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======================= Global Trends =======================

Coalitions for Sustainable Finance and Sustainable Development

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Abstract—This article deals with the formation of coalitions for sustainable development and sustainable finance in developed countries and in Russia. In developed countries, broad national coalitions for sustainable development have been formed based on the initially established industry coalitions of investors and financial institutions for sustainable finance. The ideological core of such coalitions is the idea of new models of capitalism based on the principles of sustainable development as an ideal social structure. The concepts of stakeholder capitalism and the impact or caring economy are examples of such models. In Russia, similar coalitions are much narrower because of the imitation of following the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles and mass greenwashing. At the same time, there are objective factors that can lead to the expansion of ESG coalitions and strengthening incentives for the implementation of a sustainable development model in Russia.

Keywords: sustainable development, sustainable finance, ESG coalitions, responsible investment, ESG principles, impact economy, greenwashing

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past 10−15 years, developed countries have been rapidly moving towards a new ideology of economic development, which places environmental and social values and goals at the forefront. It is referred to as sustainable development, which emphasizes the fact that economic agents following its guidelines are forced to balance different, and to a large extent, contrary goals. Since the traditional paradigm of economic sciences recognizes the simultaneous pursuit of different goals as irrational, the new ideology requires a radical transformation of theoretical ideas about the activities of economic agents, including modifying the concept of value and rejecting a number of fundamental concepts of the traditional paradigm. Perhaps, in addition to rigid, mathematically rigorous models, more flexible methods of evolutionary psychology, biotechnology, and cybernetics will be actively used. For more information on the attempted theoretical revolution related to the growth of responsible investment, which is one of the most important elements of sustainable development, see (Danilov, 2021b).

The transition to a sustainable development model is not limited to changes in the economy and eco-nomic science. Transformations are underway in a large part of humankind's ideas of purposes and values, resulting in changes across the entire spectrum of human sciences and in the prevailing ideological imperatives.

The goals of sustainable development are set out in a United Nations document (United Nations, 2015). Many international organizations and states, guided by these goals, are developing plans for the transition to the new model. However, in recent years, the private sector has been more dynamically striving for sustainable development, largely under the influence of the activity of private investors, who voluntarily impose restrictions on the placement of investments. This type of investment is called responsible investment.

According to the UN-supported Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) Initiative, the total value of assets under management of responsible institutional investors who subscribe to the PRI increased from $6.5 trillion in 2006 to $103.4 trillion in 2020,[1] by almost 16 times.

The rapid growth of responsible investment and the subsequent introduction of ESG (environmental, social, and governance) standards in the functioning of financial markets have predetermined the special

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[1] About the P.R.I. Principles for Responsible Investment. https://www.unpri.org/pri/about-the-pri.

role of sustainable finance in the sustainable development model. It is through the financial markets that private capital has influenced the consolidation of the entrenchment of the new model of sustainable development as a consensus vision of a "beautiful future" of mankind. It should be noted that it was through this channel that the largest entrepreneurs in developed countries influenced public opinion by their example, investing their own capital in accordance with the ESG principles. The author did not find works that empirically confirm the importance of the responsible investment of individual private (family) capital or the capital of publicly significant individuals. However, the assumption that the public participation of the major entrepreneurs in responsible investments played the role of an incentive motive in the rapid increase in their volume seems reasonable (Danilov, 2021a).

There are two main blocks of reasons that caused an intensive movement towards sustainable development.

First, society's awareness of sustainable development has increased as a response to mounting environmental problems. They are increasingly evident in the scarcity of resources, the aggravation of social problems, and the growing global interdependence of mankind (the advent of the "age of internalization").

Second, there were additional factors in the financial sector. Responsible investors who want to contribute to solving global problems have emerged, and there is a demand for long-term confidence as a response to ultralow interest rates, cyclical risks, and financial instability (Danilov, 2021a).

The most prominent concerns have been about environmental risks, which is why for a long time (until 2020) "green" financial instruments developed faster than social ones. Green bond issuance typically accounted for more than 80% of total ESG-compliant bond issuance.

Experts at the World Economic Forum named four environmental risks among the five global risks with the highest probability of realization in 2021: extreme weather, losses from climate events, destruction of human habitats, and loss of biodiversity. In 2020, all five risks on the list were environmental; and in 2019, three out of five. Among the five strongest risks affecting the socioeconomic system in 2021, three were environmental (in 2020 also, three of the five were environmental, and in 2019, two were environmental) (WEF, 2021).

The coronavirus pandemic and the new social risks it has created have led to a more active issuance of social bonds. At the end of 2020, the volume of issues of social bonds and sustainable bonds (issued to finance environmental and social programs) for the first time equaled the volume of green bond issues (S&P Global Ratings, 2021).

Unlike developed countries and the largest developing economies, which are increasingly actively embarking on the path of sustainable development, Russia has so far remained extremely passive in this movement. In my opinion, this situation has developed due to the difference in the breadth of coalitions for sustainable development and sustainable finance in the world and in Russia.

COALITIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE FINANCE IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Broad coalitions for the introduction of the principles of sustainable development and sustainable finance in economic life were the most important factor that predetermined the accelerated development of sustainable finance and the idea of sustainable development in developed countries.

The "tragedy of the commons" is a classic problem in environmental economics. It describes a situation in a shared resource system where individual users, acting independently in accordance with their own interests, behave contrary to the common good of all users, depleting that resource through their collective actions. Common resources include not only natural resources that can be depleted but also, for example, air or water that can be overused by consumers. The common good is usually maintained through government taxation/regulation or the transfer of private property rights (Schoenmaker, 2017, p. 60).

E. Ostrom (Ostrom, 1990) proposed principles for the sustainable and equitable use of common resources. The main idea is to create coalitions that develop rules for the use of the common good, monitor the behavior of members, apply incremental sanctions against rule breakers, and provide affordable means to resolve disputes. To create an effective coalition, it is necessary to clearly define its boundaries in order to engage the most influential stakeholders as much as possible and to ensure that those affected by the rules can participate in changing them.

Following the principles of the design of coalitions developed by Ostrom (Ostrom, 1990), D. Schoenmaker considers the following features of coalitions for sustainable finance (Schoenmaker, 2017):

(1) well-defined boundaries of what percentage of the relevant group is covered by the coalition;

(2) membership rules that limit the use for the common good by local conditions. This can then be translated into the sustainable finance typology to which the coalition adheres;

(3) collective choice mechanisms: those affected by the rules and principles can participate in changing them;

(4) monitoring: reporting on compliance with the rules and principles, as well as an independent assessment of the degree of their compliance;

(5) sanctions and rewards: a system of penalties for participants' violations of the rules and rewards for their compliance;

(6) conflict resolution mechanism: quick access to inexpensive mechanisms for resolving conflicts between members or between members and officials.

Schoenmaker proposes that the rules governing the use for the common good, such as an affordable carbon budget, should follow a systems approach. He gives examples of the most powerful industry coalitions (in the wealth management industry, in the banking sector, and in the corporate sector) for sustainable finance (Schoenmaker, 2017, pp. 62–63):

— asset managers who share the principles of responsible investment (PRI signatories);

— asset managers who in their investment strategies focus on creating global long-term value (Focusing Capital on the Long Term Global, FCLT Global);

— banks sharing the Equator Principles;[2]

— banks that are members of the Global Alliance for Banking on Values (GABV);

— corporations developing the principles of sustainable finance within the framework of the events and programs of the World Economic Forum (WEF);[3]

— corporations that are members of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

What encourages long-term investors to join new sustainable finance coalitions? One of the main incentives is access to opportunities to transition to a sustainable economy. Members of the PRI, FCLT Global, GABV, and WBCSD are inherently motivated to work towards long-term value creation. Other investors may be attracted to the argumentation of alliances of financial institutions that advocate sustainable finance, or they may be compelled to follow these principles by cooperation with corporations that share them and limit their business contacts on these grounds. Investors may be interested in joining in order to avoid the risk of losing assets. Collective investor advocacy by the coalition to encourage governments to clarify their agendas, for example in relation to climate change mitigation (including the timing of regulations and taxes), could reduce political uncertainty about the future value of assets.

Coalitions for sustainable development are much broader than coalitions for sustainable finance. As a rule,

they are not formed according to the industry principle, since there were no economic incentives for entrepreneurs from "brown" industries to switch to green technologies before the emergence of a large group of responsible investors. The growth in the share of responsible investment, the activity of coalitions for sustainable finance, and the initiatives of individual entrepreneurs, investors, politicians, and scientists created such incentives and predetermined the formation of broad-based community-wide coalitions for sustainable development.

Such coalitions are formed after the idea of sustainable development captures the whole society. They are built to a large extent on the same principles as the sectoral (guild and industrial) associations for sustainable finance that arose earlier.

At the level of public policy in developed countries, both leading political forces and weaker parties and social movements are currently promoting sustainable development. In a number of countries, this idea is actively promoted by national governments.

National banks show a generally neutral attitude. As a rule, they are not actively involved in the agenda, but they are under significant pressure from political organizations and independent experts who demand that at least the green factor be taken into account in the ongoing monetary policy.

Among non-financial corporations, a significant proportion of companies that benefit from sustainable finance follow the principles of sustainable development. Financial intermediaries, consultants, and auditors are actively involved in setting the agenda on the topic.

The role of responsible investors continues to grow, their share in the total volume of investments is very noticeable, and in some countries it is prevalent. The shares of assets invested in accordance with the PRI and ESG principles in the total volume of professionally managed assets in 2020 were as follows: Canada 62%, the European Union (EU) 42%,[4] Australia 38%, United States 33%, Japan 24% (The Global Sustainable Investment Alliance, 2021).

MODELS OF CAPITALISM BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS THE IDEOLOGICAL CORE OF COALITIONS

The broadest possible coalitions are formed based on common ideas about the ideal social order. In the case of coalitions advocating the transition to

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[2] The Equator Principles are a risk management system adopted by financial institutions to identify, assess, and manage environmental and social risks in projects, primarily designed to provide the minimum standard of due diligence and monitoring to support responsible risk decision-making. https://equator-principles.com/about/.

[3] To date (2022), numerous such events and programs have been formed within the WEF. Examples include the initiatives of the Getting to Zero Coalition and Mobilizing Investment for Clean Energy in Emerging Economies.

[4] It should be noted that in the EU the share of responsible investors peaked in 2014 (59%), but then it declined as a result of the stricter criteria used for classifying investors as responsible (which is also typical for some other countries), and also because of the introduction of mandatory regulation (for example, disclosure of non-financial reporting for all companies of a certain size).

sustainable development, these ideas proceed from the fact that the transformation of the goals of socioeconomic development in accordance with the goals of sustainable development leads to the emergence of a conceptually new model of capitalism.

At the same time, its formation is perceived as a defense of capitalism itself, understood as an exceptional value that made people rich and free. Development according to the Washington Consensus, a system of beliefs centered on the free market as the most important factor in growth, has now been declared a mistake, since the effectiveness of the capitalist system depends on a much larger number of institutions (Henderson, 2021, p. 228). In earlier works, the goal was to protect capitalism from capitalists (Zingales, Rajan, 2004). In contrast, supporters of sustainable development propose new versions of capitalism, using both the models formulated by L. Zingales and R. Rajan (an open economy opposed to the model of crony capitalism), and the division of institutions into inclusive and extractive, which was described by D. Acemoglu and D. Robinson (Acemoglu, Robinson, 2015). Obviously, the idea of a sustainable development model takes into account the positions of leftist ideologies to a greater extent than the model of an open (competitive, liberal) economy, which contributes to financial development in general (Danilov, 2020).

At the same time, supporters of sustainable development, first, are extremely strictly in favor of "a transparent democratic government, as well as other institutions of an open inclusive society, including the rule of law, universal respect for truth and independent media" (Henderson, 2021, p. 221), and, second, they clearly separate the models of sustainable development from the model of the state economy (Schoenmaker, 2020).

In my opinion, the following two concepts (models) of sustainable development, which are at the center of public discussions, are the most popular ones:

— the concept of stakeholder capitalism; and

— the concept of the impact (or caring) economy.

The concept of stakeholder capitalism is actively promoted by the head of the World Economic Forum K. Schwab. He defines it as a model for organizing a society in which private corporations take care of the public interest, which, in his opinion, corresponds best to the social and environmental challenges of our time (Schwab, 2019). Accordingly, the organization he leads is developing a conceptual framework for a new model of capitalism and compliance metrics.

The concept of a caring economy was developed by Schoenmaker. It is an economy in which governments and corporations balance profit on the one hand and the achievement of sustainable development goals on the other. The author subsequently renamed this conceptual model as the impact economy (Schoenmaker, 2020). The renaming eliminated the duality of terminology in describing both the concept of impact investment and the corresponding conceptual model of the economy. This concept relies to the greatest extent on the theoretical foundations, including the comparative analysis of D. Kopstein and M. Lichbach (Kopstein, Lichbach, 2005). It is much broader than the concept of stakeholder capitalism and uses the latter as one of its constituent elements.

Schoenmaker formulated the following main differences between the impact economy paradigm and the current paradigm of the economic system of capitalism (Table 1).

The impact economy model is positioned as the golden mean between the market and state economy models.

In a market economy, the government is responsible for public goods (nonexclusive and noncompetitive goods) and creates the conditions for economic growth. Private companies produce and sell goods on the market without considering the social or environmental impacts. Companies operate in the interests of their shareholders. The common good is the exclusive province of government.

In a public economy, the government (the state) is powerful and responsible for the production of both public goods and, in large part, private goods. Companies can produce private goods, but they are largely owned by the state.

In his work, Schoenmaker (Schoenmaker, 2020) compares the quantitative characteristics and measures of the qualitative parameters of three countries, which are the most pronounced examples of the three types of modern economic systems: United States (market economic system), EU (impact (caring) system), and China (state system).

Europe is indeed an intermediate link between the market and state economies in terms of GDP per capita, level of competition, business dynamics, and receptivity to innovation. At the same time, in terms of social and environmental well-being, Europe is ahead of both the United States and China. Europe (compared to the United States and China) has the lowest level of inequality (according to the Gini coefficient), the highest level of human rights, the highest level of gender equality, the lowest level of carbon dioxide emissions, and the highest level of forest cover. As a result, Europe has the highest level of the SDG Index and the largest share of taxes in GDP. The European Union was one of the first in the world to embrace sustainable development (Ponedelko, 2021), which establishes it as a leader, together with New Zealand and Canada, in moving towards a sustainable development model.

Table 2 shows the values of the two main integral indices (SDG and CSR), which take into account the progress of countries in various areas of sustainable development for the three selected types of economic systems and Russia.

Table 1. The difference between the impact economy and the current economy

Parameter	Current paradigm	Impact economy
Goals		
At the level of the economy	Stimulating GDP growth	Well-being in a broad sense
At the corporate level	Profit maximization	Managed goals
Decision-making criteria		
At the level of the economy	Public benefit based on fiscal and economic indicators	Public benefit based on fiscal, economic, social, and environmental indicators
At the corporate level	Net present value based on financial factors (maximization of financial value)	Net present value based on integral cost[1] (integrated value maximization)
Control		
At the level of the economy	Parliament	Parliament
At the corporate level	Shareholders	Stakeholders
Reporting		
At the level of the economy	Budget	Welfare budget
At the corporate level	Financial statements	Integrated reporting

Source: (Schoenmaker, 2020, p. 2)

[1]The concept of integrated value involves taking into account not only financial but also social and environmental aspects. It is also referred to in the literature as the total value, true value, etc.

Table 2. The values of integral indices of sustainable development for three types of economic systems and for Russia

Rating	Economic system			
	market (United States)	impact (EU)	state (China)	Russia
SDG	73.0	78.1	70.1	68.9
CSR				
General	69.0	78.8	53.0	31.0
Social	65.2	83.5	52.0	28.0
Ecological	70.8	88.2	59.5	23.0

Source: (Schoenmaker, 2020); for Russia, calculations by RANEPA's employees D.A. Pivovarov and I.S. Davydov.

Adding CSR to the analysis of ratings shows how far Russia is lagging behind in the field of sustainable development, at least in terms of the metrics that responsible investors take into account.

COALITIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE FINANCE IN RUSSIA COMPARED TO COALITIONS IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Obviously, without a broad coalition of interest groups focused on the development of sustainable finance in Russia, it is not possible to introduce the principles of sustainable finance in the Russian financial sector in the near future.

At the same time, the introduction of environmental protection goals in the practice of Russian corporations in Russia can receive quite strong support at the political level. The modern Russian political elite, in its activities, analyzes and takes into account the requests that are supported (or may be supported in the future) by a significant part of society. However, in practical politics, requests are taken into account, provided that they do not threaten the political elites.

It seems that the demands of society for environmental protection and for the intensification of socially oriented measures correspond to these condi-

tions. It cannot be ruled out that these requests will be supported and implemented in political decisions.

At the same time, it should be taken into account that the green agenda is not included in the programs of parliamentary parties, and the slogans of sustainable development in terms of social problems are formulated to a large extent by the "non-systemic" opposition. These factors significantly reduce the power of the coalition in its political part.

However, we can assume the following composition of the coalition for sustainable finance in modern Russia:

— green political movements that exert soft political pressure;

— representatives of state power who seek to intercept the social agenda from the opposition;

— state corporations looking for an opportunity to apply their resources in various aspects, including in terms of the economic and public effect;[5]

— brown non-financial corporations, which are afraid of incurring significant losses related to the entry into force of the border corrective carbon tax of the EU;

— other non-financial corporations that see an additional resource in attracting investments in global markets through the interest of responsible investors and in the form of using the investment resources of state corporations;

— consultants and experts seeking to earn additional income on a fashionable topic;

— Moscow Exchange, actively involved in the sustainable finance agenda through participation in international organizations (primarily, the World Federation of Exchanges) and discussion clubs;

— Bank of Russia (subject to the intensification of efforts to promote the ideas of sustainable finance in Russia and their implementation in monetary policy).

The composition of a potential coalition differs significantly from similar associations in developed countries. However, even the list given above is only a potential composition of the coalition for sustainable finance in Russia, and the actual coalition is significantly narrower. In Table 3, the author presents his vision of the differences between coalitions for sustainable finance in Russia and in the world.

Financial intermediaries, by themselves, do not generally act as conduits for the concept of sustainable finance. They are actively involved in the implementa-

tion of the concept when they see a noticeable demand from investors and other categories of consumers of financial services. Therefore, it can be assumed that financial intermediaries in Russia may also be actively involved in the implementation of the concept of sustainable finance when they see demand for its elements from investors.

Some Russian corporations whose shares are traded on foreign exchanges became involved in promoting sustainable development standards in 2020, when the coronavirus pandemic forced global corporations to increase their attention on sustainable development issues, which was also reflected in the actions of global stock exchanges. For example, only in October 2020, MTS announced that it had "started preparing an updated strategy for sustainable development and corporate social responsibility until 2025."[6]

Another part of Russian corporations, exporters of carbon-intensive products to the EU, took up the problem only in 2021, when it became clear that a carbon tax would be introduced in the very near future. Their response has been mixed: only a small proportion of these corporations have actually taken up the challenge of reducing their carbon footprint, while the majority intend only to imitate such activities, actually engaging in greenwashing—creating a deceptive image of a green company—by misleading investors.

Unlike other countries, in Russia the state is still extremely weakly involved in sustainable development and sustainable finance. At the federal level, the development of incentives for the development of instruments of sustainable finance in Russia is just beginning; however, so far this process concerns only green financing instruments.

In April 2019, the Russian government approved a resolution,[7] according to which enterprises have the right to reimburse the costs of paying coupon income on bonds issued as part of the implementation of investment projects to introduce the best available technologies.

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[5] It is worth highlighting the actions taken by VEB.RF to create the foundations for the functioning of markets for instruments of sustainable finance in Russia. VEB.RF has developed and approved guidelines for the development of investment activities in the field of green finance in Russia and, as an appendix to these recommendations, a taxonomy of green investments in Russia, i.e., two fundamental documents, without which the functioning of the market for private responsible investment in the field of the green economy would not be possible.

[6] In an address to shareholders, distributed through the National Depository Center, MTS explained its decision as follows: "The global situation with the pandemic has resulted in adjustments in the attitude of many companies to corporate social responsibility, putting the latter at the forefront of strategic business development. Today, corporations are forced to look for new approaches to solve problems, to act together in order to give the fight against the crisis the required impetus in the implementation of sustainable development goals. In this situation, the ESG factors have become even more relevant, since they allow us to assess the importance of ongoing changes for the future development of the business."
https://cadocs.nsd.ru/ 20201030%20MTS.pdf.

[7] In the work (Danilov, Pivovarov, Davydo, 2021), the authors give a number of egregious examples; here, we give only one. Even the compilers of sustainable development indices (Moscow Exchange and the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs) in Russia give priority to companies from brown industries, which make up 62% of the lists of these indices.

Table 3. Comparison of the composition of coalitions for sustainable finance in developed countries and in Russia

	In developed countries	In Russia
Public policy	Leading political forces represented in parliament	Predominantly politicians outside the parliament, incl. "non-systemic"
Government and quasi-government	National governments, in a number of countries very actively involved in the process	The active role of VEB.RF, as well as the more-or-less active role of other state corporations and individual federal executive bodies
National banks	Generally neutral attitude; lack of active participation	The Bank of Russia is becoming increasingly actively involved in the agenda, and in general, has a positive attitude
Non-financial corporations	A significant proportion of corporations benefiting from sustainable finance follow the ESG principles	Isolated cases of formal adherence to the ESG principles (all of them involve listing on a global exchange); the activities of many large corporations destroy the environment, which makes them opponents of the ESG
Financial intermediaries	Extremely active participation in the agenda	Generally neutral attitude; lack of active participation
Consultants and auditors	Extremely active participation in the agenda	Extremely active participation in the agenda
Investors	The role of responsible investors is growing rapidly, they are the main driving force behind ESG coalitions	Responsible investors do not exist as an independent group (there are no domestic investors; foreign investors consider Russia as a negative example in addition to sanctions)

Source: compiled by the author.

Decree of the Government of Russia No. 1912-r dated July 14, 2021 approved the "Goals and main directions of sustainable (including green) development of the Russian Federation." The document very accurately characterizes the attitude of the government to the problems of sustainable development. It is a document of only 3 pages, containing both the goals and the main directions of sustainable development. Of course, the appearance of such an order, even this most concise order, is a small step towards civilization. However, out of all areas of sustainable development, the government has limited itself to green issues and has ignored social issues.

The draft law "On amendments to the Federal Law "On the electric power industry" and certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation in relation to the Introduction of green certificates" began to be developed in 2019; however, it was terminated for unspecified reasons in 2021.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ABSENCE OF A BROAD COALITION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN RUSSIA

Russia's sustainable development agenda intensified in 2020–2021. However, so far this process has not led to the formation of a broad coalition for sustainable development. The main consequence of the absence of a broad coalition for sustainable development in Russia is the imitation of activities in this direction. Mimicking government imitation does not incur direct losses for investors, but corporate imitation of sustainability transition activities can lead to it because it misleads investors.

The big problem of Russian corporations has always been a certain imitation of corporate governance, the mimicking the corporate behavior of Russian corporations with classic examples of corporate

behavior. I. Belikov considers the gap between the formal legal role of the boards of directors of Russian public companies and the practice of corporate governance in them to be "catastrophic" (Belikov, 2019, p. 486). The habit of imitation has also persisted in the field of sustainable finance, which is being introduced in the practice of corporate governance, the disclosure of adherence to which is required by international stock exchanges where shares of Russian corporations are traded. By imitating adherence to sustainable development standards, corporations are engaged in greenwashing.

Greenwashing is a fairly common phenomenon in the world, since there are objective reasons for its existence related to the difficulties in assessing the compliance of corporate behavior with the ESG principles (shift in ESG ratings samples by the size of corporations and industry structure; lack of a holistic methodology and uniform standards for assessing ESG factors; etc. (see Danilov, Pivovarov, Davydov, 2021)). As the issuance of social bonds and other sustainable instruments grows, so does the spread of "sustainability-washing" practices (S&P Global Ratings, 2021).

However, in Russia, almost everything that is labeled as sustainable finance turns out to be greenwashing on closer inspection.[8]

In the context of the weakness of coalitions for sustainable development, the effective implementation of ESG principles in Russia is difficult. However, it is clear that there are at least three factors that can seriously change the situation for the better.

First, the EU's position to force foreign trade partners to comply with these standards. The analysis showed that these EU measures will have the strongest affect Russia (60% of whose imports to the EU are energy products), especially after 2030 (Leonard et al., 2021). In addition to the existing rules for listing on global exchanges, this forms an extremely powerful incentive for corporations to actually follow the ESG principles.

Second, a fairly wide layer of responsible private investors can be created in Russia, which can significantly strengthen the coalition for sustainable development. In relation to this, the Bank of Russia has a gigantic resource, which can introduce the carbon neutrality indicator into monetary policy. Moving from a market-neutral to a carbon-neutral Lombard list will provide a significant advantage to investors in green bonds, finally creating incentives for responsible investment.

Third, financial regulators have every opportunity to suppress greenwashing,[9] which will increase the reliability of responsible investments.

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[8] The author does not share the reviewer's opinion that the main tools to fight greenwashing is the national green taxonomy and existence of verification procedures. However, taxonomy and verification are indispensable for the effective suppression of greenwashing by instruments of financial regulation and supervision.

[9] Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of April 30, 2019 N 541 "On approval of the Rules for granting subsidies from the federal budget to Russian organizations to reimburse the costs of paying coupon income on bonds issued as part of the implementation of investment projects to introduce the best available technologies."

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===================== Global Trends =====================

Trends in Political Islam: Transition towards Liberalization

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Abstract—The evolution of Islamism/political Islam as an ideological system is analyzed. This system was formed in the 1970s−1980s and initially played the role of a progressive and alternative model, replacing the previously dominant ideas of Arab nationalism. However, the Islamists failed to fully achieve one of their main goals—the creation of an Islamic state—because of the deterrence of secular authoritarian states. The events in the Persian Gulf and the temporary drop in oil prices in the late 1990s aggravated the ideological crisis of Islamism and led to its rethinking. As a solution, a more liberal version of Islamism was proposed in the form of post-Islamism, which combined Islamic and democratic principles and was focused on duties rather than human rights. The next milestone in liberalizing Islamist ideas was the events of the Arab Spring, which led to a rethinking of post-Islamist ideas, as well as the liberalization and politization of the Salafi doctrine. Moreover, the failures of a number of Islamist parties in achieving political power, as well as the activities of radical Islamist groups, discredited Islamism among the population of the Middle East and North Africa. It is likely that the next crisis of Islamism will lead to its further liberalization or the formation of a new ideological model.

Keywords: Islamism, political Islam, post-Islamism, Middle East, instability, Muslim Brotherhood
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Being a multidimensional and ambiguous phenomenon, political Islam/Islamism has undergone significant transformations in recent decades. The relevance of the research topic is determined by the growth of Islamist groups and movements of various kinds, whose actions influence the political situation in the Middle East and beyond. The systematic approach used in this study made it possible to analyze not only individual aspects of Islamism but also to synthesize them into a single picture.

As a rule, new ideas arise during crises and/or sociopolitical upheavals as a reaction to stagnation and the desire to overcome it. Islamism organizationally took shape at the turn of the 1970−1980s and achieved enormous popularity in the Arab world as an alternative model to Arab nationalism, which had discredited itself with defeats in the Arab−Israeli wars, as well as the inability to unite all Arabs "under one roof" and resolve sociopolitical problems (Khairullin, 2019). The culminating result of the victory of Islamism was the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran, which, despite its Shiite character, gave a powerful impetus to Islamist movements throughout the Middle East. Together with Iran, Saudi Arabia was active in proselytizing and was more likely to take a leading position in the predominantly Sunni region. The oil embargo of 1973, followed by the oil boom, strengthened the positions of the Saudi kingdom (Kepel, 2003).

The astronomical enrichment of the Saudis through the influx of petrodollars allowed them to promote the conservative Wahhabi version of Sunni Islam throughout the Middle East. The leadership of Saudi Arabia considered increasingly popular political Islam to be a new integration component, which, pushing the factors of language, culture, and ethnicity to the background, would unite not only the peoples and states of the Middle East but also Muslims from all over the world into a single ummah. The creation of an Islamic welfare state became the dream of many Islamist movements and groups in the Middle East (Vasiliev, 2020).

However, the events in the region in the early 1990s significantly weakened the mobilization, political, and cultural potential of Saudi Arabia's strategy. In the first place, we mean Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991, because of which the Saudi kingdom had to call for help from American military forces to stop Iraqi aggression. The thought that "infidels," represented

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by American soldiers, would trample on the sacred land of the Arabian Peninsula seriously undermined the authority of the Saudis in the eyes of Muslims throughout the region. Saudi Arabia's positioning itself as the leader of the Sunni world and the guardian of two shrines (Mecca and Medina) were not correlated to its decision to bring in foreign troops to resolve the conflict.

The second cause in discrediting the Saudi strategy was the collapse of the illusions of the majority of the population of the countries of the region who came to the Persian Gulf monarchies (including Saudi Arabia) to earn money. Working in the oil fields did not improve the life of most Middle Eastern countries (perhaps, except for Egypt), and conservative Wahhabi Islam became associated with wealthy Gulf monarchies and aroused hostility (Kepel, 2003).

Finally, it was the temporary drop in hydrocarbon prices in the late 1990s that contributed to the decline in the popularity of Saudi-style political Islam (Akaev at el., 2012).

POST-ISLAMISM AS A REACTION TO THE CRISIS OF ISLAMISM

Against the background of the obvious ideological crisis of Islamism and the growth of radical Islamist groups, it was rethought in the spirit of liberalization. In particular, a new improved model of Islamism was proposed, supposed to adapt to the realities of the modern globalized world—post-Islamism.

Post-Islamists believed that under the dominance of secular authoritarian regimes, Islamism could not achieve its main goal—the creation of an Islamic state (Bayat, 1996; Roy, 2004). Islamism looks to the past (the ambition to create an Islamic state according to the model of the "golden age of Islam"), while post-Islamism looks to the future and can well get along with those democratic values that do not contradict the basic principles of Islam (Lauzière, 2005). One of the ideologists of post-Islamism, American–Iranian researcher A. Bayat, defined post-Islamism as a state in which, after a series of experiments, even in the eyes of the most ardent supporters, the attractiveness, energy, symbols, and sources of legitimacy of Islamism are exhausted. Post-Islamism is an attempt to unite religiosity and rights, faith and freedom. It seeks to turn the founding principles of Islamism on the head, emphasizing rights instead of duties, pluralism in the space of a single authoritarian voice, historicity instead of fixed scripture, and the future instead of the past. At the same time, it is not anti-Islamic in nature but rather reflects a trend towards the resecularization of religion. In the first place, this trend calls for limiting the political role of religion (Bayat, 1996).

As successful examples of building a post-Islamic society, one can cite Turkey and Iran, which at the turn of the 1990s–2000s managed to combine Islam with individual freedom and choice, connecting their image with democratic values (Bayat, 2007). Note that later the authoritarian style of government intensified in both countries, which cast doubt on the possibility of success in building a post-Islamic society. In addition, in the 2000s a number of politically nonexhausted Islamist parties proved that their electoral potential was still strong, and they still strove to achieve political power. For example, repression and severe restrictions in electoral rules did not prevent the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood from showing good results in the legislative elections in 2005. The Moroccan Justice and Development Party also performed well at the turn of the 1990s–2000s, showing the positive dynamics of the growth of deputy mandates in the legislative body of the country. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that in the countries under consideration, within the evolution of ideological paradigms, liberal tendencies were manifested.

THE ARAB SPRING AS A NEW FRONTIER IN THE LIBERALIZATION OF ISLAMISM

The revolutionary events of the Arab Spring significantly adjusted the ideological architecture of the Middle East. The fall of authoritarian regimes and the growth of protests in support of democratic principles led to another discussion about the "decline of Islamism" and the onset of a new "post-Islamic dawn." Describing the new post-Islamic society, the Western European researcher F. Cavatorta uses the term *new Islamists* to describe the new religiosity associated with the Arab uprising and spontaneous collaboration with institutionalized political Islam (Cavatorta, 2012b).

During the Arab Spring, Tunisia and Morocco became new examples of the formation of a post-Islamic society. The success of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt is difficult to fit into the post-Islamist paradigm due to its short duration and the inability of the Egyptian Islamists to hold on to the political arena (Ketchley, 2017).

In Tunisia, the moderate Islamist Renaissance Party (Ennahda), ideologically related to the Muslim Brotherhood, showed firm intentions to reach compromise and make consensus decisions that were far from its initial campaign promises (Cavatorta, 2012a). As a result of the parliamentary race in 2011, Ennahda won, receiving 89 out of 217 seats. In the parliament, between 2011 and 2014, the party took a pragmatic approach and formed the Troika coalition, which included the Democratic Forum for Labor and Liberties and the Congress for the Republic. Temporary rapprochement for tactical purposes allowed the Islamists to take a dominant position and influence the formation of the political agenda in the Tunisian parliament (Vasil'ev et al., 2019).

Obviously, to achieve the common goal—the transition from authoritarianism to democracy—Tunisian Islamists were ready to make a temporary tactical rapprochement with non-Islamist parties. Representatives of Ennahda repeatedly stressed the compatibility of Islam with democracy and advocated a free and just society in Tunisia (Cavatorta and Merone, 2015). However, the energetic policy of the Islamist party stalled in 2014, when it failed to become the leader in the next parliamentary elections. The loss of positions was due to the deepening contradictions amid provocations from conservative and radical groups regarding the future of the country's Basic Law. They were dissatisfied with Ennahda's statements that Sharia would not be the only source of legislation (Khairullin, 2019). The Islamists took second place in terms of the number of deputy mandates and lost the opportunity to influence political decisions in the parliament. Nevertheless, the party managed to stay in the political arena as opposed to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

The Moroccan moderate Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD) (close to the Muslim Brotherhood and sharing the same name as the ruling party in Turkey) also showed the ability to take advantage of the favorable political environment and uphold democratic rights and freedoms. As a result of the political struggle, Moroccan Islamists won the 2011 parliamentary elections and formed a government. Despite opposition from the royal authorities, the PJD repeated its success in the parliamentary elections of 2016. According to the Belgian researcher S. Zemni, the PJD can be called post-Islamist in the sense that it does not so much seek to restore the original Islamic city of the time of the Prophet as to create a social order in which justice is guaranteed through respect for Islamic values that have their genealogy in sacred texts (Zemni, 2013).

The examples of building a post-Islamic society in Iran and Turkey are unstable and dubious. However, the Tunisian and Moroccan models, which approached the transformation of political Islam based on integration into democratic choice; the civil state; and the separation of religion and politics, seem to have succeeded in approaching the core of the post-Islamic idea.

The Arab Spring contributed to the qualitative transition of a number of Salafi movements from preaching to active participation in political elections. Note that the Salafi concept, formed in the 13th—18th centuries, is based, first and foremost, on the idea that Islam has been distorted over the past centuries by various innovations, and to get rid of them, it is necessary to return to the times of Prophet Muhammad and the four righteous caliphs—the "golden age" of Islam. This goal is a constant source of inspiration for Salafists (Naumkin, 2005). Repre-

sentatives of this movement spread their ideas through preaching activities, which included calls (da'wāt) and a complete refusal to participate in politics (Wiktorowicz, 2006). It is also worth noting that Salafism and Islamism—a trend in Islam and the political ideology formed based on it—cannot be identified (Khairullin, 2020).

Before the events of the Arab Spring, the Salafis did not engage in political activities and limited their presence in the social sphere—except for, perhaps, the Salafis from Kuwait (Khairullin, 2020). However, the events of 2011 and 2012 radically changed the situation: Salafi political parties began to appear in some Middle Eastern states.

They were formed in Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen. In Morocco, Salafi movements showed an active civic stance and were able to influence the outcome of the parliamentary elections in 2011 and 2016. The participation of Salafis in political elections led to an ideological split into two camps: some supporters considered politics an integral part of modern life and a tool for upholding Islamic principles, while others considered participation in political elections as a temporary action.

Although the liberal-minded part of the Salafists did not achieve significant success and did not become an active political force, the emergence of Salafi parties indicates significant shifts towards the liberalization of the traditional Salafi doctrine.

A significant trend towards liberalization was also observed in the ranks of the traditional Islamist organization Muslim Brotherhood on the eve of the events of the Arab Spring. After having lost the parliamentary elections in November—December 2010, the liberal-minded members of the Muslim Brotherhood created the Freedom and Justice Party, which won the early elections in 2012 thanks to its democratic program and slogans. Thus, the President of Egypt and leader of the party, M. Morsi, in an interview to the *Asia and Africa Today*, stated that since the people in Islam were the source of power, democracy would be an integral part of the party's course (Vasil'ev and Petrov, 2012). Thus, within the ranks of the Muslim Brotherhood, moderate Islamist views prevail, and there is a trend towards greater liberalization of the organization, which takes the form of democratic Islamism.

Among other things, in the past few years, the public's trust in Islamist movements and Islamism in general has been declining. This dynamic is facilitated by the failure of moderate Islamist parties and movements to achieve power and their inability to solve socioeconomic problems, as well as the activities of radical Islamist groups. According to researchers from Princeton and Michigan Universities, trust in Islamist parties and trust in religious leaders have declined in six key Arab countries over the past five years, which has also affected mosque attendance. Thus, in 2013,

8% of the surveyed Arabs called themselves nonreligious ("inactive Muslims"); by 2018, their share increased to 13% (Akyol, 2019).

Trust in Islamist parties that share an ideological affinity with the Muslim Brotherhood declined significantly, and their popularity and legitimacy are at their lowest among the Arab public, dropping from 47.5% to 19.8% between 2011 and 2019 (*First Annual...*, 2020).

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Organizationally formed at the turn of the 1970s−1980s, Islamism acted as a liberal ideological model able to correct the sociopolitical mistakes of Arab nationalism. However, the movement failed to achieve its goal—to build an Islamic state—and constantly faced opposition from authoritarian regimes, which led to an ideological crisis and a rethinking of Islamist ideas in the early 1990s. As a way out of this situation, a more liberal version of Islamist ideas was proposed, post-Islamism. However, the examples of post-Islamic societies in Iran and Turkey proved to be short-lived due to the rise of authoritarian tendencies. In addition, the success of a number of Islamist parties at the turn of the 2000s showed the continuing potential of Islamism. The events of the Arab Spring accelerated liberal democratic tendencies, which were also reflected in Islamist ideology. In particular, moderate Islamists who advocated the reconciliation of Islam and democracy have succeeded in Tunisia and Morocco, which has led to a resurgence of post-Islamic ideas. The growth of liberal tendencies intensified with the emergence of Salafi parties in a number of states in the Arab world. However, the liberal approaches of the Islamists are enduring difficulties that do not allow them to fully achieve their goals. Radical Islamist groups, which also underwent evolutionary development during the Arab Spring, are a special problem on this path.

Against the backdrop of ongoing instability in the Middle East and North Africa, it is hardly surprising that the effectiveness of the slogans of Islamist parties, movements, and Islamism in general is declining, reflecting a certain disappointment on the part of the population. Of course, this trend is not very pronounced, but the current position is not comparable with the popularity of Islamism in the 1970−1980s or during the Arab Spring. Moreover, the decline in the popularity of Islamism testifies to the liberalization of public consciousness and the gradual secularization of social and political relations in the Middle East. In turn, the liberalization of the political consciousness of conservative Salafis and moderate Islamists indicates a significant transformation of Islamism, which may lead to the emergence of new modifications in it.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that he has no conflicts of interest.

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═ European Studies ═

Benefits of Regional Integration: Redefining the Concept

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Abstract—For decades, the topic of regional integration has been considered in research through its economic benefits. The classic theories of customs unions and optimum currency area, together with, to a lesser extent, the new regionalism approach are based on analyses of potential costs and benefits of regional associations. Regional integration is traditionally understood as a way to encourage trade flow between member states, to facilitate more efficient allocation of resources by stimulating competition by increasing the capacity of the internal market. That is expected to result in faster economic growth and, consequently, increased per capita income. The 70-year history of the European Union provides sufficient research material to analyze whether economic benefits truly are the main driving force of regional integration. With this goal in mind, the presented article first sums up the key reasons for the post-war unification of Western Europe, then explores the position of the cost-benefit analysis in the theory of regional integration, and finally analyzes the degree of influence of welfare effects on strategic decisions of the European Union. The analysis shows that economic gain is not an immanent property of regional integration: it does not occur at all stages of the process and is neither its primary goal nor its driving force. Instead, regional integration aims to respond to the changing global order, i.e., help member states strengthen their international position and protect themselves from undesirable external influence. While economic benefits are also important, they are not necessarily the decisive factor.

Keywords: regional integration, regionalism, European Union, customs union, single market, economic and monetary union

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INTRODUCTION

July 23, 2022 will mark the 70th anniversary of the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), signed in 1951 in Paris by the following Western European countries: France, Italy, West Germany, and Benelux. This marked the beginning of a new era in the development of Europe: the era of European integration. In 1957, the same six countries established the European Economic Community that was later transformed into today's European Union of 27 member states and a wide range of integration directions. Having gone through a series of trials over the seven decades of its existence, the European Union remains one of the key centers of power in the modern world. Its experience has become the subject of critical reflection in other regions of the world that are also developing new models of regional integration in response to the current global realities.

The most important tool for evaluating the effectiveness of any integration project is cost-benefit analysis, performed both for the association as a whole and for its individual members (Palankai, Miklos, 2017; Pelkmans, 2013; Burk, Leuffen, 2019; Taghizadeh-Hesary, 2019; Andronova, 2016). The established opinion in political and scientific discourse is that integration should always bring a net gain. This criterion is applied most strictly to associations of developing economies, including post-Soviet countries. The understanding is that countries will not want to unite for the sake of achieving common benefits if the individual gain of each of them does not outweigh the potential losses (Krapohl, Vasileva-Dienes, 2019; Yoo-Duk Kang, 2016; Auriol, Biancini, 2013). To the best of our knowledge, the existing extensive literature on political motives of integration does not consider the question of whether successful associations with a net negative economic effect can exist.

ORIGINAL MOTIVATIONS

The formation of Western European integration became possible due to a combination of several factors. Firstly, the world was processing the catastrophic outcomes of the two world wars, in which capitalist Europe was both the initiator and the main victim. After World War I, the world's first socialist state, the Soviet Union, emerged in Eastern Europe, replac-

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ing tsarist Russia; after World War II, the global socialist system was established, encompassing eight European states: Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. Relations between France and West Germany (FRG) had a previously unimaginable turnaround. The two "eternal enemies" created a dual locomotive to pull forward an increasingly longer train of uniting Western European states.

Secondly, the history of political and social development was reevaluated. Democratic regimes based on the ideas of the rule of law and inalienability of human rights and freedoms had been established in all countries of Western Europe, including monarchies. The state entered into a dialogue with civil society. Spain and Portugal were the last to embark on the path of democracy, having been freed from their authoritarian regimes in the mid-1970s. In the social sphere, Marx's theory of class struggle between labor and capital to be ended with establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat gave way to the concepts of social compromise and partnership. Dialogue between trade unions and entrepreneurs became the norm, with the state periodically getting involved to arbitrate. Social policy was becoming the leading item of state budgets (Borko, 2001, pp. 160−165).

Thirdly, at that time Western European countries were headed by an assemblage of outstanding political leaders: Charles de Gaulle, Jean Monnet, and Robert Schuman in France; Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, and Clement Attlee in the United Kingdom; Konrad Adenauer and Ludwig Erhard in Germany; and Giulio Andreotti and Palmiro Togliatti in Italy. Despite all the differences in their views, they were united by the era and their life experiences. Most of them were witnesses, and many were participants in both world wars and could compare how much bloodier and more destructive World War II was compared to World War I.

Therefore, these political leaders, as well as others, were united by a shared goal: to end the strife between European states by uniting them into a regional organization that promotes cooperation, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and protection of their interests in the international arena. The ideas of pan-European unity resounded with renewed force: Europe needs to unite to ensure its survival in a world increasingly dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union (Haas, 1997, p. 321).

The first to call for the creation of a united Europe was Winston Churchill, the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and a member of the wartime "Big Three" (together with I.V. Stalin and F. Roosevelt). He dedicated his inaugural speech, delivered in September 1946 at the University of Zurich on the occasion of receiving a honorary doctorate, to the "tragedy of Europe": the consequence of a "series of frightful nationalistic quarrels" between European states. The first step towards reestablishment of the

European family was to be a partnership between France and Germany. In the same speech, Churchill proposed to create a federal system in the spirit of the old-established concept of the United States of Europe.[1]

This goal was discussed at the Congress of Europe, held in May 1948 in the Hague. The planned regional organization was to have a charter, the right to create laws, and a system of authorities empowered to implement domestic and foreign policy within their competences. Decisions were made, but almost all of them remained on paper. European states were unwilling to share national sovereignty with the proposed regional association.

Western Europe owes its breakthrough toward integration to three persons: Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, and Konrad Adenauer.

In the spring of 1949, Monnet proposed a project to create the Coal and Steel Community between France and Germany, open to entry for other democratic states of Western Europe. Monnet is known as a successful entrepreneur and statesman; after the liberation of France, he developed and implemented the Modernization and Re-equipment Plan for the national economy. The first prominent political figure to support him was French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, the former Prime minister and by 1949 one of the most influential politicians in the country. Like Monnet, he was a proponent of the United States of Europe concept. As for Adenauer, the Chancellor of the newly created Federal Republic of Germany, the motives for his acceptance of France's offer are obvious. West Germany was offered a favorable option for acceptance into the family of democratic states. In addition, participation in the planned Community promised considerable economic benefits.

The Community was an innovative project: firstly, in terms of its goals, program, and methods. The Treaty established the abolition of all quotas in coal and steel trade among the member states, a gradual reduction of customs duties until their complete abolition, and the creation of a customs union, as well as a common coal and steel market. Two general funds were created: one for financing the modernization of the coal and steel industries, and the other, social, for retraining and reemployment of workers dismissed in the course of modernization. The 10-year program was completed 1.5 years faster, by the end of the 1950s.

Secondly, the Community was a new type of association. Instead of the traditional principle of interstate cooperation of completely independent participants, it was based on an agreement to partially delegate sovereign rights to supranational bodies, making their decisions binding for all member states. The ECSC was first referred to with the term *integration* right after its creation, in 1949. The term was

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[1] The United States of Europe. https://churchill.pw/soedinennye-shtaty-evropy.html. (Cited February 2, 2019).

coined by Paul Hoffman, US Administrator of the Economic Cooperation Administration, the body responsible for distributing the funds granted under the Marshall Plan. On October 31, 1949, at the 75th meeting of the Council of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), he called on the countries of Western Europe "to work towards greater union and to integrate their economies within a large single European market."[2] The term *integration* has since then become a regular part of the economic and political lexicon, and the process of the unification of Western Europe has become known as the development of economic integration.

A direct result of the activities of the OEEC and Hoffman's appeal was the creation of the European Payments Union (EPU) in 1950. It united 17 Western European countries,[3] also including a significant part of Africa and Asia and some territories of Central and South America, which at the time belonged to Western European currency areas—mainly the pound sterling and the French franc. Over the eight years of its functioning, the EPU fulfilled its objectives: the member states restored convertibility of their currencies, abolished currency restrictions, and eliminated most trade barriers. All of that enabled them to dramatically boost trade, both among partner countries and with third-party countries. There was good reason for Robert Triffin to count the EPU among the forms of economic integration (Triffin, 1956).

Although the European Payment Union included the entire original ECSC six, the experience of its functioning is now being hushed up, and it is resolutely removed from official narratives about the history of European integration. One explanation for that is the fact that the OEEC was built on the principles of interstate cooperation and did not imply the creation of supranational structures (Bulmer, 2007, p. 11). Other reasons can only be a matter of speculation.[4]

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[2] Statement by the E.C.A. Administrator at the 75th Council meeting Paris, 31st October, 1949. https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2009/4/3/840d9b55-4d17-4c33-8b09-7ea547b85b40/publishable_en.pdf. Cited September 9, 2021.

[3] Austria, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Greece, Denmark, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Turkey, France, West Germany, Switzerland, and Sweden.

[4] There are several potential reasons why the EPU may be inconvenient for the chroniclers of the European Union. Firstly, to better identify itself with Europe, the European Union desires to "weed out" the history of European integration to exclude unrelated phenomena, such as the European Free Trade Association, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the activities of the Council of Europe, and even integration projects in Northern Europe. Excluding them and the EPU makes the European Union seem like the mainline trend with a clear evolutionary logic: development from simple to complex forms accompanied by spatial expansion. The second and probably main reason is the leading role played by the United States in the formation of the EPU, meaning that it practically forced the OEEC countries to embark on the path of integration. The third reason is the somewhat colonial nature of the EPU that *de facto* included colonies, protectorates, and other dependent territories of the Old World metropoles. In modern political rhetoric, this is particularly unseemly.

However, the EPU had done an impressive job of trade liberalization. By January 1950, quantitative restrictions had been lifted from 90% of imports (Shishkov, 2001, p. 164). By the end of 1958, all OEEC member states (except Iceland and Turkey) had exempted 80−98% of transactions in their mutual private (nonpublic) trade from discriminatory measures (Kaplan, Schleiminger, 1989, p. 344). Therefore, the customs union established by the Treaty of Rome was not created from scratch at all, a fact that is not often brought up today.

Immediately after the ECSC Treaty entered into force in 1952, its members, with the support of NATO, attempted to create two new communities: a defense community and a political community. However, that attempt failed. On August 30, 1954, the National Assembly of France rejected the Treaty establishing the European Defence Community that had already been signed by all ECSC members, including the French Government. This put an end to the plans for the European Political Community, the treaty for which was never even created. In the summer of 1955, at a meeting in Messina, foreign ministers of the "inner six" decided to return to the path of economic integration. Work on two new treaties was launched — the treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community. Both were signed in March 1957 in Rome, and since then the development of the EEC has become the primary direction of European integration.

EVOLUTION OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE PHENOMENON

As the phenomenon of regional integration established itself and continued to develop, so did the system of its understanding in the professional sphere. The first research efforts set the objectives of delineating the subject area and developing definitions.

In 1950, Jacob Viner published a book about the consequences of creating customs unions. Its descriptions of the effects of creation and diversion of trade flows (the latter is caused by the removal of customs barriers between the association members while barriers for trade with third-party countries remain in force) retain their scientific value to this day. The book was written in line with the free trade theory, which did not prevent the author from raising the question of the potential role of the customs union in solving a broader problem: improving the welfare of the peoples of the world. According to Viner, the customs union is a very dubious and imperfect means for that goal compared to non-discriminatory reduction of trade barriers worldwide (Viner, 1950, p. 135). The reference to nondiscriminatory reduction of barriers is relevant: trade liberalization within a closed group of countries means the de facto discrimination of outsiders. Customs unions could facilitate liberalization of

international trade in some cases and hinder it in others. The overall result, according to Viner, depended on a number of specific factors and could not be calculated in advance (Viner, 1950, p. 51).

James Meade sought to develop Wiener's economic views, freeing them from the narrow framework of the free trade theory into the vaster field of the welfare theory. While expressing deep appreciation for Wiener's work, Meade made an important critical observation: within Viner's analysis, it is not possible to compare the economic benefits from the establishment of a customs union with the losses caused by trade deviation (Meade, 1955, p. 34). To fill that gap, the author constructed a model in which the demand elasticity is zero and the supply elasticity tends to infinity. After applying the model to different situations, Meade came to the conclusion that making a final judgment regarding the impact of customs unions on welfare is impossible. In some cases they contribute to a more rational use of resources, while in others they do not; it depends on a combination of specific circumstances (Meade, 1955, p. 107).

Richard Lipsey of the London School of Economics challenged the assumption that trade creation always has a positive effect on welfare, and trade diversion, a negative one. (Lipsey, 1957, p. 41). The model he developed made it possible to assess the effects of the customs union with greater accuracy and revealed that it results in trade deviation exceeding trade creation; i.e., the total volume of international trade is reduced. It was theoretically substantiated that a situation in which such an alliance raises global welfare is possible. However, naturally, situations with the opposite outcome are also not excluded (Lipsey, 1957. pp. 44, 46). Jagdish Bhagwati later clarified Lipsey's argument and confirmed his general conclusion (Bhagwati, 1971).

Jan Tinbergen understood integration as the creation of the most desirable structure of the international economy, the removal of artificial obstacles preventing its optimal functioning, and the deliberate introduction of desirable elements of coordination and unification. He paid considerable attention to the problem of centralization and decentralization and determining the adequate degree of regulation of international exchanges. In general, he considered integration as part of the more general problem of the optimum economic policy of international relations between independent states (Tinbergen, 1954, pp. 15–16, 95).

Tinbergen proposed the now textbook division of integration into negative and positive. Negative integration removes obstacles to interaction, for example, by abolishing import duties. Positive integration creates a new spatial quality, for example, by introducing a common customs tariff (Tinbergen, 1954, pp. 76–79). The author did not study the possible impact of integration on welfare. He mentioned welfare only in the context of the general goals of economic policy, focusing on the issues of the efficient use of resources and ensuring equilibrium production and fair distribution of income (Tinbergen, 1954, p. 104).

Herbert Giersch was the first to theoretically substantiate the existence of spatial effects of creating an economic union between several countries. Using examples, he convincingly showed the presence of a gravitational movement of production factors from the periphery, that is, from the outer borders of the association, towards its central regions. According to Giersch, customs borders restrain the forces that facilitate industry agglomeration throughout the world and in Western Europe in particular. The removal of such barriers within a Western European union would increase the concentration of production and population in its industrial center. In general, the formation of extensive free trade zones could increase discrimination against individual regions. This raised the issue of the need to introduce economic policy measures to neutralize the unjustified privileges of central regions and additional burdens on the periphery (Giersch, 1949, pp. 93–97).

Maurice Byé researched how the customs union can influence the system of international division of labor. He showed that the removal of trade barriers leads to changes in the specialization profiles of the member states under the pressure of competition. A union between countries with complementary specialization profiles is the most favorable option, while a union between countries with the same type of specialization is associated with difficulties. In some cases, the solution can lie in the partner countries transitioning to more specific specializations within the competing industries. In other cases, such a union may create prerequisites for industry degradation in the countries that are relatively poor in money and resources (Byé, 1950, pp. 135, 148).

Both researchers analyzed shifts in the organization of the economic life of a region caused by the establishment of a customs union. It is noteworthy that even before the creation of the ECSC and the EEC, they managed to arrive at a general idea of costs and benefits of integration that was later confirmed in practice. The EU experience has shown that consolidation of the economic space can exacerbate regional imbalances. To smooth them out, the European Union has been implementing various tools and funds of regional and structural policy since the 1970s. However, even today there is no single, generally accepted methodology for calculating economic costs and benefits of integration (Kondrat'eva, 2020, pp. 23–28).

A major milestone in regional integration studies was the work of Hungarian-born American economist Béla Balassa (Balassa 1961a, 1961b). According to the author, even in 1961, ten years after the signing of the ECSC Treaty of Paris, the concept of economic integration did not have a clear definition in the literature. Some scientists understood it as the removal of all barriers to economic activity, including barriers within national economies, while others considered

it only as a term of international relations. Balassa himself welcomed Tinbergen's understanding: associating the removal of barriers to the movement of production factors with the need for effective economic policy (Balassa, 1961b, pp. 1–3).

Within the public discussion of the time, Balassa reflected on the interaction of market forces and the state policy. He argued that integration required an active state policy: to maintain full employment, counteract negative spatial effects of integration, regulate cartel activities, and harmonize the national policies of the member states. This position did not prevent him from being critical of integration recipes of French dirigists (Balassa, 1961b, pp. 9, 10).

The author of the classic concept of regional integration stages could not avoid the question of its effect on public welfare. However, Balassa's scientific contribution lies not in solving the problem but in a comprehensive study of economic effects of integration that may eventually affect welfare (Balassa, 1961a, pp. 10–14). He supplemented Viner's static integration effects with two more categories: dynamic growth effects (due to the scale effect and the increasing competition) and effects of geographical distribution of production and income within a regional association (Sapir, 2011, pp. 1207, 1208).

Although Balassa's book marked a turn in the development of the theory of economic integration, it took a while for its ideas to become a part of the political discourse. For example, Jean Monnet in a 1963 article does not mention economic benefits of integration at all. The "father of Europe" recalls that during the war Western European countries suffered enormous damage, at the time of its end they were divided, and within a decade-and-a-half some of them had lost their empires. However, the "loss of their former greatness and prestige" did not make them give up; on the contrary, they were creating the Single Market, which in the future may lead to the creation of a European Federation (Monnet, 1963, pp. 204, 208). The value of the EEC, according to Monnet, lies in the fact that it gives the continent a market comparable in scale to the American market (Monnet, 1963, p. 205). While at the moment no European country can really influence international processes, united they will obtain the political influence necessary to interact with the United States on an equal footing. Monnet concludes that a European union is not a theory but an ongoing process of peoples and countries uniting in order to adapt to the changing global circumstances together (Monnet, 1963, pp. 209–211). Thus, Monnet saw integration as primarily an instrument of collective integration into a new geopolitical reality.

THE CONCEPT OF BENEFITS IN INTEGRATION PRACTICE

Over its 70-year existence, European integration has passed through several stages. Their goals, content, and results have been thoroughly described in the foreign and Russian scientific literature. The aim of this article is to find out how the theoretically postulated benefits of economic integration have manifested in practice at various stages of the development of the European Union.

The first period (from the creation of the ECSC to the end of the 1960s) was marked by recovery growth, low unemployment, and the gradual expansion of the social functions of the state. The integration project was also developing dynamically. In 1962, the EEC introduced the Common Agricultural Policy with a unified market of agricultural commodities. A customs union that abolished duties and quotas on trade in industrial goods was established in the summer of 1968. Thus, the major advancements of that stage belonged to the sphere of negative integration. The achieved economic benefits resulted from the removal of barriers, while the effects of integration on trade and trade deviation were often accompanied by its general expansion, in line with the global trend.

The second stage (from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s) was characterized by inactive integration dynamics. The union was going through a period of stagnation and "Eurosclerosis." The governing bodies of the EEC sought to prevent disintegration, spending most of their efforts on maintaining the project in a viable state. Individual positive shifts did not concern welfare effects in any way. During this period, the European Council was created, the European Monetary System emerged, and the implementation of regional and scientific and technical policies began.

The economic benefits direction became central at the third stage, after Jacques Delors became the President of the European Commission in 1985. The Single Market Programme (SMP), implemented by 1992, was based on ideas about the advantages of a large economic space. The EU countries expected to receive long-term benefits from its creation: accelerated economic growth and increased competitive ability through increased competition, economies of scale, and more efficient use of resources. That no longer concerned only static integration effects but also dynamic ones. The potential of the SMP was to be fully realized through the creation of the Economic and Monetary Union. The introduction of a single European currency in 1999 saved market participants from conversion costs, increased price transparency, lowered interest rates, and increased the predictability of economic conditions.

The fourth stage was marked by the expansion of the European Union to the east, when between 2004 and 2007 it accepted 12 new member states,[5] ten of which were considered part of the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) region. They were different from the countries that had already been part of the European

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[5] Bulgaria, Hungary, Cyprus, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, and Estonia.

Union in that their economies were less advanced and their recent experience consisted of almost half-a-century of Soviet-style socialism. The economic consequences of such a large-scale expansion were interpreted in different ways both during the lead-up and now, almost two decades later.

An important note: the extensive scientific literature available on this topic can be divided into two clearly separate parts. The first one examines the economic issues of the new members (Eastern countries); and the second one, the consequences for the old (Western) composition of the European Union. The first group of countries was facing a difficult transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy, liberalization of external relations, and adaptation to high competition in the EU single market. They expected the reward of an influx of Western investments and technologies, guarantees of economic freedoms, a decrease in inflation, and an increase in welfare. The latter group received an additional 100 million consumers for the EU market and the extension of the regulatory force and values of the European Union to the former buffer zone between the West and Russia. Their costs were associated with the overall manageability of the union and its decision-making mechanisms, financial costs, and the risk of an influx of migrant workers from the new member states. To the best of our knowledge, no studies have examined the economic costs and benefits of the expansion for the entire European Union as a whole, with the exception, at a stretch, of studies on the changing role of the expanded European Union in the global economy and its trade and economic relations with third-party countries, for example, Russia (Ivanov, 2006).

What is the outcome of the new members' participation in the European Union, for them and for the entire association? What was achieved and which hopes did not materialize?

On the one hand, the CEE countries have clearly benefited in terms of welfare gains. While in the EU nine,[6] the GDP per capita in 2019 was 103−160% of 2005 values (on average, 126%), in the CEE countries, the rates of its increase were drastically faster. The 2019 per capita GDP of six of them—Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Estonia—were more than double the corresponding 2005 values, ranging from 212% in Slovakia to 280% in Romania. For Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, the per capita income in 2019 was 144−197% of the 2005 level.[7] The CEE countries were deeply integrated into intraregional trade; for many of them their EU-27 partners now account for 70% or more of

their total foreign trade turnover. However, the process of reorientation of their trade flows from partners in the former Comecon to the EU countries had taken place back in the 1990s and was mostly completed by the time they officially joined the union. Moreover, in that process trade deviation was almost always accompanied by trade creation (Feit, 2002, pp. 309, 316; Khesin, 2003, p. 45).

Meanwhile, the economic connectivity of the CEE region itself still remains relatively low. Thus, investment cooperation of the Visegrád Group of countries is hindered by the fact that their national economies are based on small and medium-sized enterprises, which have difficulty competing with Western European TNCs (Gabarta, Drynochkin, 2017, p. 73). Some researchers, including Western ones, point out persistent differences in the market economy models of Western and Eastern Europe. Underpinned by national specifics, these differences may increase in the conditions of globalization, consolidating the subordinate position of the CEE countries in relation to the EU core (Lobanov, Glinkina, 2020; Butorina, 2017, p. 39). In this context, the issue of the cost-benefit ratio of economic integration acquires a new dimension.

The global financial crisis of 2009 and then the European debt crisis revealed many previously unnoticed risks of the single currency. After that, the understanding of costs and benefits of economic integration expanded and shifted towards the former. Around the same time it became obvious that two long-term programs of socio-economic and technological development of the European Union—the Lisbon Strategy and the Europe 2020 strategy—had failed. The resources of integration as an incentive for economic development had apparently been exhausted.

Many researchers note that the biggest challenge the European Union faces today is geopolitical and geo-economic in nature. The European Union's share in the world's population and GDP is steadily decreasing, the main center of global development is moving to Asia as the role of the United States weakens. The decentralization of globalization, the political and financial instability, and the fluidity of the ideological framework require the European Union to rethink its integration strategy (Kaveshnikov, 2021, p. 346; Lavery, Schmid, 2021, p. 1322). In recent years, the European Union has taken a decisive step away from the economic agenda. The new key directions are universal: digitalization, the European Green Deal, ensuring external stability of the European Union, and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of course, each of these four vectors has a significant economic component. Digital and green technologies are designed to help society and the economic system transition to a new, more progressive model of production and consumption. The question of the ratio of costs and future benefits of that transition is currently

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[6] France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark.

[7] Data in US dollars at current prices. Source: electronic database UNCTAD-Stat: https://unctadstat.unctad.org/wds/TableViewer/tableView.aspx. Cited September 28, 2021.

the subject of extensive discussion both in the media and among professionals. Combatting the pandemic also requires major investments.

This part requires an important clarification. Of course, integration projects of the modern European Union can and should be analyzed in terms of their economic cost-benefit balance. However, that analysis should be done with the understanding that achieving an immediate increase in welfare is not the primary goal of these projects the way it was in the case of the customs union; instead, they are aimed at solving a more complex objective that cannot be analyzed in accounting terms. The European Union currently faces the challenge of proving whether it has enough strategic prospects and can survive in the new geopolitical context. Responding to that kind of challenge primarily involves avoiding external threats and minimizing the inevitable damage rather than obtaining future benefits, which is typical for other regional associations elsewhere in the world as well (Butorina, 2021). The situation was similar in the 1950s, when the EEC countries united in order to find their place in the new conditions of bipolar confrontation and the collapse of the colonial system, as explicitly stated by Jean Monnet.

CONCLUSIONS

The original motives of EEC founders lay mainly in the field of geopolitics and were brought on by the new situation that had formed in the world and in Europe after World War II. Receiving economic benefits from integration was a secondary objective treated as part of the liberal ideology and the global fight against protectionism.

The concept of economic benefits of integration was formed in the 1950s−1960s, mainly as part of the customs union theory. The abolition of customs barriers contributes to the development of intraregional trade with positive consequences for welfare. According to this theory, it is not possible to assess the overall outcome of trade creation and deviation *ex ante*. Nevertheless, the existing consensus is that the creation of the customs union in the European Union in the 1960s lead to an overall positive result from negative integration measures, i.e., from static integration effects.

Dynamic integration effects associated with the increasing capacity of the single market, increasing competition, and better use of space were the base for the strategy of creating the Single Market and the Economic and Monetary Union. Negative integration measures (abolition of barriers to the movement of services, capital, and persons, removal of administrative and technical obstacles) were combined with positive integration measures, including the introduction of a single currency. However, as integration progressed many of its previously unknown costs were revealed, including those related to structural features of national economies. Therefore, the material benefits to costs ratio of integration remains a matter of faith rather than convincing calculation.

Throughout the history of European integration, it has pursued important geopolitical goals that have little to do with the concepts of benefits and costs. The current strategic priorities of the European Union do not include the objectives of maintaining sustainable growth, improving welfare and social cohesion, or economic issues in general. Therefore, using assessments of net benefits of integration as the only and main measure of its effectiveness when analyzing integration processes outside Europe seems unreasonable and not relevant to reality.

This does not contradict the fact that member states of numerous international free trade agreements, the vast majority of which are bilateral, receive economic benefits. However, multilateral integration associations with more complex structures set and solve more complex strategic objectives. The subject of their activity is (to varying degrees) the global position of the region, and that cannot be effectively analyzed by measuring profits and costs.

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======================== European Studies ========================

European Urban Strategies for Attracting Highly Skilled Migrants

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Abstract—In the context of globalization and rapid technological changes, the preservation of human capital and its multiplication are becoming an increasingly important factor of economic growth. These challenges are particularly acute for the European Union and the UK, which have been gradually losing their competitive positions in the world economy over the past decades. In this context it is particularly important to analyze policies aimed at stimulating highly skilled migration carried out at different levels, including the municipal level. Despite their limited competences in the field of migration regulation, municipal administrations are able to influence its dynamics and structure by creating a comfortable urban environment and housing policy, increasing transport accessibility, facilitating employment of local university graduates, supporting return migration, and using other soft measures to attract highly qualified specialists and representatives of the creative class. This process, however, has both winners and losers. Many cities, primarily in the peripheral EU countries, are not able to cope with the competition and handle the ever increasing brain drain problem, which requires comprehensive solutions involving not only municipal administrations but also central authorities and supranational European institutions.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the modern world, attracting and retaining highly skilled migrants (HSMs)[1] is an indispensable condition for competitiveness. The "fight for talent" is becoming an increasingly serious challenge, especially for those countries that are faced with the problem of reproducing human capital. For the European Union (EU), this challenge is most relevant due to unfavorable demographic trends: an aging population, an increasing strain on social security systems, a shortage of skilled workers exacerbated by the brain drain from less prosperous countries and regions, and, as a result, a growing backlog in the field of science and technology (Kahanec, Zimmermann, 2010). The situation is complicated by the fact that migration flows to the EU (and to a lesser extent to the UK) are dominated by medium and low-skilled migrants, while HSMs prefer to move to other countries: the United States, Australia, Canada, etc. (*Global Talent Risks ...,* 2011).

The opinion that the authorities should more actively promote the acceptance and integration of HSMs into the host communities is shared not only by scientists and experts from the EU but also by political parties and movements of various ideological orientations, ranging from left-wing radicals to right-wing populists (Potemkin, 2019). The main differences in their views lie in the specific measures that they propose should be taken and the level at which this should be done.

Currently, the main actors that regulate migration processes are the national governments of the countries participating in the integration association. It is they, as noted by N.N. Bol'shova, "who develop special programs to attract the best talent, which actually equalize the socioeconomic rights of the HSMs with their own citizens: they introduce preferential immigration regimes, simplify the rules for granting residence permits, and open access to national labor markets, as well as social insurance systems" (Bol'shova, 2017).

At the same time, two new trends have become increasingly clear in the EU over the past decades.

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[1] The concept of a *highly skilled migrant* does not have a generally accepted definition. In this article, in accordance with a common (but far from the only) classification in the European scientific literature, the author classifies five categories of migrants as HSMs: (1) senior managers and executives, (2) engineers and technicians, (3) scientists and teachers, (4) entrepreneurs, and (5) students (Mahroum, 2001).

On the one hand, some of the relevant functions flow from the national level to the supranational. On the other hand, regional and especially municipal authorities strive to use the HSMs as a development resource and implement measures that create the most favorable living and working conditions for them.

The issues of managing highly skilled migration at the level of European institutions are considered in detail both in the foreign and Russian scientific literature, primarily in the context of the introduction of a blue card in the EU, which provides third-country nationals with the right to employment in most EU countries (Burmann et al., 2018; Trofimova, Chetverikova, 2019; Bisson, 2020, and others). Also, an extensive number of works is devoted to national approaches to attracting HSMs (Romanova, 2015; Berkhout et al., 2016; Godovanyuk, 2020).

However, municipal strategies in this area and the specific measures of municipal authorities have been studied rather poorly. Scientific articles on this topic, as a rule, analyze examples of individual cities or compare urban practices within one of the EU countries (most often in Germany and the Netherlands). In this article, the author tries to fill the research gap and discover the opportunities that European cities offer to prevent the brain drain and increase their own attractiveness in the eyes of the HSM, as well as the tools that are most needed to form a policy aimed at achieving this goal.

MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AT THE CITY LEVEL: LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The growing role of a highly skilled workforce as a key factor in economic development is a global development vector that is most felt at the municipal level, as cities have become the central nodes of a globalizing economy and, as a result, key participants in the competition for investment and talent. At the same time, the municipal authorities in most European cities are still relatively little involved in attracting and retaining HSMs due to two circumstances.

First, migration processes in general and the migration of highly qualified specialists in particular strongly depend on the trajectory of the previous development ("rut effect"). As a rule, HSMs move to those cities that have already attracted labor and leave settlements that lack sufficient employment opportunities, thereby contributing to a decrease in the competitiveness of the latter. In other words, European cities can become magnets for immigrants due to a whole range of factors: economic conditions, the situation on the labor market, the quality of life, the institutional environment and stability, the geographical location of the city, the presence of a formed diaspora, etc. (*Study on the Movement ...*, 2018), in the absence of a targeted policy of municipal administrations to attract highly skilled labor. This trend was especially pronounced in global European cities, which for many years to come secured an influx of HSMs due to their position as international financial centers (London, Frankfurt am Main, Amsterdam), centers of a concentration of high-tech industries and the development of science and innovation (Paris, Vienna), or their administrative significance (Brussels, Strasbourg).

It is obvious that in the presence of undeniable competitive advantages, municipal administrations may not attach much importance to this policy direction. In particular, in Frankfurt, the city strategy is focused on increasing the level of education and competence of the Germans themselves, while attracting HSMs from abroad occupies the lowest priority (Bulatov et al., 2021). Being the second most important international financial center in Europe (after London), the city attracts tens of thousands of highly qualified foreign specialists and does not feel the need to take additional measures. Another vivid example is Limassol (Republic of Cyprus), which in just a few decades has turned from a minor port into the second-most-populated city in the Greek part of the island and the most populated Cypriot city in terms of HSMs. The status of the city has risen as a result of a combination of three circumstances: the Turkish occupation of the former main port of Cyprus, Famagusta; the civil war in Lebanon, as a result of which Beirut lost its role as the financial capital of the Eastern Mediterranean (with the result that the international capital there moved to Cyprus); and the business-friendly national tax policy. Due to the extremely high fiscal centralization by European standards, the municipal authorities had almost no influence on this spontaneous process.[2]

Second, as noted, although the competence of municipal administrations in migration management varies by country, in general, it is significantly inferior to the competence of national governments and pan-European authorities. In fact, municipalities play a supporting role in regulating migration. They are forced to act within a strictly defined legal framework, as a rule, without having the right to initiate legislation,[3] and quite often in conditions of severe financial constraints (for example, in 2020, in order to support the population, the governments of a number of countries reduced local taxes, which had an extremely negative impact on the municipal budgets). In addition, many of municipalities face the more pressing problem of an influx of low-skilled labor, which forces them to focus on the economic and sociocultural integration of refugees and economic migrants, postpon-

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[2] City of Limassol: Intercultural profile. Intercultural cities: Building the Future on Diversity. https://rm.coe.int/1680482a41.

[3] Switzerland, which is not part of the EU, is an exception to this rule, as here individual legislative decisions in the field of migration can be made through referendums at the municipal level.

ing the involvement of HSMs until better times (Kvashnin, 2020).

There is also another important point to consider: the fight to attract talent is not a mandatory but an optional part of municipal policies, which can therefore be ignored by the administration. In this situation, transitory factors such as the interest of municipal leaders in developing appropriate strategies, the ability to mobilize the financial resources necessary for their implementation, and established contacts with urban entrepreneurs who are looking for talented employees become even more important. The latter is especially important: as "municipalities, being state institutions, cannot formulate migration strategies on their own" and must work closely with companies and business associations (Kühn, 2018).

Despite the limitations listed above, in recent decades, an increasing number of municipal administrations consider it important to retain and attract a highly skilled workforce. This is particularly the case in cities where the preservation of human capital has become an existential problem due to the brain drain, and those that consider the fight to attract talented employees as an additional opportunity to develop based on building a knowledge economy.

The former focus on retaining talent and bringing back migrants who have left the city in search of a better life through a wide range of measures, ranging from informing the HSM of available vacancies to direct financial support for highly skilled workers. This approach is mainly typical for the cities of East Germany after the unification of the country, countries in Central and Eastern Europe, many of which were depopulated due to mass emigration, and Southern Europe, where a similar process unfolded during the debt crisis and recession in the late 2000s and early 2010s. This group also includes university cities in Europe, which attract many students from the EU and third countries, but cannot retain them after graduation.

The second group usually focuses on improving the quality of the urban environment by improving accessibility to public transport, developing their housing infrastructure, promoting cultural diversity and tolerance, etc. In some cases, the approaches complement each other, and the policy of cities in this area becomes complex, covering various groups of HSMs, for each of which a different policy tool is used.

URBAN PRACTICES FOR ATTRACTING HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANTS

An analysis of urban practices shows that, despite the seeming limited competence of municipal authorities, they have more opportunities to influence the inflow of HSMs than it seems at first glance. Some of these policies deserve special attention.

Information support for HSMs. Informing migrants about the procedure for legalizing their stay and position at work, available vacancies, the specifics of education and healthcare services, and the features of everyday life in the city is perhaps the most common practice that is implemented with the direct participation of municipal administrations. In many European cities there are information centers and special Internet sites for migrants. Special information is posted on social networks, which can be intended both for those who have settled in the city, and for HSMs who are only considering future employment. The effectiveness of this tool largely depends on the coordination of the efforts of migration services and businesses, as well as the latter's demand for a highly skilled workforce. Interestingly, through information assistance, the city authorities can affect the structure of the inflow of HSMs, depending on the tasks facing the city. Thus, in Aachen, Germany, the relevant services focus on students and graduates of local universities; and in Bonn, on representatives of the scientific community and potential employees of TNCs.[4]

Elimination of bureaucratic barriers. Although residence and work permits are issued by the national authorities, the municipal government can expedite the process. In particular, the administration of the city of Cologne in Germany optimized the work of the responsible institutions in such a way that these permits started being processed and issued within four weeks. There are cases when municipal authorities acted as guarantors when migrants received the necessary documents (mostly for HSMs in managerial positions) (Fobker et al., 2014).

Creation of specialized services to search for talented HSMs. Such initiatives are most widespread in cities that specialize in high-tech industries and are experiencing a shortage of highly skilled labor. The problem is especially acute in the cities of Northern Europe, whose position as leaders in the IT field is threatened by a shortage of personnel (in 2022 the shortage of specialists in this field is estimated be 70 000 people).[5]

The pioneer in this direction was the capital of Denmark, where in 1994 the Copenhagen Capacity organization was created.[6] It was founded by three amtas (regional governments, abolished by the administrative reform of 2007) and two municipalities, Copenhagen and Frederiksberg, with the assistance of the national investment agency Invest in Denmark.

[4] Die offizielle Webseite der Stadt Aachen. https://www.aachen.de/index.html); Foreigners Authority in Bonn. https://www.auslaenderaemter.de/info/info_foreigners_authority_in_bonn.php.

[5] The Nordics are struggling with a tech talent shortage. Emerging Europe. November 21, 2019. https://emerging-europe.com/news/the-nordics-are-struggling-with-a-tech-talent-shortage.

[6] Find the right talent. Copenhagen capacity. https://www.copcap.com/how-we-help/finding-talent.

The organization regularly conducts recruiting events both inside and outside the country, helps foreign businesses open branches and subsidiaries in Greater Copenhagen, provides them with market reviews, and assists them in finding partners.

A similar policy is being pursued in Tampere, Finland's second-largest urban agglomeration, which has a five-year Strategic Program for attracting international talent and migration, which is characterized by its unprecedented detail for European cities (Raunio, 2019).[7] Among the specific measures of the municipal authorities, particular importance is given to holding annual talent summits, creating job sites, and advising local companies on questions regarding the employment of foreign citizens. The main focus is on attracting talent to those sectors of the economy where the city already has a strong competitive position. Thus, to support the gaming industry in the city, a special structure, the Tampere Startup Hub, was created: a business incubator that brought together several dozen young companies and foreign experts in the field of game design.[8]

Retaining talent. This policy direction is most developed in cities that suffer from brain drain, but have the opportunity to reproduce human capital through their strong universities. Studies show a rather large variation in student retention rates not only in Europe as a whole, but within individual countries.[9] Municipal administrations are not able to prevent the departure of graduates, but in coordination with the leadership of universities, they can make sure that the education system takes into account as much as possible the demand that has formed in the city for certain vacancies. Note that this experience is not always successful. The authorities of the Finnish city of Oulu began a program to train psychologists at a local university[10] in the expectation that its graduates would then go on to work in the municipal sector. However, most of the specialists left for other regions or got jobs in the private sector.

Some city administrations are not limited to interacting with universities, supporting young talent who have recently graduated from university and are faced

with the choice of where to start their working life. The approaches here are different and strongly depend on the specifics of the city and the funds available to the municipality. In San Sebastian (Basque Country), one of the most expensive cities in Spain, the authorities are focusing on providing housing for young scientists with a PhD degree. As part of this task, a House for Talent was built in the city with preferential prices for living there. In addition, with the participation of municipal authorities, a scholarship program for talent (payments of up to 750 euros) has been introduced, which allows them to come to the city for a period of 15 days to two months. Poorer cities in Europe (Thessaloniki in Greece, Zagorje ob Savi in Slovenia, Nagykanizsa in Hungary, etc.) are also developing talent retention strategies, but these involve mostly low-cost activities aimed at establishing links between young talent and employers (Cavallini et al., 2018).

Stimulation of reverse migration. This policy direction is typical for cities that are losing skilled labor. In it, the measures of direct financial assistance to returning entrepreneurs are most effective. The municipal authorities of Warsaw, together with the Higher School of Management and Finance, with the support of European funds in the early 2010s implemented the "Become Your Own Boss" project, aimed at helping emigrants who decide to return to the country and who are interested in starting their own business in the Polish capital. Its target groups are citizens over the age of 45, Poles whose seniority was interrupted due to the birth of a child, and citizens who lost their jobs abroad through no fault of their own. It was possible to apply for participation through the website from outside Poland. The participants in the project, based on the assessment of their business plans and the professional training they completed, received non-repayable financial assistance of up to PLN40 000 for the creation of their own company and an additional PLN1100 per month for its development (Evers et al., 2014). A similar policy, but at the regional level, is being pursued in Umbria, Italy, where returning entrepreneurs can receive 20 000 euros (Cavallini et al., 2018).

Use of transport connectivity with cities and large centers to attract HSMs. Migrants are put off by the high prices, lack of developed infrastructure for leisure and recreation, inhospitable attitude towards foreigners, etc., prevalent in many European cities with ample employment opportunities. The beneficiaries of this situation are the nearby towns and communities, which are able to offer HSMs more comfortable living conditions. The most striking example of this dynamic is the pendulum migration to Luxembourg, the richest country in the EU, where before the coronavirus pandemic, 46% of the workforce were people who lived

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[7] It should be noted that in American, Canadian, and Australian cities (Pittsburgh, Detroit, Baltimore, Vancouver, Toronto, Sydney, and many others), the development of such strategies began much earlier than in Europe, which largely assured them success in attracting a highly skilled workforce.

[8] About. Tampere Game Hub. https://tampere.games/about.

[9] For example, in the UK, the retention rate for graduates is 51% in Edinburgh and Glasgow (which is considered a very good indicator), while in Norwich and Southampton, less than a third of the students stay on there after completing their studies. See.: Graduate Retention: Best UK Cities at Keeping Students After Graduation. https://www.whatuni.com/advice/news/graduate-retention-best-uk-cities/82588.

[10] Psychology Graduates Shun Municipal Sector. Yle.fi. https://yle.fi/news/3-120616.

in small towns in Belgium, France, and Germany[11] (Arlon, Metz, Trier).

Improvement of the urban environment. The administrations of European cities, as a rule, have significant competences (but not always financial resources) in creating a friendly urban space for HSMs—recreational infrastructure and developed areas for permanent residence—and promoting a culture of tolerance and cosmopolitanism. These measures help attract all categories of HSMs. However, they are most focused on the so-called creative class (scientists, journalists, writers, PR specialists, engineers, actors, artists) employed in the postindustrial segments of the economy. When choosing a city to move to, HSMs are guided not by the availability of jobs, but by the comfort of the housing available to them, the quality of leisure activities, the absence of a language barrier, the presence of English-language schools, etc. Such measures are often influenced by American urbanist thought, popularized by R. Florida, which is that cities can change the paradigm of their own development (overcome the rut effect) by investing in the human climate and habitat, which are considered indispensable conditions for attracting talent and creating high-tech industries (Florida, 2005).

In Europe, interest in such approaches is growing, but their impact on urban policy should not be exaggerated. As a rule, the urban space is not improved in order to attract HSMs: appropriate measures are intended for all residents of the city. Moreover, some municipalities strictly adhere to the "melting pot" concept, seeking to minimize property and ethnic segregation and prevent the emergence of "good" areas for HSMs and "bad" ones for low-skilled migrants, as such a situation would threaten social stability in the city. The deliberate creation of neighborhoods for the compact residence of expats is generally not characteristic for the EU or the UK; if they do appear, usually they are spontaneous and against the will of the municipal authorities. There are, however, exceptions, and the most striking one is Barcelona, where, with the assistance of local authorities, "transnational gentrification" and the creation of "foreigners only" enclaves are taking place (Cocola-Gant and Lopez-Gay, 2020).

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Concluding the review of the policies of European cities to stimulate highly skilled migration, it should be emphasized once again that their opportunities in this area are limited, as the main prerogatives are concentrated in the hands of the central authorities. At the same time, the activity of municipal administrations in this industry is growing, which generally confirms the opinion about the "local U-turn" in the management of migration processes that has taken place in recent decades, which is expressed by a number of experts (Zapata-Barrero et al., 2017; Bernt, 2019). The number of tools for attracting HSMs at the municipal level is increasing and new approaches for interaction with various actors—national governments, the business community, job seekers and, of course, the migrants themselves—are emerging. In a number of cases, the municipalities' measures are proactive in nature and are aimed at using HSMs as an additional resource for economic development. However, few European cities can boast of comprehensive strategies in this area. More often than not, action is taken belatedly and taken in the face of a massive brain drain that threatens the city's competitive position.

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========================= European Studies =========================

Angela Merkel's Leadership Lessons: the Secret of Political Longevity (2013−2021)[1]

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Abstract—The article examines the phenomenon of the political longevity of German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The subject of the study is the second period of her chancellorship (2013−2021), as few German leaders have managed to stay in office longer than two terms. The author analyses in detail what objective factors and personal qualities helped Merkel to win the 2013 and 2017 elections, overcome declining personal popularity and objective voter fatigue, and get through all crises, including the migration crisis and COVID-19. The article examines how the tactics and strategy of the first female chancellor have transformed in response to changing political conditions. It explores the tools with which Merkel built her image as nonpartisan leader of the nation, and how she became a hostage to the image she created in 2015. The decision to accept refugees was a turning point in Merkel's career; thus, the author pays particular attention to the ways in which she helped maintain her chancellorship. The paper uses the theory of how women's leadership differs from men's. The conclusion is drawn that Merkel developed her own special personal method of securing power and maintaining the image she needs. The main secret of her success is not the use of force but quick learning and adaptation, based on her instinct for political survival.

Angela Merkel has the ability to extend her political lifespan. She headed the German government for 16 years from 2005 to 2021. Before her, only Helmut Kohl, who entered the history of Germany as the unifying chancellor of the country, had been at the top of power for so long. Four times German citizens voted for Merkel and the CDU. At favorable moments in her political career, three words—"you know me"— were enough for her to win the elections. In difficult times, one phrase—"we will manage"—was enough to split German society and cause hatred for herself and the migration course among a significant part of the citizens.

According to Joschka Fischer, the former of Foreign Affairs of Gerhard Schroeder's red-green cabinet (1998−2005), Merkel spoiled her "rendezvous with history" with the beginning of the euro crisis.[2] However, during her tenure as chancellor of Germany, Merkel, unlike her predecessors, had not one but several significant "meetings with history": the banking crisis of 2008, the euro crisis of 2010, the migration events of 2015, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Each time it was about specific problems that required quick and far-reaching strategic decisions in the absence of ready-made recipes. All these dramas took place not at the level of a nation-state but in the world arena. There were no proven tools that politicians could use. In fact, Merkel had to become a "politician-fireman."

In November 2015, in a speech dedicated to the memory of German Chancellor H. Schmidt (SPD), Merkel noted that "the achievements of this politician were especially noticeable in the way he dealt with crises" (Bollmann, 2021, p. 11). This criterion applies to Merkel herself. International crises changed not only

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[1] The article is a continuation of the study of various aspects of Chancellor Merkel's leadership. See: Timoshenkova, E.P., (2021).

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[2] Ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs: Joschka Fischer: Merkel has blown it, May 21, 2010. https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/ex-aussenminister-ueber-die-kanzlerin-joschka-fischer-merkel-hat-s-versemmelt-1.947223. Cited October 15, 2021.

the chancellor's approach to governing the country, her style, and original goals, but also Germany's position in the world. For many decades, the German government has sought not to be left alone in the international arena. However, the euro crisis, which revealed the economic weakness of France; the exit of Britain from the EU; the US refusal to lead the military-moral role in the West, which was a gradual process under the presidency of B. Obama and devastating under D. Trump; and the danger of war in Ukraine brought Germany to a new level of political influence, increasing its importance in Europe and the world. It was Merkel's image—a modest and open leader, willing to compromise and firmly on her feet—that helped Germany's neighbors to accept its new role. Under the circumstances, the chancellor managed to achieve the maximum possible for her country, while using a minimum of external domination.

Foreign observers began to analyze the phenomenon of Merkel's longevity earlier than German political scientists and more closely (Florence, 2017; Braun, 2015; Bunelli, 2013; Gastronovo, 2014; Grawford and Czuczka, 2013; Qvortrup, 2017; Renterghem, 2021; Schramm, 2016) than their colleagues, who probably believed that they had studied the chancellor thoroughly by the third election period (Bollmann, 2013; Meng, 2006; Heckel, 2009; Languth, 2005; Mishra, 2010; Stock, 2005). However, the policy of "open doors" for migrants in 2015 turned out to be unexpected for many experts. A significant part of recent research in Germany falls on this period and is devoted to the analysis of the reasons that prompted Merkel to accept a huge flow of refugees, as well as the transformation of her leadership after these events (Alexander, 2017; Knaus, 2020; Münkler H. and Münkler M., 2016). In Russian political science, two scientific centers can be distinguished that consistently analyze Merkel's domestic and foreign policy: the Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences (*Sovremennaya Germaniya ...*, 2015; German Economy and Politics ..., 2019; Timoshenkova, 2020; Vasil'ev, 2018; Vasil'ev, 2021; Kokeev, 2021; Horol'skaya, 2021; Timofeev and Horol'skaya, 2021; Basov, 2019). Special attention needs to be paid to the works of N.V. Pavlov, Dr. Sci. (Hist.), and A.A. Derevyanchenko (Pavlov, 2018a; Pavlov, 2018b; Pavlov, 2019; Derevyanchenko, 2017).

The controversial decision in 2015 led Merkel to her gradual loss of power and popularity. After the forced repetition of the "grand coalition" following the results of the election to the Bundestag in 2017 and the voluntary resignation of the CDU chair (2018), many political scientists predicted her early departure from the post of chancellor (Alexander, 2021; Hebel, 2018; Levitsky and Ziblatt, 2018).

The weakening of the power resource and the promise to leave politics at the end of the fourth term of office led to the fact that, on the one hand, Merkel turned into a "lame duck," and on the other hand, the accumulated international prestige and the lack of need to compete for the fifth time gave her more freedom of action. It is no coincidence that in 2017, after the unpredictable Donald Trump was elected president in the United States, the world community recognized the German chancellor as the main defender of democracy and Western values.[3]

This article analyzes the methods of securing the chancellor on the political Olympus of Germany, the transformation of her image and decisions that contributed to the preservation of power over the last legislative periods. Merkel's foreign policy activities are not included in the study, as they are a separate topic for investigation.

MERKEL: A HOSTAGE TO HER OWN MODEL OF SUCCESS (2013−2017)

The 2013 elections were the pinnacle of success for Merkel and the CDU. Together with the CSU, the Christian Democrats received a record 41.5% of the vote. This election campaign, like the previous one, relied on the chancellor's image as an experienced and predictable politician. Merkel was convinced that the main condition for winning the elections was the calmness of citizens and their confidence in the future. Therefore, her main task was to minimize risks and maintain what had already been achieved. Merkel's principle—"you know me"—worked perfectly. However, the strong results of the CDU/CSU were not enough to create a government majority. The FDP failed to overcome the 5% electoral threshold and did not enter the Bundestag for the first time in history. Staying in the government under the leadership of strong Merkel did not allow her to fulfill her election promises, and the tactics of hard pressure on the chancellor, which were used by the liberals, contributed to the creation of an image of an unreliable and scandalous partner. As a result, the CDU/CSU again formed a "grand coalition" with the SPD.

Thus, during the first period of her chancellorship (2005−2013), Merkel perfectly mastered the techniques of "asymmetric demobilization" and "soft absorption" of competitors (Schumacher, 2006, p. 71). The former involves the adaptation of the main election slogans of the rivals and their introduction into the program of the CDU. The latter is characterized by a tactical way out of situations. Merkel can be compared to a sumo wrestler who does not throw his opponent to the ground with force, but dodges him so skill-

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[3] Angela Merkel is now the leader of the free world, not Donald Trump. Sunny Hundal, February 1, 2017. https://independent.co.uk/voices/angela-merkel-donald-trump-democracy-freedom-of-press-a7556986.html; Harvard. Merkel-Rede gegen Trump. Deutschlandfunk. May 31, 2019. https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/harvard-merkel-rede-gegen-trump-100.html. Cited October 15, 2021.

fully that an energetic opponent falls by himself. Observers and participants in the political process often interpreted her restraint and avoidance of open conflict as inaction (Blome, 2013, p. 10). Therefore, the victories looked unexpected.

A minimum of risk and reasons for criticism is a principle that Merkel successfully used in the elections and firmly embedded in domestic politics. She tried to get away from public discussion not only of sensitive topics but also of those that could contain conflict potential. For example, the chancellor rarely visited the German troops and police, although she regularly invited their representatives to meetings. At the same time, she avoided being photographed against the background of military equipment and always emphasized that the main goal of these structures is to maintain peace and order (Alexander, 2018, p. 17). Another sensitive topic was migration.

In mid-2014, Merkel's trusted collaborator Eva Christiansen—head of the "political planning, major issues, and special assignments" headquarters—brought in three specialists in the psychology of collective behavior to develop recommendations on how best to interact with citizens for their own good. As a result, the concept of "civil dialogue" emerged, the main motto of which was "it is good to live in Germany" (Alexander, 2018, p. 25). This was a wide-ranging attempt by the chancellor's office to present Merkel as a nonpartisan leader and the "mother of the German nation," who cares about her citizens and was sympathetic and aware of all problems, no matter how big.

Merkel's success in winning the sympathy of society and demobilizing competitors was so convincing that in June 2015 the Social Democrats seriously discussed the possibility of refusing to nominate their candidate for the post of chancellor in the next election, because they saw no chance of winning (Bannas, 2019, p. 46). The situation changed dramatically in September. Merkel from the most popular politician instantly turned into the most controversial political figure in Germany. Researchers are still wondering what made the chancellor open the state borders to more than a million refugees and immigrants, among whom the proportion of those who fled the war in Syria and were eligible for political asylum was insignificant.[4] There are various explanations, including the ones given below: Merkel wished to go down in history as a great humanist and rescuer; she was guided by economic calculations, since the German market economy needed an influx of foreign labor; she hoped to improve the image of Germany, which unleashed two world wars; her Christian upbringing and female empathy played a role; and the chancellor turned out to be short-sighted and did not understand

at all what consequences her decision would lead to (Resing, 2017, p. 123; Knaus, 2020, p. 7).

There is another noteworthy version, according to which Merkel was a hostage to her own principles and management style. After becoming chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, for a long time she diligently avoided publicly expressing her attitude on the topic of migration. Nevertheless, on October 31, 2014, on Reformation Day, during a speech at the Church of Mary Magdalene in Templin (Brandenburg), Merkel had to answer the question of how Christian policy correlated with the expulsion of immigrant families well integrated into German society. According to the chancellor, such a measure was not Christian only at first glance; and it would be even worse to accept many, thereby depriving those who really needed protection (Alexander, 2018, pp. 27, 29).

The onset of the 2015 migration crisis did not affect Merkel's strategy. She still tried to distance herself as much as possible from this topic, resisting pressure from the public and the media that demanded that she voice her attitude and at least visit a center for migrants. In the summer of 2015, German President Joachim Gauck met the refugees, and Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier (SPD) and Labor Minister Andrea Nahles (SPD) addressed this topic. The chancellor remained silent. She explained her inaction in a private conversation as follows: "I was elected chancellor to solve problems. If I go there (meaning, the refugee center—*Author*), then I must have a solution" (Alexander, 2018, p. 29).

However, on July 15, 2015, while visiting a school in Rostock, she found herself in a difficult situation right in front of journalists' cameras. A 14-year-old girl, who was born in a Palestinian refugee camp, admitted with tears that her biggest fear was leaving Germany because her family had no right to stay. Thus, Merkel found herself in a dilemma: to maintain the image of a caring and warm-hearted woman, on which she had been hard at work lately, or to remain head of government and side with the officials who made this decision. At first, she tried to calm the girl. However, then she answered: "If we now say that you can all come, and you really will all come from Africa, then we risk not being able to cope with this" (Alexander, 2018, p. 31). The footage of the conversation was covered by many media outlets. The chancellor was accused of coldness and cynicism not only by domestic but also by foreign, publications. The video of the scene became the most viewed on the Internet. *Stern* magazine called Merkel a "cold queen."[5] Her honest reaction to the girl's words threatened to turn into an

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[4] In 2015, Germany was forced to take in 1.1 million refugees during the year, of which 476,649 applied for asylum. For a more detailed analysis of Merkel's migration policy, see: Germany, 2015 (2016).

[5] Die Eiskönigin—wie Angela Merkel zur meistgefürchteten Frau Europas wurde. Unser Thema im aktuellen stern. /jr http://t.co/uFwjryeCG6 (twitter.com); Stern punktet mit "Eiskönigin" Merkel, Spiegel mit "Versichert und verraten." https://meedia.de/2015/08/18/stern-punktet-mit-eiskoenigin-merkel-spiegel-mit-versichert-und-verraten/. Cited October 15, 2021.

image disaster and break two images at once: a competent chancellor who always has a solution and a caring, humane leader.

During her time in government, Merkel became accustomed to start each week by analyzing statistics about what concerned German society. This helped her make decisions and respond to events in time. After the incident at the meeting with schoolchildren, 81% of the Germans surveyed were confident in the emotional coldness of the chancellor (Alexander, 2018, p. 33). At the same time, cases of attacks on refugee camps became more frequent in the country, which were used not only by the opposition but also by Vice-Chancellor Z. Gabriel for their own purposes. Society and politicians insistently demanded that Merkel break the silence and express her opinion. The decision of the chancellor to open the borders for refugees in late August—early September 2015 was influenced by the following factors: the speed of the problem, huge public pressure, lack of a unified position in the government, and fear of losing credibility and voter support.

The consequences of this decision changed Germany and split German society. The growth of radical right-wing sentiments, huge demonstrations against migrants, the problems of integration of refugees, the stunning rise of the Alternative for Germany party, the failure of the CDU in the land elections, the loss of the personal authority of the chancellor, and the threat of a constructive no-confidence vote from their own associates led to the fact that already in December 2016, Merkel officially stated at the CDU congress: "The situation at the end of the summer of 2015 should not be repeated. This grave humanitarian situation could only be overcome and brought under control by the methods that we applied. 2015 will forever remain an outstanding achievement of our country."[6]

LAST TRIALS (2017–2021)

The leitmotif of the 2017 election campaign was Merkel's promise that "Germany's great achievement of 2015 will not be repeated." The flow of refugees decreased significantly as a result of the measures taken by the government. The chancellor survived this crisis and won the election again. In fact, her decision to run for a fourth time was not dictated by a desire for change but by a desire to consolidate what had been achieved. Her reelection was not a triumph, and the formation of a government coalition was more difficult than ever in German history. It took Merkel about

six months to form a government.[7] At the same time, the first round of negotiations, in which the CDU/CSU, Union 90/Greens, and the FDP participated, failed. As the leader in the EU, Germany could not afford to be distracted by internal affairs for long. New elections would most likely bring even more votes to the right-wing radical Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, which Merkel recognized the day after the victory as the "main challenge" of her fourth chancellorship. The formation of a minority government would have made it more difficult for the Bundestag to pass laws and therefore govern the country. However, none of the potential partner parties was in a hurry to help the chancellor in this difficult situation. Liberals and Social Democrats saw firsthand that participation in government coalitions had led to the weakening of their parties and the loss of voters' confidence. In the then situation, Merkel was largely to blame herself. On the one hand, her actions as the CDU chairman to conquer the political center of society and the "no alternative" to the chancellor's course contributed to the creation of the AfD on the right flank, which took away votes from traditional parties. On the other hand, Merkel's management style in coalitions destabilized her partners, who feared a repetition of negative consequences. The situation was saved by President of Germany Steinmeier, putting pressure on the SPD. As a result, the chancellor again led the "grand coalition," torn apart by contradictions from all sides, including from her main ally, the CSU.

The crisis state of the government, the losses of the Christian Democrats in the land elections and the fall of their own authority in the party forced Merkel to announce on October 29, 2018, her voluntary resignation from the post of the CDU chairman. Thus, she violated her basic principle of maintaining leadership—the concentration in one hand of the leadership of the party and government. According to Merkel, it was the degradation of the power of her first rival Schroeder, which became a serious lesson for her (Blome, 2013, p. 108). Unlike her predecessor, the chancellor never risked her powers and did not succumb to public pressure, regardless of the level of personal ratings and party results. However, she decided to sacrifice less for the sake of saving more in this situation. Merkel remained true to her political survival instinct. At the same time, the chancellor promised to leave politics in 2021 and not run again. The actions taken allowed her to strengthen her authority and reduce the intensity of tension. In July 2018, 78% of the German population were dissatisfied with the work of the government, and Merkel's personal trust

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[6] CDU-Parteitag: Rede von Angela Merkel am 06.12.2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUqZHSK7Rt4; CDU-Parteitag: Versöhnung mit Schönheitsfehler, 6.12.2016, https://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2016-12/cdu-parteitag-angela-merkel-rede-wahl?utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.de%2F. Cited October 15, 2021.

[7] As a result of the election on September 24, 2017, the CDU/CSU received 37.2% of the votes, of which the CDU got 30.2%, and the CSU, 7%. The coalition agreement between the CDU/CSU and the SPD was signed on March 12, 2018.

rating was 48%, but by December 2018, this figure rose to 57%.[8]

The decrease in the authority of the chancellor was reflected in the behavior of her associates. Thus, to strengthen his own image, the CSU leader and Prime Minister of Bavaria Markus Söder avoided joint photographs with Merkel (Bollmann, 2021, p. 681). Proximity to her views, political course, and style of management turned into a controversial bonus for her successors, who needed to distance themselves from the chancellor and at the same time maintain the stability of the system. The situation with the coronavirus helped Merkel to strengthen her leadership and regain the trust of the German citizens. She was always perceived as a good crisis manager. The fight against the pandemic allowed her to show her strengths: outward calm, as well as scientific and at the same time humane approach to solving problems. Merkel's speech to the deputies of the Bundestag during the second wave of the disease on September 30, 2020, was one of the best in her career. In it, the chancellor not only used well-developed and polished rhetoric techniques (imperative, warning, and personal empathy, emotionality combined with pragmatism), but also demonstrated her understanding of politics: she proposed guidelines, and civil society followed them. The key mechanism of such interaction is the responsibility of everyone. Merkel had not been so emotional and convincing since 2000—a speech at the CDU congress, in which she called for the revival of the party after the departure of Kohl.

Because all rules, regulations, all measures are useless if they are not accepted and observed by people. Therefore, we must speak ... words that will reach as many people as possible .... We must all explain the danger and draw attention to the difficult situation that the cold season brings with it .... I think we all want to live the life that we knew .... But at the moment we are risking everything .... We must not allow ... a dying person to be forced to die all alone in a hospital or in a nursing home, because people who love him cannot say goodbye to him, cannot extend a hand to him.[9]

The historical paradox lies in the fact that in her first important speech, which raised her to the political Olympus, Merkel operated on the rights and freedoms of citizens, and at the end of her reign she was forced to justify the need for their restriction. German voters positively assessed the government's actions to combat the coronavirus and the personal contribution of the chancellor. Despite some costs and criticism of Merkel's political management, 84% of citizens were

confident in March 2021 that the chancellor would cope with the crisis and remain in office until the end of her term. In July, her personal trust rating rose to 83%, the best among German politicians.[10] Thus, Merkel managed to overcome all the internal political crises that fell on her 16-year period of chancellorship and remain the number one politician in Germany, despite all the difficulties of the fourth legislative period.

CONCLUSIONS

The scale of a politician is determined by the extent to which he/she corresponds to his/her time. During the chancellorship of Merkel, the familiar and stable world began to change rapidly. In foreign policy, the transformation of the postwar structure began; in domestic policy, the pandemic had an unexpected impact on the usual way of life. Having survived the collapse of the GDR in 1989/1990, she was probably better prepared than other Western colleagues for modern challenges.

Merkel began to lead the country as a "chancellor of change," but quickly realized that the conservative German voters were afraid of drastic changes. Therefore, she tried not to impose radical reforms on them. The exception was the abolition of compulsory military service and the rejection of nuclear energy. Yet even here, she acted rather forcedly, following the moods of her citizens. This harmony ended in 2015 with the admission of a large number of refugees. Merkel could no longer protect Germany from world problems and entered a conflict the core of which was the choice between national security interests and openness to the world.

Merkel's main principles in politics were pragmatism and minimum risk. She tried not to associate the political projects of the government with personal authority. Her main strategy is "asymmetric demobilization," the goal of which is to form positive associations among voters. She turned this skill into a serious weapon against the opposition. Merkel strove to avoid criticism and direct clashes. Even being on the verge of impeachment, she did not dare to use her "chancellor's competence" and dismiss the obstinate Minister of the Interior Horst Seehofer in 2018. In fact, Kohl turned out to be the only politician in her career against whom she spoke out openly and decisively.[11] Regardless of the motives, this decision turned out to be justified for Merkel and ensured her career take-off.

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[8] ARD-DeutschlandTrend. https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/ deutschlandtrend/deutschlandtrend-1279.html; Infografik: (Un)zufrieden mit der Kanzlerin? https://de.statista.com/infografik/14253/ politikerzufriedenheit-angela-merkel/. Cited July 20, 2021.

[9] Cited from: Frank Hartmann, Merkels Rhetorik: Worte auf der Goldwaage. https://www.politik-kommunikation.de/ressorts/ artikel/worte-auf-der-goldwaage-363547423. Cited July 20, 2021.

[10] Umfrage zum Verbleib von Angela Merkel als Bundeskanzlerin bis September 2021. https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/ studie/1224901/umfrage/umfrage-zum-verbleib-von-angela-merkel-als-bundeskanzlerin/. Cited July 20, 2021.

[11] This refers to Merkel's open letter to *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in 1999 and her speech at the CDU congress on April 10, 2000, in which she called for the renewal of the party after accusing its chairman Kohl of corruption—hiding the sources of funding for the CDU. (*Author's note*).

She fought with other rivals within her own party carefully and quietly. She sent some, like Federal Minister for the Environment Norbert Röttgen in 2012, to conquer the state election. It gave others the opportunity to subdue their ardor in the ministerial field: for example, the two main critics of her political course, Seehofer and Jens Spahn, received in 2017 the portfolios of ministers of the interior and health, respectively. Decisions that she could not influence, she presented as consensual and approved by her personally. Although from the outside, such actions can be interpreted as concessions and a sign of weakness, the example of Merkel proves that in a modern democratic society the secret of "political longevity" lies not in the use of force and "pushing through" the positions of others but in the ability to use forced retreats for one's own purposes, find advantages in them, and turn them into successful strategies.

Merkel's ability to pass off the merits and results of coalition governments as her own decisions and achievements seriously weakened her partners, while at the same time helping to strengthen her authority. The results of the election campaigns show that she managed to stay in office, despite significant losses and defeats of the CDU. This is contrary to the popular belief that voters perceive parties and candidates in aggregate. Merkel managed to create an image of a nonpartisan politician thanks to effective moderation and the ability to compromise. The decisive factor in retaining power was her leadership style, which guaranteed voters that she would definitely find the right solution and come to a consensus.

During the 16 years of chancellorship, Merkel's image underwent a major transformation. She was called a "political killer," compared with Margaret Thatcher; considered a follower; accused of lack of goals; admired for her ability to find compromises and get through crises; and recognized as a chancellor with a "firm hand" and a pragmatist who firmly stood on the ground. One constant was her ability to change quickly. Learning and a scientific-pragmatic approach had become the main secret of her success. Politician Merkel won all these years because she effectively applied Darwin's theory of evolution to political processes, according to which survival is not about strength but about adaptability.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that she has no conflicts of interest.

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=========== European Studies ===========

Trends in the Evolution of the Party System in Spain in the Post-Franco Period

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Abstract—The degradation of the bipolar party system established in Spain in the post-Franco period, based on the dominance in the political space of two system-forming parties of opposite political orientation, and its replacement with a multi-party model with a wider involvement of new alternative players in political processes seems to be a long-term trend. Taking into account the extreme problematic nature of the formation of mono-party cabinets of ministers in the future, the creation of government coalitions becomes inevitable. However, due to the absence of a "coalition culture," which was not necessary before, as well as a noticeable polarization of political forces and the growth of mutual rejection at the level of leaders and party elites, the solution of this problem in modern Spanish realities threatens to turn into an endless political marathon and is fraught with significant increased political instability in the coming years.

Keywords: Spain, transition, Francoism, PSOE, People's Party, UDC, Unidas Podemos, parliamentary elections, coalition culture, nationalists, polarization of political forces, Europe, Germany

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In the second half of the twentieth century. in the leading Western European countries, party systems that were generally similar in form and content were formed. They were based on the alternation in power of the two main parties of a competing political and even ideological orientation—as a rule, conservatives and social democrats with an auxiliary role, and in some cases, smaller parties capable of performing the function of allies or situational fellow travelers. At the same time, the stability of such a system was ensured due to the high total percentage of votes received in the elections by the two leading parties (70–90%). However, in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, this model began to collapse due, on the one hand, to the crisis of the old, established parties, and on the other hand, the emergence of alternative formations on the political stage, capable of winning over a significant percentage of the electorate. A similar trend is also characteristic of Spain, where the bipolar party system that emerged in the post-Franco period is being seriously tested.

THE FORMATION OF A BIPOLAR PARTY MODEL IN SPAIN

As a result of the dismantling of Francoism, a democratic political system was created in Spain, "stable in

its assessments and moderate in its conflicts, which fit within the framework of the normal confrontation of interests and ideologies," according to the conclusion of a team of analysts close to the Spanish government during the time of Socialist Prime Minister Felipe González (Alonso Zaldívar y Castells, 1992, p. 31). Political parties have become an integral element of this system, which, as stated in the current Spanish constitution (Article 6), "express political pluralism, contribute to the formation and manifestation of [the] popular will and are the main instrument of political participation."

The democratic surge at the dawn of post-Francoism led to the formation of more than 500 different organizations that were included in the register of political associations. However, the vast majority of them soon "dispersed in the face of the strength and electoral appeal of large parties and coalitions" (Alonso Zaldívar y Castells, 1992, p. 32), which formed the base of the modern Spanish party system. Only a few parties were able to prove their viability, both the historical parties that emerged before the civil war of 1936–1939 and the new ones that managed to fit into the democratic landscape.

The historical parties include the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), which was formed in the 19th century (1879) and the Communist Party of Spain (CPS), which celebrated its centenary in November 2021, as well as two nationalist parties, the Basque Nationalist Party (BNP) and the PSOE created in

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1895, and the Republican Left of Catalonia (RLC), which was created in 1931 as a result of the growth of antimonarchist sentiments in Spain and the left-leaning part of the supporters of Catalan nationalism.

These political parties participated in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the Republican government (the PSOE and the CPS were its main support), and after the establishment of the Francoist order in the country, they were forced to go underground. Interestingly, the defeat of the Republicans in the war largely contributed to the survival of the parties of the left and nationalist orientation, motivating their desire to resist (albeit, with varying degrees of activity) the new authoritarian government.

As for the right-wing and centrist parties that existed in Spain before the civil war, they all disappeared from the country's party map, actually becoming part of the new Francoist political system, the core element of which was the National Movement (NM), which united all the Caudillo supporters in its ranks. Nevertheless, the NM has never been a fully cohesive organization, it has always suffered from an internal struggle between various factions wanting to become closer to its leader. Initially, the leading positions in the NM were occupied by members of the Spanish phalanx, which was a Spanish version of world fascism. However, over the years, the influence of pro-fascist radicals in the NM declined, and in the late period of Francoism, young technocrats associated with the Catholic organization Opus Dei came to the fore. The contradictions that existed in the NM prevented the idea of Francoism gradually growing into a limited democratic society through a strategy of openness, which involved the creation of various political associations in the NM that could form the base of the new political system of Spain after Franco (*Modern Spain*, 1983, pp. 6−23).

As a result, the formation of parties in the center and on the right flank of the political space of post-Franco Spain took place largely spontaneously. Until the first democratic elections were held in 1977, it was not clear which currents from the former Francoist camp would take the lead. In particular, at a certain stage it was believed that the Spanish Christian Democrats, whose foreign adherents occupied strong positions in a number of Western European countries, primarily in Germany and Italy, had good chances to become the center of attraction for all the rightists.

For Spain, throughout its centuries-old history, a significant influence of the personality factor on political processes is characteristic. In this sense, Spain is very close to Russia. Strong leaders at the head of the state contributed to its prosperity, strengthening the position of Madrid in the international arena, while weak leaders led the country to a dead end, undermining the efforts of their politically more capable predecessors. The relatively painless political transition from Francoism to a democratic system in Spain

was accomplished (perhaps decisively) thanks to the courageous and effective leadership of Adolfo Suárez, who is without a doubt an iconic figure in modern Spanish history. The enormous authority that Suarez, who took over as Prime Minister of Spain in July 1976, won in Spanish society during the transition period, allowed him to quickly form an election coalition, the Union of the Democratic Center (UDC), which united 15 groups of various centrist orientations in its ranks, ranging from the Social Democrats to the "civilized," moderate Francoists.

Suarez himself was from the National Movement. Moreover, before his appointment as head of government, he served as the Party Secretary of the NM. Against the backdrop of the stale veterans of the "crusade" against communism, Suarez and his political associates, who belonged to the last Francoist generation (they were 40 to 50 years old), appeared clearly preferable: they were in the prime of life, had a certain political experience, and could offer a meaningful reform program.

The other post-Franco parties that were not included in the UDC and little known to the electorate had to literally prepare their election programs at short notice. As they did not have grassroots organizations, they had to rely on the recognizability of their leaders, who were also associated with the former regime, but whose political reputation was ambiguous and often simply unsuitable for the new political realities.

There was no such confusion in the camp of the left. However, a complete picture of the electorate's priorities was also lacking. The PSOE and the CPS held the advantage. The socialists had, first of all, a young dynamic leadership headed by the 35-year-old Party Secretary Felipe Gonzalez, who managed to win a tense intraparty struggle and remove from power the old émigré government, which had lost sight of the new Spanish realities. For the communists, the years of leadership in the underground struggle against Francoism allowed the party to win sympathy and support among the workers and the intellectuals in Spanish society. However, the old guard remained at the helm in the CPS, which in the eyes of many Spaniards was associated with the civil war period, whose consequences had to be overcome as quickly as possible.

The first democratic elections in post-Franco Spain took place on June 15, 1977, six months after a national referendum on a political reform bill was held. The bill stipulated the creation of a bicameral parliament, consisting of the Congress of Deputies (lower house, 350 seats) and the Senate (chamber of territorial representation, 207 seats), elected by universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage.

The UDC won the election with 34.7% of the vote. They were closely followed by the PSOE, for which 29.2% of the Spaniards who took part in the voting cast their votes. The Communists were third with 9.2%

of the vote. They were followed by the right-wing People's Alliance (8.3%), which became the refuge of many neo-Franco conservatives who realized the irreversibility of the changes that had taken place in the country, but were not ready to support Suarez as they considered him to be excessively left-wing. The Christian Democratic Federation won just 1.4% of the vote, which was the end of this political project. The followers of the Francoist "bunker" (the most staunch adherents of the caudillo) disappeared from the political arena altogether as relics of a bygone era (*Modern Spain*, 1983, p. 31).

In general, the nationalist parties of the Basque Country and Catalonia, which were able to compete on an equal footing with the regional branches of the all-Spanish parties, successfully passed through the crucible of the first post-Franco elections. This meant that, despite 40 years of persecution during the period of Francoism, nationalism had returned, and its support was generally at the same level as in the 1930s, which confirmed the stable nature of the nationalist preferences that existed among in parts of the Catalan and Basque societies (Orlov, 2020, p. 401).

The contours of the party-political system, which existed with minor transformations until the mid-2010s, were actually formed following the results of the 1977 elections in Spain. It was based on a two-party model (in Spain this model is called *bi-partism*) with the auxiliary role of two or three relatively small parties (including nationalist ones), which could, if necessary, add votes to the winning party in parliament, but did not participate in the formation of the government. After the crisis and then the collapse of the UDC in 1981—1982, associated, in particular, with the struggle for leadership in this coalition (later to become a party) and the expulsion of the founder of the UDC Adolfo Suarez, the position of the centrists as one of the two backbone parties was occupied by the People's Alliance, which was later transformed into the People's Party (PP).

The post-Franco two-party model was not something fundamentally new for Spain. In one form or another, a similar model existed throughout most of the 19th century, acquiring canonical forms at its end, when, by mutual agreement, there was a peaceful alternation in the power of the conservatives of Canovas and the liberals of Sagasta, which made it possible to moderate the political ambitions of their main competitors, the Carlists and the Republicans (Gallego Castañera, 1988, p. 112). I would like to add that in my opinion, the blurring of the two-party model during the period of the Second Spanish Republic (1931—1939) became one of the causes of the civil war: in the fateful elections of 1936, two leading parties, the Spanish Confederation of the Autonomous Right (CEDA) and the PSOE, representing opposing political tendencies, failed to bring together the strategic minimum of 51% of the vote, and were "destroyed" in the ensuing "total confrontation" (Gallego Castañera, 1988, p. 116).

In the early years of modern Spanish democracy, the disappearance of the UDC from the political arena became an incentive for the leaders of the People's Alliance to abandon excessively conservative positions in order to keep most of the former centrist electorate in their orbit. This was generally successfully accomplished. Only a small percentage of the members of the UDC, who belonged to its social democratic wing, subsequently joined the PSOE. In turn, the socialists also consolidated the entire left and center-left electorate under their wing. The main victims as a result of this tactic were the communists, who gradually lost their positions as a significant element of the Spanish political reality and disappeared into the United Left coalition (Astakhov and Rostov, 2020, p. 116).

To confirm the thesis about the dominance in the political life of Spain for nearly 40 years of two major parties competing with each other, we have given below the statistics of the cumulative results of these parties in the parliamentary elections held in 1977—2011.

In the first 11 elections in Spain in the post-Franco period, the combined electoral support of the two main, competing parties of opposing political orientations ranged from 63.76% (the lowest figure in 1977) to 83.81% (the highest figure in 2008). This provided these parties with sustained support in the lower house of parliament, ranging from a combined 282 seats in 1989 (80.6% of the total number of seats) to 323 seats in 2008 (92.3% of the total number of seats).

The performance of other political parties and pre-election coalitions against the backdrop of the dominance of the two main parties looked insignificant. If we take the combined figures of the third and fourth parties, they ranged from 6.8% (in 2008, the lowest figure) to 17.54% (in 1977, the highest figure). Accordingly, the representation of these parties in the Congress of Deputies was also very conditional (minimum, 16 deputies after the elections in 2008; maximum, 37 deputies in 1986 and 1996).

At the same time, the two-party system ensured a fairly high level of political stability. The party that won the election (in our analysis, the first party) received, as a rule, an absolute majority in the lower house of parliament, or easily gained the votes necessary to form a stable government through the support of deputies from small parties. During this period, the Spanish government was formed 6 times under the PSOE, thrice under the People's Party, and twice under the UDC. This arrangement made the creation of parliamentary coalitions unnecessary. As a result, post-Franco Spain did not develop the negotiation culture required to reach inter-party compromises, which became especially noticeable when the two-party system, unexpectedly for many local politicians and analysts, splintered.

Table 1

Election date	The total number of votes cast for the two main parties, ranked first and second, in the elections	The total number of mandates of the two main parties, ranked first and second, in the Congress of Deputies following the election results (out of a total of 350 seats)
06/15/1977 (1st election)	63.76% (UDC + PSOE)	283 (80.9%)
03/01/1979 (2nd election)	65.24% (UDC + PSOE)	289 (82.6%)
10/28/1982 (3rd election)	74.47% (PSOE + PA)	309 (88.3%)
06/22/1986 (4th election)	70.03% (PSOE + PC)	289 (82.6%)
10/29/1989 (5th election)	65.39% (PSOE + PP)	282 (80.6%)
06/06/1993 (6th election)	73.54% (PSOE + PP)	300 (85.7%)
03/03/1996 (7th election)	76.42% (NP + PSOE)	297 (84.9%)
03/12/2000 (8th election)	78.68% (PP + PSOE)	308 (88%)
03/14/2004 (9th election)	80.3% (PSOE + PP)	312 (89.1%)
03/09/2008 (10th election)	83.81% (PSOE + PP)	323 (92.3%)
11/20/2011 (11th election)	73.39% (PP + PSOE)	296 (84.6%)

Note: PC is the People's Coalition formed around the People's Alliance (PA).

Source: the tables and other calculations given in this article were compiled by the author based on official documents.

MULTIPARTY SYSTEM AS A NEW POLITICAL REALITY IN SPAIN

The 12th parliamentary election, held on December 20, 2015, became a milestone. As a result of the election, fairly representative factions of two young parties were formed in the Congress of Deputies: the centrist Ciudadanos (Citizens) and the left Podemos (We Can), consisting of 40 and 42 deputies, respectively. These parties garnered 13.94% and 12.67% of the vote, with Podemos actually holding 20.68% of the vote when the votes of the regional coalitions formed around this party were added to the nationwide list. In this case, the number of the Podemos faction in the lower house increased to 69 deputies.

At the same time, the indicators of the two leading parties dropped sharply. The People's Party was supported by 28.71% of the voters in the elections (15.92% less than in the 2011 election), which allowed the populists to get only 123 deputies in the lower house of parliament (against 186 in the previous composition of the Congress of Deputies). The results of the socialists were generally perceived by their supporters to be catastrophic: 22.01% (6.75% less than the extremely unsuccessful election results for the party in 2011). The PSOE parliamentary faction in the Congress of Deputies was severely reduced to 90 deputies (that is, less than the psychologically significant milestone of 100 seats, below which the socialists had never fallen in the modern history of Spain) (Paniagua Fuentes, 2016; Orlov, 2017).

This trend continued in all subsequent parliamentary elections. The summary table below (Table 2) of the results of the elections in 2015, 2016, and twice during 2019 indicates the emergence in Spain of new political realities associated with the erosion of the two-party system and the formation of a multiparty system.

In the 2019 elections, another party broke into the political space of Spain, the far-right Vox (Voice), which the leftist and liberal analysts characterize as the heir to the Francoist ideology, whose followers were unable to create a strong party in the period of democratic transition and for four decades "melted" into the ranks of the People's Party as its radical conservative wing (Arroyo Menéndez, 2020).

As can be seen from Table 2, the leading two parties in the last four parliamentary elections jointly won about 50% of the votes (the best result was 55.64% in 2016 and the worst one was 45.36% in the elections in April 2019). This is significantly lower than before, when their total support in some cases exceeded 80%. Accordingly, the representation of these parties in the Congress of Deputies has significantly decreased: from more than 80% of votes (and even 92.3% in 2008) to 50–60% in recent years (the best figure is 63.4% after the 2016 elections) and the worst figure is 54% in April 2019).

According to a public opinion poll conducted by the Spanish Center for Sociological Research (CIS) in January 2022, 28.5% of voters were ready to vote for the PSOE in the new parliamentary elections, and

Table 2

Election date	The total number of votes cast for the two main parties, ranked first and second, in the election	The total number of mandates of the two main parties, ranked first and second, in the Congress of Deputies following the election results (out of a total of 350 seats)
12/20/2015 (12th election)	50.72% (PP + PSOE)	213 (60.9%)
06/26/2016 (13th election)	55.64% (PP + PSOE)	222 (63.4%)
04/28/2019 (14th election)	45.36% (PSOE + PP)	189 (54%)
10/10/2019 (15th election)	48.82% (PSOE + PP)	209 (59.7%)

Source: the tables and other calculations given in this article were compiled by the author based on official documents.

21.5%, for the People's Party, which in total would allow the leading two parties to receive 50% of the vote. Such a potential outcome of the elections fully fits into the new Spanish electoral paradigm[1] (Sánchez Muñoz, 2017)].

The significant changes that have taken place in the Spanish party system (Anikeeva, 2019; Khenkin, 2020) are largely due to objective problems and difficulties that the country has faced in the 21st century. The Podemos party was formed in March 2014 in the wake of the protest movement following the global financial and economic crisis of 2008, which deeply affected Spanish society. Part of the left-wing electorate, dissatisfied with the conciliatory policies of the PSOE, having gone through a short pahse of social movements, actively supported Podemos, seeing the new party as a conductor of their aspirations (Tamames, 2015). The leader of Podemos, Pablo Iglesias, a professor at the Complutense University, was seen as a classical left-wing leader, who combined the qualities of a theoretician, orator, and leader of the masses (Khenkin, 2019). In relation to this, it must be emphasized that objectively the left-wing cluster of the Spanish political space has remained partly free throughout the post-Franco transition. The CPS, and later the United Left, could not fill it completely for various reasons, as a result of which part of the left-wing electorate voted for the PSOE, which had recovered over the years of democracy more by inertia than through strong conviction. This circumstance created a favorable opportunity for Podemos to further strengthen its position, provided that it was able to build its political line correctly, without drifting or unjustified bias (Garzón, 2014).

The Ciudadanos party was formed before the Podemos, in 2006 in Barcelona as a regional organization. It was formed as a result of the desire of a part of the Catalan society to actively oppose the local nationalism that was gaining strength. Initially, the party identified itself as a center-left, social-democratic organization, but later it began to turn to the right. As the national ambitions of Ciudadanos grew, Spanish analysts coined the term "partido-bisagra" or "hinge party" for them. It was assumed that given the new political realities, Ciudadanos would play the role of a junior partner in coalitions with the PP or PSOE, which would ensure the stability of the cabinet. However, the obviously overestimated political ambitions of the founder and leader of the party, Albert Rivera, and the obvious mistakes he made harmed the Ciudadanos at a certain stage. The party lost the lion's share of its electorate, which for the most part went over to the People's Party.

The emergence of the Vox party on the political horizon of Spain has both domestic and international implications. For a long time it was believed that the far-right political project in Spain had no prospects. The failures of Vox in the elections in 2015 and 2016 (electoral support of 0.23 and 0.20% of the vote, respectively) appeared to have convincingly confirmed this thesis. However, everything changed dramatically in 2018, when the party unexpectedly entered the autonomous parliament of the traditionally left-wing Andalusia, and then repeated its success in two national elections held during 2019. Like the mythical Phoenix bird, Spanish (Castilian) nationalism was revived before our very eyes as the antipode of Catalan and Basque regional nationalism, having not explicitly manifested itself in the post-Franco period, except perhaps in the form of local and marginal relapses.

The rise of the Vox led to an increase in the polarization of Spanish society. Thus, for all right-wing supporters, Podemos and the United Left are simply communists, while for all left-wing supporters, Vox, and often followers of the People's Party, are fascists. This gives grounds to assert that the civil war in the souls and hearts of many Spaniards, including the young, is continuing, despite the well-established idea of the post-Franco transition being seen as a miracu-

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[1] PSOE and PP suben más de medio punto en el primer barómetro del CIS de 2022. https://cadenaser.com/ser/2022/01/20/politica/1642674552_960834.html.

lous reconciliation of Spanish society by the scientific and political community. At the same time, it would be wrong to fully classify Vox as a neo-Franc party, although certain elements of the old school caudillo are undoubtedly present in the ideology of this party. Vox followers are supporters of the traditional foundations of patriarchal, conservative, Catholic Spain, who completely reject all the newfangled attitudes of the European and American left, primarily the aggressive imposition on society of the values of gay people as a symbol of a new model of liberal democracy. In addition to this, illegal migration, which directly affects Spain, which has become a transshipment route and the recipient of thousands of immigrants from Africa and parts of Asia, is a serious irritant for the Vox and other Spanish rightists. In these ways, Vox has many features in common with the new European right, which is firmly establishing itself on the political field of a number of large countries of the Old World.

After the November 2019 parliamentary elections, for the first time in post-Franco history, a government coalition consisting of the PSOE and Unidas Podemos (UP) was created, which the entire progressive Spain actively supported, including world-renowned intellectuals and cultural figures, many of whom traditionally stand on the left (Vernikov, 2019a; 2019b). However, the leader of the PSOE, Pedro Sanchez, tried to avoid forming this coalition and only entered into a coalition with the UP as he felt he would otherwise lose power.

In the voting in the Congress of Deputies, the candidacy of Pedro Sanchez for the post of head of the government of Spain received the minimal support from the deputies: 167 votes in favor, with 165 against him, and 18 abstentions. In addition to the PSOE and UP, deputies from most of the small left and nationalist parties voted for Sanchez (or at least did not block his candidacy), united mainly by the desire to prevent the return of the right to power, rather than the desire to align themselves with the ruling coalition. Thus, a situation close to a stalemate has arisen, when Sanchez, in order to preserve his cabinet, is forced to constantly maneuver (Kurakina-Damir, 2020), and at the same time make sure not to disturb the Catalan and Basque nationalists, whom the Vox leaders (and the populists) openly call "enemies of Spain."

The extreme instability of the Sanchez cabinet was confirmed by the vote in the Congress of Deputies in early March 2022 on the reform of labor legislation, which was tentatively approved by the business community, trade unions, and other "social agents." The reform was supported by 175 deputies, and, this time, the Ciudadanos party, usually opposed to the government, supported Sanchez, and the 174 members of parliament who voted against him, in addition to representatives of the People's Party and Vox, included deputies from the RLC, BNP, and other small left-wing nationalist parties whom the prime

minister constantly appeases and whose support the government needs to remain in power[2].

It should also be emphasized that the crisis of bipartisanship manifested itself prominently during the pandemic, when the interparty confrontation in Spain may have reached its climax (Yakovlev, 2020; Vernikov, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

The change in political preferences of a significant part of Spanish society, which has led to a sharp reduction in support for the two leading parties, the PSOE and the PP, is a long-term trend. The former consolidation of the left-wing and right-wing electorate around these two parties is significantly blurred: today, together, they are able to collect at best 50% of the vote against the previous 80% or more. The votes they lost went to new parties that are eager to establish their place in the Spanish political arena.

The creation of governmental coalitions in Spain under these conditions has become inevitable. At the same time, the solution to this problem, due to the lack of a "coalition culture" and the traditionally inflated ambitions of all participants in Spanish politics, seems to be extremely difficult, and in some cases simply hopeless.

In a situation of a political tug-of-war, which, apparently, is becoming the norm in Spain, it cannot be ruled out that in the foreseeable future the leading parties of this country (PSOE and PP) will be doomed to take the unprecedented step of forming a grand coalition, following the example of Germany during the time of Chancellor Angela Merkel. As of today, this seems unrealistic, and simply unthinkable to some in Spain, but if the early election charade that marked the 2016−2019 period continues in one form or another, and the government continues to be forced, like a tightrope walker, to constantly search an elusive balance, then, perhaps, there will simply be no other reasonable choice for responsible politicians in this country (Orlov, 2021).

The implementation of this scenario, however, will be significantly hampered by the sharply increased polarization of political forces in Spain in recent years, which is expressed not only in the discrepancy between the program guidelines of competing parties but also in the mutual rejection of these parties at the level of leaders and elites. Extremely harsh criticism of each other, sometimes taking the form of direct insults and unwillingness to listen to their opponent, will create additional difficulties of a purely subjective nature, shattering the entire political system. There is an obvi-

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[2] El congreso aprueba la votaci de la reforma laboral. https://www.msn.com/es-es/noticias/elecciones/el-congreso-aprueba-la-votaci-c3-b3n-de-la-reforma-laboral-c2-bfqu-c3-a9-partidos-votaron-a-favor-y-cu-c3-a1les-en-contra/ar-AATrt9H?ocid=uxbndlbing. Cited December 19, 2021.

ous analogy here with the situation in the United States, where certain circles in the Democratic and Republican parties today perceive each other not just as competitors, but as enemies. This is a very disturbing phenomenon of the new Spanish realities, capable of pushing competing party elites to act in a destructive way. In general terms, there is a growing "variability of the future" of both Spain and the "united" Europe as a whole (Gromyko, 2021, p. 11), behind which there may be an uncertainty of the processes that will dominate in the European space and individual countries, including Spain, in the near future.

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Transregional Processes

Brexit's Implications for the Transatlantic Relationship

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Abstract—Since the Second World War, the United Kingdom has served as a transatlantic bridge between the United States and Europe and as a conduit of the US influence in European affairs. Since joining the EU, Britain has been one of the main contributors to the European Union's foreign, security, and defense policies. The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU in 2020 marked a milestone in European politics. The UK's decision to leave the European Union has raised questions concerning probable implications of Brexit for the transatlantic relationship and the European balance of power. Brexit entails multifaceted changes in Britain's global posture, in particular, new nuances in its dealings with the United States and European partners. These shifts embrace a wide range of political, defense, security, and economic issues. They have stirred up debates on the British strategy's tilt towards the Indo–Pacific and Britain's future cooperation with its American ally and the EU. Having considered developments in the Washington–London–Brussels relations in the wake of the Brexit referendum, this article figures out trends in the interactions of these key players that reflect their visions of a post-Brexit reality.

Keywords: Brexit, United States, Britain, European Union, transatlantic relationship

INTRODUCTION

In June 2016, the UK held a referendum in which the majority (51.9%) voted for the country's exit from the European Union. On January 31, 2020, the United Kingdom officially left the EU. In December of the same year, the parties signed an Agreement on Trade and Cooperation and several additional documents (on the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, the exchange and protection of classified information, etc.), which govern their relationship in various fields except for foreign policy, military security, and defense. By January 1, 2021, the transition period ended, during which European legislation on the EU single market and customs union continued to operate on British territory. Brexit, from the point of view of its supporters, is intended to prove that the United Kingdom, freed from the EU shackles, can succeed much more in "free floating" than remaining in the European Union, which they call a "totalitarian superstate." The UK is the fifth largest economy in the world in terms of GDP [1] and the leading European military power. Britain's exit from the EU will weaken integrated Europe, which many politicians and experts in the West perceive as a blow to the liberal world order, because the European Union serves as its stronghold in the European space from Lisbon to Riga.

Brexit provoked a sharply negative reaction from the US and European liberal elites because it is a victory for the principle of the supremacy of state sovereignty, which is contrary to the idea of globalization, which disregards national borders. The growth of electoral support in Europe for nationally oriented, antiglobalization sociopolitical forces was caused by the global crisis of 2008, the collapse of the "open door" immigration policy, and the aggravated socioeconomic problems generated by globalization. Brexit reflects this general trend. According to a number of Western political scientists, when analyzing the causes of the erosion of American hegemony, "the role of transnational antiorder movements in Europe and North America received comparatively little attention" before Brexit and Donald Trump's win in the 2016 elections (Cooley and Nexon, 2020, p. 14).

The Brexit saga unfolded under three American presidents: Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden. The political and ideological views of these leaders and the circles of the US ruling elite behind them largely determined the nature of Washington's response to the UK's separation from the European Union. However, in the assessments of Brexit by Democrats and Republicans, common typical features are visible, reflecting the deep interests of the American state, which remain intact with a change of administrations.

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US RESPONSE TO BREXIT

The American perception of Brexit has been shaped by the interplay of numerous factors. The unique ties of alliance between the United States and Britain occupy a special place among them. The American–British axis is one of the main pillars of the Western world order. The signing by the leaders of these two countries of the New Atlantic Charter in June 2021 was a clear confirmation of this. Washington views the United Kingdom as its most important ally and conductor of its influence in international affairs, especially in Europe, because the views and approaches of the two countries are close to each other's or coincide. By cultivating a special relationship with Britain, US administrations encouraged Britain to view the United States as a more important partner than the European powers or the EU. These ties have "allowed the United States to keep a foot in Europe, which has become increasingly relevant in the course of the United States['] pivot towards [the] Asia–Pacific and also enabled the United Kingdom to play a more profound role within the Atlantic Alliance" (Ewers-Peters, 2021, p. 579).

During periods of tension in transatlantic relations, the ability of the United Kingdom to function as a link between North America and Europe, and between NATO and the EU, was of great value to the United States. A trusting relationship with London became a particularly valuable asset in American politics when it acted as a leader in the EU's diplomatic and security policy. Washington capitalized on British EU membership, using it to shape the foreign policy priorities and military plans of a united Europe. It supported the desire of London to tune European defense cooperation to the goals of NATO (United States). As the English political scientist W. Rees noted, "lacking the ability to steer European integration, the United States relied upon the United Kingdom to constrain the EU in ways congruent with its interests." He stated that "America's promotion of bilateral security and defence policy cooperation with the United Kingdom was conducted at the expense of both countries' multilateral relationships with the EU." America pursued a strategy that aggravated friction between its two key Atlanticist institutions, NATO and the EU (Rees, 2017, pp. 561, 565). The UK has strongly opposed any initiatives aimed at forming the EU as an independent center of power and geopolitical influence. It has resisted French attempts to compete with the United States for leadership in Europe or to question NATO's preeminence in the European security system.

The special relationship with the United States and EU membership opened up opportunities for London to mediate between Washington and European partners in transatlantic disputes. According to the American historian A. Cyr, Britain's role as a mediator between the United States and Europe has acquired particular value in the "context of friction involving President Donald Trump, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, and others in Europe" (Cyr, 2018, p. 92). *However, Brexit effectively deprives the UK of its ability to mediate and limits its contribution to transatlantic security cooperation to NATO.*

The benefits to American interests from UK remain in the European Union were not limited to the security sphere. Former US Ambassador to the EU (2014–2016) A. Gardner, in his memoirs, notes the important role of the British government in reaching, in the summer of 2016, a US–EU agreement on regulation in the field of the digital economy and the protection of personal data, including the Data Privacy Shield agreement and proposals for the formation of a single market for EU digital services, which were relatively favorable for US companies (Gardner, 2020, p. 90).

The topic of Brexit emerged in the transatlantic agenda at the final stage of Obama's presidency. The US administration supported the opponents of UK's exit from the EU. On the eve of the British referendum, which took place on June 23, 2016, President Obama, Secretary of State John Kerry, and other American officials, in an attempt to influence the outcome of the vote, warned about the risks and possible negative consequences of Brexit. Particularly unpleasant for the US administration was the fact that *the Brexiteers in their campaign actively promoted the theme of the restoration of the national sovereignty of Britain, which ran counter to the concept of globalization promoted by the US liberal elite.* Gardner recalls that, like many in the Obama administration, he simply could not understand "the repeated argument that Britain had become a vassal state and that it was necessary to 'take back control' over borders, money, and laws." In his opinion, this statement misled not only many voters in the United Kingdom but also key figures in the Trump administration. The US President "has referred to the EU as an 'anchor' around the UK's ankle" (Gardner, 2020, pp. 74, 75).

The Obama administration actively promoted its position to the British side, including during contacts with prominent political figures from the Brexit camp, such as London Mayor (and future Prime Minister) Boris Johnson, who, speaking in the spring of 2016 in a popular TV show on British television, called the EU "a jail with the door left open" [2]. Washington did not skimp on words, condemning the "seditious" idea of the UK leaving the EU. However, its rhetoric could not erase from the memory of the British the harsh American criticism of various aspects of the activities of the European Union. Some Western analysts believe that the US itself unwittingly had a hand in Brexit, ostracizing the political ambitions of the EU and mercilessly criticizing Brussels for the failures of European policy on immigration and countering terrorism. This criticism played into the hands of the Brexiteers, and "among those advocating withdrawal

were senior figures in the British security services who questioned the value of the EU in fighting terrorism" (Rees, 2017, pp. 563–564).

The American political and expert community split into two camps in their assessment of Brexit. The liberal wing expressed support for opponents of the UK's exit from the EU, pointing to the potential losses and risks associated with this decision, in particular, the reduction of British influence in matters of international security and finance. Opposite views were held by right-wing conservative circles. They welcomed Brexit based on their conviction that a weakening of the European Union was in the American interest. For them, the European Union was a rival to the United States in many respects.

The results of the referendum, in which most Britons (51.9%) chose to leave the EU, caused undisguised disappointment in Washington. The liberal elite and think tanks affiliated with the Democratic Party perceived the outcome of the vote as a manifestation of an alarming trend in the rise of populist sentiment and as an indicator of the frustration of a large part of British society with the results of globalization and unwillingness to come to terms with the country's postimperial status. According to the American political scientist G. Wilson, in circles close to the Obama administration, Brexit "reflected both the disturbing rise of authoritarian populism and the inability of the British to adapt to modernity" (Wilson, 2017, p. 553).

Although Washington and Brussels characterized the bilateral relationship as a partnership, on some issues the EU created problems for American policy, and the US often used its ties with the UK to solve them. As Gardner notes in his book, given that the United States and the United Kingdom "see eye to eye on nearly every foreign, economic, and security issue, it is natural that Washington would want the UK 'inside the EU tent' influencing EU decision-making and making the EU more economically liberal, Atlanticist, and pro-NATO" (Gardner, 2020, p. 88).

From the point of view of the American Democrats, Britain leaving the EU was a sensitive blow to the liberal world order, having a negative impact not only on both parties involved but also on Europe as a whole, provoking political processes that cause concern in it. The British referendum gave impetus to populist movements in Europe, especially in France, the Netherlands, and Denmark, which could lead to a split and potentially disintegration of the EU. Brexit exacerbated the internal problems of the EU; as a result, their European partners, as Washington feared, could immerse themselves in their solution for a long time, devoting fewer forces and resources to interact with the United States in international affairs. Commander-in-Chief of US Forces in Europe, Lieutenant General F. Hodges, who retired in December 2017, issued a warning at the time, saying that the disinte-

gration of the EU could have serious consequences for NATO as well.

Speaking in the spring of 2016 at a hearing in the Select Committee on Brexit of the House of Commons of the British Parliament (where he was invited to present the position of the Obama administration), Gardner explained why Washington was in favor of maintaining Britain's membership in the EU. The core of his explanation was as follows: "Having the United Kingdom in the European Union gives us much greater confidence about the strength of the transatlantic union" (Gardner, 2020, p. 84). From the point of view of the American establishment, Brexit weakens the position in Europe of a group of countries that traditionally tend to having closer ties with the US and Britain in their policies. Washington has made no secret of its concerns about the possible negative impact of Brexit on security, given that the UK has traditionally played an important role in defense cooperation within the European Union.

One of the reasons for the American concern is the risk of the unbalancing of integrated Europe after the British withdrawal. Brexit upsets the existing balance in the EU, which relied on the big European troika: Germany, France, and Britain. Brexit will result in increased German influence, while Britain is traditionally considered by American strategists as a counterbalance to German power.

The United States does not exclude *tangible economic consequences for transatlantic relations*, believing that Brexit could move the EU to a more protectionist position in trade negotiations, strengthen the influence of those circles in Europe that protect the interests of leading national companies, and promote the ideas of European industrial policy and planning, narrowing the boundaries of free trade competition and the open market. The negative attitude of the Obama administration to Brexit was fueled by fears that the UK leaving the EU would harm the interests of American companies operating in both the manufacturing and services sectors (especially financial ones), which chose to be in the UK largely because it serves them as a springboard for entering the much larger common market of the European Union.

The victory in the 2016 presidential election of Trump, who made no secret of his support for Brexiteers, helped avoid a delicate situation in US–British relations, given that the Democratic candidate Hilary Clinton criticized the results of the British referendum. Trump regarded Brexit as a rejection by the British of the "false idea" of globalization, and the weakening of the EU and the problems that have arisen in relations between London and Brussels as a win for the United States. He also considered acceptable a hard version of Brexit—the UK's exit from the EU without an agreement. Trump was scathing about the efforts of then Prime Minister Teresa May, who tried to reach an agreement with the EU on terms that

would have allowed as many British−European ties as possible to be preserved after Brexit. Western analysts noted that "in contrast to previous US administrations, however, the Trump administration did not think of the EU as a constraint on Berlin. Instead, it saw the EU as a mechanism to further German interests and power and even supported anti-EU initiatives and movements, including Brexit" (Simón et al., 2021, pp. 98−99).

A positive assessment of Brexit is widely spread in conservative American think tanks. According to experts from the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute, Brexit will allow the UK to regain its independence and create opportunities for a new upsurge in US−British relations. The views of right-wing conservative circles are largely accounted for by their perception of the EU as a tool that Germany and France use in "unfair" competition with the United States.

The current position of official Washington is determined by the fact that President Biden and influential figures in his entourage, who worked in the Obama administration, stick to their negative attitude towards Brexit. Brexit is ushering in changes that may reduce Britain's contribution to solving European problems affecting US interests. The Biden administration is interested in ensuring that the separation of the UK and the EU does not entail painful consequences. In the first year after Brexit, disagreements between London and Brussels came to the fore over specific but politically sensitive issues, such as the Northern Irish Protocol and fishing rights in British coastal waters. Although these disputes do not pose a threat to the unity of the West, which would require decisive steps from Washington, according to some Western political scientists, the Biden administration is not making enough efforts to help overcome the emerged disagreements and contribute to a mutual understanding between the UK and Europe.

FOREIGN POLICY CONSEQUENCES OF BREXIT

The withdrawal of the UK from the European Union is a major international event that concerns various aspects of transatlantic relations. *In relation to America, Brexit is resulting in an even stronger strategic rapprochement between Britain and the United States.* The tilt towards closer cooperation with the United States can be seen in the updated strategy that Prime Minister Johnson presented to Parliament in March 2021. Participation in the creation of the triple alliance AUKUS, which was prepared secretly from the EU, the designation of the Indo−Pacific Region as one of the main priorities in the field of security and a number of other political innovations indicate that the post-Brexit Britain in its international positioning is actively adjusting to the strategic objectives formulated by the Biden administration.

The updated British strategy makes cooperation with the United States and NATO the highest priority, indicating the continuity of the basic foreign policy postulates of the United Kingdom, which do not alter with the change of governments. The document confirms the commitment to maintaining a special relationship with the United States, which is characterized as their "most important strategic ally" [3]. In matters of collective security, London intends to continue to rely on NATO, considering the Euro−Atlantic macroregion as the main area for its efforts. The assessments of global threats and trends contained in the strategy largely coincide with the analysis of shifts in international relations, which is given in American official documents—the annual report of the Director of National Intelligence (*Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community 2021*) and the four-year review of the American Intelligence Community (*Global Trends 2040: A More Contested World*).

Brexit promises certain benefits for American policy. *First,* in situations that cause disagreements between the United States and integrated Europe, the potential solidarity of Britain with European powers (as was the case with the Iranian nuclear deal in Trump's presidency) will be unlikely achievable due to the lack of a legal and institutional basis for foreign policy cooperation between the United Kingdom and the European Union. London, freed from the obligations associated with EU membership, can now openly unite with the United States in opposition to European projects, which, from the US−British point of view, pose risks to the cohesion of the Atlantic Alliance. Britain supports American objections to the concept of European defense, which has been discussed within the EU for several years, considering the very idea of the strategic autonomy of Europe, which is the basis of the concept, to be harmful.

The vacuum of legal and institutional mechanisms for regulating British−European relations in the foreign policy sphere, emerged after Brexit, only strengthens the emphasis in London's policy on closer cooperation with the United States. According to Western analysts, Anglo−American cooperation in intelligence and other areas of defense policy can be expected to expand and intensify after Britain's exit from the EU (Cyr, 2018, p. 93). Admittedly, not everyone in the ruling Conservative Party agrees with such a bias in London's strategy: there are those in the ranks of the Tories who believe that American and British interests may not always coincide, and London should collaborate more closely with its European partners on European security issues.

Second, one of the consequences of Brexit was the intention of the Johnson government to expand British involvement in the affairs of the Indo−Pacific Region (IPR), which corresponds to the current priorities of the American strategy aimed at containing China as the main systemic adversary of the West.

The EU strategy for the IPR, published in September 2021 [4], although it notes some deterioration in relations between the EU and China, uses more diplomatic and balanced definitions in comparison with the assessments given to Beijing's policy by officials in Washington and London. The EU is focusing on finding opportunities for cooperation with China, not on containing it.

Third, Brexit raises the profile of NATO as a tool of interaction between the UK and their European partners in the field of defense and security, and any strengthening of the Atlantic Alliance is in the interests of the United States. The EU curtailed the exchange of classified data with London, which was carried out through a special mechanism of the European Union. Britain lost access to some services of Galileo, the European satellite navigation system. The conditions for the participation of British contractors in projects implemented through the European Defense Agency (EDA), as well as in the framework of in-depth military-political cooperation under the auspices of the EU PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) have become more complicated. In the preexit era, the UK acted as a link between NATO and the EU in some matters of transatlantic cooperation. Now these opportunities has considerably narrowed. European political scientists who tend to exaggerate the importance of the EU see Brexit as a weakening of NATO (Biscop, 2020, p. 90).

Britain's withdrawal from the European Union did not cause significant changes and legal consequences in the relationship between the United States and the EU. The absence of mutual legal obligations in the sphere of bilateral political relations between the United States and the European Union facilitates the mutual adaptation of the parties to the consequences of Brexit. Interaction between Washington and Brussels on foreign policy issues is carried out through informal mechanisms and in formats that do not require the creation of a contractual legal basis for them, providing the parties with freedom in decision-making.

The Biden administration is interested in British–European cooperation in the field of defense and security since the fruitful interaction between Brussels and London would have a positive impact on both NATO–EU relations and the transatlantic community as a whole. Some Western experts, in particular former British Ambassador to the United States N. Sheinwald, believe that an important criterion for the utility of the UK for American policy in the eyes of the Biden administration will be the extent to which London will be able to establish cooperation with the EU after Brexit [5]. However, the Johnson government, not expecting tangible benefits from interaction with the European Union in the field of external security and international policy, rejected the proposal of Brussels to conclude an agreement. The previous cabinet, led by May, sought to achieve a legally binding agreement with the EU in this area, believing that it would be better to keep abreast of EU initiatives, ensuring their compatibility with NATO tasks, than to distance themselves from Brussels, giving it full carte blanche. The British rejection of the agreement with the EU undermined Washington's hopes that the United Kingdom, after leaving the EU, would retain access to the mechanism for preparing foreign policy decisions in Brussels, which would allow incorporating the US–British point of view into this process.

Britain is not showing any interest in establishing military-industrial cooperation with the EU. It sees no tangible benefits for itself from the military-technical cooperation that the European Union, whose competence in such matters is very limited, can offer it. However, this does not exclude the development of military-industrial cooperation between Britain and leading European states on a bilateral or multilateral basis outside the European Union, especially when such interaction is consistent with NATO's plans. Judging by the strategy for the modernization of the armed forces, which the British Secretary of State for Defense B. Wallace presented to Parliament in March 2021, the UK considers France as its most important partner in the EU [6]. London expressed its readiness to closely cooperate with Paris on military issues, including in regions of mutual interest—the Western Balkans, Iraq, and the Sahel.

Britain is one of the five leading military powers in the world. According to the American political scientist M. Beckley, the European Union's deepened defense cooperation (PESCO) "is unlikely to offset the damage done by Britain's exit from the EU, given that Britain accounted for a quarter of EU defense spending and half of EU military R&D spending" (Beckley, 2018, p. 107). On the one hand, Brexit creates uncertainty around the future of European military-technical projects that were initiated with British participation. On the other hand, the political obstacles that arose due to the inflexible position of London against the expansion of the EU's competence in matters of defense cooperation are disappearing. Britain resisted the implementation of ideas aimed at deepening defense integration within the EU, blocking initiatives that could call into question American leadership in NATO. In 2003 and 2011, London vetoed proposals to form a centralized command and staff structure within the EU, seeing them as risks for the Atlantic Alliance. The United States has always supported its British ally in its vigorous opposition to the concept of a "European defense alliance." According to Rees, "Brexit offers Paris the opportunity to realise objectives that seek EU autonomy from American power" (Rees, 2017, p. 568).

Having lost access to the decision-making mechanism in the EU and having lost the function of the "transatlantic bridge," Britain keeps negligible opportunities to project the US and NATO interests in the

European Union. However, the EU is also losing a significant part of its potential with the departure of one of the key players that made a great contribution to European structures dealing with defense and security issues. According to Western political scientists, in particular N. Ewers-Peters, Brexit may negatively affect the effectiveness of cooperation between NATO and the EU and slow down the interaction of these organizations (Ewers-Peters, 2021, p. 588). The foreign policy resources of the European Union are also being reduced, given that the extensive network of world-wide links of British diplomacy will become inaccessible to Brussels.

Brexit changes the usual alignment of forces in integrated Europe. The challenge for the United States is to determine how the new EU geopolitical configuration may affect American interests. Washington is compelled to realize the decline of British influence in European affairs and to take into account the opinion of Germany and France to a greater extent when considering European problems. During the Merkel era, Germany played a key role in determining the strategic prospects for an integrated Europe, achieving a balance between the competing interests of countries, and maintaining the unity of the EU on key issues. Brexit only reinforces Berlin's status as the architect of European compromise. The states of Central, Eastern, and Northern Europe often, when defending their position, especially in matters of security and migration, turned to the UK for support, with which they have shared views. Now these countries have no counterbalance to German power in the European Union.

The decline of British influence in European affairs is forcing the United States to build relations with Germany more carefully and to be more attentive to its interests, given the increased political weight of Berlin in the European balance of power after Brexit. Formulating its approach to doing business with the EU, Washington has always been aware that the German position is often the determining factor in shaping the policy of an integrated Europe. The decisions of the governing bodies of the EU, as a rule, reflect the priorities of the FRG. Many areas in the activities of the European Union require financial support, and Germany is the major donor that provides the largest contribution into its budget.

According to Western political scientists, despite the fact that American attention is increasingly focused on China and the IPR, Washington "will likely seek engagement in Europe that is sufficient to influence the strategic interaction between Germany and Russia" (Simón et al., 2021, p. 100), even if these efforts require quite a lot of political or other costs from it. The concessions of the Biden administration on sanctions against Nord Stream 2 just demonstrated the importance for it of maintaining good relations with Berlin. Washington considered it possible to show flexibility on this issue, given the fact that Brexit did not lead to a weakening of the EU sanctions' pressure on Russia. The UK has often acted as a mastermind of the European sanctions policy directed against the Russian Federation, and, being outside the EU, it is not reducing its activity in this matter.

IMPACT OF BREXIT ON TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS IN THE TRADE AND ECONOMIC SPHERE

The UK officially left the EU on January 31, 2020, and after another 11 months, the transition period ended, and European legislation on the common market and the customs union finally lost force on its territory. At the end of December 2020, the United Kingdom and the EU entered into a Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), which provides for duty-free and quota-free access to each other's markets. Critics of Brexit regard it as a weak and rather painful deal for the British economy. Suffice it to say that the financial services sector, which is of great importance to the economic prosperity of the United Kingdom, retains access to the European single market for only a very limited list of activities.

Brexit has caused multidirectional economic consequences that affect not only Britain itself but also the United States and the European Union. Since 2018, when the decoupling process became irreversible, there has been a steady decline in the volume of UK trade with the EU. In 2020, British merchandise exports to the EU countries decreased by $40.5 billion (17.8%) compared to two years previously to $187.2 billion. Imports diminished during this time by $58.7 billion (16.5%) to $297.6 billion [7], but in absolute terms it still represents an impressive value.

The opposite trend was observed in UK trade with the United States. British exports to the United States have grown steadily, from $59.1 bln in 2017 to a record $73.5 bln in 2019. However, they fell to $55.6 bln in 2020 as a result of lower business activity on both sides of the Atlantic due to the coronavirus pandemic. In these years the volume of British imports from the United States grew even faster. As a result, the trade surplus in favor of the United States in bilateral trade reached a historically high level of $8.8 billion [8]. In the first ten months of 2021, US exports of goods to the UK amounted to $50.9 billion, and imports, to $46.1 billion [9], and, judging by the current dynamics, the volume of bilateral trade is unlikely to exceed the prepandemic record this year.

Brexit accelerated China's rise to first place in the list of leading trading partners of the United States, pushing the EU to second position, as the EU statistics no longer take into account the UK's trade volume with the United States. According to our calculations, in 2020 the share of the EU in British exports was 52.7%, while the share of the United States was 14.1%.

This shows the unequal importance for the UK of the markets of its two main trading partners. Commercial ties with the EU continue to play a paramount role in the British economy, despite Britain's withdrawal from the European Union.

Access to the British market is of no small importance, especially for those US companies and corporations that operate in the automotive industry, financial services, and insurance; these are the whales of American business such as Ford, General Motors, City, J.P. Morgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, Morgan Stanley, and Bank of America. The main investors in the British economy are large nonbank holding companies, financial and insurance firms, and manufacturing corporations. The accumulated American direct investment in the UK was $851.4 billion as of 2019 [10].

According to US statistics, the United Kingdom ranks seventh among the largest trading partners of the United States. American business has traditionally considered the UK a profitable place to allocate capital, except for a number of sectors of its economy where there were restrictions established by EU law. With its withdrawal from the European Union, the investment attractiveness of Britain for American business has declined: such an advantage as the possibility of entering the common European market on favorable terms through the "British gate"—joint ventures and British subsidiaries of American firms and corporations—has disappeared. As a result, Ford has reduced planned investment in its production facilities in the United Kingdom. Other American companies have also revised their investment plans.

The report of the US Trade Representative K. Tai notes that during the period of the UK's membership of the EU, American exporters and investors faced obstacles when they entered the UK market and when they tried to maintain or expand their presence in certain sectors of the British economy. Many of these obstacles have persisted beyond January 1, 2021, as the UK continues to comply with EU regulations [10].

US–British trade and economic relations before Brexit were governed by the US–EU Trade Agreement. When the UK ceased to be part of the EU, Washington and London faced the need to regulate their trade relations on a new basis. London is unlikely to be able to achieve for itself such favorable conditions as those that will be spelled out in the US–EU Free Trade Agreement, because it has incomparably fewer opportunities than Brussels to influence Washington's position.

The Biden administration confirmed that Britain is the closest ally of the United States, but at the same time made it clear that it would firmly defend American interests in the negotiations. Signals coming from Washington suggest that a comprehensive free trade agreement with the UK is not on its list of priorities. The United Kingdom accounts for 2.6% of US foreign trade and 3.6% of US exports [11]. As can be seen from these indicators, from a purely economic point of view, the importance of trade and economic ties with Britain for the American economy is not that great. However, in a number of cases, these ties are exclusive, which, combined with the special relationship between the two countries in the field of security, significantly increase their worth compared to the nominal value of the trade turnover.

Negotiations on a trade agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom began on May 5, 2020. The parties have made notable progress in agreeing on certain provisions of the trade agreement. In addition, they have entered into five separate regulatory standards agreements, identical to those in force between the US and the EU. These standards embrace product groups such as wine, distilled spirits, marine and telecommunications equipment, electromagnetic capability, pharmaceutical products, and they also cover insurance.

However, the stumbling block in US–British free trade talks is a disagreement over the conditions for allowing US farm products to enter the UK market. This applies primarily to GMO products and meat products made from raw materials in the production of which hormones are used. There is also no agreement among the parties regarding the standards applied to food products. To protect its market, the UK maintains high tariffs on certain agricultural products, especially fish and seafood, as well as trucks, passenger vehicles, and wood products. The issue of a tax on US companies that operate in the British digital services market remains unresolved.

To speed up the conclusion of a free trade agreement with the United States, the UK can soften the terms of access to its market, making it more attractive to the American companies. However, such compliance will make it difficult for London to conclude free trade agreements with third countries that will demand no less favorable terms for themselves. In addition, the separation of the British regulatory system from EU norms would have negative consequences for its economy, far exceeding the positive effect of the free trade regime with the United States.

The situation around the British Internal Market Bill showed that the Biden administration is ready to intervene when British–European disagreements may develop into a conflict. The document contained provisions on UK customs control, which contradicted the agreement between Brussels and London on the terms of Brexit. Washington warned the British authorities about the inadmissibility of establishing border and customs controls between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, as this would violate the 1998 Belfast Agreement reached with American mediation on the settlement of the Northern Ireland conflict. Under American pressure, the Johnson government agreed to amend the bill.

The change in the border and customs control rules caused by Brexit has led to a complication of the situation with the delivery of export goods from EU countries to Northern Ireland, which remains in the EU market space. A compromise on this issue is recorded in a special protocol, which is part of the agreement on the terms of the UK's exit from the EU. However, the problem of customs control between Britain and Northern Ireland has not been fully resolved. Although there has been some softening of London's position lately, it is still far from the complete elimination of differences. Washington calls on London to refrain from steps that could destabilize the situation in Northern Ireland. With differences between London and Brussels persisting, US mediation becomes almost inevitable, given that the US is the guarantor of the 1998 Belfast Agreement. British–European disputes over sensitive issues provide Washington with an opportunity to act as an arbiter, which increases American influence in European affairs.

CONCLUSIONS

The United States views Britain as its most important ally, and any significant changes in the country's geopolitical position, especially those that affect the balance of power in Europe, are subject to scrutiny in Washington. However, the significance of Brexit for transatlantic relations should not be overestimated: the UK's exit from the EU does not disrupt the functioning of the Western world order. Brexit, which is the product of a unique combination of objective and subjective reasons, does not pose a strategic challenge for the United States, although it affects American interests in various areas. It will not be able to shake the position of the United States in Europe, even if the EU's movement towards "strategic autonomy" accelerates after the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.

Brexit has a multidirectional impact on the transatlantic relationship. It is leading to changes to American policy in relation to Europe and it has increased the value of cooperation with Germany and France for Washington. Brexit narrows the American possibilities of influencing the EU on internal processes in integrated Europe and on the international policy of Brussels. If London continues to shy away from political cooperation with the EU, and the strategy of the Johnson government provides a basis for such an assumption, its value as a partner of the United States in European affairs will be diminished. At the same time, having got rid of the restrictions imposed by EU membership, London has more freedom to act in support of Washington.

The Biden administration is interested in establishing constructive cooperation between London and Brussels, since the rise of competition among the allies, and even more so their mutual alienation, would hinder American efforts to consolidate the West. In a situation of estrangement between Britain and continental Europe, the United States would need additional forces to maintain the European balance, which would interfere with the concentration of American resources to counter the "Chinese challenge." The distancing of the UK and the EU from each other is an unfavorable scenario for American policy, as it carries an increased risk of friction and conflict between the European partners of the US.

Brexit removes restrictions on defense projects within the European Union, which arose because of the British opposition supported by the United States: Washington and London are interested in slowing down the military-political integration of the European Union, fearing that it will become a competitor to NATO. At the same time, the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU reduces the military potential of the "strategic autonomy" of Europe: the EU cannot, as before, count on British participation in its operations. The weakening of European military-technical and military-industrial cooperation as a result of the UK leaving the EU is in the interests of the United States in terms of the race for global technological leadership and in the context of competition between American companies and European manufacturers in the international arms market.

The United States is facing controversial consequences of Brexit. On the one hand, there is an *"Americanization" of British foreign policy* as Britain has been released from many of its obligations within the EU, which is expressed in its more active and large-scale participation in American efforts aimed at countering Russia and China in strategically important regions of the world. Britain is one of the key partners of the United States in efforts to strengthen the eastern flank of NATO. In September 2021, it cofounded the AUKUS trilateral alliance, demonstrating its willingness to help Washington in every possible way implement its defense and geopolitical projects in the IPR.

On the other hand, for the United States Brexit means the loss of a powerful channel for projecting American and NATO influence within an integrated Europe. It will become more difficult for Washington to work with Brussels to mobilize the political, economic, and technological resources of the EU for the fight against China and for other goals on which the views of the parties do not coincide. London is largely deprived of the opportunity to act as a mediator between NATO and the EU: in the past, British diplomacy, performing this function, had repeatedly helped mitigate the differences that arose between the two organizations, especially when the ambitions of the United States and France clashed.

Despite the disappointing outcome of the Brexit referendum, the Obama administration in 2016 and five years later, the Biden administration confirmed the preservation of the "special" relationship between the US and the UK, which, however, did not help London achieve favorable terms on its withdrawal from the EU. *Brexit highlights the exclusive nature of the*

US–British "special" relationship. Cooperation with the United States is becoming even more important for the UK in terms of national security interests and its status in international politics. It follows from the updated British strategy that, having left the EU, the United Kingdom will actively cooperate with the United States regardless of the opinion of its European partners. This, of course, does not mean that the UK is deliberately moving away from integrated Europe, but it is unlikely to be able to maintain its former involvement in European affairs not related to security.

It is important for the Biden administration that Brexit does not cause destabilization in the transatlantic community. Washington sees the security and stability of a united Europe as a prerequisite for concentrating Western forces and resources on containing Russia and countering China. Washington believes that tensions in inter-European relations may make it difficult to achieve American foreign policy goals. Internally divided and mired in its problems, Europe (EU) is not capable of providing significant support to the United States in international affairs, whether it be in Europe or the Indo–Pacific Region.

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Transregional Processes

Afghan Agenda in Current Canadian Politics

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Abstract—Canada's operation in Afghanistan has been unfolding during a critically important domestic political event, i.e., the federal elections of 2021. The election campaign had pooled the main attention and resources of the Canadian leadership, limiting its ability to act in Afghanistan. Despite the difficulties, the Liberal Government of Justin Trudeau has achieved a lot. Firstly, they have organized the evacuation of Canadians and of Afghans who worked with the Canadian Armed Forces during the US and NATO military mission. Secondly, Ottawa has defined its attitude towards the Taliban regime by refusing diplomatic recognition. Thirdly, the admission of Afghan refugees to Canada has begun. In each of these areas, the Liberal Government has successes and failures, which have caused acute controversy in the country.

Keywords: Canadian foreign policy, federal elections, Afghanistan, Taliban, refugee admission, Liberal Party of Canada, Justin Trudeau, Conservative Party of Canada, New Democratic Party of Canada, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

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INTRODUCTION

The 2021 election campaign in Canada coincided with two mutually related events having a strong international resonance: firstly, the seizure of power by the Taliban in Afghanistan and, secondly, the completion of the withdrawal of American troops from this country. Amid reports about the election battles, the Canadian media regularly published chilling accounts of desperate attempts by Afghan nationals to flee their country, conquered by the Taliban.

Ottawa was directly involved in the Afghan events. Canadians took the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 in the United States as a blow to all Western democracies and to their country in particular, especially since over 30 Canadians died that day at the World Trade Center in New York. Political figures in Canada repeatedly raised the idea of retaliation for the dead by participating in the 2001–2011 Afghan mission.[1] Canada, like other Western countries, saw Afghanistan as a platform for practicing methods of combating terrorism. Stephen Harper's government

(2006–2015) made a decision on Canada's participation in the US and allied operation in Afghanistan.

This operation has become Canada's largest military campaign since the Korean War of 1950–1953. In terms of duration (almost ten years), this operation has exceeded the country's participation in the First and Second World Wars combined (Israelyan and Evtikhevich, 2013, pp. 145–170).

Canada was among the first countries to contribute its armed forces and civilian advisers in the fall of 2001 to support the US counterterrorism operation. In 2003–2004, Canada, along with the United States, played a decisive military role on this axis, and the Canadian contingent accounted for about 40% of all International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) (Volodin, 2007, p. 44). The operation required large-scale financial resources. About CA\$ 18.5 billion were spent on it (Afghanistan in Review, 2021). Grievous statistics should be given too: 165 Canadians died in that campaign and about 2000 were injured. Moreover, most of the Canadian military personnel were concentrated in Kandahar, the most dangerous province with the largest concentration of the Taliban.

In addition to military participation in the Afghan operation, Canada was one of the top five donors supporting the so-called *nation building* in Afghanistan, taking the lead in education investment. It should be noted that in those years, Afghanistan was the main recipient of Canadian development assistance, \$3.6 billion from 2001 to 2011 (Mank, 2021). The focus of

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[1] Canada participated in the US counterterrorism operation in Afghanistan from 2001 and then as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) until the end of July 2011, when the main part of Canadian troops were withdrawn from this country. Then, the focus of Canada's military activities shifted to training Afghan military personnel and policemen. In March 2014, the Canadian Armed Forces were completely withdrawn from Afghanistan.

Canadian assistance projects was on protecting women's rights and promoting gender equality.

The withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, which ended in August 2021, opened a new page in Canada–Afghanistan relations. The situation in Afghanistan required quick decisions from Ottawa, provoked controversy among the participants in election debates, and made the media headlines.

END OF THE US MILITARY MISSION: NEW ISSUES FOR CANADA

By August 31, 2021, the armed forces of the United States and its allies left Afghanistan, drawing a line under their 20-year military presence in this country. The withdrawal of American troops began under President Barack Obama (2009–2017) and continued under Donald Trump (2017–2021). This operation was finally wound up under the administration of Joe Biden (in power since January 20, 2021), who repeatedly announced the terms and conditions for ending the Afghan operation. Despite the lengthy process and the numerous tips-off from American officials, Canada found itself unprepared for the new challenges in the Afghan agenda of its foreign policy.

The Taliban seized power on August 15, the day Canada announced federal elections to the parliament. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau faced the difficult task of working on two fronts: the Afghan and domestic political agenda. Each area required a large concentration of human, material, and organizational resources. Information was leaked to the press that Trudeau attempted to postpone the withdrawal of Canadian troops from Afghanistan but received a categorical refusal from Washington [10]. Canada had to act exactly according to the American timetable. At the request of the United States, Canada stopped the evacuation of civilians from Afghanistan the day before the official deadline to free up airspace for American aircraft.

Observers also pointed out another fact. On the eve of the Group of Seven (G7) Summit in August 2021, Biden personally consulted on the Afghan issue with the leaders of the closest NATO allies: Britain, Germany, France, and Italy. Canada was not part of the discussions, another sign of its diminishing role in international affairs and in the US–Canada dialogue.

The main issue Ottawa faced when the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan was the evacuation of Canadians and of those Afghan nationals who worked with Canadian military and civilian agencies. In a statement signed by three Canadian ministers—Foreign Affairs; National Defense; and Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship—the government condemned the escalating violence in Afghanistan, especially against women, girls, and ethnic minorities. It also announced a suspension of the embassy's operations and promised to ensure the admission and safety of the

Afghans who cooperated with Canadian representatives [3]. The embassy staff immediately left Afghanistan.

Trudeau signed the resolution adopted at the end of August 2021 by the heads of more than 90 countries worldwide on coordinated efforts to create conditions for the unhindered exit from Afghanistan of their countries' nationals and of Afghan nationals of two categories: those who were part of the risk groups and those who assisted Western countries in fulfilling their mission. This classification set the framework for the Canadian admission policy for immigrants and refugees from Afghanistan.

Unlike some other top public officials who considered the possibility of interaction with the Taliban, Trudeau immediately announced that his administration did not plan to recognize the new government of Afghanistan. He recalled that Canada refused to interact with the former Taliban regime, which was in power in 1996–2001, having declared their movement a terrorist organization [2].

The Prime Minister's stance caused a mixed response in Canada. Most of the political elite and the public supported the diplomatic boycott of the Taliban and objected to their removal from the list of terrorist organizations. However, advocates of a different approach also came forth. Thus, Maryam Monsef, a Canadian politician of Afghan origin, who held various positions in Trudeau's cabinet, called the Taliban "our brothers" during an official briefing. Monsef has paid for her statement—many observers believe it was the real reason why she lost in her own constituency at the 2021 elections.

Dissenting points of view also exist in the academic community. Some insist on working with the Taliban, including Colin Robertson, a former diplomat, now Vice President of the country's leading think tank—the Canadian Global Affairs Institute. He believes that diplomatic recognition should not be seen as a "seal of approval" of the Taliban policies, but rather as a means to protect and advance Canada's national interests. Firstly, Canada has invested heavily in Afghanistan in terms of material and human resources, and now, in tandem with the United States and other allies, Canada must help the new government maintain the achievements of the previous years and continue the unfolding reforms. Secondly, the evacuation from Afghanistan is not complete yet, and the success of this process hinges on the interactions with the Taliban. Thirdly, Ottawa needs to work with the Taliban to achieve its main foreign policy goal, i.e., restoring the role and influence of Canada on the world arena. One of its priorities is to expand Canada's "presence on the ground" in different parts of the planet. Canada has experience in developing diplomatic relations with "unfriendly regimes," e.g., the recognition of China in 1970 and the renunciation of the trade, economic, and diplomatic boycott of Cuba in 1961. After establishing

relations with the Taliban, Canada should resume diplomatic relations with North Korea and Iran, sums up Robertson [12].

The Canadian Air Force has finished its operation to evacuate people from Afghanistan, having performed 17 flights and bringing about 3700 Canadians and Afghans to the Canadian territory. The newcomers were provided accommodations in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. In addition, Ottawa committed to take in 5000 Afghan refugees in the near future, who were evacuated by American aircraft to the United States or to US and NATO military bases in other countries. For reference: these bases are located in Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Germany, Spain, and Italy; at these locations, the Afghans go through security checks before being taken to the United States.

There are two important promises made by Ottawa. In line with the "sunny ways" policy, based on humanitarian and liberal values, which was the hallmark of Trudeau's course in previous years, the government declared commitment to accept 20000 Afghan refugees. The Liberal Party's platform mentioned 20000 to 40000 Afghan migrants. Marc Garneau, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, announced at the UN the finally agreed number of 40000 people [1]. In addition, Ottawa provided $50 million in humanitarian aid [8].

This humanitarian message won the approval of nongovernmental organizations involved in protecting the rights of immigrants and refugees. Meanwhile, the rushed campaign to evacuate civilians from Afghanistan, amid chaos and confusion, left many questions unanswered. One such question is how the repatriation of Canadian citizens remaining in Afghanistan will take place. According to official data, as of September 2021, more than 1200 Canadians, their families, and persons with a residence permit in Canada stayed on the territory of Afghanistan [8]. When questioned, officials got away with vague statements about coordinated efforts with their allies to ensure the security and safety of civilians and save the lives of Afghans.

Assessing the results of the operation to evacuate civilians who were willing to leave Afghanistan, it should be noted that Canada was not among the leaders in terms of the number of evacuated civilians (i.e., the key indicator). According to Reuters [15], as of August 30, 2021, the United States was ranked first according this indicator by a wide margin (114000). Qatar and the UAE helped evacuate, respectively, more than 40000 and about 36500 people. Among the G7 countries, Canada (3700) was ahead of only France (3000) and Japan (less than 500 people), falling behind Britain (315000), Germany (5347), and Italy (5011).

AFGHAN ISSUE IN THE 2021 ELECTION CAMPAIGN FOR THE PARLIAMENT OF CANADA

Let us revisit to the issues around the early parliamentary elections in Canada. It is known that Canadians, as one journalist put it figuratively, "vote with their wallets." That is to say, they focus on the socio—economic and financial aspects of party programs, without taking much interest in their foreign policy aspects. The events in Afghanistan somewhat changed this unwritten rule. Although the COVID-19 pandemic remained the central theme of the election battles, foreign policy issues also played a prominent role. Together with Afghanistan, debates focused on the development prospects of Canada—China relations, the fight against global warming, environmental protection, and the protection of sovereignty in the Arctic.

The Afghan operation stood as a separate issue during the debates of political party leaders in September 2021: Justin Trudeau (Liberal Party), Erin O'Toole (Conservative Party), Jagmeet Singh (New Democratic Party), Yves-François Blanchet (Bloc Québécois), and Annamie Paul (Green Party). Unlike the 2015 elections, when the divide between the parties ran on the number of Syrian refugees being admitted, the 2021 debates centered on the lessons and shortcomings of the evacuation campaign itself. Understandably, Trudeau focused on the achievements of Canadian military and civilian personnel, who managed to save the lives of thousands of people.

All other politicians unanimously criticized the government for the untimely elections. O'Toole accused Trudeau of "political selfishness" and unwillingness to abandon the power struggle for the sake of ending violence and ensuring the safety of the Afghans. Furthermore, O'Toole and Singh reproached the government for sluggishness, poor organization of the campaign, lack of coordination in the actions of the various ministries and departments, and bureaucratization of the refugee status application processing. Paul, the Green Party leader, pointed out shortcomings in the operations of the intelligence service, noting sarcastically: "It seems like we got better information on our smartphones than Mr. Trudeau got from our entire intelligence service" [4].

Opinion polls indicated that Canadians were generally dissatisfied with the government's efforts to evacuate civilians from Afghanistan. According to the Angus Reid Institute, the number of respondents who called the government's actions "successful" was close to zero (2%); 37% considered the operation "a failure"; 20% restrained from judgment; and 41% of those surveyed said that the operation went "as well as can be expected." This view was shared by the electorate of the Liberal Party, the New Democratic Party, and the Bloc Québécois, while 37% of Canadians supporting the Conservative Party called the operation "a failure." An indicator of the generally negative attitude

among the public towards government policy is the opinion expressed by half of the respondents that Canada should leave Afghanistan permanently [9].

Dissatisfaction with the process and outcomes of the evacuation from Kabul was elicited in the results of another survey. It was conducted by Nanos Research and found that 45% of respondents rated the government performance "poor" or "very poor" (17% and 28%, respectively). Men tend to be more disapproving of the country's leadership than women; i.e., 52% of the men and 38% of women surveyed believe that the government did a "poor" or "very poor" job [11].

Criticism and harsh judgments of Trudeau were undoubtedly justified. The evacuation campaign was indeed fraught with organizational blunders, strategic mistakes, and attempts to shift obligations to partners (as was the case with the Ukrainian Air Force, which helped evacuate about two dozen Canadian and Afghan nationals first to Kiev and then to Canada).

However, it is also true that Trudeau has achieved much. First of all, in the number of people evacuated, i.e., a quantitative indicator of the operation performance, Canada was ahead of many NATO members, including, as mentioned above, two G7 members. Moreover, Canada operated in very difficult conditions. Firstly, it was one of the first countries to cease its participation in the NATO military operation in Afghanistan. After that, the ties between Canada and Afghanistan weakened, and the Afghan issue virtually disappeared from Ottawa's political agenda. As a result, the Canadian military worked in an unfamiliar environment during the evacuation. Secondly, it so happened that the Afghan operation unfolded during a major domestic political event in Canada, i.e., federal elections. They pooled the main attention and resources of the Canadian leadership. All these factors should be taken into account when analyzing the achievements and costs of Trudeau's mission in Afghanistan.

AFGHAN REFUGEE ADMISSION POLICY

The Ministry of Immigrants, Refugees, and Citizenship developed two programs to receive Afghan migrants. The first one was called the Immigration Program for Afghans Who Assisted the Government of Canada [6]. To be eligible, an applicant must meet the following criteria:

Firstly, the applicant must be an Afghan national who worked with the Government of Canada (as an interpreter who provided services to the Canadian Forces or as a local staff at the Embassy of Canada) and had to be in Afghanistan on or after July 22, 2021, i.e., the date the immigration program started. However, it was indicated that even if this requirement was not observed, the applicant could still expect his/her documents to be processed. The applicant must also be admissible to Canada, and the program guidelines

explained in detail when someone could be found *persona non grata* by the immigration authorities of Canada. Three reasons were listed: security reasons (suspicion of espionage, subversion, violence or terrorism, participation in other criminal activities); medical reasons; financial reasons (inability/unwillingness of the applicant to support him/herself and family members). "Committing a crime, including driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol" was indicated separately as a reason for inadmissibility. The program also covered the applicant's family members: a spouse or common-law partner; a dependent child (grandchild) who must not be married or in a common-law relationship. The age requirement for the dependents was under 22 years. As of November 17, 2021, Canadian immigration services had registered 14 520 applications under this program; of these, 5000 were approved, and another 3460 Afghans entered Canada with refugee status [13].

The second program is humanitarian in nature as it provides an opportunity for certain categories of Afghan nationals to resettle in Canada [5]. It covers the following Afghan nationals outside of Afghanistan: women leaders, human rights activists, representatives of persecuted ethnic and religious minorities, LGBT communities, journalists, and people who assisted Canadian journalists. To be eligible for resettlement in Canada, the applicant must comply with many formalities. Potential settlers may enter Canada under a government program or a private sponsorship program, each of which is valid for a year. Contacting directly the Ministry of Immigrants, Refugees, and Citizenship is not allowed. The applicant must first register for refugee status with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or the Immigration Service of the host country. Then, his/her documents are sent to Canada by one of these agencies or by an authoritative international public organization with which the Canadian government cooperates. The document package submitted under the private sponsorship program must also include an agreement signed by the sponsor on his/her commitments, including an attachment with a thorough list of services and expenses provided by the sponsor. Not surprisingly, due to the bureaucratic obstacles, only 400 people have been able to resettle in Canada under the humanitarian program [13].

The humanitarian component of the Afghan operation was a continuation of Trudeau's government's immigration policy of previous years. It was recognized by the international community and experts as one of the most successful areas of the government work. The Liberals in power amended the Canadian Citizenship Act to expand the rights of migrants and refugees and brought the illegal migration from the United States under control. In 2018, Canada accepted a record number of Syrian refugees—instead of the promised 25 000 migrants from Syria by 2021,

Canada provided asylum to 75 000 people, ranking first in this indicator worldwide [7].

Canadian private sponsorship programs are particularly well known. In 1979, Canada became the world's first country to "partially privatize" the admission of refugees. Under Canadian law, individuals, families, or groups of people can sponsor refugees and personally integrate them. In doing so, the government takes into account the sponsors' choice regarding refugees. The sponsors, in turn, get used to living and communicating with people that represent a different culture. This practice allows Canadians to feel involved in political and global processes, gives them the opportunity to control immigration, and helps them fulfill their life purpose. Private sponsorship has reached such a scale in Canada that it has actually pushed the relevant state programs into the background. In 2019, only a third of the migrants received state assistance. The rest settled through the support of individuals or public organizations. The Canadian model of using private sponsorship in refugee admission has been rated highly by the UNHCR Office and other international structures. This practice formed the core of similar or fully analogous projects developed by France, Germany, New Zealand, and Spain (Van Haren, 2021).

The government policy of accepting Afghan refugees, as well as the evacuation campaign from Afghanistan, has not escaped criticism, which culminated in a letter from authoritative political and public figures of Canada, who addressed Trudeau and the ministers of the leading foreign affairs agencies. The letter was signed by well-known politicians such as the former Foreign Minister Lloyd Norman Axworthy and Senator Ratna Omidvar, prominent scholars (including Prof. Fen Hampson), and representatives of major human rights organizations. While recognizing the merits of the Afghan admission programs, the authors of the letter pointed to serious shortcomings and recommended measures to eliminate them. In particular, they proposed to (1) "clarify Canada's policy by defining its terms" (according to the authors, the following terms need to be defined: "assistance to Canada" and "accepted categories" of persons under the humanitarian program); (2) "devote significant resources needed to get the job done," including extra human resources for processing the applications submitted by Afghans; and (3) "waive the requirement of UNHCR recognition, and recognize the Afghan crisis as a prima facie refugee situation" [14]. The UN documents provide for such a procedure—in emergency circumstances when a group of migrants is granted refugee status, each member of this group automatically receives this status. The use of the prima facie approach instead of granting the refugee status on an individual basis makes it possible to eliminate many bureaucratic requirements and significantly reduce the time for processing applications.

CONCLUSIONS

The Afghan agenda of Ottawa's foreign policy became a national priority of Canada after the Taliban seized power in Kabul in August 2021. The situation in Afghanistan required urgent action from the government, which organized the evacuation of Canadians and of Afghans who assisted the Canadian Armed Forces during the US and NATO military missions. Ottawa defined its attitude towards the Taliban regime by refusing diplomatic recognition. Canada began to accept Afghan refugees on its territory. In each of these areas, Trudeau's government had successes and failures, which caused acute controversy in Canada.

The domestic political context associated with the events in Afghanistan was out of the ordinary for Canada since the Afghan campaign coincided with the early federal elections to the Parliament of Canada. This whole situation, along with Canada–China relations, was vigorously debated during the election campaign. Judging by the public opinion polls, the events in Afghanistan, i.e., the withdrawal of American and NATO forces and the lightning-fast victory of the Taliban over the Afghan regular army, had a significant impact on the course of the election campaign. Trudeau had to address all these issues when determining the necessary actions and developing a policy since the Afghan agenda highlighted Ottawa's foreign policy shortcomings, i.e., the decline in Canada's significance in the world arena and in the US–Canada dialogue. These are the issues to be addressed by the third government of Justin Trudeau, who won the 2021 elections.

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The Arctic Region

Russia and the United States in the Arctic: from Competition to Confrontation

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Abstract—The rivalry of great powers for hegemony and influence that has unfolded in the modern multipolar world is increasingly evident in the Arctic, a strategically important region of the world and exceptionally rich in natural resources. The attractiveness of the Arctic and the competition of great powers around it are growing due to the objective changes taking place in the Far North in four important areas (technology, economy, climate, and law), contributing to the economic development of the region. The clash of interests, primarily between the United States and Russia, is leading to an increase in military and political tension, turning the once abandoned peripheral region of the Far North into a zone of increased information, as well as political, and, most importantly, military activity of the superpowers. This article analyzes the increased popularity of the Arctic topic in the foreign policy of the United States and Russia, which is associated with climate warming, the accelerated melting of glaciers in the Arctic, the prospect of opening new sea routes, and the growing activity of the Arctic and other states, primarily China, in the region. Against the background of recent international events related to the Arctic, the Arctic direction of the foreign policy of Washington, Moscow, and Beijing is considered. The emphasis is placed on its military–political component, given that the growing political tension in the Arctic can lead to a new generation of armed conflicts and exacerbate the situation not only in the Northern region but also in the international arena as a whole. The situation is aggravated by the fact that there are no recognized norms of international law in the Arctic regarding the Arctic states' ownership of concrete vast sectors of the Arctic Ocean and islands in its aquatic area. The delimitation of maritime boundaries and the determination of rights to economic activities here remain the main problem. Political tension is growing.

Keywords: Arctic, Northern Sea Route, Arctic Council, Northern Fleet of Russia, United States Second Fleet, Northern Military District, US Arctic Strategy

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INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 21st century, the rapid planetary-scale climate change, promising the opening of new profitable sea trade routes and greater opportunities for the development of vast natural resources, made the world community pay special attention to the previously rarely mentioned at the international level and, in fact, abandoned vast expanse of the Arctic Ocean.

The Arctic, the region with the North Pole as its geographical center, includes the northern parts of Europe, Asia, and North America, as well as the Arctic Ocean. There are no generally recognized boundaries there. The Arctic states with official Arctic status are the Russian Federation, the United States, Canada, Norway, and Denmark. The legal regime of the Arctic is determined by the norms of international law and the national legislation of the Arctic states.

The region is increasingly attracting the attention of the great powers and other states due to its huge untapped resource potential. According to the US Geological Survey, the "last pantry" of the Earth contains 30% of the world's natural gas reserves, 13% of oil, and 9% of coal, as well as significant amounts of metals (uranium, copper, titanium, silver, gold), diamonds, and graphite (Sidorov, 2018). The temptation of appropriation and use of these natural resources, as well as attempts to establish American control in the region, is gradually heating up the atmosphere in international relations. According to Professor of the US Naval War College L. Saunes, "The Arctic is increasingly characterized by military buildup and presence, amongst others as a manifestation of great power competition between the USA and Russia" (Saunes, 2020). Here, a new type of conflicts of the 21st century is emerging and, apparently, will develop

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in the future. The vast resource potential and geopolitical position as a global transport artery have led to the transformation of the Arctic into a powerful magnet that attracts not only the Arctic countries but also many European states and even China, located far in the south.

STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE NORTHERN REGION

A characteristic sign of the third decade of the 21st century is the growth of publications in the international media, expressing the concern of the public about the buildup of the presence of the great powers' armed forces and military activity in the Arctic. This activity vividly shows the unfolding struggle for influence and control over the natural resources of the Far North.

Until the early 1980s, the area of the Arctic Ocean was divided by the above-mentioned five Arctic states into sectors, the peaks of which rested on the North Pole. However, after the adoption of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1982, the former demarcation lost its meaning.

Today, the territories and water areas of the polar countries are governed by the norms of this convention, which provides the five Arctic countries with the right to control the continental shelf, including the seabed, its subsoil, and resources located outside national territorial waters. In accordance with art. 76 of the convention, a state that has access to the Arctic Ocean may declare as its exclusive economic zone a territory extending 200 nm from the coast. It can be increased by another 150 nm if this state proves that the shelf is a continuation of its land territory.

An Arctic state has a preemptive right to extract minerals in its economic zone. The situation is complicated by the lack of internationally recognized clarifying documents on the ownership by the Arctic states of specific sectors of the Arctic Ocean and islands in its waters.

Disputable issues are settled by international institutions formed by the Nordic countries: the Arctic Council (AC), the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), the EU, and NATO. The leading place among them belongs to the Arctic Council, established in 1996, which deals with the main problems of interstate cooperation in high latitudes. The AC members are Russia, the United States, Canada, Denmark, and Norway, as well as the northern countries of Iceland, Sweden, and Finland. The AC observers, in addition to a number of European countries and the EU, are China, Japan, India, South Korea, and Singapore.

The coastal states do not want external players to interfere in their Arctic disputes. Attempts to coordinate problems between the European countries (Russia, Norway, and Denmark) by diplomatic means have not yet yielded tangible results. Contradictions are accumulating and intensifying.

The United States is staking on the internationalization of the Arctic maritime spaces, including the Northwest Passage (NWP), controlled by Canada, and the Northern Sea Route (NSR), controlled by Russia. Washington assumes that the Nordic countries only own 12-mile zones along their coasts. Russia, Norway, and Denmark dispute among themselves the extent of the continental shelf: Russia considers the Lomonosov Ridge, passing under the North Pole, as a continuation of the Siberian continental platform, while Norway considers it as part of the margin of the North American continent, and Denmark, as a continuation of the Greenland tectonic plate.

The positions of the Arctic and subarctic states in relation to the Arctic Ocean region were formed as follows. Four of the Arctic five states are Western NATO members (the United States, Canada, Norway, and Denmark), and they see Russia as the main opponent in the struggle for Arctic resources. The United States has also added China to the list of competitors. At the meeting of the Arctic Council in May 2019, as H. Brands points out in his book, the then US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, alluding to China, said that predatory powers were making raids on that region. "Do we want the Arctic Ocean to transform into a new South China Sea?" he asked (Brands, 2019).

The position of the US European allies is different from the American one. Europeans view the Arctic not just as a zone of economic and geopolitical rivalry. In the first place, they see in it a region in which climate change over time can cause great damage to the entire Earth, and therefore, they believe, close cooperation of all Arctic states is necessary. Based on this and relying on its own Arctic strategy, the EU advocates "equal" access to the Arctic resources and transport communications—the NWP and NSR—and the development of a new legal regime that would meet the interests of European states.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, Russia has been paying special attention to the Arctic, allocating significant financial resources for economic activity and protecting the borders of its Arctic zone, including the security of the NSR. The Ministry for the Development of the Russian Far East and Arctic supervised the Arctic direction in the Russian Federation.

THE ARCTIC IN US FOREIGN POLICY

The United States received the status of an Arctic state in 1867, upon acquiring Alaska from the Russian Empire. Of the numerous states that form the United States, it is their only northern territory, which is located in the Arctic reaching the coast of the Arctic Ocean. The harsh climate of high latitudes and the remoteness from the main territory of the United States led to the corresponding underdevelopment of

the industrial and economic infrastructure of Alaska. In addition, until the mid-20th century, the Arctic was not among important areas of American foreign policy.

Only in the years of the Cold War, during the military–political confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, did the Arctic become a strategic region for Washington. Its significance was determined by its geographical position, convenient for launching intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs)—in the event of an escalation of tension or a military conflict with the group of Soviet armed forces deployed nearby.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, Washington lost interest in the Arctic region. The personnel of American military bases in the Arctic were sharply reduced: for example, at the Thule base in Greenland, they decreased from 6000 to 100 people; 2000 military personnel were withdrawn from Iceland; a number of radars, which had actively operated during Soviet–American confrontation, were closed in Alaska [2].

The Arctic direction of foreign policy under President W. Clinton (1993–2001), formulated in Presidential Directive No. 26 (NSC-26), was determined by several theses, the most important of which were ensuring the security of the United States and the region, protecting its environment and bioresources, and economic development of the polar zone within the framework of cooperation between the eight Arctic states [3]. The approach to the region testified to its peripheral nature and non-inclusion in the national priorities of the 1990s. One cannot but agree with the opinion of O.V. Terebov, a researcher at the RAS Institute for US and Canadian Studies, that, "despite all the repeatedly declared importance of the Arctic for the United States, it does not have such vital importance for it as it does for Russia, Canada, and Norway" (Terebov, 2019, p. 230).

Only at the beginning of the 2000s, in connection with the intensification of Russia's activities in the Arctic, and especially after the Munich speech of President V.V. Putin at the international security conference in 2007, the US leadership began to show increased interest in the Arctic. The situation changed dramatically at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, when, together with the already evident acceleration of climate change, Russia intensified its activity in the Arctic in terms of developing the NSR, building modern port infrastructure there, and opening new oil and gas production facilities; Russian military presence in the Arctic increased, and new military facilities were created there. The United States regarded the manifestation of independent actions of the Russian Federation in the Arctic as a challenge. This created the impression that Washington's policy towards the region primarily responded to the emerging need to take part in the rivalry of the great powers.

COURSE TO MILITARIZATION OF THE FAR NORTH SPACE

Washington responded to the "Russian challenge" in the official Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower [4]. On October 17, 2007, the Chief of Staff of the US Navy in the administration of George W. Bush (2001–2009), Gary Roughead, at a symposium in Newport (Rhode Island) unveiled the modern US naval strategy. It, in fact, declared the internationalization of the above-mentioned Arctic maritime spaces controlled by Canada and Russia. The main objective of this strategy was to protect the territory and interests of the United States abroad. As the document noted, "Climate change is gradually opening up the waters of the Arctic, not only to new resource development but also to new shipping routes." At the same time, it is important to maintain the global mobility of American military and civilian ships and aircraft throughout the Arctic region [4].

The further efforts of the US military and political leadership in the Arctic were presented to the American public in detail in the report *The United States Navy Arctic Roadmap for 2014 to 2030,* which emphasized the creation of a special ice navy: the construction of ten new icebreakers and a sharp increase in the presence of American submarines in the Arctic Ocean [5].

To counter the Northern Fleet of Russia, the American leadership decided to restore the United States Second Fleet, which had previously controlled the Atlantic and was disbanded in 2011. This was announced in May 2018 by the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy, Admiral John Richardson, in his speech at the naval base in Norfolk. According to the admiral's statement, as soon as 2022, the Americans, together with the Europeans, intended to form the Atlantic Joint Command, responsible for the western part of the Russian NSR. In justifying the restoration of the Second Fleet in the Atlantic, Admiral Richardson referred to the national military strategy, stating that the United States had returned to the era of competition between great powers. Therefore, it was deploying the Second Fleet, making it responsible for the North Atlantic to the North Pole and for the East Coast of the United States (Dzherelievskii, 2018).

On December 17, 2020, the US Navy Marine Corps and Coast Guard released a joint document, *A Blue Arctic: Regaining Arctic Dominance: Predominance of Integrated Naval Power,* which underlies the new US naval strategy in the Far North, published in early 2021 [6]. It focuses on the confrontation between America and Russia and China, defined as sources of long-term threats to the national security of the United States: "Without sustained American naval presence and partnerships in the Arctic region, peace and prosperity will be increasingly challenged by Russia and China, whose interests and values differ dramatically from ours" [7].

The above-mentioned documents focus on the modernization and strengthening of the combat capabilities of the US Navy and the militarization of the Arctic in general. In this context, on January 20, 2021, the then Secretary of the Navy, Kenneth Braithwaite, stated that the US Navy was committed to ensuring all levels and types of presence "under, on, or over the Arctic" and intended to guarantee its partners freedom of navigation in the North. According to him, this is a bolder position, which they consider their right and responsibility as the dominant naval force in the world [7]. US dominance in the northern latitudes is focused on the NSR, which is under the sovereignty of the Russian Federation. Braithwaite made it clear that the US Navy was going to begin regular patrols near the Russian Arctic borders to prevent Moscow from advancing in the Far North [7].

The National Interest magazine, summing up the assessments of publications on the Arctic by American authors, comes to the unequivocal conclusion that the key factor determining the current situation in the Arctic zone is the confrontation between the United States and Russia and China [8].

The statements and actions of the Biden administration, which sharply criticizes Russia and China for their "global aggressiveness" and seeks to create strong alliances to counter Beijing and Moscow, fully coincide with the main provisions of the Blue Arctic strategy, which defines the strengthening of partnership and cooperation as one of the three priorities.

US MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE ARCTIC

The military–political leadership of the United States has begun to implement practical measures aimed at containing Russia in the Arctic region. The main emphasis is placed on the need to increase the number of military exercises of NATO forces in parallel with the buildup of the American military presence in the region. Not only NATO member countries but also "neutral" Sweden and Finland take part in the exercises. For example, in May 2020, a strike group of ships from the US Sixth Fleet entered the Barents Sea, where they conducted exercises together with British warships. They trained launching missile strikes with cruise missiles against the bases of the Russian Northern Fleet, as well as searching for and destroying Russian submarines. A feature of NATO maneuvers is that "they are carried out in the immediate vicinity of Russian borders and involve the development of tasks for mining sea areas and controlling Russia's northern airspace" (Zhuravel', 2018).

In 2020, according to Admiral M. Gilday, the United States conducted 20 exercises and operations in the Arctic, most of which involved partner countries. The main objective of such events is the deployment of a more deadly, stable, and flexible combat group capable of providing the United States with an advantage in this key region [9]. The Coordinator of the State Department for the Arctic, J. Dehart, even called the region "NATO's northern flank" [10]. Russia sharply reacted to this statement of the State Department representative, regarding it as "hostile and provocative" and emphasizing that the United States does not have "the same voting rights in the Arctic as Russia."

The US Arctic Doctrine stipulates that the Northern Sea Route must be blocked. In accordance with this directive, Norway and the United States are planning to restore the Navy base at Olavsvern, 350 km from the border with Russia, which was decommissioned in 2002. The US Navy's *Seawolf*-class nuclear submarines are planned to be stationed there. In this case, American submarines will pose a serious threat to the security of the Northern Sea Route, especially near Murmansk and the coast of Murmansk region [12].

Another major step taken by the Biden administration was the deployment of four *B-1B Lancer* strategic bombers to Norway. They will be placed at the Orland airfield, where 200 American troops will arrive. An air strike force with 96 high-precision cruise missiles is being formed on the northern borders of Russia [13]. The northernmost facility in the Arctic is the American air base at Thule in Greenland. The fighters located there demonstrate the ability of the US Air Force to carry out year-round operations in the conditions of the Far North. In addition, a group of *F-35* and *F-22 Raptor* fighters (150 aircraft) will be deployed at two air bases in Alaska. In 2018, the construction of a Long-Range Discrimination Radar (LRDR) began at the Clear Air Force Station [14].

The ground component of the US Arctic Command is represented by two brigades in Alaska, and, according to Chief of Staff of the US Army J. McConville, the formation will be reinforced by another motorized rifle brigade. According to reports, the Alaska grouping on a divisional scale will include units from various branches of the ground forces. To expand combat capabilities in the Arctic direction, this structure will be strengthened by the Air Force and Navy [15].

At the same time, the US Department of Defense launched an active campaign to recruit soldiers and officers for service in the Far North. Military personnel are attracted by high salaries and more comfortable special conditions of service. The ground grouping should also be strengthened by the potential of the US Coast Guard—its maritime, military, and multipurpose units. The Coast Guard operates 210 aircraft based at its 24 airfields. Relying on the powerful domestic and joint NATO military potential, the United States expects to put competitive pressure on Russia and establish its control over the Arctic under the cover of the alliance of the Arctic states and NATO.

STRUCTURE AND MILITARY POTENTIAL OF RUSSIA IN THE ARCTIC REGION

The new Joint Strategic Command (JSC) of the Russian Armed Forces, the Northern Fleet, created in accordance with Presidential Decree No. 803, performs the functions of a military district. It is entrusted with the task of comprehensively ensuring the security of Russia in the space from Murmansk in the west to Anadyr in the east [16].

The basis of the new command is the ships of the Northern Fleet (NF), withdrawn from the Western Military District: 38 large surface ships and 42 submarines, including seven out of 10 combat-ready strategic missile submarines [17]. The JSC received not only units of the Northern Fleet but also units from the Central and Eastern military districts. In the near future, the Northern Fleet will be replenished with three new Borei-project nuclear missile carriers, three multipurpose nuclear Yasen'-project submarines, and two frigates—*Admiral Kasatonov* and *Admiral Golovko* [17].

Since 2014, the Federal Agency for Special Construction (Spetsstroy) of Russia has been actively building military camps and airfields in six remote regions of the Arctic—on Alexandra Land (Franz Josef Archipelago), in the village of Rogachevo (on Novaya Zemlya), on Srednii Island (Severnaya Zemlya), on Cape Schmidt, Wrangel Island, and Kotel'nyi Island (Novosibirsk Islands). In recent years, 13 airfields have been restored, built, and modernized in the Far North (including Tiksi, Nar'yan-Mar, Alykel' (Noril'sk), Amderma, Anadyr, Rogachevo, Nagurskoye), as well as an aviation training ground and ten radar complexes and aviation guidance points, including at Cape Schmidt and Wrangel Island, 300 km from Alaska.

Air defense is being equipped and enhanced. Russian air defense in the Arctic is represented by the 45th Air Force and Air Defense Army. The air defense proper includes the 1st Air Defense Division, which combines three antiaircraft and two radio regiments. The air defense units are armed with the most modern means of combating an air attack—the S-400 air defense system and the modernized Pantsir-S1 air defense system. The division protects the Arctic borders of Russia from aircraft, cruise missiles, and UAVs of any possible aggressor. As part of the 45th Army, a new antiaircraft missile regiment has been formed, which is located on the Novaya Zemlya Archipelago. The Commander of the Navy, Admiral N. Evmenov, announced plans to create another air defense division in the Arctic.

The main land strike force of the Northern Fleet is the 14th Army Corps, which includes the 200th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (Arctic) in Pechenga and the 80th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (Arctic) in Alakurtti, Murmansk region. In addition, the 61st Separate Marine Brigade, four tactical groups on the islands of the Barents and Kara seas, as well as special forces and combat and logistics support units, are subordinate to the Northern Fleet JSC [17].

On Kotel'nyi Island, which is in the center of the NSR, a battery of supersonic Bastion coastal missile systems is deployed. Outside of their operation, including in the area of eternal ice, the naval aviation of the fleet operates. New Bal missile systems are being put into service with coastal defense units. They ensure the security of territorial waters and strait zones; the protection of coastal facilities and coastal infrastructure, including naval bases; and the protection of the coast in the most dangerous directions in terms of landing.

The airspace over almost all the northern borders of the country is well protected. In terms of retaliatory deterrence and a possible preemptive strike, Russian strategic aviation has increased combat air patrols in the Alaska region in recent years. From here, our new missiles reach targets in the United States, including the East Coast, in minutes. For example, the number of flights of "Bears" (TU-95) has sharply increased. In 2015, there were only six of them, while in 2020 the number of combat patrol flights in the Arctic reached 60. MiG-31BM supersonic interceptors protect the NSR. In addition, UAV crews will constantly monitor the situation in the Russian part of the Arctic, including the environmental and ice conditions in the near sea zone and along the Northern Sea Route.

CONCLUSIONS

Dialogue between the United States and Russia was aborted in 2014 as a result of the termination of military cooperation between Western countries and Moscow. The current situation in the Arctic is characterized by the fact that containment and military confrontation remain almost the only signals that America sends to Russia. This was recently reaffirmed by the U.S. Secretary of State, A. Blinken. At the session of the Arctic Council in Reykjavik on May 19, 2021, he stated that the intensification of Russian military activity undermined the common goal of a peaceful and sustainable future for the Arctic and that Russia was making illegal maritime demands, and in particular, regulating the passage of foreign ships along the Northern Sea Route, which was contrary to the law of the sea [18].

Washington does not hide that the United States intends to oust Russia from the Arctic and block China's access to high latitudes. However, Russia will not give up its sovereign lands and the large reserves of natural resources stored in the Arctic, and China will not tolerate its removal from the economically, politically, and militarily extremely beneficial activities in the Arctic zone. The transformation of the confrontation through the increased tension into a military clash in the Far North, the scale and significance of

which will surpass all military conflicts of our time, is fraught with a global war.

Although Washington's foreign policy in the Arctic is implemented mainly by strong supporters of the Cold War, there are also sound voices on the American side. Thus, Rear Admiral Saunes, a professor at the US Naval War College, together with a colleague from the same college, W. Berbrick, published a report that emphasizes the importance of preventing military conflicts and establishing cooperation in ensuring security in high latitudes [19]. The report recommends restoring multilateral cooperation in the Arctic. It proposes, for example, to resume contacts with Russia within the framework of the current Forum of defense ministers of the Arctic States. "The forum offers an opportunity for dialogue to help prevent misunderstandings and unintended security escalation."

On the Russian side, Nikolai Korchunov, Ambassador-at-Large of the Russian Foreign Ministry, spoke in favor of regular meetings with the heads of the military departments of the Arctic countries: "Russia supports resuming the annual meetings of the Chiefs of the Armed Forces in the Arctic states in order to prevent deterioration of the military-political situation in the Arctic" [19].

The leadership of the US Armed Forces understands the danger of growing military–political tensions in relations with such powerful military powers as Russia and China, and individual high-level military persons take it upon themselves to advocate dialogue with Moscow in the interests of peace and stability in the Arctic. This, in particular, was expressed by the head of the Northern Command of the US Armed Forces, General Glen VanHerck. At the online briefing on March 31, 2021, the general supported the idea of preventing conflicts and maintaining stable relations between our countries in the Arctic region, as well as in cyberspace and space. He holds that we need to establish norms of behavior to avoid unintentional escalation, so that we were not in a state of crisis [20]. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Mark Milley, also spoke from the position of strategic realism, stating that the United States had embarked on a dangerous course, maintaining an excessively high level of rivalry with Russia and China. It would be wiser to create conditions for a future that would prevent war between the great powers [21].

Positive signals from the US military indicate the presence of a countertrend in the United States to the current unbridled escalation of tension, which, however, is much weaker than the official course of confrontation. Healthy voices also sound confidently among experts and politicians. Henry Kissinger, for example, called on the United States to establish a balance with global powers. According to him, if we imagine that the world plunges into endless rivalry, the collapse of the world order is inevitable, and its consequences will be catastrophic [22].

The US ruling circles should listen to and consider the consensus that has developed in the expert community about the inability of the US to continue its hegemonic policy due to shrinking material resources and economic and strategic opportunities. Jerry Hendrix, Vice President of the Telemus Group military consulting company, points to this in particular in the *National Review*. He holds that economically and strategically America can no longer afford to continue trying to be everything to all peoples. Instead, the nation should strive for excellence in the target spectrum of such engagement (Hendriks, 2021).

Strategic realist politicians and the military, in our opinion, will gradually increase resistance to the course of dangerous balancing on the brink of nuclear war and, possibly, will lead to an adjustment of the aggressive US foreign policy.

Assessing the possible actions of the Americans in the foreseeable future, we agree with the opinion of the Russian researcher M.Yu. Gutenev: "The economic and military–political aspects will remain the foundation of Washington's policy in the Arctic for the next decades" (Gutenev, 2019, p. 139).

The United States, Russia, and China will face difficult maneuvering and adaptation to unfavorable circumstances. Objectively, there is a wide field of activity for multilateral diplomacy. Due to the rich Arctic resources and the significant future economic benefits associated with the NSR, aggravation of contradictions and crises cannot be avoided. At the same time, the obligations arising from the internationally recognized borders and natural rights of the Arctic countries, combined with respect for the sovereignty and rights of states that do not have privileges in the Arctic but have the right and desire to participate in the development of the northern region, leave the opportunity, using active diplomacy, to redirect potential conflicts towards dialogue and political settlement.

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══ Political Theory and Practice ══

Ethnicity and Politics:
Terminological Debates and Nodal Points of Intersection

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Abstract—A critical interpretation of the existing academic texts devoted to various phenomena related to ethnic politics raises the following questions: what are the criteria for ethnicity? What are the nodal points of intersection of ethnicity and politics? Based on the constructivist interpretation of ethnicity as a changeable concept that cannot be reduced to cultural and linguistic originality, the definition of an ethnic group as a social group that has distinctive cultural features (in the broadest sense) and the idea of the hereditary transmission of group membership is proposed. Based on this definition, it is proposed not to limit the subject field of ethnopolitical science to the interaction of the state with ethnic groups, but to include populism (in the form of right-wing populism, understood as ethnopopulism) and nationalism (as a product of ethnic mobilization). Particular attention is paid to regionalism as a particular but very important case of nationalism. The conclusions are supported by examples from Western European political practice. Based on the extremely inclusive constructivist definition of ethnicity, it is possible and necessary to understand the subject field of ethnopolitical science as broadly as possible in order to strengthen its position in the circle of sociopolitical disciplines, in particular, in studying sociopolitical processes in the European Union.

R. Brubaker wrote: "The intricate and ever-recommencing definitional casuistry in studies of ethnicity, race, and nationalism has done little to advance the discussion, and indeed can be viewed as a symptom of the noncumulative nature of research in the field" (Brubaker, 2004, p. 11). It is difficult to disagree with this: in the context of endless conceptual disputes regarding the nature of ethnicity and the ways of studying it, the increment of knowledge is quite difficult. In order for truth to be born in a dispute, it is necessary, at a minimum, that the disputants have some common grounds for their positions. Ethnicity, as S.V. Cheshko stated, "invariably slips through your fingers, despite any methodological tricks" (Cheshko, 1994, p. 39).

Nevertheless, there are reasons for cautious optimism: a number of common grounds already exist, although they are not always reflected in academic thinking. Firstly, it is obvious that ethnicity and the ethnic exist, few people argue with this (although we will consider this point of view further on). Secondly, it is equally obvious that ethnicity is present in the

political field: although in the early 1990s there were optimistic forecasts about its departure from the political agenda (Gellner, 1994), now it is not so evident. Moreover, even in the conditions of modern Europe and the European Union, regarding which this optimism was the greatest (presumably, a supranational identity would supplant national and ethnic identities; we will also return to this thesis), ethno-regionalist and right-wing populist parties based on ethnic mobilization are successfully functioning. Beyond this circle of understanding, justified debates are starting: what phenomena can we define as ethnic and how can ethnicity influence political processes?

The discipline called Ethnic Political Studies was referred to by some researchers as a quasi-science in the early 2000s (Voronkov, 2009, p. 35), and now it appears to have "gained its right in the struggle" and has become firmly established in the academic vocabulary. Meanwhile, only certain aspects of the state management of ethnic diversity are still considered to be its subject in order to prevent the development of conflict scenarios (Turaev, 2004; Abdulatipov, 2004). At the same time, the nodal points of intersection of ethnicity and politics are at the center of attention of modern comparative political science and political theory. What are these points and what should be the

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focus of modern ethnopolitical analysis? In this material, we will try to offer our own answers to these questions, based on a critical reflection of the existing academic texts and discussions.

CONSTRUCTIVIST UNDERSTANDING OF ETHNICITY

Although the "Soviet theory of ethnos" was characterized by the definition of ethnos (not ethnicity) as a certain fixed social group with a set of stable characteristics (Bromley, 1983), at about the same time, in the second half of the 20th century, Western European and North American anthropology disputes concerned the degree of persistence of ethnic markers. Since the late 1980s, ethnicity was introduced in Soviet and then Russian science largely through Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences V.A. Tishkov, who performed "Requiem for an Ethnos" (Tishkov, 2003) as if for a fixed group. Indeed, textbook disputes between conditional primordialists and conditional constructivists (H. Hale convincingly proves the heterogeneity of these categories (Hale, 2004)) are primarily not about whether an ethnos is a stable community of people (with the exception of marginal interpretations); now the subject of discussion is the limits of the flexibility of the very category of ethnicity. "Ethnic boundaries began to be understood not as the boundaries of groups in space (in the Kushnerian sense) but as mental markers along which groups can line up (in the Barthian sense)" (Tishkov, 2016, p. 7).

In the 1970s A. Cohen demonstrated that potentially the category of ethnicity can be applied almost unlimitedly to any groups that have common patterns of normative behavior and are part of a larger group of the population (Cohen, 1974, p. ix). The British anthropologist has proved (within his own paradigm) that what can be called ethnic is, for example, a group of brokers in the City of London, who are "socio-culturally as distinct within British society as are the Hausa within Yoruba society" (Cohen, 1974, p. xxi). However, such a broad interpretation of an ethnic group as any one connected by certain, albeit, flexible, ties, although it has some heuristic merits, can significantly complicate academic studies: in the absence of a clear categorical apparatus, the latter are practically impossible. In particular, some of our colleagues were even convinced by the intellectual exercises of the instrumentalists of the futility of any attempts to define ethnicity: there is a point of view according to which "an "ethnic" community cannot in principle be described even as a set of persons with one or another "ethnic" identity (...). There is no concept — there is no phenomenon" (Filippov, 2006, p. 94).

Nevertheless, we do not share the radical pessimism of the respected author cited above. In response to the research of Cohen and a number of other radical constructivists and instrumentalists, attempts were made to limit the ethnic and introduce it into some

basic coordinates. For F. Barth and V.A. Tishkov, ethnic is primarily cultural, in combination with the social (Bart, 2006; Tishkov, 2003, p. 115). However, then again, is that not too broad? J. Rothschild, K. Chandra, and A. Weber with coauthors went a little further (independently of each other) and proposed a criterion for the transfer of group membership by inheritance (Rothschild, 1981, p. 9; Chandra, 2012, p. 10; Weber et al., 2016, p. 3]. Indeed, practically all groups that we consider ethnic have the idea of the possibility of natural self-reproduction (logically related to the idea of a common origin, but not reducible to it). It is clear that, in fact, an ethnic group can also grow through cooptation; but the idea itself, the myth of self-reproduction and the hereditary transmission of membership is, in our opinion, a really basic characteristic of an ethnic group.

However, there are also groups that have the idea specified above but it is hardly possible to consider them ethnic; in such a case, we can add the previously discussed cultural indicators. It is the cultural properties shared at the group level that indicate "why the existence of the category is substantial and legitimate" and provide members of the group with a common "social biography" (Handelman, 1977, p. 190). Thus, instrumentally, we can define an ethnic group (which has common ethnic characteristics at a particular point in time) as a social group that has distinctive, broadly understood cultural traits and an idea of the hereditary transmission of group membership.

In this case, objections can be made: a number of confessional groups are also associated with cultural otherness and natural reproduction; shall we call them ethnic? The answer is yes. Many researchers intuitively associate only linguistic features or special customs with ethnicity, which is not true; religion can become the same marker of ethnicity if it has a distinctive meaning in the society in question. A classic example is Northern Ireland, where confessional groups of Protestants and Catholics have been perceived and described as ethnic for several centuries, while the actual origin and knowledge of the Irish Gaelic language has lost its meaning (Jenkins, 2008).

Another example pointing to the contextual, indexical significance of certain ethnic markers is Rwanda, where a common language, religion, and culture have not overshadowed the purely social distinctive features of the Tutsi and Hutu (Panov, 2020). And on the framework of these social differences, the propaganda of the "radio of a thousand hills," and before that of the colonial administration, erected a harmonious building of genetic (in the meaning of origin) and phenotypic differences. Even the bloody genocide of 1994 did not destroy this building, and its sketches are periodically reproduced even in the works of very eminent sociologists (see, for example, Mann, 2012).

In Europe, an example of a rather arbitrary ethnic construction can be seen in the Cagots, a group of the population in southern France, historically discriminated against for unclear reasons; versions have been put forward of their origin from the Cathar sect or from the carpenters' guild. Simply put, those markers become ethnic, which the individual and society see and think are meaningful, culturally determined, and hereditary, be it skin color, church attendance, language, or land size. This was brilliantly formulated by the Russian ethnographer A.S. Myl'nikov, who wrote that ethnicity implies a contrast of perception; something that "is capable of surprising the observer "from the outside," while remaining for the observer "from the inside" something ordinary, familiar, and therefore not always fixed" (Mylnikov, 1999, p. 111).

We now return to one of the original theses: it is obvious that the ethnic identity understood in this way cannot be supplanted by the national, suprational, or supraethnic (for example, pan-European) identity if only because in this case we will still talk about identity or rather *ethnic* identity, albeit, located at a different level of the hierarchy of ethnic identifications. Thus, the common identity of Europeans, as having a conditional European cultural heritage, is also an ethnic identity (perceived as a civilizational one), and it should be analyzed from the point of view of ethnopolitical dynamics. The institutions of the European Union do not create a replacement for the existing ethnic identifications, but only add another one to them (more precisely, they reactualize it after the period of domination of national-state identifications of the modern era).

The definition formulated above, although somewhat narrowing the field of understanding of ethnicity, still appears to require certain reservations. Indeed, the European nobility at a certain stage of development combined both distinguished features of ethnicity, cultural and hereditary: the noble culture differed from the peasant culture, as did the language of communication, and even at times the genealogy, traceable to the Normans or Franks (Rothschild, 1981, p. 35). The same applies to some other class and guild groups both in Europe and outside Europe. Nevertheless, it is not possible to clarify our understanding of ethnicity in such a way that these examples do not destroy it. If we extrapolate modern theories of ethnicity to periods of flourishing guilds and estates, they can indeed be considered ethnic groups, and I see no contradiction here.

ETHNICITY AND POLITICS: POINTS OF INTERSECTION

Having dealt with what we mean by ethnicity at this stage, we move on to a more pressing question: how does ethnicity interact with the political process? Ethnopolitics is a set of specific measures applied (a) by the state in cooperation with ethnic groups and (b) by ethnic groups in interaction with each other in order to redistribute power and prevent conflict situations. The study of ethnopolitics in this context implies the study of both models of ethnopolitical management and the dynamics of ethnopolitical interactions, as well as the features of ethnoconflict management and ethnic leadership. These aspects of the relationship between ethnicity and politics are quite obvious and are beyond the scope of the discussion of this article. We are more interested in the fact that many political phenomena are ethnicized, that is, they acquire (naturally or artificially) ethnic semantic content; there is also a reverse process, the politicization of ethnicity. However, how do we separate the ethnic in politics from the nonethnic, what forms of politicization of ethnicity are most relevant in our century and can be key starting points for ethnopolitical analysis?

Let us propose the following hypothesis: at present, the political phenomena most prone to ethnicization are populism, nationalism, and regionalism (as a special case of the latter). We explore these relationships in more detail.

Populism is one of the most discussed political phenomena now, which has not left the light of academic spotlights for several decades. As noted by C. Mudde, "more articles and books have been written on far right parties than on all other party families combined" (Mudde, 2016, p. 2). A number of researchers even talk about the "populist hype" that has gripped the academy (De Cleen et al., 2019) and the desire to label any political phenomena with negative connotations as populism. One of the basic definitions of populism, which we will take as a base in this article, is the strategy of a political struggle (Weyland, 2001, p. 14), based on antielitism and holism (see also: Oskolkov, Tevdoi-Bourmouli, 2018). In other words, populism is a set of political stratagems, the main one of which is the rhetoric of opposing the people and the elite, as well as the idea of the people as a single entity with a common will, which populist politicians express.

At the same time, the division of populism into right-wing populism, which emphasizes the rights of the "indigenous population," and left-wing populism, which plays on economic contradictions, has become relatively conventional (Priester, 2011). What is called right-wing populism is usually associated with nationalism, primarily in the nativist form of the latter, in which the core of the people are organically opposed to outsiders. It is obvious that the mentioned *core* has a pronounced cultural properties that distinguish it from these "foreigners," and that membership in it is perceived as inherited. Hence, right-wing populism may well be synonymous with ethnic populism or ethnopopulism. Moreover, let us assume that it is the term ethnopopulism that is more relevant in the conditions of modern party-political systems, since the very concepts of right and left in the programs of

European populist parties become extremely blurred. Speaking about right-wing populism, we are inevitably forced to make reservations that its economic agenda does not necessarily have classical right-wing features, and the boundaries of the right-wing political agenda are also very arbitrary; the proposed term *ethnopopulism* makes it possible to remove these contradictions. Thus, while R. Madrid understands ethnopopulism as a desire to include representatives of all ethnic groups in the electorate of the party (Madrid, 2008), E. Jenne prefers to define it as "a discourse that equates 'the people' with 'the nation' and holds that sovereignty should be an expression of the will of the 'nation-people'" (Jenne, 2018, p. 550). We understand ethnopopulism as a subcategory of political populism that uses ethnic identification in its rhetoric. Synthesizing the two concepts, we formulate the definition of ethnopopulism as follows: *the strategy of a political struggle based on antielitism, holism, and mobilization of ethnic identity as cultural and inherited*. The definition, of course, is controversial, but it seems to us useful in this analysis.

From what has been said above, it follows that nationalism is also primarily ethnically colored. However, then what about the textbook division of nationalism into "ethnic" and "civic" (see, for example: Greenfeld, 1993)? This dichotomy is not problematic. A. Smith drew our attention to the fact that any civic nationalism (based on the understanding of the nation as a community of citizens) has ethnic components: "Even the most 'civic' and 'political' nationalisms often turn out on closer inspection to be also 'ethnic' and 'linguistic'" (Smith, 1998, p. 126). In addition, a community in a nation under certain conditions can also be considered as culturally conditioned (for example, membership in a French or German nation implies loyalty, respectively, to French or German culture, no matter how we interpret it). Moreover, membership in the nation is a priori heritable: most concepts of acquiring citizenship by birth imply that a child born to citizens (or even to one citizen) will also become a citizen. Therefore, within the given theoretical framework, almost any nationalism can also be considered ethnic (Jenkins, 2008, p. 151), if only because the ideologists of nationalism appeal to a certain framed group identity.

Let us consider the previously formulated theses on one of the most relevant examples of right-wing populism and nationalism in Western Europe: the Dutch party "Forum for Democracy" (*Forum voor Democratie*). Of course, the rhetoric of the Forum is based on antielitism: the opposition of the people of the Netherlands to the left-liberal elite, the "left church" (*linkse kerk*). "The people of the Netherlands" are seen as a single entity with a certain common will, *volonté générale*. At the same time, the leader of the party, T. Baudet, appeals to the German civilization, the boreal [northern] world (*boreale wereld*), that is, to a certain historical and cultural community to which

all the Dutch belong by birthright. The same characteristics distinguish the French National Rally (*Rassemblement national*): its leader, Marine Le Pen, calls for "freeing the French people from an arrogant elite," implying the homogeneity of both of these groups, and insists on the priority of the French over immigrants who do not share the French cultural heritage and the "general will" (De Jonge, 2021).

Regionalism can be seen as a variation of nationalism, in which the loyalty of the nation is transferred to a specific region (narrowed down to it). If a region is viewed purely as a territorial unit with no cultural otherness, then regionalism has no ethnic character. In other situations, we are talking about ethnoregionalism, and we are again dealing with manifestations of ethnicity in political processes. Moreover, ethnoregionalist parties, in the case of Europe united in the European Free Alliance, can conditionally be viewed as both nationalist and ethnopopulist (Newth, 2021): for instrumental purposes, they discursively mobilize the ethnic identity of the inhabitants of the region. Holism and antielitism (as the opposition of their own ethnic group, understood integrally, to the politically dominant ethnic group in the state, often in accordance with the theory of "internal colonialism" by M. Hechter (Hechter, 1975)) lies at their ideological core.

Let us take the Scottish National Party as an example of an ethnoregionalist party. Since its inception in the first half of the 20th century, the party has exploited the conventional opposition of the "people" in Edinburgh or Aberdeen to the "elite" in London or Leeds. At the same time, the SNP appeals to the regional and conditionally "national" feelings of the electorate, united by loyalty to Scottish culture and the idea of Scottish independence. We note that Scottish ethnicity in the understanding of the SNP is open, and any British subject living in Scotland and demonstrating the indicated loyalty can accept it (Panov, 2021; Okhoshin, 2020). Therefore, the criterion of heredity in this case potentially dies out, although it continues to sound implicit. To a certain extent, the same applies to the Welsh party, *Plaid Cymru*. Against, *Sinn Féin*, the main ethnoregionalist actor in Northern Ireland (although advocating irredenta rather than full independence) is less open to nonhereditary incorporation due to the greater radicalism of its rhetoric (Shapke, 2019). Also the Basque Solidarity Party (*Eusko Alkartasuna*), which separated from the Basque Nationalist Party in 1987, speaks in its program and electoral manifestos almost exclusively about the Basque people, who are considered as a single entity, regardless of state borders, and acts in the interests of this ethnic group in two states at the same time: Spain and France. Party ideologists consider the common ethnic identity of the inhabitants of the Spanish Basque Country and the south of the French New Aquitaine to be a sufficient base for redrawing the current state borders and creating a united and independent Basque

state on this territory, regardless of the opinion of the Parisian and Madrid elites.

CONCLUSIONS

What Should Researchers of Ethnic Politics Study?

By the basic characteristics of ethnicity, we mean cultural conditioning (broadly understood) and the idea of the inheritance of group membership. Based on these characteristics, we can identify a number of problematic points of modern ethnopolitical science that lie outside the boundaries of the relations between the state and (un)organized ethnic groups that have become classical for it: populism (ethnopopulism), nationalism (ethnonationalism), and regionalism (ethnoregionalism). Each of these phenomena has ethnic connotations, is built to a large extent on the emphasis on cultural otherness and inherited properties. Therefore, we propose, firstly, to proceed from a fairly broad, albeit, limited by some basic coordinates, understanding of ethnicity; secondly, to consider the activities of populist, nationalist, and regionalist movements and parties as nodal points of intersection of ethnicity and politics and, thus, as the main directions of modern ethnopolitical analysis. Thus, the current ethnopolitical agenda in the studies of the European Union goes beyond migration and consociational (in the case of a few multiethnic federations: Belgium, Switzerland, Bosnia and Herzegovina) issues and covers both the problems of forming a common European identity and the latest trends in the development of party-political systems.

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