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THE IMPACT OF THE BUSH DOCTRINE ON RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY¹

WPŁYW DOKTRYNY BUSHA NA ROSYJSKĄ POLITYKĘ ZAGRANICZNĄ

Abstract:

The article focuses on the issue of the Bush Doctrine as the basic geopolitical code that dominated American foreign policy in the first decades of the 21st century. It aims to explain the impact of this code and doctrine on Russia's aggressive policy in Ukraine. The author examines the key elements of contemporary US security strategy, noting the way in which the US geopolitical code has been read by Russian political elites and how this has impacted Russian behavior in international relations. It is pointed out that the "idealistic" attempt to spread democratic values embodied in the Bush Doctrine has been read by Russian elites as a "realistic" instrument of geopolitical expansion. The author explains the consequences related to the Russian reading of the processes taking place in the international environment, which in the Russian symbolic-political space have been identified with the US implementation of the Bush Doctrine. The author's thesis is that among the reasons for the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine one can point to a specifically Russian interpretation of the Bush Doctrine.

Keywords: Bush doctrine, geopolitical code, Russia, Ukraine, United States.

Introduction

In his analysis of the causes, course, and effects of various decisions made in the context of the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, John Gaddis in 1982 drew attention to the importance of knowledge and views of political leaders as well as the impact of their vision of the world on the actions of the state. He stated

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that in the consciousness of political leaders there is something that can be called an “operational code”. It is a set of certain perceptions about the image of the world that is formed during the initial phase of a political career and invariably guides the behaviour of the person responding to a crisis situation (Gaddis, 2007: 7).

The term “geopolitical code” has gained popularity due to its usefulness in explaining processes taking place in the international environment. Colin Flint and Peter Taylor emphasised the fact that the codes constitute geo-political assumptions regarding a state's place and role in the world, that are the foundation of foreign policy (cf. Flint, Taylor 2007). Peter Taylor (1993) pointed out that the significance of geopolitical codes results from the fact that they constitute the “building blocks” of the geopolitical world order. At the same time, he emphasised that when analysing geopolitical codes, it is important to pay attention to the spatial scale, as geopolitical codes can refer to three different levels: the global, regional and state one, they are hierarchically interlinked and cannot be analysed in isolation. Local codes have to take into consideration the geopolitical codes of regional powers, and these in turn have to locate their codes in the structure of global codes of world powers (Taylor 1993: 37-38). This means that the codes of the so-called global powers have undue influence on other participants in the international system. Geopolitical codes represent the hidden assumptions behind the foreign policies of individual states; they occur at three spatial scales, and their combination provides a global policy pattern referred to as the geopolitical world order (Flint, Taylor 2007: 46).

Due to the importance of the US foreign policy in the functioning of the global world order and the fact that the US are able to impose on other actors in international relations the framework within which they must navigate in defining their interests, US actions in the international environment have repeatedly been the subject of in-depth analyses [cf. Kaufman, 2007; Dyson, 2014; Henderson, 2004; Tunç, 2009; Fiala, 2008; Schmidt, Williams, 2008; Rigstad, 2009]. The author examines the key elements of contemporary US security strategy, noting the way in which the US geopolitical code has been read by Russian political elites and how this has impacted Russian behaviour in international relations. It is assumed that in their actions political actors are guided by particularistic perceptions and representations of the world, which constitute one of the main determinants of political activity.

The author analyses the consequences related to the Russian reading of the processes taking place in the international environment, which in the Russian symbolic-political space have been identified with the US implementation of the Bush Doctrine. Assuming that international identity is dialogical in nature, i.e. occurring in dialogue with others², the author's thesis is that among the reasons for the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine one can point to a specifically Russian interpretation of the Bush Doctrine. Reading it as an instrument of a geopolitical attack on the Russian Federation resulted in a return among Russian elites to a thinking based on spheres of influence and superpower-imperial rhetoric, and consequently led to aggressive action against Ukraine, subsequently presented in political propaganda as a "defence of the Russian world".

The way political actors think and act is a product of intersubjective, normative or discursive conceptual frameworks. Social objects are entities formed from and in relation to intersubjective concepts or ideas that are shared in social space. Thus, the social world is built of hierarchical concepts/ideas, which are the main factor shaping the causative mechanisms, the context of applicable rules and adequate actions [cf. Dyduch, Mikiewicz, Rzeszótko, 2006: 45-48]. Symbolic systems and cognitive categories define the zone of possibilities and shape human choices. Therefore, every policy begins with what is imagined, presented, i.e. actually dreamt and experienced emotionally, and ends in the systems of a large space created by the entities that run them [Skarzyński, 2011: 315].

Democracy promotion as a US foreign policy strategy

An analysis of the axionormative sources of American foreign policy requires paying attention to those elements that are the basis of the American symbolic space, and above all to the content of the founding documents: the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Federalist Papers, which to this day, set the foundations of the "civic religion" that is the basis of American symbolic space. In the American Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, one of the founding fathers of the USA, included the words: "*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their*

²This means that it is an expression of the feedback effect between the state in question and other actors in international life. The state's interactions with the international environment involve defining oneself against "others" and "strangers".

Creator with certain unalienable Rights, which include Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness". These liberal words were, and still are, the ideological foundation of the US, along with the belief that fundamental rights are universal and enjoyed by all people, regardless of their role or membership of a particular society. The liberal principles of individual rights and democratic republicanism adopted during the American Revolution made these traditions central to the formation of American identity and civic community. The American civic myth promises a free, peaceful, diverse but tolerant and prosperous community. It guarantees the individual's personal independence from multiple repressive structures and ensures a civic life that expresses personal dignity and is shared with loyal fellow citizens. These elements stem from Jefferson's justification for America's independence from Britain, which was based on what Locke believed was the proper role for government. The principles on which the American society was founded, that government should protect the natural rights of individuals, form a common culture shared by Americans [Smith, 1997: 36].

The liberal and republican traditions underlined in standard descriptions of the American political culture are not simply rationalist political doctrines in themselves, but also civic myths that form the basis for the emergence of strong social bonds and a sense of belonging to a political community [Smith, 1997: 37]. The American Creed, which is a kind of a political religion, is a fundamental element of American symbolic space and, through socialisation processes, shapes dominant attitudes and American political culture. With the dominance of the Western world and the spread of the belief in the universalism of liberal values, the United States was placed in a specific position, as American political elites could maintain that whatever Thomas Jefferson and other founders of the United States may have meant when they claimed that "all men are created equal" there is nothing uniquely American about this statement, and the United States is unique in that when speaking about its own national values, it also speaks for other races and nations. Therefore, the US diplomatic representatives emphasise that the promotion of freedom and democracy and the protection of human rights around the world are essential when it comes to the US foreign policy, and that the values contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are consistent with those on which the US state was founded. Therefore, the global role of the US, or the positioning of the US role in the world by US elites, should be seen as a function of the internal civic religion and the core values flowing from it.

As part of the foreign policy strategy, the promotion of American values, freedom and democracy is a permanent part of the American political tradition. These values were already present in Monroe Doctrine but are most often identified primarily with the policies of President Woodrow Wilson. The so-called Wilsonian tradition assumes that the role of the US is to spread American values in the world: democracy, human rights and freedom of conscience. The promotion of democracy, liberalism and the defence of American values have always been an important part of the US foreign policy, but the emphasis on the implementation of moral values has not always been equally distributed. Analysts studying US security strategies after the Second World War point out that, in order to explain the dependent variables of the variants of the US grand strategy, it is useful to distinguish between basic ideal types. With regard to the goals of security policy, strategies can be distinguished that focus their attention on the issue of the balance of power in relation to the enemy (realist grand strategies) and strategies that focus on the promotion of ideology (ideological grand strategies). For example, in the case of a great power appealing to the liberal tradition, such as the US, big ideological strategies focus on promoting democracy and free market economies. In the case of illiberal powers, their ideological grand strategies focus on promoting illiberal ideologies, such as fascism, communism or any other illiberal ideology – depending on the ideological nature of the given entity [Miller, Rubinovitz, 2020: 9-10]. It is also useful to distinguish between offensive and defensive approaches to the use of force regarding security policy measures. Offensive security strategies advocate the full and unilateral use of military force, while defensive strategies involve limiting the use of force and, when necessary, acting as a fairly broad coalition. The combination of these elements allows four ideal types to be distinguished: offensive realism, defensive realism as well as offensive liberalism and defensive liberalism [Miller, Rubinovitz, 2020: 10].

During the Cold War, US strategy focused on competing with the Soviet Union using a realist approach. While supporting the democratization of some key countries, most notably West Germany and Japan, US leaders have been willing to ignore the internal nature of the regimes of many of their authoritarian partners. Among other things, the rapprochement with China in the 1970s was possible by overlooking the nature of the Chinese regime and human rights violations. Following the above, Nixon addressed the Chinese leaders in 1972, saying that what contributed to mutual rapprochement is the US recognition that the

internal philosophy of the organisation of power is not crucial for the development of relations. On the other hand, the period after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the USSR was conducive to a change in the strategy of the United States towards the dominance of a liberal approach to the issue of the place and role of the USA in the international system. Global change has enabled Washington to take the question of the nature of the regime of its former two rivals, i.e. China and Russia, as well as other unstable states, more seriously. This way, the focus of US policy strategy shifted from the balance of power and arms control to issues related to domestic and economic policy: democratisation, globalisation, economic involvement, and humanitarian intervention. In other words, the United States has begun to pursue the liberal transformation, or convergence, of key states [Miller, Rubinovitz, 2020: 168-169].

The change in US policy was also a reflection of the prevailing views at the time on the nature of the civilizational changes taking place. In the 1990s, Francis Fukuyama wrote that the victory of the "liberal revolution", which, together with the third wave of democratization and the collapse of the USSR, envelops the whole world, as well as the rapidly progressing globalisation processes, are of great importance for the development of new tendencies in the shaping of the international political order. A specific consensus in the economic sphere, formed after the collapse of the USSR and the planned economy, consisting in the victory of the principles of a liberal, democratic and free-market economy on a global scale, will also influence the formation of a global social and political consensus based on liberal-democratic values. Economic development will close social gaps, create the need for universal education, and former social barriers will collapse, to be replaced by a state of universal equality of opportunity [Fukuyama, 1996: 295]. The dominance of liberalism contributed to the formation of a community of interests and a new international identity, as democratic political systems and a market economy would enforce international cooperation, peace and international development. However, Fukuyama also pointed out that they would continue to exist in the international space between the so-called "post-historical world" and the so-called "historical world", in which the old principles of "power politics" would continue to apply. Relations between democratic and non-democratic countries will therefore continue to be guided by distrust and fear, and despite the increase in economic dependence, power will remain the ultimate rationale. Post-historical liberal democracies will jointly defend

themselves against external threats, as well as promote democracy in those countries where it does not yet exist [Fukuyama, 1996: 119].

Therefore, the strategy adopted by the US in the first post-Cold War decade (1991-2001) largely followed an approach that can be described as “defensive liberalism”. Both the administration of George Bush senior and the administration of Bill Clinton showed a leaping commitment to the liberal agenda. Its outline was drafted by George H. W. Bush, indicating that in the aftermath of the Cold War, in a world where the US had become the sole superpower, the US, acting in an agreement with other powers and international institutions, should take the lead in promoting democratic peace. Transformations in the international system and the absence of serious strategic threats led the Bill Clinton administration, inspired by democratic peace theory, to adopt an “expansion” doctrine aimed at enlarging the global community of market democracies. Clinton made it clear that this strategy serves US interests because “democracies rarely go to war with each other”. The Clinton administration also sought to promote free trade and increased economic interdependence. The policy of the Clinton administration was increasing economic cooperation with China, helping to democratise the Russian Federation, as well as involvement in resolving the conflict in the former Yugoslavia [Miller, Rubinovitz, 2020: 167-168].

As a policy, or in other words a strategic approach to international relations, the American liberal ideological grand strategy was a type of thinking based on a combination of the concept of hegemonic stability theory and the concept of democratic peace theory. Hegemonic stability theory maintains that the liberal world order does not arise spontaneously as a result of some global “invisible hand” of order. Instead, such a system requires a hegemonic power, i.e. a state willing and able to provide the world with a collective good in the form of economic stability and international security. The US, like the UK before it, has taken on the role of hegemon not out of altruism but because it is in its national interest to do so. At the same time, American analysts emphasized that although the US hegemony can be caricatured as unilateralism and ignoring allies and international institutions, in reality it is a “benevolent primacy”. It is an approach that is in line with the liberal traditions of the United States, but which at the same time recognises the world as a dangerous place where a just order can only be maintained by a strong power. This form of international primacy is based on the assumption that US power is good not only for the United

States but also for the rest of the world, due to the universalism of US socio-political values.

The argument is that the United States can only be fully secure in a world where everyone is equally secure. However, the existence of liberal institutions or international agreements is not enough. As Donald Kagan has written, history seems to indicate that goodwill, unilateral disarmament, avoidance of alliance building, convincing people of the evils of war, are of no use. What seems to work best in the international space is for those states that want to keep the peace to have a dominant power and a willingness to accept the burden of responsibility required to exercise such power [cf. Kagan, 1995: 570]. Such a liberal order is therefore only possible if the United States is willing and able to maintain it. Samuel Huntington, on the other hand, wrote that maintaining US primacy matters to both the world and the United States. Indeed, a world without US dominance will be more chaotic, with more violence, less democracy and less economic growth than a world in which the US continues to have more influence than any other country in shaping global affairs. The enduring international supremacy of the United States is therefore critical to the well-being and security of Americans and to a future of freedom, democracy, open economies, and international order [Huntington 1993].

On the other hand, the concept of democratic peace is based on the idea, popular among liberal internationalists, that liberal democracies do not fight each other [cf. Doyle 1997]. It still stems from the tradition of the philosophical thought of Immanuel Kant, who argued in his pamphlet *On Perpetual Peace* written in 1795 that the spread of constitutional republics was a necessary if not sufficient cause of peace between states. The idea of democratic peace was one of the constant elements of the American vision of the post-Cold War world. George W. Bush was not the only American politician to refer to it. The same was said by the democratic President Bill Clinton in 1994, stating that ultimately the best strategy for ensuring national security and building lasting international peace is to support democracies in other parts of the world, because democracies do not attack each other. A symbol of the consensus among the US political elite was the passage by the US Congress in 2005 of a bill introduced by Senators John McCain and Joe Lieberman, the Advance Democracy Act, which stated that wars between democratic countries are extremely rare, while wars between or within non-democratic countries are common and millions of people have lost their lives due to the policies of totalitarian governments.

The Bush Doctrine – from defensive to offensive liberalism

The Bush Doctrine is a term for the US policy strategy adopted after the terrorist attacks in New York in September 2001. It was shaped primarily as a reaction to the events of 9/11 in New York City, but it should be noted that the strategy of the Bush administration was heavily influenced by the ideas of the so-called neo-conservatives. They primarily have guided the nature of the response of the American elite. The neoconservatives were an intellectual movement that emerged in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s and became an important part of US domestic foreign policy debates throughout the 1990s. The neoconservatives constituted an informal group or, in other words, a network of connections composed mainly of intellectuals, former and current state administration officials, analysts, journalists and experts associated with think tanks such as the American Enterprise Institute and Project for the New American Century. This school was the epitome of offensive liberalism, understood as a combination of liberal belief in democracy and its impact on the peaceful coexistence of nations with a willingness to use force to change undemocratic regimes (while distrusting international institutions as ineffective and limiting US policies). Leading neoconservatives described themselves as “hard-core Wilsonians” and “liberal hawks”, i.e. as advocates of using US power to enforce the liberal principles that characterise the American society [Miller, 2010: 54].

The ideas of the neo-conservatives proved to be very functional in the situation in which the Bush administration found itself after the 9/11 attacks. George W. Bush was forced to quickly seek a response to a new, immediate threat to the country's security. Scholars analysing the rise of the Bush Doctrine point out that George W. Bush, who assumed the presidency without much experience in foreign policy, was forced to deeply rethink foreign policy in the face of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The personal qualities of the new president, in particular his deep faith, played an important role. The moralism and sense of mission that he derived from his faith led him to adopt a programme that was not limited to the uncompromising use of hard power but also included an important 'moral' element: the promotion of democracy. In response to the attacks, George Bush was said to have told his colleagues that this was a decisive moment in which an opportunity arose to restructure the world towards freedom. Above all, he was driven by moral idealism and the conviction that democracy was an innate right of humanity and that the US should be the country to offer its values to the world. His idea of

the democratisation of the world was a kind of a historical and divine imperative [cf. Dyson, 2014: 46-48].

The first evidence that the administration of President George W. Bush attempted to develop a comprehensive doctrine of national self-defence emerged in the President's State of the Union address in January 2002, in which the President declared that the greatest threat to the United States came from the intersection of terrorism, rogue states and weapons of mass destruction, and that there is an "axis of evil" consisting of Iran, North Korea and Iraq. Another important development of the Bush Doctrine came in June 2002, when the President claimed the right to launch pre-emptive strikes against countries deemed to be a threat before the US itself was attacked. President Bush declared that the United States must confront the worst threats before they occur, and that it must be ready to act pre-emptively when needed [Henderson, 2004: 6-7].

The Bush Doctrine was therefore based on a few basic principles. Firstly, it was a rejection of the principle of moral balance in international affairs. As part of what Robert Kaufman called moral-democratic realism, the Bush Doctrine assumed that liberal-democratic regimes were preferable to tyranny and all forms of authoritarianism [cf. Kaufman, 2007: 87-99]. Secondly, it rejected the social theory of terrorism and the belief that economic factors (poverty, hunger, unequal income distribution) were the root causes of the phenomenon. The Bush Doctrine was based on the claim that the terrorism against the US and Israel, was simply a murderous ideology designed to destroy Western liberalism. Consequently, this ideology is as dangerous as fascism/nazism and communism. The source of 9/11 and similar aggression is a 'culture of tyranny' that breeds fanatical, aggressive secular and religious despotism. The cure for this may lie in democratic regime change and the spread of liberal values throughout the world. Thirdly, the final principle of the Bush Doctrine was the recognition that post 9/11, the traditional approach to threats, i.e. deterrence, containment and *ex post facto* response, was inadequate when dealing with terrorists and authoritarian regimes. Thus, the United States reserves the right to launch a preventive war. While international law and standards have recognised the right of a state to launch a pre-emptive attack against another state when an attack by the latter is imminent, it rejects any right to preventive war. President Bush argued that in an age of globalisation, terrorism and weapons of mass

destruction, such distinctions had become meaningless. If an attack is imminent, it is too late to pre-empt it.

The Bush Doctrine took its final, formal shape in the “National Security Strategy” published in September 2002. Its main principles were the concept of the so-called “pre-emptive strike”, the concept of “rogue states” and the promotion of democracy as a strategy to combat international terrorism. Under this doctrine, Washington has ascribed to itself the right to a pre-emptive military attack on any state that poses or could pose a threat to its interests. In line with the White House's chosen policy, the US is also expected to support the spread of classical liberalism by helping to establish appropriate institutions and spreading the values associated with Western civilisation. The Bush Doctrine has evolved over the course of George Bush's two presidential terms. While in the first term, the emphasis in the announced NSS was mainly on the right to carry out a pre-emptive strike against states defined as rogue states, during the second term, elements related to the promotion of freedom and democracy took precedence.

The most succinct statement of the moral goals of the Bush Doctrine could be heard most notably in George Bush's second inaugural appearance, in which he said that it was the policy of the United States to seek out and support the development of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal: the end of tyranny in the world, and the new National Security Strategy adopted in 2006 noted that the United States must defend justice and freedom throughout the world because these principles are true and universal for all people. These non-negotiable general human values are best protected in democracies therefore the US government will defend them in word and deed by allocating adequate resources to develop and protect these ideals [NSS, 2006: 2]. In the NSS announced in 2006, the US reaffirmed the controversial doctrine of pre-emptive self-defence as central to the War on Terrorism declared after the 9/11 attacks. In his 2006 letter outlining the US National Security Strategy, President Bush stated that America is at war and that the new security strategy is a war strategy necessitated by the serious challenge facing Americans, namely the rise of terrorism fuelled by an aggressive ideology of hate [Gray, 2006: 556].

The shift in emphasis towards stressing the moral aspect of the doctrine was linked to developments in the international space and the US-led military operations resulting from the declared War on Terrorism. In May 2003, US leaders announced that major combat

operations in Afghanistan and Iraq had ended but that the War on Terrorism was continuing. With regard to Iraq, President Bush asserted that the battle for Iraq was one victory in the War on Terrorism, which began on 11 September and is still ongoing. To justify the continuation of the War on Terrorism despite the announcement of the achievement of military objectives in Iraq and Afghanistan, President Bush in his introduction to the new NSS emphasized the importance of promoting freedom, noting that the United States has an unprecedented opportunity to lay the foundations for future peace, and ideals that have inspired American history and development, i.e. freedom, democracy, human rights, are more often inspiring individuals and nations around the world. As free nations strive for peace, so too will the advancement of freedom make America safer. President Bush emphasised that the entire US security strategy rests on two pillars: 1) The first is the promotion of democracy, justice and human dignity - working to end tyranny in the world by promoting effective democracy, and supporting global prosperity through free and fair trade and wise development policies. Free and democratic governments are accountable towards their citizens and therefore manage the territory entrusted to them effectively by pursuing economic and social policies that benefit all citizens. Democratic governments do not oppress their citizens or attack other free nations. Peace and stability in the international environment can only be credibly built on a foundation of freedom; 2) The second is that solving the global challenges facing the international community is possible through cooperation and through American leadership of a growing community of democratic states. Many of the problems faced by modern states are transnational in nature, transcending the borders of individual states. Effective multilateral cooperation is key to solving these problems. History teaches that when Americans take responsibility, others do so too. Therefore, the US must continue its role as a global leader [NSS 2006: i-ii].

The spread of democracy, freedoms and the realisation of human rights remains a challenge due to the fact that 1) many countries are still in political transition and need to consolidate their democratic institutions and leaders who have won elections need to uphold democracy; 2) some countries have regressed by destroying the democratic freedoms their nations have enjoyed; 3) some governments have failed to provide their citizens with the benefits of effective democracy and prosperity leaving them open to the influence of authoritarian and anti-market demagogues; 4) some regimes have

sought to separate economic freedom from political freedom in their pursuit of prosperity while denying their citizens basic rights and freedoms; 5) tyranny in its cruellest forms still persists in many nations [NSS 2006: 3]. This is why the United States has long defended freedom, as it both reflects American values and promotes American interests.

Russian interpretation of the Bush Doctrine

The introduction of the new US geopolitical code into the international space coincided with a change of power in the Russian Federation. In 2000, Vladimir Putin took office as president. The chaos of the Yeltsin era created a public expectation for a strong leader who would be able to stabilise the internal situation. The newly elected president's main task thus became to stabilise the country's internal situation, which took place under the following slogan: "verticalisation of power". After coming to power, Vladimir Putin presented a comprehensive programme for Russia's social and economic development until 2010, which included measures to counteract the widening gap between Russia and the developed countries and to restore and strengthen Russia's position as one of the world leaders. The president was aware that for his plans to succeed Russia faced the need for deep structural reforms. In the opinion of the Russian authorities, the implementation of these reforms required the restoration of the authority of the central government and its strengthening.

One of the elements of Putin's political agenda during his first two presidential terms has also become a drive to restore Russia's relevance and influence in the international arena. With the end of the Cold War, the Russian Federation, which was established after the collapse of the USSR, began to search for a new formula for its international identity and to seek a new role for itself in international relations. The deep social and economic crisis associated with the processes of systemic transformation led to the previous directions of domestic and foreign policy being judged as a failed attempt to build a new Russian identity, and thus to a return to the typical elements marking the Russian path dependency, which manifested itself in domestic policy in the processes of centralisation of power, and in foreign policy in appeals to superpower identity and the concept of an "exclusive sphere of influence".

Initially, in order to restore Russia's traditional position as a superpower, Putin proposed a pragmatic and flexible approach from foreign policy [cf. Tretiakov, 2002]. It was to be a foreign policy oriented

primarily towards the defence of clearly defined national interests, but at the same time capable of adapting to changing conditions and opportunities. Putin's foreign policy pragmatism meant adopting a strategy aimed at overcoming the internal crisis and subsequently strengthening the power of the state and gradually reducing the distance between the existing international status quo and the acceptable order.

During Putin's first two terms, the implementation of the foreign policy line adopted and the restoration of Russia's position in the international arena were facilitated by the conjuncture in the international environment. The terrorist attacks in New York City in September 2001 made Russia an important ally for the West in the fight against Islamic fundamentalism. It would be impossible for the US and its European allies to conduct military operations in Afghanistan without Russia's consent and support. The Russian authorities were determined to make the most of the political conjuncture brought about by the events of September 2001. Its primary objective was to forge a relationship with the West that would allow it to co-decide on matters of international security and the regulation of emerging crises. The inclusion of Russia in the anti-terrorist coalition created such an opportunity for Russia. An additional element of success has been the economic conjuncture resulting from the rise in oil prices on world markets. Between 1999 and 2004, Russia experienced a clear economic recovery and dynamic development in all sectors of the economy. Russia's very good economic indicators at the time were mainly due to the high prices of energy commodities, the basis of Russian exports. Thanks to the inflow of petrodollars, which had a stabilising effect on public finances, the authorities managed to calm the domestic situation and put Russia on a path of sustainable economic growth, which remained stable in the following years as well. At the same time, international conflicts (the war in Iraq, sanctions against Iran) have made Russia a stable exporter of energy resources, which has contributed to Russia's growing importance on the international arena and has enabled Russian companies in the energy sector to dictate the terms of concluded contracts that are favourable to them. One symbol of Russia's return to the ranks of world powers was the Russian Federation's gaining of viable membership of the G8.

It seems that Russia's geostrategic policy during the presidency of Putin was based on a realistic approach to relations with the US, rooted in Cold War thinking built on the archaic concepts of peaceful coexistence and respect for spheres of influence, which, in the opinion of

the Russian political elite, was supposed to mean recognition by the West of Moscow's dominant role in the post-Soviet area. This way of perceiving the international environment by the political elite of the Russian Federation has significantly influenced the interpretation of events taking place in the international environment, including in the immediate vicinity of the Russian Federation, and linking them to the American strategy contained in the Bush Doctrine. In particular, the so-called colour revolutions have become an important element in US-Russian relations. "Rose Revolution" in Georgia in 2003, which led to the resignation of President Eduard Shevardnadze, and the "Orange Revolution" in Ukraine in 2004, which brought Viktor Yushchenko to power. The common denominator of the colour revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine was the declared desire to cooperate with EU and NATO structures and to be closer to the United States, which was considered in the Russian Federation as a violation of its security zone. The threat of losing influence in a zone considered strategically crucial has caused growing frustration on the part of the Russian authorities. Colour revolutions began to be increasingly seen as the implementation of the Bush Doctrine, an attempt to further weaken Russia and build an anti-Russian front.

In the Russian public space, attention began to be drawn that it is primarily the West that supports the colour revolutions and, under the slogan of democratization, tries to create a *cordon sanitaire* in the post-Soviet space, which will isolate Russia and inhibit the modernisation of the country, and thus the growth of its geopolitical power. Russian analysts have begun to link the colour revolutions to the US policy towards Russia, which they believe has maintained its continuity since the 1980s. Its consequence was to be the collapse of the USSR, and currently it would be the domination over the entire post-Soviet area by American influence. According to Russian analysts, the colour revolutions were therefore not protests caused by internal problems and a desire to democratise and replace the existing elites. They were treated as operations of Western elites and secret services aimed at weakening the Russian sphere of influence, and through the domino effect, also overthrowing the system of Putin's rule. These revolutions began to be clearly assessed as a tool of the geopolitical expansion of the West, which procured and financed them in order to install favourable regimes in the zone recognised by Moscow as the "near abroad". The Russian power elites were unable to accept the interpretation that the foreign policy failures were caused by their own incompetence and support for corrupt

and authoritarian regimes, disregarding the sympathies of the population. Therefore, the belief that Russia was a victim of Western diversion prevailed [cf. Kaczmarek 2006: 164-168]. This was made easier by the fact that it was not difficult to link the processes taking place in Georgia and Ukraine to the Bush Doctrine and present them as part of a geopolitical rivalry between the superpowers.

The direct indication in the American National Security Strategy of 2006 of Belarus as a country where tyranny should be ended and the events of the so-called revolution, made the Russian decision-makers certain that the social protests in the post-Soviet countries were instrumental. In response, Putin, in a speech at the 42nd Munich Security Conference in February 2007, accused Western countries of disregarding the voice and interests of the Russian Federation. At the same time, he declared that Russia would no longer accept the status quo and the US drive to create a unipolar international order [cf. M. Kaczmarek, *"Russian revisionism towards the West"*, OSW Works, no. 33, December 2009]. It seems that in the opinion of the Russian political elites, it was a signal and a warning to the West that the Russian Federation believes that it has become the object of aggression on the part of the USA, carried out by means of the so-called colour revolutions.

The events associated with the so-called the Arab Spring in 2010-2012, as well as the mass protests in the Russian Federation in late 2011 and early 2012 against the rigging of the State Duma elections, reinforced the Russian leadership's belief in the West's geopolitical aggression related to the implementation of the Bush Doctrine and the desire to rebuild political relations in the Middle East and the post-Soviet area. The Russian authorities were particularly concerned about the changing nature of social protests in Russia. While in the 1990s social and economic problems dominated, in 2007-2011 political demands began to clearly dominate, including problems of human rights, nature protection and demands for political reforms [cf. Robertson, 2013]. This is why the wave of protests and demonstrations in Ukraine in 2014 against Viktor Yanukovich, known as Euromaidan, was regarded by the Russian authorities as an attempt to move the colour revolutions strategy into a zone that directly threatened the security of the Russian state and the stability of the existing political regime.

In response to the events in Kiev, publications started to appear in the official Russian public space that began to portray the Russian world as the object of a ruthless attack, while the democratic Ukraine and its new authorities were portrayed as a threat to the Russian people. Such

an interpretation fitted in with Russia's traditional international identity and the way it viewed the international environment in terms of rival powers. Therefore, the Russian Federation returned to its *path dependency*, part of which was not only the consolidation of the political regime and a return to authoritarian forms of governance, but also a resurgence of power-imperialist rhetoric, as well as nationalist-traditionalist rhetoric. The effect of the ongoing processes was the decision to undertake a full-scale aggression against Ukraine, justified by the need to launch a pre-emptive strike in the face of threats to the Russian Federation arising from the territory of Ukraine and the defence of the so-called Russian world.

Ending

In the early 1990s, Francis Fukuyama, writing about the global victory of the “liberal revolution”, also warned that there was still a division of the world into a post-historical world and an area still entangled in history. These worlds will live side by side guided by different values and operating principles. The historical area of the world will still operate according to the rules of realism, so the post-historical area must use realistic methods in its relations with it. Relations between democratic and non-democratic countries will therefore continue to be characterised by distrust and fear, and despite the increase in economic interdependence, force will remain the ultimate rationale. Post-historical democracies will jointly defend themselves against external threats while promoting democracy in those countries where it does not yet exist.

While in the 1990s far-reaching international cooperation seemed possible under conditions of mutual interdependence and responsibility, the 9/11 terrorist attacks fundamentally changed the international situation. The specific security strategy adopted by the US administration, referred to as the Bush Doctrine, became the basis for military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, but what is more, it coincided with social protests against authoritarian and corrupt governments that took place in various parts of the world. From the perspective of countries described as liberal-democracies, this was a manifestation of wider macro-processes that were part of the “third wave of democratisation”. However, from the perspective of authoritarian regimes, it was the result of the implementing a new, offensive American security strategy, aimed at a radical reconstruction of international relations and consolidation of the US's unilateral

dominance in the world. The clash between these two ways of interpreting the processes taking place in the international environment has become a source of increasing tensions leading to more and more intense conflicts.

In Russian-US relations, realistic thinking, rooted in seeing the world as a competition for spheres of influence, has been confronted with idealistic thinking in terms of democratic peace. The clash between the historical and post-historical worlds led to a violent escalation of the conflict leading to the tragedy of war in Ukraine. Russian interpretation of the Bush Doctrine in terms of a geopolitical tool of American policy made it possible to explain political failures with external factors, as well as to legitimise the increasingly authoritarian ways of exercising power. As a result, the Bush Doctrine has become the main point of reference for Russian elites in assessing the processes of change taking place in the international environment, and for Russian propaganda a point of reference for legitimising the policy of aggression against Ukraine and building a Manichean worldview in which the conflict in Ukraine is presented as a “clash between the forces of good and evil”.

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Streszczenie:

Artykuł koncentruje się na kwestii Doktryny Busha jako podstawowego kodu geopolitycznego, który zdominował amerykańską politykę zagraniczną w pierwszych dekadach XXI wieku. Jego celem jest wyjaśnienie wpływu tego kodu i doktryny na agresywną politykę Rosji na Ukrainie. Autor analizuje kluczowe elementy współczesnej amerykańskiej strategii bezpieczeństwa, zwracając uwagę na sposób, w jaki amerykański kod geopolityczny został odczytany przez rosyjskie elity polityczne i jak wpłynęło to na rosyjskie zachowanie w stosunkach międzynarodowych. Wskazano, że "idealistyczna" próba szerzenia wartości demokratycznych zawarta w Doktrynie Busha została odczytana przez rosyjskie elity jako "realistyczny" instrument ekspansji geopolitycznej. Autor wyjaśnia konsekwencje związane z rosyjskim odczytaniem procesów zachodzących w środowisku międzynarodowym, które w rosyjskiej przestrzeni symboliczno-politycznej zostały utożsamione z realizacją przez USA Doktryny Busha. Autor stawia tezę, że wśród przyczyn wybuchu konfliktu na Ukrainie można wskazać specyficznie rosyjską interpretację Doktryny Busha.

Słowa kluczowe: Doktryna Busha, kod geopolityczny, Rosja, Ukraina, Stany Zjednoczone.