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Warsaw

THE DILLEMAS OF "EASTERN" POLICY*
OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
From the dynamic equilibrium to unbalance

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1. The reversal of vectors.

"The Great Change" of the 1989, laid the grounds for the transformation of the Polish foreign policy. The circumstances were conducive. First and foremost, there was the change in the political attitude of the Soviet Union due to the Soviets coming to terms with the impossibility to sustain the limited sovereignty of the empire's satellite countries. Concurrently, the support for the aspiration to gain independence came flowing in from across the ocean and Western Europe.

The key actors of the Polish political stage were increasingly in agreement in regard to the critical components of the Polish foreign policy. They have accepted the main directions that were laid out September 12, 1989, by the Prime Minister who expressed Poland's ambitions to "liberate itself" from the restrictions that were imposed by the existing divisions in Europe and in the World as well as concerns that this would not complicate the Poland's situation. He announced that Poland will partake in co-forming of "new Europe" and will work together with the international partners toward overcoming the divisions that exist in the World. He acknowledged, that "international relations that are based on sovereignty and partnership are

* „Przegląd Politologiczny. Political Science Review” nr 3/2014.

much more stable than those based on domination and power". He declared, that the "key goals" of the Poland's foreign policy "will preserve its contents and meaning regardless of which political orientation will be at the steering wheel at a given time". He called for a sensible approach in regard the relations with the Soviet Union, arguing that only a "rational comprehension" of these relations would lead to solutions that would take into a consideration the interests of the Soviet Union as the "world power" on one hand and the sovereignty of our country and our right to freely and independently form and govern our internal affairs" (Oświadczenie premiera, 1989). Generally, the government was carrying out the policy of "liberating Poland" from the restrictions imposed by the existing divisions in Europe and the World that was coupled with the reversal of the political vectors.

From September 1989, Poland started to participate in the debates of the Council of Europe. The Chancellor of Germany Helmut Kohl paid an official visit to Poland on November 9-14, 1989. Although, the visit was interrupted by events that have erupted in NRD, which had later lead to the unification of Germany, nevertheless a visit paid by such a prominent politician in such a neuralgic for Central-Eastern Europe time and place had its significance and constituted a brand of approval and support for the changes that were taking place in Poland, it also augured well for the future.

As the leader of changes in the region that brought about the dismantling of the real socialism Poland had gained the approval of the leading world power - the United States. Lech Walesa spoke at the joint session of the US Congress on November 15, 1989. His appearance was applauded by the members of both houses in the acknowledgment of "Victory over the Evil Empire". Walesa's speech was characterized by dignity and the sense of mission. In exposing the role of Poland in "reaching for the freedom to which She was fully

entitled" he also extracted the expectations "now the participation by the West in this transformation shall also increase. We have heard many wonderful words of encouragement. This is good, but as a worker and a man of real labor I will say that while there is a great supply of good words in the world, the demand for them does not get any smaller" (Wałęsa, 1989).

The intensification of the ties with the West was of growing importance within the context of Poland's future relations with the Soviet Union. During his visit to Moscow on November 23-24, 1989, Tadeusz Mazowiecki once again spoke of the authentic broad social base of interactions and their longevity as the basis for the relations between the Soviet Union and Poland. The forthcoming change was signaled by the announcement of the "cleansing of the field for cooperation by reevaluating the past: the clearing up of the difficult matters, and firstly the matter of Katyń will help both countries liberate themselves from the layers of negative past experiences and strengthen the friendship between the two nations. (Nowa sytuacja, 1989).

2. Abandoning the East...

To what degree the concept of the dynamic equilibrium that has been developed in 1989, was later enriched and continued? What of the experiences or achievements of that period was preserved or became a permanent feature of the political life, what part of that was discarded, abandoned or labeled as "unwanted" ballast? Looking at it from the "trend" point of view, the answer appears to be quite clear. It reached the point of putting the idea of "equilibrium" into question. The quest to form a context for relations with the "East" had weakened. The political groups that claimed to be the first line descendents of "Solidarity" moved up to the top and were exerting the most influence over the domestic and the foreign policies. The scarcity of their real political achievements during the 1990-ties resulted in overcompensation particularly in a way of magnifying the

"communism syndrome" which tied to Russia. The key attributes of the dominant political formation were to use the self-interpreted past as the matrix for defining the present and the future. There was no attempt among these groups to even conceal their attempt to preserve the bipolar system within a framework of which the antagonism between the "communism" - which was interpreted intellectually in a rather unrefined manner (Janowski, 1996, s. 213-214) - and the powers of progress, democracy and reforms became the key tool for sorting out the political vision. Paradoxically, the camp that deserved the most regard for the fight against the socialist order had adapted the from that very model of political establishment elements that were in direct contradiction to the ethos of the August of 1980 protests.

Poland was liberating itself from the dependency of the Soviet Empire in a relatively low conflict manner as demonstrated by the peaceful withdraw of the Russian troops and the almost friendly relations between the presidents of Poland and Russia - Wałęsa and Jelcyn. The so called "Eastern Capital" of Poland was composed of: the level of sympathy exerted by the Russians toward the Poles, the knowledge of the "East", its material and cultural needs and their mutually beneficial economic and trade relations. Indeed, Poland did have a chance to play a role as a "bridge" between the "West" and the "East".

Nevertheless, the subsequent "Solidarity" governments in contradiction strove to turn Poland into a bulwark for the "West" that would safeguard the civilized West against the "uncivilized" East. Thus addressing the East more as the subject of political and civilization crusade and the recipient of the western born cultural goods and values while reserving the right to expose the superiority of own moral principles, etc. The politicians of "Solidarity" were demonstrating their mental inability to dispose of the ballast of the past. As if not being able to acknowledge and come to terms with the downfall of the

Soviet Union, they proceeded to comprehend and treat Russia as the "Soviets". They refused to acknowledge the changes that were taking place in Russia or the problems that Russia had to face. They were also not willing to perceive the interests of Poland and Russia as symmetrical. Instead, they were interpreting the aims and aspirations of Russia through the projection of their own experiences and feelings, especially those of phobias and frustrations.

So, the Eastern direction became overrun by chaos, impulsiveness, lack of rationality and the absence of positive and rationally based actions. Events that have occurred went well beyond something that could be classified as "incidents" in time turning into a peculiar sequence. The unconcealed antipathy toward Russia was reflected in the foreign policy that was far astray from the norms and standards typically observed by the international diplomatic community. A good example of that is the expelling of the Russian diplomats who were accused of espionage. This event was commented on in a peculiar manner by the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, who said: "The time has come to put an end to actions born out thrillers authored by John Le Caré (Koniec, 2000). The analysis of information regarding the actions by the expelled Russian diplomats raises many doubts as to the measures that were taken as well as to the level of professionalism of persons in charge of the state policies (Raport, 2000).

Within the same context, it is hard not to mention the hooligan's actions that were carried out against the Russian diplomatic posts. The organizers of these actions frequently had the support and sympathy bestowed on them by people who descended from the underground "Solidarity" and who were now serving in prominent government posts. The events went uninterrupted by the Police or the Secret Service. The culprits went unpunished (Flaga pod but, 2000). Also noted should be the vandal brawls that took place in the front of

the Russian Embassy in Warsaw on November 11, 2013 (Rosja żąda przeprosin, 2013).

It was very fitting within the context of the "government narration" to take advantage of the Katyń tragedy. The Katyń massacre was a sharp, double edged political sword to be used in two directions: internally (within Poland) and externally against the East (Golgota Wschodu, 2000). This approach was seconded by the Catholic Church, which had further elevate the level of drama within the framework of the Polish-Russian relations. The Church did not conceal its anti Russian sentiments and it was the Church's posture combined with the failure of the proselytism of John Paul II, that become an additional premise of the "Eastern policy" that was carried out by the descendents of "Solidarity" thus demonstrating the attachment to the tiara.

3. The triumph of the anti-Russian syndrome...

In essence the Eastern segment of the foreign policy had been given a rather ideologically-emotional dimension which made it impossible to define it in rational terms. The best testimony to the above, is the response to the proposal, to improve the Polish-Russian relations, put forth by the President of Poland, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, during the meeting with the members of the American Chamber of Commerce on March 1, 2000. During that meeting the Polish President had defined the relations with Russia as "not good at the moment". He reminded of Russia's disapproval in regard to Poland joining NATO. Yet, at the same time he underscored the indigenous sources of reservations, pointing out that "undoubtedly some significant errors were made by the Polish side (...) and the new government, despite the declaration, that new Polish-Russian relations would be free of the "ballast of the past", did nothing of consequence toward that end".

In analyzing the entrance of the political stage by the " newcomers", particularly in reference to Jelcyn - the Polish President concluded that the Polish-Russian talks will become more difficult because the new Russian President is a strong man of a European conduct, but at the same time deeply rooted in the "Russian Empire" way of thinking (Rakowski, 2000). On March 29, 2000, during a phone conversation to congratulate Mr. Putin on his election as President of Russia, the Polish President invited President Putin to visit Poland and expressed his conviction that both countries will undertake efforts to build the best of bilateral relations based on " joint values, historical heritage and experiences, and mutual sympathy". In turn, Putin stated that such a neighborhood of such a close proximity requires that a suitable rank of mutual relations be established while eliminating unwanted incidents and barriers (Kwaśniewski, 2000).

The opinions expressed by the Polish President met with a hostile reaction by the government. The assertions by the Polish President were perceived wrongfully as interfering with the constitutional powers of the government and the President was accused of undermining the Polish *raison d'état*. During the extraordinary conference that was held on March 6, 2000, the Minister of Foreign Affairs put forth the following questions: "If you, Mister President, view the Polish foreign policy toward Russia so negatively, then let me ask do you still agree with the position that Russia does not hold a position of a privileged partner? (...) Are we still in agreement, that Ukraine is the strategic partner for Poland and (...) that we shall not alter that policy?" (Rozmawiać, 2000). This exaggerated reaction not only had adjudicated a false meaning on the intentions of the Polish President, but more importantly - had confirmed the key directions of the Eastern segment of the Polish foreign policy.

Could that process have been stopped or reverted by the "left-wing" of the Polish political stage? Having had the world and European political "experience and training" it could seize the moment to redefine the Polish foreign policy and to phrase it in a more pragmatic framework. Mentally, the Left was ready to embrace a more open policy toward the East while acknowledging the importance of the relations with the West (Oświadczenie Leszka Millera, 2000). However, during the time the Left was in power the foreign policy had not changed. During 1993-1997, the shape of the Polish foreign policy was heavily influenced by Lech Wałęsa. Despite their own lack of commitment and ideological consistency the Left was also the bearer of the psychologically-political reservations held against them by the "Solidarity" formation. "SLD's ability to act is restricted, because after having suffered PRL which can be only compared with having suffered "scarlet fever", it must go through a period of quarantine (Milewicz, 2000) - this was the justification of the political distribution, which was exploited at the time against democratic rules and mechanisms. In general, the Left was paralyzed by the fear that any of their actions would be categorized by their political opponents as closely related to the "Eastern totalitarianism " (Nowak-Jeziorański, 2000).

Excelling in casting calumnies, insinuations and slanderous accusations, which after all, only give a testimony of conceptual weakness, were the prominent leaders of the government in Power during 1997-2001. They were exhibiting "anticommunism" that was almost Jacobin-Bolshevik like in nature, suggesting that the Left is still subject to the pressures and ideals of the obsolete doctrine. They perceived the potential victory of the Left in the presidential and parliamentary elections in as disastrous and catastrophic. "The Dominance of the political stage by SLD could undermine and put into question the current goals of the Polish foreign policy" (Rybicki, 2000). While in

power during 2001-2005, the Left had failed to revert the tendencies that dominated the foreign policy. Admittedly, they were able to sustain or enhance the key elements. The cooperation with the West had deepened and moved forward as demonstrated by the progress in the integration with the European military and economic and political structures; in 2004, Poland became a member of the EU.

It seems that the majority of the dilemmas that Poland was facing in 1989, are still current today. Starting in 2005, when the Right came into power, the "Western" direction within the context of the foreign policy had gained in superiority, while the efforts to form a rational policy toward the East had dwindled. The distance toward Russia was deepening in time taking on the form of hostility while accompanied by the growing subservience toward the US. The rules had subscribed to the illusion that they are participating in a "great world political drama". No consideration was given to the character of the competition between Russia and USA. Poland, despite its subordination to the US interests, was not able to secure, aside from positive gestures and promises, any hard benefits, more so, even those that are eventually achieved usually did not match with promises or expectations. This is easy to comprehend because the needs and wants of the US partners are taken into consideration only if these fit in or do not contradict the US interests and policies. However, the rulers of Poland give an impression of being unaware of it.

The next issue that resides outside of the realms of the political imagination of the Polish politicians is the matter of the relations that tie Russia and the various member countries of the EU. These various mutual and particular interests come together in spider web like pattern. Priority lies with the ability to carry through and not with values as these take a second place within the EU. Groups of Polish politicians who aspire to be recognized as the "political elite" do not differ in their perception of the political triangle "USA-EU-Russia"

from their counterparts in other member states within the region. Instead striving to serve as a bridge between the EU and Russia (...) they use the EU as a tool to play out each own psychological problems within their relations with Russia. Today, Poland and the Baltic states are the US "Trojan Horse" in Europe and they provide more benefit of the US administration than to the EU - this commentary herein, on the tri-party relations between US-EU and Russia, (Polska to, 2010), is consistent with the conclusions of the academic analysis on the subject.

Poland is successful in regard to its "West" direction, particularly in the economic sphere. However, the effects of the policy toward the "East" raise many doubts. Admittedly, more than once Poland was able to convince her European partners to act somewhat consistent with Poland's intentions. This indicates that the potential social, economic and political and even axiological of Poland is valued. However, when looking at it from the perspective of the social, economic and national interests, Poland's achievements within the Eastern sectors present an array of real failures. Without going into details regarding the nature and sense of actions undertaken by Russia, whose past as the "Great Empire" is still well remembered, it should be noted that her actions and behaviors had drifted away from the European standards on many occasions. But Russia's influence on the course of the international political drama cannot be underestimated. Yet, the subsequent political regimes rooted in "Solidarity had shown lack of comprehension in regard to Russia's rights and interests while accentuating their own. Their political posture and behaviors resulted in the evolution of very peculiar Polish-Russian relationships that were a lot different than those that are typical for other European nations which had formed their relations with Russia with the intent toward the fixed future and common benefits. One of the most condensed example of a failure brought about by the "mis-

sion over the economy" principle was the matter of the Nord Stream Company. Referable to the "anti Russian syndrome" Poland gave into the phobias and Martyrology at the expense of the Future and potential benefits and as a result was left out of the decision process regarding this strategic undertaking, thereby having the shareholders bear unnecessary costs.

4... and its influence on the regional strategy.

The anti-Russian syndrome has acquired on a strategic dimension. The countries who are neighboring with Russia are perceived by the rulers of Poland as elements of an offensive sanitary cordon. The Polish-Ukrainian relations are encumbered with the tragic consequences connected to the Polish expansion onto the East as well as with the increasing national aspirations of the Ukrainians. The Polish attitude toward Ukraine appears to be irrational. "The Orange Revolution" along the "Majdan of Freedom" (2006) was enthusiastically endorsed by the Polish political personas and political parties. The leading modus was the deeply felt "mission" to carry out the charge of bringing "freedom and democracy" to Ukraine. This, however, was accompanied by the lack of awareness as to the real state of the Ukrainian internal affairs, particularly in terms of the readiness of the Ukrainian nation to bring in and adhere to the values and mechanisms of the "West", as well as the inability to translate the ideals of the "mission" into the interests that mirror the Polish "Right d'Étaté".

Finally, a conclusion can be drawn as to the lack of professionalism and ability for crisis management. Prevailing is the delusion that the "Ukrainian card" opens the opportunity to flirt with the Eastern neighbor as equals. In essence, Ukraine became an instrument, only seemingly of a local nature, to strike at Russia. The is what, the whole thought of liberating Ukraine from under the "imperial dictatorship" and running the "buffer" into the "Western Orbit" can be

boiled down to. The "Orange Revolution" was disappointing in terms of recognition of the Polish interests and desires. Yet, despite the failures or maybe because of it the anti Russia phobia had deepened reaching the level of a political paranoia, that skews the "accepted and constructive reactions to threats (...) brings in pathological elements (...) not only activates, but also deforms defense mechanisms and correct political responses" (Robins, Post, 1999, s. 31).

The aspiration by the Polish politicians to hold influence over Russia - meaning to obstruct Russia - was exemplified in the "Eastern Partnership" initiative of 2009. The "official" purpose was to bring about a closer cooperation by particular member states of the EU based on the EU standards, values and norms. Whereas, in reality its edge was directed against Russia. The members of the alliance - the former republics of the Soviet Union - Armenia, Azerbajden, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, were enticed do break off the historical and economic ties with Russia. Poland actively supported the thoughtless anti-Russian undertakings by the Georgian President (2008) also attempting to entangle into it other members of the EU and NATO. The countries of the "Eastern Partenship" were to be the links in the chain of the "buffer cordon" separating Europe from Russia. Poland was propagating this idea most intensely, making efforts to render this approach from a policy into practice without giving any regard to potential consequences and retortion that could take on a diversity of economic harassment (prices of commodities, an embargo on produce and food products, etc.) assuming international and Alliant solidarity and support.

The Polish-Russian context, but primarily the mission to spread freedom and democracy- to counter weigh the Russian influence included Belarus. To make up for the absence of success the conciliatory approach was given up and substituted by the language of aggressive superiority. Poland had been taken a hostage by its own mission,

which it is not able to carry out. So, comes the escalation of conflicts, initiated are political quarrels and antagonistic actions supported by demagogy and black PR including the meddling in matters of a sovereign nation. The Polish authorities support the youth that is contesting the official public order, provide support for the hostile TV station "Bielsat", grant extraordinary privileges to the activists of the Polish People Alliance in Belarus and use blackmail. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs jointly host a meeting with the representatives of the Belarussian Opposition. The prime minister announced that: "There shall be no aid for Belarus without a dialogue with the opposition" appealing to the countries of the EU against establishing closer relations with the "Belarus regime" (Mińsk, 2011). Without refraining from manipulation the Polish minority is used as an instrument by implanting conflicts, disintegration and destabilization. It is being exploited in a conflict against the country within border of which it exists. This weakens the Poland's ability to homogeneously elaborate own interests and makes it impossible to make a rational and pragmatic relationship with the neighbor country.

Admittedly, preceding the Ukrainian revolt in the Fall of 2013, the Polish-Russian relations appeared to be improving due to the pragmatic approach of the ruling party and paradoxically as a result of the "Smoleńsk Catastrophy" (2010). However, the gestures were not followed by actions. To the contrary, the regress had continued. As a result of the attempts to influence the course of the Ukrainian drama, Poland had assumed the leadership in radicalizing the attitudes, postures and actions toward Russia by the politicians of the EU. "At present, it is impossible not to realize that a Pole is becoming the rising political star" - this is how the Czech weekly "Respect" had commented the activities of the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs in

Ukraine and in the EU (Czeski Respekt, 2014). Is this not merely like a humor taken straight from the works by Jaroslav Hašek?

Poland has written a next page that confirms Poland's inability to define and carry out a rational foreign policy floating instead on the clouds of euphoria and emotion living through its anti-Russian mission without reflecting upon potential consequences. It had taken the leadership position in motivating the Ukrainians to turn away from Russia. The easily understood desire to improve one's existence and claim out of poverty is interpreted as universal want for freedom and democracy and readiness to embrace the Western standards. The mirage of "the wealth for one and for all" and of Ukraine soon getting closer relations with the EU was floated before the Ukrainians for years. The expectation of benefits had taken over the imagination of the people of Ukraine, enticing them to engage in demonstrations, social unrests, and drastic and aggressive protests breaking the law and the public order.

The command over these events was assumed by the extremely radical and combative political powers that were centered around the so called "Right Sector". Military like squads were established that were subject to military ways of command and equipped not only in weapons that resembled museum exhibits, but also arms seized in clashes with militia or the special forces (BERKUT) or taken from police or army magazines. The squad members received training modeled after the training of the assault groups. The atmosphere along the "Majdan of Freedom" was largely created by the All-Union of Freedom "Svoboda", one of the principal and in some towns the leading political force in the Western Ukraine. It contributes greatly to the radicalization of the political sentiments and expressions. Originally, it bore the name the Social-National Party and its emblems resembled the marks of Hitler's NSDAP. It references itself to the nationalism of the Second World War (Działacze Swobody, 2014). Its ef-

fectiveness rests on the high point of organizational structure, mobility and the ability to echo and propagate the wants and expectations of a great portion of the Ukrainian people. Admittedly, it holds only 37 mandates in the 450 member parliament that was elected on 28/10/2012, while the Party of the Regions (the party of the ousted President Victor Yanukovych) holds 185 mandates, Batkivchina (the Homeland) of Julia Tymoshenko holds 101 mandates, 40 mandates belong to UDAR of Vitali Klitschko, 32 are held by the communists, 43 by the independent parliamentarians and the rest is spread among the smaller parties (Ukraine, 2012).

Whereas, in reality it is the "street" and the crowds of the mavericks on the "Majdan of Freedom" that dictate the survival of the fittest and the manner of operation of the offices. Prevailing is nationalism (also anti-Semitism) with the Bandera traditions, often taking on the form of fighting squads. The "Foreign Policy" - an American magazine pursues: "Putin's invasion of the Crimea must be drawn in the strongest of language". Still, a solid policy shall be established on an honest analysis of all political actors. Such analysis would require that the arguments presented by the Crimea: "the new leaders of Kiev are at large fascists" are true and should be acknowledged (Foreign, 2014). The euphorically experienced climate of the combat clashes, and the group exaltation of the victory over the recently elected and generally accepted powers weakens rationalism and makes it impossible for those politicians who declare themselves on the side of civilized methods of political disagreements and political competition to influence the political process (Co się wydarzyło w Kijowie, 2014).

Well written into the stream of the confrontational populist rhetoric that is belligerent in a form, but most of all anti-Russian in contents is Julia Timoschenko (the presidential pretender) - the leading Persona of the "Orange Revolution". In the telephone conversation

(March 18, 2014) she referred to the Russians as the "Damn kacapy" whom shall be executed by a firing squad along with their leader" and the 8 million of Russians who live on the territory of Ukraine shall be destroyed with the use of the nuclear weapons. The German government had distanced itself from this kind of a political expression. The spokesman for the government had defined the phrases that were employed by the former prime minister as "fantasies of violence" stating further that: " Despite the wholehearted opposition to the activities undertaken by Russia in the Crimea and regardless of all - even fundamental- differences of opinions, there are barriers of ideas and manifestations that shall never be thwarted" (Fantazje o przemocy, 2014).

A more complex assessment of the developments in Ukraine was formed by Günter Verheugen, the former European Commissioner for Enlargement, incidentally much praised by the Polish media and politicians at a point in time. He pointed out that the source of escalation of the Ukrainian conflict is rooted in Kiev, "where we have the first government in the 21 Century some members of which are fascists". He categorized the provision of financial assistance to Ukraine to be a mistake. In his opinion "it is still not too late to resolve the conflict and we shall prevent the escalation that would lead to the new cold war". Europe should provide to Russia an all-European safety structure in which Russia would participate together w NATO. He concluded with the assertion that: "Even more significant is the foundation of the special economic cooperation zone from Lisbon to Vladivostok" (Verheugen, 2014).

5. Is there a chance of success for the Polish crusade?

The decision makers of the Polish Foreign Policy do take the stock of the diversity of political options, political orientations, the dynamics and the long-term consequences of the Ukrainian events. They do not conduct the profit and loss analysis in terms of the Polish

interests. They had expressed, and continue to do so, indiscriminate and unconditional support for the Majdan revolt in its effects so far mostly for its anti-Russian aims. On the 3rd of December, 2013, the Polish Parliament passed a special resolution on the situation in Ukraine to announce its solidarity with the Ukrainian people who "are demonstrating today with a great determination that they desire their nation to become a full-fledged member of the European Union". The Polish parliament called on the parliaments of other EU member nations to undertake initiatives aiming at the fortifying of the civil society" (Uchwała Sejmu RP w sprawie sytuacji na Ukrainie, 2013). On the 24th of January of 2014, the Polish Parliament had condemned the use of force to "repress freedom and the rights of the citizens, particularly the right to peaceful demonstrations and the freedom of speech" (Uchwała Sejmu RP w sprawie wydarzeń na Ukrainie, 2014).

On the 5th of March, Ukraine was the lone point on the order of business for the session of the Polish Parliament. It was with a keen satisfaction that Donald Tusk announced that Poland had accepted the "leading role". He said that these efforts "must" result in Ukraine signing the EU Association Agreement. From that perspective also, the prime minister was presenting the position and the role to be played by Poland: "Today, we are not the object of the game (...) but the subject of it". He proceeded to make a virtue of the strategy that was implemented by Poland. He encouraged the EU allies to take after the Polish example and adopt similar goals and motivation. To emphasize the drama of the moment he did not hesitate to recall the "Munich procrastination". "Anyone who thinks that peace and stability can be ensured by giving into threats and demands is in error (...) Poland has never experienced such a critical situation close to our borders". In his speech, he broke a specific sequence of events that led from the awakening of the Ukrainian hope

to the "dangerous for Poland" confrontations to which the result can be found only in the unity by the entire "West".

According to Tusk, the entire future of the Polish nation, its very existence and sovereignty is being put into question and all of that because of the actions undertaken by Russia. It is Russia who bores the sole responsibility for the crisis having shown on more than one juncture that she had not dispensed with her imperial ambitions. In the face of such dangers and threats to be faced by Poland it is paramount to strengthen the battle spirit: "The Polish soldier(...) his morale, his bravery, his training and his patriotism are flawless, he is still better than the most modern equipment" - announced the prime minister of the Republic of Poland and he was then applauded by the members of the Parliament (its was a standing long-lasting ovation) as they were accepting the resolution on the solidarity with Ukraine (Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne, 2014).

The Ukrainian events exposed the resilience of the anti-Russian syndrome. It became an element of the election campaign, for the seats in the European Parliament, which was originated by the National Convention of the Civic Platform (PO) on March 22, 2014. The key points on the agenda were Ukraine and the menace of the Russian aggression. Symbolizing the support for Ukraine was the participation by Vitali Klitschko. Donald Tusk dealt with the Ukrainian crisis as it was a dare laid before "the whole Europe". "The results of the election to the EU Parliament will establish whether the European Union will live on (...) These elections just may be about the question whether the Polish children will get to school this September first" - he stated referring to the drama of September 1939. (Opozycja kpi z Tuska, 2014). The prime minister maintained that Poland is a "valued trade mark" that engages in a "rational and responsible policy (Tusk na RW PO, 2014). The statement regarding the competent and responsible policy stands in direct contradiction with the aggres-

sion and the establishing of the pro-Ukrainian, and in reality, anti-Russian crusade which is way above Poland's ability to bear it away; the attitudes of David are lacking to defeat the Goliath.

The way the Ukrainian conflict is being utilized to supply Poland with an adequate proportion of political drama brings back memory of the pre-World War II slogan propagated by the Sanation "Strong, Dense and Ready". Predominantly, it is the speech given on May 5, 1939 by the Polish Foreign Minister, Joseph Beck, who stated in reaction to Hitler's ultimatum: " Here in Poland we do not know the phrase of peace at any cost. There is only one thing in the lives of people, nations and states, that is priceless and that is honor". (Przemówienie, 05,05.1939).

The increasingly warlike rhetoric was at the same time a tool for the political combat. The international policy was harnessed into the chariots of political competitions driven by the political parties descending from "Solidarity". The goal is to evoke in their constituency the feelings of fear and tension. The Civic Platform, having been in Power for the second term without much to show for in terms of economic and social contributions as well as not being able to present new ideas for the EU or a clear role for Poland within the EU structures, is using Ukraine and predominantly Russia as the reason to stay in Power. In looking at the way the Civic Platform is using political marketing tools, an analogy can be drawn to the situation in Great Britain, where the decrease in the level of support for the Conservative Party was interrupted only after the war in the Falklands was started. The result of the war secured the stay in Power by Margaret Thatcher.

A fear for the destiny of Ukraine was expressed by the President of Poland for whom it was the key to the relations with Russia. He shared in the views that the situation presented a genuine threat for Poland and about the means of counteracting the danger stating " I

dream about a stronger presence of NATO in Poland, because this is the issue of Poland's safety. However, he stipulated that " nobody is after an all-out conflict with Russia" and declared that good economic relations with Russia will be sustained and the conflict will not impact the sphere of cultural relations (Komorowski, 2014). Such a declaration, which held out the expectations that Russia will come to terms with Poland's hostile gestures only gives a testimony to the to hypocrisy and ill perception of the state of affairs by the Polish rulers. "Why should the ordinary citizen of Poland and Russia pay for the ill conceived policy toward Ukraine and the decisions made by Putin" - this question was posed by the Polish prime minister during his April 6 visit to the region that borders with the Kaliningrad district (Kampania, 2014). By the same token a question shall be presented "why should the average Polish citizens suffer the consequences of the imprudent " Sarmatian" undertaking of their rulers?

How should be the undertakings of the rulers by interpreted? What is and what is not of the substance within the implemented strategy? By taking on the role of the promoter of Ukraine, the ruling party takes on a highly insecure and risky undertaking. Ukraine is not capable to take a hold over its internal revolt which is an attempt to resolve many diverse issues. Due to the economic instability, the unchanged structure of the ruling powers that are dominated by the "oligarchs" and the nationalism and hostility toward Poland and finally due to the increased inflow to Poland of desperate Ukrainians, the outcomes may be of a very unexpected nature. Simply put, Poland is unable to meet the expectations of the Ukrainians. From that point of view the problem that Poland is facing is not Russia it is Ukraine. In proving their support for the "Ukrainian Revolution" which is the emanation of mutiny against Russia, however, not civic or democratic in nature, and which can bring totally unforeseen consequences, the Polish politicians are applying highly elevated slogans.

Furthermore, they elevate a local conflict, however diversely justified, into a global matter. Presenting a radical point of view, they undertake efforts to convince the nations of the EU to forgo care, restraint and moderation that are rooted in the care for the mutual interests of the EU, the Polish rulers are enticing them to step onto the risky path justifying this by waving high ideals and assuming the character of the " EU Conscience".

It would be worthy to recall the results of the research by Gallup, that show that the country that poses the greatest risk to World Peace is the USA (24% of respondents). Russia with 2% is outside the first 10. However, 17,9% of Poles believe that it is Russia that poses the greatest threat to World Peace, assigning the US the sixth place (5,8%) after China and before Syria (Gallup, 2013). A visible correlation with the last month's events is shown by the polls conducted by the Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) that show that 80% of respondents fear Russia the most, listed next are Ukrain and Germany (CBOS, 03-09/04/2014). 39% of respondents expressed their dislike of Russians (versus 31% of sympathy), 41% did not like the Romanians and 52% did not like the Romes (Stosunek Polaków, CBOS, luty 2013). 47% of Poles expressed reservations in regard to sovereignty (as compared to 20% in December) and almost half (45%) is seeing threats in the economy and ties these to economic dependency by Poland. At the same time the percent of Poles expressing the opinion that Poland faces a threat to its sovereignty has decreased from 37% in December to 18% at the moment. The Poles strongly support Poland's membership in NATO. Currently, 81% (19% increase from February) support the membership versus 5% who oppose it. 64%, desires to have an increased military presents by NATO in Poland and 21% support the permanent presence of the NATO contingent in Poland (CBOS, 03-09/04/2014).

It would be wise to be cautious in regard to the results of polls of the public opinion, but by the same token, these should not be disregarded taking into consideration the fact that both sides- the politician and the society are influencing one another. The Gallup research surely reflects the consciousness of respondents who notice the hypocrisy of the USA. The US shows no reservations in regard to apply a manipulation or deceptiveness in order to push through its agenda (Iraq). Whereas, when considering the state of the awareness of the Poles, particularly as shown by the CBOS research, a consideration should be given, when looking at the dynamics, to the general lack of knowledge in regard to the political phenomena and processes, the instability of social attitudes as well as to the influence of the "political correctness" (the spiral of silence). A sizable chunk of the Polish nation turns out to be very receptive to marketing, particularly when it comes to raising emotions. Secondly, consideration should be paid to the strength of the socialization efforts that are being taken on by the leading political groups and their political domination within the "open" political market where the postures of the electorate are fluid and characterized by a highly adaptable subservience.

In general, it may be said that this way of conducting political policy is not targeted at achieving the substantial interests of Poland. It rather constitutes a reflection of a unrefined strategy rooted in the notions of taking out a civilization mission, Martyrology, phobias, frustrations, exaggeration and quarrelsomeness. The inability to dispose of the ballast of the past makes it difficult to apply professionalism to policies directed at the East. It also reveals the conceptual poverty of the rulers as well as the intellectual weakness of the power base and finally, the lack of willingness and ability to step outside their own thinking horizons and political experience. Inclining to further reflection, is the lack of consideration given to the ingenious conclusions drawn, among others, by Stanisław Bieleń (Bieleń, 2014)

or Ryszard Zięba (Zięba, 2014). Nonetheless, the decision makers remain convinced that Poland is the leader of the East bound European civilization mission. As a result, instead becoming the bridge between the West and the East, Poland had become the civilization rampart posing herself as the key propagator ideological values of the West. The Polish Foreign policy toward the East is not an applied art, but rather the magnitude of "empty grandiose words, sentiments, the romantic spirit and an absolute absence of a rational and positivistic thinking" (Lazari, 2009, p. 193).

Considering feasible assumption it would be appropriate to formulate a thesis that it is not Russia that presents a problem for Poland. At least, not in the sense in which it is being given by the Polish leadership. Neither the territorial sovereignty nor the boundary lines, nor yet the independence is being jeopardized. The analysis of the neighborhood bordering with Kaliningrad contradicts the Cassandra like prophecies. Russia remains pragmatic and suitable to its own perceptions and means it is fending for its identity, position in Europe and in the World, while distancing itself from globalization, which constitutes the tool of large corporation, particularly in the US. According to Joseph E. Stiglitz: Nobel 2001, " In the >new<, post-communist Russian revolution (...) the front guard is kept by the international bureaucrats who coerce the unwilling people into unwanted changes by using the Bolshevik-like methods". Stiglitz emphasizes the role of the US and IMF consultants who supported those who had led Russia and many other economies onto the "chosen path, putting forward arguments supporting the new religion - the market fundamentalism" (Stiglitz, 2007, s. 151 and 127).

Russia does not accept "Pax Americana", however the possibilities of questioning it are limited. The US attempts, with different results, to influence the surrounding neighborhoods of Russia. Following the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia was unable to maintain con-

trol over the countries that have departed from the "Soviet Bloc". However, all the same, it tries to hold them within the sphere of own influence or to impact their conduct using various instruments of pressure, i.e. the ethnic argument - the protection of the Russians who are the inhabitants of a said country or region. Nevertheless, it would be hard to support the thesis that Poland's sovereignty is threatened by Russia. Such arguments only serve to preserve the hostile relations with Russia. Whereas, it should be considered that it is not Russia who needs Poland, but it is Poland for whom Russia is the more attractive partner. By casting aside of its civilizing mission and political crusade attitudes Poland gains a chance to make new relations with Russia. Without jeopardizing its dignity or independence - even as a member of the EU - Poland faces the challenge of establishing its relations with Russia on the basis of mutual benefits. Holding up the attitude and the icon of the most unfriendly and aggressive toward Russia country amongst the nations of the EU, constitutes a path that goes to nowhere else, but to more losses that would be borne by Poland. In the foreseeable future, regardless of the current conflict, Russia will not cease to be an important partner for Europe and for the US. The condition for the rebirth of positive relations between Poland and Russia is to dispose of the attitude of supremacy of one's own arguments and convictions and to treat the domain of international relations as area of conflicting interests forcing of which is not only the right, but also the responsibility of each partner.

In summary, when examining the manner in which Poland establishes the relations with its neighbors within the region, it could be reasoned that the most important matter for Poland is to root itself strongly within the safety zone that is warranted by the integration into the West while establishing rational, practical and not quarrelsome relationships with the East - Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the

Baltic countries, particularly Latvia. This would demonstrate the power of the Poland, as a country, to realistically and rationally grasp its national interests, that is the Polish *raison d'état*, within the given geopolitical conditions of competing interests, gaining supremacy or entering into alliances or compromises and choosing long-term options.

Warsaw, April 2014.

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Executive Summary

In analyzing the mode in which Poland was settling its relations with Russia a deduction comes to mind that Poland remains under the spell of the syndromes which were either disposed of or dealt with by other European nations. Remaining is the challenge to solidify Poland's position within the safety vault of heaven that is vouched by the West while establishing a pragmatic and rational and conflict free relationships with the East - Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic countries, particularly Latvia. Thus, required is the ability to comprehend the Polish national interests, that is the Polish *raison d'état*, in a realistic and rational manner within the limits of the existing geopolitical situation of the competition, securing sustained competitive advantages, entering into alliances or compromises and making a long-term option.

Key words:

Interest; National interest; Foreign Policy; Raison d'état; Russia, syndrome.

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