 criminal cases were opened in 2022 alone, in which 55 clergymen of the UOC-MP were clearly mentioned (including 14 of the episcopal rank). As of February 23, 2023, the SSU was investigating almost 60 criminal proceedings against pro-Russian clergymen of the UOC-MP, more than 350 church buildings and 850 people underwent an

¹*The Resolution of the Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church dated May 27, 2022.* [online] Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/orthobuk/photos/a.573953583079625/1419710981837210/?type=3> [in Ukr.]

²*Archbishop of the OCU Yevstratii Zoria: The Participation of the OCU in the Assembly of the World Council of Churches Is an Incredible Breakthrough.* [online] Available at: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3585536-evstratij-zora-arhiepiscope-pcu.html> (10.04.2022). [in Ukr.]

³*The SSU Published a Catalogue of Individuals To Be Included in the ‘Church List’ of the NSDCU Sanctions.* [online] Available at: <https://armyinform.com.ua/2022/12/03/sbu-opublikuvala-perelik-osib-yaki-potrapyly-u-czerkovnyj-spysok-sankcij-rnbo/> (12.03.2022). [in Ukr.]

in-depth inspection. It was also established that illegal construction and other violations were being carried out on the territory of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra.¹

Interfaith dialogue between the OCU and the UOC-MP carried out both by the management and its individual representatives. In response to the fact that the UOC-MP did not distance itself from the ROC, the OCU and structures close to it are calling for restrictions on the activities of the UOC-MP and its unification with the OCU.

As a result of the joint actions of the OCU and the public in certain regions of Ukraine (importantly, in the eastern ones), there are trends towards unity between the OCU and the UOC-MP. The tendency was mentioned, in particular, by the Bishop of the OCU of Kherson and Kakhovka Borys Kharko in an interview on July 20, 2021. In his opinion, that was due to the fact that parishioners very often choose not the ‘canonical Church,’ but the shepherd they trust. In the words of Bishop Borys, ‘practically all parishes rally around the authority of a particular priest. Even more so since the mothers of some clergymen of the UOC-MP go to services with the priests of the OCU.’²

Evidently, a portion of the UOC-MP membership has been trying to clearly and unambiguously distance itself from the ROC. The tendency has been illustrated by the group led by archpriest of the Dnipropetrovsk eparchy Andrii Pinchuk, which has emerged within the UOC-MP and become one of the initiators of collecting signatures for an international church tribunal over Patriarch Kirill on April 18, 2022. In the petition, the Primate of the ROC was accused of preaching the doctrine of the ‘Russian world’ not corresponding with Orthodox teachings (therefore, it should be condemned as heresy) as well as approving the war against Ukraine and supporting Russian troops on the territory of Ukraine. As of April 2022, Pinchuk’s supporters have collected 430 signatures from the UOC-MP.³ At least 15 dioceses of the UOC-MP have already officially announced that they will stop commemorating the name of Patriarch Kirill during

¹Pogorilov, S. *The Media Have Reported that the UOC-MP Is Not Going to Leave the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, Filing a Lawsuit.* [online] Available at: <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2023/03/29/7395532/> [Accessed 29 March 2023]. [in Ukr.]

²*The Kherson Bishop of the UOC-MP Has Reported that There Is a Tendency towards Forming Unity between the OCU and the UOC-MP in the Oblast.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/hersonskij-yepiskop-povidomiv-shcho-v-regioni-ye-tendenciyyi-do-yednostimizh-pcu-ta-upc-mp_n120139 (07.20.2021). [in Ukr.]

³*Priests of the UOC-MP Have Collected Almost Half a Thousand Signatures For a Church Tribunal over Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Kirill.* [online] Available at: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-kyrylo-tserkovnyi-trybunal/31808350.html> (04.18.2022). [in Ukr.]

worship services. In many other dioceses, the ruling bishops have given verbal permission to the clergy not to commemorate the name of Patriarch Kirill.

It is also known that some priests of the UOC-MP serve as chaplains in the Armed Forces of Ukraine or provide them with other support. For example, priests and laypeople of the UOC-MP donated blood for the needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on October 7, 2022 at the Rivne Oblast Blood Service Center; Archbishop Pymen of Rivne and Ostroh, in particular, shared his blood. As reported by the Information and Educational Department of the UOC-MP, priests and laypeople donated blood for Ukrainian soldiers within the campaign 'The UOC Thanks the Armed Forces of Ukraine' dedicated to the Defenders Day of Ukraine.¹

Even more telling and resonant can be considered the statement of 29 hierarchs of the UOC-MP, who condemned the dismissal by the Synod of the ROC of UOC hierarchs in the temporarily occupied territories.²

The above allows us to state that local branches of the UOC-MP, including its highest episcopal rank, are increasingly aware of the inexpediency or even impossibility of their presence in a pro-Moscow milieu. At the same time, the dialogue between the OCU and the UOC-MP at the leadership level has not been successful enough; for its part, the OCU has been doing everything possible to ensure that the dialogue takes place. Yet another call for negotiations with the UOC-MP led by its Primate Metropolitan Onufrii (the secular last name of Berezovskyi), which the OCU published on August 15, 2024, remained unanswered.³

The search for ways to consolidate Ukrainian Orthodoxy has been facilitated by the position of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. On August 24, 2021, Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, in a speech on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of Ukraine's independence, called on the clergy of the UOC-MP to reconsider their position: 'We invite at this sacred time and call on from the

¹*Priests and Laymen of the UOC-MP in Rivne Have Donated Blood for the Needs of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.* [online] Available at:https://risu.ua/u-rivnomu-svyashcheniki-ta-miryani-upc-mp-zdadi-krov-na-potrebi-zsu_n132934 (10.09.2022). [in Ukr.]

²*In Their Joint Statement, 29 High Priests of the UOC-MP Have Condemned the Dismissal of Hierarchs on the T.O.T. by the Synod of the ROC.* [online] Available at:https://risu.ua/29-arhiyereyiv-upc-mp-zasudili-zvilnennya-sinodom-rpc-yihnih-yerarhiv-na-tot---zayava_n151897 (11.01.2024). [in Ukr.]

³*The OCU Is Disappointed by the Absence of Response From the Hierarchs of the UOC-MP to the Recent Call To Start a Dialogue.* [online] Available at:https://risu.ua/u-pcu-rozcharovani-vidsutnistyu-reakciyi-yerarhiv-upc-mp-na-zaklik-rozpochati-dialog_n152027 (11.07.2024). [in Ukr.]

bottom of our hearts our brothers in Christ, the hierarchs in this country, their clergy and believers who do not communicate with us in church, to reconsider their position and promote peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding here between people and Orthodox Christians, sharing with love their originality for the sake of reconciliation and establishing tolerance we all need.’¹

Counteraction to the ideology of the ‘Russian world’ by the church and secular public. In this context, we talk here about, above all, the joint actions of the OCU and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (the abbreviated version of UGCC). Nationally minded Ukrainian Churches have long and actively debunked the theory of the ‘Russian world’ as aggressive and anti-Ukrainian. An alternative way to the spread of the ‘Russian world’, in the belief of the Primate of the UGCC Sviatoslav (the secular last name of Shevchuk), is ‘to build one’s own Ukrainian world, i.e. a society where Ukrainian values and Ukrainian visions prevail, to constructively change post-Soviet stereotypes and forms of interaction between people and social structures.’²

In the light of the confrontation with the impacts made by the Moscow Patriarchate, joint actions of the Ukrainian Orthodox and Greek Catholic Churches aimed at consolidating the faithful around national spiritual ideas are important. A telling example of this was the unified position of the leaders of both confessions expressed in 2010, when, on the occasion of the 1000th anniversary of the Kyiv-Sophia Cathedral, the question of transferring the temple to them for holding divine services arose at the initiative of the UOC-MP.

In the context of establishing Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness in the religious sphere and countering the ideology of the ‘Russian world’, actions by the international community, especially at the highest level, are important. The first publication has just appeared in the USA that positively interprets the ban on the UOC-MP, more explicitly the article by Gillian Kay Melchior in the American magazine *The Wall Street Journal* justifying the actions of Ukrainian lawmakers.³

It is noteworthy that the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution ‘*The Death of Alexei Navalny and the Need to Counter the*

¹Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew Called On the UOC-MP to Reconsider Its Position. [online] Available at:https://risu.ua/patriarh-varfolomij-zaklikav-upc-mp-pereglyanuti-svoyu-poziciyu_n121227 (08.24.2021). [in Ukr.]

²Filipovych, L. *Religious Security in Ukraine: Threats and Ways To Overcome Them*. [online] Available at:https://risu.ua/religiyna-bezpeka-v-ukrajini-zagrozi-i-shlyahi-jih-podolannya_n97436 [Accessed 11 April 2019a]. [in Ukr.]

³*The Wall Street Journal: Is Religious Freedom in Ukraine ‘Under Threat’?* [online] Available at:https://www.religion.in.ua/zmi/foreign_zmi/50954-the-wall-street-journal-chi-ye-religijna-svoboda-v-ukrajini-pid-zagrozoyu.html (03.24.2024). [in Ukr.]

Totalitarian Regime of Vladimir Putin and His War on Democracy’ under the pressure of the international community in April 2024. Importantly, the document condemned the doctrine of the ‘Russian world’ and named the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church and personally Patriarch Kirill of Moscow as accomplices in the crimes of the Putin regime.¹

The media. The information sources have definitely played an important role in overcoming the controlling position of the Moscow Patriarchate. Characterising them as a kind of tuning forks of public sentiment, the well-known researcher and religious scholar L. Filipovych noted that ‘the media are called upon to inform Ukrainian society in a timely, objective, and responsible manner, without creating fake information, without manipulating information, without substituting concepts, without programming people, but rather respecting their freedom and right to truthful information. The media should work not on centrifugal, but on centripetal processes in Ukrainian society as well as on its solidarity and consolidation since there are many challenges, the number of which only growing every year.’²

A separate and perhaps the most important factor in the opposition of both ROC and UOC-MP has been the development of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, deserving special attention.³

Therefore, Russia's military and ideological aggression has clearly revealed the position of the UOC-MP as a structural part of the ROC and a powerful tool for implementing the policy and ideology of the ‘Russian world’ in the territories of Ukraine. The realities of Ukrainian church life encourage an active search for ways to counteract the leverage of the Moscow Patriarchate. In a practical sense, effective means of its implementation can be: state legislation in the religious sphere; the activities of the Security Service of Ukraine; interfaith dialogue between the OCU and the UOC-MP; opposition to the ideology of the ‘Russian world’ by the church and secular public, primarily joint actions of the OCU and the UGCC in opposing the Moscow Patriarchate; strengthening the role of the media in overcoming religious threats.

¹*From Communion to Abetment*. [online] Available at: https://df.news/2024/04/21/vid-spivprychastia-do-spivuchasti/#google_vignette (04.21.2024). [in Ukr.]

²Filipovych, L. *Religious Security in Ukraine: Threats and Ways To Overcome Them*. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/religiyna-bezpeka-v-ukrajini-zagrozi-i-shlyahi-jih-podolannya_n97436 [Accessed 11 April 2019b]. [in Ukr.]; See also: Kagamlyk, S. (2020). Interfaith Confrontation in Modern Ukraine: Forms of Manifestation and Ways of Counteraction. *Almanac of Ukrainian Studies*, Issue 27, pp. 95–100. [in Ukr.]

³See: *Building the Orthodox Church of Ukraine in the Face of Global Challenges*.

4.3. Building the Orthodox Church of Ukraine in the face of global challenges

The emergence of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine is a significant factor in overcoming the Russian neo-imperial reach in the Ukrainian society and the current conflict processes within Ukrainian Orthodoxy. Obviously, the newly formed independent Orthodox Church of Ukraine faces difficult external and internal challenges, which require ensuring internal unity, eliminating the division between the differing Orthodox orientation to either Kyiv or Moscow, and affirming the values of open European Christianity.

The growth of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine can be considered in both internal, Ukrainian, and external, international, contexts. The internal Ukrainian context of the emergence of the OCU is clearly evidenced by transitions of religious communities of the UOC-MP under the subordination of the former. According to the State Policy Agency, from 2018 to mid-2024, more than 1.5 thousand religious communities transferred from the UOC-MP to the OCU. In particular, since 2018, when the OCU was created, the subordination has been changed by the following numbers of religious communities formerly registered with the Moscow Patriarchate: in 2018 – 2; in 2019 - 319; in 2020 – 30; in 2021 – 25; in 2022 – 496; in 2023 – 471; 2024 – 159 communities and counting.¹ In 2022–2024, 1,127 parishes joined the OCU (as of August 2024).² In other words, the transition of communities began especially actively with the beginning of the all-out Russian invasion, subsequently fully revealing the essence of the UOC-MP as an adherent of the ROC and an aggressor state.

Communities are most actively switching to the OCU in the central and western parts of Ukraine, including the Kyiv, Khmelnytskyi, Vinnytsia oblasts and the Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopil oblasts. The progress is evidenced by certain statistics: as of December 2024, more than 350 parishes in the Khmelnytskyi oblast changed their pro-Russian denomination to the OCU.³ That was undoubtedly facilitated by the decision of the Khmelnytskyi Oblast Council

¹*The DESS Report Says that 1.5 Thousand Religious Communities Have Transferred from the UOC to the OCU since 2018.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/derzhnopolitiki-z-2018-roku-z-upc-do-pcu-perejshlo-15-tis-religijnih-gromad_n150573 (08.29.2024). [in Ukr.]

²*The War Has Seen More than a Thousand Parishes Joining the OCU.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/pid-chas-vijni-do-pcu-priyednalosya-ponad-tisyacha-parafij_n150275 (08.16.2024). [in Ukr.]

³*Two More Parishes of the Moscow Patriarchate Have Joined the OCU in the Khmelnytskyi Oblast.* [online] Available at: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-regions/3798516-nahmelnicini-do-pcu-perejsli-se-dvi-parafii-mospatriarhatu.html> (12.11.2023). [in Ukr.]

to ban the activities of the UOC-MP in the oblast, adopted in April 2023.¹ In the Chernihiv oblast, 28 communities of the UOC-MP joined the OCU after the outbreak of the war.² In the Zhytomyr oblast, 13 religious communities have joined the OCU since the beginning of 2024.³ As of October 2024, 94 religious communities in the Cherkasy oblast have exercised the right to change their subordination from the Moscow Patriarchate to the OCU.⁴ Since the beginning of 2024, 6 votes have been held in the Chernivtsi oblast on the transition from subordination of the UOC-MP to the OCU, 5 communities have already formalised the official transition.⁵

The analysis of the transitions of religious communities from the UOC-MP to the OCU allowed us to identify certain features of this process. It is especially important when it concerns the main cathedral churches. On April 5, 2023, the community of the St. George Cathedral of the Lviv Eparchy of the UOC-MP voted for the transition to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. The process was accompanied by minor clashes and disputes. After the vote, the Dean of the Lviv Eparchy of the OCU Fr. Oleg Drevniak performed a divine service in the Ukrainian language with the co-service of the clergy of the eparchy.⁶

Information provided by the media indicates that the prerequisite for the transitions could have been the decisions of local councils to prohibit the UOC-MP from owning churches and land plots. For instance, an extraordinary session of the Khmelnytskyi City Council, held in April 2023, adopted a unanimous decision to terminate the right to use land plots used by the UOC-MP. The

¹*The Khmelnytskyi Oblast Council Banned the Activities of the UOC-MP within the Oblast.* [online] Available at: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-regions/3691444-hmelnicka-oblrada-zaboronila-dialnist-upc-mp-na-teritorii-oblasti.html> (04.04.2023a). [in Ukr.]

²*28 Communities of the UOC-MP in the Chernihiv Oblast Have Joined the OCU During the War.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/na-chernigivshchini-pid-chas-vijni-do-pcu-priyednalosya-28-gromad-upc-mp_n151958 (11.04.2024). [in Ukr.]

³*Another Religious Community in the Zhytomyr Oblast alongside the Rector Have Joined the OCU.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/shche-odna-religijna-gromada-na-zhitomirshchini-razom-iz-nastoyatelem-perejshla-do-pcu_n151428 (10.09.24a). [in Ukr.]

⁴*A Fight Has Broke Out over the Church's Affiliation between believers of the UOC-MP and ones of the OCU in the City of Cherkasy. It Has Been Reported that There Are Victims.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/u-cherkasah-mizh-viryanami-upc-mp-ta-pcu-stalasya-bijka-zahram-ye-postrazhdali_n151607 (10.17.2024a). [in Ukr.]

⁵*New Five Religious Communities Joined the OCU In Bukovyna This Year.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/na-bukovini-cogorich-do-pcu-priyednalosya-pyat-religijnih-gromad_n151676 (10.21.2024). [in Ukr.]

⁶*Lviv's Main Temple of the UOC-MP Has Been Transferred to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine: Residents Have Been Warned about Possible Provocations.* [online] Available at: <https://prm.ua/u-lvovi-holovnyy-khram-upts-mp-pereyshov-do-pravoslavnoi-tserkvy-ukrainy-mistian-poperedzhaiut-pro-mozhlyvi-provokatsii/> (04.05.2023). [in Ukr.]

immediate reason for that was the scandalous beating of a soldier of the Armed Forces of Ukraine by clergymen of the UOC-MP near the Holy Intercession Cathedral. The citizens of Khmelnytskyi held a protest action near the cathedral, and later held a meeting at which they voted for the transition of the temple to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.¹

In some cases, the initiative for the transition could belong to a specific priest who earned the trust and authority of the faithful, but it has happened more often the other way around, where the community itself is pushing its pastor to take a decisive step; the transition could take place without his consent as well. For example, the rector of the parishes in the villages of Novychi and Zholudky in the Khmelnytskyi oblast, previously subordinated to the UOC of the Moscow Patriarchate, did not support the parishioners' decision to switch to the OCU.²

In the Zhytomyr oblast, since the beginning of 2024, only 4 out of 13 religious communities have joined the OCU together with their abbots.³ In particular, on November 10, 2024, the faithful of the St. Nicholas parish held a meeting in the village of Syngaivka in Berdychiv raion, at which they decided to leave the Moscow Patriarchate and join the Zhytomyr-Polish eparchy of the OCU. In an official request addressed to the ruling Archbishop Volodymyr, as he reported himself, 'they complained to me about the priest. Because they have been asking me to let him go over to the bosom of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine for 3 years, since the war has been going on. The priest allegedly promised several times, but did not take any concrete steps. Therefore, people were so confused in the third year of the war that they could no longer stand it.'⁴

For obvious reasons, the transitions to the OCU in the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine are taking place much more slowly. In particular, as of the beginning of May 2024, only 2 communities in the Odessa oblast had transitioned to the OCU, while another 414 remained under the Moscow Patriarchate. At the

¹Reiter, Yu. *The UOC-MP in the City of Khmelnytskyi Has Been Deprived of the Right to Use 13 Land Plots*. [online] Available at: <https://weukraine.tv/novyny/u-hmelnytskomu-upts-mp-pozbavyly-prava-na-korystuvannya-13-zemelnymy-dilyankamy/> [Accessed 4 April 2023]. [in Ukr.]

²*The Khmelnytskyi Oblast Council Banned the Activities of the UOC-MP within the Oblast*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-regions/3691444-hmelnicka-oblrada-zaboronila-dialnist-upc-mp-na-teritorii-oblasti.html> (04.04.2023b). [in Ukr.]

³*Another Religious Community in the Zhytomyr Oblast alongside the Rector Have Joined the OCU*. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/shche-odna-religijna-gromada-na-zhitomirshchini-razom-iz-nastoyatelem-perejshla-do-pcu_n151428 (10.09.24b). [in Ukr.]

⁴*The UOC-MP Community in the Zhytomyr Oblast Has Transferred to the OCU*. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/na-zhitomirshchini-gromada-upc-mp-perejshla-do-pcu_n152159 (11.13.2024). [in Ukr.]

same time, it is noteworthy that such a decision was made by the community together with the abbot. In particular, the rector of the religious community in the village of Kontseba Fr. Viacheslav informed Archbishop Athanasius of Odessa and Baltsk of his desire to transition to the OCU together with the community.¹

The parish in the village of Oleksiivka in Nikopol raion of the Dnipropetrovsk oblast has also supported the decision of its abbot Mykola Chemerys to join the OCU. As reported by the media, Fr. Mykola had taken an active part in defending the country against Russia. It was the fight against the ‘Russian horde’ that became the catalyst for his adoption of such an important decision.²

It is worth noting that there have been misunderstandings or even distortions in the process of transitions of religious communities. In September 2022, the Deputy Head of the Main Directorate of the SSU in Kyiv and in the Kyiv Oblast Yu.Palahniuk sent a letter to the Darnytsia District State Administration, stating that the Security Service sees the transitions of communities from the UOC to the OCU as ‘threats to national security.’ For interfering in the process of transition of communities from the UOC to the OCU, Yu. Palahniuk was removed from his duties.³

The process of transition of religious communities to the OCU also encountered obstacles of a legal nature. In early April 2023, the Head of the Ternopil OVA M. Holovko reported that the Minister of Justice was deliberately blocking the transition of Ternopil religious communities from the UOC-MP to the OCU. As of now, more than 40 communities in the Ternopil oblast have already transitioned to the OCU, but the state registrar cannot legalise their transition. ‘This is nonsense, especially for our oblast!’ – Holovko added.⁴

¹*Previously Registered with the Moscow Patriarchate Community in the Odessa Oblast Has Joined the OCU, Accompanied by the Priest.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/na-odeshchini-religijna-gromada-razom-zi-svyashchenikom-perejshla-do-pcu_n151900 (11.01.2024). [in Ukr.]

²*A Priest of the Moscow Patriarchate in the Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Has Converted to the OCU.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/na-dnipropetrovshchini-svyashchenik-moskovskogo-patriarhatu-perejshov-do-pcu_n151751 (10.25.2024). [in Ukr.]

³*The Deputy Head of the SSU Department in the Kyiv Oblast Has Been Suspended for Interfering in the Process of Religious Communities' Transition from the UOC to the OCU.* [online] Available at: https://lb.ua/news/2022/09/16/529655_zastupnika_nachalnika_upravlinnya.html (09.16.2022). [in Ukr.]

⁴*The Ternopil Oblast Council Has Called For the Return of the Pochaiv Lavra to State Ownership and the Dismissal of the Minister of Justice of Ukraine.* [online] Available at: <https://prm.ua/ternopilska-oblrada-zaklykala-povernuty-pochaivsku-lavru-u-vlasnist-derzhavy-i-zvilnyty-ministra-iustytzii/> (04.05.2023). [in Ukr.]

In some regions of Ukraine, the process of transition of religious communities has become particularly acute. Just as an example, a conflict occurred between believers of the UOC-MP and the OCU near the Holy Assumption Cathedral in Kriukiv, the Poltava oblast, later ending with the sealing of the church.¹ Then, in October 2024, a fight broke out between representatives of the OCU and the UOC-MP due to the transfer of one of the largest Orthodox churches in Ukraine, namely St. Michael's Cathedral in Cherkasy, to the OCU. Commenting on those events as a witness, military chaplain Fr. Nazarii told *Suspilne (Societal)* why, in his opinion, it was important that the church be transferred to the OCU: 'The Russian Orthodox Church occupied the territory of St. Michael's Cathedral, while hypocritically calling itself the Ukrainian Church. In fact, we have heard of their services, where they commemorate Patriarch Kirill and do not pray for the Ukrainian army. The cathedral is the same one built by the people of Cherkasy and, among others, by Bishop Sophrony, who was a great patriot who, unfortunately, did not live to see the transferring of the facility to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine as he patiently waited for that; at last, it has done the transfer today. We indeed must liberate all of Ukraine from Russian occupation and spiritual Russian occupation.'²

An important factor in the authority of the OCU and the expansion of its influence was the transfer of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra to its disposal, which became a truly historical event. Let us briefly outline the prerequisites of that process.

It is worth noting that the OCU petitioned for the transfer of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra to its jurisdiction back in April 2020, motivating the decision by the fact that 'it is quite fair that the spiritual sanctuary should be used by the Orthodox denomination recognised by the majority of the Orthodox world as the autocephalous Orthodox Church on the territory of Ukraine.'³ However, the petition did not receive the necessary resolution.

¹*The Conflict between the Faithful of the UOC-MP and the One of the OCU Near the Holy Dormition Cathedral in the Poltava Oblast Has Ended With the Sealing of the Church.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/konflikt-mizh-virnimi-upc-mp-ta-pcu-bilya-svyato-uspenskogo-soboru-na-poltavshchini-zavershivsyia-opechatannyam-cerkvi_n151647 (10.20.2024). [in Ukr.]

²*A Fight Has Broke Out over the Church's Affiliation between believers of the UOC-MP and ones of the OCU in the City of Cherkasy. It Has Been Reported that There Are Victims.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/u-cherkasah-mizh-viryanami-upc-mp-ta-pcu-stalasya-bijka-za-hram-ye-postrazhdali_n151607 (10.17.2024b). [in Ukr.]

³*Electronic Petition No. 22/092966-en 'To Terminate the Use of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate by Withdrawing from the Lease Agreement and Transferring the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra to the use of the Orthodox Church of*

In June 2022, the Primate of the OCU Epiphanius addressed the ex-Prime Minister of Ukraine Denys Shmyhal noting that the leadership of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra within the Moscow Patriarchate had supported and continued to promote the ideology of the 'Russian world' over the past three decades, then becoming a 'justification' for the open aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine; he added that the vicegerent of the Lavra Pavlo (the secular last name of Lebid) had personally been awarded the Order of Friendship of Peoples of the Russian Federation by Putin. In that regard, the question was raised as one requiring an urgent resolution of the issue about providing one of the temples on the territory of the Upper Lavra, which had actually been not used for permanent services (the Annunciation Church in the former Metropolitan Palaces, The Gateway Church of All Saints or any other building in the Upper Lavra), but for the performance of regular services of the Holy Dormition Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra of the OCU. The letter noted that 'the monopoly of the Moscow Patriarchate monastery on divine services in the Lavra has not found any support by the majority of Orthodox in Ukraine and Ukrainian society.'¹

Happenings of recent years have urged a resolution of the issue of transferring the entire Kyiv Pechersk Lavra to the jurisdiction of the OCU since the parish became an environment to produce collaborators and an instrument of significant impact of the enemy state (particularly, the vicegerent of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra Metropolitan Pavel of Vyshgorod and Chornobyl was detained at the border in early October 2022 as he had tried to take out valuable church items;² also, in mid-November 2022, the SSU opened a criminal case regarding the glorification of Russia in the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra)³. At the same time, the NSDCU initiated an inspection of the legality of the presence of the Moscow Patriarchate's Local Church in the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra. According to the results of such an inspection, it was established that illegal construction and other

Ukraine'. [online] Available at:<https://petition.president.gov.ua/petition/92966> (04.15.2020b). [in Ukr.]

¹*Metropolitan Epiphanius Has Appealed to the Prime Minister of Ukraine with a Request to Transfer One of the Temples of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra under the OCU.* [online] Available at:<https://df.news/2022/06/23/mytropolyt-epifanij-zvernuvsia-do-prem-ier-ministra-z-prokhanniam-peredaty-ptsu-odyn-z-khramiv-kyievo-pecherskoi-lavry/> (06.24.2022). [in Ukr.]

²*The Head of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra Has Been Detained On the Border: Metropolitan Pavlo Had Tried to Take Out Valuable Church Items.* [online] Available at:<https://news.bigmir.net/ua/capital/6881145-rukovoditelya-kievo-pecherskoj-lavry-zaderzhali-na-granitse-smi> (10.02.2022). [in Ukr.]

³*The SSU Has Opened a Criminal Case Regarding the Glorification of Russia in the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra.* [online] Available at:<https://konkurent.ua/publication/106963/sbu-vidkrila-kriminal-schodo-proslavlyannya-rosii-u-kievo-pecherskiy-lavri/> (11.15.2022). [in Ukr.]

violations were being carried out on the territory of the monastery complex, having been leased to the UOC-MP since the 1980s of the last century. As a result, the evidence became the basis for terminating the lease agreement from March 29, 2023.¹

However, the leadership of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, which had annually brought tens of millions of funds to the UOC-MP, refused to leave the monastery and sought various ways to avoid eviction; the leaders of the UOC-MP declared that they would not leave the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, threatening ‘the beginning of the apocalypse’ and called on the supporters of their church to ‘stand firm and unshakable in the faith.’² The clergy of the Moscow church believed that they were restoring and rebuilding the Lavra facilities, which they had rented since 1988; the authorities, on the contrary, were trying to ‘comprehensively intimidate them, persuade them to some kind of “compromise” and, as a result, simply destroy them.’³

After a long and tense process of liberating the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra from the clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Orthodox Church of Ukraine received part of the religious buildings of the Upper Lavra. A former member of the Spiritual Council of the Lavra within the UOC-MP Archimandrite Avraamii Lotysh was appointed the new vicar of the Lavra within the OCU, currently performing these functions.

The international context of the development of the OCU has taken the form of its global recognition. Objectively, the first to officially recognise the OCU was the Ecumenical Patriarchate, whose Primate Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople granted Ukraine a Tomos of Autocephaly in January 2019. In the same year of 2019, the OCU was recognised by the Patriarchate of Alexandria and the Orthodox Church of Greece. In November 2020, the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus adopted a decision to recognise the autocephaly of

¹Roshchina, O. *The National Preserve ‘Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra’ Cancels the 2013 Agreement with the Monastery Belonging to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (of the Moscow Patriarchate) On the Free Use of Religious Buildings and Other Property, Set to Be Invalid from March 29 Onwards.* [online] Available at: <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2023/03/10/7392897/> [Accessed 10 March 2023]. [in Ukr.]

²*The UOC-MP Have Stated that They Will Not Leave the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, Threatening with ‘the Beginning of the Apocalypse’.* [online] Available at: <https://prm.ua/v-upts-mp-zaiavyly-shcho-ne-pidut-z-kyievo-pecherskoi-lavry-pryhozyvshy-pochatkom-apokalipsysu/> (03.13.2023). [in Ukr.]

³*The UOC-MP Has Refused to Leave the Lavra in Kyiv.* [online] Available at: <https://prm.ua/upts-mp-vidmovylas-pokynuty-lavru/> (03.23.2023). [in Ukr.]

the OCU. Currently, the number is a third of all 15 Orthodox Churches existing in the world, including the OCU itself.

At the same time, a number of other Orthodox Churches have not yet made a final decision on the OCU or are close to making the decision. It is known that the Romanian Orthodox Church de facto recognised the OCU during services on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the enthronement of Patriarch Bartholomew in October 2021.¹ The OCU received partial recognition from the Georgian Orthodox Church: in March 2022, 13 of its bishops declared their public support for the OCU.² Also, the Bulgarian Church has demonstrated its openness to dialogue this summer. As Metropolitan Yevstratii of Bila Tserkva (the secular last name of Zoria) expressed in a comment to *Religiina Pravda (Truth In Religion)* on June 18, 2024, the recent steps of the Bulgarian hierarchs indicate the openness of the Bulgarian Church to communication with the OCU since the Bulgarian Church has officially formed its synodal commission to study the Ukrainian issue.³

In his interview with the journalist of Radio Liberty, the Primate of the OCU Metropolitan Epiphany has highlighted that the process of recognition of the OCU by other local Orthodox churches had slowed down due to the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation and to the intrusions of Russian propaganda. In his opinion, some local churches are probably waiting to see when and with whose victory the war will end.⁴

In the context of the growing role of the OCU for the geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine, it is worth recalling its representation at the assembly of the World Council of Churches in October 2022. The chairman of the Ukrainian Church delegation Archbishop of the OCU Yevstratii Zoria afterwards called that session ‘an incredible breakthrough’, which had in fact become ‘a presentation of

¹Kasian, V. *The Romanian Orthodox Church Has De Facto Recognised the OCU*. [online] Available at: https://lb.ua/society/2021/10/22/496855_rumunska_pravoslavna_tserkva.html [Accessed 22 October 2021]. [in Ukr.]

²13 Bishops of the Georgian Church Have Declared Their Support for the Recognition of the OCU. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/13-arhiyereyiv-gruzinskoyi-cerkvi-vidkrito-pidtrimali-viznannya-pcu_n127830 (03.31.2022). [in Ukr.]

³Metropolitan Yevstratii (secular last name of Zoria): *The Bulgarian Church Is Open to Recognising the OCU*. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/bolgarska-cerkva-vidkrita-dotogo-shchob-viznati-pcu---mitropolit-yevstratij-zorya_n149024#goog_rewarded (06.18.2024). [in Ukr.]

⁴Huliichuk, D. *Why Local Churches Have Mostly Not Recognised the OCU: Epiphanius Gave a Reason in regard to Such a Situation*. [online] Available at: <https://tsn.ua/ukrayina/chomubilshist-pomisnih-cerkov-dosi-ne-viznayut-pcu-epifaniy-poyasniv-2572392.html> [Accessed 5 May 2024]. [in Ukr.]

Ukrainian autocephaly to almost the entire Christian community of the world.’¹ This is all the more important because a resolution condemning the Russian aggression was adopted at the meeting. That is, we can talk about both the expansion of the influence of the newly created local Ukrainian Church and the growth of support for Ukraine in the war with Russia.

‘The influence of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine has been improving, its voice is more audible,’ said Daniel Galadza, a lecturer at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, in response to a question by a Voice of America correspondent Natalia Churikova, who was monitoring the progress of the conference organised in January 2023 by the International Orthodox Theological Association in Greece. As a part of the mega-event bringing together about 400 Orthodox theologians from 44 countries around the world, the problems of Ukrainian Orthodoxy were also discussed, in particular the situation of the OCU and the UOC-MP. Some participants in the conference argued that the war between Russia and Ukraine, with both being the two centers of Orthodoxy in the world, did not become a reason for uniting the Orthodox world against the war. At the same time, it is noteworthy that a representative of the UOC of the Moscow Patriarchate, whose name was not mentioned in the report, advocated the right of the Ukrainians to self-defense in a discussion with ‘Orthodox pacifists’ from Greece.²

The strengthening of the positions of the OCU is facilitated by the support of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. On August 24, 2021, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who had been invited to the celebration of the 30th anniversary of Ukraine's independence, congratulated Ukraine in his speech at St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv for being the country where the largest number of Orthodox people had lived and the youngest Orthodox Church had been created, namely the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.³ In that regard, Epiphanius said that Patriarch

¹*The Archbishop of the OCU Yevstratii Zoria: The Participation of the OCU At the Assembly of the World Council of Churches Has Been an Incredible Breakthrough.* [online] Available at: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3585536-evstratij-zora-arhiepiscope-pcu.html> (10.04.2022) [in Ukr.]

²Churikova, N. *The Influence of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine Is Growing, Its Words Are Heard More Often, Theologian Daniil Galadza Says.* [online] Available at: <https://ukrainian.voanews.com/a/6924175.html> [Accessed 19 January 2023]. [in Ukr.]

³*The Constantinople Patriarch Bartholomew Has Visited the Lastborn Orthodox Church but the Largest Orthodox Country in the World.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/patriarh-varfolomij-vidvidav-najmolodshu-cerkvu-ta-najbilshu-u-sviti-pravoslavnu-krayinu---religiyeznavec_n121380 (08.28.2021). [in Ukr.]

Bartholomew had given the OCU an impetus for new achievements with his arrival.¹

It is noteworthy that when applying to the Ecumenical Patriarchate with a request for autocephaly, the Church of North Macedonia set a condition, namely recognition of the OCU. As it was claimed by the professor of canon law Metropolitan Gregory Papathomas of Peristeri at the meeting with clergy and theologians, the Ecumenical Patriarchate would not grant autocephaly to the Church of North Macedonia until it entered into communion with the OCU. The hierarch also proposed the Ecumenical Patriarchate to cancel the autocephaly of the Russian Church for 5 years in resolving the issue of the ROC.²

The culmination of the rise of the OCU, bearing great importance for both Ukraine and the international community, can currently be tracked in the call of the President Zelenskyi of Ukraine to raise the status of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine to the Patriarchate. The call was first made at the end of August 2024 at the President's meeting with the ambassadors of the Ecumenical Patriarch, who had come to Kyiv and were supposed to convey the information to the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.³ Certainly, the concept of the President, if implemented, will become an important factor in establishing Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness.

As a result, the self-affirmation of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine is a significant factor in overcoming the Russian neo-imperial sway on Ukrainian society and conflict processes within the Ukrainian Orthodox community. The internal Ukrainian context of the rise of the OCU is clearly evidenced by the process of transitions of religious communities of the UOC-MP into the new environment with its distinct characteristics in certain regions. An important factor in the power of the OCU and the expansion of its influence was the transfer of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra to its disposal, which became a truly historical event.

¹*Metropolitan Epiphanius Claims in Facebook: the Patriarch Bartholomew's Arrival Has Given the OCU an Impetus for New Achievements.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/patriarh-varfolomij-okriliv-nas-obyednati-usih-pravoslavnihi-ukrayinciv-navkolo-kiyivskogo-prestolu---mitropolit-epifanij_n121274 (08.25.2021). [in Ukr.]

²*The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople Will Not Grant Autocephaly to the Macedonian Orthodox Church until It Enters into Communion with the OCU, the Hierarch of the Church of Greece Has Asserted.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/vselenskij-patriarhat-ne-dast-avtokefaliyu-cerkvi-pivnichnoyi-makedoniyi-poki-vona-ne-viznaye-pcu---yerarh-elladskoyi-cerkvi_n149699 (07.19.2024). [in Ukr.]

³*Zelenskyi Believes that the Status of the OCU Should Be Raised to the Patriarchate.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/zelenskij-vvazhaye-shcho-potribno-pidvishchiti-status-pcu-do-patriarhatu_n151074 (09.22.2024). [in Ukr.]

The international context of the promotion of the OCU is laid in its global recognition, which currently accounts for a third of the local Orthodox Churches in the world. That process of approving the OCU was slowed down by the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation and the opposition by Russian propaganda. The representation of the OCU in the assembly of the World Council of Churches was the presentation of Ukrainian autocephaly to the world. The strengthening of the OCU's positions is facilitated by the support of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The culmination of the development of the OCU is presented by the idea of elevating its status to the Patriarchate as an important factor in establishing the geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine.

4.4. The international mission of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as a factor in strengthening the geopolitical subjectness of Ukraine

In the face of global challenges, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has demonstrated a national and patriotic and pro-Western position in the conduct of extensive international activities. This mission is particularly important for the establishment of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness, while the newly created Orthodox Church of Ukraine has yet to receive full recognition within the framework of global Orthodoxy.

Objectively, the issues of the Russia-Ukraine war have been at the center of attention of both the internal and external activities of the UGCC. In this context, the *'Message of the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC in Ukraine on War and Just Peace in the Context of New Ideologies'* (hereinafter referred to as the *'Message'*) adopted on February 16, 2024 can be considered as a kind of programmatic document containing an analysis of the origins of the current war against Ukraine, an assessment of the ideology of Ruscism and of the main directions of countering it. The *'Message'* attracted considerable attention: its text, translated into six languages, was published in the most prestigious scientific theological publications of the Catholic Church.¹

The Head of the UGCC Sviatoslav (the secular last name of Shevchuk) later confirmed in the program *'Vidkryta Tserkva' (Discovering Church)*, the *'Message'* had been addressed to many addressees: those were the faithful of the UGCC itself, church leaders of various Christian Churches, Catholics from

¹*Message of the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC on the War and Just Peace in the context of New Ideologies dated February 16, 2024a.* [online] Available at:<https://docs.ugcc.ua/1723/> [in Ukr.]

different countries of the world who have issued similar documents (such as the Anglican Church, the Catholic Church in Germany), the Apostolic See, the world community.¹

The *'Message'* also interpreted the question of peace and war in the light of new challenges and problems. In particular, it was claimed in the text: 'The war waged by Russia against Ukraine has all the features of a neocolonial war on the European continent with clear signs of genocide. The extermination of the proponents of Ukrainianism from existence has become the political program and mania of the Russian leadership supported by a significant part of the citizens of the aggressor state.'²

The ideology of Ruscism was characterised as a theory that combined 'all previous ideological constructs, starting from the Moscow kingdom with its messianic ideas of "Holy Russia" and the "Third Rome" and ending with the USSR with its aggressive imperialism and desire for global domination.' The *'Message'* treated the doctrine of the 'Russian world' as 'quasi-religious,' having solely provided an ideological justification for the Russian aggression against Ukraine. At the same time, pacifist ideas of appeasing the aggressor were denied and various forms of confronting the intervention proposed, ranging from non-violent resistance to armed resistance as a legitimate right of the Ukrainians.³

The authors of the *'Message'* saw their mission to prove the criminality of the Russian imperial ideology not only in Ukraine, but also beyond its borders and to contribute to a better understanding by the international community of the present challenges and of Ukraine's place on the spiritual map of the modern world. The following passage can serve as an example: 'How should Christians around the world act now? First of all, it is necessary to realise the global nature of the current threat and to affirm and develop the power of just international law.'⁴

¹Kozak, O. *The Head of the UGCC Discusses the War and Just Peace, Ukraine and the World*. [online] Available at: <https://ugcc.ua/data/glava-ugkts-pro-viynu-i-spravedlyvyy-myr-ukraynu-i-svit-4733/> [Accessed 18 April 2024a]. [in Ukr.]

²*Message of the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC on the War and Just Peace in the context of New Ideologies dated February 16, 2024b*. [online] Available at: <https://docs.ugcc.ua/1723/> [in Ukr.]

³*Message of the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC on the War and Just Peace in the context of New Ideologies dated February 16, 2024c*. [online] Available at: <https://docs.ugcc.ua/1723/> [in Ukr.]

⁴*Message of the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC on the War and Just Peace in the context of New Ideologies dated February 16, 2024d*. [online] Available at: <https://docs.ugcc.ua/1723/> [in Ukr.]

For Christians around the world, as argued in the *'Message'*, it was important that the doctrine of the 'Russian world' be condemned primarily by representatives of the Orthodox community. In this regard, it is noteworthy that at the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war, 342 Orthodox theologians of the world signed a Declaration in March 2022, in which they condemned the doctrine of the 'Russian world' based on the false doctrine of ethnophyletism, calling it a heresy and a 'vile doctrine that has no justification.'¹

The essence of the *'Message'* and the basis for its implementation in the daily activities of the UGCC has regularly been presented by Father Sviatoslav in his archpastoral visits, weekly addresses and meetings with the church and secular public. Since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war, the Primate of the UGCC has subordinated all his archpastoral visits outside the borders of the Ukrainian state to the growth of international support for Ukraine in the fight against the enemy. The international activities of the UGCC were especially intense in September and October 2024, when its Primate almost continuously carried out his foreign archpastoral visits.

The United States of America

In the aforementioned program 'Open Church', the Head of the UGCC summarised the visit of the UGCC bishops' delegation to the United States on March 1–10 to participate in the meeting of the Permanent Synod of Bishops. His Beatitude Sviatoslav noted that the visit was also marked by a number of important ecumenical and diplomatic meetings. In particular, he personally met with the Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the United States Anthony and Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Elfidophoros; it should be noted that the metropolitanates have no relation to either the UOC-MP or the Moscow Patriarchate directly. As part of the diplomatic mission, the delegation had meetings in the Senate (in the Congress in large) and in the US State Department, in particular with the House Majority Leader Stephen Scalise, the Senate Minority Leader Republican Mitch McConnell and the Speaker of the House of Representatives Mike Johnson. 'We saw,' as Bishop Sviatoslav noted in that context, 'how important the Church as an institution, its public and social mission are for both Democrats and Republicans American

¹*The Declaration of Orthodox Theologians across the World on the Phenomenon of 'Russian World'*. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/deklaraciya-pravoslavni-bogosloviv-svitu-pro-russkij-mir_n127230 (03.16.2022). [in Ukr.]

politicians. But, I think, we took maximum advantage of this opportunity to convey the voice of Ukraine, the Ukrainian people, to our interlocutors.’¹

Germany

In September 2024, the Patriarch of the UGCC made an archpastoral trip to Germany, during which he met with German government officials, higher clergy, and representatives of charitable organisations. In particular, on September 11, His Beatitude Sviatoslav met with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the office of the head of the German federal government, attended also by the Apostolic Exarch for Ukrainians in Germany and Scandinavia Bishop Bohdan Dziurakh, the Chairman of the German Episcopal Conference, Bishop Georg Betzing and the Prelate of the Catholic Commissariat in Berlin Prelate Dr. Karl Justen. The Father of the UGCC marked the comprehensive assistance that the Ukrainian people had received from the German people throughout Russia's all-out invasion in Ukraine, in particular, the acceptance and provision of necessary social protection to more than 1.2 million Ukrainian refugees.²

He also told Scholz about the role of Churches and religious organisations both in Ukraine and beyond in spiritual support of Ukrainians amid the war, and emphasised that he had felt it was his duty to ‘rebut the myths about Ukraine spread by Moscow propaganda, striking fears in the hearts of the leaders of the German state and prevent it from doing even more for Ukraine.’³ Both church and state leaders also discussed the issue of integrating Ukrainian nationals into German society and agreed that it was necessary to create conditions to facilitate employment among them; additionally, their stances revolved around the idea that the active participation of Ukrainian agents in the economic growth of Germany would become an additional argument for increasing German aid to Ukraine.

¹Kozak, O. *The Head of the UGCC Discusses the War and Just Peace, Ukraine and the World*. [online] Available at: <https://ugcc.ua/data/glava-ugkts-pro-viynu-i-spravedlyvyy-myr-ukraynu-i-svit-4733/> [Accessed 18 April 2024b]. [in Ukr.]

²*While Having a Meeting with Kanzler Scholz of Germany, the Head of the UGCC Refuted Myths about Ukraine Spread by Kremlin's Propaganda in the Country*. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/glava-ugkc-pid-chas-zustrichi-z-sholcom-sprostuvav-mifi-pro-ukrayinu-poshireni-moskovskoyu-propagandoyu-v-nimechchini_n150862 (09.12.2024a). [in Ukr.]

³*While Having a Meeting with Kanzler Scholz of Germany, the Head of the UGCC Refuted Myths about Ukraine Spread by Kremlin's Propaganda in the Country*. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/glava-ugkc-pid-chas-zustrichi-z-sholcom-sprostuvav-mifi-pro-ukrayinu-poshireni-moskovskoyu-propagandoyu-v-nimechchini_n150862 (09.12.2024b). [in Ukr.]

During the trip, the Head of the UGCC also met with representatives of charitable organisations actively working in Ukraine, in particular, the leaders of the organisations Church in Need, Renovabis, Misereor, the Catholic Central Committee against Hunger and for Development and Caritas Internationalis, thanking them for supporting the interests of Ukraine and the generous assistance they provide to those affected by the war. Those present emphasised the need to adhere to new standards in humanitarian activities, namely, the responsibility and transparency of the use of charitable donations.¹

Romania

From the bishop's weekly addresses, it is known that the UGCC delegation also took part in the 25th Congress of Eastern Catholic Bishops of Europe in the Romanian city of Oradea (September 16-19, 2024). Most of the participants of the meeting were bishops of the UGCC from Ukraine and other European countries. About 60 bishops came not only from the Byzantine rite, but also from the Syriac Catholic Church and the Maronite Church. As Bishop Sviatoslav recalled: 'In all our meetings, a powerful word in support of Ukraine has sounded... Bishops from Romania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, the Balkan countries, Austria, Germany, etc. have shared the experience of how the Catholic Church and our communities in these countries open their hearts and homes to Ukrainians who have had to flee the homeland because of the war; how forcefully they are trying to shout the truth about Ukraine amidst huge disinformation campaigns that Russia is spreading all over the world!'²

Estonia

Immediately after his visit to Germany, the Head of the UGCC visited Estonia, where on September 21 he met with the Ambassador of Ukraine to Estonia Maksym Kononenko at his residence, attended also by the US Ambassador to Estonia George Kehn, the Apostolic Administrator of Catholics in Estonia Bishop Philipp Jourdan, the Head of the Pastoral and Migration Department of the UGCC Bishop Stepan Sus, Fr. Roman Ilnytskyi, Fr. Roman Kikh and Fr. Silver Vytvytskyi. The meeting discussed the problems of

¹*The Head of the UGCC Has Thanked German Charitable Organisations for Their Support of Ukraine.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/glava-ugkc-podyakuvav-blagodijnim-organizacijam-nimechchini-za-pidtrimku-ukrayini_n150833 (09.11.2024). [in Ukr.]

²*Address of the Head of the UGCC On the 136th Week of the Full-Scale Aggression dated September 22, 2024.* [online] Available at: <https://ugcc.ua/data/zvernennya-glavy-ugks-u-136-tyzhden-povnomasshtabnoy-viny-22-veresnya-2024-roku-5535/> [in Ukr.]

Ukrainians forced to leave Estonia due to the war. The Primate of the UGCC emphasised that ‘our and your main mission is to bring those Ukrainians and the believers together, and help them integrate into the society, but not become assimilated by it.’ In remembrance of the meeting, the Father of the UGCC gave the ambassadors the book *Ukraine Stands! Ukraine Fights! Ukraine Prays!* as a gift, containing the daily addresses of His Beatitude Sviatoslav in the first year of the Russia-Ukraine war.¹

In the second part of his first pastoral visit to Estonia, His Beatitude Sviatoslav, accompanied by Bishop Stepan Sus, met with the Ukrainian diaspora, representatives of such Ukraine-related organisations as the Ukrainian Youth Association in Estonia, the Ukrainian Women's Association of Estonia, the Ukrainian Center, the Ukrainian Emigration Club, the Congress of Ukrainians of Estonia, and the Ukrainian Community in Estonia; representatives of the Ukrainian Association in Finland also participated in the event. His Beatitude Sviatoslav stated that Estonia was a country that has accepted the largest percentage of Ukrainians among all European countries, about 100 thousand. At the same time, he noted that the UGCC is a unique Church that unites the global Ukrainian community within its bosom, creates a special Ukrainian world abroad, and belonging to the UGCC very often prevents assimilation. ‘Our Church in Estonia truly wants to be an open home for everyone. We want to be a platform that can unite all public organisations.’²

It is important to note that, while the UGCC were staying in Estonia, the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople offered assistance to the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate in separating from the ROC with the status of a self-governing vicariate; that archpastoral visit definitely convinced the local priests to make the suggestion, in accordance with which the EOC-MP ‘will remain an independent church formation, be able to continue to follow its own church practice, use its own language and calendar, and be completely financially

¹ ‘*The Ukrainians Want You to Help Them With Integrating, Not With Assimilating,*’ – the Head of the UGCC Has Told the Ukrainian Ambassador to Estonia at Their Meeting. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/ukrayincyam-potribno-dopomogti-integruvatisya-ale-ne-asimilyuvatisya--glava-ugkc-poslu-v-estoniyi_n151073 (09.22.2024). [in Ukr.]

² *The Head of the UGCC Met with Ukrainian Public Organisations at the End of His First Visit to Estonia.* [online] Available at: <https://ugcc.ua/data/na-zavershennya-svogo-pershogo-vizytu-do-estoniya-glava-ugkts-zustrivsyaz-ukraynskymy-gromadskymy-organizatsiyamy-5555/> (09.24.2024). [in Ukr.]

independent.’¹ It is obvious that such an act, if implemented, would significantly weaken the position of the Moscow Patriarchate in Estonia, just like the Tomos granted to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

Sweden

In October 2024, the Head of the UGCC made a pastoral trip to Sweden, during which he visited the Archbishop of the Diocese of Stockholm Cardinal Andres Arborelius. The meeting was also attended by the Apostolic Exarch for Ukrainians of Germany and Scandinavia Bishop Bohdan Dziurakh and the Vicar General of the Diocese of Stockholm Rev. Pascal Rene Lung. For the Ukrainian hierarchs, that meeting was an important opportunity to express gratitude to the representatives of the Catholic Church in Sweden for their comprehensive support of Ukrainian pastoral care and to discuss the issues of spiritual care for Ukrainians of Sweden. Those present noted that Ukrainian refugees are active missionaries who share their faith, culture, and spirituality, thereby affirming the unity of the Catholic Church in diversity. Church leaders of Sweden assured their continued support for Ukraine and the UGCC and highly appreciated the pastoral ministry of the spiritual fathers of the UGCC in Stockholm and cooperation with Apostolic Exarch Bohdan Dziurakh.²

Italy

Characterising the international activities of the UGCC, it is worth emphasising that, in addition to archpastoral visits, the Primate and other spiritual leaders use all foreign platforms to protect the interests of Ukraine and assert its geopolitical subjectness. For example, on October 19, 2024, the Head of the Church His Beatitude Sviatoslav, took part in the diocesan congress ‘*The United, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic One*’ on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the Diocese of Lanusei and held in the city of Tortola, Italy, bringing together representatives of different countries and continents of the world. One of the main topics of the congress was the topic of the war in Ukraine, its prerequisites, consequences and ideological basis. In his speech, Sviatoslav pointed out the

¹*The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople Has Offered the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate Assistance In Separating from the Russian Orthodox Church.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/konstantinopolskij-patriarhat-zaproponuvav-dopomogu-estonskij-pravoslavnij-cerkvi-mp-u-viddilenni-vid-rpc_n151094 (09.23.2024). [in Ukr.]

²*The Head of the UGCC Has Discussed with the Archbishop of Stockholm the Development of Spiritual Care for Ukrainians in Sweden.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/glava-ugkc-obgovoriv-z-arhiyepiskopom-stokgolma-rozvitok-duhovnoyi-opiki-ukrayinciv-u-shveciyi_n151538 (10.14.2024). [in Ukr.]

neocolonial nature of the war in Ukraine, Russia's attempts to revive the Soviet Union and return Ukraine to the 'prison of peoples', depriving it of the European path of development among democratic countries. He also added: 'The war in Ukraine is a conflict of two projects: the future and the past. A real genocide is taking place in our country, every day Russia kills hundreds of civilians, destroys our infrastructure, cultural and spiritual centers,' the Head of the UGCC emphasised.¹

Croatia

Another location that the UGCC leadership used to strengthen international support for Ukraine in the fight against the enemy was the annual International Meeting of Rectors of the European Marian Network held in Marija Bystrica, Croatia on October 22-25, 2024. This network of spiritual centers includes 22 holy places from different countries in Europe, such as Lourdes (France), Fatima (Portugal), Walsingham (England), Altötting (Germany), Zaragoza (Spain) and others. From the Ukrainian side, the Marian spiritual center 'Zarvanytsia' was represented by the Auxiliary Bishop of the Ternopil-Zboriv Archeparchy Volodymyr Firman, the External Relations Officer of the Archeparchy Fr. Ivan Sichkaryk, and the Administrator of the Educational and Educational Center of the the Marian spiritual center 'Zarvanytsia' Fr. Ihor Zasiibida. One of the main topics of the meeting was the cessation of the war and the achievement of a just peace in Ukraine. It was noted that all Marian spiritual centers pray daily for peace in Ukraine, and each sanctuary, respective of its capabilities, still accepts refugees from Ukraine and provides them with diverse humanitarian and social assistance.²

The Vatican

Perhaps one of the most significant matters of war and peace in the context of establishing Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness are the relations of the UGCC with the Vatican and personally with the Pope. The aforementioned '*Message of the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC in Ukraine on War and Just Peace in the Context of New Ideologies*' emphasised the traditional role of the Holy Father as

¹The head of the UGCC Has Spoken On the War in Ukraine at the Congress in Sardinia. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/glava-ugkc-na-kongresi-v-sardiniyi-govoriv-pro-vijnu-v-ukrayini_n151661 (10.21.2024). [in Ukr.]

²Representatives of the UGCC Have Participated in the International Meeting of Rectors of Sanctuaries in Croatia. [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/predstavniki-ugkc-vzyali-uchast-u-mizhnarodnij-zustrichi-rektoriv-sanktuariyiv-u-horvatiyi_n151861 (10.30.2024). [in Ukr.]

‘the supreme arbiter of the Christian world’, allowing the Vatican to play an important, sometimes decisive, role in resolving a number of conflict situations around the world, as well as to facilitate the establishment of channels for the exchange of prisoners. The ‘Message’ cites telling facts about the diplomatic mediation efforts of the Holy Father, his role in the release of captured soldiers and deported children.¹

The leadership of the UGCC uses various public platforms of the Vatican to publicise their views on the issues of the Russia-Ukraine war and affect the position of the Vatican. The ‘Message’ referred to a public discussion of the Head of the UGCC with one of the Italian pacifists, which had occurred at the end of January 2023 as a part of a press conference on Vatican Radio. The Primate then said: ‘You know, if you can show us how to stop Russian tanks without weapons, come to Ukraine and show it!’ And he further explained the need for the obvious conclusion: ‘the legitimate defense of one's Motherland is not only a natural right, but also a sacred duty of the citizens of Ukraine.’²

In the same context, it is worth mentioning the participation of representatives of the UGCC (besides the Head of the UGCC, they included the Apostolic Exarch in Germany and Scandinavia Bohdan Dziurakh and Archbishop and Metropolitan of Ternopil and Zboriv Teodor Martyniuk) together with other delegates of the Catholic Church and the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the work of the Papal Synod, which took place in October 2024. Commenting on that event, the Head of the UGCC noted that the Ukrainian delegates had had the opportunity to ‘discuss the religious and interfaith situation in Ukraine and further prospects for dialogue and cooperation between our Churches’ in the course of the Synod.³ The youngest bishops of the Synod of the UGCC, who attended training for young Catholic bishops in Rome and met with His Holiness Pope Francis and the heads of the Vatican Curia, also made their contribution to the cause.

¹*Message of the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC on the War and Just Peace in the context of New Ideologies dated February 16, 2024e.* [online] Available at: <https://docs.ugcc.ua/1723/> [in Ukr.]

²*Message of the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC on the War and Just Peace in the context of New Ideologies dated February 16, 2024f.* [online] Available at: <https://docs.ugcc.ua/1723/> [in Ukr.]

³*The Head of the UGCC: At the Synod of Bishops, We Are Testifying To the Shared Tradition of the Kyiv Church together with the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/glava-ugkc-na-papskomu-sinodi-razom-z-delegaciyeyu-vselenskogo-patriarhatu-svidchimo-pro-spilnu-tradiciju-kiyivskoyi-cerkvi_n151617 (10.18.2024). [in Ukr.]

As the Head of the UGCC His Beatitude Sviatoslav threw the light on the situation, active relations with the Vatican were yielding results: ‘The latest statements of the Vatican Secretariat of State have been very clear: both regarding the inviolability of Ukraine's borders, and that in order for any opportunities for peaceful dialogue to arise, Russia must stop military operations in Ukraine. That is, we see a certain evolution in the position of the Holy See, but this is also the fruit of the constant and reasoned work of our Church. We do not simply express our dissatisfaction with certain statements from the Vatican, but we write messages, meet, convince, and convey the voice of the long-suffering Ukrainian people.’¹ The piece is eloquent evidence of the direct impact of the leadership of the UGCC on the positions of the Vatican in order to protect the national interests of Ukraine.

Ecumenical activity

An important component of the UGCC policies is ecumenical activity on both national and international scales. Its essence, in the words of His Beatitude Sviatoslav, is that ‘our Church feels its special mission – to care for the unity of the Churches.’²

On October 25 of the same year of 2024, His Beatitude Sviatoslav met with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in Istanbul, Türkiye. Both church leaders discussed the situation in Ukraine and agreed on the next steps of the ecumenical dialogue. The Father of the UGCC emphasised that Patriarch Bartholomew is an indisputable moral authority for the Ukrainians regardless of their confessional affiliation, and presented the Patriarch with ‘*Message of the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC in Ukraine on War and Just Peace in the Context of New Ideologies*’, pointing to the ‘genocidal nature of the ideology of the “Russian world”, the criminality of which is felt by millions of Ukrainians.’ At the same time, the Head of the UGCC underscored the special significance of the decisions of the last Synaxis of the Ecumenical Patriarchate arranged held September 1–3, 2024 condemning the ideology of the ‘Russian world’, and expressed his gratitude to

¹Kozak, O. *The Head of the UGCC Discusses the War and Just Peace, Ukraine and the World*. [online] Available at: <https://ugcc.ua/data/glava-ugkts-pro-viynu-i-spravedlyvyy-myr-ukraynu-i-svit-4733/> [Accessed 18 April 2024c]. [in Ukr.]

²Kozak, O. *The Head of the UGCC Discusses the War and Just Peace, Ukraine and the World*. [online] Available at: <https://ugcc.ua/data/glava-ugkts-pro-viynu-i-spravedlyvyy-myr-ukraynu-i-svit-4733/> [Accessed 18 April 2024d]. [in Ukr.]

the Patriarch for the fact that he ‘personally and in the fullness of the Patriarchate of Constantinople’ stood up for Ukraine.¹

The above confirms that the leadership of the UGCC headed by its Primate Sviatoslav has conducted substantial international activities to protect the national interests of Ukraine and to establish its geopolitical subjectness in the context of global challenges, the greatest of which is the Russia-Ukraine war. The Father of the UGCC personally, through his archpastoral visits, messages and other actions in many European countries, has carried out an important mission of conveying truthful information about the Russian criminal ideology and Moscow's propaganda to world leaders and the Vatican, supporting internally displaced persons and uniting Ukrainians around the world. Models of church unity that have emerged from the UGCC medium promote the combination of Western and Eastern Christian traditions on the basis of the ecumenical idea, contributing to the integration of Ukraine into the European cultural and spiritual space.

¹*The Head of the UGCC Has Paid an Official Visit to the Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew.* [online] Available at: https://risu.ua/glava-ugkc-zdijsniv-oficijnij-vizit-do-konstantinopolskogo-patriarha-varfolomiya_n151768 (10.25.2024). [in Ukr.]

AFTERWORD

The study of the formation of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness amid emerging challenges and threats has become an extremely important goal for contemporary humanities. In fact, the issue concerns an entire set of problems requiring renewed conceptual reflection by virtue of the fact that, from the beginning of the 20th century, Ukraine has been not merely a component of the modern world, but has constituted one of the main knots of political, economic and ideological contradictions; a 'frontier', where civilisational 'lines of force' intersect.

This research has managed to outline a range of the most pressing objectives in the light of the analysis of geopolitical challenges facing the modern Ukrainian nation and its state, and to suggest specific conceptual approaches for shaping adequate societal responses to those challenges. First and foremost, it is an attempt to conceptually answer the following question: in what way does Ukraine's centuries-long latent subjectness become not only actual, but consistent and consolidated and up-to-the-minute?

In 1917–1918, Ukraine finally emerged as a geopolitical actor; thereafter, none of the global or European subjects of geopolitical processes could ignore the Ukrainian question. Those who attempted to bypass or neglect responding to it ultimately collapsed: the instances of the Second Polish Republic, the Third Reich and, later, the USSR can be recalled. At various historical stages and under differing geopolitical circumstances, Ukraine has still influenced the course of European and world history: one should not forget that Ukraine was one of the founding states of the United Nations and that the Ukrainians constituted the only nation (besides the Poles) whose representatives had fought against the Axis powers for the entire six years of the war from September 1, 1939, to September 2, 1945, serving in different armies and formations.

However, Ukraine has not always acted in the capacity of a fully recognised national actor. For this reason, the theoretical and practical exploration of the current state and prospects of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness in the contemporary world becomes an urgent task for modern science.

A substantial factor in instituting Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness is the systematic resistance on the part of its north-eastern neighbour. 'Historical Russia' has continuously obstructed and suppressed even the slightest manifestations of Ukrainian national lifestyle, hypocritically declaring the 'natural inability' of the Ukrainians for state-building and insisting on their 'non-

historicity’ and ‘non-existent subjectness’. Indeed, the very understanding of the concept of subjectness differs fundamentally between, on the one hand, classic imperial and contemporary neo-imperial Russian ideologues and, on the other one, democratically oriented Ukrainian intellectuals. For an empire, to be a subject means the power to impose the will of the Center, the metropole, in order to keep subordinate territories and their populations under its control; for a democratic society, to be a subject is, on the contrary, the institutionally linked with the state degree of maturity of civil society that is capable of understanding and defending its interests, of setting and achieving its defined goals. Hence, the refusal to recognise Ukraine’s sovereignty once again proves that the Russians have not moved beyond their imperial–colonial discourse. The dreams of restoring Russia’s status as a global superpower will remain unattainable without bringing Ukraine back into the orbit of Kremlin influence. By interpreting reality through the categories of ‘metropole–colony’ (while publicly denying this), Russian neo-imperialists cannot accept that the 21st century has not only seen most colonial empires disappear, but also witnessed the significant changing functions of nation-states.

The Russian full-scale aggression has accelerated transformations of Ukraine’s state institutions, demonstrating the ability to evolve toward greater effectiveness. The Ukrainian nation has become more cohesive, with the sphere of Ukrainian-language use expanding noticeably. While Ukraine was not a monoethnic or mononational entity (a notable part of the population identified itself with the ‘Soviet people’ or with ‘Russians’ in a political sense) at the moment of the restoration of statehood in 1991, today we can observe a real nation-state in its classical sense (when a ‘relatively homogeneous people inhabits a sovereign state’), which continues to confidently respond to the existential challenge posed by Russia. Despite present negative trends, Ukraine can hardly be considered a ‘weak state’: it withstood the blow of the ‘world’s second-largest army’ in 2022; it is currently resisting a military force which American experts used to elevate to the level of the ‘world’s strongest army’¹; it is steadily moving toward European integration, already meeting the requirements for EU accession by many criteria. Speaking of the strength of the NATO, the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the National Guard of Ukraine have definitely surpassed the actual combat capability of most European armies. It was no coincidence that the *Financial Times* noted earlier that even, as of autumn

¹ *These Countries Have the Strongest Militaries U.S. News & World Report*. [online] Available at: <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/rankings/strong-military> (2023) [in Eng.]

2024, European NATO allies had 1.9 million soldiers collectively, they would realistically struggle to mobilise more than 300,000 ‘bayonets’ to repel a potential Russian invasion. On top of that, Western European armies have ‘dwindled away’, with a considerable number of officers and sergeants ready to resign in the event of a large-scale war; thus, the chances of the NATO in this regard are, essentially, based only on the combat-ready armed forces of Poland and of the United States.¹

Concerning the very scholarly problem of assessing Ukrainian subjectness, the research regarding the issue has been insufficient so far after having been significantly hindered by the postmodern fashion of rejecting the very concept of the ‘subject’ and of attributing to individual and social subjectness nearly all the evils of the 20th century, especially totalitarianism. In reality, the opposite is true: the same totalitarianism was rooted precisely in the denial of subjectness as a social norm and of society’s inherent multi-subjectness. According to the totalitarian mythology, there was to exist only a monolithic ‘great social wholeness’ headed by the ‘great leader’ and his close entourage ostensibly embodying all the canon-like virtues, yet practically required to act strictly within the boundaries of the regime’s fundamental mythological constructs.

The concept of a ‘doer’ is close to that of a subject in the sense of active agency. A geopolitical subject is one who independently sets goals and strategies and who establishes certain rules of action not only for itself. In the broad sense, the subject can take the form of an individual; of an organised group of individuals; of a social, ethnic, or political community, or society as a whole, carrying out inherent activities aimed at the practical transformation of objective reality as well as its theoretical and spiritual comprehension in practice. Basically, anything related with this concept bears the qualities enabling it to perform socially meaningful functions. What this definition lacks is the notion of ‘purpose-built rationality’ as one of the key attributes of a subject. In its turn, ‘geopolitics is the study of factors such as geography, economics and demography exerting influence on policies, especially on the foreign one, of a state; it is also a governmental policy guided by geopolitical considerations.’² In this sense, the observation that ‘Ukraine has entered a new geopolitical reality of de facto becoming the border of the EU’s security architecture rather than a buffer

¹ Jones, S. & Rathbone, J. *Wanted: New Soldiers for Europe’s Shrinking Armies*. [online] Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/f9dc7922-8d5c-4f29-90f3-6a5d27311c1c> [Accessed 25 June 2024]. [in Eng.]

² *Geopolitics*. Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary. [online] Available at: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/geopolitics> (21.11.2025). [in Eng.]

between the union and Russia by having withstood Russia's onslaught' becomes particularly truthful.¹

The military-political dimension of Ukrainian subjectness deserves special attention. Russian officials often claim that the Ukrainians are allegedly unable to follow the path of a self-sustaining nation and are only fit to serve as the West's pawns. They narrate those beliefs as if, following Hitler's example, the Anglo-Saxons had managed to unite almost all European states in a struggle against sole Russia, seeking to destroy it on the battlefield; to achieve their goal, the coalition had supposedly established the 'Nazi and fascist Kiev regime' to use it as a mere tool. Ukraine, they continue to argue, is incapable of waging war on its own, of being a full-fledged geopolitical subject, only playing the role of someone's instrument. Yet many independent analysts, who are both Ukrainian and foreign, do not regard Ukraine as a fully-fledged geopolitical subject either, arguing that it would not endure for long without Western assistance; neither the Second Polish Republic in 1920 nor the USSR in 1941–1945, however, would have been able to fight in war without the substantial aid from their allies.

Therefore, the question arises as follows: which factors and resources are most important in attaining and affirming relevant and proper geopolitical subjectness?

The authors of this monographic study deduce that a geopolitical subject is one who strives to become as such, with the primary resource in this regard being the people, the nation, the demos; its consciousness and will; its values and goals. The potential of Ukraine's internal human-centred subjectness has been strengthened by the nation's awareness of its right to life, safe existence, freedom and sovereignty as well as by the realisation of the necessity of actively countering the threats of genocide and ecocide that have intensified since the beginning of the full-scale Russian–Ukrainian war. At present, Ukrainian society's consciousness and mastery of the creative potential of its consolidation as the core value for affirming national geopolitical subjectness are growing. Owing to the consolidation, the thoughtful part of the international community has increasingly recognised the necessity of supporting the Ukrainian people globally. This axiological approach constitutes an essential foundation for the assertion of Ukraine's geopolitical subjectness and must continue to be explored by Ukrainian studies.

¹ Biscop, S. *Not Another Geopolitical Commission, Please!* [online] Available at: <https://www.egmontinstitute.be/not-another-geopolitical-commission-please/> [Accessed 26 June 2024]. [in Eng.]

Under the conditions of the Russian–Ukrainian war, the confessional component has also become an important factor of Ukraine’s geopolitical subjectness. The social role of the church in Ukraine has increased during the wartime due to its humanitarian mission and spiritual support of the military. Russia’s war against Ukraine has remained a powerful catalyst for the civilisational choice of Ukrainian Orthodox institutions. The 2019 historic act of the Ecumenical Patriarchate granting the Orthodox Church of Ukraine the Tomos of autocephaly is undoubtedly of fundamental importance for Ukraine’s geopolitical subjectness.

Evidently, Ukraine’s primary geopolitical objectives, considering the intensification of external challenges and the new configuration of international forces, are the following: to ensure its sovereignty and territorial integrity; to enhance its internal and external security; to consolidate the position in the European and Euro-Atlantic civilisational space by facilitating efforts toward comprehensive integration into European and Euro-Atlantic political and social structures; to strengthen strategic partnership with the United States and ties with Western European countries; to deepen and to cement together special relations with strategically important neighbours, namely Poland, the Baltic states, Moldova, and Turkey; to contribute to the formation of a ‘belt of stability’ and of new regional security structures from the Baltic and Black Seas to the South Caucasus and Central Asia; to boost cooperation with Asian countries whose geopolitical role has been growing annually and has not been aimed at undermining the Euro-Atlantic world. In the context of the full-scale invasion, Ukraine has increased its geopolitical subjectness by forming a coalition of supportive states. Conversely, the Russian neo-empire is historically doomed, for the collapse of Putin’s totalitarianism is only a matter of time.

Yet further strengthening of Ukraine’s geopolitical position world-wide will be possible only after engaging into actually effective reformation of most spheres of public life, establishing of a rule-of-law state, minimising the corruption, assisting the self-developing civil society, forming a strong and structured middle class and creating appropriate conditions for attracting foreign investment, which will promote economic growth. Above all, all this requires responsible, dynamic, professional and patriotic socio-political elites guided by state-building interests.

A policy of supporting civil society as the backbone of upholding democratic values demands that the public sector become a pillar for all other responsible organisations within the security sphere, signifying the

transformation of thinking at all levels (and across all sectors of socio-economic activities) under conditions of nonlinear threats. The evolution has been possible with the integrated consideration of all socio-economic and political issues through the lens of security; it in fact led the EU to adopt and implement a pragmatic approach in its foreign policy. While the trend may appear to represent a step back from value-based policy toward pragmatism, such an approach is capable of generating an adequate response to the growing uncertainty and complex threats. Essentially, it is beyond promoting democracy when national security has been jeopardised itself.

The methods employed by Russia to erode Ukraine's national subjectness from within have targeted a weak point, namely the lack of trust between society and state institutions: by discrediting governmental authority internally, the aggressor seeks to obtain at least neutrality, if not support, from Ukrainians regarding the military actions. The Kremlin uses the same manipulative tools to delegitimise the Ukrainian government and the very idea of Ukraine's independence on the global stage. The experience attests to the requirement of strengthening the national and societal informational resilience of the EU's neighbouring partner states under conditions of the aggressive external information pressure. In the meantime, Ukraine should promote by means of public diplomacy its own subjectness with the broad representation of the national culture internationally. The Ukrainian state must intensively suggest its own vision of ending the war and of the postwar order, while explaining and advancing the advantages of Ukraine's victory for the entire global community. A strong and sovereign Ukraine is far more important for Europe and the world than a weak and dependent one - this is the formula.

Therefore, by examining the informational resilience of society, the authors draw conclusions regarding the subjectness of the country and of its community as a whole. Subjectness, or agency, is the most important category linking an individual and a society; indeed, it describes the capacity of people to make decisions that transform the surrounding reality. The same finding applies to a particular nation: its subjectness is laid in the capacity to follow independent domestic and foreign policies. Contemporary scholarship asserts that the world of the 1990s, when Ukraine regained independence, was characterised by instability and unpredictability, at least in the long term, so that world came to be known as the VUCA world (an acronym for 'volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity'); since 2020, in the aftermath of the intensifying global climatic, epidemiological and other threats, our reality has acquired a new label in the

scholarly literature of the BANI world, which stand for ‘brittle, anxious, nonlinear, incomprehensible’. It is in these specific conditions of new global and national challenges and threats that modern Ukraine is battling for its geopolitical agency as an independent European state as well as a subject of international legal relations.

The authors hope that the proposed monographic study will encourage Ukrainian scholars to pursue further in-depth exploration of the ways and methods of affirming Ukraine’s geopolitical subjectness, which will be useful both to humanities scholars and to the broader readership interested in Ukrainian studies.

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv
Research Institute of Ukrainian Studies

Scientific edition

I. Hrabovska
S. Hrabovskyi
R. Dodonov
S. Kahamlyk
R. Marutian
K. Nastoiascha
L. Chuprii

**GEOPOLITICAL SUBJECTNESS OF UKRAINE
IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES**

a monograph

Translated from Ukrainian by V. Voitenko, V. Kolobova.

Видавництво "МІЛЕНІУМ" (Київ)
Свідоцтво про внесення суб'єкта видавничої справи
до державного реєстру видавців, виготівників
і розповсюджувачів видавничої продукції
ДК № 535 від 19.07.2001 р.
e-mail: milenium_ofis@ukr.net