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CZECH REPUBLIC FOREIGN POLICY: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНІ ОСНОВИ ЗОВНІШНЬОПОЛІТИЧНОГО КУРСУ ЧЕСЬКОЇ РЕСПУБЛІКИ

КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНЫЕ ОСНОВЫ ВНЕШНЕПОЛИТИЧЕСКОГО КУРСА ЧЕШСКОЙ РЕСПУБЛИКИ

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Анотація. *Зовнішньополітичною стратегічною метою Чехії у 1990-ті рр. було забезпечення свого належного місця в міжнародних відносинах після закінчення «холодної війни», що передбачало вступ до низки міжнародних міждержавних організацій (МВФ, організацій Групи Світового Банку, ОЕСР, ЄБРР, НАТО, ЄС тощо) і розвиток дружніх відносин із сусідніми державами та партнерами. У цьому сенсі немає підстав характеризувати зовнішньополітичний курс Чеської Республіки в цей період лише як курс орієнтований на «повернення до Європи».*

На початку 1990-х рр. більшість чеських політичних акторів поділяли ідеї «повернення до Заходу» та «ліберальної демократії», відмінності в їхньому баченні моделей геополітичної орієнтації Чеської Республіки дозволяють виокремити взаємодію трьох головних зовнішньополітичних ідеологій у процесі прийняття зовнішньополітичних рішень: атлантизм, континенталізм та автономізм.

У свою чергу, різне тлумачення сутності «ліберальної демократії» призвело до появи в чеському політикумі двох ідеологічних течій, які мали істотний вплив на бачення зовнішньополітичних пріоритетів Чеської Республіки: економічного універсалізму (спрямованого на усунення інституційних перешкод для вільного потоку товарів, послуг, грошей) та морального універсалізму (орієнтованого на поширення демократії та захист прав людини, що є пріоритетом у зовнішній політиці). Прихильники економічного універсалізму (насамперед, В. Клаус) активно виступали за розвиток економічних зв'язків із Росією та Китаєм, у той час як носії ідеології морального універсалізму (В. Гавел та його послідовники) активно виступали проти цього.

У статті також досліджено вплив зовнішньополітичних упереджень на формування зовнішньополітичного курсу Чехії, серед яких найвпливовішими є антиросійське та антинімецьке.

Ключові слова: *зовнішньополітичний курс, зовнішньополітичні ідеології, зовнішньополітичні упередження, Чеська Республіка*

Abstract. *In the 1990s the Czech foreign policy objectives were to secure its proper place in international relations after the end of the Cold War, which included the entry of a number of international intergovernmental organizations (IMF, World Bank Group organizations, OECD, EBRD, NATO, EU, etc.) and the development of friendly relations with neighboring states and partners. In this sense, there is no reason to identify the foreign policy of the Czech Republic during this period only as a course aimed at "returning to Europe".*

In the early 1990's, most Czech political actors shared the idea of "return to the West" and "liberal democracy", the differences in their vision of the models of the geopolitical orientation of the Czech Republic make it possible to distinguish between the interaction of the three main foreign policy ideologies in the process of adopting foreign policy decisions: atlanticism, continentalism, and autonomy.

Different interpretations of the essence of "liberal democracy" led to the emergence in the Czech politics of two ideological trends that had a significant impact on the vision of the foreign policy priorities of the Czech Republic: economic universalism (aimed at eliminating institutional barriers to the free flow of goods, services, money), and moral universalism (oriented towards the spread of democracy and the protection of human rights, which is a priority in foreign policy). Followers of economic universalism (primarily V. Klaus) actively advocated the development of economic ties with Russia and China, while the followers of the ideology of moral universalism (V. Havel and his followers) actively opposed it.

The article also investigates the influence of foreign policy prejudices on the formation of the foreign policy of the Czech Republic, among which the most influential are anti-Russian and anti-German.

Key words: *foreign policy, foreign policy ideologies, foreign policy prejudices, Czech Republic.*

Аннотация. *Внешнеполитической стратегической целью Чехии в 1990-е гг. было обеспечение своего надлежащего места в международных отношениях после окончания «холодной войны», которое предусматривало вступление в ряд международных межправительственных организаций (МВФ, организаций Группы Всемирного Банка, ОЭСР, ЕБРР, НАТО, ЕС и т.д.) и развитие дружественных отношений с соседними государствами и партнерами. В этом смысле нет оснований характеризовать внешнеполитический курс Чешской Республики в этот период только как курс ориентирован на «возвращение в Европу».*

В начале 1990-х гг. большинство чешских политических акторов разделяли идеи «возвращения к Западу» и «либеральной демократии», различия в их видении моделей геополитической ориентации Чешской Республики позволяют выделить взаимодействие трех главных внешнеполитических идеологий в процессе принятия внешнеполитических решений: атлантизма, континентализм и автономизм.

В свою очередь, различное толкование сущности «либеральной демократии» привело к появлению в чешском политикуме двух идеологических течений, которые оказали существенное влияние на видение внешнеполитических приоритетов Чешской Республики: экономического универсализма (направленного на устранение институциональных препятствий для свободного потока товаров, услуг, денег) и морального универсализма (ориентированного на распространение демократии и защите прав человека, является приоритетом во внешней политике). Сторонники экономического универсализма (прежде всего, В. Клаус) активно выступали за развитие экономических связей с Россией и Китаем, в то время как носители идеологии морального универсализма (В. Гавел и его последователи) активно выступали против этого.

В статье также исследовано влияние внешнеполитических предубеждений на формирование внешнеполитического курса Чехии, среди которых самыми влиятельными являются антироссийскую и антинемецкое.

Ключевые слова: внешнеполитический курс, внешнеполитическая идеология, внешнеполитические предубеждения, Чешская Республика.

From the beginning of the 1990s, the governments of the Czech Republic differed in the construction of the hierarchy of priorities. This does not mean that there is a consensus on foreign policy in Czech society and among the Czech political elite. Czech foreign policy is constantly the subject of uncompromising internal disputes, which tend to reduce its effectiveness.

The aim is to examine the peculiarities of the formation of the foreign policy of the Czech Republic.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Outlining the conceptual frameworks of the foreign policy course, the author relied on the work of such researchers as: Drulak P.[1], Hayek F.[2], Habermas J.[3], Rorty P.[4] and Katzenstein P.[5] Attention was also paid to the work of domestic scientists Scherbakova Y.[13] and Tepina I.[7].

The foreign political ideology of the Czech Republic was formed in the early 1990's in response to certain questions of the period of the transformation of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic into liberal democracy and a market economy. The slogans of this period were "return to Europe", "return to the West" and "the construction of a liberal society". The overwhelming majority of Czech society has identified itself with these slogans. Nevertheless, it is precisely their uncertainty as to the definition of such concepts as "Europe", "West" and "liberalism" that posed the following issues to society. Two issues were particularly important for foreign policy - one about the "West", and the other about "liberalism". Each gave rise to a specific typology of foreign policy ideologies.

The first question is geopolitical, namely: which states among the western powers regarded the Czechs as "models, sponsors and defenders" [1, p. 81]. Then there were two possible answers - Germany and the United States of America. On the one hand was an economic giant and a reunited leader of European integration in the neighborhood. In this classification, Germany advocates a continentalist ideology that defines European integration and cooperation with other EU leaders, such as France and the Benelux countries. On the other hand, he was the winner of the Cold War and the only superpower on the other side of the Atlantic. In this classification, the United States represents a broader Atlantic ideology, which also includes Britain and NATO.

These ideologies were not mutually exclusive in the 1990s. On the contrary, they together represented an internationalist ideology that saw the guarantees of Czech security in the USA and NATO, while in Germany and the EU guarantees prosperity for the Czech society, while Germany and the United States were perceived as Western sources values of democracy, human rights and a market economy. While internationalist ideology prevailed among politicians who carried out foreign policy in the 1990s, and included both continentalism and Atlanticism, the alternative autonomous ideology denied everything. Her pivot was Czech sovereignty, and she cautioned against any external hegemony, whether it was American or German. Instead, she advocated the neutrality of the Czech Republic or the construction of a European security system with the OSCE as a key regional organization. Its recommendations were also deeper cooperation with the Eurasian great powers of Russia and China. Thus, the geopolitical question gives us the following typology of foreign policy ideologies: Atlanticism (NATO, US), continentalism (EU, Germany), internationalism (Atlanticism + continentalism) and autonomism (sovereignty, OSCE, Russia, China).

The second issue of freedom related to the nature of liberalism. From the point of view of political philosophy, it can be represented as a choice between F. Hayek and J. Habermas [2; 3], between the right - conservative liberalism proclaiming economic freedom and self-

regulation of the markets, and the left - progressive liberalism, advocating for the expansion of human rights and the role of civil society. This choice gives rise to two universalist ideologies of foreign policy - economic and moral universalism.

The ideology of economic universalism suggests eliminating institutional barriers for the free flow of goods, services and capital. It associates these flows with freedom, peace and prosperity. Universalism is skeptical of foreign policy and international institutions that work for it. In contrast, the ideology of moral universalism advocates the expansion of democracy and human rights, which must be protected by the actions of authorities and international organizations. And again, democracy and human rights are associated with peace and prosperity [3, c. 5]. While liberal economists, led by Vaclav Klaus, shared the ideology of economic universalism, moral universalism was close to the followers of Vaclav Havel.

These two types of universalism are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Together, they border in a single universalist ideology that represents the world as the only political and economic entity of free entrepreneurs and citizens. Nevertheless, both types of universalism can also be denied in the name of the cultural and economic features of the national community. This ideology of nationalism can take the form of national liberalism, which has a long history and tradition in Central Europe, or it (ideology of nationalism) can abandon liberalism in favor of social and solidarity concepts. Thus, the question of freedom leads to the following typology of foreign policy ideologies: economic universalism (free trade and investment), moral universalism (universal human rights), strong universalism (economic + moral), and nationalism (society decides on its economic needs and the rights of its members).

Even if there are links between the two typologies, these relationships are interpersonal and institutional, and thus can be subject to change, as opposed to logical and necessary connections. It often happens that politicians have a clear ideological position on one scale of scales, in the absence of a position on the other.

Most of the political parties were internationalists in the 1990's and supported the entry of the Czech Republic into NATO and the EU. In spite of the fact that the Civic Democratic Party (hereinafter - CDP) leaned more towards Atlanticism, and the Czech Social-Democratic Party (hereinafter - CSDP) to continentalism, these parties, as well as most of the small parties, were not sincere in their internationalist consensus. The most significant exception to this consensus was the autonomous position of the Communist Party of the Czech Republic and Moravia (hereafter - the CPCM). Everything changed after joining NATO and the EU (in 1999 and 2004), because it was perceived as an achievement of the goal, namely, "return to Europe". After these events, the internationalist consensus ceased to exist. Atlantists no longer feel obligated to conceal their fears about European integration (opposed to the European constitutional treaty, not wanting to enter the euro, opposing the build-up of the military potential of the EU), while the continentalists express their doubts about US foreign policy (criticizing the war in Iraq, mission in Afghanistan and the location of American missile defense systems in the Czech Republic).

Strong universalism didn't have long time hegemony in the Czech society after the Velvet Revolution of 1989. After the collapse of Czechoslovakia, a struggle between supporters of economic universalism and moral universalism was under way. This confrontation was embodied in civic clashes between Vaclav Klaus (as Prime Minister and later President) and Vaclav Havel (as president, and then ex-president) when discussing politics with regard to China or Russia. While economic universalist, supporters of V. Klaus, have long talked about strengthening economic ties with Russia and China and warning about the consequences of neglecting human rights protection, moral universalists, followers of V. Havel, emphasize the protection of human rights and considering economic connections as secondary.

These confrontations crossed party lines, apart from the unequivocal support of the Green Party of Moral Universalism. Most parties were divided on these issues or did not have a clear position. Thus, the CDP was divided between moral and economic universalists, the

CPCM between economic universalists and nationalists, and the CSDP and the Christian Democratic Union Party (the CDU) did not have a clear position on liberalism in general. In contrast, prominent actors, on the one hand, were large companies and commercial organizations that supported economic universalism, and, on the other hand, influential non-governmental organizations, as well as most of the major media outlets that chose moral universalism.

Two typologies (the question of geopolitical choice and the nature of liberalism) of foreign policy ideologies offer an important analytical tool for studying Czech foreign policy ideas. Nevertheless, in political practice, these ideologies are either too intense or vice versa, weakened by foreign policy prejudices, which are usually hidden in the depths of mind and reflect the historical peculiarities of development [4, p. 96].

Some influence on the formation of the foreign policy of the Czech Republic is due to Czech foreign policy prejudices, which are based on normative judgments about the world outside its borders and are based on concrete assessments of Czech collective experience in modern history. The bearers of these prejudices in most cases take them as due and see no alternative to them, which, according to P. Katsinstein, makes these prejudices quite dangerous [5, p. 122].

There are two main prejudices in Czech society, which come from its foreign policy thinking and decision-making. The Czech researcher P. Drulak proposes to divide them according to the geographical criterion: north-west and south-east [6, p. 371]. The North-West bias consists of seizure and emulation, the desire to recognize and perceive inferiority towards countries and societies in the west and in the north of the Czech Republic (Western Europe, Northern Europe, USA, Canada). South-eastern bias is an addition to the northwest. It consists of indifference, a sense of superiority, and sometimes of fear, in relation to countries and societies in the east and south of the Czech Republic (Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Southern Europe and the rest of the world). These two biases give rise to the geographical manifestation of the ancient dichotomy between civilization and barbarism, and they reflect the historical experience of the Czech participation in the culture of Western Christianity. In addition to autonomy, all Czech ideologies of foreign policy (internationalism, continentalism and Atlanticism, as well as all kinds of universalism) accept these two biases as due.

However, these general prejudices are complementary and even altered by a number of specific prejudices, the most influential of which are related to anticommunism. Czech anti-communism, aggravated by south-eastern bias, uses the dichotomy of the Cold War between communism and democracy to assess contemporary international politics. Instead of taking on the form of a developed ideology, it remains at the level of the reflex, which works when something seems communist or somehow connected with communism.

Czech anti-Russian prejudice is the strongest product of Czech anti-communism. It depicts the Czech collective experience of the days of Soviet imperialism and associates contemporary Russia with the Soviet Union. A poll conducted by the STEM agency shows that 40 years were not enough for citizens of the Czech Republic to forget the events of 1968. Only 10% of the respondents are ready to forget the past, and 88% categorically refuse to leave history, 2% - not determined [7]. In practice, anti-Russian prejudice is expressed in deep mistrust of any Russian foreign policy steps. Most Czechs believe that Russia may pose a threat to their country. According to a STEM agency survey released in October 2014, 65% of respondents believe this opinion, while in 2013 only one third of respondents [8] believed this.

It should be noted that along with the vision of Russia as a Soviet threat, after the collapse of the USSR, gradually, in the Czech society, the vision of "new Russia" as a growing force with its interests in Central and Eastern Europe was established. The perception of "new Russia" is very important to take into account - it is within this vision that Russia is often perceived positively in political circles, namely as an opportunity, especially for the Czech economy. The Czech political debate on Russia and Czech-Russian relations is

characterized by strong political polarization, especially in recent years, when this topic was strongly influenced by controversial issues, missile defense systems and increased attention to potential security threats associated with Russia's economic interests and strategic spheres (energy). In the political sense, the true attitude is close to anti-Russian prejudice. Russia is viewed by them as a potentially dangerous and rather unstable state, which should be restrained. Trade with Russia is often viewed as a compulsory need (especially in connection with the import of Russian energy resources). This perception is characteristic of some of the centrist and right parties in the Czech Republic, although the CDP does not fully agree with this interpretation of the "Russian threat". Left parties, on the contrary, perceive Russia optimistically and see Russia as a partner for dialogue. Energy and economic dependence are absent in the political debate of these parties. The strengthening of contacts between the Czech Republic and Russia is systematically supported by the Communists in particular. The idea that modern Russia acts as a stable partner of the EU and other European organizations is often expressed by the representatives of the Czech Social-Democratic Party [9]. The polarization of the Czech political debate on this topic leads to frequent turning of Czech foreign policy.

In addition to the differences among the parties, former President V. Klaus played a special role in shaping Czech foreign policy towards Russia. Unlike his predecessor, V. Havel, whose position toward modern Russia is very restrained and close to the aforementioned anti-Russian prejudice, V. Klaus often emphasized that today Russia can not be compared with the USSR [10]. He stressed the status of a great power of modern Russia as a fact that empowers her to sovereignly pursue its own foreign policy, and V. Klaus often expressed a similar view on the issues of the agenda of international relations (issues of recognition of Kosovo, the war in Iraq, the Georgian-Russian war, Western criticism concerning democratic processes and protection of human rights in the Russian Federation).

In general, the Czech-Russian bilateral relations have two relatively autonomous dimensions. The first dimension is the highest-level policy that passed the stage of "cool peace" after the NATO troops entered Kosovo for a warmer relationship during the first term of the presidency of V. Putin. Very often, the steps taken by Czech diplomats were perceived by the Kremlin as "irritants," and bilateral relations between the states remained "dry" and restrained for years. Such an example can be the evolution of the Czech-American solution to the location of the missile defense system on the territory of the Czech Republic, and although these plans were eventually dismantled by the US administration, the activity of Czech-Russian diplomacy was very low during this period.

The second dimension is the economy. In spite of changes in the political landscape, economic relations have gradually improved, with ever-increasing exports from Russia to the Czech Republic and vice versa. Although these connections were complicated by double asymmetry (exports from Russia contain mainly raw materials, while Czech exports to Russia high-tech goods in favor of the Czech Republic), for a long time they were considered a stabilizing factor in bilateral relations.

Another anti-communist prejudice is anti-Chinese. China is seen as a communist great power and thus automatically associated with the threat of communism. The Czechoslovak experience of communism is used as the basis for understanding modern China. Thus, internal resistance to the Chinese authorities is seen as an analogue of the Czechoslovak dissident groups in the 1980s. This leads to pro-Tibetan bias in favor of the Dalai Lama and its movement for Tibetan autonomy. Anti-Russian and anti-Chinese prejudices sometimes go hand in hand with the Atlantic ideology, according to which the United States is seen as the only actor able to balance Russia or China.

Nevertheless, anti-communism undermines the ideology of moral universalism. Building on the dichotomy of communism during the Cold War against democracy, moral universalism understands the protection of human rights, first of all, as a struggle against a communist or non-communist regime (for example, Cuba or Belarus) at that time, for

example, ignoring human rights violations in the Middle East, in Africa, in South Sahara and in the most westernized countries. This diagonal undermines its versatility and, accordingly, any of its moral values. In contrast, anti-communism is committed to the Atlantic ideology, to the extent that the United States is seen as the winner of the Cold War and the only guarantor of security.

Another Czech prejudice, which in one way or another is connected with anti-communism, is pro-Israel. Israel was an imperialist aggressor in communist propaganda in the 1970s and 1980s, which contributed to its good reputation in the eyes of Czech anti-communists after 1989. Czech sympathy for Israel goes beyond anti-communism. This is probably due to the special historical position of Prague on East European Jews and the quality of relations between Jews and the majority of the population of Czechoslovakia before the Second World War. Czech-Israel relations were relatively benign compared to other places in Central and Eastern Europe. On this basis, Jewishness became fashionable in Czech society since 1989, and this positive bias also reflected in the emotional support of Israel and its policies. Like anti-communism, the pro-Israel prejudice also reinforces the Atlantic ideology that supports Israel's main ally.

One of the most influential Czech prejudices has traditionally been anti-German, reflecting the feelings of fear, delight, humiliation and neglect that Germany may cause to the Czechs. From the 19th century, modern Czech identity was formed in opposition to German speakers (whether it was Germans, Austrians or Czech Germans), and the experience of the Second World War increased this prejudice. On the other hand, the reincarnation of German identity after the Second World War and decisive German support for the Czech return to Europe significantly weakened the anti-German prejudice.

The historical agenda of the Czech-German relations is determined by several factors. Firstly, it was determined on the basis of a mutual political understanding that issues relating to the past should not be burdensome of the current relationship. This position is enshrined in the joint Czech-German Declaration of 1997 signed by the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, V. Klaus, and the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany G. Kohl. This document, in particular, states: "The parties declare that they will not burden their relations with political and legal issues that have a historical background" [11]. Despite these agreements, nationally-minded circles on both sides, the Czech-German and Czech-Austrian border, tried to proceed with disputes about the legality of the eviction of Sudanese Germans from Czechoslovakia in 1945-1946, and the controversial historical heritage of the then President of Czechoslovakia E. Benes. The most radical representatives of the Judo-Romanian community raised the issue of returning property confiscated from their families during deportation, as well as the possibility of returning civil and political rights to the Sudeten Germans in the Czech Republic. It should be noted that the German side, as the Austrian side itself, has never placed on the agenda of the Sudeten German Heritage Organization demands for the abolition of President E. Benes decrees and compensation for the confiscation of property of the Sudeten Germans.

Secondly, a more general attitude to the past represents another aspect of the Czech-German asymmetry. Most representatives of the German society (with the exception of the expelled community and among their closest supporters) traditionally perceive the military and post-war transfer of property of the Sudeten Germans primarily as a moral problem. For Czechs, by contrast, historical relations with Germany (and Sudeten Germans) have always been vital; the propensity to look very much like Germany and its attitude to the past was part of the "genetic code" in the Czech society. The importance of the past, however, decreased after the normalization of relations (namely, after the signing of the Czech-German Declaration of 1997) and the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU. However, the anti-German prejudice was not completely removed from the political agenda. From time to time, anti-German prejudice is used by political forces during their pre-election struggle. For example, in 2001-2002, when the election campaign coincided with the controversy of the

official circles of the Czech Republic, Austria and Germany regarding the post-deportation of the Sudeten Germans in accordance with the "decrees of Benes". Discussion initiated in January 2002 by Czech Prime Minister M. Zeman, who, in an interview with the Austrian edition of Profil, called the Sudeten Germans "Hitler's fifth column" and expressed his approval for the post-war deportation of the German minority from Czechoslovakia [12] The response to these statements was the sharp criticism of Austrian politicians (Chancellor V. Schüssel, Vice Chancellor S. Risspasser, leader of the ultra-right Freedom Party J. Heider), and soon German politicians - Prime Minister of Bavaria, then-time candidate Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany E. Stoibera, Chairman of the Sudeten-Germanic community B. Posselt and others. This resulted in the cancellation of the visit to Prague by the German Chancellor G. Schroeder, scheduled for April 2002. Czech President V. Havel was forced to negotiate with his colleagues J. Rau (Germany) and T. Klestil (Austria) to disavow the harshest statements of M. Zeman. Nevertheless, this diplomatic conflict aroused a new interest in the problem of the Sudeten Germans and revived discussions in both the Czech and German and Austrian media [13, p. 57]. The reminder of President V. Claus about the decrees of President Benes at the final stage of ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon reminded of the past and again became a political issue on the agenda for some time, however, the Czech politicians reacted very calmly and pragmatically.

Thirdly, the institutionalization of relations was not only important but also successful. The Fund for the Future and the Czech-German Discussion Forum have created a platform for official and, more importantly, spontaneous public events. The Czech party initiated the continuation (and financing) of the Fund and the Forum for another 10 years (in the Czech-German Declaration of 1997, the existence of these two institutions was foreseen for 12 years). Due to the economic crisis of 2009, the number of private financing has decreased, and the assistance of the Future Fund has become a major prerequisite for the implementation of a large number of bilateral non-profit projects. In 2009 alone, the Fund supported and co-sponsored 600 such projects worth a total of 76 million kronas [14].

Fourthly, the context of the issues related to the tragic past has changed. The compensation program for the victims of Nazi terror and forced labor was completed in 2007, which has become a significant political and administrative achievement for both sides. Compensation for the last (and rather small) group of victims - forced laborers in the Nazi ghetto - was completed in 2009. Issues related to the tragic past have shifted to the field of local, national and international political debate by experts, the media and, most importantly, the public. An example of this move might be the memory program of German opponents of the Nazis (The Project 'Vergessene Helden' (Forgotten Heroes)), which was announced by then Prime Minister I. Paroubek in 2005 and implemented by the following governments. It is equally important that Czech state and non-governmental organizations have developed a wider range of activities focused on German victims of post-war liberation and forced relocation (for example, the Collegium Bohemicum in Usti nad Labem, a non-governmental organization that studies the history of the German population living in the regions of Moravia and Bohemia).

Economic relations are the most dynamic sphere of Czech-German bilateral relations. When the prime concern that German capital was taking control of Czech's most attractive capital fell into decline, two more practical issues were of fundamental importance: firstly, a high level of dependence on the German economic cycle and, consequently, the need to diversify Czech foreign-economic policy and, secondly, the fact that the Czech economy and politics were forced to seek ways to maintain the level of exports to Germany. The Czech position was weakened by its abstention from the Eurozone, the shortage of skilled labor and its rising prices.

Germany is one of the main investors in the Czech economy. However, its direct investments decreased almost twice: in 2000, the inflow of investments from Germany amounted to 26.5%, whereas in 2009 only 12.7% [15]. This decrease is due to a partial loss of

investment attractiveness of the Czech Republic. Slovakia began to draw attention to the replacement of the Czech Republic.

In their ideologies, the policies of both countries of the Czech Republic and Germany seek to support the liberal principles in the national and international economy that united them during the process of deregulation in the EU. During the Czech presidency of the EU, Germany supported the Czech initiative to liberalize the law.

For last ten years Germany is the most important trading partner of the Czech Republic. In the report of M. Singer (head of the Czech National Bank) in 2013, the following theses were substantiated:

- Czech exports exaggerate German imports and are more specialized than German imports into the Czech Republic;

- There is a very close correlation between business cycles in Germany and the Czech Republic (foreign trade, production);

- Bavaria is the largest trading partner among the federal German lands [16].

In general, relations with Germany fall into the category of good neighborly relations, as well as in the context of cooperation within multilateral institutions, namely the EU. However, the lack of interest in foreign policy among the Czech political elites has led to the absence of an appropriate program of government and the concept of foreign policy, including in relation to Germany. Without strategic direction and coordination, Czech foreign policy towards Germany has often been driven by the actions of individual political actors.

Conclusions. Foreign political ideologies have a significant influence on the formation of the foreign policy course of the Czech Republic. Usually these ideologies are either too intense, or vice versa, weakened by foreign policy prejudices. Among them, the most influential are anti-Russian and anti-German prejudices. However, in both cases, the policy of the Czech Republic has two dimensions - political and economic. If the political dimension fully satisfies the vision of politics through the prism of foreign policy ideology, then the economic dimension of the bilateral relations demonstrates a new approach and vision of Czech foreign policy towards the above-mentioned states.

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