



ACTIVE MEASURES

RUSSIA'S KEY EXPORT

Jolanta Darczewska, Piotr Żochowski

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INTRODUCTION

The special services of the Soviet Union served the interests of a totalitarian state, not only by fighting all views which disagreed with it and blocking channels of communication with the outside world, but also by contributing to the implementation of its foreign policy (i.e. by creating the conditions for its implementation). To this end they used a variety of methods: propaganda, deception and sabotage, and even the physical liquidation of political opponents. These operations acquired the collective, euphemistic name of 'active measures'. This term justified the aggressive policy of the expansion of Communism, which was subjugated to a long-term strategy of psychological-ideological combat.

The belief that Russia lost its capacity to engage in this kind of long-term action together with the fall of Communism is incorrect. A more thorough analysis shows that 'the Marxist scientific worldview' was very quickly replaced by a 'geopolitical scientific worldview' and, as during the Cold War, this concept was raised to the rank of an official doctrine of foreign and security policy. This geopolitical image of a world embedded in the civilisational framework lay at the heart of the 'Primakov doctrine' formulated in the 1990s, and of the 'Putinism' which has been implemented since the beginning of this century.

The question indicated in the title was until recently the sole province of research by Western analysts of the Soviet Union's psychological warfare as conducted during the Cold War. An excellent anthology of texts by these theorists and practitioners was compiled by the French writer and journalist Vladimir Volkoff¹, who

¹ Vladimir Volkoff, *Psychosocjotechnika, dezinformacja - oręż wojny* [Psychotechnology, disinformation - a weapon of war], Komorów 1999. His books published in Poland as *Montaż* [Montage] (2006) and *Traktat o dezinformacji. Od Konia Trojańskiego do internetu* [A treaty on disinformation. From the Trojan horse to the internet] (1999), in which he summarised his many years of research in this area, also contained his work on misinformation.

appended his own commentary accurately describing the goals, methods and means of the Soviet operations aimed at influencing the public opinion and policy of foreign countries. Russian publications on the subject are by their nature more or less disguised forms of myth-making, aimed at the self-definition of the Russian special services.

The renaissance in the study of Russian active measures which we are currently observing should be linked to their role in creating crises whose effects we can witness in Ukraine, Syria, Germany and the USA. This has led the member states of NATO and the EU to develop warning mechanisms to identify threats from Russia. One manifestation of this was the resolution adopted on 10 October 2016 by the European Parliament's Commission of Foreign Affairs, and the report annexed to it entitled 'On the EU's strategic communication aimed at countering hostile propaganda from third parties'². This report shows that, by using various kinds of organisation (agencies, social media, foundations and associations, and by social groups, including political parties, which it has inspired), Russia is conducting a long-term process of destabilisation intended to undermine the European system of values and Euro-Atlantic cooperation, to stoke conflicts between EU member states, and to justify the right of Russia to build up its own sphere of influence in Europe.

This topic also deserves special treatment because contemporary forms of 'active measures' are based to a considerable degree on Cold War-era schematics. The current problems connected with the Russian services' aggressive actions are at the same time an enhanced version of the old problems, to which new information and communication technologies have contributed. A historical perspective may help to analyse and identify their covert mechanisms.

² Be aware of Russian and ISIS propaganda, warn foreign affairs MEPs, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=IM-PRESS&reference=20161010IPR46530&language=PL&format=pdf>

The comments presented in this paper show the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the activities referred to as ‘active measures’. In the operations where they are used, it is sometimes difficult to define and determine their effect on the end result of these operations. There is a lack not only of research and tools to measure their effectiveness: in addition, the main limiting factor in the analytical process is the secret nature of the operations. This text consists of three parts. In the first, we attempt to define the concept and examine those institutional structures within the KGB which conducted offensive informational and sabotage actions; the second part focuses on their conceptual basis and the organisational innovations implemented after the Cold War; and in the third, we highlight the contemporary challenges and the ways of identifying them (by examining Russian doctrines, the foreign policy goals of the Russian Federation, and a list of the areas at greatest risk).

THESES

- **The concept of ‘active measures’ covers offensive undertakings aimed at disinformation, deception, sabotage, destabilisation and espionage, arising from the assumptions and priorities of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, whose aim was to force its enemy to act in the manner desired by Moscow. The term combines various techniques used in operations aimed at influencing the international environment of the Soviet Union and supporting the foreign policy of the Kremlin.**
- **The institutionalisation of active measures testified to an attempt to combine the various means of action into a single coordinated process, which was associated with plans for the broader ideological expansion of the USSR. The special services were the key element: they analysed the situation in the countries affected, prepared plans for operations, implemented these plans and chose the ‘sub-contractors’. In addition to the organisational and executive features, the secret services also had security, control, and inspirational functions. The services used their channels to build up a network of agencies for influencing and financing actions supporting the Kremlin’s policy; they used intelligence positions in politically influential media, international organisations, etc. By creating false documents, activating the internal oppositions in the West and creating political and social crises there, as well as inspiring events desirable from the point of view of the Kremlin, the secret services worked under its supervision and control.**
- **These activities also served the socio-technical self-definition of the USSR’s special services: in the Soviet state’s totalitarian strategy, the apparatus of repression in its ideological strategy became ‘the force of progress’, ‘the**

Chekist army in the revolutionary war’, and ‘the winner in the war of intelligence services’. This mythologisation of the possibilities and unlimited potential of the special services conformed to the interests of the Kremlin, both by putting a kind of pressure on foreign public opinion, and by mobilising Soviet society and strengthening it in the belief in the effectiveness of the Communist Party’s policy. This was aided by the strict regime of state secrecy which surrounded the political police.

- **Active measures were not discontinued after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the KGB. Attachment to proven methods is a fundamental element of Russian political and strategic culture. The permanent bases of this culture include the legitimation of the regime by transferring internal tensions within Russian society to external enemies; mythologising its own power, the army and the special forces; the ‘fortress under siege’ syndrome; the primacy of psychological and ideological thinking over thinking in terms of political realism; and imposing an ideologised image of the world, and creating a confrontational approach to the international community.**
- **A constant manifestation of this culture is the conduct of an ideological-psychological proxy war against the alleged enemy, which proxy-entities conduct by (non-military) surrogate means. This is a permanent war, calculated over a long duration, and which requires the constant renewal of the concepts and mobilisation of its ‘soldiers’ on the various fronts, as well as the training of new generations of them.**
- **Post-Cold War reality has expanded the opportunities for Russia’s special services. This translates into multi-level activities which cover a variety of areas: political, economic, military, social and informational. Their coherence**

has been served by the new ideologisation of Russia. Ideological constructs are formatted in a geopolitical matrix emphasising the importance of the factors of space and of power. This is a spacious matrix which combines a variety of trends and geopolitical concepts: Eurasianism, the 'Russian world,' conservatism, neo-Byzantism, Orthodox Chekism, neo-Stalinism and others.

- These concepts are intended to provide a toolbox of tools - tools which legitimise the Putin regime, neutralise the Westernisation of the surrounding countries and prevent integration with the West, weaken the enemy's position, etc. These are negative concepts, which are based on the image of the enemy. They exploit a potential which is destructive, not creative. Today, Russia is not imposing its own assumed values, but is in fact destroying the values of others. It does this by manipulating content which is already present in political discourse, and by choosing narratives that allow it to emphasise controversies and divisions, i.e. to weaken the enemy.
- The repertoire of modern 'active measures' differs little from that used during the Cold War. These techniques are implemented by means of both word (disinformation and propaganda) and deed (subversion, provocation, protest actions, paramilitary actions, etc.). The latest innovations mainly rely on the use of new means of communication, which have expanded the special services' opportunities for action. The internet has abolished the old barriers to information and communication; it provides access to information in real time, making it easier for the special services to effect the rapid penetration of their targets. It has created possibilities for the rapid dissemination of specially-prepared content (its dissemination throughout the world, its reduplication, the removal of objectionable content, the imposition of their own interpretation),

while providing anonymity and access to the audience without any intermediaries. This means that today's problems with Russia's aggressive foreign policy are merely enhanced versions of the old ones.

- **Today, the Russian special services' active measures are located in the context of the rivalry of civilisations, in which Russia, in defending its vital interests, is forced to resist the 'aggressive' West. The construction of internal cohesion by external conflicts, as well as the inclusion in the arsenal of support for the Russian Federation's foreign policy of military forces and measures, demonstrates that these actions have been subordinated to the systemic, permanent, long-term offensive strategy of the state.**

I. ACTIVE MEASURES: AN ATTEMPT TO CLARIFY THE CONCEPT

1. Characteristics of the concept and its terms

‘Active measures’ is a historical, now somewhat imprecise term. Like many Russian terms, this one also is a façade, behind which various methods of influencing the international community are concealed. These have been carried out by different actors, mostly at the inspiration and under the control of the special services. The term first appeared in the 1960s, on the wave of intensification of the USSR’s ideological battle against the West, as a collective term for various techniques (misinformation, special propaganda³, sabotage, etc.), which in common acceptance have negative connotations. In addition, the term conceals the offensive nature of such activities by presenting them as defensive.

Definitions of active measures can be found in publicly available KGB documents. In the ‘Dictionary of counterintelligence’⁴ issued by the KGB’s Felix Dzerzhinsky Higher School in 1972, ‘active measures’ (Ru. *aktyvnyye meropriyatiya*) are defined as “acts of counterintelligence making it possible to penetrate the intentions of the enemy, allowing his unwanted steps to be anticipated, to lead the

³ In the scientific literature, misinformation and propaganda as separate concepts have strictly assigned ranges of meaning. For more detail on this topic, see e.g. Tomasz Kacała, *Dezinformacja i propaganda w kontekście zagrożeń dla bezpieczeństwa państwa* [Disinformation and propaganda in the context of threats to state security], *Przegląd Prawa Konstytucyjnego* [Review of Constitutional Law] no. 2/2015. In this text, they are treated as techniques for influence, depending on the use of manipulated information; both of these techniques also combine ideological and informational sabotage. For this reason, the terms ‘disinformation’ and ‘propaganda’ are used interchangeably in this text.

⁴ *Контрразведывательный словарь*, Moscow 1972, pp. 161-2 (<http://enc-dic.com/search/?searchid=1913655&text=%D0%BC%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%8F%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%8F+%D0%B0%D0%BA%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%BD%D1%8B%D0%B5>). For a scan of the entire document, see <https://docviewer.yandex.com/?url=ya-disk-public%3A%2F%2FfAlGUq9IcULWRmqEoOAPcEXoJlHxKPkixIzbR4mngdg%3D&zarc>.

enemy into error, to take the initiative from him, to thwart his actions of sabotage. Active measures, in contrast to defensive measures, e.g. those concerning the maintenance of a regime of secrecy and the protection of state and military secrets, are offensive in nature, allowing the detection and prevention of hostile activities in their early stages, forcing the opponent to expose himself, imposing the will to act on him, forcing him to act in adverse conditions and in ways desired by the counterintelligence services. In practice, active measures as practised in counterintelligence activities by the organs of state security include projects aimed at building up the position of spies in the camp of the enemy and its surroundings, conducting operational games with the enemy, disinformation directed at him, compromise and demoralisation, the transfer onto the territory of the USSR of persons of special operational value, obtaining intelligence information, etc.”.

The intelligence services’ definition of active measures was given by the former KGB intelligence officer and archivist Vasili Mitrokhin, who drew particular attention to their political, economic, military and ideological dimension. In Soviet intelligence these were defined as “espionage-operational activities, aimed at exerting influence on the foreign policy and domestic political situations of the countries that are the object of those activities, carried out in the interests of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, global Communism and national liberation movements; undermining the political, military, economic and ideological positions of capitalism; torpedoing its aggressive plans in order to create favourable conditions for the successful implementation of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union; and to ensure peace and social progress.”⁵

From these definitions, it follows that the concept of ‘active measures’ covers offensive undertakings aimed at disinform-

⁵ Vasili Mitrokhin, *KGB Lexicon: The Soviet Intelligence Officer’s Handbook*, London 2002, p. 13.

mation, deception, sabotage, destabilisation and espionage, arising from the assumptions and priorities of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, whose aim was to force its opponents to act in ways desired by Moscow. The term combines various techniques used in operations aimed at influencing the international environment of the Soviet Union and supporting the policy of the Kremlin. The essence of active measures is treated identically in both definitions: influencing the enemy in order to create favourable conditions to successfully implement the objectives of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.

A US State Department report from 1986 on anti-American misinformation and propaganda campaigns⁶ defines it as “secret or decoy operations carried out in support of Soviet foreign policy. Active measures should be distinguished from both espionage and counterintelligence, as well as from traditional diplomatic and informational activities. The objective of such measures is to influence the opinions and perceptions of governments or public opinion in order to obtain a specific reaction.” According to the State Department, the essence of active measures was a game of appearances: disinformation and falsification, front organisations, and the manipulation of the media. These activities often include secret operations, although not always.

The range of terms covered by the concept of ‘active measures’ varies among different researchers into the KGB. Some include physical actions, such as sabotage or assassinations carried out abroad (such as those of Yevhen Konovalts in 1938, Lev Trotsky in 1940, Stepan Bandera in 1959, Hafizullah Amin in 1979, and many others), and perceive their continuation in the more recent murders of Aleksandr Litvinenko, Akhmad Maskhadov and others. Nevertheless, the majority emphasise the use of applied techniques: disinformation and fakes produced in order to discredit

⁶ Active Measures: A Report on the Substance and Process of Anti-U.S. Disinformation and Propaganda Campaigns, August 1986, Washington, p. 1.

individual politicians, governments and organisations; the creation of front organisations, i.e. fictional organisations presented as non-government structures which are politically uninvolved; political provocations carried out by spies who conceal their connections with the KGB, as well as by ‘useful idiots’, i.e. persons unaware of such connections. Similar mechanisms were also listed in a report by the FBI from 1987 entitled ‘Active measures in the USA in the years 1986-7’⁷, in which unwitting ‘agents’ (‘fakes’, as they were described), i.e. persons unaware of the influence being exerted on them, were distinguished from persons recruited by methods of espionage, who were aware that they were operating in the interests of the enemy, and thus causing harm to their own country.

Another key element of ‘active measures’, sabotage, most often used with the adjective ‘ideological’ (Ru. *ideologicheskaya diversiya*), has both a wider and narrower range of meanings. It is often equated with ‘active measures’. In accordance with the general definition, it includes projects intended to destabilise the political authorities and to lower the morale of society and the armed forces in a manner intended to bring about a crisis; and then, to changes in the domestic and foreign policy of the state concerned. Its indirect methods include inspiring, creating and directing the activities of both secret and public organisations within the given country, and diplomatic, informational, agitation-propaganda, psychological, blackmail and corruption actions. Direct forms of subversion, in turn, include acts of terrorism and sabotage carried out by KGB-trained militias (who are presented as spontaneous resistance groups), assassinations (i.e. the liquidation of social and political activists), and also (in the case of anti-Communist revolutions) armed interventions, such as Operation ‘Whirlwind’ in Hungary in 1956, ‘Danube’ in Prague in 1968, and the installation of Babrak Karmal and the intervention in Afghanistan in 1979.

⁷ For the Russian version of the document, see <http://okpz.freesevers.com/mashkov/activities/activities.html>

This kind of activity has been subject to various spheres of state and social activity, such as religion, the dominant ideology, politics, economics, ethical systems, culture and science. Their scale has been demonstrated, among others, by the impressive list of organisations drawn up by the French researcher Thierry Wolton⁸ which the Kremlin has considered as extensions of the KGB, including groups such as the World Council of Peace (which includes 135 national organisations), the World Federation of Trade Unions (90), the Organisation of Solidarity of Peoples of Asia and Africa (91), the World Federation of Democratic Youth (210), the International Union of Students (118), the International Association of Journalists (114), the International Democratic Federation of Women (129), the Christian Peace Federation (86), the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (64), the World Federation of Science (33), and others. These groups acted in the interests of Moscow and were financially supported by it. The World Council of Peace enjoyed Moscow's special favour: as revealed in the 1990s, 90% of its funding came from the Soviet Union and the so-called socialist bloc.

Regardless of the offensive actions outlined above, extraordinary precautions were taken to avoid the West exerting any influence on the citizens of the Soviet Union. As a result, the rules of Moscow's game resembled a one-way street: Soviet propaganda and misinformation, for example, were presented as fully legitimate aspects of the free flow of information and interpersonal contacts, while the West's attempts to oppose this informational sabotage were interpreted as interference in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union and as the illegal practices of 'agents of imperialism'.

2. The institutional frameworks

The Soviet Union's special services employed active measures from the time that state came into being: the Kremlin intended them

⁸ Thierry Wolton, *Le KGB en France*, Paris 1986.

to accelerate the victory of Communism over capitalism. They applied different structures, including civilian bodies, working closely under the direction of the ideological and international divisions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The first so-called bureau of sabotage, misinformation and special propaganda (Ru. *dezinfobiuro / dezbiuro*) was set up in 1923 by Józef Unszlicht within the framework of the OGPU (successor to the CheKa)⁹. In the Ministry of Public Security, extreme sabotage (terror) and soft ideological sabotage abroad were dealt with by the separate Bureau No. 1, whose head was Pavel Sudoplatov (internal subversion on the territory of the Soviet Union was dealt with by Bureau No. 2 of the MPS).

The creation in January 1959 of another, separate structure, Department D (the letter standing for *deza*, disinformation, in Russian operational jargon), as part of the 1st Main Directorate (KGB intelligence), signified a new approach to this kind of work. It should be assumed that a similar structure was also created within military intelligence (the GRU); as is apparent from the disclosed facts, the structures of the Main Political Directorate contained a 7th Directorate (for special propaganda) until 1991¹⁰. Department D was created on the basis of the disbanded Information Committee at the Foreign Ministry of the Soviet Union, which employed officers from both civilian and military intelligence. The new structure was created at the initiative of Ivan Agayants, who was appointed its head. The Foreign Intelligence Service characterises him on its website as an outstanding intelligence employee who worked as a resident agent in France and Iran¹¹.

⁹ More on this subject in Yevgeny Gorbunov, a historian of the Russian special services; he sets this initiative in the context of the Soviet authorities' acumen in glorifying the intelligence service as a factor of strategic stability. See Евгений Горбунов, Фактор-стабильности - стратегическая дезинформация, <http://ricolor.org/history/rsv/good/2/>

¹⁰ http://old.redstar.ru/2011/06/29_06/5_01.html

¹¹ Before the war, Agayants specialised in sabotage, including the operation to bring the Spanish Communist Party activists Dolores Ibárruri and José Diaz to Moscow. During World War II he developed a spy ring against the Nazis

Department D initially had around 50 officers, who conducted disinformation campaigns both verbally and in active operations. The Department's first task was to discredit the Federal Republic of Germany as 'a country of neo-Nazism'. East German agents were sent to the Federal Republic of Germany to desecrate Jewish tombstones and paint anti-Semitic slogans on synagogues, stores and offices run by Jewish organisations, and to provoke the local population into taking similar actions. During the course of one year, as John Barron wrote¹², the West German authorities reported 833 anti-Semitic acts, a fact which was greeted with condemnation on the international stage and tarnished that country's image in the eyes of the public.

The success of the department meant that in 1963 it was transformed into Service A of the 1st Directorate of the KGB (A standing for *aktivka*, i.e. active measures), and was entrusted with inspirational and planning functions. Its heads, according to reports which have proved difficult to confirm, were: Ivan Agayants (1963-1967), Sergei Kondrashev (1967-?), Nikolai Kosov (?-1975), Vladimir Ivanov (1975-90), and Leonid Makarov (1991). Its last leader was in charge of the residency in Oslo, and then became head of intelligence for the KGB of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Service A was the crowning achievement of his brilliant career, hence the conclusion that its leadership was reserved for the elite of the KGB¹³. The names of the heads of Service A appear in the Soviet delegation at the arms reduction talks in Helsinki (1970), the negotiation of the final act of the CSCE (1974), and other events.

in Iran, researched the mechanisms of Fascist propaganda and conducted counter-propaganda actions. After the war he was again sent to the residency in Paris, was among other things co-founder of the Soviet-French Friendship Society, and at the same time (from 1946) an employee of the above-mentioned Information Committee and a lecturer at the 101st School (for KGB intelligence).

¹² Quoted in Volkoff, *Psychosocjotechnika...*, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

¹³ <http://shieldandword.mozohin.ru/kgb5491/structure/1GU/A.htm>

Foreign trips to coordinate activities, however, were the prerogative of the service's leadership: according to Oleg Kalugin, the rank-and-file officers saw it as a position which offered little hope for promotion, which they identified with a posting abroad. Many of the officers lacked operational experience abroad, and in their assessment it was based on conspiracy theories about 'the insidious machinations of the imperialists and Zionists controlled by the CIA'. Cell A in the KGB headquarters prepared guidelines and executive instructions for intelligence officers in its foreign residencies: in practice, operations of this kind were conducted by officers of the geographical departments of the 1st Directorate of the KGB. The residencies in Bonn and Washington were an exception, as they were reinforced by officers from Service A.

The institutionalisation of active measures demonstrated an attempt to link the various methods of influence into a single coordinated process, which was associated with plans for the broad ideological expansion of the USSR. On the one hand, this required the recruitment and running of agents of influence, secret financial operations, the build-up of bridgeheads of influence in opinion-forming media; and on the other, actions of sabotage and wrecking, the provocation of conflicts, support for opposition groups and resistance movements, and paramilitary and military actions. When methods of ideological persuasion proved ineffective, arguments of 'force' were resorted to. These ventures were organised by the intelligence services, which analysed the situation in the countries under attack, prepared operational plans, and nominated their contractors.

3. The special forces' role in the proxy Cold War

The above-mentioned activities were reflected in reports and documents from the KGB. In a report which Yuri Andropov sent on 6 May 1968 to the Secretary-General of the Communist Party

Leonid Brezhnev¹⁴, we read for example that “within the framework of operations in support of the USSR’s foreign policy, KGB intelligence carried out a series of actions intended to expose the aggressive plans of imperialist states, politically compromise the US administration and the most dangerous enemies of the Soviet State, and thwart acts of ideological sabotage being prepared in connection with the 50th anniversary of Soviet power” (*sic*). Also, in the Regulations for working with espionage agents and trusted colleagues¹⁵ (Ru. *doverennoye litso*, a trusted contact) of 4 July 1983, approved by the head of the KGB Victor Chebrikov, “active measures to combat the intelligence and sabotage activities of the enemy” are found at the start of the section of the document describing the tasks to be implemented with the help of the agency. Moreover, among these tasks we find “misinforming the enemy, combating the ideological subversion of anti-Soviet centres and foreign organisations, preventing anti-social and other undertakings, as well as negative processes among the exile community, which may arise under the influence of ideological sabotage by the enemy”. In the same document the category of ‘particularly valuable agents’ appears; these include “the staff of international organisations who have documentary information on the domestic and foreign policies of their government and their plans regarding the Soviet Union, government officials able to influence the course of their governments’ foreign policy, heads of military departments and general staffs, officers of the intelligence and counterintelligence authorities (especially cryptographers), scientists and experts, as well as leaders and authorities of foreign anti-Soviet organisations (exiles, Zionists, nationalists, clericals, etc.)”.

Until recently, the issue of ideological sabotage and disinformation-psychological operations was the sole focus of the research

¹⁴ Report on the KGB’s activities in the year 1967; see <http://www.famhist.ru/famhist/andropov/000394f1.htm>

¹⁵ ‘Приказ...’ see the website of the Lithuanian blogger www.aurmonas.home.mruni.eu/.../agenturinio-aporato-nuo.

carried out in the West. These were based on reports and media commentaries by famous deserters from the KGB (Yuri Bezmenov, known in the US as Tomas David Schuman; Oleg Kalugin, Vasili Mitrokhin, Oleg Gordievsky, Anatoly Golitsyn and others), who revealed the operating techniques of Soviet intelligence and its strategic objectives. According to Gordievsky, for example, Soviet intelligence focused on the following aspects:

1. the preparation of materials, including false documents, aimed above all at compromising US policy,
2. organising campaign groups to incite conflicts between allies in NATO and the EU, and
3. supporting pacifist movements and the potential for protest in the West.

In his book on the techniques of disinformation *New lies for old*, Golitsyn revealed the strategic objectives of this policy:

- to push the US out of Europe,
- to push the West out of Asia, Africa and South America, and
- to conceal the Soviet Union's own expansion, etc.

Active measures operations were of long duration. For example, the order by General William Westmoreland (commander-in-chief of the American forces in Vietnam and Chief of General Staff of the USA), concerning the provocation of attacks by leftist terrorist groups – and prepared in 1970 by Service A – was used for a whole decade; even in the 1980s, it served as an argument for the United States to support the Italian Red Brigades.

The facts confirming the participation of the special services in the Cold War were drawn mainly from KGB archive materials disclosed by deserters from those services; after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, these were supplemented by documents disclosed by the Baltic states¹⁶. A real goldmine of knowledge, straight from the original sources, came from the so-called Mitrokhin archive,

¹⁶ See for example www.kgbdocuments.eu/

which was made available in February 2014 by the Churchill Centre at Cambridge University. Some of the documents gathered therein are discussed in the books by Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, known under the titles of ‘The Mitrokhin Archive’ and ‘The Mitrokhin Archive II’. However, it is worth noting that the authors themselves have pointed out that a significant part of the work contains manipulated information and fabricated evidence about the effectiveness of the KGB. Its head’s annual reports were intended to be a kind of certificate of propaganda success, not only for the KGB, but for the policy of the Soviet authorities. Pandering to the Politburo also became a part of foreign intelligence activity: in 1977, resident agents devoted a great deal of effort to persuading local dignitaries to send the Soviet authorities congratulatory letters on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the October Revolution¹⁷.

After the dissolution of the KGB, this question was discussed in so-called ‘Chekist’ literature, i.e. memoirs by veterans of the intelligence and counterintelligence services. Many books with this background mythologised the services and their achievements. One striking example of this is the memoir by Vsevolod Radchenko, an officer of Department D, and later of the KGB’s Service A¹⁸. In chapter 5 of his book *Main profession – Intelligence agent*, dedicated to active measures, he admits that “the great majority of them are still covered by the top-secret clause”; however, he stresses that a key aspect of this work was “operations to expose the anti-Soviet activities of Western intelligence services, in the first instance, the CIA and the British Intelligence Service”. The author cites three examples of counter-propaganda operations: discrediting the Western-published ‘Penkovsky Papers’, written by a deserter from the GRU who was arrested and sentenced to

¹⁷ Christopher Andrew, Vasili Mitrokhin, published in Polish as *Archiwum Mitrochina II. KGB i świat* [The Mitrokhin Archive II. The KGB and the world], Poznań 2006, p. 52.

¹⁸ Всеволод Радченко, Главная профессия – разведка, <http://litbook.net/book/39527/glavnaya-professiya-razvedka/>

death in March 1962; the interventions by Service A connected with the publication in the West of *My secret war*, a book by Kim Philby, a British intelligence officer who escaped to Moscow in 1963; and the organisation of the propaganda backdrop to the trial of Francis G. Powers, a pilot shot down over Sverdlovsk in the 1960s while flying an American U-2 spy plane on an espionage mission over the Soviet Union.

The confessions in Radchenko's book, published in 2011, evoke reflections on the durability of Russian thought on the West as the main enemy, as well as of a specific social didactic: on the one hand, the author exposes how the Western intelligence services took advantage of the paid services of renegades, traitors, people with suspect reputations, and even schizophrenics, who compromised themselves and did not represent anyone or anything (like Penkovsky); yet on the other hand, by motivating potential agents to cooperate with the Russian services, Radchenko emphasises the beneficial results of this collaboration for peace and stability in the world, and indicates its positive aspects (such as the lifetime care of the 'great helper of the Land of the Soviets', Kim Philby). The author emphasises how helpful the special services were in supporting the policy of the Soviet government. Powers's show trial in Moscow was, as the author notes, the idea of Roman Rudenko, the prosecutor-general of the USSR (the trial took place in the Hall of Columns of the House of Unions, close to the Kremlin, to which Powers's family and a large number of Western journalists were invited; by the way, they were also shown an exhibition of the plane's remains which had been mounted in Gorky Park). The trial was intended to show the USA in a compromising light and discredit the American narrative (in the official communiqué, the White House was informed about the plane's disappearance by NASA). Prosecutor Rudenko was the main player in a plan prepared in the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, and carried out under the personal supervision of Nikita Khrushchev: he accused the USA of a duplicitous policy and of violating international airspace law. The role of the special services, in this

case, undoubtedly came down to the selection of the Western journalists invited, the security during their stay, and the media amplification of the trial abroad. The finishing touch, and at the same time a certificate of the continuity of the Soviet services' conspiratorial thinking about the West, is Radchenko's interpretation of Powers's death in a car accident: according to the author, this was the revenge of the CIA, which could not forgive its humiliation.

The subsidiarity of the special services relative to the Communist Party is demonstrated by an excellent analysis of archive materials from the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and the KGB by the Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky. A detailed description of one of the combined operations to neutralise the potential effects of the boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics, as well as their counterintelligence security, was summed up by the author in the significant statistics of the medals awarded for special merits in the field. According to a resolution by the Politburo of 14 August 1980, during a ceremony at the Kremlin, awards were given to five thousand workers and officials, 300 military personnel, 1500 employees of the Interior Ministry – and 850 to the KGB¹⁹. The boycott of the Olympics was a reaction to the invasion by the Soviet army of Afghanistan in 1979; 63 countries refused to attend the games in Moscow. The Kremlin's propaganda machine, however, said that “the idea of the boycott completely backfired (...) we have managed to fend off the anti-Soviet and anti-Olympic attacks and break the information blockade which has arisen around the Olympic Games.” A separate resolution by the Politburo stated that “the vast majority of the participants and guests of the Olympics, who had come to the Soviet Union with a negative attitude to socialist reality, had the opportunity to see how deceitful and untrue all the allegations of bourgeois propaganda made against us were”. On a side note, it should be noted that sport was

¹⁹ Vladimir Bukovsky, *Judgment in Moscow*, published in Polish as *Moskiewski proces*, Warsaw 1998, p. 476. The author has made the archives scanned by himself available on his website <http://bukovsky-archives.net/>

treated as an element of ideology and a tool of propaganda: sporting victories were intended to demonstrate the superiority of the socialist system over that of capitalism. The legacy of the political treatment of sport and the propaganda matches of the national teams is the pathology of doping, which remains prevalent today.

The operations of influence during the Cold War evolved depending on the temperature of Moscow's relations with the West. In times of tense relations, these were extremely aggressive and took on considerable dimensions: as examples, we might mention the response to Western criticism of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in the 1980s, which involved dynamic and extremely prominent actions intended to discredit the United States; or the campaign associated with the supposed invention by the Americans (in the course of research on bacteriological weapons) of HIV, ostensibly in order to eliminate African-Americans; or the trade in 'spare-part children', i.e. the kidnapping by Americans of children from third-world countries and their murder in order to retrieve organs for transplants. During periods of 'thaws', the stress in the active operations was transferred to agitation/propaganda actions (the organisation of marches for peace and disarmament conferences; proposals for cooperation in the fight against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, terrorism, the drugs trade and other problems that disturbed the West). The use of active measures was not halted after Mikhail Gorbachev's rise to power and the announcement of his *perestroika* and 'new thinking', when the idea of cooperation between the KGB and the CIA was revived (Yuri Andropov had been the first to put forward such an initiative), and talks were initiated on disarmament and the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons and chemical weapons, as well as on exchanging information on nuclear weapons tests. These discussions were presented in propaganda as the result of "the Soviet Union's struggle over many years for a peaceful coexistence", "cease-fires", "the demilitarisation of space", etc.; however, the 'peace' protests organised by KGB lost the previous momentum which had, for example, been displayed by the protests against

American military involvement in the Vietnam war (1965-73) stigmatising American militarism ('American death squads') on the international stage. An important condition of this change was the progressive erosion of Communist ideology and the exhaustion of the planned economy model.

To sum up, it must be stated that the secret services were just one of the state's many policy instruments, but nevertheless a key instrument. The employees of the intelligence service carried out the covert part of the exertion of influence. It suffices to mention the dual roles of individuals such as the KGB intelligence officer Vladimir Putin, who at the end of the existence of the Soviet Union was the director of the German-Soviet House of Friendship in Dresden: or the subsequent head of the Foreign Intelligence Service Yevgeny Primakov. According to common opinion, when Primakov was a full-time correspondent for *Pravda*, he was also the link between Soviet intelligence, the Kurdish militias and the Palestinian terrorists of al-Fatah in the Middle East. As a Professor at IMEMO (today the Primakov Institute of Global Economy and International Relations) and an expert of the party bigwigs, he was responsible for providing military and political support to dictatorships in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

As a key part of the executive resources of the activities referred to as active measures, the special services carried out functions which were informative (analysis of the situation), organisational, security-related, monitoring, and also conceptual and inspirational. They used their channels to build a network of agents who exerted influence and financed actions in support of the Kremlin's policies. To implement these plans, agents were placed in positions in the opinion-making media, international organisations, etc. By generating false documents, by activating the internal opposition in the West and creating political and social crises there, as well as by causing events which were desirable from the point of view of the Kremlin, they worked under its supervision and control.

These activities served the socio-technical self-definition of the USSR: the apparatus of repression in the totalitarian strategy of the Soviet state in its strategy of ideological warfare became ‘the force of progress’, ‘the Chekist army in the revolutionary war,’ and ‘the winner in the war of the intelligence services’. The mythologisation of the special services’ possibilities and unlimited potential, as well as their successes, accorded with the interests of the Kremlin as a kind of pressure it could put on foreign public opinion, and served as a way to mobilise Soviet society and strengthen its belief in the effectiveness of the policy of the Soviet Communist Party.

II. CHANGES IN THE APPLICATION OF 'ACTIVE MEASURES' AFTER THE COLD WAR

1. Old methods in new realities

Activities employing active measures did not cease in the 1990s either, after the collapse of the USSR, the dissolution of the KGB and the creation of a separate Foreign Intelligence Service (FIS: Rus. *Sluzhba vneshney razvedki*). This was confirmed by the intelligence colonel Sergei Tretiakov, who went over to the Americans in 2002; according to his account, Service A was transformed into the MS unit (Ru. *meropriyatiya sodeystviya*, means for facilitation/assistance); officially the FBS reported that the unit had been liquidated (which the Americans had requested anyway)²⁰. As a sidenote it should be added that, according to Irina Borogan and Andrei Soldatov²¹, a parallel structure had been created in the FSB in 1999. It received the name of the Directorate for Support Programmes, and Aleksandr Zdanovich, the former head of the FSB's Centre for Social Contacts, became its first head.

The continuity of both the institutional framework and the 'active' methods is demonstrated by the use of arguments and propaganda slogans familiar from the 1990s: as during the Cold War, it is ceaselessly argued that Russia is democratising and reforming, and references are also made to the belief, popular in the West, in factional battles between 'doves' and 'hawks'. Any attempts to criticise the government of the Russian Federation, for example the question of the brutal Chechen wars (which are described in the context of the fight against international terrorism), are interpreted as 'unacceptable attempts to interfere in

²⁰ Pete Earley, *Comrade J: The Untold Secrets of Russia's Master Spy in America After the End of the Cold War* (2008), published in Polish as *Towarzysz J. Tajemnice szefa rosyjskiej siatki szpiegowskiej w Stanach Zjednoczonych po zimnej wojnie*, Poznań 2008, pp. 184-5.

²¹ Andrei Soldatov, Irina Borogan, *KGB/FSB. Władcy Rosji [KGB/FSB. The rulers of Russia]*, Warsaw 2015, p. 137.

Russia's internal affairs' and a return to the practices of the Cold War. Right up to today, for example, the Russians argue that 'cultural transformations have led to a rise in cases of AIDS, which is an unfailing source of profits for American pharmaceuticals', and 'since the colour revolutions in the countries of the Maghreb, statistics have shown an unprecedented rise in income for the US from the arms trade'.²²

The security services dedicated some of their activity to fighting for their return to their former position as a pillar of government, by building up Russian society's need for a super-power state and a strong leader. They did so by applying tried and tested means, contrasting the weakness of the state and the chaos of the time with their own offer of strength and order. By exploiting the moods of a society which was suffering as a result of the process of privatisation, the years of transformation were presented as the years of the 'Yeltsin-suffering' (i.e. chaos, confusion), of '*demokratura*' (democracy+dictatorship) and '*dermokratia*' ('crapocracy'). At a symbolic level, this also found expression in the renewal of the Chekist ideology²³. The beginning of this process was indicated by Boris Yeltsin's establishment in 1995 of a national Day of the Security Services' Employees (this holiday fell on 20 December, the day of the CheKa's creation; thus in the public space it immediately acquired the name of 'Chekist's Day'). In this way Chekism became isolated from Communist ideology, the failure of which was indicated, for example, by the removal of the statue of Feliks Dzerzhinsky in 1991. Its The renewal of Chekist ideology took place after only four years: the Chekists, who had previously stood in defence of Communism, and later participated in the transformation of

²² See Константин Черемных, Маринэ Восканян, ред. А.Б. Кобякова, Анонимная война. «Новый 1968 год»: мировоззренческое содержание и механизмы революций 2.0 (доклад Изборскому клубу), <http://www.dynacon.ru/content/articles/1468/>

²³ For more on this topic see Julie Fedor, *Russia and the cult of state security: The Chekist tradition from Lenin to Putin*, Routledge 2011 (Russian publication 2012).

Russia, became above all the guarantors of Russia's geopolitical interests and the state's security in official rhetoric. The legislation adopted in 1995, particularly the law on operational-investigative activities, like the law on federal security organs, indicated a return to traditional priorities in Russia's security policy, as did the transformation of the Federal Counterintelligence Service into the Federal Security Service in the same year²⁴.

One effect of this activity by the Russian security services was the increase in the political importance of the *siloviki*, which was associated with their mass influx into politics, as well as their promotion of Putin and the KGB people who remain at the helm of power in Russia to this day. This approach fell on fertile soil: regardless of how they were presented in propaganda – as 'people with hot hearts, cold minds and clean hands', 'Orthodox Chekists', or 'a new nobility in the service of the interests of the state' – in the view of the Russian public, the security officers are the embodiments of 'order' and 'the strength of the state', even if this order is maintained by the use of violence and the methods of a police state.

The new realities, in the first place the removal of the corset of rigid Communist ideology²⁵, as well as the rapid pace of social and

²⁴ It is worth emphasising at this point that the intelligence service of the former KGB relied on reorganisations. The First Directorate of the KGB initially adopted the name of the Central Intelligence Agency of the Soviet Union, and next that of the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation. Their leader (until 1996) was Yevgeny Primakov, later prime minister of Russia. After Vladimir Putin took power, the situation for the special services notably improved: the President freely granted and still grants new powers to the services, and provides them with a level of secrecy unparalleled in other countries (state secrecy covers the services' organisational structure, size and budget), as well as good financing and non-budget funding opportunities. The legal and organisational structures adopted in Russia in the 1990s ensure that the Russian system of special services is *de facto* deprived of any external supervision. It is hard to consider the President's supervision of them as being of any importance, as he directs all the institutions of force in Russia and has control over them.

²⁵ As Rafał Brzeski writes, "the Kremlin sponsors both left-wing and far-right groups, green environmental defenders of various kinds, sexual deviants,

economic transformations, have broadened the opportunities for the Russian security services, both within the country and abroad. Reporting directly to the President, the intelligence service has since its very beginning operated in an aura of legalism and purposefulness, which was guaranteed in the law (prepared by the FIS) on the Russian Federation's intelligence bodies adopted in August 1992. It stated that "full-time employees of the intelligence service may occupy positions in ministries, departments, enterprises and organisations without disclosing their ties with the intelligence bodies." Whereas during the KGB's time intelligence operatives had been embedded in foreign residencies under the guise of diplomatic placements and facilities recognised in the West (Aeroflot offices, sales representatives, offices of foreign correspondents), from this moment on they were able to work abroad under any political, economic or social cover available. In addition, the 25 million-strong Russian diaspora scattered around the CIS and the world was used to build up these spying links.

The Russian special services were also encouraged by the new technological realities. The turbulent development of the internet abolished the previous barriers to information and communication. It provided access to information in real time, allowing the special services to effect instant digital penetration into the targets of their actions. At the same time, the development of the so-called new media (traditional online media and social media) created opportunities for the rapid dissemination of crafted content (its dissemination throughout the world, its easy duplication, the deletion of objectionable content, and the imposition of their own interpretation). The internet provides anonymity and access to the target audience without any intermediaries. It provided a new toolbox, which means that today's problems with Russia's aggressive foreign policy are only an enhanced version of the old ones.

anti-globalisationists and all sorts of anti-system groups, and at the same time it introduces its trusted people into the world financial elite"; <http://niepoprawni.pl/blog/rafal-brzeski/agresywna-propaganda-kremla>

This commitment to tried and tested methods, including the durability of active measures, derives from Russian political and strategic culture. The fundamental elements of this culture include the legitimisation of the regime by transferring internal tensions within Russian society to external enemies; mythologising its own forces, the army and the special forces; the ‘fortress under siege’ syndrome; the primacy of psychological and ideological thinking over thinking in terms of political realism; and imposing an ideologised image of the world, and creating a confrontational approach to the international community.

A constant manifestation of this culture is the conduct of ideological-psychological proxy war against the alleged enemy, conducted by (non-military) surrogate measures by the proxy-entities. This is a permanent war, calculated to last a long time, which requires the constant renewal of the concepts and the mobilisation of its ‘soldiers’ on the various fronts, and for new generations of them to be trained.

2. The ‘Primakov doctrine’: a repackaged technology of geopolitical confrontation

After 1991, the role of the intelligence services in the creation of security and foreign policy clearly increased. This was largely thanks to Yevgeny Primakov. Back in the days of the KGB, as an experienced practitioner of active measures, he had already been a well-established figure in the intelligence services. He headed the list of candidates for members of the Politburo, and for many years he was a correspondent for *Pravda*; in the 1970s he was a representative of the group of so-called academic analysts (he was deputy director of IMEMO and the Institute of Oriental Studies, which did research for the KGB and the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party); at the same time, he was vice-chairman of the Soviet Peace Committee, and finally an adviser to Mikhail Gorbachev on foreign policy, and conducted many diplomatic

missions at his initiative. When he became director of the intelligence services, he had already acquired the image of a flexible bureaucrat, a supporter of cooperation with the West, and a self-proclaimed democrat who had broken with Communism and its confrontational orientation.

From the 1980s, Primakov pushed a concept of geopolitical realism, which later became known as the 'Primakov doctrine'. Formulated as an intelligence doctrine, it became the primary concept behind Russia's foreign policy in the 1990s. The head of the FIS was the first to define the vital interests of Russia as follows: its territorial integrity; close integration within the CIS; maintaining the state's defence capabilities, including the option of the nuclear deterrent; guaranteeing the conditions for Russia's inclusion into the global trade system; maintaining the strategic balance in the world; and maintaining a buffer zone in the immediate vicinity of the borders of the Russian Federation. In his vision, Russia was still a superpower, and it needed a strong intelligence service and a revitalised army to maintain this status²⁶.

At the core of this doctrine, on the one hand, lies the belief that the return of Russia as a superpower onto the arena global policy must be preceded by its modernisation, and on the other a realistic assessment of the state of the nation, and of its economic and social potential; the planned economy model had been exhausted, and Russian society was dominated by a syndrome of 'Soviet empire fatigue'. Because of this, Primakov mainly demonstrated pragmatism, convincing global public opinion that Russia had entered the path of rational thought. His doctrine was also formed by Russia's foreign and security policy during his time as minister of foreign affairs and prime minister (1996-9)²⁷. In the second

²⁶ For more on this topic, see e.g. his memoirs: Евгений Примаков, *Минное поле политики*, Moscow 2007, pp. 103-28.

²⁷ For example, in order to mobilise a broad anti-NATO front in both Russia and abroad, immediately after becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs he convened a meeting with the ambassadors of Russia in the CIS countries, in-

half of the 1990s, this politically calculated conception became entrenched, and acquired a clearly more anti-American tone. The Russian position was presented more assertively, insisting on the need for other countries to take the interests of Russia into account, as demonstrated by Moscow's campaign of resistance to NATO enlargement, Russia's attempts to realign Europe's security architecture through its mutual guarantees with NATO to the states created after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, as well as the reform of the OSCE; and not forgetting the 'Primakov turnaround' – at the news of NATO's intervention in former Yugoslavia, Primakov ordered the plane he was flying on to an official visit to the United States to turn back. Official policy was dominated by the 'Eurasian' strategy: Russia announced the construction of a strategic alliance between Moscow, Beijing and Delhi, plus possibly Tehran.

Primakov redefined the hierarchy of Russian intelligence's objectives and priorities. The main objective, the modernisation of Russia, defined the new intelligence priorities: scientific and technological intelligence (the so-called critical technologies) moved to the foreground, as did economic intelligence (due to the financial crisis, civilian intelligence also undertook an assessment of the options for arms sales, and considered the possibility of having loans granted by the Soviet Union returned to Russia; it also examined the economic outlook on the hydrocarbons market, and checked and verified what foreign contractors could offer, etc.). As Primakov wrote in his memoirs, the political intelligence initially focused on the 'newly opened US and Western European residencies in the CIS countries' as well as 'extremist and nationalist organisations in the West which fomented separatist sentiments within Russia and the CIS'. In reality, this referred to the sabotage of NATO's Partnership for Peace programme, which was

structuring them: "In our policy towards NATO we need the support of the CIS. The embassies are required to take care of this, and organise this support." (*Дипломатический Вестник*, no. 9/1996).

being devised at that time, and to the construction of a Russian security zone. Primakov saw another priority in strengthening the analytical component of the intelligence services. Analysts were given the task of shaping public opinion. At Primakov's request, in 1992 Boris Yeltsin created another analytical institute called the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies (RISI), which, unlike the intelligence analysts, was able to present the position of the Russian Federation in public.

In its public activities the FIS emphasised legalism, de-politicisation (de-Communistisation), de-KGB-isation and demonstrations of transparency. According to Primakov's declaration, the special services acted within the limits of the law, in accordance with the law on the intelligence services adopted in 1992, not by using 'uncivilised' methods such as the abduction of opponents or the use of psychotropic substances, or 'dirty tricks' against the Western democracies. It was stressed, however, that the de-ideologisation of the services did not mean they were departing from its deep traditions. This ostentatious transparency was served by the partial opening of the archives and the public reports prepared by the FIS (the 1992 report was dedicated to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, that of 1993 to the effects of potential NATO enlargement, and that of 1994 to the vital interests of Russia in the CIS). These were intended to represent specific offers by Russia to Washington; they emphasised the need to negotiate these issues with Russia, and at the same time provided prepared scenarios for diplomatic moves and information actions (for example, the FIS highlighted the risks associated with the possession of nuclear weapons by countries which were politically unstable, or riven by ethnic and social conflicts; it provided arguments against NATO enlargement; and suggested that it represented a common front for the CIS countries, etc.).

The implementation of the short-term objectives of Russian foreign policy required subtle, less aggressive methods of influencing the West; however, this did not apply to the policy concerning the

so-called 'near abroad'. For example, provocations and aggressive disinformation campaigns led the Georgian president Zviad Gamsakhurdia to flee Tbilisi in 1992 (he died under mysterious circumstances a year later). In 1993, the CIA officer Fred Woodruff, a security adviser to President Eduard Shevardnadze, was shot. Because the assassination coincided with an official visit to Moscow by the head of the CIA, James Woolsey, this was interpreted in the West as a move to curb the Americans' actions within the CIS. The Russian services continued to foment regional separatisms and conflicts. Their provocations began to make use of the Russian-speaking nationals of other member states, as was seen for example during the escalation of the Russian-Latvian conflict in 1998, related to Latvia's accession to NATO and the EU, as well as its new law on citizenship, which required citizens to undergo a Latvian language examination (Moscow demanded the zero option, i.e. the granting of citizenship to all Russian residents of the country). Latvia was accused of human rights violations, apartheid, racism and even fascism and ethnic cleansing. In order to internationalise the conflict, various 'dirty' methods were used: as recently as 1998 the graves of Soviet soldiers were desecrated, there were attacks on synagogues in Liepaja and Riga, and a bomb was planted in a rubbish bin in front of the Russian embassy in Riga. The Latvian authorities deemed these incidents to be Russian provocations, and the Latvian special service asked the FBI to help them investigate; the press in Latvia and abroad placed the blame on the Russian FSB. In addition, protests by Russian-speaking citizens were held in the centre of Riga, and Latvia lost an estimated US\$300 million due to the sanctions on food trade and fishing in the Baltic Sea imposed by Russia. Moscow also delayed the signing of agreements concerning the borders with Latvia and Estonia, as well as the ratification of a border agreement it had already signed with Lithuania, realising that this issue was a prerequisite for NATO membership. To sum up, they employed any means available.

Generally, due to the state of the nation and the reduction of foreign residencies, for the Russian secret services the

mid-1990s were mainly a period of activity within the CIS, and of domestic political and economic activity; in any case, this is where they were most clearly visible. The memory of the crisis in the KGB's loyalty to the authorities, of which the coup in August 1991 was a clear symptom, was still fresh. Lacking funding and instructions from the Central Committee, the *'Lumpenmilitariat'*, as the institutions of force (generally armed formations and special services) were described at the time, went into business - in the first instance, the business of force, which resulted in the flourishing of private protection services related to the new companies, as well as supervising the process of privatisation taking place at the time. On the one hand this resulted in expanded opportunities for the Russian services to act abroad; and on the other, in their criminalisation.

3. The rule of Vladimir Putin: the return of the state and ideology

The geopolitical 'Primakov doctrine' became linked to the Putinist concept of 'raising Russia from its knees'. The beginning of Putin's first term still passed under the banner of the modernisation of Russia, but in official statements and public discussions, new arguments appeared: 'the West had betrayed Russia', 'through NATO enlargement Russia has become the target of the United States and the Alliance', the United States has 'become a global policeman', 'NATO is an anti-Russian relic of the Cold War and the policy instrument of the United States in Europe', 'the old Cold War divisions have not disappeared, but have merely been transformed'. In official rhetoric, Russia's vital interests in the CIS appeared in the context of a Eurasian civilisational community which was separate from the West. The West became the antithesis of this community, as something which introduced global chaos and counteracted the assumed process of Eurasian integration. This rhetoric became especially radicalised after certain landmark events (such as the 'Orange Revolution' in Ukraine,

Putin's speech in Munich 2007, the war with Georgia in 2008, the announcement of the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union, and others). This assertive rhetoric indicated an ideological U-turn by the Kremlin.

Putin, who established the centralised state and the special services as a key element of his organisation, perceived at the same time the importance of the ideological 'glueing together' of the construction of power that had ruptured as a result of (among other things) his own past activity, when as a typical representative of the frustrated middle generation of the KGB in the 1990s he dealt intensively with the privatisation process in St. Petersburg²⁸. The new ideology takes today's realities into account. Today, for example, Russian analysts argue that all the modern digital and cyber-technology that are products of the American military mainly serve to implement the geopolitical interests of the United States. US foreign policy is mainly being carried out by the use of 'colour revolutions' and 'controlled chaos', i.e. the covert direction of political, economic and civilisational processes. As it predominates in the global information space, the United States is imposing its own understanding of the economy and state constitutions upon the world, destroying any values and ideals that deviate from the idea of the consumer society. They are proving that the global geopolitical game is a contest about the reach of influences, and only Russia has the potential to check the US.

After Vladimir Putin came to power, the methods referred to as 'active measures' had their systemic nature restored to them. They were included in the paradigm of the new generation of wars, cultural and civilisational wars, including 'the West's information war against Russia', which gave them a military aspect, while at the same time emphasising the role of the forces and special

²⁸ Prof. Włodzimierz Marciniak discusses this topic in his afterword to the Polish edition of the book by Yuri Felshtinsky and Vladimir Pribylovsky, *The Age of Assassins*, published in Polish as *Korporacja zabójców*, Warsaw 2008.

services. This new paradigm located Russia in the role of 'defender' of its own citizens and of those states which 'did not consent to the hegemony of the United States or to a unipolar world', that is, a defensive role, not that of an aggressor which initiated conflicts ('Russia does not threaten, Russia is threatened by the expansion of the West and NATO'). The propaganda of its own values, its alleged spiritual and cultural advantage, is presented as 'Russian soft power' ("Like all the states in the world, Russia has the right to the use of soft power in international relations")²⁹. The practice of 'soft power', however, inclines to its use as a technology for social and political control, the management of knowledge and perception of the world; in fact, it camouflages the use of deceitful actions³⁰. What is more, Russia's defence of its interests and the propaganda of its own values inevitably weakens the position of other countries and the disintegration of their societies, i.e. the destruction of foreign values.

The ideological void of the 1990s was quickly filled by new doctrines, political myths and ideologies. From the beginning these were formatted in a geopolitical matrix, imposing the view of a multi-polar world and emphasising the importance of the factors of space and

²⁹ The task of building Russian soft power, according to Yevgeny Kosachov, the former head of the state agency Rossotrudnichestvo, has become particularly topical "since the return of Crimea to the motherland": "we are not as lonely and isolated as our opponents endeavour to portray us. And we are certainly not defenceless against foreign soft power. We must continue, consistently and systematically, to unite those links of support for Russia abroad - scattered, partially elemental, partly still unknown to us - into real points of support - just as the Western countries do, unconcerned with the costs." (www.rs.gov.ru; this post appeared on 20 June 2014).

³⁰ For more on this topic see Michał Wojnowski, *Zarządzanie refleksyjne jako paradygmat operacji rosyjskich operacji informacyjno-psychologicznych w XXI w.* [Reflective Management as the operating paradigm of Russian information and psychological operations in the 21st century], *Przegląd Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego* [Review of Internal Security], no. 12/2015; *ibid.* *Koncepcja „wojny nowej generacji w ujęciu strategów Sztabu Generalnego Sił Zbrojnych FR* [The concept of 'a new generation of war' as understood by the strategists of the General Staff of the RF's Armed Forces], *Przegląd Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego* [Review of Internal Security], no. 13/2015.

power. As they interpret the global space, Russian political scientists focus on the need to re-organise it, thus justifying the Kremlin's foreign policy moves. And because the geopolitical worldview legitimises the government in Russia, the Kremlin stimulates its intellectual resources to search for a national idea which will hold the superpower state together. However, even today this has still not been developed, something which is undoubtedly made difficult by Russian realities, above all the ethnic and religious pluralism of Russian society. The geopolitical matrix has so far proved to be remarkably spacious, combining a variety of trends, concepts and technologies, such as the above-mentioned political concepts of geopolitical realism, Eurasianism, neo-Byzantism, isolationism, Occidentalism, neo-Slavophilia, 'the Russian world,' conservatism, Orthodox Chekism, neo-Stalinism, the limited sovereignty of Russia's immediate neighbours, and others. At the same time this is a neo-imperialist matrix, linking ideological constructs from the days of both the Soviet and the pre-Soviet empires. As a result, Russia does not have a single universalist ideology, although Russian conceptualists stress that the modern Russian ideology constitutes an offer for a world which does not consent to the hegemony of the United States. Many ideological constructs, their symbols and propaganda slogans have been drawn from the well of history and adapted to today's realities: however, for the most part they are turned towards the past, in which they differ strongly from Communist ideology, which faced a bright future.

According to Michał Wojnowski, "enormous influence on shaping the main lines of Russian geopolitical thought has above all been wielded by the attitude towards four great traditions of the Russian Empire, which are the impetus behind many [of the current] constitutional solutions, and also serve as important points of reference in the search for a new identity intended to replace Soviet nostalgia."³¹ In this context, the author lists the heritage of Kievan

³¹ Michał Wojnowski, „Neobizantyzm”: polityczna utopia czy nowa ideologia elit Federacji Rosyjskiej w XXI wieku? [Neo-Byzantism: a political utopia or the new

Rus, the legacy of the Byzantine Empire (which was a key concept both in Russia and in the Grand Duchy of Moscow), the reign of the Mongols and the reign of Peter I.

Russia's historical heritage has been reinterpreted in the light of these new concepts, which has at the same time made possible the most important reinterpretation of the relationship between the state and the church: the Orthodox Church has now become an ally of the State. Whereas in Soviet times, clergy of Communist ideological convictions were recruited and infiltrated as a hostile environment, at present the state and the religious authorities are a joint element of the Byzantine heritage. The special services are also included as an instrument of this power, as evidenced by the ideological construct of 'Orthodox Chekism'. The significant renewal of this symbolism (the shield and sword have become 'the sword of truth and the shield of faith') testifies to the skilful semiotic use of symbols which was one of the techniques of manipulation, like that of 'Chekism'; the Eastern Orthodox Church has now been given the role of legitimising, or even sacralising, the government in Russia. The conceptual convergence of the Soviet and pre-Soviet empires also has another value. It justifies the thesis that the new empire has, as it used to, the potential to develop – that is, the potential to reorganise the geopolitical space of the whole world. By imposing its own vision of the world, the new Russian ideology not only describes it; according to tradition it represents an instruction to act, to change the world.

One of the more recognisable of these systemic projects is the 'Russian world' (*russkiy mir*). At its roots lies the geopolitical concept of a separate civilisation. It refers to the Imperial concept of Byzantism, and of Moscow as the third Rome, as well as the concept of Eurasianism developed in the 1920s. The idea of a spiritual

ideology of the elite of the Russian Federation in the 21st century?], *Przegląd Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego* [Review of Internal Security], special edition. Warsaw 2013, p. 154.

Eastern Slavonic community was one of the ideological pillars of the Russian Empire and served the sacralisation of the empire and its power. The 'Rus'ian' spiritual (Orthodox) community was transformed into a state-political (Russian) community. By taking over Rus' as its own historical heritage, thanks to the pseudoscientific concept of the 'triune Rus'ian nation' (Belarusian-Ukrainian-Russian), Russia has come to inhibit the national and political emancipation of Belarus and Ukraine.

In recent years, to meet the needs of the broader-scale influence operations, the interpretations of the terms 'Russian world' and 'compatriots' have been extended. The 'Russian world', as we read on the website www.russkiymir.ru, "refers to our compatriots in the countries of the nearer and farther abroad, emigrants from Russia, their descendants, foreign nationals speaking Russian, students and teachers of the Russian language, and all those who are sincerely interested in Russia". In this definition, a 'countryman' comes to mean any person who identifies with the 'Russian world', regardless of their nationality and citizenship. If such a person asks for help from *Rosstrudnichestvo* or the Foundation for Support and Defence of the Rights of Compatriots Abroad, then they can count on getting it. It must be assumed that this is not a unilateral path: in this way, the diaspora becomes an ally of the intelligence service, acting as an important 'shelter' for it.

Russia has justified its interventions in Georgia, Crimea and the Donbas in terms of defending the 'Russian world' and 'the largest divided nation in the world'; it threatens the countries of the post-Soviet area with the potential to foment separatism in those regions in which Russian-speaking citizens are settled in a compact way, and so on. Military force has become one tool for 'protecting Russians abroad', a concept which was included in the Military Doctrine of 2010. The myth of the 'Russian world' has become an ideological platform for the reintegration of the territories of the post-Soviet area. More: the artificial creation of a civilisational community with Russia at its centre has also become the offer of

‘a global community of values’ which deviates from the consumer-society values of the ‘American world’, *Pax Americana*.

Historical myths have always played a huge role in the Russian vision of building its own position on the international stage. The myth of the ‘invincible Red Army’ has contributed to the construction of a ‘community of winners’, Russia and the CIS. Every day sees the use of aggressive campaigns ‘demystifying the falsification of Russian history’. Wide-ranging information campaigns are carefully prepared and run, at Putin’s decree, such as the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the October Revolution. These have a clear message: as Sergei Naryshkin, the head of the Foreign Intelligence Service, said during a meeting of the Russian Historical Society on 29 December 2016: “Russian historical memory is the target of destructive actions by foreign state structures and international organisations pursuing their geopolitical interests as part of their anti-Russian policy.”³² Historical film-clips often appear in President Putin’s political messages, as he constructs the political identity of modern Russia (for example, ‘the black ingratitude at liberation by the Red Army’, ‘the managerial effectiveness of Stalin’, or most recently ‘a Russia without borders’). One significant U-turn by Putin should be noted in this context: whereas at the beginning of his presidency he spoke of the disintegration of the Soviet Union as ‘the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century’, at a meeting of the National Assembly in 2013, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, he spoke about the two ‘national disasters’ of Russia in the 20th century (in 1917 and 1991), which had led to the breakdown of statehood and “the rupture of the cultural and spiritual code of the nation”.

³² The organisers predict that the campaign will be founded on the organisational and executive bases devised during the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of World War I, <http://rushistory.org/proekty/100-letie-revolutsii-1917-goda/s-e-naryshkin-yubilej-revolutsii-1917-goda-neobkhodim-dlya-isvlecheniya-urokov.html>

The systematic approach to this problem is evidenced by its constant presence in the work of the Security Council of the Russian Federation. During a meeting dedicated to this question in October 2016, the Council's experts once again listed the facts which are most often 'falsified' abroad:

1. the nationalities policy of the Russian Empire;
2. the nationalities policy of the Soviet Union;
3. the role of the Soviet Union in the victory over fascism;
4. the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact;
5. the Soviet Union's response to the crises in the GDR, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and other Eastern-bloc countries (which are interpreted in a contemporary light, as anti-Communist pogroms and colour revolutions organised by emissaries of the United States³³); and
6. the revolution of 1917.

As we should assume on the basis of the documentaries already shown by Russian state TV on the latter subject, the celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the revolution will focus around the civil war of the time (juxtaposing 'patriotic' and 'unpatriotic' attitudes), as well as the armed intervention by the West. These programmes are clearly linked to Soviet propaganda: victory in the civil war confirmed the superiority of the Communist ideology and established an inspiring cultural pattern. This pattern was renewed during the Second World War, which is known in Russia as the Great Patriotic War. In our time, the symbols of fascism and the Russian fight against it were used to discredit the Baltic States on the eve of their accession to NATO and the EU; latterly, the fight against 'Ukrainian fascism' has been used to justify Russia's actions in Ukraine.

These myths, repeatedly employed in television debates and as memes on social networks, have many uses. The constant use

³³ TV Rossiya, 29 October 2016; <http://kommersant.ru/doc/3131019>

of the image of the enemy and the cult of victory serve the political consolidation and militarisation of society, as they blur the boundaries between war and peace. The enemy, as identified in the geopolitical sense, has both a potential for confrontation which is hard to evaluate, and serves to legitimise the actions of the Russian government. The image of the enemy, of conspiracy, of intervention, of psychological warfare with Russia, has helped to overcome the crisis of the legitimacy of the Russian government in the 1990s. And today it is being constantly renewed, in order to extend this legitimacy.

Today the image of Russia in the world is associated above all with the 'stolen empire' and the country's failed modernisation. The Kremlin explains the failure of its policy by the 'aggression' and 'errors' of the West, blaming it for its own failures. The propaganda image of the state has thus been replaced by the image of its leader: strong and firm, the one who has raised Russia from its knees and who effectively defends its interests, who has set about 'the gathering of the Russian lands', who is the architect of 'a new community of victors', etc. This image of the President is continually perpetuated by analysts and the Russian media abroad. For example, the head of the Defence Research Centre of the Russian Institute of Strategic Research (RISI), Igor Nikolaychuk³⁴, has belittled the importance of factors such as the attractiveness of the country and the strength of its attraction: in his opinion, the image of the country is today being replaced by the image of the state's power. The problem is not only that the Russian model of development is unattractive, and thus its ability to win allies by 'soft' political methods is negligible. Russian 'controlled democracy' does not have the social safety valve of free elections: the same candidate is continually re-elected. This choice must then be justified by false ideological reasons. When the ideological factor fails, the factor of force is then demonstrated: in fact, this is the only tangible sign of real Russian power. In this sense, the 'victorious

³⁴ <http://riss.ru/smi/6696>

little war' in Georgia, the annexation of Crimea and the war in Syria have clearly demonstrated Russia's desire to strengthen active measures through the use of military operations.

Russian political myths, which have risen to the rank of a new ideology, are formatted in a geopolitical matrix, which emphasises the importance of the factor of space and the factor of power. This kind of concept is intended to provide a toolbox (of tools legitimising the Putin regime, neutralising the Westernisation of the surrounding countries and preventing integration with the West, weakening the enemy's position, etc.). These are negative concepts, which are based on the image of the enemy. They exploit a destructive potential, not a creative potential. Today, Russia is not imposing its own assumed values, but is rather destroying the values of others. It does so by manipulating content which is already present in political discourse, and choosing narratives that allow it to emphasise controversies and divisions, i.e. weakening the enemy. It has little to do with Western soft power: it should primarily be thought of as a technology of the geopolitical confrontation between Russia and the West.

4. The old fundamentals of organisation and innovation

From the beginning, the systemic project of the 'Russian world', which was originally addressed to the West as a flagship programme of Russia's 'soft power', was functional in nature. When extended to cover the post-Soviet states, in order to keep them within Russia's political and cultural orbit, it allows us to perceive several trends in how current operations supporting the Kremlin's foreign policy are implemented.

First, they represent the expression of the systemic, integrated activity of the state. The Kremlin uses all the tools available to it. The project is being carried out by many actors, both governmental (in this particular case, the *Russkiy Mir* foundation

established in 2007, and the *Rosstrudnichestvo* agency founded a year later³⁵), and the so-called non-governmental organisations (such as the Gorchakov Foundation, which aims to develop Russian public diplomacy), business (such as the Gazprom and Lukoil companies, or private oligarchs like Konstantin Malofeyev, who are instructed to implement individual programmes (such as grants and scholarships) or to finance them. Other important participants in the project include the Orthodox Church, the Russian army and the media. In brief, the system has subjected many actors to itself, all of whom are pursuing a common objective.

During the annexation of Crimea and the war in the Donbas, which was accompanied by a top-down psychological-ideological action entitled ‘Russian Spring’, a series of actors supporting the ‘Russian world’ were activated. The military and paramilitary activities were joined by Russian nationalists, controlled extremist organisations, Cossacks, as well as ordinary criminals such as the FSB reservist Igor Girkin, a.k.a. ‘Strelkov’, the former ‘defence minister of the Donetsk People’s Republic’, who took responsibility for the military operation of the separatists of the so-called Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics (as he put it, he “pulled the lever of war, by liquidating the Right Sector sabotage groups”); or Aleksandr Matyushin, the leader of the voluntary *Varyag*

³⁵ The *modus operandi* of the *Rosstrudnichestvo* agency and the *Russkiy Mir* foundation, which is headed by the political scientist, historian and political technologist Vyacheslav Nikonov (a grandson of Vyacheslav Molotov), is a clear and overt element of support for Russian policy. These organisations are oriented to work in the long term. Every year they organise a ‘Summit of the Russian World’; annual international conferences of teachers and professors of the Russian language; and also (in cooperation with diplomatic delegations) conferences, seminars and presentations in centres of Russian culture and science, as well as celebrations of anniversaries and concerts. In 2014, their activities focused on patriotic education, historical memory, IT training and initiating appeals for support for Russia after the annexation of Crimea; in 2015, celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II and the fight against Russophobia predominated. In 2016, the resolutions of the compatriots’ summits emphasised the need to counteract the falsification of history, attempts to diminish the decisive contribution of the Soviet Union in the victory over Nazism, and the profanation of monuments to war victims.

battalion in the Donbas, whose origins lie in the illegal ‘Russian Style’ extremist organisation and *BORN* (the Armed Organisation of Russian Nationalists). Fraudulent organisations such as the Rightist-Conservative Union, the Great Homeland party of Nikolai Starikov, the *Novorossiya* movement, the Battle for the Donbass movement, the Eurasian Youth Union, etc., have organised support for Ukrainian separatists, while at the same time concealing the participation of Russian soldiers in the armed actions which to this day are being presented as a ‘Ukrainian civil war’. Several movements under the Anti-Maidan banner have arisen, including those run by the nationalists Starikov and Aleksandr Zaldostanov (a.k.a. the ‘Surgeon’), the leader of the biker club called the Night Wolves. This organisational boom continues today, as evidenced by the new International Foundation for a Donbass without Weapons, at the head of which stood Nikolai Leshchenko, a pro-Russian politician from the Ukrainian Party of Regions, who now lives in Moscow.

Secondly, the special services are present at all levels of this kind of project: conceptual, organisational and developmental. Officially, in the institutional sense, the ‘Russian world’ project was (and still is) being worked on by the Russian Institute of Strategic Research (RISI) and the Institute of CIS States, also known as the Institute of Diaspora and integration. Until 2008 the RISI was the official think-tank of Russia’s intelligence service; at present it operates within the structures of the Presidential Administration. For many years it was headed by the intelligence analyst Leonid Reshetnikov; it is currently run by the former head of the FIS Mikhail Fradkov.

Both these centres represent what is known as ‘information analytics’, inspired by the Russian special services, which gave birth to the need for a convergence between conceptual and executive action, and also to expand the executive resources. Sometimes it takes on a conspicuously public form, as in the case of the former GRU analysts who initiated a project entitled ‘Academy for

Development Management. The Institute of Heaven-Politics (Ru. *Institut Nebopolitiki*). Its co-author Andrei Kozyrev (not to be confused with the first head of the Russian foreign ministry) has listed the ‘mental unblocking’ of citizens, i.e. unlocking their ability to distinguish truth from lies, the national core from foreign accretions, etc. and the analytic build-up of confidence in the authorities (to achieve a situation in which the citizens do not reject the authorities’ initiatives) among the functions of such analysis. Kozyrev has also devised the concept of ‘analytical security’; in his thinking, the analytical security parameters of Russia include: analytical self-sufficiency, support for the nation’s geopolitical project (analysis in terms of project and world-outlook), analytical warfare (analytical misinformation), analytic defence (the identification and prevention of analytical sabotage), and the reproducibility and development of analytical resources (assets).

The longest-running entity in this segment of policy support is the Russian Academy of Sciences, established by a decree of Boris Yeltsin in 1995, which was co-created by a group of former analysts from the special services and the Defence Ministry. At its inspiration, a project entitled ‘The Academy of Informational Self-Defence’ was created in 2008. It issues a quarterly periodical entitled *Informatsionnyje Voyny* (Information Wars)³⁶, which is simultaneously an educational project, a platform for popularising discussions on Russia’s security, and an intellectual base for educating a new generation of analysts. Its authors describe Western achievements in military science, and also draw upon Soviet theories from the Cold War. At the heart of their interest lies the perfection of techniques of psychological influence. The authors include an increasing number of students and doctoral candidates. This kind of training, for a new generation of psychological warfare with the West, is an

³⁶ www.iwars.su; more see Jolanta Darczewska, Russia’s armed forces on the information war front. Strategic documents, Centre for Eastern Studies, *OSW Studies*, 27 June 2016, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-studies/2016-06-27/russias-armed-forces-information-war-front-strategic-documents>

extension of the state's training programmes: in accordance with the guidelines from the Security Council of the Russian Federation³⁷, the subjects of 'geopolitics', 'information war' and 'disinformation and propaganda' have now taken permanent places in the military and civilian educational curricula.

Third, 'active measures' are still being implemented through front organisations, which today imitate the so-called third sector, i.e. non-governmental organisations. In the West, non-governmental organisations are formed at private initiative and work in the interests of society. Russian so-called NGOs, as represented by various clubs, associations and foundations, work in the interest of the state and are created by the state. The *Russkiy Mir* Foundation was set up at the decree of the President, as was the Gorchakov Foundation and the Fatherland's History Foundation. These are state NGOs, or so-called GONGOs (government-organised non-governmental organisations). These have a public-private financial background, thanks to which they can afford to undertake an extensive range of operations. The Russian associations are most often organisations of the *nomenklatura*, which have significant institutional potential.

The GONGO sector is constantly being expanded. Many older organisations have been reactivated, such as the Russian Historical Society, currently headed by the current chief of the intelligence service, Sergei Naryshkin; the Russian Geographical Society, chaired by the minister of defence, General Sergei Shoigu; and the Imperial Orthodox Palestinian Society under General Sergei Stepashin, who held a variety of prominent positions in the security sector, including as head of the Federal Counterintelligence Service, the predecessor of the FSB. (This group includes the Society for the Development of Christianity in the East, which for example organises humanitarian aid for Syria, rebuilds churches destroyed by the so-called Islamic State, etc.).

³⁷ <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/security/information/>

Examples of representatives of Russia's so-called third sector are numerous to say the least; their names include the Strategic Culture Foundation, the Association of Orthodox Experts, the Katehon Club, the Izborski Club, also known under the name of the Institute of Dynamic Conservatism, the 'Public Diplomacy' Foundation to Support Civil Initiatives, the CIS-EMO International Monitoring Organisation, and many others, including those created abroad, such as the Institute of Democracy in Washington or the Institute for Dialogue of Civilisations in Berlin. They serve the Russian and foreign media as opinion leaders. They also arrange agitation-propaganda events (such as conferences, marches, protest actions, concerts). On the one hand, they are ideological platforms in the fight with the West and 'Atlantism', and on the other, they serve to build up networks of contacts in the West.

Fourth, the Russian media abroad do not only work to create a favourable media framework for Russian policy or to disseminate misinformation: they also build up the bridgeheads of Russian influence on the West, and organise and expand the circle of 'understanders of Russia.' As part of Russia's global mission, the media broadcasting Russia's message to the rest of the world have been transformed: the end of 2013 saw the establishment of the Russia Today International Agency (*Rossiya Segodnya*), which merged the TV station RT (Russia Today), the radio station *Golos Rossii* and the RIA Novosti press agency. In November 2014, the director-general of this state company, Dmitry Kiselyov, unveiled another multimedia project, Sputnik, which integrates and coordinates from Moscow the work of the foreign radio stations which had previously operated under the brand name of *Golos Rossii*. This message, broadcast in 30 languages, is multiplied exponentially by internet portals, the news agency, analogue and digital broadcasting and mobile applications. On the model of RT, the radio propaganda message is tailored to local conditions; they increasingly use the services of local journalists and opinion leaders. The task of the new company

was explained by Igor Nikolaychuk, the analyst for RISI quoted above³⁸: it is to achieve the maximum extension of the viewing and listening audience, as well as to get local leaders and authorities involved in co-operation, as “Russophiles are everywhere, you only need to organise them.”

Fifth, the new media and the so-called non-governmental sector, like the think tanks, are being used to cross-link the Russian message. Networking technologies are understood widely and involve both real and virtual informational spaces. Russian network structures are organised from the top, and directed, controlled and adjusted from the top, which ensures the hermetic nature of the system. They are strictly centralised, and act in accordance with the principles of ‘network collectivism’, within the framework of a common ideological matrix, in accordance with the instructions of the executive. For this reason, the decentralisation of activities and the horizontality of networks in the West present a serious research problem for Russian experts: the nature of the Russian system only permits a principle of strict hierarchy and action in accordance with its own cultural code, in its confrontation with the ‘foreign’ cultural code. The Russian networks co-create the above-mentioned foundations, associations, controlled social movements and youth organisations. These represent so-called nodes in the network.

In contrast to the role of paid bloggers and trolls in spreading misinformation in the comments sections of the websites of traditional media and on social networks (the ‘troll factories’ were detected thanks to the trolls themselves; that is, the human factor was involved), it is difficult to detect the link between them and their control centres. Building this kind of network is one area of the work of the abovementioned informational analytics. As explained by the FSB Colonel Yuri Kurnosov, the originator of the

³⁸ <http://riss.ru/smi/6696>

‘Russian School of Analysis’ project³⁹, it is based on “the implementation of new technologies of collective analytical work (...), which is intended to guarantee the following: Russia’s takeover of the historical perspective of the transition to a new geopolitical situation; the management of hierarchized social systems, including the management of the mechanisms of their self-organisation, as well as the implementation of special projects”.

The Russian networks make good use of modern communication technologies, which have also created new opportunities in monitoring the situation in target countries, as well as in broadening the channels of deceptive impact on the audience.

Sixthly, the operations’ military component has been strengthened. This is linked to the important role of the factor of force in the Kremlin’s foreign policy. Over the centuries this was invariably regarded as a marker of Russia’s position as a global power, an instrument of deterrence, for imposing political pressure and building spheres of influence. Today it has become an argument justifying Russia’s *raison d’état* as a superpower. This is due in part to the limitations of the ideological factor, which is perceived abroad as artificial and inappropriate to Russia’s unattractive development model. The factor of force is, in fact, the only tangible manifestation of Russia’s great-power status. In this sense, the ‘victorious little war’ in Georgia in 2008, the annexation of Crimea and the war in the Donbas, as well as the Russian action in Syria, clearly testify to the desire to support the use of active measures by military means.

Seventh, the modern use of active measures is characterised by their regionalisation. This allows the regional and cultural specificities of the target area to be taken into account, and helps

³⁹ Kurnosov presented the founding of this project in his books *Аналитика как интеллектуальное оружие*, Moscow 2012; *Алгебра аналитики. Секреты мастерства в аналитической работе*, Moscow 2015 and others.

to reduce the mental and cultural distance between the aggressor and the target of his actions. The effectiveness of the operation of influence depends on analyses of the balance of power and the political situation, but also of the political culture and the status of popular demands. These analyses form the basis of the social engineering techniques used by the Russian special services to set the elites and the public of the target country against each other. Such research is supported by the Kremlin: it is no coincidence that in 2011 the Kaliningrad Polish Research Centre received a presidential grant for the study of Polish elites⁴⁰. Research in this direction is being carried out by Russian think tanks.

Eighth, in the activities of the Russian special services we observe a departure from the principle of the total camouflage of their participation in the implementation of the projects. This applies above all to the wide range of their activities in the open information space. Leaving traces of, or even suggesting Russian inspiration, confirms the ubiquity of the Russian special services in the mind of the target audience. By considering these actions as an important tool in the arsenal of active measures, in particular with regard to their role in influencing the outside world through offensive mechanisms of misinformation and '*maskirovka*' (distractions from the attacker's real activities and their purposes), it is difficult to call them 'secret' methods which would be difficult or impossible to identify.

⁴⁰ <http://www.ruvek.ru/?module=articlesp&action=view&id=5856>

III. THE RUSSIAN 'ACTIVE' THREAT: TODAY'S CHALLENGES

1. The role of the special services and their support operations in the Russian doctrine

The new conception of the role of the so-called 'force sector' and its support activities was crystallised during work on the Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation and the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation from the year 2000. These works were based on geopolitical philosophical and cultural grounds. Both in these doctrines and the later Russian strategic documents which were based on this approach⁴¹, these ideas found expression primarily in redefining the concept of threats to Russia. These are defined as attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of the Russian Federation, to seize its assets, to bring about its weakening, destabilisation, the disintegration of its territory, its cultural degradation, and to limit its sovereignty. Whereas in the 1990s the exploitation of Russia's raw material resources was emphasised, currently the civilisational and spiritual threat is in the foreground: the marginalisation of national culture by the American substitute for culture, demolishing the institutions of the family, faith, and the spiritual essence of the 'Russian man' (*russkiy chelovek*). Russian strategists argue that in fighting globalisation, Russia is also fighting with anarchism in the world, i.e. the negation of all kinds of hierarchy, whereas it defends the sovereignty of the state and of international law, examples of which are supposed to be its positions regarding Kosovo or Syria.

⁴¹ For more see Jolanta Darczewska, The devil is in the details. Information warfare in the light of Russia's military doctrine, Centre for Eastern Studies 19 May 2015, *OSW Point of View*, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/point-view/2015-05-19/devil-details-information-warfare-light-russias-military-doctrine>; and Russia's armed forces on the information war front, *op. cit.*

In successive editions of the publications mentioned above, the evaluation of the current global situation has been radicalised. This is confirmed by the latest edition of the Doctrine of Information Security from December 2016. As assessed in section 12: (...) “the range of application of the measures of information and psychological influence is constantly expanding, leading to the destabilisation of the political and social situation in different regions of the world, and violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states”; “discrimination against Russian mass media is increasing”, “in the Western media the amount of materials containing tendentious opinions of the state policy of the Russian Federation is increasing; the impact of the information society in Russia, primarily on young people, is intensifying”. ‘Civilisational’ security is a strategic objective in the field of defence (the defence department has the job of “neutralising the psychological-informational impact on society, in the first place on the young; and of preserving historical, spiritual and patriotic traditions” (item 21). The security sector has the same task, and in addition it has to take care to “raise the effectiveness of the State’s information security policies” (item 23).

In recent years, the doctrinal approach to the special services’ role has been coordinated. In the new editions of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation (from December 2014) and the Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation (from December 2016), emphasis is laid on the importance of ‘new, non-traditional methods of connecting military and non-military measures in the four-dimensional combat space’. Laying the emphasis on the information space and so-called non-military measures demonstrates the sanctioning in official doctrine of the position of the so-called civilian special services as entities existing in the logic of the complex of military operations, and which often play a key role in these operations⁴².

⁴² In this document we encounter a description of potential activities whose implementation would the special services to participate. These include: “the comprehensive use of the armed forces, as well as political, economic, informational and other non-military measures, implemented by a broad use

In the text of the Military Doctrine, adjustments have been made to the list of potential internal threats, the elimination of which is directly related to the implementation of the legal competences of the institutions of force⁴³. The catalogue of external threats highlights areas which had hitherto not been associated with military threat. These are: sabotage by foreign special services; and the impact of information on the population, including young people, in order to undermine the historical, spiritual and patriotic traditions of the defence of the homeland, or provoking social tensions.

While analysing Russia's doctrinal documents and taking their role as propaganda into account, and fitting them into the scheme of deterring the enemy, it is worth noting that the changes incorporated into them testify to the thinking of the Russian power elite. By highlighting their role in maintaining the stability created by the authoritarian political system, they present this stability as an objective which guarantees that Russia will retain its strong position in the world. The permanent adoption of the idea that the West is violating the vital interests of Russia puts the special services not only in the role of key defenders of those interests, but also of the defenders of society, which among other things justifies the services' activity aimed at isolating society from external influences.

of the potential of protest and of special operations forces; influencing the enemy throughout his territory, in the global information space, in airspace, land and sea; participation in the activities of irregular military formation and private armed companies; the use of indirect and asymmetric operational methods; the use of political forces and social movements funded and managed from outside”.

⁴³ The list of internal risks includes: activity aimed at the overthrow by force of the constitutional regime of the Russian Federation, the destabilisation of the domestic political and social situation in the country, the disruption of the operation of the organs of state power, important state and military properties and of information infrastructure; the activities of terrorist organisations and individuals aimed at violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation.

A variety of different terms are used in the strategy papers instead of the expression 'active measures'. The most distinctive was the term 'special means of influence'. This appeared in the 2000 Military Doctrine; in subsequent editions it was replaced by various concepts, both general and specific, such as 'non-military means', 'indirect action, such as wrecking, sabotage, organising irregular armed formations', 'informational operations', 'informational-psychological operations' or 'informational-technical operations'. In the most recent version of the Military Doctrine from December 2014, the term 'information technology' appeared, without any more detailed elaboration. It has also been included in the new edition of the Doctrine of Information Security, where it occurs in a variety of contexts: as a 'shield', with the aim of defending the sovereignty of the Russian Federation and the preservation of the cultural, historical and spiritual-ethical values of the multi-ethnic nation of the Russian Federation (section 8), and also as the 'sword', the West's information weapon used for political and military ends to intervene in the internal affairs of other states (paragraphs 15 and 16). This concept represents another example of Russia adapting Western terms for its own ideological and cultural system of concepts, the distinctiveness of which has been emphasised by many theoreticians. It also falls within the broader concept of 'political technology', which has gained immense popularity in Russian political science. In a nutshell, this means a complex of covert and overt methods and activities, mainly social engineering and psychological methods of manipulating human behaviour (although some political scientists do not rule out methods of direct coercion and physical violence), which serve the achievement of specific political objectives.

The laws of the special services' jurisdiction also include wording which refers to the planning, organisation and conduct of long-term operations whose aim is to actively support diplomatic, political, military and economic actions. This is demonstrated by extracts of the law on the foreign intelligence service of the Russian Federation from 1996 (and the reference to them in the law on

the Federal Security Service introduced in 2003), which specify the tasks of the intelligence institutions. The tasks of the FIS, GRU and FSB include:

- providing support in the implementation of undertakings by the state in the interest of ensuring the security of the Russian Federation (article 2, paragraph 2);
- ensuring an environment conducive to the successful implementation of the policy of the Russian Federation in the field of security (article 5, paragraph 2);
- supporting the economic development, scientific and technical progress of the country and the military-technical assurance of the security of the Russian Federation (article 5, paragraph 3)⁴⁴.

References to the term ‘active measures’ today appear mainly in the work of the special services’ historians, as well as in operational jargon as ‘*aktivka*’, ‘activists’ etc. For example, in a report for Rossiya-24 TV from 12 October 2016, the war correspondent Yevgeny Poddubny stated: “The bombing of a convoy of humanitarian and civilian targets in Aleppo is the responsibility of the anti-Assadist Jabhad an-Nusra [group], which is backed by the United States and its NATO allies, and avails itself of the potential of terrorists.” He illustrated his thesis with footage showing how children make themselves up with the use of ash and red paint, and “are shown in the West as victims of Russian war crimes”. According to the correspondent, “the terrorists were instructed by Western activists” (i.e. specialists in active measures). It must be assumed that in the propaganda-disinformation activities, this slang term has become a kind of cultural code understood by its organisers and actors⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ Federal law on the foreign intelligence service of 10 January 1996: <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/8732>

⁴⁵ For example, see the material entitled Активисты в США и Обаму обвинили Сороса на перевороте в Украине [Activists in the United States blamed Obama and Soros for the upheaval in Ukraine], http://tvzvezda.ru/news/vstrane_i_mire/content/201702240643-w01a.htm

2. The special services' place in the armed forces: the Russian situation

The doctrinal inclusion of the special services into the military security system has confirmed their position in the so-called sector of force. Since the beginning of 2013, the armed forces of the Russian Federation, which continuously train in rotation around successive regions of Russia, have been in a state of permanent combat readiness. The armed forces' activity has been accompanied by the involvement of the institutions of force, which support the actions of different types of troops. Moreover, the range of exercises related to the mobilisation of the civil administration and the verification of its ability to function during wartime has been increased. For obvious reasons, intelligence activity has also increased. Russia's opening of new fronts of conflict and rivalry, from the Arctic to the Mediterranean, leaves open the question of whether the **Foreign Intelligence Services** are able to maintain sufficient capacity to carry out a wide range of 'active projects'. The involvement of the **Federal Security Service** revealed in this area (e.g. in the Baltic States and the USA) demonstrates that this service, due to the enormity of the tasks before the Russian special services, has become the *de facto* intelligence-counterintelligence service. A separate issue is the development of the potential of **military intelligence**, whose activities in cyberspace are no longer associated only with the field of military security, as evidenced by the GRU's recent actions in the context of the presidential elections in the United States⁴⁶.

The problems outlined above confirm that the Russian special service system is incompatible with the existing service systems in the West. This is determined by the following factors:

⁴⁶ Actions in Response to Russian Malicious Cyber Activity and Harassment, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/12/29/fact-sheet-actions-response-russian-malicious-cyber-activity-and>

- the lack of a strict delimitation of competences, which means that the conventional classification of services (intelligence, counterintelligence and protecting the legal order) does not come into consideration: the Russian services have a wide range of powers, each of which is a multi-functional tool of the Kremlin's policy;
- a level of internalisation unparalleled in other countries: strict secrecy covers the organisational structure, the size and budget of the special services (their expenses are not only covered under the item of 'Security and protection of the legal order', but much of it is hidden in other sections of the budget, such as culture or higher education). The services can also be funded from outside the state budget;
- the functions they carry out: in addition to functions typical of special services (information, security, control, preventive, repressive), the Russian services additionally serve an integrational function (the security apparatus is a factor which links the administrative apparatus of the state), as well as a 'moderating' function (the generation and creation of phenomena and facts desirable from the point of view of Russia's authorities).

This has consequences for both the security sector and the current regime in Russia. The integrative function puts the sector's institutions in an autonomous position with regard to the other executive state bodies, and in a superior position with regard to the apparatus of the state administration (at regional and territorial levels). One consequence of this is that the organs of civil authority can take over the operational methods of the special services (the areas covered by state secrecy are expanded, discretionary authority expands). Upon orders from the Kremlin, the special services are becoming embroiled in political tasks and the ongoing political struggle. Moreover, informal relationships and non-transparent decision-making processes have become distinctive features of Putin's regime.

The informal legal order ensures the continuity of the special services' informal institutional commitments at the meeting point of politics, namely the businesses controlled by people from the state security sector and organised crime. This business enjoys the support of the state and the privilege of secrecy. This leads to the fossilisation of the defects in Russia's political and economic system, including corruption and abuse of power, which prevents the effective enforcement of the law in a way that is equal for all citizens. It is also a factor in the maintenance of criminalisation in the security sector. For this reason, the high position of the special services in the hierarchy of the political system should not be equated with their effectiveness or their declared mission of building the state as stressed in official rhetoric. The lack of effective control or supervision over them increases their temptation to commit abuses and illegal activities, as is confirmed by the corruption scandals in which they are involved, as well as the high level of illegal violence with assassinations alone. The system of the Russian special services is conflictual by its very nature, but actual conflicts are effectively muted. If these scandals were publicised and consistently dealt with, this would risk a compromise of the image of the Russian state and its security institutions.

All this means that describing the role of the special services in an integrated, broad complex of activities supporting government policy is not an easy task. Furthermore this topic covers offensive intelligence and counterintelligence activities which are not available for open sources, i.e. covert offensive operations, often of complicated and long-term operational combinations, subject to the implementation of an established political goal. They take into account the participation of special services officers operating outside Russia's borders, the use of espionage resources, the carrying out of inspirational activities often 'under a foreign flag', organising channels for financing initiatives in support of the foreign policy of Russia, and in extreme cases, the use of violence. A separate issue is the use of cyber technology to weaken critical

infrastructure in foreign countries. This type of activity, although it should be classified as a support project, has the features of pinpoint attacks as part of military action scenarios. On the other hand, activities in cyberspace associated with the theft of sensitive data are used for political purposes, for example to discredit a politician from a foreign country, which for example may result in the destabilisation of the domestic political scene.

For analysts working with open sources of information, another major challenge is the preliminary identification of areas at risk of 'active projects' by the Russian special services. Any analytical reflection on this topic requires:

- the contextualisation of events observed in the strategic and tactical objectives of the foreign policy of Russia;
- the identification (through aims and results) of areas of particular operational interest to the Russian special services, as well as of institutions and social groups which are potentially susceptible to influence from Russia;
- the continuous monitoring and analysis of political developments and economic and social processes in selected areas, a critical approach to the assessment of the causes of events observed, as well as the evaluation of conclusions supporting the thesis of the involvement of the Russian special services;
- careful interpretation of camouflaging and masking activities which hinder the correct identification of risks, including as a result of the construction by Russian special services of the image of a 'false agent', an expression of which is demonstrative transparency, drawing simple conclusions by highlighting the pro-Russian nature of certain people or organisations (the overt activity of the 'pro-Russian lobby', promoting conspiracy theories, importing particular importance to events of marginal significance);

- a broader interpretation of the cultural context of the special services' activities. Political culture – and its descendant, strategic culture – make it possible to interpret facts which are difficult to explain on the basis of political pragmatism. In such cases, it may prove helpful to draw upon the historical experiences of the Russian special services, including in the field of ongoing support projects.

3. Areas affected by Russian actions

By recognising Russia's declared foreign policy goals as a starting point, which can be helpful in identifying areas which are particularly vulnerable to the active projects of the Russian special services, the primary task is to identify the policy's strategic offensive targets in Europe⁴⁷. These are:

- the maintenance and possible expansion of the sphere of influence, by finding effective methods of influencing the political elites of European states to take actions in accordance with the interests of Russia;
- in the regional dimension: keeping control over Belarus, regaining control over Ukraine, and striving to destabilise the Baltic states, as part of weakening the eastern flank of NATO;
- the disintegration of the European Union by stoking disputes between the member states and limiting the influence of the

⁴⁷ This description of the aims of Russian foreign policy was based on publications by Marek Menkiszak from 2013 to 2017: *Russia and the West: What Went Wrong and Can We Do Better?*, https://transatlanticrelations.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Pages-from-The_Eastern_Question-4.pdf; *Russia's best enemy. Russian policy towards the United States in Putin's era*, Centre for Eastern Studies, *OSW Point of View*, 15 February 2017, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/point-view/2017-02-15/russias-best-enemy-russian-policy-towards-united-states-putins-era>; and *Greater Europe. Putin's vision of the European (dis)integration*, Centre for Eastern Studies, *OSW Studies*, 14 October 2013 <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-studies/2013-10-14/greater-europe-putins-vision-european-dis-integration>

United States in Europe, including by interfering with cooperation within NATO, and as a result, the revision of the current shape of European security (including limiting the efficiency of the defence policy in Central Europe);

- the deconstruction (by setting the partners against each other) of plans to build separate political, military and economic alliances that may make it harder for the achievement of the aims of Russian policy;
- stoking anti-American sentiment among the authorities, elites and societies of Europe, and the consistent building of a pro-Russian lobby, whose aim is to perpetuate in society the notion of having to accept Russia's 'reasonable requests', which in turn is intended to weaken any determination to oppose such actions.

Today, the support operations carried out by Russia's services are focused on creating crises in other countries. These cover a wide range of overt and covert activities carried out on the territories of foreign states, the strategic objective of which is the continual undermining of the public's trust in their authorities, the destabilisation of the situation on part of or all of the territory of a foreign state, as well as discrediting its authorities on the international stage. This activity is intended to reduce society's desire to resist political, economic and military pressure from Russia. These offensive political measures being carried out by the Russian special services are treated as a 'surrogate war', and these projects are systematic and long-term in nature.

They are being conducted in most European countries. Russia uses political parties, non-governmental and church structures, among others, and the way they are used depends on the current climate in political and economic relations with the country concerned, as well as internal political, social and cultural circumstances. Different measures are applied to Germany, where there is a significant potential for destabilisation associated with the

large Russian-speaking diaspora; and in France, where Russia acts through a strong pro-Russian environment. One important weapon in the special services' arsenal is the creation of mechanisms for corruption (for example, with the aim of covertly conveying financial assets from Russia via European banks), or the open hiring of former Western politicians in companies which pursue Russian economic objectives.

Analysis of Russian support operations allows us to distinguish the following universal areas of action:

- **influence on information space** (creating web portals which camouflage their pro-Russian nature while lending credibility to Russia's position, reaching out to major media outlets, creating the desired image of Russia as an important global and regional player, as dissemination mechanisms of an uncritical approach to information from Russian sources);
- **the use of the psychological military factor, of demonstrations of force to suggest that Russia might take military action** (military manoeuvres near the boundaries of NATO countries, which could for example include scenarios for unblocking the Kaliningrad oblast, demonstrating Russia's military advantage over NATO forces in the region, and thus lowering public morale in other countries, the dissemination of information about the use of tactical nuclear weapons, intelligence activity aimed at assessing the capacity of counter-intelligence services and attempting to disrupt them, with particular regard to infiltrating the institutions responsible for defence preparations and military structures, disavowing actions being undertaken to improve the state of defence);
- **supporting groups favourable to Russia** (a wide spectrum of activities aimed at popularising Russian arguments justifying the policy of Moscow, instilling the belief that opposition to Russia is doomed to failure, stoking negative ideas through

the media and instrumentalising internal disputes in order to discredit the ‘pro-American’ or ‘anti-EU’ policies of the countries’ governments, highlighting the adverse economic impact of limiting trade with Russia, building up a false image of ‘pragmatic Russia as a friend of the West’), promoting Russia as a state where conservative ideology can form the basis for an agreement with conservative circles in the West;

- **penetrating and supporting groups critical of closer integration within the EU or cooperation with the US and NATO**, or which represent extreme nationalist views, and strengthening their arguments;
- **the long-term construction of social, political and intellectual groups which are friendly to Russia or which unwittingly support the implementation of Russian political objectives** (local authorities, business circles, educational cooperation, youth exchange programmes, artistic groups, sports fans’ associations);
- **the instrumentalisation of criminal groups** (smuggling, arms trading) and using them to infiltrate society;
- **special pinpoint operations aimed at raising the level of threat of internal destabilisation** (such as cyber-attacks aimed at demonstrating poor preparation for the protection of information sensitive for NATO; acts of sabotage aimed at creating panic among the local population; disruption to critical infrastructure, the ability to create a migration crisis, the destruction of symbols related to Russia and accusations of stoking Russophobic sentiments, organising demonstrations in support of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation, compromising representatives of the political elite by fabricating compromising materials in order to exacerbate internal political conflict, especially during parliamentary or presidential elections in a given country).

Russian activities are also carried out outside the territory of the 'target state'. Symptoms of these are attempts to influence the public opinion and governments of other countries, and their aim is to discredit their foreign policies and make it more difficult to implement international initiatives contrary to Russian aims. These include:

- **monitoring activities and building an unfavourable attitude towards individual countries in EU institutions.** These methods include exploiting the political and economic relations of Russia with other EU countries, based on mutual interests. In this context, the Russian special services involve themselves in Russian business contacts;
- **conducting media operations of varying levels of intensity in the West, aimed at maintaining the negative image of any country that asserts itself towards Russia as being unstable and leading an irresponsible foreign policy,** and threatening to European security. These methods are implemented using local media and journalists who have been inspired by Russia;
- **preventing initiatives aimed at intensifying cooperation with countries in Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and Central and Eastern Europe.** One of these tools is the constant stoking of ethnic conflicts, especially in Belarus, Ukraine and the Baltic states.

One prominent feature of these activities is support (organisational, financial, and information and propaganda) for radical, populist, anti-American, Eurosceptic and separatist political parties and movements in Europe. Russian political parties and social organisations controlled and instructed by the special services work to consolidate such groups. One spectacular example of this was the conference organised in Moscow in September 2016 under the auspices of the Russian Anti-Globalist Movement, with

the participation of twelve foreign separatist organisations (from Italy, the US states of Texas and California, Moldova, Lebanon, Somalia and others). It was held under the banner of ‘A dialogue of nations’, and was funded by the Charity Foundation created by President Putin. The organisation of seemingly neutral political conferences, which are dedicated for example to a dialogue of cultures or the cooperation of professional groups, should be assumed to be just an initial step in calling out people and groups who (consciously or unconsciously) can be used in the operational machinations of the Russian special services.

One of the manifestations of Russian active enterprises is the attempt at pinpoint destabilisation of a given situation in order to exert political pressure. One example of this was the creation (from September 2015 to February 2016) of individual channels of migration from Russia to northern Norway and north-east Finland (most likely with the participation of Russian power structures and organised crime groups), forcing the authorities of both countries to cooperate with the Russian security apparatus. An attempt to destabilise the situation in Germany aimed at Chancellor Angela Merkel was a Russian diplomatic-propaganda action (the ‘Liza affair’, the use of false information about the disappearance of an underage girl) in January 2016, when statements from the Russian Foreign Ministry critical of the German authorities were accompanied by local anti-immigrant demonstrations with the participation of the Russian diaspora and Russian-speaking Germans. The attempt to destabilise the internal situation in Montenegro in October 2016 confirms that Russia’s special services are able to inspire actions resembling preparations for a coup.

SUMMARY

THE INHERITANCE AND THE PRESENT

The disintegration of the Soviet Union, the crisis of the 1990s and the change of the European security architecture have not modified the thinking of the Russian political elite concerning the role of the special forces in the political system and the organisation of the state. They have not questioned the wisdom of continuing covert offensive actions aimed at obtaining if not a dominant, then at least a significant position for Russia in international relations. The definitions of active measures in their counterintelligence and intelligence aspects which were cited at the beginning of this work include common elements which are worth recalling. These are: to build up espionage positions in the camp of the enemy and his surroundings, conducting operational games with the enemy, his disinformation, discreditation, compromise and demoralisation, as well as operational actions of espionage aimed at influencing the foreign policy and the domestic political situation of those countries that are the targets of these actions.

Operations conducted by the Russian special services revealed during the last decade include:

- the murder of the former president of Chechnya Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev and the former FSB officer Aleksandr Litvinenko;
- the financing of Russia-friendly foreign political parties and social organisations;
- the expansion of networks of operators distributing disinformation;
- destabilising operations to stir up social unrest or disrupt democratic procedures, such as parliamentary elections;

- operations to discredit countries which adopt an assertive posture towards Russia;
- the dissemination of false information provoking insecurity or uncertainty among the societies of other countries, and as a result, the reduction of support for those countries' authorities.

These actions demonstrate that the repertoire of 'active measures' has not undergone any substantial changes. The Russian special services continue to plan, organise and carry out long-term special operations, whose purpose is to support the Russian government's activities of a diplomatic, political, military, social or economic nature.

These operations, as before, are located in the context of a rivalry of civilisations: Russia, while supposedly defending its vital interests, is forced to oppose the 'aggressive' West. This also demonstrates the durability of Russian strategic culture, which is characterised among other things by the primacy of psychological and ideological thinking over thinking in terms of pragmatism. Moreover, the systematic expansion of a conceptual and executive support on this basis, as well as the inclusion in the arsenal of support for the Russian Federation's foreign policy of military forces and measures, demonstrates that these actions have been subordinated to the systemic, permanent, long-term offensive strategy of the state.

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