

CONDITIONS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S STRATEGIC CULTURE AND ITS IMPACT ON RUSSIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

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ABSTRACT

Over the last thirty years, the importance and interest in cultural factors in international relations and in international security has increased. The links between culture and security, and in particular the impact of culture on security, are issues whose importance is growing and which are being increasingly studied. They are regarded as a multifaceted problem, as cultural differences have become the cause of conflicts and wars, and tendencies of cultural domination have led to the destruction of cultures and entire civilizations. It therefore seems interesting to reflect on the process of developing an independent strategic culture of the Russian Federation. The purpose of the article is to discuss the process of shaping the independent strategic culture of the Russian Federation and to address four basic research problems: the sources of Russian strategic culture; the indication which

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of them are primary and which are secondary ones; determining whether Russian strategic culture underwent evolution; and determining whether the Cold War influenced the shape of today's strategic culture of the Russian Federation. To achieve the intended purpose of the article, critical analysis of literature is applied, which allowed to find answers to the research questions.

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INTRODUCTION

Relations between culture and politics were already recognized in Antiquity, while the definition of strategic culture appeared only in the mid-1970s in the United States. At the beginning of the 21st century, there was an increase in interest in cultural factors in international relations and security. This is evidenced by the fact that currently almost all strategic documents in the world, documents of countries and international security organizations, devote more and more space to cultural factors. In addition, it should be noted that the concept of strategic culture is a response to the need to take into account the subjective factors shaping the foreign policy and security of states. Given completely different cultural traditions of particular states, the analysis of these factors may prove necessary for a full understanding of the new international order.

The purpose of the article is to discuss the process of shaping the independent strategic culture of the Russian Federation and to address four basic research problems:

- the sources of Russian strategic culture;
- indication which sources are primary and which are secondary ones;
- determining whether Russian strategic culture underwent evolution;
- determining whether the Cold War influenced the shape of today's strategic culture of the Russian Federation.

Unfortunately, due to the extensiveness of the topic, the article devotes little space to the important issue of the military security policy of the Russian Federation, which is a priority element of Russia's strategic culture. Nor

is sufficient space devoted to the mental factor, which has a considerable impact on the perception of Russian citizens and political elites, as well as military threats and ways of using the armed forces.

SOURCES OF THE STRATEGIC CULTURE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The basic sources of Russian strategic culture include the geographical environment, geopolitics, generational changes, historical experience, the political system, the beliefs of the elite as well as the organization of the military. It is the geographical environment in which the Russian Federation is located that has for centuries determined relatively stable elements in the perception of the outside world by the Moscow decision-making center, and that influences the way the country conducts its policy, while also influencing the frequency of the use of military force for political purposes by Moscow decision-makers.

However, it is geopolitics and history¹ that play a decisive role in the creation of Russian strategic culture. According to Johnston, “[t]he most important strategic preferences are rooted in the early experiences of forming the state”.²

In the case of Russia, these include adoption of Christianity from Byzantium in 998, Mongol invasions in the 13th century, or Tatar-Mongol captivity lasting until 1480. These events resulted in the centralization and hierarchization of state power characteristic of Russia, which was typical of both the Eastern Roman Empire and the *orda*.³ After the dropping of the Tatar-Mongol yoke in the 15th century, one of the fundamental elements shaping the identity of the Russian people was Orthodoxy, and the Orthodox Church gained the status of a state church. It legitimized power and constituted the basis for East Slavic identity.⁴ Today, in turn, the Orthodox

¹ On Polish strategic culture see e.g. K. Malinowski, *Kultura bezpieczeństwa narodowego w Polsce i w Niemczech*, Poznań 2003, pp. 7–92; A. Włodkowska-Bagan, *Kultura strategiczna Polski*, [in:] R. Zięba, T. Pawłuszko, *Polityka zagraniczna Polski w zmieniającym się świecie międzynarodowym: wybrane problemy*, Kielce 2016, pp. 55–76.

² A.I. Johnston, *Thinking about Strategic Culture*, “International Security”, 1995, vol. 19, no. 4, p. 34.

³ *Orda* – a general term that in Polish is used for nomad troops, usually Tatars from the Crimean Khanate and front Nogai hordes, invading Lithuanian, Ruthenian, Polish and Russian lands in the 15th–18th centuries. Among the Altai peoples, this was a name of the ruler's tent, or, more generally, their abode.

⁴ A. Curanović, *Czynnik religijny w polityce zagranicznej Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Warszawa 2010, p. 109.

religion is a cultural, state, and national identifier. Russian strategic culture owes its construction to a variety of sources, both those whose genealogies can be derived from Western culture and those firmly anchored in Eastern culture. The possibility of communing with Western culture, passive until Peter the Great took control of Russia and active since the period of his reforms, has clearly contributed to Russia's enrichment.

In the 18th-century Russia, the Russians, absorbing news from the West, also adopted its ideology and philosophy. From them then arose the concept of a wise philosopher advising a wise ruler. And the ruler is a strong individual, a tyrant, but their strength is to be used to introduce changes that serve society. It was during the reign of Peter the Great that a model of despotic power based on a bureaucratic political system was formed, which excluded the possibility of any pluralism.⁵ Many researchers of the problem believe that Russia has managed to create its own separate culture, which does not mean, however, that at least in some aspects it does not identify with the culture of the East or West. One of the important elements that affect the construction of Eastern culture is the attitude to power. The final shape of Russian strategic culture has a widespread conviction, shared not only by the elite but also by the broad social masses, that only authoritarian hierarchical power is capable of controlling society.⁶ It is characterized by a selective approach to human rights or to bribery. Eastern societies are also reluctant to make any changes in contrast to Western cultural societies, and a strong mythologisation of their own history is often part of their culture, often at the expense of neighbors, towards whom they can be hostile.

STRATEGIC CULTURE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AFTER THE COLD WAR

The Federal Republic of Russia was formed as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which during the Cold War was one of the main pillars in the bipolar system. There was a sharp ideological, political and economic struggle between the US and the USSR. It resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union and thus of the Soviet empire. A new state was created, which adopted the name of the Russian Federation and it faced enormous political, economic, military (strategic) and identity-related problems. This

⁵ B. Zientara, *Dawna Rosja. Demokracja i despotyzm*, Warszawa 1995, pp. 117–118; see J. Dogońska, *Cywilizacyjna tożsamość Rosji*, Toruń 1997, p. 25.

⁶ J. Olchowski, *Czynnik kulturowy stosunków międzynarodowych a kulturowe determinanty Wschodu*, [in:] *Wschód w globalnej i regionalnej polityce międzynarodowej*, A.R. Bartnicki, E. Kuźlewska (eds), Toruń 2009, p. 13.

new Federation ceased to be one of the main world powers, becoming a regional power, and this contributed to an increase in the activity of third countries in the zone of Russian influence (from the west the European Union, the North Atlantic Alliance and the United States, from the east China, from the south Turkey and Iran⁷), and to an increase in uncertainty of and threat to the Federation's interests.

The above situation forced Washington to take some measures to secure world peace due to nuclear weapons located in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus. Immediately in the first years after the end of the Cold War, the United States pursued pro-Russian policy by pressing on the other three states to give nuclear inherited arsenals under Russian control. This problem was finally resolved by signing in 1992 the Lisbon Protocol, which made the post-Soviet states parties to the START I treaty. Other important problems and challenges for the new federation were those related to joining the new post-Cold War world order. The issue of the international identity of the new state, the development of new military and strategic doctrines, the formulation of the concept of national security and foreign policy as well as defining the state's national interest in the new international security environment were also important.⁸ These issues were the starting point for the shaping of Russian strategic culture.

There is no doubt that the present strategic culture of the Russian Federation is a derivative of Russia's former strategic culture, which was based to a large extent on a military factor, whose role was disproportionate to other national strategies and acted as the main instrument for creating international relations.⁹ According to the Soviet political elite, the USSR should allocate funds at the expense of other areas of life in order to gradually increase its military potential. The Soviet strategic culture was characterized by lack of trust in relation to partners and reliance on the Soviet Union's own defense potential. Paradoxically, these assumptions largely contributed

⁷ See A. Włodkowska-Bagan, *Rywalizacja mocarstw na obszarze poradzieckim*, Warszawa 2013, p. 27.

⁸ K. Świder, *Kultura strategiczna Rosji w świetle rosyjskich koncepcji i strategii bezpieczeństwa narodowego*, "Studia Polityczne", 2016, no. 42, p. 12.

⁹ Z. Cesarz, *Rozpad ZSRR i polityka zagraniczna Rosji jako zagadnienia współczesnych stosunków międzynarodowych*, [in:] *Problemy polityczne współczesnego świata*, Z. Cesarz, E. Stadtmüller (eds), Wrocław 1996, pp. 130–144; see A. Bryc, *Cele polityki zagranicznej Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Toruń 2004, pp. 20–21.

to the collapse of the Soviet state, which was not able to effectively continue the further arms race.¹⁰

Among the features of the strategic culture of the Russian Federation, the so-called **besieged fortress syndrome**, created on the basis of historical processes, should be mentioned first. It meant a country without allies, surrounded by hostile or relatively hostile states. Therefore, the USSR had to count only on itself, which is why, according to the Soviet political elite, it should be a self-sufficient state to be able to cope with the task of not only protecting the sovereignty but also securing the sphere of influence. It is a feeling of being surrounded by enemies in conjunction with the territorial extent and the multitude of neighbors, as well as certain symbols, myths, and attitudes affecting the Russians and the Russian state, that shaped this syndrome.

In the perception of threats by Russians, the largest ones come from the West (NATO, USA), and, despite the declared strategic partnership, from China. An important element for Russia's strategic culture is its relationship with the United States marked by fierce competition during the Cold War and by suspicion and prejudice today. The process of enlargement of NATO and partly of the EU has been affecting the (not very best) relations between Moscow and Washington. In addition, there is also the United States' failure to recognize the post-Soviet republics as a zone of Russian influence, the US building a missile defense system in Europe, or the Ukrainian-Russian war, of course, not forgetting that the US and the EU impose economic sanctions on Russia.

Russian-Chinese relations have been characterized by hatred for many centuries. It was only the end of the Cold War that relatively normalized them. They are now connected with significant economic disproportion and the role on the international arena. Russia's relations with Turkey are also not the easiest issues. Russia's lack of confidence in Turkey is influenced not only by historical problems (numerous mutual conflicts from the 16th to the beginning of the 20th century, or Russia's capture of Istanbul in 1878, which intensified mutual hatred), but above all by Turkey's membership in NATO.

Russia's distrust is due to its excessive focus on history, which is the source of the greatness of the Russian Federation, but also of traumatic

¹⁰ P. Wieczorek, *Ekonomiczne aspekty polityki wojskowej Związku Radzieckiego i Polski*, "Sprawy Międzynarodowe", 1990, no. 11, pp. 97–98.

experiences. Skillful pointing to or intentional creation of enemies of both external and internal nature draws the attention of Russians away from the problems of the state, facilitates their consolidation around power, allows limiting civil rights or increasing expenditure on armaments. A vision of an external threat is created and distrust is being built in Russian society which allows maintaining a high level of trust in the army and strong leadership. As with the besieged fortress syndrome, the roots of another syndrome, the **power and imperial syndrome**, should be sought in history and geography.¹¹

One of the main determinants of Russia's imperial expansion is the pursuit of "self-defense", which the Russians understand as ensuring the survival of the Russian Federation. Another determinant is the pursuit of expansion, i.e. increasing ownership and power position in the region and the world, and thus pushing towards the revival of the empire. As an American political analyst Robert Kagan writes, Russia's desire today is what the superpower always wanted: to maintain a dominant position in regions that are strategically important to them and get rid of the influence of other powers. For Russia, maintaining the status quo is also a reputational issue understood as a requital for the collapse of the Soviet Union.¹²

Reflections on Russian strategic culture after the Cold War period can be divided according to two periods. The first concerns the times when power was wielded by Boris Yeltsin (1991–1999): at that time, the political system of the state was built from scratch and attempts were made to revive the Great Russian national spirit. Despite the differences in the way of exercising power, the same period in the history of Russia can also include the time that fell under the rule of Vladimir Putin. The second stage falls on the rule of Putin–Medvedev political duo when attempts were made to change Russian strategic culture through a new opening in relations with the West and internal settlements with Russia's own history. However, this process is still ongoing, so it is difficult to assess to what extent it will change the overall Russian strategic culture, and that it will affect it, there is no doubt.¹³

The strategic culture of the Russian Federation remains to some extent a derivative of the Soviet strategy. Until Dmitry Medvedev took power,

¹¹ A. Włodkowska-Bagan, *Kultura strategiczna Rosji*, "Sprawy Międzynarodowe", 2017, no. 3, p. 45.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 46.

¹³ R. Kłaczyński, *Kultura strategiczna Federacji Rosyjskiej*, "Nowa Polityka Wschodnia", 2012, no. 1, p. 26.

only those modifications had been introduced which were forced by the external situation determined by the collapse of the USSR. The redefinition of policy basically affected the limitation of Russian activity to the borders of the former USSR. The mechanisms of creating relations in this area have not changed, except that – as events have shown – the weakness of the Russian state prevented even the realization of intended goals in the territory of the former USSR. This period was characterized by cool relations with the West, destructive processes occurring within the framework of internal policy, and permanent inertia of state power structures, which was only stopped by Vladimir Putin.

During the administration of Dmitry Medvedev, an attempt was made to establish closer relations with the Western world on the part of Russian political elites, probably with the consent of Vladimir Putin. Despite the growing importance of the presidential center, he was the one who made the most important political decisions. This situation forces significant modifications in the strategic culture of the Russian Federation. In the future, it may force Russian elites and institutions that are responsible for forming strategic culture to start work on a completely new structure. It should be noted that it all overlaps with globalization processes, to which both the USSR and the Russian Federation have not yet been able to find the answer.¹⁴

The Soviet stereotypes rooted in the strategic culture of the Russian Federation prevent Russian power elites from fully using their defense potential, as exemplified by its inability to enter or build fully valuable military alliances. Russia's attempts to build military alliances in the area of the former USSR did not meet the state's hopes. Also, the construction of a new European security system, taking into account Russia's ambitions, covering the entire Old Continent, has not yet been met with understanding, let alone the support of either European state or non-state actors within the EU. This is due to the fact that the Russian Federation is still perceived as a country separate in terms of civilization, culture, and identity from other European countries, especially those belonging to the EU. A different value system, a political system combining elements of an authoritarian state with a democratic order, and particularly the lack of a clearly defined path of development are divisive rather than connective factors.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

The already described features of Russia's strategic culture not only affect the perception of challenges and threats, but also motivate the Russian Federation's activities on the international stage. It is characteristic that the Russian vision of the world is based on the conviction that it is the force that gives the chance to survive in an unfriendly world, which leads to the Russian power being based on military strength and constant armament. This is accompanied by the conviction that one can never be strong enough to be safe. This emphasis on strengthening the Russian military force is present in the sphere of declarations and in the real increase in expenditure on reinforcements.

It is Russia's sense of danger that causes Russia's actions to be presented to Russian and international public opinion and the international community as defensive, which is often manipulation. It is also important that the enemies of the Russian Federation are not always specific countries - they can also be non-governmental organizations whose activity is contrary to Russia's interests and which receive external support. A certain "mirror" of Russian strategic culture are program documents, in which the provisions about Russia as a superpower prevail, that, together with permanent members of the UN Security Council, is responsible for maintaining global security and peace.¹⁵ This is confirmed by, among others, an entry in the first foreign and security policy program document issued after the Cold War, i.e. that of 1993. In 1997 concept, in turn, provisions strongly emphasize that the size of the territory of the Russian Federation as well as the potential and specific Eurasian location predispose it to leadership in the post-Soviet area. In other program documents on Russia's foreign and security policy, particular attention is paid to the growing tendencies in the United States to build a unipolar order using economic and forcible means. The West (NATO) in this strategic framework is accused by Russia of pursuing a policy aimed at regional and global destabilization from which the Russian Federation is forced to defend itself.

An important issue in these documents is also the perception of challenges and threats. In addition to terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, or climate change, the permanent threat, according to them, comes from the North Atlantic Alliance. What is very worrying is the fact that in the 2000 *National Security Concept of the Russian Federation*,

¹⁵ A. Torkunov, *Vneshnaya politika i bezopasnost' sovremennoy Rossii 1991–2002. Hrestomatia*, vol. 1–4, Moscow 2002, p. 22.

NATO began to be seen as one of the main threats.¹⁶ This means that the actions taken by the Kremlin are presented to Russian and international public opinion as defensive, which often has signs of manipulation. Also, the often aggressive Russian information and propaganda offensive carried out by means of mass media (RT or Sputnik) uses a false narrative about defense against a massive attack from the West.

Currently, President Putin's government is implementing the main strategic priorities of its foreign and security policy, among others in accordance with the provisions of the *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation* approved on 30 November 2016. According to the provisions of this document, the Kremlin considers among the main priorities primarily to strengthen the position of the Russian Federation as one of the influential centers of the modern world; to strengthen its position in the system of connections of the world economy; and to maintain international peace, general security and stability based on the provisions of the United Nations Charter. One cannot agree with the provision about Russia establishing good relations with neighboring countries, helping to eliminate existing and preventing new outbreaks of conflicts in their territories, which is a negation of Putin's real actions (Russian-Ukrainian war). What is also worrying are the records about the need to increase the role of the factor of strength in international relations, about the expansion and modernization of the strength potential, as well as about the creation and development of new types of reinforcements.¹⁷

A positive attitude should be taken to the Kremlin's struggle for action with global terrorism, because, as the provisions of the Concept indicate, one of the most dangerous realities of the modern world is the increasing threat of international terrorism. In view of the above, Russia proposes the creation of a comprehensive international anti-terrorism coalition based on a solid legal base and on effective cooperation of states, without politicization and double standards. The above document also indicates that one of the main priorities of Russia's security policy is the fight against international crime and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Russian

¹⁶ A. Włodkowska-Bagan, *Kultura strategiczna Rosji*, "Sprawy Międzynarodowe", 2017, no. 3, p. 49.

¹⁷ *Koncepcja polityki zagranicznej Federacji Rosyjskiej (zatwierdzona przez Prezydenta Federacji Rosyjskiej Vladimira Putina 30 listopada 2016 r.)*, "Ambasada Rosji w Polsce", 17 January 2017, https://poland.mid.ru/web/polska_pl/koncepcja-polityki-zagranicznej-federacji-rosyjskiej (accessed: 5.04.2019).

Federation counteracts organized crime related to illicit drug and psychotropic trafficking. Because of its rich experience the Russian Federation is an important and effective part of the global system to combat emergencies. In addition, Russia participates in international cooperation in regulating migration processes and guaranteeing the rights of economic migrants, including by creating optimal forms and mechanisms for their integration in the society of the host country, establishing the conditions for granting citizenship, granting asylum against persecution. Russia also rejects the use of migration processes for political purposes.

It should be emphasized that, according to Putin's government, Russia's enemies are not always specific countries, but, for example, NGOs whose activities are contrary to Russia's interests. The government of the Russian Federation has granted non-government organizations performing political activities the status of organizations performing the functions of so-called foreign agents. The use of the name foreign agent is a conscious action of the Russian authorities to discredit in Russian society those organizations that evoke negative connotations associated with ideological and political struggle, espionage or the secret services of other countries operating under cover.¹⁸ In addition, the Russian government also considers Russophobes as its enemies, both internal and external, including Poles or Ukrainians.

MILITARY SECURITY POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The Russian Federation is currently considered the greatest military threat, because the other neighbors remain in alliance with the Baltic region countries or are too weak (e.g. Belarus). Russia is distinguished by a significant quantitative and sometimes qualitative advantage in the most important weapon systems.¹⁹ In the era of hybrid conflicts, the boundaries between military conflicts and other types of conflicts, e.g. social, information, or cultural, are disappearing. Every possible military threat will have a base of geostrategic importance. Russia's economy is becoming more and more weakened, and economic sanctions are leading to the impoverishment of society, which can significantly worsen relations with neighbors.²⁰ The real

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 52.

¹⁹ E. Lucas, *Nowa zimna wojna. Rosja Putina. Zagrożenie dla Zachodu*, Warszawa 2015, p. 239.

²⁰ Kenneth Waltz believed that the usefulness of nuclear weapons concerns only deterrence, which brings aside the possibility of defense and warfare. R. Kopeć, P. Mazur, *Odstraszanie militarne w XXI wieku. Polska – NATO – Rosja*, Kraków 2017, pp. 8–10, 17.

threat is the plans of the Kremlin, unknown to external parties, which may include destabilizing actions in other parts of the former USSR. Intervention in defense of the interests of the Russian minority in countries such as Lithuania, Latvia or Estonia, similar to what Russia did in Crimea²¹, can be a threat here. The Kremlin is unable to accept the exit of these republics from its former empire and their entry into NATO structures. Russia's foreign policy manifesting itself in dangerous incidents involving Russian warplanes and jets against Poland and other countries of the region is a cause of tension and fear.²²

These activities do not allow one to have any illusions about the security of independent neighboring countries of Russia. It constantly strives to expand its political, economic and military sphere of influence. However, military confrontation should be considered as a last resort, because without NATO support, no country in the Baltic Sea region would be able to stand alone against the Russian Federation.²³

Russia's main asset is Strategic Missile Forces that are developing under the nuclear umbrella. Despite the financial crisis, Russia is modernizing all types of armed forces. The modernization of strategic nuclear forces is extremely politically important for the Kremlin. They include: strategic missile troops, nuclear submarines, and strategic aviation. According to the war doctrine, the Russian Federation reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in response to the use of nuclear weapons and other weapons against the Federation itself and/or its allies.

It should be noted that the Russian military doctrine allows for the possibility of using nuclear weapons at the time of armed conflict and it is of great importance for Moscow, at least in terms of political pressure on other states. Tactical nuclear weapons are currently the greatest threat because the Russian arsenal of tactical nuclear warheads is greater than NATO's European stocks.²⁴ In order for Poland's security not to be

²¹ In the military doctrine, the Russian Federation clearly states that it is ensuring "the possibility of intervention in neighboring countries in defense of their own citizens, or even if the authorities of a neighboring country pursued a policy contrary to Russia's interests". db/ja /, *Doktryna wojenna Rosji zagraża Polsce? Sprawdzi RBN*, "TVN24", 18 March 2015, <https://tvn24.pl/polska/rbn-o-doktrynie-wojennej-rosji-ra525179-3296608> (accessed: 17.05.2020).

²² E. Lucas, *Nowa zimna wojna...*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

²³ T. Pisula, *Rosja umiera*, "Gazeta Polska", 15 October 2014, no. 42(1106), p. 22.

²⁴ R. Lipka, *Rosyjska triada nuklearna – propagandowa broń Kremla?*, Warszawa 2017, p. 5.

threatened, nuclear weapons should be treated as the ultimate weapon. In addition, there is the MAD doctrine that mentions enough warheads on the Russian and US side to destroy each other.²⁵ Stocks of tactical bombs in these countries, however, are small in comparison with the Russian nuclear arsenal. In this situation, the United States has the appropriate forces and resources to respond to Russian actions.

The threat from the Kaliningrad District cannot be overlooked because the militarization of the Kaliningrad District is a source of concern among the countries of the Baltic Sea region. The local A2/AD system built in the European part of the NATO area enables the control of a significant part of the territories of the Baltic States. Since 2011, a modernized radiolocation station of the Voronezh-DM system has been dislocated in the Kaliningrad District. It has the potential to cover the whole of Europe and parts of the Atlantic. Together with the potential of aviation and missile troops, it is part of the local A2/AD (anti-access/area denial) system, which is responsible for detecting, tracking, disrupting and destroying enemy targets”.

It should also be emphasized that a significant part of the territories of the Baltic States have been within the range of influence of the Russian integrated air defense system since 2012. In conclusion, among the threats from the Russian Federation, the most serious concern is a threat to the region of the Baltic States, the loss of which the Federation still cannot accept. The black scenario is a military confrontation between Russia and NATO in the Baltic region, as Baltic countries have small armed forces. Any military threat will have a geostrategic basis. In this sense, for Russia, the area of today's Poland is the so-called west gate. That is why NATO's policy of deterrence and defense on the eastern flank is a key ensuring factor for the Baltic States' and Poland's security in the region.

CONCLUSION

As the analysis of Polish and foreign literature has shown, strategic culture is perceived as a set of views resulting from historical experience, customs or norms of a given nation regarding its perception of challenges, threats and ways of counteracting them as well as the attitude to the use of armed forces. The analysis also showed that the sources of Russian culture include primarily its geopolitical location, and history and traditions of the Russian people. Despite the collapse of the Soviet Union, this culture maintains

²⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 1–2.

continuity and is saturated with the syndrome of a besieged fortress, chronic suspicion, and perception of the world as a hostile place. Some changes are noticed in the evolution of the selection of means and methods, e.g. a clear application of economic means, taking into account the so-called soft power, and changing priorities in the foreign and security policy of the Russian Federation. The country was formed as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and during the Cold War, it was one of the main pillars of the bipolar system. An important problem and challenge for the new federation was to become part of the new post-Cold War world order. The starting point for the development of Russian strategic culture was then the question of the international identity of the new state, the development of new military and strategic doctrines, and the formulation of an appropriate concept of national security and foreign policy.

The above considerations on the strategic culture of the Russian Federation have also shown that the Federation's strategic culture includes both advantages that Russia can use to build a modern strategic culture that meets the requirements of global politics, and obstacles that Russian elites must overcome if they are serious about building a modern power of global significance. For this to happen, however, the consciousness of both the political elite and the entire Russian society must change, and this will undoubtedly be a long-term process. So, building the strategic culture almost from scratch, the Russian political and intellectual elite must be patient. Changing the mentality of society seems to be an even more difficult task. As history teaches, it often requires the work of several generations.

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