

The macro-regional project of Intermarium:
The Baltic state's perspective

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The main aim of this Master's Thesis is to explore how state and non-state actors of the Baltic countries (Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia) perceive the idea of the regional project Intermarium. The main theory of this research work is the theory of new regionalism, which involves state and non-state actors in the creation of a region. Intermarium or Miedzymorze is a macro-region, which is one of the levels of regionalism, that expands between Baltic and Black Seas. Baltic states play a crucial role in it, as they connect the Baltic sea with other countries up to the Black sea, thereby creating a belt of countries between Western Europe and Russia.

The methodology of this thesis is based on the historical approach, which allowed to investigate the concept of regionalisation in international relations, history of its theoretical dimension; the origins of the Intermarium project and its development until nowadays; the contemporary discussion about the Intermarium project and the perspective of the Baltic countries.

The main conclusion of the research is that Baltic states' governments are not interested in the Intermarium project, but they pay great attention to a similar project – The Three Seas Initiative. However, Intermarium got support from such non-state actors as far-right groups. Nevertheless, its perspectives remain questionable and doubtful.

The further researches may focus on the role and perspectives of the Three Seas Initiative project in the Baltic region, as well as the role of the far-right groups in such kinds of initiatives.

Keywords

region, regionalisation, new regionalism, macro-region, Intermarium, Baltic states, The Three Seas Initiative, far-right groups

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INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the term of 'region' has been related to a geographical area that consists of two or more states. These states are limited either by natural barriers, such as such as oceans, rivers or chains of mountains, or by the sphere of influence. Regions were regarded as part of the geopolitical system, as these that play an essential role in the bloc policy. Regionalisation, or the process of a regional formation, happened when specific states were included in the area of the main power, as it happened in case of such regional organisations, as NATO or Warsaw Treaty. Such approach was called the 'old' regionalism, as in it's case the international regions could include only states.

The term 'new regionalism' appeared in the early 1990s and defined the strategy for building a region as a response to the economic and political challenges of globalisation. The research works of F. Sonderbaum, B. Hettne, A. Hurrell, R. Foque and others are devoted to the study of this approach. If the old regionalism was created "from outside" and "from above" (by superpowers), the new regionalism is a more spontaneous process from within and "from below" (constituent states are main actors). The new regionalism is a more comprehensive and multidimensional process.¹ Regions are formed under the influence of many factors and conditions, such as economic and political interests, common value approaches, historical memory and cultural heritage. Regions may include both state and non-state actors.

The 'global regionalisation' is regionalisation of the global world that is formed of the regions on different levels: sub-level and macro-level. On the macro-level the main interaction happens between different regional groups, but not between big powers of coalitions of states that are geographically far from each other.² According to the definition made by the former EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Pawel Samecki, a macro-region is "an area including territory from a number of different countries or regions associated with one or more common features or challenges."³ He also indicated that some of the main reasons for a macro-region are: the macro-region may help to solve cross-border problems

¹ Hettne, and Inotai, 1994, 1

² Leonova 2016, 271

³ European Commission, 2009, 1

like environmental issues; macro-regions handle the influence and aspects of the ongoing denationalisation and globalisation much better than one state alone.⁴

One of the examples of the emerging macro-regions is, so-called, Intermarium or Miedzymorze, which means ‘between the Seas’ and extends across the territories that expand between the Baltic, Black and Adriatic Seas.

Initially, the idea of Intermarium as an alliance of states to protect Poland and other European countries from Russian expansion belongs to the Polish Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, which was later, during the interwar period, supported by the first head of the revived Polish state, Jozef Pilsudski, who developed an idea about the creation of a confederation of states (Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Estonia, Belarus, Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia) “as a counterbalance to Russian communism and German nationalism considering it to be the Third force and one more democratic Empire in Europe”.⁵ His idea was not supported by the countries which were considered as potential candidates, and the concept was forgotten until the beginning of the XXI century.

In 2015 then-winning Polish President Andrzej Duda announced the idea of creating a partnership bloc of countries located between the Adriatic, Baltic and Black Seas. At the same time, his Croatian colleague Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic proposed the same initiative. In 2016 The Three Seas Initiative, or so-called ‘Trimarium’, that consists of twelve states (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia) was created. Though Three Seas Initiative seems to succeed the idea of Intermarium, they have several differences: Trimarium is more concentrated on the economic benefits of its members, while Intermarium concerned the idea of liberating nations suffering from the Soviet rule. Moreover, all members of the Three Seas Initiative are members of the European Union.

In 2016 the Ukrainian ultra-right decided to revive the initial idea of Intermarium. The intention to develop relations with neighbours was then announced by deputy head of the Staff of the Special Operations Detachment AZOV, Ukrainian, Andriy Biletsky, who gathered the far-right groups from the whole Intermarium region in order to create a union that is considered by Ukrainian nationalists as an alternative to both the Customs Union and the EU at the same time.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Bresky. 2011, 140

Theoretical frame and research questions

The main question of this research work is: How state and non-state actors of the Baltic countries (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia) perceive the idea of the regional project Intermarium? These countries play a critical role in this region, as they connect the Baltic sea with other countries up to the Black sea, thereby creating a belt of countries between Western Europe and Russia.

In order to respond to the research question, the following *research tasks* were set:

1. to understand what is 'the region', how and why is it created, what is 'global regionalisation' and what is the role of the region in it;
2. to study the history of the Intermarium phenomena;
3. to investigate how the governments of the Baltic countries express their interest to the Intermarium macro-regional project;
4. to find out which role the far-right groups play in the Intermarium macro-regional project.

Theoretical frame: *regionalism*. The main theory of the thesis is the theory of *New Regionalism*, which involves a variety of state and non-state actors in the process of transformation of the world order. Macro-region is one of the levels of regionalism, which is a territory that consists of several different countries or regions associated with one or more common features or challenges.

The methodology of this thesis work is based on the *historical approach*, which allowed to investigate the origins of the Intermarium project, its development until nowadays and to contextualise the phenomenon in the historical process. The contemporary discussion about the Intermarium project and the perspective of the Baltic countries are also situated in the historical context. The historical approach also helps to research the concept of regionalisation in international relations and the history of its theoretical dimension.

Theoretical research enables to explore and discuss the theory of regionalisation and one of its levels – macro-region.

The case study enables to gain a deeper understanding of a particular object or a defined group of objects, in this case – Baltic countries' (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia) perception of the idea of the regional project Intermarium and the role of far-right groups.

Empirical material and research literature

The research is based on *primary* and *secondary* data. In the first chapter, secondary and tertiary sources are used in order to that analyse the concepts of global regionalisation, ‘new’ and ‘old’ regionalism and the macro-region, written by many professors and scientists, such as Tanja A. Borzel, Andrew Hurrell, Matthew Farrell, Bjorn Hettne, Joseph Ney, Karl Deutsch, Olga Leonova and others.

The second chapter is based on such secondary data as historical research literature that helped to shed light on the historical background of the Intermarium project. The essential role in this research work played: *Intermarium: The Land Between the Black and Baltic Seas* by Marek Jan Chodakiewicz and *Intermarium: Wilson, Madison and Eastern-Central European Federalism* by Jonathan Levy, that give an overview of the history of the region and its communities. In order to analyse the situation of the Intermarium project at the beginning of the XXI century, there were used such secondary sources as scholarly journal articles, as well as primary sources: government reports and interviews.

In the third chapter, there were mostly used primary sources. Firstly, political documents by authorities (governments, ministries, presidents’ offices) which describe foreign policy of the presidents of the three Baltic states and if they expressed any interest to Intermarium or similar projects. Secondly, primary sources, controlled by the far-right groups: the Tumblr blogs (*Interregnum blog*, *Reconquista blog*), The New Eastern Europe online magazine (articles by Kott Matthew (2017) and Wishart Alexandra (2018)), FOIA Research platform, Facebook page (*Intermarium Support Group*) and YouTube channel (*Reconquista Ukraine*), which discuss and promote the idea of Intermarium, activities of the far right-groups, concerning this project, how they see this project and which perspectives it has.

The primary sources were analyzed by using the *context and textual analysis*.

First of all, it was important to identify the physical nature of the source: most of the sources about the far-right groups were controlled by the far-right groups, as well as information about the Baltic states’ authorities – on the official webpages of the authorities.

Secondly, it was important to answer the questions “What is the purpose of the source?” “What do we know about the author?”. As most of the authors of the primary sources, which consisted information about the far-right groups, were members or were

somehow related to the far-right groups, it was important to bear in mind that the information may not be objective and is worth checking out in different sources.

Thirdly, it was worth considering, who was the target audience of the primary sources. As most of the primary sources of the information about the Intermarium and the far-right groups were found on the webpages, controlled by the same far-right groups, one may have to conclude that the target audience was people, who support and are interested in the far-right ideology. It should be noted that the information about the far-right groups' position on the Intermarium project was not found in any other general sources. The target audience of the sources of the information on Baltic states' authorities was general public that is why the language of delivery was simple and non-critical,

Most of the primary and secondary sources were collected using the *online research method*, which is the way how researchers collect data via the internet. After making a systematic keyword search "Intermarium Estonia/Lithuania/Latvia", the results showed that far-right groups are interested in the project, which led to the creation of the fourth subchapter in the third chapter.

Structure

In order to complete the following research tasks, the structure of the thesis is organised in the following order.

The first chapter is devoted to a theoretical understanding of what the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ regionalisms are and what is the difference between these approaches. Special attention is also paid to the concept of “global regionalism” and one of its levels – macro-region.

The second chapter describes the historical background of the Intermarium phenomena: from several thousand years ago, when first human transaction appeared in the region, through the period of Ruthenia and Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the introduction of the idea of Intermarium by Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, its further development by the Polish leader Jozef Pilsudski at the beginning of XX century, until the XXI century when the project was revived and reconsidered.

The third chapter briefly outlines the structure of the political system in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, their authorities’ foreign politics and attitude towards the Intermarium macro-regional project. The fourth and final part of the third chapter presents activities of the far-right groups of the region.

Finally, the conclusion presents the outcome of the research work.

1. REGIONALISATION IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The phenomena of the division of the international space into regions are not something new in international relations. British researcher, Professor of International Relations, Louise Fawcett notes that regionalism has always existed. Throughout the history of international relations regions could be presented as empires, spheres of influence, an alliance of major power and its allies. Regions could be represented by entire continents, for example, Europe as a regional international system in the XIX century. In the modern sense, according to L. Fawcett, regions stand out as parts of the international system, they have independent universal activity, and for the first time begin to function as independent units at the beginning of the XX century, after the end of World War I.⁶

The regional dimension of international relations can be traced in the League of Nations' activities during 1920-1930s. It appeared in the discussions and practical approaches of the League of Nations regarding correspondence between the universal nature of the problems of sovereignty and collective security and their regional dimensions. This mainly concerned the legitimisation of regional associations organised outside the structures of the League of Nations.

The experience of the League of Nations attitude towards regional associations was considered during the formation of the new international organisation of the UN after the end of World War II. Regional structures were legitimised within the EN. For example, in chapter VIII, Article 52 of the *UN Charter* provides participation of regional structures in conflict resolution.⁷ The activities of regional economic commissions and commissions responsible for resolving social issues are an integral part of the UN. According to L. Fawcett, the principles of regional participation and cooperation were firmly defined by the UN Charter.⁸

During the formation of the United Nations and its charter, victorious states, namely the United States, the USSR, Great Britain and France, governed the rules of the international order. Later, the world order was transformed into bipolar balance. In that context, the role of regions was reduced to their subordinate position in the framework of

⁶ Fawcett, 2004, 430

⁷ Charter of the United Nations, Charter VIII

⁸ Fawcett, 2004, 430

the relationship between the two poles – East and West. In military-political terms, their functions were determined by two regional blocs – NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The rules of the bipolar world established the resolution of disputes outside the regional associations only with the participation of the highest judge of the bipolar system – the UN Security Council.

In 1953 after the failure of the idea of the European Defense Community, the leading theme of regionalism was to ensure a strategy of peace and reconciliation in Europe. The critical issue here was the reluctance of some European states to lose its state sovereignty. The topic of discussion among politicians and researchers were federalist approaches, primarily the concept of the United States of Europe which was proposed by Winston Churchill in his famous address given at Zurich University on September 19, 1947.

At the same time, regional integration processes, which were formed within the framework of two blocks and did not go beyond the borders of the existing bipolar system, which The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the Roman Treaties represented in Europe, were strengthened.

Nevertheless, the existing bipolar system did not become an obstacle for the emergence of regional organisations or pan-regional groups, such as Organization of African Unity (1963), League of Arab States (1945), South East Asia Treaty Organization (1995), ANZUS Security Treaty (1952), The Central Treaty Organization (the Bagdad Pact) (1955).

For the developing and non-aligned countries, regionalism has taken the form of ideological justification for equal remoteness and independence within the framework of a bipolar system. These were, for example, the Group of Seventy-Seven (G-77) (1964) and Non-Aligned Movement (1961), operating within the UN.

During the 1970-1980s, many developing countries sought to find their place in the regional economic and security space. There was a process of fragmentation of the international system with trends, which then took shape in the concept of ‘third world’. L. Fawcett defined the new trends in international relations as “the rebellion of the periphery”.⁹ The new regional and subregional associations appear, such as Association of

⁹ Fawcett, 2005, 28

South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) (1976), Caribbean Community (CARICOM) (1973), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (1975), Southern African Development Community (SADC) (1980), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) (1985). In the late 1960s and 1970s, the foundations of such regional associations as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (1975) and Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) (1969) was laid.

The real dynamics of the formation of regional, subregional and pan-regional association in the second half of the XX century demonstrates the increasing role of the regional dimension in international relations.

1.1. History of the Theoretical Dimension of Regionalisation

According to Tanja A. Börzel, Professor of Political Science, in the broadest sense, “theoretical approaches to the study of regionalism are divided into old and new regionalism; regionalism in its first, second, third generations; economic, monetary, cultural and security regionalism, state regionalism, shadow regionalism; cross-, inter-, trans-, multi-regionalism; pure and hybrid regionalism; offensive, extroverted, open, or neoliberal as opposed to defensive, introverted, closed, resistance, regulatory and developmental regionalism; lower and higher level regionalism; North, South, North-South regionalism; informal and institutional regionalism”.¹⁰

These concepts are as varied as the objects of study. There is no single definition of what a ‘region’ is. Some researchers, as Andrew Hurrell, Professor of International Relations in Oxford, agree that the region and dynamics of regionalism imply a certain “geographical proximity and contiguity” as they differentiate regionalism from other non-global forms of organisation.¹¹ Joseph Ney, a famous American political scientist, defined a region as “a limited number of states linked together by a geographical relationship and by a degree of mutual interdependence.”¹² Also, he described regionalism as “the formation of interstate association or groupings based on regions”.¹³

Regionalism, therefore, refers to the processes and structures of regional construction in terms of closer economic, political, security, social and cultural relations between states and societies that are geographically close. In the political sciences, the concept of ‘regionalism’ is often used as a synonym for the concepts of ‘regional cooperation’ and ‘regional integration’, which can be observed at the opposite ends of the essence, within which regionalism can change.¹⁴

The authors of the book *Global Politics of Regionalism: Theory and Practice*, published in 2005, edited by M. Farrell, B. Hettne and L. Langenhove, distinguish two waves of theoretical approaches to the study of regions.¹⁵ In the framework of the first

¹⁰ Börzel, 2011, 5

¹¹ Hurrell, 1995, 353

¹² Ney, 1968, xii

¹³ Ibid., vii

¹⁴ Börzel, 2011, 5

¹⁵ Farrell, Hettne, and Langenhove, 2005, 7

(1950-1990s), integration dynamics in the world and regional integration processes in Europe were studied.

Decolonisation and formation of European integration aroused interest in regional subsystems and regional integration from the angle of maintaining world order. As part of system analysis of Morton Kaplan, American Professor of Political Science, the term 'region' appears in the meaning of 'subsystem'. The subsystem supports system connections of a higher international level and allows to explain the behaviour of regional players by interpreting local features that have common sociohistorical roots.¹⁶

The subsystem level of analysis was present in the research of American political scientist Kenneth Waltz. He considered the subsystem as "a new level of analysis between the individual (state) and the international system."¹⁷ The subsystem could have polarities (centre and periphery), as well as an international system. The subsystem was open to the external influence of higher systems. Regions, like the international system, could have their international institutions and their subregions.¹⁸

According to Randall Schweller, Professor of Political Science at The Ohio State University, the relationship between the regions and the international system was a shape of "chandelier". The regional subsystem was subordinate, and the dominant international system had the possibility of an external impact on the subsystem. Within the framework of this model, transregional interaction could be present, however, it was constrained by the rules, established by the "main system".¹⁹

In the framework of the scientific approaches of researchers who studied subsystems (Ernst B. Haas and Joseph S. Ney among them), many discussions turned to the role of integration. The theory 'neo-functionalism' approached the study of integration and used it in researching of what is the regional and international organisations' role. Integration was considered as a mean of solving the conflicts that erupted in the postcolonial space. Therefore, regionalism became not only an analytical approach but also a normative way of regulating international relations.²⁰

¹⁶ Kaplan, 2005, 19-21

¹⁷ Waltz, 1979, 177

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Schweller, 1994, 72

²⁰ Mihailenko, 2014, 16-17

Furthermore, according to E. Mihailenko, “neo-functionalism focused on studying the role of transnational pressure groups, rather than technocratic and administrative networks, as the main actors in regionalism, while the free market should regulate business interests.”²¹

In the late 1950s Karl Deutsch, social and political scientist, in his book *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area* developed the transnationalism approach, which meant a group of states formed so-called ‘security communities’. Such communities didn’t choose to resolve conflicts by using force. “They have to come to agreement on at least one point: that common social problems must and can be resolved by processes of ‘peaceful change’.”²² While regional institutions work in order to solve emerging conflicts, cross-border social and economic agreements develop and improve relations between members of the community. In this case, both neo-functionalism and transnationalism considered the development of transnational ties as the main source of overcoming the resistance of states against regionalism.

According to *the intergovernmental approach*, states stay stable concerning the shift of politics and political power to the level of regional institutions, especially in the field of “high politics”.²³

The creation of the European Economic Community and its rapid development (the formation of the Customs Union, in particular) confirmed the neo-functionalist approaches. Outside Europe, a wave of regionalism has risen in other parts of the world, for instance, in Latin America and Africa.

However, in the 1970s, European integration faced severe problems in creating the European Economic and Monetary Union; attempts to integrate along the South-South line were also unsuccessful. This situation prompted researchers, Ernst Haas, for example, to switch to questions about why regionalisation was less successful in other parts of the world. From the standpoint of neo-functionalism, it turned out to be impossible to explain why in the early 1970s, European states could not organise themselves to overcome the

²¹ Ibid., 17

²² Deutsch, Burrell, and Kann, 1957, 5

²³ Hoffmann, 1966, 865

crisis. Ernst Haas even made a statement that the theory of regionalism was generally outdated.²⁴

The Single European Act (1986) and the Maastricht Treaty (1990) drew a line under the period of ‘Eurosclerosis’ that meant the high unemployment and economic stagnation in Europe. The deepening integration trends in the EU triggered a new wave of regionalism outside Europe. In Europe, there was a rapid formation of supranational institutions, including a mechanism for regulating the market, the creation of the European Commission, the European Court and others. All this together led to a revitalisation of the theoretical understanding of regional processes and a rethinking of neo-functionalism and intergovernmental theoretical approaches.

Liberal intergovernmental approaches explained supranational processes that national governments remained masters of the ongoing processes, and their actions were caused by the desire to use collectivist methods to improve domestic problems. According to E. Morawczyk and M. Pollack, national governments, but not transnational alliances led by supranational actors, stand behind regional governments.²⁵

According to T. Börzel, the process of developing a multi-level management system in the European Union led to a ‘theoretical revolution’ in the study of regional processes, which was characterised by the end of the domination of theories of international relations and opened the space for political and social comparative studies.²⁶

In the study of processes in the EU, this opened the way for social constructivism that develops in discussions with rationalist and historical institutionalist approaches. Studies of social constructivists (J. Checkel, T. Riese, T. Dietz) emphasised the importance of the processes of socialisation and the formation of collective identity in the processes of regional integration. T. Börzel believes that theoretical approaches of a regionalist nature have become sub-disciplines of theories of international relations.²⁷

At the same time, she notes that the existing theories of international relations and the established theoretical approaches to the study of European integration hardly can help to understand regionalist processes in Africa and Asia. This mission was undertaken by the so-called ‘New Regionalism’, which synthesises various approaches, including the social

²⁴ Haas, 2002

²⁵ Börzel, 2011, 7

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 8

construction of regions, the role of non-state actors, pressure groups, culture and the environment. The toolkit of the global political economy is used in the study of regional trade and investment models, institutions that facilitate the liberalisation of access to regional markets. The boundaries of institutionalist theories are verified by using statistical methods. Comparative regionalism has developed as a research field, converging various theoretical approaches that are difficult to combine.²⁸

In general, the study of regional issues was Eurocentric. The formation of the European integration theory by Antje Wiener and Thomas Diez in their book *European Integration Theory* is divided into three stages. During the first stage (1960-1970s) scientific schools explained the reasons for European integration. During the next stage (the 1980s), scientific schools analysed levels of government in the European Union. Finally, during the third stage (the 1990s), the construction of the EU was studied.²⁹ However, during these periods, there was no dominance of any theory or scientific schools.

In the 1980s, according to A. Wiener and T. Diez, a new analytical approach to the study of integration began to form. Such questions were raised within it: “What kind of political system the EU represents?” “How it is possible to call the political processes that happen inside the EU?” “How the EU regulatory policy works?”³⁰

The neo-functionalism approach, adding to the functionalism approach a broader interpretation of integration, namely the transition from the anarchist system to supranational construction, focused on social and market mechanisms and how these mechanisms push elites to defend supranational institutions. Having emphasised the interpenetration and interdependence of various areas of domestic politics, the economy, the social sphere, neo-functionalists focused on the so-called ‘low politics’. The opposite of them is the appeal to ‘high policy’, which focuses on the vital interests of the survival of the state, primarily such as state and internal security.

Thus, in studies, there is a departure from ideas about the anarchist system of states to the study of supranational institutions, social and market mechanisms, and the role of political elites.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Wiener, Diez, 2009, 6-8

³⁰ Ibid., 7

Neo-functionalists distinguish three mechanisms for promoting integration – functional spillover, political spillover and cultivated spillover. Representatives of this direction explain the reasons for integration in different ways. They mark the emergence of interactions and communications beyond established boundaries. Thereby, this phenomenon can be defined as transnationalism. For example, they believe that the elites responsible for governance in supranational institutions, such as the European Commission, promote integration because they are interested in it. However, these mechanisms do not work automatically.³¹

The study of regions as subsystems and the theoretical understanding of regional integration processes did not give a complete picture of the nature and characteristics of such a newly defined actor in international relations as the region. The previously used theoretical approaches may be defined as an ‘old regionalism’, which operated with traditional cartographic and geographical concepts in determining the region or used the name of regional organisations. In general, the definition of regions did not go beyond the geographical subsystem.

Political analyst Robert E. Kelly noted the accumulation of knowledge about regional theories.³² He writes that before the end of the Cold War regions were considered primarily as part of the cartographic approach. Among the first researchers of the region as a structure with a certain internal interaction, R. Kelly mentions William Thompson, who defined the region’s indicators by conducting a serious study of work on this issue. He proposed four necessary and sufficient conditions for the regional subsystem’s existence:

1. pattern of relations and interactions
2. generally proximate
3. internal and external observers and actors recognise the subsystem as a distinctive area
4. consists of at least two and quite probably more actors.³³

In his approach, the normative definition of a region as an organisation, as well as integration and system/subsystem dominance, go by the wayside, and the main characteristics in determining the status of a region are interaction characteristics.

³¹ Ibid., 9

³² Kelly, 2007, 197

³³ Thompson, 1973, 101

As part of the transition to a new international economic order, theorists began to move away from the 'old' approaches associated with regionalism. For example, according to R. Kelly, E. Haas began to define integration as an 'outdated' approach, and J. Nye turned to the theory of interdependence.³⁴

A new generation of integration process researchers is studying state and supranational institutions not only as tools in the hands of their creators but also how institutions alone impact on the development of integration processes and European governance. With the signing of the Maastricht Agreement in 1992 and the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997, European integration entered a new phase, thereby expanding the empirical base of research. In the 1980-1990s, there was a complex process of rethinking the traditional theories of international relations with giving them new meanings, and the arrival of constructivist and critical approaches from sociology was also identified. Reliance on ontology and epistemology was not characteristic of traditional international theories.

A new stage in the development of the theory was associated with the combination of comparative and institutional approaches, when the focus of the research was on the essence of the European Union, the forms and content of the activities of its institutions, multilevel and network management systems. For example, Gary Marks, Liesbet Hooghe and Kermit Blank tried to get an answer to the question of whether the EU is a multi-level or network management system.³⁵

Topical for theorists were the issues of 'designing' and defining the boundaries of European integration, the problems of the legitimacy of European governance, the formation of formal and informal institutions, the processes of Europeanization and European identity.

Thus, the regional dimension has long been analysed through the prism of traditional approaches, and integration processes in Europe remained the main object of analysis.

³⁴ Ibid., 204

³⁵ Marks, Hooghe, and Blank, 1996

1.2. Origin and Theoretical Foundation of the New Regionalism

Andrew Hurrell, Professor of International Relations at Oxford University, stated that until the beginning of 1990s there was no ‘regional dimension’ in the theory of international relations.³⁶ It is difficult to agree with him completely. However, the author is right that theoretical schools that studied region, regionalisation and regional dynamics appeared only in the 1990s. Until this time regional dynamics was studied mainly in the context of relations between states and the formation of supranational institutions. A. Hurrell named three main reasons that changed the traditional approaches to the study of regions. Firstly, these traditional approaches may not be effective due to the character of developments in the region. Secondly, regional communities have “important distinguishing features – not necessarily because of cultural difference but because of radically different historical trajectories, patterns of regional interaction, and geopolitical and economic contexts.”³⁷ Thirdly, regional distinctiveness can become the part of the region’s formation. Here the cultural factor plays the central role, which is understood “in terms of the lasting legacy of attitudes and beliefs in society derived from authoritative teachings and recurrent, large-scale socialization processes and embedded in complex and elaborate systems of discourse.”³⁸

The process of decentralization of international system was the reason of the regionalism processes in the 1990s. Regional balance changed and it found expression in new institutional forms and practices. Mihailenko marks the effect of the weakening role of the UN, on the one hand, and the surge in the regional integration in Asia and America as a response to decentralisation processes in the Euro-Atlantic space, on the other side.³⁹

Regional conflicts and interstate wars in the end of XX century and UN’s weakness in resolving them have showed that at the regional area there are problems in sharing responsibility.

In the 1990s, globalisation was seen as a crucial element that quickens changes in the global system and that there is a connection between globalisation and regionalization.⁴⁰

³⁶ Hurrell, 2005, 39

³⁷ Ibid., 40

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Mihailenko, 2014, 28

⁴⁰ Foqué and Steenbergen, 2005, 54

Globalisation affects the whole system of international relations. New regionalism should be seen as “a multidimensional and multi-level process that is not formed exclusively around the axis of a sovereign state but reflects the activities of the state, non-state actors, social groups and networks.”⁴¹

Mihailenko also gives some arguments that confirm the relationship between regionalisation and globalisation. The region is “the most suitable and viable level for coordinating actions in response to changes and increased pressure from the global capitalist competition, on the one hand, and the need for political regulation and management, on the other.”⁴² It is easier to engage in negotiations (about integration and rules that are necessary in the globalization process regulation, public consensus and political governance outside the state) at the regional level. For many developing countries, regionalism can be vital in the process of integration into the global economy. It also may be useful in tackling the challenges of market liberalisation, as well as, social protection and sovereignty.

In the work of Rene Foque and Jacques Steenbergen *Regionalism: a constitutional framework for global challenges?* regionalism is seen as an answer to the challenges of globalisation. As an example, the authors consider two organisations that structure the globalisation space – the WTO and the EU. The European Union is a regional initiative that has gone beyond the possibilities of studying it with traditional theories. The authors consider the EU as a kind of laboratory for studying the relationship between the processes of regionalisation and constitutionalisation. They distinguish two types of regional organisations: technical and political. Technical organisations created to address regional technical issues can manage and build a structure similar to the management rules that apply to private organisations and traditional intergovernmental organisations. As for the organisations, created to solve political issues, their structure should correspond to the political structures within which political decisions are made. Society cannot control the processes of globalisation. The isolationist position of the state may provoke a worsening of the situation. Hence the important role of regional structures, within which is a possible rational response to the challenges of globalisation.⁴³

⁴¹ Mihailenko, 2014, 29

⁴² Ibid..

⁴³ Foqué, and Steenbergen 2005, 54

In the 1990s the theories of new regionalism became very widespread. In their research work *Theorising the Rise of Regionness*, Björn Hettne and Fredrik Söderbaum considered a global social theory, social constructivism and comparative regional studies to be the starting point for the new regionalism.⁴⁴

By global social theory is meant “a comprehensive social theory that abandons state-centrism. Social processes must be analysed delinked from the national space.”⁴⁵ Such approach is a so-called connecting link between “certain strands in development theory and international political economy, or rather political economy, since ‘international’ does no longer need mentioning.”⁴⁶

Social constructivism is the second important theory of new regionalism. Social constructivism “provides a theoretically rich and promising way of conceptualizing the interaction between material incentives, inter-subjective structures, and the identity and interests of the actors.”⁴⁷

According to social constructivists shared knowledge, skills, ideological forces, normative and institutional structures have a great importance. They also state that “understanding of intersubject structures allows us to trace the ways in which interests and identities change over time and new forms of cooperation and community can emerge. Social constructivism draws attention to how regions are socially constructed. The region constitutes an open process and can only be defined post factum. Regions are social constructions, and to observe and describe regionalization is also to participate in the construction of regions.”⁴⁸ If there is no concrete region, there are no regionalist interest, however the are interests and identities that appear in the process of interaction and intersubjective understanding. Regionalisation is a process.

Comparative studies rely on generalisations, comparative analysis, which are important in theory-building.

The concept of ‘region’ is essential for regional analysis. Therefore, it is important to determine the novelty of the new regional approach.

⁴⁴ Hettne, and Soderbaum, 2006, 6

⁴⁵ Ibid., 7

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Hurrell, 1995, 72

⁴⁸ Hettne, and Soderbaum, 2006, 7

The ‘new’ regionalists focus on the concept of ‘region’ in the meaning of ‘actor of international relations’. Thus, the region stops to be an object of international relations (level of analysis) but becomes a subject, an actor in international relations. The regional research has allowed forming a new niche in the study of international relations, different from the national and global levels. According to B. Buzan and O. Waever, the regional level of research allows giving the most balanced interpretation of most security issues. The region, therefore, turns into such force or potential force that affects regional governance and regional decisions.⁴⁹

Different disciplines use the concept of a ‘region’ in different ways. For example, in the field of geography, regions are generally regarded as subnational entities or historical provinces or recently created structures.

In international relations, regions are often regarded as supranational subsystems of international relations. This has an importance in assessing what these regions are – subsystems in the system of international relations or new regional entities with their dynamics. Such macro-regions can be defined in different ways: “as geographical continents or supranational entities of countries that have common political and economic projects and a certain degree of collective identity. Minimalist definition of a region of the world, as a rule, includes a limited number of states connected by geographical relations and a certain degree of interdependence.”⁵⁰

In terms of a broader approach, a region can be defined as “an area that consists of states that share some ethnic, linguistic, cultural, social, and historical ties.”⁵¹ By using an integrated approach, regions can be differentiated in terms of social cohesion (ethnicity, race, language, religion, culture, history, consciousness, common heritage), economic cohesion (availability of trade infrastructure, economic complementarity), political cohesion (regime, ideology) and organisational cohesion (presence of official regional institutions).⁵²

Often a region is simplistically associated with a specific regional organisation. An organisation is a form of cooperation between states and other entities. This becomes possible if there is a real experience of cooperation, common interests in a single political

⁴⁹ Buzan, and Waever, 2003, 481

⁵⁰ Mihailenko, 2014, 34

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

community, and, thus, the region is 'real'. Previously, the main imperative for determining a region was the presence of regional internationalisation and market integration. In the framework of the modern approach, the region may not coincide with the institutional form, may include several organisations or their intersection.

1.3. Global regionalisation: the role of macro-regions

Olga Leonova, Doctor of Political Science and Professor at Moscow State University, defines ‘global regionalisation’ as “a phenomenon that appeared in the process of globalisation when regional unions of states that have similar interests appear, pooling of resources which allows them to achieve their goals more effectively.”⁵³ The global world consists of three levels: subregions, mesoregions and macroregions, and the “region” is the essential element of this three-level system.

The processes that take part at the macro level lead to such a configuration of international relations, within which the main interaction takes place between different regional groups, but not between individual major powers or coalitions of states geographically distant from each other. The result of these processes is a change in the Westphalian system of the world, the transformation of the geopolitical, geostrategic and geo-economic structure of the global world and the formation of new centres of the global economy and politics.

According to the definition made by the former EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Pawel Samecki, a macro-region is “an area including territory from several different countries or regions associated with one or more common features or challenges.”⁵⁴ In the working paper were also presented two normative reasons for a macro-region: macro-region may help to solve cross-border problems like environmental issues; macro-region handles the influence and aspects of the ongoing denationalisation and globalisation much better than one state alone. One of the examples of the macro-regions is the Intermarium region, which includes countries with similar historical background and challenges.

The macro-region, as a rule, has such features:

general supranational governing bodies (European Union, CIS)

sociocultural or linguistic boundaries (countries of the British Commonwealth, the North Atlantic Community, the Arab world, etc.);

confessional unity (Islamic world, Christian civilisation);

⁵³ Leonova, 2016, 271

⁵⁴ European Commission, 2009, 1

general socio-economic development model (liberal, continental, Mediterranean, Scandinavian, etc.).⁵⁵

The main reason for the global regionalisation is the need to integrate into the emerging hierarchy of political actors in the global world. For instance, the main reason of the creation of the Intermarium region was to counterbalance Russian communism and German nationalism in XX century; as a defence against potential Russian expansion in XXI century.

This hierarchy has such levels:

1. centres of power;
2. applicants for centres of power;
3. economic, political, military and civilisational poles
4. regional powers.

The centre of powers of the global world can be defined as the totality of the military, economic, political, sociocultural resources of the state, the presence of which determines its geostrategic, geoeconomic, geopolitical and socio-cultural potential and allows to participate in the management of global world processes. For a single country, it is difficult to achieve; however, the unification of its economic, political and military resources with other states makes it possible for such alliance to become the centre of power of the global world. When the integration processes were completed, a full-fledged economic, political, military-strategic partnership was formed, this formation that has accumulated the power and strength of several neighbouring states becomes the centre of power of the global world. However, so far in practice, due to the difficulty of implementing these conditions, only the European Union has become the centre of power.

Applicants to the centre of power are countries that are in the process of pooling their resources and creating an economic, political and military-strategic alliance. These are many regional integration associations, such as ASEAN, APEC, MERCOSUR, the South African Customs Union, etc., which are at the stage of economic integration.

Global regionalisation is, on the one hand, an integral characteristic of globalisation, and, on the other, its opposite tendency. In the whole world, there are intensive integration processes due to which countries unite into regional systems and form the macro-regions.

⁵⁵ Leonova, 2016, 272

This reflects the emerging structure of the global world, which appears to be a combination of macro-regions. The leading macro-regions, as, for example, the European Union, the Asia-Pacific region and such world power as the USA, are the main engines of globalisation, that have a high impact on the rest of the world. The Westphalian system of the world is being replaced by macro-regional polycentricity or a multi-level hierarchical structure.⁵⁶

At the macro level, the region is considered as socio-economic and political integrity; it is formally a supranational and transnational entity. The paradigm of global regionalism is based on the idea of the macro-region as an integrated socio-economic, political system with geocivilizational integrity, sociocultural affinity and held together by several supranational political institutions. The macro-region is a structural element of the global world that is self-sufficient in economic, political, military-strategic and sociocultural terms.

Specific features of the macro-region are:

1. It is an open system that exchanges resources, energy and information with the external environment.
2. It is an unstable system, in which there is a constant change of its basic parameters, as its composition, number of elements, their quality, functions, configuration. These changes depend on the external environment. The example is the global economic crisis that had a substantial impact on the European Union.
3. It is a dynamically developing system: macro-region can develop from a free trade zone to a supranational entity with common governing bodies. These are, for example, the EU, NATO, OSCE, APEC. The SCO, Mercosur, South African Customs Union and others are in the process of evolution.

Most of the macro-regions were formed as a result of economic integration, for example, the European Coal and Steel Association that later evolved to the European Economic Community and finally into the EU. The Three Seas Initiative is one more example of such macro-region. Such integration is usually seen as the process of creating a single complex at the level of national economic systems. Political integration, in turn, creates an integrated complex at the level of national political systems of integrated

⁵⁶ Ibid., 273

countries. Though it has limits, because states that participate in integration may feel it as the threat of loss of their national sovereignty; they would like to maintain a certain political autonomy.

There is a well-known scale of economic integration, in which such seven stages are defined: a preferential trading area, a free trade area, a customs union, a common market, an economic union, an economic and monetary union, a complete economic integration, and final – a total harmonisation of fiscal policy and a perfect monetary union.⁵⁷

Due to the lack of quantitative indicators, it seems to be impossible to make a similar scale for political integration. Such region, as Intermarium, was formed as a result of political integration. Although the practice of empirical observations of the most successful integration associations, which moved from economic integration to political integration, as EU, for instance, or are at the stage of such transition, allows highlighting the steps of their evolution:

1. mutual information and coordination of domestic and foreign policies of countries-members of integration association;
2. policy coordination;
3. creation of a regional security system;
4. the formation of supranational bodies (control, coordination and management);
5. adoption of the general constitution.⁵⁸

According to Udo Bullmann, the main reasons for the regionalisation in the European Union are the following:

1. regionalisation as an attempt to modernise political systems, which is always based on unique national traditions; an effort to provide the regions with a broader field for manoeuvre, which means independent growth, internal development and attraction of external sources in the face of globalisation;
2. modern nation-states' attempt to survive due to the complexity of social, economic and environmental problems requiring a different approach than the traditional universal hierarchical top-down approach;
3. as a reflection of cultural and historical issues and a response to the requirements of territorial autonomy, the expansion of political rights of regions;

⁵⁷ Kenton, 2020

⁵⁸ Leonova, 2016, 274-275

4. as a result of deepening integration processes and their penetration into the competence of the regions.⁵⁹

There are several ways in which regional globalisation occur. First of all, it is the integration of local communities and their integration into the macro-region. There may be internal (economic partnership, similar political culture and institutions, sociocultural proximity) and external factors (general foreign policy guidelines, strategies for interacting with the global world and its actors, solving macro-regional security problems etc.). Secondly, it is a localisation of a self-sufficient territorial-economic, territorial-political and territorial-sociocultural community, the borders of which are clearly defined and often are similar to the borders of a state. Such entities can be defined as functional regions, as they function as sovereign states. Thirdly, a qualitatively new geopolitical and geoeconomic entity, emerges based on integration and localisation, whose members (sovereign states) transfer part of their functions to the supranational level. The boundaries of such macro-regions may coincide with the boundaries of geocivilizations (for example, the EU). These entities tend to the closure of trade and investment flows within the system, which contributes to the achievement of even greater self-sufficiency, independence from the external environment, stability and security.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Bullmann, 1997, 9-10

⁶⁰ Leonova, 2016, 275

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE INTERMARIUM PROJECT

2.1. The origin of the idea of Intermarium

Intermarium is a space between the Black and Baltic Seas. Polish-American historian Marek Jan Chodakiewicz in his book *Intermarium: The Land Between the Black and Baltic Seas* reflected that it is easier to explain Intermarium's boundaries by its rivers: "In the north, the boundaries follow the Baltic coast from the estuary of the Vistula and, then, the Neman until the Gulf of Finland, where they slope south through Lake Peipus into Velikaya River. They proceed toward the general area where the Western Dniva bends, the Svir originates, and the Berezina, Sozh, and Desna, in turn, meet the Dnieper as it flows into the Black Sea. The boundaries hug its coast until the delta of the Danube to move sharply north from there following the Prut toward the Dniester and the Bug as it veers west to meet the Vistula and complete the cycle in its estuary at the Baltic."⁶¹ The history of the region dates back to several thousand years ago to the first human transactions in the region. Archaeologists report about some exciting findings from the Scythian culture. During the Migration Period in the V century, numerous Asian tribes settled across the southern areas of Intermarium. Some of them, like the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Langobards, remained there for some time and later moved to the west, and others, like Slavs, settled the area permanently. Soon, the Slavs divided themselves into three groups: western (later Poles, Czechs, Slovaks and Lusatian Sorbs), southern (Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Bulgarians and Macedonians) and eastern (Russians, Ukrainians and Belarussians), Eastern Slavic regions were also called Ruthenia. In the north, it was connected with the Balts, who were ancestors of Estonians, who were part of the Finno-Ungaric migration from the Altai. Samogitians, Lithuanians, Latvians and other Baltic groups were the last Indo-European settlers in the Intermarium area.⁶²

Byzantium played a crucial role in the history of Ruthenia as it contributed to the establishment of an Eastern Orthodox bishopric of Rus' in the IX century. Until XIII century the Intermarium was divided into the pagan north and the Orthodox south. Eastern

⁶¹ Chodakiewicz, 2012, 35

⁶² Ibid., 35-37

Orthodoxy had steady contact with Latin Christendom through intermarriage (Yaroslav the Wise (Grand Prince of Veliky Novgorod and Kyiv, 978-1054) and his children were married to the royal representatives of Hungary, Sweden, Norway, Spain and France), trade and war. During the XII and early XIII centuries, the Rus was divided into several principalities owned by princes, who regularly engaged in conflict with one another and refused to unite against the foreign enemies. The Mongols used disunion of princes, and one by one invaded the Ruthenian lands in 1223-1242. The Mongols proved to be the “unprecedented shattering force that even the most unified of states were unable to resist.”⁶³ In the eastern Ruthenian lands, the so-called ‘Mongol yoke’ lasted until 1480, despite a symbolic Muscovite victory over the Tatars in 1380. The Mongols turned to local collaborators for tax collection, including human beings for slavery. After a few princes rebelled, most notably in Tver, the ruler of Muscovy, Ivan Kalita, allied with the Golden Horde against that principality and helped crush it in 1327. In return, he accepted the yarlik, the plenipotentiary privilege from the khan and also received the title of the Grand Duke. Muscovy collected the taxes for the Mongols and curbed rebellious Ruthenians for their distant overlords. In Muscovy, there was no law, but only the ruler’s wish. The dukes of Muscovy called themselves ‘autocrats’, and ‘emperors’ (tsars), and Muscovites saw Moscow as ‘the Third Rome’. It was also a justification for their imperial expansion of the Ruthenian lands. When Muscovy’s power rose, it turned against their erstwhile Tatar overlords in the east and against the dukes of Lithuania in the west. The Muscovites started to call themselves ‘the Russians’, for external propaganda purposes and ‘Great Ruthenians’, for internal use, and they dubbed their realm as ‘Russia’ and ‘Great Ruthenia’ to the same ends. Finally, they renamed their state into the Russian Empire and continued their expansion in all directions. The avowed aim of ‘Holy Russia’ and its rulers was to “gather all the lands of Rus”, which they dubbed ‘Russian lands’.⁶⁴

The Balts were the least numerous and the weakest people of the Intermarium. Except for invasion of Estonia by Ruthenian princes, trade relations were also popular, and sometimes they united against the Germans and the Tatars. In the XIV century, partly because of the Mongol threat, Ruthenians were in close relationship with the dukes of Lithuania. They even almost succeeded to turn Lithuanians to Orthodox Christianity

⁶³ Moss, 2005, 14

⁶⁴ Chodakiewicz, 2012, 42-43

(though they remained pagan until the end of XIV century when they converted to Latin Christianity as a basis of their alliance with the Poles) and Ruthenian language became official of Lithuanians' documents. During the next 150 years the Danes, Swedes and Germans attacked the Balts. As a result, Karelia was taken by the Swedes, the Danes invaded the large part of contemporary Estonia, and German took the lands along the Baltic coast (Prussians, Latgalians, Ests and Livonians). During the XIII-XIV centuries, the State of the Teutonic Order stretched from Pomerania to Estonia along the shores of the Baltic. It cooperated closely with the Hanseatic League, which was a trading alliance of German and Scandinavian lands. The Teutonic Order fell into decline after its defeat in 1410 in the Battle of Grunwald, crushed by the alliance of the Poles, Lithuanians, Ruthenians and Tatars. The Teutonic Order became a part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth established in 1569 between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It was one of the largest and most populous European countries in XVI-XVII centuries. It stretched beyond Livonia on the Baltic in the north, past Smolensk in the east, approached the Black Sea in the south, and until Silesia and Pomerania in the west. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had great ethnic diversity, and noteworthy was that the Warsaw Confederation Act (1773) guaranteed religious tolerance.⁶⁵

The middle of the XVII century turned out to be catastrophic for the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: the Ukrainian Cossacks rebellion, the Russian-Polish war (1654-1667) and the war with Sweden. Nevertheless, King John II Casimir managed to keep the country from collapse and absorption by its neighbours. Participation in the Northern War (1700-1721) caused a devastated population and economic weakening of the Commonwealth. The *Liberum veto*, which was a parliamentary device in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, form of voting rule that allowed any member of the Sejm to interfere any reforms, also led to degradation of the armed forces compared with neighbouring countries. The increasing interference of foreign powers in its internal affairs did not meet enough resistance during the biggest part of the XVIII century. In 1768, following the results of the so-called Replin Sejm, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth turned into a protectorate of the Russian Empire.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ UNESCO, 2003

⁶⁶ Chodakiewicz, 2012, 53-55

Only during the reign of the last king, Stanislaw II Augustus, some wide-scale reforms radically changed the political system of the Commonwealth and culminated in the adoption of the Constitution on May 3, 1791. These reforms had positive results; there was some economic upsurge. However, Russia, during the Russian-Polish war in 1792, with the help of the Targowica Confederation (confederation of Polish and Lithuanian magnates that opposed the Constitution of 1791), destroyed the results of the reforms. After the Grodno Sejm, during which the second partition of Poland was approved, the Commonwealth again appeared in political dependence on Russia. The last attempt to save the Commonwealth was the Kosciuszko Uprising, which was crushed by Russian and Prussian troops, and as a result of the Third Partition in 1795, the Commonwealth ceased to exist.⁶⁷

Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, who was a foreign minister of the Russian Tsar Alexander I and later a leader of the Polish government in exile, had the idea of resurrecting an updated Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and was the first one who introduced the idea of the Intermarium. In his book *Essai sur la diplomatie* (Essay about Diplomacy) published in 1830, Czartoryski wrote that “Having extended her sway South and West, and being by the nature of things unreachable from the north and east, Russia becomes a source of constant threat to Europe.”⁶⁸ He believed that “she” or Russia would succeed making friends, rather than slaves. Moreover, he wrote that it was necessary to unite renewed Poland and Easter Prussia, due to the threat coming from Prussia.

Czartoryski’s main will was to recreate the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, supported by Britain, Turkey, and France, in union with Hungarians, Slovaks, Czechs, Romanians and all Southern Slavs. He also was sure that Poland was able to settle disputes between Hungary, on the one side, and Slavs and Romania, on the another. During the period 1948-49, when national revolutions happened, his idea sounded realistic enough, but it broke down because there was no support from the West against the Hungarian unwillingness to reconcile with Slovaks, Czechs, and Romanians. One more factor was the growth of German nationalism.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 56

⁶⁸ Petersen, 2011, 76

2.2. Development of the idea of Intermarium in XX century

The ideas of the prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski were inherited by Polish leader Jozef Pilsudski. He treated Intermarium as “a counterbalance to Russian communism and German nationalism considering it to be the Third force and one more democratic Empire in Europe.”⁶⁹ After Poland acquired independence, J. Pilsudski began the implementation of the idea of so-called ‘Prometheism’ (after the Greek mythical hero Prometheus, who gave fire to people, against the will of the gods) in order to support the movement of the people of the former empire for independence. Prometheism had a geopolitical meaning as “its mission was to liberate people from the Soviet regime and to create national statehood for the peoples of the former empire. In the geospatial relation, it included a wide strip of land from the Baltic to the Black and Caspian seas as well as separate geographical regions of the Volga region. The plan envisaged a federation of states located both in the Baltic sector of Europe and in the Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea region such as Latvia, Lithuania, Finland and Estonia as well as Belarus, Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.”⁷⁰ This idea was not supported by the countries that were considered as potential candidates. The main reason why these countries opposed the concept of Intermarium was because they did not want to give up their national freedom. Most states saw in it threat of Poland’s regional domination. Many European powers also did not support the strengthening of Poland and saw threat in it.⁷¹

According to the British historian George Sanford already in 1920, during the Polish-Soviet war, Pilsudski acknowledged that his plan was unworkable.⁷² In 2007 Jonathan Levy published the book *Intermarium: Wilson, Madison and Eastern-Central European Federalism*⁷³ in which he thoroughly researched the origin of the idea of Intermarium and its prospects. According to Levy, Pilsudski’s idea was attacked from the worst four enemies: the Soviets, nationalism, Polish isolationism and democracy.

Pilsudski had geopolitical type of thinking. thought in geopolitical categories. Paradoxically, the person whose famous statement: “there cannot be any independent

⁶⁹ Bresky, 2011, 140

⁷⁰ Ulunyan, 2011, 103-104

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Sanford, 2002, 5-6

⁷³ Levy, 2007

Poland without independent Ukraine”⁷⁴, first of all was interested in the separation of Ukraine from Russia, and only after in the well-being of Ukrainians. Furthermore, he used his army in order to expand Polish territory in Volynia and Galicia, and stopped Ukrainians in their attempt to gain independence on the territories to the east from the Western Bug.

Regarding the future Polish borders, Pilsudski said that “everything that Poland can receive in the West depends on a friendly agreement between the states to the degree to which it can limit Germany while in the East there are doors which open and close. Everything depends on the one who compels to open the doors and how far to open them.”⁷⁵ But after the war in 1919-1921 between Poland and Soviet Union Pilsudski’s federation idea based on the Polish-Ukrainian axis failed.

After that Pilsudski started thinking about the opportunity of creation the same federation, but with Baltic and Balkan states. According to this plan a Central European Union had to include “Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Scandinavia, the Baltic States, Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Greece. The focus of this union was not only on the East and the West and not only on the space between the Baltic and Black seas, but, mainly, between the North and the South and from the Arctic Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea. This project also failed as Czechoslovakia and Lithuania did not trust Poland, and while Poland had rather good relations with other countries, these countries had intense relationships with their neighbours making it impossible to create a big block in Central Europe.”⁷⁶ Finally, in 1921 only the Polish-Romanian alliance was created.

According to Ulunyan, “despite the indisputable authorship of J. Pilsudski, the geoconstruct ‘Intermarium’ like each of similar megaprojects possessed ‘mosaic’ features and included subregional construct as its elements.”⁷⁷ The project of the Baltic Union was the main one and was presented in 1917-1920. This project proposed the creation of a political-military block that includes Poland and Baltic states that were on the way of getting independence due to the disintegration of the Russian, Austro-Hungarian and German empires. Another similar union could be the Baltic-Scandinavian block. This idea was proposed by Jaan Tõnisson, leader of the Estonian Democratic Party. His aim was to guarantee security for the Baltic region and Northern Europe. Nevertheless, the countries -

⁷⁴ Bresky, 2011, 141

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 142

⁷⁷ Ulunyan, 2011, 104

potential members of the union were not interested in it as they didn't want to get involved in any conflicts in the Baltic region.⁷⁸

In 1935 Pilsudski died. One of his closest associates and head of the Polish Foreign Ministry, Joseph Beck, decided to continue his geospatial concept by setting a new policy, named 'Intermarium or Third Europe Project', called for "the establishment of a political association of countries lying between the Baltic and Black Seas and between Germany and the Soviet Union with Warsaw as its center."⁷⁹ These countries had to form a region of security that wouldn't be on side either the 'Nazi dynamism' nor the 'Communist imperialism' and become stronger against these dangers. However, due to the start of the Second World War, his project was suspended.

It is worth mentioning, that during the Second World War the Polish Government in exile, led by Wladyslaw Sikorski, restored the concept of the 'Central European Union' as "a triangular geopolitical formation located between the Baltic, Black and Adriatic seas."⁸⁰ In order to create such formation, first of all there had to be made negotiations between Poland, Greece, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia about the Greek-Yugoslavian and Polish-Czechoslovak federations. After all these negotiations failed. The main reason for that was Soviet opposition which made Czechoslovakia to be uncertain and also made the West indecisive or even hostile to such idea.⁸¹

Juliusz Mieroszewski, who was a Polish journalist and publicist, together with Jerzy Giedroyc, Polish writer and political activist decided to continue the three pre-War Polish geopolitical projects: Intermarium, Federalism and Prometheism. In the 1970s, they developed the doctrine called the Giedroyc-Mieroszewski doctrine or ULB doctrine (for Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus). The main reason for this doctrine was understanding of the possibility to improve the Polish geopolitical situation. Mieroszewski believed that Poland was stuck in its past, but he, together with Giedroyc, were also sure that a new geopolitical transformation is possible. They believed that the liberation of Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Belarusians from the Soviet domination in cooperation with the Polish nation was the best way to ensure Polish security. Furthermore, this liberation should take place in partnership with global transformations and all European nations, as it is impossible for

⁷⁸ Lubelski, 2010, 186-188

⁷⁹ Gromada, 1981, 66

⁸⁰ Bresky, 2011, 142

⁸¹ Ibid.

captive nations to fight for their freedom alone. They stated that it was important for these nations to maintain their independence. The Giedroys-Mieroszewski doctrine was based on the Pilsudskis' ideas and of those who wished to restore the old Commonwealth.⁸²

Nevertheless, comparing to previously mentioned ideas, their project was based on "equality and partnership, not domination."⁸³ As these countries could accept it only in such form. But during the interwar period, the Lithuanians and Ukrainians didn't show interest in forming any federation with Poland, that is why attempts to create it soured relations between Poland and Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania.⁸⁴

One of the first classic geopolitics that pointed on the importance of Eastern Europe was Halford Mackinder, academic and politician, one of the founding fathers of both geopolitics and geostrategy. According to his theory. "who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island; who rules the World-Island commands the World".⁸⁵ Nicholas Spykman, American political scientist, one of the founders of the classical realist school in American foreign policy and known as the "godfather of containment", in his book *The Geography of the Peace* proposed a similar theory in which Rimland is the key space to change of balance of forces between the Heartland and the marginal sea powers.⁸⁶ Ukrainian geographer S. Yaromenko refers to the Baltic-Black Sea Region as to a so-called 'seam zone' that is the object of geopolitical and geostrategic value and impact. These countries occupy a very favourable economic and geographical position, where are trade routes between different economic centres. This transit zone always calls a big geoeconomic interest from big states and blocks of states. In the wide meaning this 'seam zone' includes countries of the Baltic-Black Sea region: Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, Belarus and Moldova.⁸⁷

Some of the works of the founder of the Ukrainian political geography, Stepan Rudnitsky, are interesting for understanding the current situation in the Baltic-Black Sea region (*Ukraine from the Political-Geographical Position* (1916), *Ukraine and the Great Powers* (1920), *The Ukrainian Case on the Political Geography* (1923)). In his works, the main focus was on the Black Sea region, but sometimes the author analyzed the

⁸² Zajac, 2016, 49-50

⁸³ Ibid., 51

⁸⁴ Ibid., 51

⁸⁵ Mackinder, 1942, 106

⁸⁶ Spykman, 1994, 4

⁸⁷ Yaromenko, 2014

perspectives of Ukraine in the Baltic-Black Sea region. In *The Ukrainian Case on the Political Geography* Rudnitsky emphasized on the natural fear of the expansion by Russian imperialism from the new states, created after the World War I, namely Finland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. According to the scientist, such fear should strengthen relationships between these countries and Ukraine and even create a so-called 'Baltic-Pontic Federation' consisting of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine.⁸⁸ It is worth mentioning a proposed idea of 'cordon sanitaire' by Italian and French prime ministers V. Orlando and J. Clemenceau on January 21, 1919, at the Paris Peace Conference: "M. Orlando agreed that Bolshevism constituted a grave danger to all Europe. To prevent a contagious epidemic from spreading, the sanitarians set up a 'cordon sanitaire'. If similar measures could be taken against Bolshevism, to prevent its spreading, it might be overcome, since to isolate it meant vanquishing it."⁸⁹ American diplomat William Bullitt expressed similar views describing the situation in Hungary, Finland, Estonia, Ukraine and Lithuania in 1919.⁹⁰

Winston Churchill's, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during the Second World War, memoirs, including the fifth volume of *The Aftermath* is very informative. Thus, in chapter XIII, he describes Marshal Pidsludski's efforts to use Ukraine as a buffer zone between Poland and Russia. Churchill also mentioned in his memoirs the formation of a 'sanitary border': "Russia has been frozen in an indefinite winter of sub-human doctrine and superhuman tyranny. However, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and above all, Poland, were able during 1919 to establish the structure of civilized States and to organize the strength of patriotic armies. By the end of 1920, the 'sanitary border' which protected Europe from the Bolshevik infection was formed by living national organisms vigorous in themselves, hostile to the disease and immune through experience against its ravages..."⁹¹

⁸⁸ Rudnitsky, 1923, 138

⁸⁹ Huebsch, 1919, 26

⁹⁰ Ibid., 137-138

⁹¹ Churchill, 1929, 276

2.3. Intermarium at the end of XX – beginning XXI century

At the end of XX – beginning of the XXI century, the emergence of new geospaces contributed to the appearance of the following versions of Intermarium in the shape of a three-seas project: 1. Baltic, Black and Mediterranean Seas; 2. Baltic, Black and Caspian Seas; 3. Baltic, Black and Adriatic Seas. The USSR self-dissolution, the Commonwealth of Independent States on the post-Soviet space creation, members of which became the former Soviet republics, except for the three Baltic states, the Eastern Bloc liquidation, Yugoslavia break-up, Czechoslovakia dissolution and the adoption by the post-communist Eastern European states of the course towards joining the Euro-Atlantic community became the main factors in the formulating new regional geospatial projects concerning the post-Soviet part of Eurasia, combining pragmatic considerations with a historical component. Another important factor that played an essential role in the formulation of such projects was the changing system of international relations of the late XX – early XXI centuries, one of the main features of which was the increasing confrontation for influence in the post-Soviet space, and especially between Moscow and Washington. According to Armenian politician and scientist Gagik Harutyunyan, “the character of the United States-Russian relations today is sometimes compared with the First “Cold War” in the second half of the XX century. That war was a tough confrontation between geo-ideological and geopolitical projects, whose supporters (sometimes against their will) are united around the USA and the USSR.”⁹²

During the Soviet period, there were no conditions for the development and implementation of such cooperation. After the end of the Cold War, the situation changed. In February 1993, Ukrainian president L. Kravchuk presented the initiative that was accepted warmly by Hungary and other Central European countries. He proposed to create a ‘zone of stability and cooperation’ in the region between Russia and Western Europe which had to include the Baltic States, Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, Bulgaria and Romania. This initiative was meant to be the Eastern version of the Balladur-sponsored Stability Pact (named after French Foreign Minister

⁹² Harutyunyan, 2006

Eduard Baladur). Still, when the Partnership for Peace program was launched, it lost its meaning.⁹³

During the ten-nation summit organized in Vilnius in September 1997 to bridge the Baltic and the Black Sea nations, the former Lithuanian President was first to talk about the resumption of the Baltic-Black Sea cooperation. This summit was an effort to establish a new, loose coalition of states to reduce the impression that the enlargement of NATO is creating new dividing lines in Europe.⁹⁴

In September 1999 in Yalta, Ukraine organized a summit “Baltic-Black Sea Cooperation: to Integrated Europe in the Twenty-First Century without Diving Lines” during which was discussed the importance of improving cooperation in the area between these two seas. Ukrainian president L. Kuchma repeatedly emphasized on Ukrainian significance to Europe, because of its position between the Black and Baltic Seas. Unfortunately, formalization and institutionalization of the Baltic-Black Sea cooperation failed.⁹⁵

The concept of Intermarium is similar to the “NATO-Bis” initiative, which aim was to create a collective security system in Central and Eastern Europe, including Ukraine and the Baltic states, under the patronage of NATO. This initiative was proposed by the President of Poland Lech Walesa during the meeting with German President, Richard von Weizsäcker in 1992. However, other members of the Polish government, Prime Minister Skubiszewski, for instance, did not support his idea.⁹⁶

Later, in the early 2000s, there was an inevitable institutionalization of geoeconomically, geopolitically and historically conditioned Baltic-Black Sea cooperation. In December 2005 the forum of the Community of Democratic Choice took place in Kyiv with the participation of the Presidents of Ukraine, Georgia, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Romania, Slovenia, Moldova, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The basic principles of the Community of Democratic Choice were contained in the Borjomi Declaration that envisions the Community of Democratic Choice as a “powerful instrument for removing the remaining divisions in the Baltic-Black Sea region, human rights

⁹³ Balmaceda, 2000, 147

⁹⁴ Knudsen, 1999, 212

⁹⁵ Hyde, 1999

⁹⁶ Gorska, 2010, 71

violations, and any type of confrontation, or frozen conflict.”⁹⁷ Later participants of the Kyiv forum accepted a final declaration in which they voted to cooperate “to strengthen peace, democracy, and prosperity on the European continent.”⁹⁸

In May 2006, a summit devoted to “Common Vision for Common Neighborhood” of the leaders of the Baltic-Black Sea Region took place in Vilnius, emphasizing the importance of regional cooperation for European and transatlantic integration. At the summit, Lithuania prime minister Casimir Priskiene declared: “I have not lost hope that the Baltic-Black Sea alliance is not only our historical past from the time of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, but also certain historical motivations have remained until now”.⁹⁹ However, the idea of the Baltic-Black Sea Union was not so explicit, because at that time only Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova were not members of the European Union.

The summit in Vilnius almost coincided with the beginning of the formation of a new EU policy in the Eastern direction. In 2007 the Black Sea Synergy was launched, in 2008 the work for implementation of the Polish and Swedish initiative on the Eastern Partnership entered the final stage, and in May 2009 the Eastern Partnership was officially activated. It is a joint initiative of EU, its member states and six Eastern European Partners that govern their relationships with the post-Soviet states of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Its main aim was accelerating political and economic integration between the EU and its partner countries. The new initiative covered part of the Baltic-Black Sea region, which offset the idea of creating a Baltic-Black Sea Alliance.

Agreements between the EU and Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine about the association, was a significant achievement for these countries, which, however, did not allow them to realize their European integration potential completely and did not guarantee future accession to the European Union. Despite certain economic benefits for the countries-participants, the possibility of this program no longer satisfied the interest of most Baltic-Black Sea countries that were interested in deepening political and economic integration. The new model of the program, proposed by Latvia Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkēvičs called for its renewal due to the involvement of the USA (transformation of the Eastern Partnership into the Euro-Atlantic Eastern Partnership) and precise definition of

⁹⁷ Peuch, 2005

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Laruelle, and Rivera, 2010, 20

perspectives of complete EU membership for the partner countries.¹⁰⁰ However, the leading EU countries were not interested in such drastic transformations. In general, the West expanded its sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, and the accession of Ukraine and Moldova to European integration project led to their transformation into a geopolitical and geoeconomic 'periphery' of the European Union.

The period until the beginning of 2015 was identified by the development of the Eastern Partnership, the main achievements of which were signing of Association Agreements and the creation of a Free Trade Area between the EU from one side and Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova from the other. However, all this happened after the start of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine, which dramatically changed the situation in the Baltic-Black Sea region. Russia not only annexed Crimea and invaded Eastern Ukraine, but also activated its policy of information and military threats to the security of other countries in the region. Even allied to Russia Belarus did not avoid this: in March 2015 Russian nationalists raised the idea that the eastern Belorussian regions were illegally included to Belarus.¹⁰¹

The Russian expansions actualized in European countries the problem of protection against external aggression. In fact, the current EU does not have any system of defence against potential attack. The EU's Common Security and Defense Policy, despite the development of relevant institutions (the Eurocorps, in particular) is functionally incapable of protecting the Member States. Even the current confrontation with Russia will not lead to a radical transformation of the European Union into a more capable, neo-imperial geopolitical system. Therefore, it is understandable why European countries in the field of European security and defence more rely on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). As a result of NATO expansion in 1999 and 2004, most countries in the region became full members of the Alliance. In 2014-2015 happened a political strengthening of the Alliance, an increase and improvement of respond forces, escalation of joint programs, exercises and other forms of cooperation between member countries. NATO steadily intensified and developed its cooperation with Ukraine.

Taking into account the new challenges and inability of the existing EU Eastern Partnership to withstand them, in early March 2015 the EU Foreign Ministers Council

¹⁰⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, 2014

¹⁰¹ Belarusskii Partizan, 2015

formally launched the process of revising the European Neighborhood Policy, including the Eastern Partnership.¹⁰² Except for Russia's aggression, the reasons for this decision were: the need to take into account the changes dictated by time; the achievement of the initial results identified by the initiative; the appearance of the Eurasian Economic Union with the participation of Belarus and Armenia, which separated the East Partnership; the need to review EU policy on Russia.

After the Crimea annexation and the conflict in the East of Ukraine escalation, the idea about the establishment of the Baltic-Black Sea Alliance is becoming increasingly popular, both among experts and civil organizations, and official representatives of the states. In August 2015, one day before his inauguration, the newly elected Polish President Andrej Duda stated that is was considering the idea of creation of the partner block of countries from the Baltic to Black and Adriatic seas. He added that "this regional bloc could lead to deeper economic, military and even political integration."¹⁰³ The new Polish president was sure enough that it is the best time for such union: since the end of the Cold War the East-West tensions are at their peak; Ukraine needs help, and such cooperation will help to improve the situation; the United Kingdom and France seem to be for an arrangement that might counterbalance German impact in the East; Poland is interested in such union in order to protect itself from Russia.¹⁰⁴ In 2016 he gained a great diplomatic success – The Three Seas Initiative, or so-called 'Trimarium', that consists of twelve states: the four countries of the Visegrad group (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia), the three Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) together with Austria, Romania, Bulgaria and two Adriatic countries: Croatia and Slovenia. All these countries are members of the European Union. According to Polish researcher Dariusz Gora-Szopinski, if "the original Intermarium idea of Jozef Pilsudski was comprehensive and geopolitical...the Trimarium reduces itself to the economic benefits of its participants..."¹⁰⁵ If Intermarium concerned "the idea of liberating nations suffering from the Soviet rule, the current Trimarium project lokks more self-centred".¹⁰⁶ The author also states that creators of Trimarium decided to ignore the problems of the region, especially in the non-EU

¹⁰² HR/VP, 2016

¹⁰³ Goble, 2015

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Gora-Szopinski, 2017

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

countries. Such a position would cause the challenge of a bigger gap between the eastern EU and non-EU countries.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

III. PERCEPTION OF THE INTERMARIUM PROJECT IN THE BALTIC COUNTRIES

3.1. Estonia

Estonia has a mixed, presidential and prime ministerial system. Between 1992 and 2020, Tallinn had 15 governments with ten prime ministers and four presidents. A mostly symbolic president is chosen by Estonian parliament or the Riigikogu. If a candidate does not get a two-thirds majority, the electoral college casts a vote.

Lennart Meri, a twice-elected president from 1992 to 2001, was among the leaders of the movement to restore Estonian independence from the Soviet Union. He was a national anchor in Estonian's first stages of statehood. Still, his reputation was spoiled by accusations of collaboration with the KGB (Committee of State Security of the Soviet Union)¹⁰⁸. The next president, Arnold Rüütel (2001–2006), was a former Communist and the Chairmen of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Estonia. In March 2005 he declined an invitation to be present in Moscow at the celebration of the anniversary of the end of the Second World War as a protest against such portrayal of history and suffering experienced by Estonia during the Soviet occupation. After his presidency in 2006 his reputation was overshadowed by an article of the *Eesti Ekspress* that stated that, according to the documents, which were kept in the archives of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union of Estonian SSR, Rüütel condemned the scientist Johannes Hind to jail. Later Arnold Rüütel himself commented that he was not involved in the discussion about Johannes Hind and, on the contrary, he tried to help him gain recognition for his work among the scientific community.¹⁰⁹ The accusation in corruption (in 2003 was a peak level of corruption index in Estonia, according to the Corruption Perception Index¹¹⁰), his connection with the KGB, as well as his poor health, caused his defeat on the next elections.

The next twice elected president was Toomas Hendrik Ilves, Swedish-born and former emigrant in the United States. First, he was an agrarian conservative but later identified himself as a social democrat. Ilves paid more attention than previous presidents,

¹⁰⁸ Delfi.ee, 2005

¹⁰⁹ Lohmus, 2006

¹¹⁰ Trading Economics, n.d.

to foreign policy. “We need to head more vigorously towards the heart of Europe”¹¹¹ he confirmed. On relations with neighbouring Russia, he said: “A road to Moscow goes through Brussels”.¹¹² When the armed conflict happened in South Ossetia in August 2008, Ilves, together with other heads of the Baltic states, supported the Georgian leadership. On August 10th, he joined the declaration that was also signed by the presidents of Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, in which Russia's actions were called aggression against Georgia.¹¹³ On August 12th, presidents of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine visited Georgia to support territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia.¹¹⁴ After Russia recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia on August 26, Ilves said at the meeting of the leaders of Baltic states and Poland: “An attack on the security architecture of Europe after the Cold War cannot occur with our shameful silence.”¹¹⁵

The fifth and current President of Estonia is the first female head of Estonia since the country declared independence in 1918, Kersti Kajulaid (since 2016). She defines herself as a liberal-conservative. She is the first president that expressed her interest in participating in the union between the countries of the Baltic-Black-Adriatic Seas. In 2017 she attended the Three Seas Initiative summit in Warsaw and the Eastern and Central European summit where she met the president of USA Donald Trump to discuss transatlantic cooperation and security issues in the region. During the Three Seas Initiative summit held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, Kersti Kaljulaid announced that Estonia is ready to organize the 2020 summer summit in Estonia. “Estonia fully shares the aims of the Three Seas Initiative, which include ensuring more rapid development of the Baltic, Black and Adriatic Seas countries by creating transport, energy and digital links between the countries of the region. It also lends the region political visibility and helps increase general prosperity in the European Union,”¹¹⁶ said Foreign Minister of Estonia Urmas Reinsalu. He also mentioned the importance of connecting the countries of the region as this union would guarantee their security. Estonian`s leaders are also interested in improving cooperation on

¹¹¹ Välisministeerium, n.d. 15

¹¹² Välisministeerium, n.d. 16

¹¹³ Ergma, Daudze, and Česlovas, 2008

¹¹⁴ Adomaitis, 2008

¹¹⁵ Kruuse, 2008

¹¹⁶ The Baltic Times, 2019

issues that relate to the single digital market and the free movement of data, which will help in increasing the competitiveness of the EU.¹¹⁷

The current Estonian Prime-Minister Jüri Ratas (since 2016) also supports the idea of the Three Seas Initiative and states that it opens new opportunities for Estonia. “I am convinced that constructing new energy, transport and digital connections on the North-South Axis of Europe injects new energy into the economies of Central and Eastern European countries and contributes to raising the competitiveness of the European Union through this.”¹¹⁸ He also mentioned the readiness of Estonia to host the next Three Seas Initiative Summit in summer 2020. During the meeting with James Risch, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, he stated the importance of the USA's commitment to the security of Estonia and other Baltic states and that Estonia takes the strengthening of independent defence capability very seriously.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Republic of Estonia Government, 2019

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

3.2. Latvia

Latvia has a unicameral parliament or Saeima which is elected in direct elections. The parliament chooses the president who, in turn, appoints the prime minister. Since its independence, Latvia had eighteen governments, fourteen prime ministers, and six presidents. The presidents showed different levels of engagement to Latvian tradition and cohesion, as well as various visions of modernity.

Guntis Ulmanis, born as Guntis Rumpitis, was Latvian president in 1993-1999, he was elected due to the strength of his family ties to free Estonia's last prewar president Karlis Ulmanis: he was his grandnephew. A Gulag survivor, upon return home, the younger Ulmanis concealed his background and as Rumpitis joined the Communist party to advance his career as an economist. He was nonetheless fired in 1970 when his family's heritage was revealed. Laying low, the future president waited until 1989 to quit the Communist party, to revert to his real family name, and to oppose the system openly. A leader of the agrarian Latvia Farmer's Union party, a resurrected namesake of its prewar parliamentary predecessor, Ulmanis, provided much-needed stability to his nation and a symbolic sense of continuity with the prewar republic.¹²⁰ He paid particular attention to foreign policy, for example, Latvia's integration into international organizations, setting up and strengthening cooperation both with European and other countries. One of the most notable successes of his politics was an agreement with Russia about Russian Army withdrawal from Latvian's territory, as well as the adoption of the Law on Citizenship. He also paid much attention to the research of the history of Latvia and its interpretation issues. He even called on the international community to condemn the totalitarian regime of the former USSR.¹²¹ In 1995 during his visit to Ukraine, Guntis Ulmanis and Ukrainian president Leonid Kuchma stated that they were "interested in creating a Baltic-Black Sea 'economic space'".¹²² They agreed on creation of a joint commission in order to implement agreements to mutual diplomatic support, trade, and cooperation in the military-industrial sector, and also possible construction of a Black-Baltic Seas oil pipeline.¹²³ In May 1997 the presidents of Poland, Ukraine, Estonia and Lithuania had a meeting in Tallinn, where they discussed the

¹²⁰ Chodakiewicz, 2012, 278

¹²¹ Chancery of the President of Latvia, n.d.

¹²² The Jamestown Foundation, 1995

¹²³ Ibid.

perspectives of multilateral cooperation. They insisted on the right of their countries “to protect their security through means of their choice, including accession to alliances.”¹²⁴ They stated that these countries would “work together to help create a stable and secure Europe and to enhance the effectiveness of NATO’s Partnership for Peace program.”¹²⁵

The next Latvian president was Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga (1999-2007) who spent almost whole her life in Canada as an emigre and a scholar, a clinical psychologist. She played a leading role in achieving Latvia's membership in NATO and the European Union. On the other hand, her critics accused her of political correctness, mushy multiculturalism and extreme attentiveness to the needs of the Russian minority. She was also criticized because she did not acknowledge the Soviet occupation; she was much less sensitive to the matters of de-Communization and lustration.¹²⁶

Valdis Zatlers (2007-2011) was the next who assumed the presidency. Election of the new president was much more confusing than the previous one. Being an orthopaedic surgeon, he had minimal experience in politics and was not a member of any political party. Moreover, his reputation was marred by accusations in tax evasion and corruption. After the election, Zatlers also emphasized on the importance of the pan-Baltic unity and even mentioned that he had some ideas on how to strengthen regional cooperation.¹²⁷

In 2011 Zatlers lost the election to Andris Bērziņš. Zatlers had great chances to win the voting until he accused lawmakers in corruption and called for the dissolution of Parliament. Andris Bērziņš is a multi-millionaire and former bank president with numerous bank holdings around the country and great experience in politics, as before he was a member of Soviet Latvia political elite: from an electronic enterprise executive to a deputy government minister. After 1992, he became the president of the Bank of Latvia, as well as a board member of several large corporations.¹²⁸

Raimonds Vējonis (2015-2019) was the first president among the European Union countries who was a member of a green party. He used to be Minister of Environmental Protection and later Minister of Defense of Latvia. He stressed the importance of national and international security of the country. He expresses his support to the Three Seas

¹²⁴ The Jamestown Foundation, 1997

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Chodakiewicz, 2012, 279

¹²⁷ Archdeacon, 2007

¹²⁸ Global News, 2011

Initiative, participated in every summit, and during the Summit of the Three Seas initiative in Slovenia in 2019, he stated that it empowers the countries of the region to develop connectivity, which is the main factor for economic growth.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ Chancery of the President of Latvia, 2019

3.3. Lithuania

Lithuania differs politically, institutionally and economically from its Baltic neighbours. It is less stable and had more often changes in the government. One of the reasons is that Lithuania was the first Soviet-occupied state that announced restitution of independence. Consequently, it had to take more steps, compromises and innovations. As a result, it experienced deeper post-Communism than the other two Baltic states. For that reason, there are some differences in institutional and legal arrangements. Same as Lithuania and Estonia, Lithuania has a unicameral parliament or Seimas and a prime minister, but its president is elected in direct, general elections. Since its independence, Lithuania had eighteen governments, thirteen prime-ministers (some of them served two and three terms) and seven heads of the state.

According to M. J. Chodakiewicz, Lithuanian presidents may be characterized as those who are under the negative impact of the Soviet legacy, and the system as the neutral cruelties of democracy in the post-Communist context, where neither de-Communization nor lustration occurred. Same as everywhere, the electorate chooses the most comfortable and pleasant candidate, which, in most cases, is not the most experienced and justifiable. However, sometimes the heads of the state are chosen correctly, even in post-Communism, due to freedom and democracy.¹³⁰

The first freely elected president was Algirdas Brazauskas (1993-1998), later also prime minister. His position was questionable due to Communist part, as he had been the First Secretary of Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania, that was a part of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, during the two decades, he was the most important political figures of the country, who played an essential role in the taking apart the communist system not only in his country but across the Soviet empire. As a prime minister, he led Lithuania first to NATO and then to the European Union in 2004, returning the country to the West. In 2006 he had to resign due to the corruption scandal among his cabinet. Algirdas Brazauskas supported the idea of Intermarium and stressed the importance of Lithuania among other Baltic states, as it is at a crossroads of Baltic and Black sea regions. According to him, cooperation with the Central European countries is in

¹³⁰ Chodakiewicz, 2012, 282

priority as it “secures the Lithuanian position as an integral part of Western civilization and brings it closer to CEFTA membership”.¹³¹

Almost around all Lithuanian presidents were rumours about their alleged corruption, past and present connections with KGB and mafia. Except for Valdas Adamkus, who was president twice (1998-2003 and 2004-2009), a citizen of the USA, an American military veteran and former anti-Communist. In his foreign policy, he called for active dialogue between European Union member states and former Soviet republics who were actively seeking membership in the EU. In 2005 he welcomed the initiative to create the Community for Democratic Choice and stressed that cooperation between the Baltic and Black sea states had a promising future.¹³²

The third Lithuanian president, Rolandas Paksas (2003-2004) was only Europe's head of state that was impeached and removed from the office because of the corruption charges.

Dalia Grybauskaite (2009-2019) was the first female Lithuanian president. She had anti-Russian position and multiple times stressed on the Russian threat to Lithuania and other Baltic states, which have little armed forces and big Russian speaking minorities. In 2018 she said that Western states were naive in their assessment of Russia and would “wake up” only “when they have been attacked” and “notice that Russia interferes in their interests, spies on them or manipulates their elections.”¹³³ She actively took part in the Three Seas Initiative Summits, as the initiative is highly important for Lithuania to consolidate energy independence, diversify energy supplies, ensure national security and military mobility.¹³⁴

Lithuanian prime minister Saulius Skvernelis (since 2016) at the beginning of 2020 during the meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland also expressed his support of the Three Seas Initiative as the connection of these three seas will enable the development of cooperation among the countries in the fields of energy, transport infrastructure and digitization.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Knudsen, 1999, 213

¹³² Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania, 2005

¹³³ Radio Poland, 2018

¹³⁴ Press Service of the President, 2019

¹³⁵ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, 2020

3.4. The far-right groups

As it was mentioned before, the Intermarium concept was initially invented by Jozef Pilsudski, who was a Polish statesman at the beginning of the XIX century. According to his idea that he proposed after the First World War, this confederation should stretch from Black and Adriatic seas to Baltic sea, thus including Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Moldavia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and, possibly, also Finland. Intermarium or Miedzymorze was supposed to establish a multinational and a multicultural tradition of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and allow the Central European states to avoid the dominance of Germany and Russia. The USSR and all Western powers protested the idea; therefore, the idea would not be fulfilled.

After the collapse of the USSR, it was partially revived in the form of the Visegrad Group and the Three Seas Initiative. Although they are both considered as a unifying security strategy for Central and Eastern Europe, they still do not succeed in the idea of Intermarium completely. The Visegrad Group or Visegrad Four (established in 1991) is a cultural and political alliance that includes only four Central European countries: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. The Three Seas Initiative (established in 2016) connects the Baltic, Black and Adriatic Seas. It includes twelve members: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Comparing with Intermarium, it is more self-centred and concentrated on economic benefits and development of the countries. It does not include non-EU countries, like Ukraine, for example, thus not following the prime Pilsudski's idea: the idea of liberating nations from the Soviet rule.

During the last several years the far-right groups of the region have shown great interest in the Intermarium concept or, as Matthew Kott, historian researcher with Uppsala University that specializes in the Baltic Sea region, editor of the *Journal of Baltic Studies*, mentioned in his article, 'hijacked' it.¹³⁶ Definition of the term 'far-right' is a bit problematic. Firstly, because it is usually associated with fascism and its crimes, thus excluding it from democratic politics. Jurgen W. Falter and Siegfried Schumann, German political scientists, gave to the far-rights ten ideological characteristics: "hyper-nationalism, ethnocentrism, anti-communism, anti-parliamentarism, anti-pluralism, militarism, law and

¹³⁶ Kott, 2017

order thinking, a demand for a strong political leader, anti-Americanism and cultural pessimism.”¹³⁷ Ukrainian crisis in 2014, which was caused by the decision of the Ukrainian government to stop the process of signing the Association Agreement with the European Union that provoked mass protests and revolution, and the inability of EU, NATO and the USA to stop Russian annexation of Crimea and inducement of armed conflict in the Eastern part of Ukraine, Donbas, were the main premises of such interest. The unstable political situation in Ukraine and uncertainty in peace and stability in Central and Eastern Europe brought far-right groups from countries of the region together and allowed them to start promoting their political ‘Third-Way’. The ‘Third-Way’ is a general term used to denote various political positions trying to avoid the extremes of the left and right. It became popular among the Ukrainian far-right groups that see themselves as a ‘true Europe’ and part of historical heartland and their role in the protection of the European radical cosmopolitanism.¹³⁸

On July 2-3, 2016, the leader of the Special Operations Detachment AZOV¹³⁹, People's Deputy of Ukraine (2014-2019) and leader of the National Corps Party Andriy Biletsky organized the Inaugural Conference of the Intermarium Development Assistance Group. Delegates from Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, Baltic states, Georgia, Slovakia, Croatia and the Russian Federation (Kaliningrad) took part in the conference. Mostly these were representatives from the far-right and even fascist groups from the whole region (such as Marian Kotleba’s Slovak Brotherhood¹⁴⁰). It is worth mentioning that military attaches from Poland, Hungary, Romania and Lithuania also visited the conference, as well as academics and media representatives.

The project envisages integration in such fields as security and defence, energy independence, economy, culture, science. The first stage of integration is expected to unite Ukraine, Poland, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. During the second stage, it is expected to involve such countries as Croatia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova,

¹³⁷ Klandermans, Klandermans, and Mayer, 2006, 4

¹³⁸ Wishart, 2018

¹³⁹ Ukrainian National Guard regiment, which was formed during the 2014 Ukrainian crisis as a volunteer military unit and integrated into the National Guard of Ukraine.

¹⁴⁰ The Slovak Brotherhood or Slovenska pospolitost’ was an ultra-nationalist political party during the years 2005-2006, nowadays operates in the form of a civic association. They cooperated with the European National Front and supported their ideas of European nationalist unity.

Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Austria, Georgia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Macedonia are considered as potential partners.

One of the organizers of the conference, deputy head of the Staff of the Special Operations Detachment AZOV, Mykola Kravchenko, said: “These stages of integration are conditional. Today we can see that historical and political processes are going so fast that integration will be even more intense than we assume.”¹⁴¹ He stressed that integration in the field of security and defence was the most relevant. “First of all, the unification of military training and the development of territorial defence forces is considered. Another area is a common air defence and missile defence system, a rapid response force, and in the future, possibly, a common nuclear security system. The third area is the cooperation of intelligence of participating countries.”¹⁴² Kravchenko also added that these were not dogmas but suggestions for discussion. In the field of energy security, cooperation was offered on diversification of energy sources, optimization of the development of won fields and development of alternative energy sources. In the economic area, such projects as the Regional Customs Union, the Free Trade Area, the exchange of advanced technologies and the creation of joint production cycles were discussed. In the framework of cultural cooperation, it was suggested to think about how to avoid a migration catastrophe and to ensure the unique development of the cultures of the peoples of the region and also, to provide support to the family, in particular, focusing on the successful experience of Poland. In the field of science and education it was planned to discuss the prospect of integration of the higher education system and verification of diplomas, development of innovative technologies, joint space program and joint explorations of the Arctic, Antarctic and the World Ocean.

Aiming to improve transnational linkages, the “AZOV” created English speaking platforms, such as Tumblr blog *Reconquista-Europe* and their own YouTube channel *Reconquista Ukraine* where they post the last events in Ukraine and the region and liaise with other activists of the region. In one of the videos called “Intermarium – an alternative of the EU”, they state about EU’s inefficiency and inability to deal with such issues as “the global economic crisis, uncontrolled mass migration, international terrorism, political and

¹⁴¹ Kaganets, 2016

¹⁴² Ibid.

economic expansions of Russia, depopulation and ageing.”¹⁴³ They believe that Intermarium is a geopolitical alternative and the future of European nations lies in it.

The second Intermarium Support Group conference was held on April 27, 2017, in Kyiv. Delegates from the Baltic countries, Poland, Belarus, Croatia and Ukraine, took part in it. The speakers outlined a wide range of challenges – from defence and security to culture and economy. There were also speakers from Latvia and Lithuania. Konstantins Pupurs, Latvian political scientist and member of Latvian National Anti-Communist Resistance Group Helsinki-86, in his speech “Intermarium – from “Wage Union” to Military Cooperation” spoke about a wide range of issues that concerned the regional and all-European security. The next speech performed by Rajmund Klonowski, the head of Polish community in Lithuania, “Intermarium and the Question of a Polish Minority in Lithuania” was dedicated to the rights of national minorities in European countries. Audrius Baciulis, Lithuanian expert on national defence policy and security issue, columnist of the “Lietuvis Zinios” daily newspaper had his speech on the topic of territorial defence. Ruuben Kaalep, head of *Sinine Āratus*, a youth organization of the Estonian Conservative People’s Party, showed the main purpose of discussions and determined the main mission of the Intermarium: “to become a source of the fundamental European revival.”¹⁴⁴ During the Third Conference of the Intermarium Support Group in 2018, there was only one speaker from the Baltic states, Kestutis Markevicius, representative of NGO “LDK palikuonys”, who highlighted the practical Lithuanian-Ukrainian cooperation within the framework of the “Memory of the Nation project”.¹⁴⁵ According to the post on Facebook of the Intermarium Support Group, the Fourth Conference was scheduled in Zagreb or Brussels in autumn 2019, but, afterwards, there was no information about it found.

Almost the same time as the Intermarium Support Group Conference in 2017 and 2018, in Kyiv was held the first and the second Paneuropa Conferences which, under the auspices of the all-European Reconquista movement, brought together far-right groups from all over Europe: Italy (*Casapound Italia*), France (*Nouvelle Droite*), Sweden (*Nordisk Ungdom*), Germany (*Third positionists*), Switzerland (*Swiss branch of Reconquista*), Russia (*Russian Centre and Wotan Jugend*), Croatia (*Generacija Obnove*), Poland (*SZTURM and Noklot*), Lithuania (*Nationalist Union*), Estonia (*Sinine Āratus*), as well as several

¹⁴³ Reconquista Ukraine, 2016

¹⁴⁴ Reconquista blog, 2017

¹⁴⁵ FOIA Research, 2019

representatives from Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Spain and even Chili.¹⁴⁶ Thematically it overlapped with the Second conference of the Intermarium Development Assistance Group. The Second Paneuropa Conference was also joined by a representative of the US Alt-Right, but no speakers from the Baltic region this time.

The reason why the idea of the Intermarium inspired the far rights is, according to Matthew Kott, that the national conservatives position Intermarium “as the remaining heartland of the ‘true Europe’...a defence not only against ‘neo-Bolshevism’ coming from Moscow but also against the neoliberal, multicultural, secular and feminist ‘neo-Bolshevism’ coming from Brussels.”¹⁴⁷ In these terms the far rights equate the danger coming from Russia to the threat coming from the EU. They are concerned about the USA's mixed signals about its engagement to Ukraine and NATO eastern allies. It is worth mentioning that Intermarium`s security also highly depends on the stubborn fighting spirit of people of the region. That is why this far right`s interest should not be considered as an insignificant phenomenon mainly because there are other political groups, except for the AZOV civil corps, that have a more significant impact on politics and are also attracted by these ideas. The official website of the National Alliance¹⁴⁸ in Latvia posts discussions about the far-right vector of the Intermarium. Raivis Zeltits, the Secretary-General of the National Alliance and leader of its youth organization, is the main advertiser of identity ideology in Latvia. He is also one of the creators of <https://thenewnationalism.com/> website, which is a new site for the promotion of new forms of nationalist theory and practice, and a new geopolitical concept of Intermarium. *The New Nationalism* became a political platform, which united the far right from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

The New Nationalism cooperates with “AZOV” through different initiatives, for example, an exhibition devoted to Latvian general Peteris Radzins, who is a significant figure in the construction of a common regional space. This exhibition “General of the Latvian Army Peteris Radzins in the History of Latvia and Ukraine” was organized at the Latvian Embassy in Kyiv by the National Alliance. Representatives from different Latvian and Ukrainian far-right political groups, as well as, the Ambassador of Latvia Juris

¹⁴⁶ Reconquista blog, 2017

¹⁴⁷ Kott, 2017

¹⁴⁸ National Alliance, officially the National Alliance “All For Latvia! - “For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK” is a right-wing populist, national-conservative political party in Latvia, member of the Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe, with seats in the European Conservative and Reformists group in the European Parliament.

Poykans, public and cultural figures were present at the opening of the exhibition, according to The New Nationalism website.¹⁴⁹ The fact that such an event was held in the Latvian embassy would mean that the Republic of Latvia approves this ideology, which consequently legitimizes the political views of the far-right groups. It is a very strong claim. However, there is neither information on the official website of the Latvian embassy or Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirming that such exhibition took place at the Latvian Embassy in Ukraine, nor confirmation that Juris Poykans, the Ambassador of Latvia, did open the event. The only source that gives some evidence about the event is The New Nationalism website, which provides detailed information and photos of the event, in which Juris Poykans is visible.¹⁵⁰

Matthew Kott, in his article about the far rights and Intermarium, stated that Latvia, despite its small size, may play a significant role in the transportation of radical ideologies from East to West and vice versa. Its geopolitical position allows it to be an ideal entry point for ideological conflicts imported from the further East, and being a member of European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization makes it a so-called ‘Trojan horse’ to increase the impact of the far-right forces in the Euro-Atlantic community.¹⁵¹ The Intermarium case is an illustration of how far rights become a part of Latvia’s politics and now can facilitate and decriminalize some of the most extreme Ukrainian groups on the European stage.

During the last years, the Baltic far-right groups were actively developing a philosophical foundation for Intermarium, called ‘Ethnofuturism’. They aim to cooperate with Ukrainian nationalists and Visegrad members and promote their ideology by various platforms, mostly they use different websites: Tumblr, blogs and Instagram. This doctrine’s social background was connected with the national liberation movement in Estonia in the late 1980s. Later it was developed by the nationalists of the Baltic region willing to unify and create a Slavic civilisational platform. It stresses the importance of cooperation but not a competition between nationalist groups.¹⁵²

Every year the youth organization of Estonian People's Conservative Party (EKRE), *Sinine Äratuse* or *Blue Awakening* host the Ethnofutur conference in Tallinn. Its leader is

¹⁴⁹ Semenyaka, 2017

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Kott, 2017

¹⁵² Wishart, 2018

Ruuben Kaalep, Tartu City Council member and the head of EKRE's Foreign Affairs office. This conference is attended by famous speakers from Estonia, USA, Finland, Ukraine, Sweden, Lithuania and Hungary. Olena Semenyaka, international secretary of National Corps and coordinator of the Intermarium Support Group also took part at the conferences. During the Third Etnofutur conference, she presented Intermarium as "space where Old Europe can return to life again, entering a new culture and civilization turn".¹⁵³ Timo Hännikäinen, Finnish intellectual, publisher, editor-in-chief of the online magazine *Sarastus* made a speech about the cultural relationship between Ukraine and Finland. It is worth mentioning that he was the one who, together with other staff of the *Sarastus*, who are also members of the neo-fascist organization called *Suomen Sisu*, organized the Awakening conference in April 2018 in Helsinki, which organizers described as "the first ethno-nationalist conference" of Finland. Some speakers of the Entofutur II conference in Tallinn also took part in the conference in Helsinki.¹⁵⁴ The *Sinine Äratus* is supported by Conservative People's Party of Estonia, as Martin Helme, who used to be the leader of EKRE, since 2019 Estonian Minister of Finance, was supposed to speak at the Second Etnofutur Conference, but he cancelled his visit due to illness.

¹⁵³ Interregnum blog, n.d.

¹⁵⁴ FOIA Research, n.d.

CONCLUSION

This Master Thesis has made theoretical research on the concept of regionalism and investigated the macro-regional project of Intermarium and its perception in the Baltic countries. The main goal of the study was to find out how the state and non-state actors of the Baltic countries (Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia) perceived the idea of the regional project Intermarium.

The research has led to such results:

1. Intermarium or Miedzymorze represents one of the European macro-regions, as it is a territory that includes a group of countries that have similar features and challenges. The process of forming this region belongs to the concept of “new regionalism” which appeared in the early 1990s and, comparing to the old traditional regionalism, is a more spontaneous process where states are the main actors, rather than superpowers; regions may include both state and non-state actors, as the far-right groups in this case.
2. Through investigation of how the governments of the Baltic countries express their interest to the Intermarium project, there were found lots of similarities in the foreign policy of the authorities. It is interesting to point out that the first presidents in Estonia, Latvia (Lennart Meri (Estonia), Guntis Ulmanis (Latvia) and almost all Lithuanian presidents (except for Valdas Adamkus and Dalia Grybauskaite) were accused in collaboration with KGB and Communist party. Nevertheless, all of them paid attention to strengthening cooperation with European countries, which led their countries to the membership in NATO and the EU. Latvia's President Valdis Zatlers expressed interest in the unity of the Baltic states. Lithuanian first president Algirdas Brazauskas, despite his previous position in the Communist party, supported the idea of Intermarium and stressed the importance of Lithuania among other Baltic states.
3. The research of how the governments of the Baltic countries express their interest to the Intermarium project led to the conclusion that nowadays none of them is interested in it, they pay attention instead to a similar project – The Three Seas Initiative or Trimarium that is more concentrated on the economic benefits of its members. Presidents and Prime Ministers officially expressed their support to the idea of the Three Seas Initiative and took part in its Summits. It is worth mentioning that in summer 2020 Estonia hosts the Three Seas Initiative Summit.

4. In the process of seeking information about Baltic states non-state actors` position on the Intermarium project, there was found much information about the interest of the far-right groups to the project. This interest was caused by the unstable political situation in Ukraine and uncertainty in peace and stability in Central and Eastern Europe. The main initiator that brought far-right groups from all the countries of the region together was Ukrainian leader of the Special Operations Detachment Azov Andriy Biletsky, who organized the Inaugural Conference of the Intermarium Development Assistance Groups, as well as further conferences. They are not supported by any of the state actors (even the fact that one of the exhibitions, organized by the representatives of Latvian and Ukrainian far-right groups, was held in the Latvian Embassy in Kyiv cannot be proven by any source except for the far-right group's website); conferences and meetings form the biggest part of their activities. The last conference was in October 2018, and, according to the post in Facebook of the Intermarium Support Group, the 4th Conference was scheduled in autumn 2019, but, afterwards, there was no information about it found.

The main conclusion of the research and the answer to the research question is that state actors of the Baltic countries are not explicitly interested in the Intermarium project, they rather choose the Three Seas Initiative project, which is a new perspective regional cooperation initiative. It is also questionable and doubtful if Intermarium project, conducted by such controversial non-state actors as far-right groups, has any further perspectives.

The further researches may focus on the role and perspectives of the Three Seas Initiative project in the Baltic region, as well as the role of the far-right groups in such kinds of initiatives.

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