Strategic Thinking about Future Security

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Strategic Thinking and the Language of Challenges

The reality that we face at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century renders security issues, and in particular the ways of providing security, central to international attention, both in its present and future aspects. The reasons for this centrality are not only the revolutionary changes in science and technology, but also perhaps even more importantly the characteristics of the already diagnosed and existing threats and predicted challenges for the global security environment for which we have not yet found sufficient responses. This essay focuses on the notion of challenges [1] and opportunities created by the world in transition that we undoubtedly face, instead of relying on the "language of threats" and the responsive, symptomatic approach towards them that has characterized the discourse of the strategic community in the past. Discussing a new security environment requires a new set of terms.

Although we do live in times when the threat of a full-scale global conflict has been significantly reduced, the new phenomena, issues, and events that appear have a significant impact on our ability to sustain and create genuine international stability in the future. Those phenomena include, among others, economic, social, political, and ethnic tensions and crises; political instability and failed states; transnational organized crime; WMD/WME proliferation; the pace of technological change; terrorism; ecological and climate disasters; and the shift of strategic attention to peripheries.[2] Those phenomena,

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[1] The notion of *challenges* is here understood as the integral parts of a set of predicted events, phenomena, conditions, processes, etc. that a subject (organization) must take into consideration in the process of projecting the future course of action. By their nature, challenges are both subjective and objective, and they must be seen equally as threats and opportunities. Since they are neither negative nor positive—they are "electrically neutral"—the language of challenges should be the language of prognoses. A challenge will be then any event that might occur, and which must be taken into account by the subject when designing its future strategies, attitudes, and actions. Cezary Rutkowski, ed., *Security Management in Higher Education – Research and Didactics Issues* (originally published as *Zarządzanie bezpieczeństwem jako problem nauki i dydaktyki szkoły wyższej*) (Warsaw: National Defense University, 2003).

[2] "Weapons of Mass Effect" (WME) are used in some of the contemporary security studies literature as a counterpart of the previously used term "Weapons of Mass Destruction" (WMD). The shift is justified by technological developments that allow conventional armed equipment to gain the effectiveness equal to WMD. WME are a wide category of tools of energetic (kinetic) and informational destabilization and disintegration of any systems prone to those processes, in particular macrosystems. Marian Kozub, *Strategic Security Environment in the First Decades of the Twenty-first Century*; original title: *Strategiczne środowisko bez-*

however, are not only limited to one state or region, as had previously been the case; therefore, an approach that considers a state as the sole agent involved in creating its own security is no longer efficient. These phenomena and threats are interwoven, multi-dimensional, and transnational in nature, and their occurrence is usually of a systematic nature. External threats and challenges—whether real or potential, and whether of a political, economic, or of a psychological character—consequently pose internal challenges as well, creating a chain reaction of interrelated phenomena. We must also remember that many scientists and researchers, while seeking solutions and means of effective security policy and strategy, draw on the rich heritage of past methods in these fields. Their pursuits sometimes only serve to limit their attempts to discover certain universal features of security threats, and can lead them to recommend ways of dealing with such problems that might not always be adequate to the current situation.

The events of the past twenty-five years—most notably for our purposes, the fall of the Eastern Bloc and the end of the Cold War—have changed the geostrategic situation not only in Europe or America, but also globally. The East-West split has come to an end, and the states in Central and Eastern Europe underwent a deep transformation, which created in that region a thoroughly new security environment demanding strategic thinking on the level of individual states, instead of within the former framework of collective security.[3] Of course, many of the previous threats have vanished or evolved, but those that replaced them might prove even more difficult to cope with. Strategic thinking about the future, then—in particular with respect to choosing the ways of en-

pieczeństwa w pierwszych dekadach XXI wieku (Warsaw: National Defense University, 2009).

[3] Strategic thinking must be based on an interdisciplinary approach to strategic processes. Strategic processes are defined as processes that embrace a variety of unpredictable or indefinable factors, and that create multi-optional conceptions of future courses of action and lines of situational development. Strategic thinking, then, involves a directed and conscious use of the imagination, supported by the most accurate available knowledge about the future, resulting in the creation of different visions and scenarios that might appear as a result of a number of simultaneous changes in a given environment. Ideally, those scenarios should be able to embrace all possible conditions in which an organization might operate, indicating most of the uncertain and unforeseeable circumstances that will create both threats and opportunities.

The skill of strategic thinking also means to be able to aim at generating the best intelligence in a given situation, investigating options, prioritizing goals and ways of utilizing available resources, bearing in mind that all has to be considered in a long-term perspective. It also involves creating a set of techniques and methods of data gathering, analysis and synthesis that will enable the realization of goals, as well as accommodating the imperatives of continuous change and integration of fields in which one operates in order to be able to prepare the organization for future functioning and development, and creating a positive image of the organization in society. Last but not least, strategic thinking demands that one consider the organization holistically, not merely as a sum of its parts. *Management strategique de PME/PMI, Guide methodologique* (Paris: Economica, 1991).

suring and enhancing the strategic security environment[4]—should be an inherent attribute of functioning of every organization, above all of states and alliances. It should be remembered, though, that the construction and design of images of the strategic security environment's finite future is at all times condemned to failure. This is a consequence of the fact that virtually all processes and events are perpetually changing;[5] they are by no means repeated in the same manner, and are thus by definition unpredictable.

Thus it would seem justified to keep certain key considerations in mind when formulating questions pertaining to the future security environment, in particular:

- Do the changeability and unpredictability of the strategic environment excuse each particular organization from thinking about the future course of events?
- Are all attempts to anticipate the future wholly irrational?
- How should an organization (state, alliance) function in an uncertain environment?
- How should we plan for action to help reach the organization's objectives in the unstable conditions of the contemporary and future environments?
- What might be the context of future social-military conflicts?

Each organization, and each of us, must address those questions. We must bear in mind, however, that the background of those considerations must be always security, which is the fundamental value and the prerequisite of the existence of all units and organizations. This is particularly the case since security is a category that embraces not only the very existence of the organization, but also its future survival and further possibilities of development. The main fields of interest of organizations and institutions responsible for security should thus be the analysis, assessment, diagnosis, and progno-

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[4] The strategic security environment is defined here as the realm consisting of the internal and external factors that determine the realization of a state's interests and strategic objectives. Those factors, among others, include: geostrategic context (conditions, relationships, trends, issues, and interactions), challenges, opportunities, threats, and risks. They can be analyzed in terms of abstract parameters that should be specified with regard to the organization (country, region) or the situation, either on a global basis in a specific (usually contemporary) phase of development of the international reality, or from the perspective of a particular country. In such cases, the strategic security environment will be slightly or substantially different for each state. Strategic objectives in the field of security, then, shall be understood as the defined future state of a state's security that embraces the needs and fundamental values expressed by vital national interests and is shaped by the environment and potential possibilities. It is crucial for strategic thinking that the defined condition must be calculated in a long-term perspective. See H. R. Yarger, *Strategic Theory for the 21st Century* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, United States Army War College, 2006), 17–19.

[5] Heraclitus of Ephesus was the author of the most common concept of change as a central rule of the world order ("panta rhei"). As he stated: "You cannot step twice into the same river, for other waters and yet others go ever flowing on. They go forward and back again." William Harris, *Heraclitus: The Complete Fragments* (Middlebury, VT: Middlebury College, 1994), 11; available at http://community.middlebury.edu/~harris/Philosophy/heraclitus.pdf.

sis of the condition, character, and dynamics of change in the strategic thinking process, with special attention given to the careful consideration of diagnosed threats, risks, and challenges, since those conditions imply modes of action through which a given subject attempts to realize its objectives. We must also keep in mind that such challenges embrace all the spheres of life: political, economic, military, informational, diplomatic, social, scientific, ecological, cultural, spiritual, and many others. Those challenges, moreover, are not only new and emerging processes and phenomena, but also the elements of the aforementioned set of diagnosed events and trends that require a response through in-depth analysis, assessment, diagnosis, and management after the fact. The history and development of each and every nation, state, and civilization, along with the advance of the whole human race, should be considered from the very point of their capability to respond to challenges (not only to threats, as used to be the common mode of assessing such matters).

Profound analysis and assessment of the above phenomena can lead us to the conclusion that the contemporary condition of humanity and civilization is in transition, at a civilizational and cultural turning point. The capacity for adjusting strategic, systematic solutions to constantly emerging challenges is thus indispensable for any organization, whether it is a military unit, a defense ministry, a state, or an alliance.[6] This transition process shapes a new construction of the international geopolitical and geostrategic system, which will also influence the future global security environment.

Strategy of the Future: Questions and Answers

Any attempt to characterize strategic thinking about future security, then, should be initiated by ordering our considerations: namely, we must create a strategy.[7] There are around 450 extant working definitions of "strategy," varying according to the interpretation, approach, perspective, or application. For the purpose of our considerations here, however, we may choose from those carried out on the basis of research on the contemporary theoretical and practical aspects of strategy, and that embrace the three following areas of consideration:

- The aim (objective) and method of using power in a state's political activity[8]

[6] Janusz Stacewicz, *Megatrends and the Strategy and Politics of Development*; originally published as *Megatrendy a strategia i polityka rozwoju* (Warsaw: Elipsa, 1996).

[7] Strategy is here defined as a prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve strategic, long-term (theater, national, and/or multinational) objectives of a given subject. *JP 1-02: DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 15 July 2011), 341.

[8] It should be noted here that the author understands "power" not only in military terms, since power is used in a variety of domains of a state's activity, whether it is politics, economy, diplomacy, information, etc. Each of those fields of a state's activity wields its own means and resources of power.

- The level of defining the goal and ways of functioning within the state (whether it is a short-term tactical objective, an operational one or, eventually, a strategic aim)
- The level of defining the objective and identifying the means of realization of a complex task.[9]

It is estimated that, given the three ways of understanding strategy outlined above, the one that allows for the widest spectrum of deliberations is the third approach, which defines strategy as the process of defining an objective and identifying the means by which to achieve a complex task. According to this approach, strategy is an integral part of each complex, multi-stage action. It indicates or presumes the existence of a subject, and comprises the cardinal components of the subject: its aim, means, resources, methods, and the environment in which a given organization operates. Understood in this way, then, strategy is an ordered set of assumptions, decisions, and choices that express the accepted and projected features of the organization as examined in the context of the circumstances, stages, and components of the courses of action and general objectives, means, resources, methods, and tactics and techniques of control and execution. Strategy determines the above objectives, actions, means, and resources in the simplest and most general manner, but in a scope necessary and sufficient for the identification and endorsement of the execution process.

This approach implies two cardinal and inherent attributes of strategy: its simultaneous subjectivity and objectivity.[10] Subjectivity of strategy requires us to identify whose strategy it is, who its creator is, and who is willing to execute it. The objectivity of strategy, on the other hand, designates the specified field (mode, domain, and sector) of the subject's activity. In our subject matter, the field of activity of our subject—an organization, state, or alliance—will be the future strategic environment (as estimated until the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century). Therefore, when considering the security strategy of any given state, we should focus on its activities in the domain of widely interpreted security. Security, moreover, should be understood not only as the ability to respond to threats by means of hard power,[11] but as a multidimensional spectrum of activities aimed at satisfying and maximizing the existence, development, safety, stability, integrity, identity, independence, and standards of living on behalf of a state's citizens. What is more, strategic thinking should not be limited to considering external factors when envisioning threats and challenges. The subject's own weaknesses and flaws must be brought into focus, as they might create the gravest dangers for the very existence of given organization.[12]

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[9] Rutkowski, ed., *Security Management in Higher Education*.

[10] It does not exclude, of course, emphasizing the subjective or objective approach towards strategy when necessary.

[11] J-P. Charney, *La Strategie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1995); translated into Polish by P. Gawliczek (Warsaw: National Defense University, 2008).

[12] Jerzy Stańczyk, *Understanding Contemporary Security*; originally published as *Współczesne pojmowanie bezpieczeństwa* (Warsaw, 1996).

This leads us to the first significant conclusion regarding strategic thinking about future security: it is high time for us to stop thinking about security only in terms of "threats," in particular those that are familiar and predictable. It does not, obviously, mean that we should neglect those traditional threats, but that we should think about those threats on a tactical level. Having performed a proper self-diagnosis to avoid breaking at the weakest points at the most unexpected moments, strategic thinking should primarily ponder challenges that ought to be seen as opportunities (chances). Hence, the solutions we advance with when tackling the challenges, risks, and threats ahead should evoke subsequent favorable opportunities.

Let us pay attention to a curious historical detail here. In both ancient China and in the Roman Empire, a state clerk who failed to seize an opportunity to amplify the glory and power of the state because he failed to accurately evaluate an adversary's strengths and weaknesses would be severely punished! Nowadays it seems reasonable to return to this tradition, since, as Sun Tzu said: "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."[13] Applying that line of thinking to the future security environment, we might also infer that it is high time we abandon the mentality focused on seeking external threats and turn to a more unconventional approach – an approach that is based first of all on self-diagnosis, and secondly on searching for and exploring chances and opportunities where they might seem least expected to be found, just like modern business people do. Such activity, by rule, should be a process of changeable and adaptable dynamics that will properly respond to the constantly altering environment, civilizational progress, and the shifting range of needs of all subjects involved.

Having explained the notion of strategy in the field of security as an established set of activities of a subject, with clearly defined goals, resources, and tools, we can turn to the next substantial issue: which factors influence and shape those established activities, and to what degree? The intuitive answer might be that a number of those factors will influence all aspects of strategy. For instance, the level of civilizational development, the political goals, and the potential of a given state will influence its value systems, priorities, technological development, access to resources, geostrategic situation, etc. In such a situation, the considerations of strategic thinking about security should be guided by the common, yet not fully explored, notion that "the future will be so much different from what we are able to imagine today."[14] But how exactly different from the contemporary situation will the future be? How will the global geostrategic environment develop? How will the understanding of security evolve? How will the nature of conflicts change? Will it still be possible to define them as social, political, military? Will all those matters be comparable to other conflicts, past or present? All of these questions are, of course, difficult to answer. There have been many attempts to

[13] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, translated from Chinese by Lionel Giles, 1910; see http://www.chinapage.com/sunzi-e.html.

[14] Peter F. Drucker, *Post-Capitalist Society* (New York: Harperbusiness, 1994).

find a way to diagnose the course of future events. Theorists have developed the cyclical theory of history, and then also the linear theory of history and civilization that traces development to the great world religions, but none of these attempts on the part of historians have given us a ready and foolproof set of tools that would enable us to deal with the uncertainty of the future. There have also been postmodern theories that were supposed to address the unsteadiness of today and the unpredictability of tomorrow, yet despite their flexibility and unconventionality, and their focus on imagination rather than on rational prognosis, they have also failed to meet our needs for foolproof prediction. The key here might be our habitual human unwillingness to change, and our inability to accept that the future may in fact be unimaginable.

As a consequence, strategic analysis, assessment, and prognosis all evoke a deep anxiety, one that has been familiar to humankind for centuries. Thus we have tried to tame it in a way by setting laws and rules, in an attempt to bring order to chaos. We have created certain visions of our needs, demands, interests, strategies, and relations with other participants of this seemingly fixed order. But the order we knew—and along with it the strategic thinking about security—is altering, and it is impossible to shape it in the clearly defined fashion that was the norm during the Cold War. Due to the many factors of change mentioned above, the strategic security environment is in constant evolution, and instead of strategic balance we face a situation of unstable, multidimensional equilibrium. Thus, our strategic thinking should adapt and evolve to meet the new conditions, although it does not always manage to keep up. Security at present is hardly ever a clearly defined and sustained state; rather, it is a complex, multidimensional process that changes its range, form, character, and structure. As a result, the relations between various actors in the international arena change and evolve, new issues and phenomena occur, the balance of global power fluctuates, and new challenges appear. Moreover, along with different opportunities and challenges, we have to face a plethora of threats that were hitherto unknown, or ones that have been evolving latently for years. All the above determine the shape of the security environment, influence the conditions in which societies develop, and thus are deciding factors of the pace and direction of security development. Consequently, this state of constant metamorphosis forces us to create modes of implementing novel solutions pertaining to the use of hard and soft power, along with other instruments of strategy.

The Contemporary Strategic Security Environment and the Paradigm Shift

Given the many changes discussed above, the following questions arise. How can we characterize the contemporary strategic security environment? How much has it changed since the end of the Cold War? How has it evolved, and even more important, how is it going to change in the future? What are the new features of the new security landscape, and which familiar signposts are no longer there? In addressing these questions, we must bear in mind one of the key characteristics of today's global security

environment: growing global disproportions and asymmetries.[15] The evident examples of growing asymmetries are such phenomena as unexpected behaviors on the part of states and other actors, unequal objectives and interests, disparate access to natural resources, and grave differences in potential and power (especially growing inequality in levels of social conditions and development). This disproportion is most clearly seen between the global North, which is deemed wealthy, developed, stable and thus predictable, and the poor, conflicted South, whose future is uncertain and the region itself is unpredictable. The existing asymmetry is also proved by the fact that the wealthy North is interested in protecting human rights, pursuing and expanding democracy, preventing and combating terrorism, and reducing WMD proliferation. As a general rule, Northern societies are willing to live in a predictable, safe environment, with clearly defined normative frames, in a stable and balanced way. Those countries are therefore dominated by a "Western-centric" way of thinking, shaped on the grounds of liberal and democratic values, aiming at establishing global stability and security in order to create the conditions for further development and prosperity. The global South on the other hand—in particular Africa, the Middle East, and numerous Asian countries, along with South America—in many (of course not all) cases, has not only stopped trying to eliminate the problems mentioned above, but does not even try to diminish them and eradicate their harmful consequences. What is more, those regions are a breeding ground of such phenomena as terrorism and illegal WMD production and proliferation. They also tend to reject the principle of democratic rule, forming totalitarian regimes and dictatorships instead. A frequent political tactic chosen by such states is the "shortcut" route – to strengthen their position and power, they refuse to act in compliance with international legal norms and democratic rules. North and South, moreover, understand power and rationalize its use very differently. In the South, hard, military power is the basic and indispensable tool that determines the position of a state, shapes its success in the political arena, and serves as the primary mode of influencing neighboring states or regions. Hence military power becomes the decisive element in determining the power or weakness of given state, and as a consequence, determining the position of that state in the local or regional hierarchy.[16]

It is also important to bear in mind that the necessity of changing our perspective and approach towards the future security environment is strongly justified by the paradigm shift in extant threats. As Robert Steele claims in *The New Craft of Intelligence,* the "new" threats, as contrasted with the "old" ones, will not be connected directly to any state, and will not originate from them.[17] Their characteristic features will be

[15] I define "asymmetry" as a feature designating different forms of disproportion, diversification, and disharmony. "Asymmetrization" then, is the process in which those disproportions emerge.

[16] Adam Leszczyński, "UN: Overhaul or Demolition"?; original title, "ONZ. Remont czy rozbiórka?", *Gazeta Wyborcza* (12 August 2005); available at http://serwisy.gazeta.pl.

[17] The paradigm of "old" threats focuses on nuclear and conventional military threats that can be clearly identified as belonging to a given state. Such potentials are designed for conventional field combat, according to operational plans with clearly established phases. The use

unconventionality, transnationality, a highly dynamic nature, and irregular occurrence.[18] It is believed that those threats cannot be coped with through adherence to any previous or currently established doctrines, and therefore they will be more difficult to eradicate. Doing so will be an even more arduous task due to the growing connections between transnational organized crime and terrorism, along with the spread of corruption, that also add to the assymetrization of future threats to global security.

Taking into consideration the fact that the character of current threats differs greatly from those that we faced ten or fifteen years ago, and that the modes of response that we have developed are insufficient, we must admit that the model of strategic thinking about future security will have to be much more innovative, unconventional, and flexible. This is particularly true in light of the fact that the strategic dilemmas of the new reality will become even more dynamic and unpredictable, but are also quantitatively and qualitatively different from the dilemmas of the previous decade. It becomes evident when we observe the contemporary threats and global issues that spread rapidly with no regard to either territorial or geographical limitations. The range and pace of that spread can easily not only undermine the economy of a sovereign state, causing fear, chaos, and social instability; it is also able to deepen such issues as global hunger and poverty, not to mention the possibility of producing significant infrastructural and human losses.

It is crucial to realize that these new threats are no longer the effect of state interventionism, as we were accustomed to perceiving them in bipolar world. Rather, they result from major strategic changes of a political, social, economic, and military nature – changes that occur at a level that is beyond the control of any state. Additionally, those intricately complex problems become interrelated and inextricably bound, as in the case of the difficulty in separating terrorism from organized crime. Similarly, it is not possible to wage war against only one phenomenon, excluding all the other sources of conflict and threats.[19]

What about the reality and our responses to the threats? Sadly, we still hold to a symptomatic mode of response. Instead of working in a preventive and preemptive manner that we should follow, we limit our actions to countermeasures once the threat has already manifested itself. We respond separately to the observed, evident symptoms, instead of taking comprehensive, holistic actions against complex challenges. In addition, the time horizon and range of our thinking is too limited, taking in too short a

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of those weapons is also regulated by clearly defined rules and doctrines, hence the phase of deployment can be easily detected. From: Marian Kozub, "World Security in the First Decades of the Twenty-first Century," in *Contemporary Dimensions of Terrorism*; original title "Bezpieczeństwo Świata w pierwszych dekadach XXI wieku," in *Współczesny wymiar terroryzmu*, ed. Z. Piątek (Warsaw: National Security Bureau, 2006).

[18] Robert D. Steele, *The New Craft of Intelligence: Achieving Asymmetric Advantage in the Face of Nontraditional Threats* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, United States Army War College, 2002), 5–7.

[19] Robert Hall and Carl Fox, "Rethinking Security," *NATO Review* 49:4 (Winter 2001).

term for true strategic thinking and actions in the field of security.[20] We also seemingly fail to understand that what we do in this regard is insufficient when considering not only our reactions to already diagnosed threats, but also to those threats that are on the horizon. Paradoxically, all the aforementioned is taking place at a time that we know is vastly different from what we have known before, at a time when the civilizational transition demands a new perspective, fresh cognitive capabilities, and a different way of thinking. The future security environment needs a thoroughly new philosophy instead of modified common tactics, reactions, and adaptations, for undoubtedly we are facing yet another revolution – a revolution in philosophies of life, organization, and management.

Strategic Thinking about the Future

The requirement to think strategically about future security stems not only from the awareness of changes to the social structure within states and the evolution of the international environment that might be a breeding ground of threats, but is also generated by the challenges and opportunities appearing in such context. The need in question is also reinforced by the fact that today's security, due to the growing number of subjects involved, is becoming an increasingly complex domain.

Creating security in the first decades of the twenty-first century, given such phenomena as population growth, environmental change, globalization, WMD proliferation, extremist ideologies, terrorism (with the formerly unknown forms of cyber terrorism and superterrorism[21]), along with rapid technological development, will compel the institutions responsible for security to envision numerous (and increasingly improbable) scenarios regarding the potential use of violence. Religious and ethnic conflicts, climate change, the global narcotics trade, mass migrations, regional instability, transnational organized crime, epidemics, scarcity of resources, privatization of violence and the emergence of non-state militant groups of influence, are by nature unlimited territorially or legally. Hence they are also difficult to prevent, and it is frequently also difficult to identify and prosecute those responsible.[22] We can then clearly infer that all those interrelated and inextricably bound issues, problems, and challenges that emerge in today's networked reality render security a subject that is highly susceptible

[20] Do we work with the same passion on planning future development and expansion as on ensuring current operational effectiveness and the reduction of structures? We spend less than 2 percent of our time on imagining and creating the future; on the scale of a month, this represents only an afternoon. Gary Hamel and C.K. Prahaland, *Competing for the Future* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1996) (Polish edition: *Przewaga konkurencyjna jutra. Strategie przejmowania kontroli nad branżą i tworzenia rynków przyszłości*, Warsaw: Business Press, 1999).

[21] "Superterrorism" is a form of terrorism in which weapons of mass destruction may be used. *Lexicon of the New Terrorism* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corp., March 1998).

[22] Marian Kozub, "The Character of Threats and Conflicts in the First Decades of the Twenty-first Century"; original title: "Charakter zagrożeń oraz konfliktów zbrojnych w pierwszych dekadach XXI wieku," *Myśl Wojskowa* 1 (2006).

to a vast range of negative influences. And out of all those, two trends are believed to impact the contemporary and future security environment most: globalization and the information revolution, since in the new era of electronic interconnection it is fairly easy to destabilize this sphere.

As we have discussed above, the security of sovereign states is not only limited to their local or territorial dimensions, embraced by state boundaries. Traditional physical state boundaries do not protect us from the expansion of distant threats, as has been shown by the recent spread of lethal flu viruses or the wave of revolutions in the Arab world. At present, at a time when the Internet has become a mass medium of global real-time communication, it takes merely a speech to incite crowds and urge them to action, as was the case of the recent speech by Pope Benedict that caused mass protests among Muslim communities from the West Bank, through Qatar, Iran, Turkey, and across the seas to Somalia and Malaysia.[23] Ulrich Beck explains that phenomenon as the "globalization of emotions":

> The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians can break out in the middle of any other state and threaten the relations between the Jewish community and other citizens. A matter of the past is also the theory of identity, society and politics based on the belief that we live in states separated from each other, as if we were living in separated containers. In the global "television village," since the live broadcasts of wars and their victims became common, violence in one part of the world can cause retaliation in many other places. Influenced by the deeply moving scenes of suffering and deaths of civilians and children in Israel, Palestine, Iraq or Africa, the modern citizen has to take a stand, and hence transnational compassion is born.[24]

Evidently, in the future we will most likely experience even more expanded "globalization of emotions," and this phenomenon might prove particularly significant and dangerous in multicultural, ethnically complex and ideologically or religiously divided societies. We must bear in mind, then, that future events influencing and shaping the global security environment taking place in distant parts of the world, through the mechanisms of globalization and the development of modern real-time communication media, will affect the security of the entire world system and will be able to manifest themselves in unexpected parts of the globe. This interdependence and its effects on the global security system were well described by Robert Kaplan, who stated that in the near future we might witness catastrophically expanding chain reactions. A terrorist attack in one part of the globe can cause a military retaliation elsewhere, which will instigate riots in yet another point of the globe, leading to a coup in one of the major states.[25]

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[23] In a lecture given in Regensburg, Germany on 12 September 2006, the Pope associated Islam with violence. A. Bostom, "The Pope, Jihad and Dialogue," *The American Thinker* (19 September 2006); available at http://archive.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=2533.

[24] Ulrich Beck, "Half-blind," *Forum* (16–22 February 2004) (Quote translated from the Polish edition, "Ślepi na jedno oko," Warsaw, 2004).

[25] Robert Kaplan, "Cowboy on the Tiger"; translated from the Polish edition, "Kowboj na tygrysie," *Tygodnik Forum* (8–14 April 2002).

The analysts specializing in organization management predict that the most significant future changes should be expected to take place in the world's "peripheries" – places seemingly on the margins of the mainstream of political and economic activity, distant from the major interests of the main players on the international stage. This characteristic feature of the postmodern world is accented by, among others, George Soros, who holds that the paradox of globalization is that our security does not depend on the leaders of great superpowers, but of the regimes that rule at the world's edges.[26] This thesis fits with the predictions of Samuel Huntington, who stated that the peripheries of civilization—the meeting points and borderlands of cultures—are places where conflicts, clashes, instabilities, and crises may easily arise.[27] Nowadays those places are designated as "the arcs of instability." Hence the peripheries should be areas of particular focus in the future, and the object of constant observation and investigation, in particular respect to the coexistence and relations between various cultures, religions, ideologies, and political systems, as well as the potential conflicts that might result from them.

Another interesting theory related to the issues discussed is the claim of the French sociologist Pierre Hassner, who has observed that the contemporary international order is an order in name only, as we live in an epoch characterized by a deep diversity of political solutions and creations, and a chaos of conflicts and alliances between them.[28] The philosopher John Gray, on the other hand, asserts that Western societies are fading and the rising powers are torn by conflict, which renders the world progressively conflicted and divided; thus, the obvious solution should be to focus on the development of international cooperation.[29]

Conclusion

All the above considerations lead us to important conclusions about the future security environment. First of all, the shape of the strategic security environment, and thus the strategic thinking about the reality we will face in the next ten years, will be determined by such decisive factors as the pace and direction of a wide spectrum of civilizational changes. When those changes are firmly established to be considered as civilizational megatrends, it will be easier to predict the direction of further developments in the strategic environment. Second, a profound analysis of those transformations will enable us to more accurately diagnose future challenges—both threats and opportunities—and to create risk scenarios and take proper measures against them. And last but

[26] Fernando Gualdoni's interview with George Soros; Polish title, "Kto usztywnia kruche racje," *Tygodnik Forum* (16–22 May 2005).

[27] Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*; Polish edition, *Zderzenia cywilizacji i nowy kształt ładu światowego* (Warsaw: Muza, 1998).

[28] Pierre Hassner, "The Age of Uncertainty"; Polish title "Stulecie niepewności," *Europa. Tygodnik idei* (30 June 2007): 13–14.

[29] Glyn Morgan, "Gray's Elegy for Progress," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 9:2 (June 2006): 227–41; available at http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic207175.files/morgan_gray.pdf.

not least, we must remember that the growing interdependence of actors in the field of security has constantly expanded the range of subjects that bear a responsibility to help ensure security. In an open, globalized world this responsibility must extend out further and cross previously established limits and divisions. The new dictionary of today's and tomorrow's strategic thought must prioritize such key terms as "preemption," "anticipation," "creation," and "imagination," instead of the old terms of "adaptation," "reaction," and "pursuit," even if we find ourselves engaged in a race after all. This is the new language of strategic thinking about the future.

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