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**Szymon Łenyk<sup>1</sup>**

## **THE RISE OF CHINA'S POWER – SECURITY AND GEOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA**

### **Abstract:**

In this paper the author tries to explain how the states in the East and Southeast Asia pursue their security strategies in the uncertain geopolitical environment. For the last 40 years China's GDP has risen in the pace of an average 9,5% per year. This development enabled Beijing to increase its expenditures on the military budget and hegemonical aspirations not only in the region but also in the wider perspective. The enormous economic and military growth let China use more ambitious, assertive or even aggressive policies against its neighbors using intimidation, coercive methods and/or predatory economy practices, especially in the South and East China Sea, imposing so-called 9-dash-line which interferes into Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of the claimant states. In the light of the ambiguous United States policy under the current administration towards its allies and the other East and Southeast Asia States, these vulnerable countries seek to minimize the threats and uncertainties

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of new geopolitics by pursuing optimal security strategies. The author presents that the most attractive strategy, which is within bandwagoning – balancing spectrum, is hedging, which allows the states to improve their competitiveness while at the same time avoiding direct confrontation with main contenders.

**Key words:** China, EEZ, geopolitics, hedging, East Southeast Asia.

### **Introduction**

As a result of China's enormous economic and military growth many states in the East and South East Asia seek to optimize their security and economy policy in the unstable environment. Pursuing optimal policy helps vulnerable states to achieve their goals which are at the same time protecting the sovereignty and benefiting from the trade exchange with the formidable neighbor in the wake of the great power geopolitical competition between China and the United States. The basic forms of behavior of the secondary power states in such circumstances, the ideal-type extremes, are "ally with" or "ally against" the other state. The former is known as bandwagoning and describes the state which forms official or unofficial alliance with the stronger side of the emerging conflict, the latter is balancing which is placed on the opposite end of the spectrum and characterize the state which accumulates its military power and/or forms a coalition aiming to balance and contain the threat (Jackson 2014). The third stance,

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which seems optimal for the states of the region - Vietnam, the Philippines and Japan - is hedging, a strategy which enables the states to be flexible in their strategic choices in the environment of changing geopolitics and maintain ambiguity in their relations with the contending powerful players.

Vietnam and the Philippines in pursuing their security policies remain equivocal which helps them to avoid being part of the conflict and at the same time maximize their competitiveness in order to reduce the gap with the system leader (Geeraerts & Salman, 2015). Japan, being not powerful enough to balance against China, remains too strong to bandwagon” – therefore, against Beijing Tokyo is also pursuing hedging strategy which is mixed of both “containment and engagement“(Vidal & Pelegrin, 2017, p. 193).

### **Literature, definitions and methods**

The rise of China’s power and the shift of the geopolitical center to East Asia is widely described in literature (Hayton, 2014; Kaplan, 2014; Fels, 2017, Guardian, 2017). The biggest concern is to determine to what degree the emergence of the new hegemon can alter the current security architecture of East and South East Asia and what impact this new situation can have on the region. Some scholars claim that“ China needs a peaceful international environment to develop, so she will not seek hegemony in the world” (Zhou, 2012, p. 2) and “cooperative behavior boosts China’s international influence

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and is rooted in the leaders' interest in achieving a peaceful international environment to sustain economic growth and prevent social unrest" (Shirk, 2008, p. 11). On some conditions China can rise peacefully and regional players can cooperate in areas where there is convergence of interests, such as environmental issues, non-traditional security areas like humanitarian help and disaster assistance or trade exchange between the countries and interpersonal contacts can mitigate the proneness to escalate the tensions (Bijian, 2005; Babones, 2017). On the other hand, with the dynamic growth of China's economy comes in pair more self-confident, assertive or even aggressive Beijing's behavior enhanced by growing nationalism which are the main factors that can diminish the results of the efforts for the peaceful cooperation among the neighbors (Roy, 1994; Mearsheimer, 2006; Kaplan, 2014).

Growing uncertainty about the forms and directions of China's rise combined with the vague policy of US administration under the President Donald Trump - US as an "epicenter of unpredictability" (The Diplomat, 2018a) - toward the region requires the optimal security strategy the East and South East Asia countries must adapt. In the latest studies hedging, "that includes engagement with China, soft balancing with the United States and enmeshing other regional actors in the related affairs" (Hlavacek, 2006, p.53) seems to be the optimal strategy for the analyzed secondary states in the region, namely the Philippines, Vietnam and Japan. Hedging is defined by scholars of the

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international relations as a third alternative, policy, or behavior of the secondary states, embedded within bandwagoning – balancing spectrum (Roy, 2005;Goh, 2005; Kuik, 2008;Jackson, 2014, Koga, 2018). Hedging is also often understood as a “strategic choice that the state makes by not taking sides, either temporarily or permanently. Scholars thus use the term as the third choice in addition to balancing and bandwagoning, contributing to honing the “balance of power” theory by adding a nuanced explanation of state behavior” (Koga, 2018, p. 668)

To position and therefore understand hedging more precisely it is necessary to describe its ideal-types extremes – i.e. balancing and bandwagoning. There are two kinds of balancing: internal and external. Internal balancing is a country’s activities toward increasing its own defense strength by expanding its latent power, growing its defense budget and developing clever strategies(Waltz, 1979), whereas external balancing is a country’s activities to create coalition or alliance to increase its security (Salman & Geeraerts, 2015). Bandwagoning is understood as “joining the side that appears likely to win”, "joining the stronger coalition" and - according to balance-of-threat theory - “alignment with the source of danger”; the bandwagoneer first – “may hope to avoid an attack on himself by diverting it elsewhere, second - a state may align with the dominant side in war in order to share the spoils of victory” (Schweller, 1994, p. 81).

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Some scholars articulate that in the in the international relations balancing predominates among the actors and in the most circumstances balancing is definitely more popular than bandwagoning (Walt, 1987). Kaufman (1992) argues that bandwagoning is preferable option among the states and balancing is rather an exception to a rule. Waltz (1979, p. 125) claims that “whether political actors balance each other or climb on the bandwagon depends on the system's structure”.

Both balancing and bandwagoning, apart from the benefits they provide, may bring also negative consequences. External balancing can bring the risks characteristic for alliance security dilemma: “entrapment and abandonment” (Snyder, 1984, p. 466). Bandwagoning carries the risks of subordinating to the leading power and limiting autonomy due to the stronger states’ prevalence (Schweller, 1994). Against this backdrop, the “hedging” is basically the compound of “balancing” and “bandwagoning,” and this combination reduces, if not eliminates, the risks of picking one of the described above extreme strategies and, in the same logic, the prospective gains. Goh (2005, p. XIII) in that context adds that hedging is “set of strategies aimed at avoiding (or planning for contingencies in) a situation in which states cannot decide upon more straightforward alternatives such as balancing, bandwagoning, or neutrality”.

In the international relation (IR) methodology of the security research can be organized, gathered into two groups, attitudes:

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positivistic and post-positivistic. Into this first group scholars include realism, liberalism, behaviorism, to the second – postmodernism, constructivism and critical theory (Zięba, 2015). For the researches in the environment of the emerging great power competition the realism seems to be the most adequate to apply to the current conditions when Beijing and Washington contend for the hegemony (Mearsheimer 2001). However, in the world of interdependence, where non-state actors play significant international role and domestic politics strongly influence the states decisions, the sheer realism needs to be enriched with the view of other attitudes. The neoclassical realism may help to widen the researchers toolbox. Kaczmarek (2015, p. 13) describes, that “on the one hand, the neoclassical realism admits that the primacy in explaining the dynamics between the main actors belongs to the superpowers and the international system. On the other hand, a number of variables determine the way in which the state interprets and reacts to changes in the system on the international level and, consequently, affect its policy. The state may misinterpret changes taking place in the system, which it leads to erroneous policies that are not in accordance with the realism”. In the discussion on the methodology Czaputowicz (2014) cites, that most realists applies a historical approach and often conducts philosophical consideration, neo-realists on the other hand prefer to test competing hypotheses using quantitative and qualitative methods. In the third attitude – the neoclassical realists prefer quality methods, such as case

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study and process tracing. This third method seems to be the most adequate when analyzing the relations between the Philippines, Vietnam and Japan with the other actors in this paper, however quantitative methods also my help researchers.

### **Discussion on the strategies of the Philippines, Vietnam and Japan in changing geopolitics**

As mentioned in the chapters above, in the wake of the great power geopolitical rivalry between China and the United States, the Philippines, Vietnam and Japan position themselves within balancing-bandwagoning spectrum, to pick a strategy that optimize their chances to reduce the negative consequences of that competition. To better understand the motivations standing behind each government decision to choose this preferable strategy, it is necessary to understand the particular characteristics of each state and thus focus more detailed on the factors that influence the states leaders when deciding about directions of the security policy.

When describing the behavior of Southeast Asia countries Goh writes (2005), that he optimal strategy for these states is hedging and consists of three main elements. First is indirect or soft balancing, in which secondary power try to encourage one of the main contender in the geopolitical rivalry – in this case the United States - to serve as balance to the growing influence of the threat - Communists China. Second, hedging focuses on complex engagement of Beijing at the

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various levels and platforms of activities (economy, diplomacy etc.) with aim to persuade Chinese leaders to act in accordance with the international rules, norms and standards. In this aspect, engagement activities may be seen as a way to reduce the tendency of the Chinese government to act aggressively and to mitigate potentially aggressive Chinese domination. The last main element of the hedging strategy pursued by the Philippines, Vietnam is an overall aim to enmesh the maximum number of the actors in order to involve and convince them that stable regional order serves also as a benefit to them.

After analyzing these three main hedging elements the conclusion is that the Philippines, Vietnam are generally hedging against three the most dangerous threats which resulted from the changing geopolitics: the domination or hegemony of China; American *désintéressement* or stepping out from the Western Pacific and an unstable regional architecture of security. Japan, possessing much more economical power than both the Philippines and Vietnam combined and being an treaty ally of the United States (like the Philippines) sees the danger for its security as a result of the geopolitical changes and US potential withdrawal from its obligation in the region. Therefore Tokyo hedges vis-à-vis the Washington's commitment reduction to East Asia and strengthens its military potential easing the restrictions from its Constitution's Article 9 through reinterpreting it (Forbes, 2014; Koga, 2017).

To maximize their security the Philippines and Vietnam are active members in Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), trying to engage, or enmesh, China in as many bilateral multilateral relationships as possible, regarding ASEAN as a crucial platform for such cooperation (Matsuura & Tomikawa, 2018). In addition, all secondary power states in the region, like the Philippines, Vietnam and Japan must act in the specific security environment where the United States has been seen as a provider of the security and other public goods like, for example, freedom of navigation on the adjacent seas. However, taking under consideration policy conducted by the US administration under Donald Trump (withdrawal from the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), 'America First' policy) the level of reliance in the US is diminished. In this context Kendal Stiles (2018) adds one more important element to the discussion concerning security issues characteristic for the Philippines, Vietnam and Japan, which is trust. In his observations he places hedging as a midpoint between trust and distrust and underlines that when making a decision "a key element is almost certainly a fear that your partners will betray you" (Stiles, 2018, p. 12). To hedge, or secure against, the betrayal of the strongest opponent of China – the US, Vietnam, the Philippines and Japan also increase their efforts to tighten relationships with players from beyond the region – India, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, EU and others.

The Philippines

The Philippines security strategy mirrors its fear of the changing geopolitics, namely the unfavorable rise of China and doubts concerning American willingness to help Manila in the case of war with Beijing. It also originates from the economical situation of the country where China is a main trade partner of the Philippines. The growing economic dependence to the powerful neighbor combined with sovereignty threats presented by Beijing put Manila in a position where it should hedge against existing risks by strengthening its military potential avoiding at the same time any confrontation with Beijing (Reuters, 2017; The National Interest 2018).

China's growing assertiveness in the South China Sea is a main problematic issue in the bilateral relation between these countries (also in the Sino-Vietnamese relations) and is a source of the potential conflict which may emerge from the current tensions. Beijing claims about 80-90 per cents of the waters and so called 'nine dash line' overlaps with exclusive economic zones of all claimant states – the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and the Republic of China-Taiwan (Thuy, 2018). In 2016 the Permanent Court of Arbitration in Hague ruled in favor of the Philippines against China in the case submitted by the previous president Benigno Aquino III. The tribunal stated that China has no historical rights based on the 'nine dash line' map. This verdict was rejected by the Peoples Republic of China and the Republic of China. The incumbent president of the Philippines,

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Rodrigo Duterte, has - so far - not used this verdict as a argument in the disputes with Beijing. Instead, he counts on the increased China's engagement in the projects Manila has difficulties in financing and for increased direct investments. Apart of the verdict, the second important asset of Manila that plays in its favor against the rise of China is the fact, that the Philippines are longstanding treaty ally of the United States. In the Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines (1951) both sides agreed in the paragraph III and IV that "an armed attack in the Pacific Area on either of the Parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common dangers in accordance with its constitutional processes (...) and an armed attack on either of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack on the metropolitan territory of either of the Parties, or on the island territories under its jurisdiction in the Pacific or on its armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the Pacific". However, two major questions arise from this agreement that are very important to understand the applicability of this treaty to disputed territory in the South China Sea. First problem for Manila is the ambiguous definition of "an armed attack". What is the understanding of thresholds of aggression (from China) which exceeding would result in the armed reaction from the US? And the second problem is the vague description of "in the Pacific Area". Should the Pacific be interpreted as only the water to the east from the Philippines or does it include also the South China Sea or

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West Philippines Sea (Just security, 2019)? This second issue was clarified by the US Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo when he explained that “as an island nation, the Philippines depends on free and unobstructed access to the seas. China’s island-building and military activities in the South China Sea threaten your sovereignty, security, and therefore economic livelihood, as well as that of the United States. As the South China Sea is part of the Pacific, any armed attack on Philippine forces, aircraft, or public vessels in the South China Sea will trigger mutual defense obligations under Article 4 of our Mutual Defense Treaty” (U.S. Department of State, 2019).

Against this backdrop, the security strategy policy (on the balancing-bandwagoning spectrum, closer to bandwagon with China) currently realized by President Duterte may be seen as an aberration from the desirable hedging and may be backtracked to the one pursued by his predecessors, especially when the Philippines’ military forces opt for maintaining proper relationship with the US (The New York Times Magazine, 2019). Thus, on the one hand Manila needs Beijing’s financial support but on the other the growing threat of the dependence on the powerful neighbor needs to be contained.

### Vietnam

Vietnam, similarly to the Philippines, is highly economically dependent on China. China is the biggest trading partner for Vietnam and its key investor, and - on the other hand - among ASEAN states,

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Vietnam is the largest goods exchange partner for China (World Bank, 2019; Inquirer, 2019). Additionally, the growing hegemony of Beijing threatens the sovereignty of Vietnamese waters (the East Sea) – Beijing claims overlap with EEZ of its neighbor on Paracel and Spratly Islands what brings serious negative consequences for the Hanoi economical projects. These issues show the hedging choice to be optimal for Vietnam which from the economical point of view needs proper relations with China, but in the same time it must counterweight Beijing rising assertiveness by internal and external balancing. In case of the Philippines, Hague Tribunal ruled in favor of Manila, in case of Vietnam scholars tend to agree with the Vietnamese position and, as the US Navy Major Raul Pedrozo cites (2014, p.130), “based on the arguments and evidence submitted by the claimants and general principles of international law related to the acquisition of territory, it would appear that Vietnam clearly has a superior claim to the South China Sea islands”. Also Samuels, claims (1982) that Beijing has more rights to the Paracels, however its claim to the Spratly’s are seriously disputed. Greg Austin (1998, p. 5) partially agrees with this opinion, claiming that China had better claims to Paracels,” but the legal complexity of the disputed Spratly claims meant that, China claims to the entire Spratly group are at least equal to any other”.

As long as China’s rise continues and the South China Sea issue stays unsolved Vietnam can be intimidated by Beijing and tensions on the adjacent waters will have the largest significance of the strategic

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security choices made by Hanoi. The best examples of the challenges Vietnam must face are coercions made by Beijing on Hanoi when the latter tried to explore its natural reserves in the sea bed within its EEZ - a multimillion oil and gas infrastructure project led by Spanish Repsol, was withdrawn as a result of Chinese pressure (The Diplomat, 2018b). Also the installation of the oil rig by China on the contested waters in 2014 was a source of serious backlash between two states (Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, 2017). As the security of Vietnam is concerned, Hanoi still remembers the 1979 Chinese invasion which aimed to “teach Vietnam a lesson” (Zhang 2005, 851). Furthermore, it cannot be excluded, that the Chinese military forces will want to try its new offensive air and maritime potential – and Vietnam might be the optimal adversary, as country without American security guarantees (The Diplomat, 2019b) . Therefore, in spite of the fact that both countries are ruled by the communist parties and have also records on cooperation (Vietnam War) the level of mistrust is still significant. In this context, in the changing geopolitical environment, Vietnam, seeks closer cooperation not only with the United States, which position is declining, but develops comprehensive strategic partnership with the US geopolitical rival - Russia (Nhan Dan 2019). This behavior, proves that Vietnamese leaders are open for all possibilities and cannot become hostage of only on the one side of balancing – bandwagoning spectrum.

The South China Sea problem seems at the moment to be the biggest threat for the Vietnam and the largest hurdle in bilateral relation with Beijing. Until both issues – dependent economy and sovereignty challenges - are nor solved, Hanoi has to be flexible in searching for optimal strategy and therefore hedging seems to be the most reasonable choice.

### Japan

Japan, is the second strongest economy in the region, with the nominal GDP reaching 40 per cent of China's, with this gap widening (International Monetary Fund, 2019). Its military expenditures (47 bln USD) are also significant in comparison to the Philippines (4,7 bln USD) and Vietnam (5,5 bln USD) but pale in the comparison with the China's military budget (250 bln USD), let alone the US Pentagon's military spending (650 bln USD) (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2018). Japan also functions as crucial pillar in the Asia security architecture. After the end of the Second World War Tokyo became a treaty ally of the United States (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1960) and is now one of the spikes in so called 'hub and spike architecture'(the San Francisco System) where the US, as a hub, established bilateral security alliances with some Asian countries, except Japan, also – Australia, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand (and – to some extend – Taiwan), which help to stabilize the region and also work as a hedge against an undesirable multilateral order

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emerging in the region (Koga, 2011; Park, 2011). However, being a long-standing American treaty ally (like the Philippines) does not exempt the Tokyo government from the obligation to maximize Japan's security with additional activities, like internal balancing and cooperation with other regional players, especially in the context of the geopolitical shifts of power and ambiguous President Trump's foreign policy, predominantly affected by the US domestic issues ("America First" policy, withdrawal from the TPP, tariffs imposed not only on China but also, among others - on Japan).

Tokyo has many critical concerns in its security environment. North Korea's ballistic missile launches coupled with permanent nuclear threat posed by the Kim regime, unsolved disputes over Northern Territories (Kurils) with Russia are the legacies of the order emerged after the World War II. Aging population with declining birth rate and severe fiscal situation pose a socio-economical risk. Also on the rise is the danger of "hybrid warfare" (which whites out the demarcation between the military and non-military actions) and the possibility of "gray-zone" situations, "representing neither pure peacetime nor contingencies over territory, sovereignty and maritime economic interests" (Mifune 2016 p.149). Takahashi, (2018, p. 139) writes, that "the dichotomy between peacetime and wartime is no longer relevant; serious security challenges occur in a kind of "gray-zone" between wartime and peacetime".

While defining its threats, Tokyo admits that the most significant issue that Japan must cope with is the challenge of rising China. In its National Defense Program Guidelines (Japan Ministry of Defense, p.5) Ministry of Defense clearly states, that “China engages in unilateral, coercive attempts to alter the status quo based on its own assertions that are incompatible with existing international order. In the East China Sea and other waters, China is expanding and intensifying its military activities at sea and in the air. Around the Senkaku Islands, an inherent part of Japanese territory, Chinese government vessels continually violate Japanese territorial waters despite Japan’s strong protests while Chinese naval ships continuously operate in waters around the Islands (...) Such Chinese military and other developments, coupled with the lack of transparency surrounding its defense policy and military power, represent a serious security concern for the region including Japan and for the international community”. To hedge its security strategy in the wake of geopolitical competition between China and the US, Japan does not solely base on the Japan-American alliance but focus also on three other significant pillars, which are: first - strengthening its own military capabilities; second - cooperation with main international actors from and outside the region and third – enhancing economic relations with China. This first element is realized through reinterpretation of Japan constitution to allow collective self-defence—the clause of military aid to a country which is an close ally that is under attack. Tokyo is

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strengthening its own architecture for national defense at the same time emphasizing its adherence to the basic precept of maintaining the exclusively defense-oriented policy and not becoming a military power that poses threat to other countries, ensured civilian control of the military, and observed the Three Non-Nuclear Principles (Japan Ministry of Defense, 2018). The second pillar is embodied by Japan policy toward other actors in the region. Tokyo is strengthening its partnership with ASEAN by closing economic ties (ASEAN-Japan 10-Year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap, 2012-2022) and working together to address emerging challenges and promote peace and stability (ASEAN, 2018). Japan is building up cooperation also with India and Australia – other two significant players in the Indo-Pacific region – on the military, economic and diplomatic realms (The National Interest, 2019; The Japan Times). Third pillar base on proper and intensive economic relations with Tokyo's main adversary, Beijing. As The Diplomat cites (2019a): "China was Japan's second largest export partner, after the United States, from 2011 up until the end of the 2017 fiscal year in March 2018. According to the Japanese Ministry of Finance in April 2018, Japan's exports to China soared to \$141 billion in FY2017, a 18.3 percent increase over FY2016. Meanwhile, exports to the United States continued to grow, but at a slower pace of 7.5 percent over the previous fiscal year, coming to just over \$140 billion". In addition, Japan, despite geopolitical concerns, joined China's New Silk Road – Belt and Road Initiative in hope for economic

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gains and benefits (South China Morning Post, 2017). Furthermore, in May 2018 Tokyo and Beijing signed the “Memorandum on Business Cooperation in Third Countries” in which both sides agree that promotion of business activities between Chinese and Japanese companies and development of their business activities in third countries is valuable for bolstering bilateral economic cooperation and would also bring gains for third countries (Japan Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 2018). Such situation clearly shows that through interdependence Tokyo seeks to increase the costs that Beijing could have to bear in case of confrontation with its significant partner.

### **Conclusion.**

In the wake of return of great power politics and geopolitical competition between rising China and relatively weaker United States security architecture in the East and South East Asia changes with a very high speed. In such developing situation Vietnam, the Philippines and Japan try to maximize their security through pursuing optimal strategy that facilitates this goal. Taking under consideration growing economic interdependence between analyzed countries and China together with the security threats that must be addressed the optimal strategy which seems to give the best equipped toolbox is hedging. This strategy allows to reduce the danger of ascending China by conducting multidirectional security policies through the network of relations with the main actors from and outside the region coupled

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with internal balancing. The ambiguity of hedging allows these states to maintain proper or even very good economic relationships with Beijing thanks to avoiding cold war behavior and at the same time pursuing optimal security policy basing not only United States but also all other available directions.

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**Zbigniew Chechliński<sup>1</sup>**

**THE EFFECTS OF THE HYPOTHETICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF  
PREFERENTIAL VOTING METHODS IN POLAND ON THE POLISH  
POLITICAL STAGE AND NATIONAL INTEGRITY**

**Abstract:**

One of the factors which foster political polarization of Polish society is the D'Hondt voting method. Replacing it with the preferential methods – Instant Runoff Voting and Schulze methods would reduce the political polarization and thus increase the national integrity. The preferential methods would incentivise the political parties to use more conciliatory rhetoric. Instant Runoff Voting would encourage them to court for a vote of the moderate voters, instead of basing on their core electorates. In turn, the Schulze method would tend to advantage the most compromise parties and thus would discourage the politicians from using aggressive and confrontational rhetoric and strategies. Nonetheless, implementation of the new system would also create risks, especially in case of the Schulze methods, which was never applied in any country on the central level.

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**Key words:** Preferential system, voting method, Instant Runoff Voting, Schulze, political polarization.

### **Introduction**

National integrity is an essential states'asset. Unfortunately, in the second decade of the XXI century, the political polarization of Polish society intensified. National integrity is influenced by many factors, including historical, economic or religious. This article focuses on the role of institutions, particularly the voting systems. The paper analyses the influence of the hypothetical implementation of the preferential voting systems – IRV and the Schulze methods on the Polish domestic politics and the political discourse.

The topic of the voting systems was already raised in Geopolitical Review by Piotr L. Wilczyński. In his article *“Analiza wyników wyborów samorządowych w 2014 i prezydenckich z 2015 w świetle postulatów zmiany systemów wyborczych w Polsce”* he analyses the results of the elections in 2014 and 2015 from the point of view of the majority first-past-the-post, Single Transferable Vote and the mixed systems (Wilczyński, 2016). Also, in his article from 2019 *“Wybory Parlamentarne 2019 w świetle wybranych sposobów przeliczania głosów na mandaty poselskie”* he converts the results of the parliamentary elections in 2019 using the Sainte-Laguë and Hare-Nemeyer methods (Wilczyński, 2019). Those two articles include the

quantitative simulations, used to demonstrate the effects of converting the votes into mandates by different voting methods. Unfortunately, it is impossible to run a similar simulation in case of the Instant Runoff Voting and the Schulze methods without conducting precise field research. This situation is caused by the fact that the ballots used in the D'Hondt method (current voting method in Poland) differs significantly from those used in the preferential voting. For that reason, this article does not present the exact quantitative results but rather focuses on the general effects and long-run trends caused by the implementation of the preferential methods. The topic of preferential systems was raised by the Paul E. Johnson, (Johnson, 2005) Warren Smith (Smith, 2011), Rosa Camp, Xavier Mora and Laia Samuel (Capm, Mora, Samuel, 2008). Also, the problem of the Condorcet Paradox mentioned in the article was raised by Daniel Bochsler in his paper "Marquis de Condorcet goes to Bern" (Bochsler, 2010). Above all, the article is based on the paper "A new monotonic and clone-independent single-winner election method" written by the inventor of the Schulze method, Markus Schulze (Schulze, 2003).

In the first part, the paper describes the current voting systems, used in the parliamentary and presidential elections in Poland. Next, there is a description of the Polish political stage, so the main parties in Poland. Then the article proceeds to the most important part, so the description of the preferential systems and analysis. First, the paper describes the operating principle of the Instant Runoff Voting

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and explains the concept of the Condorcet system. Then the article analyses the potential *ceteris paribus* results of the implementation of the IRV as a voting system in Poland. Next, the article proceeds to the analysis of the long-run implication of the implementation of the IRV. The next part, the essay focuses on the Schulze method. First, the essay describes the mechanism of this method. Then, it analyses the *ceteris paribus* effect of the implementation of the Schulze method as the voting system in Poland. Then, the paper analyses the long-run implication, again focusing on the issue of social integrity and polarization. The last part is the summary, which concludes the finding of the whole paper. The essay argues that hypothetical implementation of the IRV and the Schulze method would decrease the political polarization of society and thus positively affect the national integrity. However, that kind of institutional reforms could have some risk, especially in case of the Schulze method, which was never implemented by any country on the central level.

### **Political stage in Poland**

#### United Right

United Right is an informal alliance of three conservative parties. The core is the Law and Justice – Christian-democratic, national conservative and statist party. The United Right also has the moderate and the radical wing. The first one is Agreement – socially conservative and economically liberal party. The second one – United

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Poland is more explicitly conservative and statist than its larger sister, Law and Justice. United Right is softly eurosceptic, and all the three parties are the members of the European Conservatives and Reformists, where the United Right is the leading force. Since 2015 the coalition has an absolute majority in Sejm and thus rules the country. In the parliamentary election in 2019, the party received 43.59% of votes. (PKW, 2019) United Right has the largest negative electorate, as 40% of respondent declare that they would never this group (CBOS, 2019). It is important to mention that such a high result is influenced by the fact that the United Right is a large and well-known fraction. The electorate of the United Rights is the most socially conservative, static and eurosceptic among all the parties (CBOS, 2019).

### Civic Coalition

Civic Coalition is a big tent electoral alliance of centre to left-wing political parties. The main party in the alliance is the liberal Civic Platform, the member of the European Peoples' Party. The Civic Platform ruled Poland between 2007 and 2015 alongside the Polish Peoples Party. The Civic Coalition is also comprised of the classical liberal Modern (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats), social democratic and anticlerical Polish and the Greens (European Green Party). The Civic Coalition is strongly euroenthusiastic. The alliance received 27.40% of votes in the parliamentary election in 2019 (PKW, 2019). Civic Platform, the main component of the Civic Coalition, has the largest negative electorate, as 37% of respondents declare that

they would never this party (CBOS, 2019). The electorate of the Civic Coalition is more economically liberal and significantly more socially progressive than the average for the population (CBOS, 2019). It is also the most euroenthusiastic among all electorates (CBOS, 2019). It is important to mention that the flows of electorates between the Civic Coalition and the United Right are marginal (IPSOS, 2019). Thus, it seems that the border between those two groups is, in fact, a trench between the two hostile camps.

### The Left

The Left is the alliance of three left-wing parties: socialdemocratic, post-communist Democratic Left Alliance (Progressive Alliance of Socialist and Democrats); progressive and social liberal Spring (Progressive Alliance of Socialist and Democrats) and socialist Left Together (Democracy in Europe Movement 2025). This coalition is strongly euroenthusiastic and obtained 12.56% of votes in the parliamentary election in 2019. (PKW, 2019) Spring and Democratic Left Alliance have consequently 14% and 15% of the negative electorate (CBOS, 2019). This relatively low level of the negative electorate is influenced by the fact that those two parties are smaller and thus less recognizable than the main two parties. It is reasonable to expect that due to their relative radicalism The Left could, in fact, have a bigger share of the negative electorate, especially after increasing its recognizability in the election campaign 2019. The electorate of the Left is the most socially progressive among all

electorates (CBOS, 2019). It is also only slightly less euroenthusiastic than the electorate of the Civic Platform. Surprisingly, despite the social-democratic rhetoric of the Left, its electorate is also more economically liberal than those of the Civic Coalition. (CBOS, 2019)

### Polish Coalition

Polish Coalition is the alliance of the Polish Peoples' Party, Kukiz'15 movement and few other minor parties. The core of the alliance is the Polish Peoples' Party - Christian democratic and agrarian party, which traditionally played a role of the pragmatic bridge between the left-wing and the right-wing camps. Polish Peoples' Party formed a coalition government with Democratic Left Alliance in 1993 and with Civic Platform in 2007 and 2011. It is important to mention that by that time, the Civic Coalition was significantly more conservative than in 2019. It means that the Polish Peoples' Party was able to cooperate both with the Centre-left and the Centre-rights parties. The second biggest fraction in the Polish Coalition is the Kukiz'15 - an anti-establishment and conservative-liberal movement, which champions direct democracy and deep constitutional reform. Polish Coalition is euroenthusiastic but is more socially conservative than the Civic Coalition. Polish Coalition received 8.55% of votes in the parliamentary election in 2019. (PKW, 2019) Polish Peoples' Party and Kukiz'15 have consequently 5% and 10% of the negative electorate (CBOS, 2019). Similarly to the case of the Left, the actual negative electorate of the Polish Coalition could be potentially higher.

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Nonetheless, it is reasonable to expect that it would be still significantly lower than in case of the Left, Civic Coalition and the United Right. In terms of social conservatism, economic liberalism and euro enthusiasm, the electorate of the Polish Coalition is in between the United Right and Civic Coalition. Interestingly, this electorate's views are very close to the average views of the whole population (CBOS, 2019). The primary alternative preference declared by the Kukiz'15 electorate is the United Right, while in case of the Polish People's Party it is the Civic Platform (now the fraction of the Civic Coalition). The above findings support the view, that the Polish Coalition stands in the centre of the political stage, between the main enemies – the United Right and the Civic Coalition.

#### Confederation Liberty and Independence

Confederation is the alliance of the paleolibertarian KORWiN with the national-catholic National Movement, reactionary Confederation of the Polish Crown and few other minor parties. Confederation champions free-market economy, social conservatism and traditional, catholic values. This eurosceptic party received 6.81% of votes in the parliamentary election in 2019. (PKW, 2019) KORWiN has relatively large negative electorate, as 18% of voters declare that they would never vote for this party (CBOS, 2019). The National Movement and the Crown were not included in the poll. It is reasonable to expect that overall the Confederation has large negative electorate. The voters of this right-wing alliance are slightly less

socially conservative and eurosceptic than the United Right supporters (CBOS, 2019). Remarkably, the Confederation has by far the most economically liberal electorate and no other electorate gets even close to the Confederation's enthusiasm toward the free-market. Due to the synthetic measure used in the research the distance between the Confederation and Civic Platform in terms of economic liberalism is almost 3.5 times larger than between the liberal Civic Platform and statist United Right. Thus, the Confederation's electorate is remarkably more economically liberal than the United Right's electorate (CBOS, 2019). Surprisingly, the research on the preferences of the KORWiN's and National Movement's electorates implies that the Confederation's electorate would be more willing to vote for the United Right than for the Civic Platform (CBOS, 2019). This finding suggests that the economic views are not the leading indicator of the Poles' preferences and Polish domestic politics can be simplified to the one-dimensional spectrum, with socially conservative eurosceptics on one side and socially progressive euro enthusiasts on the other side.

### **Voting systems in Poland**

Constitution of the Republic of Poland shapes Polish domestic politics since 1997. According to this document, Poland is a democratic country, with a strong position of the lower house of parliament – Sejm. There are three voting methods at the central level in Poland.

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### Senate

Senate elections are held using the majority, first-past-the-post system in 100 single-mandate districts (Kancelaria Senatu, 2010). The significance of the election systems was especially visible after the election in 2019 when the opposition block, comprised from the Civic Coalition, the Left and the Polish Coalition adjusted their strategy to the voting algorithm, which allowed them to win the majority in the Senate.

### President

A presidential election is held using the absolute majority system. (Kancelaria Senatu, 2010) Polish presidents usually enjoy a high level of social trust and a relatively low level of the negative electorate. Notable, Polish society traditionally has a more favourable opinion about the presidents, than about the parliament (CBOS, 2019). One of the reasons behind this situation is the voting algorithm - to win the election in the runoff the candidate needs to get more than 50% of votes to win the election. Thus, the candidates court for a vote of the moderate voters. The intuition behind this is explained in the example below:

Let's assume that in the hypothetical election, with the two candidates in the turnout – centre-left and centre-right candidate. The complexities of the political spectrum go beyond the simple right-left axis. However, in the sake of simplification, this example assumes that the political stage can be reduced to the pure, one-dimensional

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spectrum. In this model, the centre-right candidate naturally expects to be supported in the runoff by his core, centre-right electorate, which voted for him in the first stage of the election. He also assumes to be supported by the more right-wing voters, who would naturally prefer to vote for him than for a centre-left candidate. A similar situation would occur in case of the centre-left candidate. Thus, in the turnout, the candidates focus court for a vote of the so-called "centre" voters to get over 50% of votes. Therefore, they need to use more moderate and conciliatory rhetoric to win the election. In the long-run, this feature promotes lowering the temperature of social discourse, what in turn decreases the polarization of society.

### Sejm

The elections to the lower chamber of Polish parliament – Sejm are held using the proportional D'Hondt method in 460 multi-mandate districts (Kancelaria Senatu, 2010).

The D'Hondt method is a proportional system, which means that the proportion of votes gained by a party in an election is similar to the proportion of seats won in parliament. It is achieved by dividing the candidates in each district into the parties' lists. There are multiple mandates available to win in each district. The system allocates the adequate number of mandates to each list, which roughly reflects the aggregate number of votes. In order to avoid an excessive fragmentation in parliament, the countries often introduce the threshold -the minimal result in national level which party needs to

receive to get to the parliament. In Poland, the threshold is 5% for parties and 8% for coalitions. In this system, committees with highest results tend to win proportionally more mandates than parties with low results. One of the features of the D'Hondt system is that the party can gain a significant share of parliamentary seats, despite having a big negative electorate. An excellent example of a situation like this is the election in Poland in 2015, when Law and Justice won 235 out of 460 seats in parliaments (51%), despite gaining only 37.58% of votes in the election and having an extensive negative electorate (CBOS, 2015). Thus, parties can base their success in the election on the aggressive rhetoric, which targets the core electorate instead of courting for a vote of the more moderate voters. As a result, the D'Hondt method fosters the radicalization of political discourse and consequently, polarization of society. Furthermore, the governments formed as a result of the proportional election based on D'Hondt system tend to have a relatively low level of social support, what undermines their legitimacy and encourage the opposition to use obstructive political strategies.

The proportionality rule is intended to increase the representativeness of the parliament. Thus, the public should tend to identify with at least some fraction of the MPs. In fact, despite the seeming representativeness of the parliament, the public's opinion about Sejm tend to be significantly less favourable than on presidents (CBOS, 2019).

## **Introduction to analysis**

### Assumptions

The paper assumes the implementation of the IRV and Schulze methods as the voting methods in the election to Sejm, as this chamber dominates Polish politics. However, apart from the Sejm's election, it could also be introduced in the senate elections as it would not affect the results of the analysis.

First, the article describes the mechanism of the IRV system and analyse the effects of the implementation of this system. Then, the article does the same with the Schulze method. The article conducts two types of analysis; ceteris paribus and the long-run analysis.

### Ceteris paribus analysis

This type of analysis outlines the potential composition of the Sejm elected using the IRV and Schulze methods, without taking into consideration the long-run evolution of the Polish political stage caused by those institutional reforms. This type of analyses is more straightforward, as it includes fewer variables and unknowns than the analysis of the long-run effects. On the other hand, it is strictly theoretical and has a very speculative nature. It is because it assumes that parties would not adjust their strategies and rhetoric to the new institutional environment. Not only this situation is improbable to happen, but also it is against the primary assumption of this article, according to which the voting system actively influences the behaviour

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of actors within the political system. Nonetheless, it is essential to conduct this type of analysis, as it provides a good starting point for further analysis. The analysis is based on the characteristics of the parties and their electorates; the electoral alternatives of the voters (CBOS, 2019); the parties' negative electorates (CBOS, 2019); the flows between the electorates (IPSOS, 2019) and the political views of the parties' electorates (CBOS, 2019).

#### The long-run analysis

The second part – the long-run analysis describes the expected long-run effects of the implementation of the IRV and the Schulze methods as a voting system in Poland within the following few terms of the parliament. In other words, it forecasts the possible trends in the Polish political discourse after the theoretical introduction of the electoral reforms outlined in the above chapters.

#### **Instant Runoff Voting**

##### The mechanism (Marron, 2003)

Instant Runoff Voting is a preferential, single-member electoral system used in national elections for the Australian House of Representatives (Australian Electoral Commission, 2014), American Congress in Maine state (Katherine, 2017) and parliament in Papua New Guinea. (Limited Preferential Voting, 2010) It is also used to select the presidents of Ireland (Limited Preferential Voting, 2010).

IRV is a ranking system, which means that the voter ranks the candidate from the most preferred to the least preferred. A voter ranks with number 1 the most preferred candidate, number 2 with the less preferred candidate, but preferred over any other. Then the voter can rank number 3 with his third choice and so on until he ranks the least preferred candidate. The winning candidate is selected by elimination. First, the system eliminates the candidate with the lowest number of votes (highest preferences), and his votes go to the candidates ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> by the voters who voted for an eliminated candidate. Then the procedure is repeated until one candidate has more than half of the votes. Usually, the voter can leave some candidates without any rank. It means then that he is preferred less than any candidate with a rank. Also, the voter can give two or more candidates the same rank. To minimize the probability of strategic voting (hiding the voter's true preferences in order to stop another candidate from winning ), it is good to consider applying this method in the form of a head-to-head comparison of each pair. In that case, the voter would be simply asked: "Which of those two candidates would you prefer to win". However, the effectiveness of applying this modification has rather psychological, not mathematical reasons.

IRV system is expected to cause bipolarity in parliament. However, in case of IRV preferences of voters would be mapped more actually, as this system eliminates the problem of the waster votes - the votes not for elected candidates. In other words, in the IRV



system, every single vote influences the composition of the parliament. It is because voters, who voted for smaller parties can transfer their votes for bigger parties in instant-runoff. However, despite its relative complexity, the IRV is not the Condorcet winner. It means that the winner is not necessarily the candidate preferred over any other candidate in most of the direct duels. Therefore, the IRV system is not a Condorcet method. To exemplify this problem, let's assume that there are three candidates: A, B and C.

	40%	0%	11%	9%	0%	40%
1 <sup>st</sup>	A	A	B	B	C	C
2 <sup>nd</sup>	B	C	A	C	A	B
3 <sup>rd</sup>	C	B	C	A	B	A

Source: Private

In that case candidate B is eliminated, as he gained only 20% of first-choice votes, while candidates A and C both received 40%. In the instant-runoff candidate, A received additionally 11%, while candidate C only 9%. Thus, in the runoff, candidate A won, as he received 51%, while candidate C only 49%. However, it is visible in the table, that candidate B is preferred over the candidate A by 60% of voters. Similarly, player B is preferred over player C also by 60% of voters. Thus,  $B > A$  and  $B > C$  in the direct duels. Candidate B is, therefore, a Condorcet winner, as he is preferred over any other single candidate. Nonetheless, under IRV, he would not win the election.

Ceteris paribus effects of implementing IRV method in Poland. (Robb, 2011)

Applying the IRV method in Poland is expected to cause a bipolarity in the parliament. It is because, in the most likely scenario, the two committees in the last "instant-runoff" (so after all other parties are eliminated) are the United Right and Civic Coalition. The later one would be expected to represent the left-liberal and euroenthusiastic bloc, by gathering the votes of Left's supporters (CBOS, 2019). On the other side of the political spectrum, United Right would represent the right-conservative and more eurosceptic bloc. This formation would supposedly gather the votes from Confederation's supporters, despite the differences on a field of economic between those two groups (CBOS, 2019). It is difficult to predict the exact behaviour of Polish Coalition voters without conducting more specific field research on this topic. The support of the Polish Coalition voters could supposedly tip the balance and give one of the blocs' victory. Nonetheless, Polish Coalition could get a small fraction of mandates as well, by winning in a few districts with the strong party structures of the Polish Peoples' Party.

Due to bi-polarity of the parliamentary system, it would be possible that either United Poland or Civic Coalition would get an absolute majority in parliament. Again, it would be difficult to state which exact party could get an absolute majority without conducting more specific field research. However, the fact that the opposition bloc comprised

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from Civic Coalition, Left and Polish Coalition won a majority in Senate by forming an electoral alliance is an important premise suggesting the victory of the left-liberal side.

On the other hand, the result of the Senate election in 2019 could be different, if the United Right formed a similar alliance with all the right-wing parties, including the Confederation. Thus, the Senate election is not a straightforward estimation of the theoretical IRV election.

Neither the Left nor the Confederation would be expected to have a representation in parliament, as it is unlikely that any of those two parties would get over 50% of votes in the last "instant runoff" in any district.

#### Long-run effects of the implementation of IRV method in Poland

It is expected that in the long-run the parties would need to adjust their rhetoric and elections strategies to get over 50% of votes in the last "instant runoff" in the maximal number of districts. Thus, the system would incentivize the committees to court for a vote of the most moderate "centre" voters. As a result, the biggest parties would get closer to each other in terms of programme, rhetoric and political agenda. It would supposedly unlock the flows of electorates between the United Right and Civic Coalition (or their political incarnations). In other words, it would be more common for voters to hesitate between voting for those two parties and to change their preferences

from one of those parties to another. All the processes described above could result in lowering the temperature of the political discourse and what follows the mitigation of social polarization and mistrust. Not only parties would need to use more conciliatory rhetoric in order to win the hearts and minds of the most moderate voters, but also changing the political affiliation by the voter would be more frequent and thus seen as something natural.

Another feature of the IRV method is that it would be more likely for the winning committee to have an absolute majority in the parliament, as there would be fewer parties in the parliament. This could increase the stability of the system, as it would be more frequent for the winning committee to form a single-party cabinet without conducting difficult negotiations with the potential partner. Thus, it would be easier to avoid situations like that in Belgium, where the parties could not manage to form a government for a long time after the election. (CNN, 2011) On the other hand, this feature of the IRV system could result in the hegemonic position of the largest party and create an incentive to ignore the voice of the opposition.

As it was mentioned above the radical parties would not be represented in the parliament. In some fashion, it would deprive the members of those parties the capability to represent their views using democratic tools. In turn, their members and supporters could feel alienated from the current political discourse. Thus, there is a risk that they would express their views using means different than those

provided by democratic institutions, within the legal system. Throwing stones at the police and burning cars during the protest could become a new standard for those groups. Thus, marginalization of the extreme parties could result in their further radicalization. This feature could foster the political polarization of society and negatively impact the national integrity. On the other hand, there are no wasted votes in the election based on the IRV system, unlike in the election based on the D'Hondt method. Therefore, contrary to the D'Hondt election, the composition of the parliament selected using the IRV method would reflect the views of all voters, still including those most radical.

The expected bipolarity in the parliament could potentially lead to the development of the two-party system in the long run. However, the two-party tendencies are expected to be less profound than in the case of the first-past-the-post majority system. It is because in the IRV system, there are no wasted votes, so the voice of the smaller parties' electorate is taken into account. Therefore the politicians from those parties have a tool to actively influence the public opinion. Fact that the actions of the minor parties are somehow effective could create an incentive for its members to maintain the existence of those parties, instead of transferring to bigger parties or giving up their political activities.

Another difference of those institutional reforms is that parties would become less autocratic and the power within those organizations would be more dispersed, similarly to the Anglo-Saxon

model. This feature is typical for the majority systems, where the MP's are more a kind of representants of their districts, not the soldiers in the strongly hierarchical political organizations. Thus, the tendencies of forming the wings within the political parties and alliances (for example Agreement and United Poland as the wings of Law and Justice, Modern and Polish Initiative as the wings of Civic Platform, KORWiN and National Movements as the wings within the Confederation) would intensify.

### **Schulze Method**

#### The mechanism (Schulze, 2003)

Schulze method is a ranking system, similarly to IRV. Nonetheless thanks to its complexity, it is a Condorcet winner method. This system is not implemented in any national election yet. However, it is used in the several elections to the board of the companies or NGOs, including the Wikimedia Foundation. (Plamondon-Williard, 2008)

Markus Schulze, the creator of this method explained in his paper: "Basic idea of the Schulze method is that the strength of the indirect comparison "alternative a vs. alternative b" is the strength of the strongest path  $a \equiv c(1), \dots, c(n) \equiv b$  from alternative  $a \in A$  to alternative  $b \in A \setminus \{a\}$  and that the strength of a path is the strength

( $N[c(i),c(i+1)]$ ,  $N[c(i+1),c(i)]$ ) of its weakest link  $c(i),c(i+1)$ " (Schulze, 2011).

Further description of mathematical mechanisms would significantly decrease the approachability of this paper. To avoid jargon and simplify the content, this article explains the mechanism basing on the following example, which divides into three stages:

Stage 1: Head to head comparison, identically to the IRV system. In case if the winner of the elections is the Condorcet winner, so is the winner of the direct head-to-head comparison in the majority of duels with other candidates, this is the end of the procedure. However, in other cases, the winner, it is necessary to proceed to the next stage.

Stage 2: Drawing a graph of pathways and their strengths.

Stage 3: Head to head strength comparison of both direct and indirect relations between each pair of candidates.

Let's assume that there is a small single-mandate constituency with 19 voters and 4 candidates: A, B, C and D. The following table illustrates how many times did a particular configuration of preferences occurred.

	7	4	3	5
1 <sup>st</sup>	A	D	B	D
2 <sup>nd</sup>	B	A	D	A
3 <sup>rd</sup>	C	B	C	B
4 <sup>th</sup>	D	C	A	C

Source: Private

Below are the example results of the simple head to head comparison in case of a hypothetical duels in the 1 vs 1 instant runoff.

A>B, as 16 voters preferred A over B and only 3 voters preferred B over A.

A<D, as 12 voters preferred D over A and only 7 voters preferred A over D.

B>D, as 10 voters preferred B over D and only 9 voters preferred D over B.

There is no Condorcet Winner, as A>B, B>D, but A<D. To find a most preferred winner, the system checks the strength of the certain preferences, by subtracting the number of losing votes from the number of winning votes, so that:

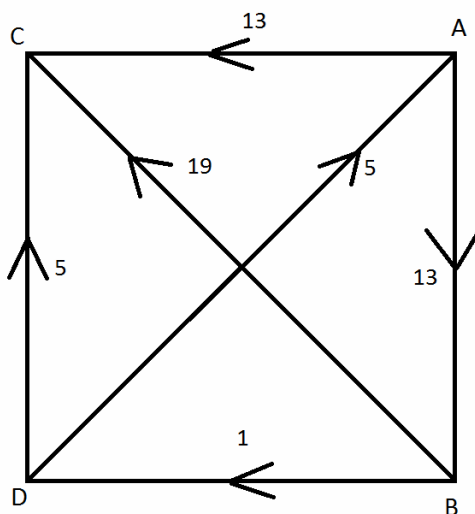
A>B:  $16-3=13$ .

A<D:  $12-7=5$

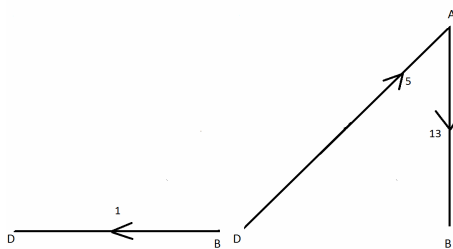
B>D:  $10-9=1$

It is visible that, according to simple head-to-head comparisons, the preferences of the group are not transitive (Transitivity: If X>Y and X>Z, then X>Z). The clue of the method is to examine the preferences by examining the strength of both direct and indirect relations between the candidates. All relations are presented by the "pathways" of preferences. The chart below presents the above reasoning graphically:





Each corner symbolizes one different candidate. The arrow on the graph indicates loser. The number near to the arrow represents the strength of direct preference. The shortest pathway between B and D represents the direct relation. Due to the direct relation  $B > D$ . However,  $D > A$  and  $A > B$ . In that case, the indirect relation is  $B > A > D$ . Schulze method compares the strength of direct relation, so the shortest pathway, with the strength of the indirect relations, so the pathways composed by more than 2 candidates. In the pictures below there are graphical representations of those two types of pathways and the relations between B and D:



The picture on the left represents the shortest pathway, while the picture on the right represents the longer pathway, composed of 3 candidates. In the example above, the strength of the direct preference is equal to 1. It is because 10 voters preferred B over D and 9 voters preferred D over B. On the other hand, the strength of the indirect preference is equal to 5, as 5 is the weakest preference in this pathway. Thus, the preference  $D>A>B$  is stronger than the preference  $B>D$ , as  $5>1$ . Therefore, in this case, the Schulze winner of the head-to-head strength comparison between D and B is D.

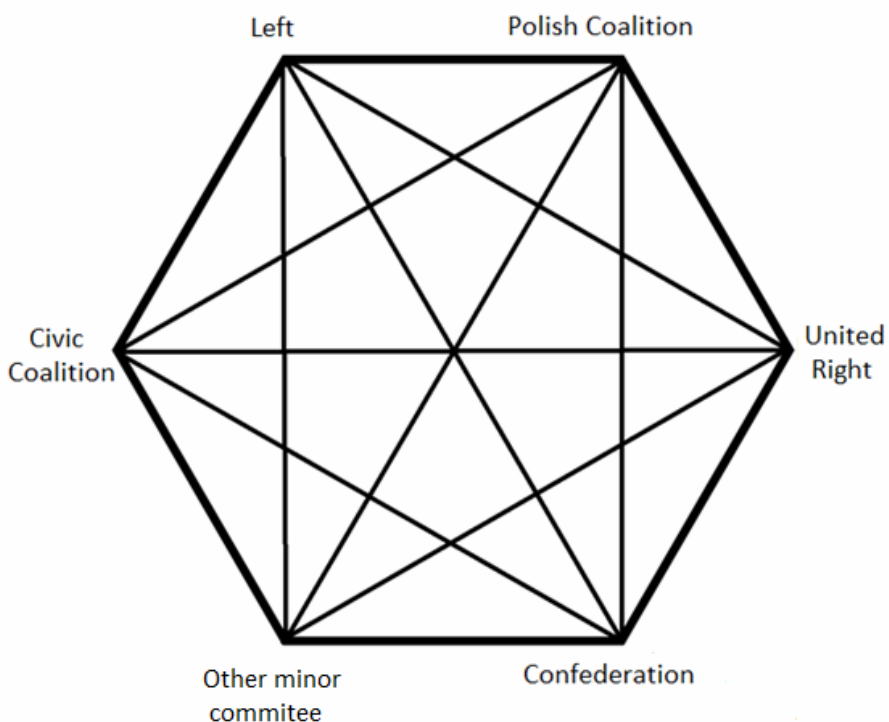
The aggregate of the all direct and indirect preferences would give the following result:  $D>A$ ,  $D>C$ ,  $A>B$ ,  $B>C$ ,  $A>C$ ,  $B>D$ . Thus, the Schulze winner is candidate D, as he won all head-to-head strength comparison.

#### Ceteris paribus effects of implementing the Schulze method in Poland

In opposition to the IRV, the Schulze method might not favour the main parties, so the United Right and Civic Coalition. It is because under this method, the winner should not have an extensive negative electorate. As the Schulze method is the Condorcet method, the most obvious effect is that the winner in each district would be a Condorcet winner. As a result the winning party at the central level would be rather moderate. The party traditionally seen as a bridge between the right-conservative and left-liberal camps is the Polish Peoples' Party, the core member of the Polish Coalition. It is, therefore, possible that

this party would win the most significant share of seats in parliament. Supposedly, Polish Coalition could also win an absolute majority. However, in many districts in Eastern Poland, the Condorcet winner could be the United Right – in some constituencies this group has over 50% of support even in D’Hondt elections. Also, Civic Platform could win in some metropolitan districts. Nonetheless, it would be almost impossible for Left and Confederation to get any mandates. To sum up, the main fractions in the parliament would be the Polish Coalition and the United Right

The chart below represents the pathways of direct and indirect preferences between the electoral committees.



Long-run effects of the implementation of the Schulze method in Poland

It is difficult to forecast the evolution of the political stage and discourse in Poland after the implementation of the Schulze method. It is because this system has never been implemented on the national level in any country. The examples from organizations like the Wikimedia Foundation might not include all the complexities related to the politics at the national level. Nonetheless, this chapter is trying to forecast to most obvious trends at the Polish political stage after the hypothetical implementation of the Schulze method.

As it was mentioned above, in every single district, the Condorcet winner is the most compromise candidate. However, after the implementation of the Schulze method, Poland would be divided into 460 separate districts. Therefore it is important to avoid the intellectual temptation of treating the whole country as one big electoral district. However, despite political divisions between the Eastern and Western Poland, as well as between the electorates in the large cities and the countryside, none of the five main political groups in Poland has a regional character. Polish political stage is significantly less regionalized than British or Spanish. Therefore, the strategy of relying on the support of one region, ignoring the rest of the country would not be a default option for any of the main powers. Thus, to win the general election and rule the Poland parties would tend to court for a vote in the whole country, not only in part of it. It is necessary to

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highlight this finding, despite its seeming obviousness, because it leads to the conclusion that not only is the Schulze winner most compromise in each district, but also the party with the biggest share in the parliament is most compromise (or at least close to compromise) on the aggregate level. Thus, it is reasonable to expect, that in the long run only the relatively moderate parties would be able to win the elections and rule the country.

Thus, the implementation of the Schulze method would result in mitigation of the confrontational and radical rhetoric, as the parties would strive to minimize their negative electorates. This feature would reduce the temperature of the political dispute and in turn, decrease the social polarization. The differences between the main parties would diminish, and the borders between their agendas would become more blurred.

A decrease in social polarization seems to be an attractive prospect for politically divided Poland. However, the governments formed by the parliaments chosen in the elections based on the Schulze method could be incapable of introducing a necessary, but unpopular reforms. Poland could end up having in having perpetual “warm water in a tap” policy – a situation when the government avoids introducing the important, but unpopular reforms for the sake of temporary stability.

Also, it is possible that introducing the Schulze method would cause the effect opposite the one intended. As it was mentioned

above, it would be crucial for the parties to maintain the relatively low level of the negative electorates. Possibly the parties would not directly attack each other in an obvious way, in order to maintain opinion of the Doves of Peace. Still, negative campaigning could be a domain of the media. Therefore, it could create an incentive for the media informally affiliated with the party A to viciously attack the party B and vice versa. This could, in turn, increase the political divisions between the camps and thus foster the polarization of society.

It would be very difficult for the radical parties to win any constituency. Similarly like in the case of the IRV system, the marginalization of the extreme parties could result in their alienation and further radicalization. This problem could be more profound in the case of the Schulze method, as the mainstream political stage would be even more moderate. Thus, it would be even more difficult for the extreme voters to identify with any of the sanitized parties in the parliament.

Finally, the Schulze algorithm is complicated, and many voters could struggle to understand it. As a result, they could feel alienated and tricked by the mainstream parties, which base their legitimization on some incomprehensible mathematical calculations. Thus, paradoxically, using the sophisticated algorithm which faithfully reflects the preferences of the public could result in a peoples' distrust towards the state.

## Conclusion

To sum up, due to the simple majority voting system used in the presidential elections, the candidates for presidents need to use conciliatory rhetoric to court for a vote of moderate voters. In contrast, the D'Hondt system allows the parties to win the Sejm's election despite having relatively big negative electorate. Thus, the parties can use less conciliatory rhetoric which increases the temperature of the social discourse and in turn, fosters the social polarization.

The Instant Runoff Voting is a preferential method of voting, which allows the electorates to rank the candidates. *Ceteris paribus*, introducing this system in Poland would result in forming a bipolar system in the parliament, with the leading role of the conservative United Right and centre-left Civic Coalition. In the long-run implementation of this system would result in decreasing of the temperature of the political discourse and thus the social polarization, as the parties would need to court for a vote of the so-called "moderate" electorate to get over 50% of votes in the last "instant runoff" in the maximal number of districts. The bipolar system in the parliament could increase the stability of the cabinets, as they would not need to negotiate with the potential partner. However, it could potentially also increase the autocratic tendencies of the majority

parties in the Sejm. In the long the implementation of the IRV system could potentially lead to the formation of the two-party system. However, those tendencies would be less explicit than in case of other majority systems. Nonetheless, parties would tend to be less autocratic and more dispersed. It could lead to the formation of the wings within the political groups, similarly to the Agreement and United Poland parties within the United Right coalition. It would be possible that the extreme parties which supposedly would not be represented in the parliament would radicalize, as their members and supporter could feel alienated from the mainstream political discourse.

Schulze method is the preferential voting systems, more complex than the Instant Runoff Voting. The winner in the Schulze method is also a Condorcet winner. It means that in Schulze winner would win in the majority of the simple 1 vs 1 comparison with any other candidate. Thus, the Schulze winner in any of the constituencies would be the most compromise candidate.

Ceteris Paribus, the winner of the Schulze election on the national level, would be moderate, compromise party, supposedly the Polish Coalition. Implementation of the Schulze method as the voting system in Poland would be expected to lower the temperature of the political discourse and thus, social polarization. It is because the parties would need to minimize their negative electorate. However, introducing the Schulze method as the voting system in Poland would



also create risks. First, the parliament politicians could avoid the important, but unpopular issues, not the increase their negative electorates. Also, the role of negative campaigning could increase. What is more, the problem of further radicalization and alienation of the supporters of the extreme parties could be even more profound than in case of the IRV system. Finally, this system is complicated and possibly many voters would never understand it.

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Leszek Sykulski<sup>1</sup>

## RUSSIAN GEOPOLITICAL DOCTRINE OF “VELIKIY LIMITROF”

### Abstract:

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in Russian intellectual societies became fashionable to appeal to the geographic space and its influence on current policy. The resurgence of geopolitics as a field of knowledge and forms of reflection on international affairs resulted in a sharp increase in publications on the subject of Russian researchers, politicians and journalists. Among them, a special place occupied Vadim Tsymburskiy (1957-2009), academic scholar, philosopher and geopolitician. He created an original geopolitical thought, including Island Russia concept and the Grand Limitrof (in Russian: Velyky Limitrof) that entered the canon of modern Russian geopolitics. Tsymburskiy came out from the assumption that Russia is a separate civilization, “island” separated from the world by the Grand Limitrof – frontiers stretching from the Gulf of Finland by Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Mongolia to the Pacific’s shores. An article focuses on the importance and the impact of Tsymburskiy’s

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thought on contemporary Russian policy, including relations with the so-called near abroad.

**Key words:** Vadim Tsymburskiy, Velikiy Limitrof, geopolitics, Russia, geopolitical thought.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, research and geopolitical reflection in Russia was revived. This was largely due to the desire to redefine the place of the Russian Federation in the changed geopolitical system. The collapse of communism also meant a departure from the history of treating geopolitics as "bourgeois science". It should be noted, however, that geopolitical thinking, which closely links the analysis of the influence of space on politics, has a long tradition in Russia, going well beyond the 20th century. The connection between spatial thinking and reflection on state policy can already be found in Mikhail Lomonosov, Nikolai Berdyaev and Fyodor Dostoyevsky (Potulski 2010).

Russian geopolitics nowadays refers broadly to the tradition of classical geopolitics, which was born at the end of the 19th century. Especially popular are the concepts of German geopolitics, headed by Karl Haushofer. Traditional Russian geopolitical codes, i.e. the spatial imagery of Russia's place on the international arena, have revived. Thus, references to the concepts of Moscow-The Third Rome, Russia-Byzantium or pan-Slavic ideas are popular. The author puts forward a

research thesis according to which the concept of "Russia-island" presented and promoted in the 1990s by Vadim Tsymburskiy is a separate current of deliberations within contemporary Russian geopolitical thought. This current will be called isolationism. It is one of the three main approaches to the place of Russia in the modern world (alongside atlanticism and eurasianism). We can even call these images separate schools of geopolitical thought.

Atlanticism promotes Russia's relationship with the civilisational West (mainly the European Union and the USA). In political deliberations in contemporary Russia, this current refers to the tradition of liberalism of the tsarist times. It promotes above all the Western model of modernisation. Eurasianism, on the other hand, sees Russia as a separate civilization, with an expansive and anti-criminalist approach. The Eurasian school goes back to the roots of the first half of the 20th century and the work of such thinkers as Nikolai Danilevsky (1822-1885), Piotr Savitski (1895-1968), Nikolai Trubietskoy (1890-1938), and Lev Gumilov (1912-1992). Its representatives propagate the view that there is a separate Russian civilisation with its geographical roots in the Central Asian steppes, being independent of Western and Asian civilisations (Ashenkampf 2006).

Isolationism assumes the limitation of relations with neighbouring countries, and even partial autarky, aimed at defending the political, economic and civilizational interests of its country. Due

to Russia's natural resources and the vastness of its territory, this trend has a very long tradition in this country. Until the reign of Peter I, Russia was a country largely isolated from the rest of Europe (Potulski 2010).

Vadim Tsymburskiy was born on 17 February 1957 in Lviv. He was a classical philologist by education. After graduating from the Faculty of Philology of Lomonosov Moscow State University in 1981, he worked for the next four years as an assistant in the Department of Classical Philology of the MGU, and then, after defending his doctorate in philology, he moved to the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, where he was employed at the Institute of the United States and Canada. After the fall of the USSR, he worked at the Institute of Eastern Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences and then, until his death, at the Institute of Philosophy of the RAN. In his research work, apart from philological issues (mainly Homer's work), he was primarily concerned with philosophy and geopolitical thought. He particularly liked the research area called with literature the science of civilization and geoculture, i.e. the study of distinctness of cultural spaces. He died on 23 March 2009 in Moscow.

According to the Russian philosopher, Russia constitutes a separate civilisation which, as a separate geopolitical subject, can be defined in three ways. Firstly, the country constitutes a "geopolitical ethnic niche" which is located to the east of the "Roman-Germanic platform of the North Civilisation". The Russian "ethnic niche" is,

therefore, a separate platform filling the space between Russia and China. It should be noted here that the "ethnic niche" is not to be equated with ethnic nationalism. What we are dealing with here is rather a reference to Leo Gumilov's concept of ethnoses. The creator of the concept of Russia-Isle by means of the Russian ethnic niche understood the peoples who had lived for centuries in the Volga region, the Urals and Siberia, and this factor which gave them the form of a separate "platform of the North-Westernisation" was the Russian state (Russian centre of power) (Tsymburskiyy 1993).

The second factor defining Russia's distinctiveness as a geopolitical centre of power is the extent of its territories to the east of the Urals. The Russian philosopher pointed out that for more than four hundred years of history, Russia has not experienced any serious threats from China or Mongolia that would threaten its rule over Siberia. Hence the "danger" of the Asian threat to Russia, raised by e.g. Vladimir Solovov, he considered it unrealistic and treated it as a very distant history (the invasion and reign of Mongols in the Middle Ages). He differed here fundamentally from the theorists of the Eurasian school, who raised the Mongol occupation period in Russian history to the rank of one of the main paradigms affecting Russian identity and a factor determining the geopolitical awareness of the Russian elite (Massaka 2001).

The third factor determining Russia's geopolitical distinctiveness was, according to Tsymburskiy, its separation from

Romantic-German Europe, which he treated as the cradle of "liberal civilisation". What is very important, the Russian geopolitician separated the separate space between the Western European civilisation (which in his opinion was "the first centre of modernisation") and the "Russian platform". He originally called this area 'stream territories' (in the original *territorii proliivy*; Tsymburskiy also uses the English term 'stream territories'). This concept will later be the basis for the delineation of the "Great Limitrophe" area. The Russian geopolitician clearly rejected the thesis of civilisational unity between Central Europe and Western Europe. He believed that religious factors (the influence of Catholicism and Protestantism) in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary or the Baltic states were not decisive. He claimed that the social and economic processes that led to the separation of Central Europe, which was different from both the western and eastern parts of the continent, were crucial. The central part of Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which according to Tsymburskiy was decisive for the creation of the streaming territories, did not belong to the "Western world-economy" nor did it adopt the eastern model of statehood led by a strong centralization of power. The Russian geopolitical theorist stressed that since the beginning of modern times the "European system" and the "Baltic-Black Sea system" have developed separately (Tsymburskiy 1993).



Vadim Tsymburskiy presented his geopolitical concept for the first time most fully in an article entitled *Russia-Island: Prospects of Russian Geopolitics*, published in 1993 in the journal *Polis*. He contrasted his views on Russia's place in the modern world with the concepts of both pro-Western and expansionist policies. He believed that both did not correspond to the real geopolitical conditions and political possibilities of Russia. He also opposed the ideology of Russian geopolitical thought. He was in favour of a cool calculation of power relations in the international environment.

Vadim Tsymburskiy, based on the assumption of Russia's civilizational distinctiveness, did not follow in the footsteps of the eurasianists who identified Russia with Eurasia but created the concept of Russia's "insularity" (ros. *ostrovityanstvo*). This feature (insularity) was, in his opinion, to be determined, among other things, by the kind of armed conflicts that this country has had in its history. The Russian philosopher pointed out that most of the wars were conducted by Russia on the periphery of its empire. It was extremely rare for an opponent to directly threaten the centre of the country. However, if this was the case, the aggression was spread along the entire length of the "territorial straits" located on the country's borders. According to Tsymburskiy, these border territories were of decisive importance for the development of the Russian empire and caused the "isolation" of the centre of the empire and the channelling of armed conflicts. What is important, he stressed the different paths

of civilisational development of Western Europe and Russia, hence he considered any ideas promoting the idea of "Russia's return to Europe" to be unfounded

The Russian isolationist has consistently criticised eurasianism as a school of geopolitical thinking. He was critical of this intellectual tradition. He probably summarised his position most concisely in a fragment of the title of one of his articles: From Russia-Eurasia to Russia in Eurasia (Tsymburskiy 1995). This clearly shows that Tsymburskiy's goal was not only to present an alternative path of Russia's development but also to introduce a separate geopolitical code into the intellectual debate, i.e. an image, a spatial representation of Russia's place and role in global politics. He rejected both Russia's belonging to the European civilisation, which, as indicated above, he identified with the cradle of the "liberal civilisation", as well as a policy of great power, focused on expansion. According to the Russian geopolitical theorist, eurasianism as an ideology is based on an erroneous assumption about the possibility of Russia dominating all of Eurasia, derived from Halford Mackinder's concept of Heartland, which assumed that the one who controls the central part of Eurasia (the heart of the land - Heartland) dominates the whole continent (Tsymburskiy 1995).

The development of the Eurasian idea was strongly determined by the promotion of opposition between the maritime and land powers. Among the most prominent precursors of this current of

geopolitical thought in Russia were Piotr Savickiy (1895-1968), Nikolaj Danielevskiy (1822-1885), Nikolay Trubietskoy (1890-1983), Vladimir Laman'skiy (1833-1914) and Georgiy Florovskiy (1893-1979). A strong influence of geography on the development of countries and civilizations was noticed by Lev Mietschnikov (1838-1888), a geographer and the author of a book titled "The Development of the State and Civilization". He was a geographer, author of the book entitled "Civilization and Great Historical Rivers". In it, he divided the history of humanity into the following periods: the river (antiquity and the Middle Ages), sea (since the fall of Carthage) and ocean (since the discovery of America). Vadim Tsymburskiy departed from the opposition between the powers dictated by geographical factors in favour of the concept of cultural distinctiveness (Sykulski 2009).

The creator of the concept of Russia-Isle has based his theory on geocultural foundations, i.e., those relating to the definition of the distinctiveness of the Russian cultural space. He tried to prove that the image of Russia as an island is one of the oldest cultural archetypes in the Russian tradition. He even coined the term "Eurasian Atlantis" to emphasise the autonomy of Russian geopolitical and geocultural subjectivity. The sources of this archetype are found in medieval images of Kievan Rus', an area surrounded by a dense network of lakes and swamps, forming a kind of "continental island". (Tsymburskiy 1997).

In his geopolitical concept, Vadim Tsymburskiy formulated the important term "Great Limitrof", which he referred to a large border area that includes Central and Eastern Europe, Transnistria, Transcaucasus, Central Asia, and then a belt inhabited by Altai and Turkish-Mongolian peoples up to the Russian-Chinese border. As part of this area, it also mentions Xinjiang and independent Mongolia, Inner Mongolia (part of China) and several Russian autonomous regions such as Buryatia and Tuva. This border strip, stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific, was, in his opinion, supposed to naturally condition not only the distinctiveness of Russia's civilisation but also affect its "insularity" and make it necessary to pursue an "inward" policy. It was to be directed towards the development of the centre and the Far East, especially the modernisation of Siberia (Tsymburskiy 2009).

It is worth noting that the very concept of limitroph has a much longer history. It is derived from Latin (Latin *limitrophus* - borderland) and means border area. In the tradition of Russian geopolitics, it has been used since the 1920s. Soviet science rejected geopolitics as a separate science or research method ("bourgeois science"), which does not mean that researchers in Soviet Russia and later in the USSR did not draw on classical geopolitics. It should be remembered that spatial thinking about politics is inseparable from Russian political tradition. In the Soviet encyclopaedia of 1929, we find the term

limitroph in reference to the Baltic States, Poland and Finland (Volin 1929).

In Vadim Tsymburskiy's concept, the area of the "Great Limitroph" in a way determines the historical distinctiveness of Russia. The Russian researcher pointed out that the western part of this area may become a convenient instrument to try to isolate Russia from the western centres of power, hence he postulated maintaining Russian influence on the Kaliningrad-Crimea axis. In his opinion, the demand to concentrate political and economic and social energy on the development of the centre of the state and the strengthening of the Far East (the development of the 'Russia-Isle') should not mean the withdrawal of Russian influence from the territories of the straits. He also did not rule out an attempt to extend Moscow's direct power in these areas in the future.

In Russian geopolitical thought, Vadim Tsymburskiy's concept has its own separate place. After 1991, it became neither a dominant paradigm in Russian foreign policy nor an idea that set the tone for other currents of geopolitical reflection. It is worth noting, however, that it is continuously present in academic textbooks on geopolitics in Russia. Some of the themes of this concept ("The Great Limitroph") are always present in the Russian tradition of spatial thinking. It is worth considering why Vadim Tsymburskiy's thought has not found a wider group of adherents. The author assumes here that the Russian geopolitical tradition is directed towards the power of global politics;

hence the narrowing of Russian politics to the so-called internal geopolitics could not have met with a broader resonance in political and intellectual circles.

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