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Russian Active Measures in Psychological Warfare

Abstract: The aim of the article is to analyse Russian active measures in the context of psychological warfare. Active measures are defined as the actions of political warfare conducted by Russian secret service. In case of Russian Federation they are the core of psychological operations that are tools of realising international and domestic policy priorities. Active measures include disinformation campaigns and supporting insurgency in opponent states. Regarding the context of psychological operations active measures are designed to model the mental sphere of opponent society. Active measures are aimed at weakening the unity of the European Union as well as common trust in NATO. Creating favourable atmosphere for Russian activity is the main goal of implementing active measures. Therefore active measures are considered as a great part of Russian interpretation of psychological warfare. Although active measures can support the military activity they are designed to influence the mental sphere of opponent society and are used to create opinions and interpretations that match Russian interests. Those measures are difficult to identify and therefore are threats that are not easy to counteract.

Keywords: *active measures; Russian Federation; secret service; security*

Introduction

Active measures, psychological and informational operations, creating and placing agents of influence in countries that are in direct Russia's interest. This kind of activities was popular during the soviet period as well as in the contemporary Russian Federation. Active measures are the integral factor of the strategy of foreign and domestic policy. Active measures defined as offensive action targeted to the mentally-perceptual sphere of opponent, are intended to prepare the social mentality for aggression with the use of conventional methods such as attacks on the critical infrastructure of opponent. Active measures are the Soviet term for the offensive actions carried out by the Soviet intelligence service.

Psychological warfare is a term for new non-standard actions implemented on the psychological-informational basis. Every psychological activity is aimed at the perceptual and the mental aspects of opponent's existence. They interfere with its perception and mentality.

In the times when information is considered as a powerful weapon and can be used to model an opponent's perception and to realise the international and domestic policy priorities, informational-psychological activity is the constant element of the strategic activity of states. It is not only a feature commonly associated with non-democratic regimes. Psychological operations have many different definitions. In literature they are known as a part of propaganda, asymmetric engagement, non-conventional activities. In Russia they are known as active measures. Regardless of definition, psychological activities are aimed directly at the perception of the opponent society – the target of psychological operation. The wide range of psychological activities are planned, organised and deliberated. During the Cold War and after the fall of the Iron Curtain, they has remained an important tool of realising the priorities of internal and international politics. The main body responsible for the implementation of active measures and conducting psychological operations is Russian secret service – especially FSB (Federal Security Service) and SVR (Foreign Intelligence Service).

They are characteristic for all asymmetric activities. In the case of the Russian Federation, psychological and informational operations are some kind of introduction. Active measures prepare a target to the following intervention of Russian army. The psychological-propaganda operations are used to create and model the awareness of opponent. Russian aim is to model the perception of opponent as it is expected. In a broad sense psychological operations are defined as the planned use of communication in order to influence the attitudes and behaviour of a particular group of people. It consists of political, ideological and military actions that are oriented on the behaviour and attitudes of a particular targeted group. The purpose of such an operation is to shape the consciousness and conceptual sphere of opponent in such a way that they both favour the aggressor's goal (Shleifer, 2011, p. 145). Active measures may accompany or advance the military action, prepare ground for action with the use of armed forces. This is an action associated not only with spreading disinformation, distorted visions, but primarily its goal is to demoralise, disorient, and mislead the enemy. The another overriding goal is to influence positive opinions and interpretations that favour the aggressor's point of view.

Psychological operations are an important tool of international politics. They have always a hidden weapon used during wars and the course of international competition. They served the protection of the national interest, the reason of the state. Even Sun Tzu, a prominent Chinese strategist, said that wars are not won by those who have strong weapons, but those who influence the sphere of perception of enemy and thus have a wider horizon for military manoeuvres. Sun Tzu claimed also that the greatest achievement is to defeat the enemy without a fight. Defeating an enemy without the kinetic involvement of military troops is possible by planning and conducting coordinated psycho-informational operations that will deliberately weaken the morale of the enemy – the target of the attack and break the strategy of defence (Sun Tzu, 2013, p. 21).

The article aims to analyse the definitions and goals of conducting psychological operations as the main tools used to implement the priorities of domestic and international

policies of states. The article describes the casus of Russian active measures. The core of the analysis is a hypothesis that operational and psychological actions allow non-invasive control over the society of the opponent. The basic concept is the concept of the *miateż* by Jewgienij Messner. Psychological and information activities are the integral part of the network wars and the concept of *miatież* war. The concept was formulated in the 1960s by Russian strategist Colonel Jewgienij Messner. The basis of a new form of conflict – rebellious wars is a psychological and informational activity. Also today, and especially after the end of Cold War conflict, the concept of rebellious wars seems to be still relevant and applicable to the current situation in international relations. The key use of information and psychological action in the concept of rebellious wars is realised by the organisational background in the form of state security organs.

Propaganda and Informational Activity in Russian Federation: What is it?

Contemporary aggressive actions, threats and conflicts are far different from those that occurred during the Cold War. All strategies of activities are enriched by the development of informational technologies. The destruction of bipolar order has led to a radical change in international security and contributed to the internationalisation of many conflicts that have gained international dimension and reach. Asymmetric threats have emerged and the role of non-state threats has significantly increased (Zapała & Sokała, 2011, p. 5). New non-state actors like international organisations, terrorist networks take advantage of non-conventional activities. The great example is Russian Federation. Great meaning in the concept of rebellious war play the tactics of psychological influence as organised campaigns and the tactic of guile and treason (Messner, 2004, p. 134–138).

Also in the Art of war, the Chinese strategist emphasised that the greatest achievement is to win wars without bloodshed, without fighting with the use of information and irregular, hybrid activities. Hybrid warfare is frequently used term in academic analysis and media discourse. The change in the nature of the international environment after the end of Cold War conflict has led to a serious change in the strategic discourse. Psychological and informational activities are widely used not only by non-democratic states, but also by those who appear to be the representatives of democracy as the United States. Hybrid conflicts are characterised by a high level of ambiguity. As such, they are large a part of security environment in the 21st century. Uncertainty, the irregular nature of warfare distinguishes hybrid conflicts from the activities conducted by regular military units. There is no possibility to identify an aggressor. Blurred boundaries between war and peace results in the distorted distinction between regular forces and guerrillas or militias. The term hybrid itself is derived from the Latin language and refers to an entity that combines the various characteristics typical for different activities. This kind of activity consist of parts that belong to different structures (Cole, 2010, p. 80–81).

In asymmetric conflicts advantage is achieved mainly through well-planned, multistage and coordinated psychological operations. According to that an opponent with lesser potential is able to dominate its mighty adversary. The conflicts of new type are characterised by convergence. In the case of asymmetric conflicts especially significant and valuable are irregular activities. They are not easy to identify. In asymmetric conflicts convergence is manifested in blurring the borders between psychological power and kinetic activity and non-kinetic, regular troops and militias (Lidel, 2010, p. 6–7). The paradigm of war conducted with the use of regular armies has been replaced by a completely new approach. A new perspective on the changes in the security environment after the end of the Cold War is based on undermining the authority of national states. The erosion of the authorities of national state has created a fertile ground for the development of various types of organisations, non-state actors that have less potential and therefore exploit the irregular activities, including information and propaganda. Asymmetries are the most oftenly used by weak opponents. Non-standard actions allow them to gain an advantage and overcome disproportions. In a large scale, the potential of psychological operations that characterise contemporary asymmetric conflicts is exploited also by modern states, and in the case of Russia these operations are a highly effective tool for the implementation of policy. Active measures are also a way to achieve strategic goals. Security after the end of the Cold War is network-centric. It is shaped by the progressive abolition of state monopoly for using violence. Liquidity, non-determinability, the disappearance of the idea of national state create the possibility to use an influence that is almost invisible and difficult to identify. Influence becomes a powerful tool for modelling the behaviour of opponent – the target of attack. In the era of information and democratisation of access to the media, special attention must be paid to psychological and information operations carried out from the position of states.

Using of asymmetry and conducting psychological-informational operation is also an issue considered from an ethical perspective. Information technologies have created a wide range of opportunities for both – non-state actors and nation states. In the information age, in all asymmetric conflicts kinetic weapons and regular troops have lost their decisive potential (Van Baard, 2009, p. 18). The battlefield changes. Nowadays it is a space of confrontation and information warfare. Warfare is conducted throughout the political, economic, social and environmental spectrum. The war has changed its character too. At present, warfare is described by the conflict of different ideas, emotions, interpretations. The development of technology create completely new opportunities to influence, generate and spread influence, specific ideas, values. The goals of players in information wars are not constrained only to military purposes, but contain psychological, economic and social goals. The aim of informational activities is to destroy the will to defence and the resistance of opponent's society (Gray, 2007, p. 215).

Propaganda and informational activities are the domain of the so-called wars of third wave. An american political scientist, Alvin Toffler, claims that in the post-industrial age, where the main resource is knowledge, information affects the ways of conducting wars and conflicts (Toffler, 1980, p. 418). The decisive feature the is use of the flow of information in the

21st century. The instability of security conditions and the lack of coherence make psychological and informational activities a particularly effective way of realising national interest. Wars in the age of information society are won with the skillful use of information resources and information as well as psychological operations. Defence against psychological-information operations differs from classical defence, understood as the mobilisation of armed forces. The impact is elusive and difficult for a clear identification. It is problematic to designate the entity responsible for attacks in the undefined informational sphere. In western democracies, the awareness of information and psychological operations organised and realised by the Russian Federation is low. In the West, the issue of hybrid conflicts and coordinated multi-stage operations of influence appeared in public discourse after the annexation of Crimean Peninsula by the Russian Federation in 2014. Psychological operations are oriented towards achieving victory over the enemy without the need for using military force. Throughout the centuries, actions aimed at deceiving the enemy, spreading disinformation, gaining advantage through irregular actions were considered as morally questionable.

Now policymakers are thinking about how to improve the psychological and information activities and increase the reach of the state, not whether to use the power of influence and properly crafted information (Linebarger, 1948, p. 48). Psychological and informational activities are coordinated, interrelated undertakings aimed at manipulating information. This is an organised activity, implemented according to a specific plan and strategy. The main goal of psycho-informational operations is to achieve and maintain an advantage over the opponent by influencing the political, social, or economic processes in the hostile state. Very often these operations use disinformation and serve to create a favourable atmosphere for the country's moves, as well as to depreciate the authorities of the enemy state. This is done mainly by inspiring the dissatisfaction of opposition circles with the policy of state and its authorities. These operations are aimed at weakening an opponent's will to resist. Coordinated long-term psychological operations transmit a specific perception and interpretation of international events. In the context of an opponent's ability to defend against the operations of influence psychological operations can reduce the effectiveness of general defence. Influence, the disturbance of the normal functioning of the state, influence extended on the sphere of mentality and public opinion in the opponent's country is the essence of psychological actions – regardless of the state. Psychological and informational measures are implemented not only to protect own interests – but, above all – to keep the *status quo* intact. Nevertheless, effective psychological and informational action, must be rooted in reality. The message should be coherent and mutually consistent. This is a way of managing political and social processes in the opponent's country. This action is aimed mainly at undermining the foundations of the state and society of adversary. It is identified with attack on mentality, an attempt to model it according to its own interests (Wasiljewa, 2012, p. 30). The purpose of the operation may also be to break down the territorial integrity of the enemy state. The great exemplification of territorial disintegration is the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014.

Psychological and informational operations are a phenomenon with a long history. The foundations of psychological-information activities have been described by ancient Chinese theorist Sun Tzu. He pointed out that one of the most important elements of warfare is the psychological impact aimed at opponent. In the context of Russian propaganda and informational warfare, Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov has said that the battlefield in the wars of the future will be the informational sphere. Conducting effective psychological and information operations ensures that country will achieve strategic advantage at low cost. Democratised access to information and the facilitated preparation and transmission of specific content enable the organisation of psychological operations. Broadly speaking, the tool for the implementation of psychological and information operations is a careful selection of information, aimed at changing not only the information systems of enemy, but also the social and political sphere. This is a measure aimed at the perception of society, the public opinion of the society of a state – the target of the attack. The implementation of multi-level psychological-informational operations is strategic and tactical. Informational operations are directed against not only informational and technological systems but also against individual and social awareness (Slipczenko, 2010, p. 210). In the era of social media it is easy to conduct the psychological and informational activities.

Psychological warfare is based on the use of information against the human psyche. This involves exerting a broad influence, which is intended to induce a change in the behaviour of people and their perception and interpretation of events in favour the strategic interests of the aggressor. As Lowcow and Kruglow (1999, p. 49–51) emphasise information is the kind of armaments that is used to influence the psychological and spiritual sphere of society. The informational impact affects the entire social consciousness.

The term psychological warfare refers to activities carried out using psychological methods to induce planned, specific psychological reactions in others. The West does not seem to understand that and marginalises the range of psychological and informational operations planned and implemented by the Russian Federation. It is especially dangerous for Europe because the main Russian aim is to undermine the unity of the European Union and confidence towards the NATO's defence potential. The similar situation has occurred in the past – during the existence of the USSR. USSR mastered to the highest level the use of active measures and disinformation in order to depreciate the opponent (Sanders & Brown, 1961, p. 59). In Russia-West relations, the operation of influence is a tool of play. Psychological operations are carried out to demoralise and weaken the will to resist and fight. These types of operations of influence may prepare the kinetic horizon of military engagement or warfare campaigns (Poczepcow, 2000, p. 56). The term of the psychological warfare was used in 1920. It was introduced to the common use by British historian J. Fuller. The context of the analysis was the First World War. For the first time the term psychological operation has been used in the American plans of the war with Japan in 1945. Psychological warfare, informational-psychological operations use a wide spectrum of techniques for influencing values, beliefs, interpretations of events and reasoning, as well as behaviours.

Psychological operations are used to mask real intentions and actions, as well as to create and maintain appropriate attitudes and behaviours that are connected with aggressor's goals and interests. This is also one of the ways of undermining the morale of the opponent, the mental condition of society. Target of psychological and informational activities is usually the society of the opponent as well as the power's circles.

Information and psychological activities can be interpreted as a kind of indirect aggression, a specific kind of propaganda. A psychological influence is difficult to counteract because it is difficult to identify (Ellul, 1973, p. 54). The psychological threat is not new, although it is a serious contributor to the redefinition of security priorities in the West. Psychological operations in the 21st century benefit from rapid technological development. Another aspect is defensiveness in the approach to informational dangers and low social awareness of what is a psychological operation that is carried out beyond the consciousness of individuals and society (Szekowcow, 2017, p. 43).

Reducing social resistance and changing beliefs of society are important goals of any psychological operation aimed at the perception and mentality of opponent. Another important factor of psychological operation is to effectively destabilise the society. The effectiveness of the influence operation is derived from effective application of appropriate ideas, beliefs and values and transfer them right to the social consciousness. All transferred ideas and concepts reinforce the beneficial behaviour from the aggressor's point of view. The change of perception and interpretation, and even the change in the basic meaning of concepts in the public discourse anesthetise the society – the target of the attack and destroy any possible resistance against the aggressor's actions. Psycho-informational operations are a tool used to introduce universal fear in society and in order to paralyse rational reasoning.

Contemporary psycho-informational operations are just an updated version of those realised during the Cold War conflict. Contemporary actions seek not only to demoralise the enemy, but to show the powerlessness of state structures. This results in lowering social trust in state's structures and basic functions of the state authorities. Playing on the emotions of society leads to the increased level of social suggestion. Referring to the emotions facilitates the introduction of rational and interpretative alternatives that match the aggressor's interest (Kossek, 2016). The modern Russian Federation uses the potential of psycho-informational and disinformation to model social awareness by influencing both the social fabric and the decision-making centres. Planning and implementating the strategy of active measures is an integral part of the general strategy of realising the policy priorities not only internally but also at international scale.

Disinformation and Active Measures in the Russian Federation: Why are they Growing Danger for the Western World?

In Russia active measures and multistage, coordinated psychological and informational operations aimed at the perceptual sphere of society – the target of the attack has a long

history. Active measures are an integral part of implementing the priorities of international policy and building a favorable atmosphere for Russia's international and internal actions. Active measures developed along with the formation of the Russian state and secret service, which are the backbone of psychological operations, which have always been an instrument of power (Darczewska, 2017, p. 40). The psychological warfare, defined in Russia as active measures, consists of specially organised and professionally conducted operations that influence the consciousness, emotions, attitudes, behavior and the will of the opponent. Since the twentieth century, the role of active measures and psychological operations has significantly increased. Still the most important factor of Russian international activity is disinformation. Nowadays, information is the main weapon that the Russian Federation uses to act effectively. It is one of the strongest assets of Russia that is widely used in international relations.

In Soviet Russia, disinformation was a way of implementing the Soviet interests. According to the Soviet Military Encyclopedia, disinformation is a means of securing combat operations and the actions of armed forces, a complex set of measures to mislead the enemy with regard to the presence and dispatch of forces, various military objectives, their state, combat readiness, operations and command plan. The *maskirovka* allows to achieve the surprise effect, combat readiness, and increase the chance of survival. It is implemented at the lowest tactical level and contains all active and passive elements destined for deceiving the enemy. Disinformation is often confused with camouflage. In fact, the Russian *maskirovka* consists of camouflage and imitation. This kind of activity includes the use of the so called 'useful idiots', maneuvers aimed at deceiving the opponent, distracting of its attention (Haaland & Heier, 2016, p. 106). *Maskirovka* is a product of the Soviet era and it is commonly associated with the activities of Soviet secret service – a phenomenon with a long history.

The potential of psychological activities has been used in Russia for centuries. Globalisation and technological development have updated the legacy of informational and psychological activities. According to Sun Tzu, the purpose of psychological activities is to degrade everything that is good in the opponent state. The core of the psychological war is the use of public figures of the state – the target of the attack. To undermine the prestige of the opponent state authorities Russia uses influencers for effective and elusive psychological action. Active measures implemented by the Russian Federation in other countries are based on instilling conflicts and clashes within the people, initiating social tensions and opposition towards state policy. All active measures have a disintegrating effect on the effectiveness of the functioning of state structures. To undermine the power of authority it is necessary to assert public opinion in the belief that it cannot ensure the security of the public and therefore is not able to fulfil its essential functions. The purpose of active measures is to disrupt and disintegrate the work of the executive power and the legislature in the opponent country. In common sense, the psychological war is nothing more than the spontaneous use of the post-conflict mechanisms of influence and pressure on the public opinion of the enemy state in order to subordinate them or create favorable conditions for the realisation

of Russian interests. Active agents as well as all sorts of information and psychological operations are not directed against the armed forces, but are oriented on modeling the consciousness of targeted society.

Psychological operations are not regulated by any legal norms. There is no law that sets the common rules of conducting psychological operations. This kind of operation does not depend on territory or the course of warfare. Both the psychological war and the implementation of active measures is a continuous process. Psychological warfare and active measures do not fit in the traditional concept of war coined by Claus von Clausewitz. Psychological warfare is characterised by indeterminacy. In this kind of warfare an enemy is very often non-defined. The enemy is not individual and has no identity. Information that is the basis of a psychological war can lead to an advantage over the opponent. Information supported by appropriate technology and managed according to a specific strategy plays a determining role in the international policy (Solowjow, 2010, p. 76). In the concept of national security of the Russian Federation No. 24 from 10.01.2000, the main threat to the information sphere for the Russian Federation is the desire of states to dominate the world informational space and attempt to diminish the position of Russia in the internal and global informational space (*O strategii nacionalnoj bezopasnosti do 2020 goda*, 2014).

Russia has always appreciated the potential of psychological and information activities aimed at exerting influence on the enemy and disseminating disinformation. It is not surprising that the informational sphere is one of the variants of the national security strategy. Manipulating of information is a link between psychological warfare and active measures. Using the media to influence the public's consciousness in the opponent state is not a new practice. Both information and disinformation are equal weapons. Manipulating interpretations and the awareness of society is a way of playing in the contemporary international conflicts (Korablewa, 2012, p. 104–105). The global information space becomes undefined battlefield that is not regulated by any legal norms. Psychological and informational activities are an integral part of geopolitics. Impact operations are a form of geopolitical confrontation (Iwanow, 2013, p. 277).

In Russia psychological activities known as the operations of influence are known as active measures and strategic disinformation. Disinformation of the enemy, the influence exerted on its consciousness, the modelling of interpretation and terminology used in the enemy state is crucial for securing Russian interests. These are tools of creating a favourable atmosphere for the activities of the Russian Federation. Disinformation is a mean to secure military operations and the daily activities of armed forces. It is a complex of measures aimed at introducing the enemy to misrepresentation in terms of the distribution of forces, the variety of military objectives, their combat readiness. The purpose of the mask is to achieve a surprise effect. Therefore disinformation can be perceived as the core of active measures (Yefrimov & Chermashentsev, 1978, p. 175–177).

Maskirovka as an integral part of active measures is implemented on lower tactical and strategical levels, and is designed to mislead the enemy. At the same time is used to hide the

real intention of the attacking state. The aim of *maskirovka* as a part of active measures is to increase the effectiveness of other military activities. It is the commonly used mechanism to protect Russian national interest (Cimbalaa, 2014, p. 365). *Maskirovka* as well as other means is designed to influence the course of international events. They can be used both abroad and domestically. Regarding the damaging effect of active measures and its strategic meaning in Russian doctrines we should keep in mind that this kind of activities developed along with the structures of the state and secret service. In other words they were an integral part of the development of the Russian state.

Active measures have a long history in Russia. They were used at a large scale in the Soviet period. Both in the Soviet period and in the present day, active measures are the forms of political warfare. In the USSR, the state security organs – the Bolshevik WCzK, the OGPU, the NKVD, and the KGB – were responsible for the implementation of the strategy of active measures. Nowadays, the Federal Security Service (FSB) is responsible for the implementation of active measures. They are used to create a favourable picture of Russia and its actions in international politics. The favourable atmosphere that justifies Russian activities on the global stage is crucial to Russian operations. The purpose of active measures is not only to influence the course of events in the international arena, but also to facilitate the domestic activities of Russian state. This is indirectly affected by a public opinion, interpretation, a way of thinking and behaving. Active measures are implemented both – within and without the borders of the Russian Federation. Russian active measures are often identified with disinformation, psychological-informational operations, the falsification of documents, the preparation of material that compromises the opponent's state.

Active measures have always been the domain of Russian secret service. One of the most popular ways of implementing active measures is to support the ideology and fund the wide range of organisations that agree with Russian rhetoric. In the communist era, active measures consisted of support the Communist parties and opposition parties, in order to weaken the legitimacy of power. Russia has also supported the national liberation movements of the Third World. Russia uses active measures to induce unrest, inspire the underground movements and different militias (Mitrochin, 200, p. 300). Implementing the strategy with the use of active measures is reinforced by technological development and globalisation. Democratising access to the media allows you to freely transmit a properly crafted message to any part of the world. Active measures are the heart of Russian intelligence services. Intelligence efforts related to the standard collecting of information are supplemented by subversion, ideological activities aimed at the weakening and disintegration of the unity of the West. Active measures are calculated to weaken the hegemonic role of the United States in international relations. To conclude, modern active measures are based on supporting all opposition movements in the Western Europe. Discrediting an opponent, producing a story that puts the opponent in an unfavourable light.

At the core of active measures carried out by the Russian secret service is the strategy of information warfare. The practice of disinformation is crucial in the strategy of active

measures that are aimed at properly modeling the social opinion in the states – targets of the attack. Russian secret service as entities involved in the implementation of Russian foreign policy use a strong arsenal that consists of propaganda, provocation and subversion. Active measures are the offensive weapon and are a part of the Russian strategy of psychological warfare with the West. Active measures play also important role in geopolitics, which has been reborn since 1991 – especially its expansive, offensive line that is based on the discourse of two opposing civilisations. Contrasting the different civilisational qualities is the basis of modern Russian geopolitical thinking. The main and the most prominent representative of aggressive, civilisational geopolitics is Alexander Dugin. He opposes the traditional Russian civilisation with the degenerated character of Western civilisation that is often identified with globalisation, the pursuit of universalism and the desire to establish unipolar international order (Dugin, 2002, p. 271). Alexander Dugin's Eurasian idea is closely linked to the prevailing political situation and anti-Western rhetoric of the authorities in the Kremlin (Dugin, 2004, p. 253). Civilisational antagonism is the foundation of justifying the hegemonic role of Russia in the near-foreign region as well as is the basis for the implementation of active measures outside the Russian Federation.

According to Vladimir Volkov, a theorist of disinformation, active measures use the potential of information exchange and its reach. In the context of active measures one thing that Volkoff emphasised is the fact that every information has a misleading character (Volkoff, 1990, p. 5). The implementation of active measures creates the myth of Russian secret service as the one and only pure elite that is able to effectively protect the Russian national interests. The skilful and consistent implementation of psychological and informational operations, which are aimed at influencing the dynamics and shape of events on the international stage, is a prerequisite for the protection of the Russian national interests at the international scale. The destabilisation of the mental sphere of opponent society as well as the undermining of authority of opponent state are important goals of active measures. The implementation of active measures is focused on the realisation of Russian foreign policy priorities. Nevertheless active measures differ from classical intelligence and counterintelligence activities. They also extinguished from classical diplomatic and information activities. According to Igor Panarin, the information warfare, and therefore the implementation of active measures, takes place in new, unknown fronts: cultural, civilisational, ethnical and religious, and it is not easy to counteract them (Panarin, 2006, p. 7).

Benefits from the implementation of active measures and exerting influence on the opponent's mental sphere were widely known in Russia. The implementation of active measures by the security services has contributed to autocreation of the myth of the secret service as an elite that protects the Russian national interest. In spite of the disintegration of the USSR, active measures are still one of the functions of the secret service, and in particular the Federal Security Service (FSB). The high position of secret service is derived from the Russian strategic culture. The contemporary active measures differ greatly from those used during the Cold War. At present times, information seems to be the greatest weapon. Inspiring

protests on a large scale, provocations are still in use. After 1991, the strength of active measures has been strengthened by globalisation and unrestrained access to communication channels. Real-time access to information enhances the reach of Russian active measures. Active measure can be perceived as a project of a geopolitical nature. As a way of influencing the consciousness of the society of enemy, they are deeply embedded in the context of the rivalry of civilisation. In many contexts of analysis active measures are analysed as activity subordinated to the offensive Russian state. Such active measures serve above all to impose Russia's own interpretation of the course of international events (Krysko, 1999, p. 9).

From the perspective of intelligence activities, the Russian active measures are the operational measures aimed at exerting influence on the international policy and internal situation in the states that are the objects of these activities. Active measures are all actions designed to destabilise and weaken the unity of the West. All possible definitions of active measures have some common features. First of all, active measures are offensive and disinformative and are a derivative of the domestic and foreign policy of the Russian Federation. They are calculated to create a n atmosphere favourable for Moscow by inducing an opponent to take actions in line with the Russian interests. Since the fall of USSR, active measures have been institutionalised in one single, co-ordinated process that is subordinate to the Russian secret service. For the purpose of implementing the active measures that are targeted at the mental sphere of the opponent, destabilizing and discrediting is embedded in the context of geopolitical confrontation. An extremely important foundation for the intensification of active measures is the return of ideology of the strong state to the mainstream rhetoric of Russian authorities. Secret service, which are the backbones of active measures, are tasked by the Kremlin and are a tool of political warfare. In political context active measures focus on creating crisis situations in opponent states. In order to implement active measures, Russia widely uses anti-establishment parties and political movements in the Western Europe.

Conclusions

Encouraging conflicts, supporting opposition movements, and executing counterintelligence operations in the opponent states are the classic distinguishing features of the active measures implemented by Russian secret service. They are also a great part of psychological-informational operations that are aimed at the mental sphere of opponent society and the circles of power. They are the part of the broader context of the psychological and information war with the hostile Western civilisation of the West. The existence of the enemy legitimises the necessity of carrying out active measures aimed at the mentality and perceptual sphere of the opponent. Active measures in the current form continue to be an important tool for the implementation of Russian policy in the international relations. The scope of the application of information and psychological influences on the mental sphere of the opponent is constantly widening. The Kremlin's goal is to destabilise and reduce the morale of the enemy. The use of active measures is defined in the key doctrines of the

Russian Federation. Many official papers that have a strategic importance like Doctrine of Informational Security and National Security Concept in Russian Federation speak about active measures in the context of psychological warfare and its meaning for the protection of the Russian national interests. Nevertheless, active measures are a part of the geopolitical confrontation between the West and the East, and as such are a derivative of Russian political and strategic culture. Psychological and informational activities are threats that are difficult to identify. Therefore it is not easy to counteract them effectively.

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