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## DOMESTIC AND EXTERNAL FACTORS OF UKRAINE'S FOREIGN POLICY

*В статті автор розглядає фактори, що впливають на формування і реалізацію зовнішньої політики України щодо європейського, євроатлантичного та євразійського міжнародно-політичних регіонів. Аналізується вплив основних політичних гравців, політичних партій, груп інтересів і громадської думки на зовнішню політику, загальні особливості процесу прийняття рішень у сфері зовнішніх зносин України; описується міжнародно-політична ситуація, характер загроз національній і міжнародній безпеці, політика ключових міжнародних акторів стосовно України. Робиться висновок про те, що пріоритети зовнішньої політики України формуються під впливом як внутрішніх, так і зовнішніх факторів при переважаючій дії перших. На думку автора, динамічне балансування між центрами сили в трикутнику Росія-ЄС-НАТО є найбільш оптимальним варіантом зовнішньополітичної стратегії України.*

**Ключові слова:** зовнішня політика України, внутрішні фактори, зовнішньополітичний процес, міжнародні фактори, Росія, Європейський Союз, НАТО.

*В статье автор рассматривает факторы, влияющие на формирование и реализацию внешней политики Украины относительно европейского, евроатлантического и евразийского международно-политических регионов. Анализируется влияние основных политических игроков, политических партий, групп интересов и общественного мнения на внешнюю политику, общие особенности процесса принятия решений в сфере внешних сношений Украины; описывается международно-политическая ситуация, характер угроз национальной и международной безопасности, политика ключевых международных акторов в отношении Украины. Делается вывод о том, что приоритеты внешней политики Украины формируются под воздействием как внутренних, так и внешних факторов при преобладающем действии первых. По мнению автора, динамическое балансирование между центрами силы в треугольнике Россия-ЕС-НАТО является наиболее оптимальным вариантом внешнеполитической стратегии Украины.*

**Ключевые слова:** внешняя политика Украины, внутренние факторы, внешнеполитический процесс, международные факторы, Россия, Европейский Союз, НАТО.

### Introduction

It has been almost twenty years since Ukraine gained its independence, but because of internal and external factors the country is still to a considerable extent a grey security zone and

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an unpredictable player for its international partners. It is difficult enough to make forecast concerning its place and role in the European system of international relations since they will be shaped by both Ukraine's choice of its foreign policy strategy and by the actions towards it on the part of NATO, the EU and Russia as the key actors in the field of the European security.

In the light of the facts mentioned above it seems to be timely to study the factors that influence the formation and implementation of Ukraine's foreign policy towards the European, Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian international political regions and to scientifically contribute to the development of the most appropriate foreign policy strategy for Ukraine itself and for the countries that are interested in cooperation with it.

In order to achieve the objective of the research the following tasks were set: 1) to analyze the internal factors of Ukraine's foreign policy: the influence major political players, political parties, groups of interests and public opinion have on the foreign policy; the general peculiarities of decision making process in foreign policy field within the state machine; 2) to describe the external factors of Ukraine's foreign policy, in particular the international political situation, the nature of threats to the national and international security, the policy of the main international actors towards Ukraine.

### **The internal factors of Ukraine's foreign policy**

The foreign policy of Ukraine is inseparably linked with its domestic policy. It conforms to its goals and constitutes its logical continuation. A distinctive characteristic of Ukraine's foreign policy is the fact that its priorities are determined to a greater extent with regard for the internal political situation and not with account taken of international situation development and the state's strategic prospects.

The nature of the influence the internal factors have on Ukraine's foreign policy is complicated and ambiguous. It is explained both by the fact that state-building processes in Ukraine are not complete and take place dynamically and by the indirect effect a number of international factors have on the domestic policy processes. Such a situation makes it more difficult to study the range of problems inherent in Ukraine's foreign policy since the assessment and systems analysis of different issues are required to be done by a scholar.

The key internal factors that influence Ukraine's foreign policy are the peculiarities of how the country's course in the foreign arena is set and the current internal political situation. Also, the state's foreign policy activity is organized so as to serve the national security interests. Threats to the national security both of foreign and domestic origin may require a state to seek external help for their elimination. A considerable influence on the choice of means and goals of a foreign policy strategy of national security maintenance has the nature of security threats and not the least of the factors here is the peculiarities of their apprehension by political actors. Therefore, among other things, a researcher should study the following domestic policy factors: by whom, in what way and under what circumstances threats are determined and what results it has.

### **The following is the examination of the above-listed factors.**

The peculiarities of the decision-making in foreign policy and the current internal political situation

In addition to President of the state Cabinet of Ministers (Government) and several political parties (blocs) and their leaders, first of all, are key foreign policy players in Ukraine. However, the right to determine the actual value and the role of certain directions of foreign policy in most of the cases is exercised by President and his administration which makes the whole

process of pursuing the foreign policy an object of manual control. The weakness of counter-elites, insufficient level of development of civil society institutions and the authorities practically out of any control deeply affect the quality of the development and making of decisions in foreign policy field. This situation is slow to change.

The Ukrainian political parties are not effective political institution which could “democratically” influence the foreign policy process. They still champion “corporate” interests of mainly financial and political groups in foreign policy field. Parties do not generally determine the country’s political course on their own, but in the case of contemporary Ukraine they represent an important mechanism of coordination of their positions with the partners.

Among different “groups of interests” only big business, that often needs political help to protect its external economic interests, takes a real part in foreign policy process. The effectiveness of its influence depends on the degree of its proximity to President and key political leaders.

A characteristic feature of the present stage of development is the limited amount of Ukraine’s non-governmental participation in the international cooperation. The non-governmental organizations are not much oriented towards the development of international relations and are not ready enough for that.

The Orange Revolution of 2004 and the strengthening of freedom of expression as a result of it raised the level of the society’s political culture and civil activity including in foreign policy issues. That is why when analyzing the internal factors that shape the foreign policy it is necessary to take into account not only the new configuration and the relations between the members of the ruling top, but also the necessity of its response to public opinion.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned tendency as well as the relative democratization of the electoral system it can be stated that a “democratic” (voters – parties – Parliament – President and Government) channel of influence on the determination of foreign policy priorities partially works in Ukraine. However, it has effect only on the determination of priorities, while their specification, shaping and implementation of the country’s foreign policy including its “shadow” directions take place mostly behind closed doors and are in President’s hands and in the hands of his closest official and unofficial aides and associates. Moreover, the process of realizing foreign policy priorities by citizens depend more on manipulative mythology being imposed by political actors than on independent articulation of own and collective interests. People’s reaction to ideological propositions of political groups is quite often a product of well-planned brain-washing procedure [1].

To a considerable extent the foreign policy views of the Ukrainian community are shaped by the civil identity. In this context it is necessary to mention the clearly observed fact that the civil identity of Ukraine’s citizens is distinctly divided into Ukrainian on the one hand and “post-Soviet”, or Eurasian, on the other. According to the survey carried out by the non-governmental organization “Ukrayinske demokratychnе kolo” (“Ukrainian democratic circle”) the percentage of those who identified themselves with the Soviet Union rather than Ukraine remained high among the residents of the country: there were 39% of such people in 2002 and not much fewer in the year of 2006 – 34%; for the Eastern oblasts this proportion reached 62% and 54% [2]. Fifteen years of independence were not sufficient time for sweeping changes in attitude of the Ukrainians towards their own country. Chiefly those were the deep-rooted beliefs about the historical and cultural kinship of Ukraine with Russia that accounted for it. Some 63 % of the respondents expressed positive opinions about Ukraine being a part of the Soviet Union and only 20% of the respondents reacted to the idea negatively. The collapse of the Soviet Union was a negative event for 54% of the Ukrainians (in 2002 there were 59% of such people): from 81% in the Eastern oblasts to 21% in the Western ones. This event was seen as a negative one

by 62% of the Ukrainians over 50 years of age and 41% of young people under 30 years of age [3].

It is obvious that a considerable part of the country's population adapts itself to the independence, but is not positive, let alone enthusiastic, about it. It is symptomatic that 21.5% of the citizens are ready to support the idea of uniting Ukraine and Russia into one state and another 26.3% aspire to it but understand it is impossible under present conditions [4].

As a Ukrainian researcher Oleksandr Dergachiov notes, the Russian factor remains a powerful tool that shapes the attitude of many Ukrainians towards any significant question of international politics. The deterioration of relations with Russia is the most widespread argument against Ukraine's membership in NATO. For a significant part of the elite and the citizens signals from Moscow are sufficient to subordinate the national interests of Ukraine to those of Russia. The feelings of this part of the Ukrainian citizens for the inherently close country remain special and their attitude towards it stays irrational. It has to be admitted that biased attitudes towards the most important world partners are quite widespread in Ukraine. Some of the global partners are welcomed by the Ukrainians while others are seen negatively. A mass phenomenon that has a considerable influence on public attitudes in general is anti-Westernism and particularly anti-Americanism. Some of the citizens have a complex of ideas about the attitude that allegedly exists among wealthy communities towards a poor country. Here the old ideological clichés that interpret the antagonism between exploiters and oppressed still partly function. The irritation at the most developed countries that "seized the resources", "dictate their will" and "are always right" is raising [5].

It is also necessary to note that the foreign policy orientations of the society are affected by the absence of a national idea with its classical uniting and inspiring functions. The idea of "the return to Europe" is seen by a considerable part of the population as a not too much realistic one that is at least somewhat abstract or distant. At the present stage the idea of national revival has appeared to be not appropriate in its liberal dimension as it presupposes the existence of clear answers to the questions of political nation, official language and interethnic relations. The most perfect in the ideological sense and the most geopolitically neutral is the idea of the national welfare. But even given the fact that social and economic problems are invariably a high priority for the citizens of all the Ukrainian regions they haven't become a uniting factor. The reason for it is an ongoing competition several leading political forces went into to win the right to put the idea of welfare into effect. Furthermore, in their approaches the task of raising the living standards goes hand in hand with the dilemmas of roles of the state and market, the rates and vectors of the international cooperation, i. e. those problems that give rise to glaring contradictions [6].

A characteristic feature of the Ukrainians' civil identity is that the processes of its shaping are not complete yet (according to some estimations, more than one third of the citizens does not have stable ideological beliefs and is guided by unsteady moods in their assessments). Moreover, as the identity remains in some way bipolar no stable vector of its further development can be observed at the moment.

### **National security threats and their assessment as a factor of foreign policy**

Since national security serves the basis and a condition of a state's existence, the national security maintenance is a fundamental national interest of any state. Every state and every society have particular "generic" security problems connected with their individual characteristics. In the end the degree of national security is determined by the ability to appraise the situation adequately, and that is often difficult to do. Threats are not always self-evident; to a considerable extent they emerge as a result of social construction and depend on the changes in political

awareness. Sometimes security problems may be fictitious or their difficulty may be exaggerated by political actors in order to accomplish certain political objectives. An exaggeration of a danger is not a less serious mistake than its underestimation or misinterpretation. Thus, to a certain extent security is always subjective and needs a “quality” player [7].

In Ukraine the process of democratic transformations of the society consists, in particular, in the change of the way goals of security maintenance are determined and security maintenance tools are chosen. This extremely complicated process has even more general function which is shaping (maybe even for the first time in the Ukrainian history) of public ideas about national security and its necessity as the attributes of a mature political nation and a modern European state. The perception of security as, first of all, a social phenomenon isn't widespread in Ukraine. Although the official concept of national security is highly detailed and a close attention is paid to its economic, ecological, demographic, informational and some other individual aspects, this doesn't ensure the quality needed. The existing approaches to the problems of security in its internal and international dimensions are characterized by simplicity, sketchiness and attachment to the needs of the state machine, what makes them inadequate, especially when taking into consideration the modern European standards. Only the attention to all the major objects and levels of security can be effective enough [8].

The greatest problem of the national security maintenance is a lack of self-sufficiency and internal integrity of the country as well as the existence of wide discrepancies in the dangers that threaten an individual, the society and the authorities. The overcoming of the enumerated shortcomings becomes real under the conditions of a developed law-governed democracy. At the same time, characteristic of transitional societies that are not well-established yet is substantial divergences in assessing the essence and sources of threats to national security by different strata of society and political forces. Inconclusive independence and deideologization of approaches to security issues is observed. In Ukraine it tells, on the one hand, in the presence of special vulnerability concerning the Russian influence, on the other hand – in out-of-date, disfigured perception of the Western security structures. It causes a “purposeful” timidity to free oneself from usual Russian guardianship and the same fear to get to dependence from potential new unusual “different” partners.

In transitional countries internal threats absolutely prevail over external ones. Internal threats to national security are in fact the most various and complex. Inner contradictions are inherent in internal threats – the substance of threats to a state as such, to a society, to separate communities and to an individual can never be quite similar and are naturally seen in different ways. The indicated security actors often rival each other in the determination of conceptual foundations and priorities of security policy. A specific group of internal threats to state security is made up by threats that spring from the probability of illegitimate change of political system, territorial structure and state regime. Threats to a society can be divided into the following categories: violation of democratic norms, “shadowization” of political life, ineffective governance when authorities themselves are a source of threats, internal splits and social tension. Into a separate category fall the threats connected with the objective unprovoked crisis phenomena in a state and a society. The experience of the last decades suggests that real security is possible only under the conditions of its simultaneous and harmonious maintenance in all the indicated dimensions. The case of Ukraine proves the foregoing general observations.

### **External factors of Ukraine's foreign policy**

In our view, the external factors of Ukraine's foreign policy can be divided into two categories: 1) international environment as a current state of the system of international relations (in particular, its organization type, regularities, tendencies and acting forces of its development) and

2) policy of individual states towards Ukraine. To a variable extent these factors are able to influence the situation inside Ukraine, its foreign policy course and ability to concentrate resources for implementation of foreign policy goals.

### **Basic Parameters of a Postbipolar World**

Ukraine exists in the postbipolar system of international relations that replaced the system of bipolar world which disintegrated after the end of the Cold War. The postbipolar system is characterized by stirring up of internationalization processes that exhibit themselves in a gradual formation of globalized world and growth of regionalization. Adaptation to these intensive processes is a difficult challenge for a state and society. Supported by high economic and technologic potential of a narrow circle of states this process threatens the national identity of outsiders that have found themselves on the periphery of global processes. At the same time conditions of competition are becoming complicated, the consolidation of the tendency of uneven development and deepening disparities in individual nations' potential and perspectives of national development is observed.

At the present stage of world development a growing interconnection and interdependence of international actors of different types and levels, a decrease in states' exclusive privileges in world politics are seen. In the postbipolar system of international relations a state preserves its traditional role as a key actor, continues to determine conditions for international system functioning as well as decisively influences the ways of evolution of the system. However, the changes are taking place within the structural organization of the system and affect the place of a state in the structure of international relations. This structure is supported not only by states but also by a complex of other interdependent, various elements (such as quasi-states, transnational corporations, non-governmental international organizations, virtual communities, transnational interest clubs and political organizations, etc.).

Effectiveness of a policy aimed at absolutizing actors' egoistic interests and actions is significantly decreasing. None of the states will be capable of taking the burden of purely independent actions or allow selfisolation in a globalized world. An alternative to one-sided politics could be a policy of selected alliances within a limited number of partners. However, polarization of alliances and coalitions will be difficult, since allies in defense will often be competitors in international trade, finance or technological development. Instead of a more foreseeable and governed world politics, multitude of steady and ad hoc coalitions will trigger fears of marginalization among those outside a coalition as well as uncertainty about compromises made among those inside [9].

The modern world witnesses a rapid growth of the gap between open institutions and structures and those that envisage the members' conformity to certain informal, as a rule, rather complex economic, social and political conditions. The contemporary structure of international relations spatially differentiates the spread of various types of interactions. Relations inside highly developed and the rest of the regions and interregional ties qualitatively differ. Cooperation prevails in the regions experiencing integration processes. At the same time cooperation is not able to fully oust competition, rivalry that though become norm-ruled and civilised. The dynamic development of closed interstate formations to some extent alters the system of relations and influence conditions of national development. In complex these international factors doubt the maintenance of national self-originality and strategic success of a state [10].

One should also note a steady actualization of new types of threats and as a consequence a change in a set and requirements to actions in the sphere of their prevention and neutralization. At the same time, a hypothetic likelihood of military collision among the leading world centres

of power – China, Russia and USA – remains in the long-term perspective. The fact that the conflict of values, norms and interests is still present among them speaks in favour of this assumption.

American policy, aimed at preserving and possible strengthening of the U. S. central role in a postbipolar structure of international system, is the main regulatory mechanism of the system.

Militarily, economically, culturally, technologically the United States is capable of making and makes the most significant impact on the modern international system and in some cases on the balance of power and equilibrium of relations among power centers. Self regulation of international system stimulates restoration of the balance once it is broken. Thus the probability of forming "coalitions for contention" is growing, and the tendency for multipolarity through consolidation of united Europe, Russia, China and other centers of power, is strengthening.

Unsteadiness of the structure of the international system and absence of unquestionable hierarchy, the presence of which was a key regulator in previous forms of the international system, predict that next bifurcation point is approaching.

### **Ukraine in the Conditions of Postbipolarity**

For Ukraine as well as for the newly independent states on the territory of the former Soviet Union the influence of external factors becomes not additional but along with the influence of internal ones basic on its existence. This particularly takes place in cases of close interactions between highly developed and less developed countries, in regions engaging in integration processes. This fully tells on the processes in the Central and Eastern Europe that Ukraine is part of. Substantial specificity is peculiar to the so called Eurasian or post-Soviet factors that have features of both internal and external. Ukraine is also deeply influenced by such factors. Interweaving of these specific characteristics strongly complicates both their analysis and practical consideration.

Assessment of the role of external factors, their analysis requires adherence to some conditions. The first is avoidance of ideological clichés. The second is formulation of adequate perception of geopolitical changes, tendencies of world development, correlating of these processes with long-term national interests.

It is quite obvious that external factors played a substantial role in the process of gaining independence and continue to strongly influence domestic situation in Ukraine. But the issue of correlation, weight and role of internal and international factors in forming Ukrainian foreign policy has not yet been finally decided by its researchers.

The international space that Ukraine belongs to is not uniform, therefore the influence of external factors is not unilateral. The character of this influence is primarily determined by the country's belonging to a certain region. Besides, a certain hierarchy of impacts of various actors is observed. Here the critical mass of the Western influence has not been achieved because of the inherited isolation and deliberate inhibition of its overcoming. Instead, a specific sort of societal development has become firmly established. This development is characterised by the absence of real competition in both economic and political spheres and ruling groupings form the national course in domestic and foreign policies on the basis of their own particular interests. Having not got rid of basic ancestral features of the past Ukraine naturally feels on itself primary Eurasian influence. Besides, the region experiences a deep asymmetrical interdependence, strong economic and in majority of instances political influence of Russia. Though the impact of the West is being growing here, it remains superficial if compared to the Russian one.

The EU's interest towards Ukraine is shaped by establishment of the sphere of influence, supported by the processes of enlargement and neighbourhood policies. The EU enlargement is

aimed, first of all, at creating a consolidated space on the basis of democratic values and stable political and economic development – a space which will turn into a powerful actor in world politics. European strategic interests are expanding south- and eastwards, through Central Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia with the view to build transport and energy routs. Implementation of these projects will result in forming an EU-oriented geoeconomic space, which will include intermediate states into European sphere of interests.

In the Euro-Atlantic space, that is primarily organized by NATO, Ukraine is seen as (1) one of important objects for practical implementation of American doctrine of "expanding democracy" in the context of struggle for control over post-Soviet space and (2) a key element in creation of subregional institutions without Russia. The U.S. attention to Ukraine is determined by the fact that Ukraine is an instrument for competition with Russia and by the desire to include Ukraine into the so-called "New Europe" and rely on it in order to control integration processes in Europe.

In many respects the West's interest towards Ukraine obeys the strategy (or the search of it) regarding Russia. To some extent Ukraine is a tool of rivalry with Russia and in some cases can play a role of an ally or buffer in confrontation with it. [11] The attention towards Ukraine will likely be increasing in periods of aggravation in relations between Russia on the one hand and Europe and USA on the other hand. At these moments the competitors may try to draw Ukraine over one's side.

Russia's interests towards Ukraine are determined by the strategy of creating the Eurasian sphere of influence, spreading throughout Russia's borders via implementation of reintegration projects in the post-Soviet space as well as via direct military, economic and political presence. Ukraine holds one of the most important places in implementation of such a strategy. Mechanisms include struggle for rights of Russian-speaking population, projects of economic reintegration through increase of Russian capital in Ukrainian economy and joint economic ventures as well as through military and technical cooperation.

In the postbipolar international system Ukraine had both potential advantages and shortcomings. Advantages included greater freedom of choice in foreign policy priorities, determined by conditions of gaining independence and limited external threats to the sovereignty; absence of formal international restrictions in mechanisms of foreign policy decisions, resulting from participation in supranational institutions; "free agent" status in the process of transformation of the international system, which enabled more freedom of choice of partners and better chances to get better outcomes from such co-operation. Shortcomings materialized in the absence of a guaranteed support from other states; high level of uncertainty about its future place in the international system; vulnerability to threats of force and diplomatic blackmail from other states and international organizations.

In a general outlook, Ukraine is a medium power whose foreign policy is mainly concentrated at the meso-levels of the international system. This means that the country receives systemic impulses and determines its place in the system. In this framework, general tendencies at the global level and their implications at the regional levels are determined and international environment of Ukraine is modeled; then the reaction of the state is fixed. The latter is mainly observed in the regional subsystems. The upshot is that the medium-power status and the relative shortage of resources mean that systemic parameters dominate in the formation of Ukraine's foreign policy at the global level.

Quite often, within multipolar regional systems the equal distance principle is a viable tool for the foreign policy strategy of middle powers. This principle underlines the importance of enhanced cooperation between middle power and every major regional power aimed at the es-



establishment of stable or even strategic partnership with the latter. The equal distance principle empathizes on the balanced consideration of the interests of all and every major regional power while developing cooperation with each of them. Thus, rapprochement with one of regional leaders should never harm directly strategic interests of the other one [12].

In our view, according to its status in the postbipolar international system, Ukraine has mainly two strategies for developing its relations with world's centers of power:

- unilateral orientation at one of the powerful states, global or regional leader, which can be beneficial tactically, but strategically threatening by the loss of independence;
- dynamic balancing among centers of power while maintaining neutrality in the respect to military alliances.

The last option is the most complicated one and demands acquiring capability of rapid adaptation of foreign policy to dynamic changes in the modern system of international relations. In other words, the main task of Ukrainian foreign strategy is comprehension and adequate response to structural imperatives of world politics with the view to use its own potential power for protecting national interests of survival and development as an independent state.

It is the most effective way of defending and realizing national interests. Namely, this way is a theoretical background for multivector foreign policy.

If to move away from conceptual generalizations and to advert to political practice, one can find that during relatively short period of its existence as a state Ukraine has been trying with various successes to implement one or another of the abovementioned options of foreign policy strategy. During the whole period of state independence two foreign policy strategies – non-alignment and Euroatlantic integration - have been discussed and to some extent realized. Rather intensive international contacts have always had as their component a search of reliable international guarantees of independence and sovereignty. Taking into account the public opinion and leading political forces' stances it has to be admitted that the final choice has not been made and the way to consensus of elites is still quite long. From the start of independence the Ukrainian government has been avoiding clear choice at all as it understood or felt that practical steps in the framework of any certain strategy would be very difficult and success would not be guaranteed. Both strategies after all require substantial external support [13].

Owing to the non-alignment policy during the first three-four years of independence the Ukrainian government managed to take away an undesirable perspective of Eurasian military and political reintegration which would substantively limit geopolitical freedom of the state. The non-alignment blocked and replaced it. It was considered not so much as a real formula of taking root in international arena but as an evidence of a soft geopolitical separation from the union, peaceful divorce and to a certain degree as a condition of sovereignization. Namely, this role was successfully played by “the intention in the future to become a permanently neutral state which doesn't take part in military blocks” that was proclaimed in the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine (1990) [14]. It is not accidentally that in the Declaration this intention was directly (textually, - in one phrase, over the comma) linked to the non-nuclear status of the state, which (it is symptomatic) was implemented. Ukraine felt high interest of strategic partners in this aspect.

Obviously, a certain form of neutralism is able to have a positive influence by way of securing a country from negative consequences of armed conflicts. In Ukraine neutralism corresponded and corresponds to contradictory attitudes of political elite, compensates the lack of national consensus as concerns geopolitical priorities and strategies of national security maintenance. The non-alignment has become a natural expression of uncertainty, transitional state of the Ukrainian society, in which internal prerequisites for a single choice in respect to basic values, development strategy, geopolitical orientation have not yet grown ripe.

In the contemporary Ukrainian history attempts to realize a course of integration with one of the world power centers were made as well. In 2002 President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma announced the start of implementing the course of Euro-Atlantic integration, however the practical deviation from non-alignment did not take place. There were mainly talks not about accession but about integration as a process. The situation changed when the new President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko made accession to NATO a priority of his foreign policy course. In 2005 a real confrontation of non-alignment and Euro-Atlantic integration began. Both ideas got to be actively used in domestic political struggle; their adherents substantially redistributed themselves in comparison with the previous period. Both ideas become an instrument of struggle for electorate and this resulted in the fundamental decrease of their ability to facilitate optimization of foreign policy course. Intellectual means of bringing consensus concerning foreign policy priorities become ineffective. The idea of Euro-Atlantic integration turned out especially disfigured. Mass perception which has not yet got rid of Soviet clichés is being additionally polluted by artificial phobias.

As a consequence of the absence of geopolitical choice instead of clear guiding lines for building up foreign policy strategy Ukraine still have only manifold set of tasks, fundamentals, directions and priorities which suggest very wide space for official interpretations, selective use or even unofficial revision. The current political practice has consolidated such state of affairs.

Since the government coalition “Stability and Reforms” headed by the new President Viktor Yanukovich came into power in March of 2010 a renaissance of the policy of non-alignment [15] and certain balancing between Russia and the West (with some rapprochement with the former) has been observed. It is yet early at the present stage to evaluate the potency of such a policy. Let us just assume that in many respects the effectiveness of Ukraine’s new foreign policy will depend on support of it from the side of Russia and the West. If aggravation of relations between these principal actors of world politics occurs, the non-aligned Ukraine may become a strategic barrier between them.

### **Conclusion**

On the basis of my analysis I can conclude that priorities of Ukraine’s foreign policy are shaped under the influence of a number of factors – internal and external - with a prevalent impact of internal ones. Mainly the internal situation will determine Ukraine’s international position in the future. In case of successes in domestic transformations and conducive international political climate Ukraine will be able to utilise its potential which is symbolized in its capacity to be a communication channel between European and Eurasian geopolitical spaces and so one of key links for uniting them in a single pan-European space.

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2. See in details: Materials of the press conference “Geroi, tsinnosti i mify suchasnoi Ukrainy” (“Heroes, Values and Myths of the Modern Ukraine”) prepared by “Ukrainian Democratic Circle” in collaboration with the company «Ukraine sociology service» (January 10, 2007).

3. Ibid.
4. Sotsiologicheskoe issledovanie “Ukraintsy i rossiane: vzgliad drug na druga” // Vneshniaia politika Ukrainy: kak soglasovat’ zapadnyi i vostochnyi vektory (Sociological Research “The Ukrainians and Russians: View on Each Other” // Foreign Policy of Ukraine: How to Coordinate Western and Eastern Vectors). – Kiev: Institut izuchenia Rossii, 2008. – P. 32.
5. Dergachiov O. Partnerskyi potentsial Ukrainy: stanovlennia i realizatsia (Ukraine’s Partnership Potential: Formation and Realization). – Kyiv: Kuras Institute of Political and Ethnic Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2009. - P. 105.
6. Ibid., p. 107-108.
7. Buzan B. Rethinking Security after the Cold War // Cooperation and Conflict. - 1997, Vol. 32, No. 1. – P. 18.
8. Dergachiov O. Op.cit. - P. 249.
9. Manzhola V. et al. Ukraine in Postbipolar System of International Relations: Analytical Report [Text in Ukrainian and English]. – Kyiv: Institute of International Relations of Taras Shevchenko National University, 2006. – P. 40.
10. The Globalization of Eastern Europe: Teaching International Relations Without Borders / eds.: K. Segbers, K. Imbusch. — Hamburg : LIT, 2000. — P. 399–402.
11. The appearance in 1991 on the map of Europe a new Ukrainian state distinctly affected European balance of power and regional states’ military planning. The independent Ukraine impartially took a role of the West’s strategic buffer. As far as it is known, since 1992 NATO military planning relies on the “additional time” factor inasmuch as in case of the likelihood (now yet insubstantial) of invasion into Europe Ukraine will take the first strike upon itself. During decades the West achieved military parity with the USSR at the cost of trillions of dollars annually. In practice the Ukrainian state self-determination took away this “strategic risk” saving for the USA and its allies more than a half of expenses on “communism containment”.
12. Manzhola V. Op. cit. – P. 41, 42.
13. Dergachiov O. Op. cit. – P. 253.
14. Deklaratsia pro derzhavnyi suverenitet Ukrainy [Electronnyi resurs]: uhvalena Verhovnoiu Radoiu Ukrainskoi RSR 16 lypnia 1990 roku (Declaration of the State Sovereignty of Ukraine [Electronic Resource]: Adopted by the Supreme Council of Ukraine on July 16, 1990). — URL: [http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/cgi\(bin/laws/main.cgi?nreg=5512](http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/cgi(bin/laws/main.cgi?nreg=5512).
15. On July 1, 2010 the Law of Ukraine “On Fundamentals of Domestic and Foreign Policy” was adopted in the Ukrainian Parliament. The document proclaims Ukraine’s non-alignment status, i.e. refusal from entering into military alliances. - URL: <http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/cgi-bin/laws/main.cgi?nreg=2411-17&p=1291993324358262>.