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The Concept of Occidentalism by Dmytro Dontsov as a Methodological Basis for Analysing the Contemporary Russia-Ukraine War

Summary: The concept of Occidentalism developed by Dmytro Dontsov serves as a significant analytical tool for understanding the Russia-Ukraine war (2014–2025), viewed as a confrontation between two fundamentally different civilisational models. His methodology incorporates four key components that establish a unified foundation for analysing this conflict, not only as a geopolitical struggle but also as a deeply rooted historical and cultural dichotomy.

This article presents a comprehensive analysis of Dontsov's works on Occidentalism, covering cultural-historical aspects, a critical deconstruction of Russian narratives, a dialectical interpretation of existential confrontation, and an examination of global processes. This approach not only reveals deep civilisational contradictions but also provides an opportunity to assess the prospects for forming a stable international order in the region.

Dontsov viewed Ukraine's historical mission as a crucial factor in European security. His concept holds dual significance: first, it reaffirms Ukraine's historical role as a buffer between different civilisational models, and second, it stimulates integration processes, fostering new alliances and partnerships in response to external threats.

The article highlights that the prolonged Occidental confrontation with Russia remains a struggle for sovereignty and national identity. Modern international coalitions opposing Russian aggression, when analysed through the prism of Dontsov's Occidentalism, demonstrate both historical experience and the potential for establishing new alliances that ensure Ukraine's security and independence. Dontsov's Occidentalist concept continues to be relevant to understanding modern geopolitics.

Keywords: Occidentalism, Dmytro Dontsov, Russia-Ukraine War (2014–2025), existential nature, historical-geopolitical uniqueness

Introduction

Occidentalism is a concept that reflects the distinctive perception of the East toward the West as a socio-cultural system. In the works of Dontsov, one of the most influential Ukrainian publicists and thinkers of the first half of the 20th century, Occidentalism serves as a central element of ideology. The scholar emphasises Ukraine's orientation toward Western civilisation as a bearer of high cultural and spiritual values.

Dontsov contrasts these values with the influence of the East, particularly Russian imperialism, considering them the main threat to national identity. The relevance of this topic lies in addressing Dontsov's vision of Ukraine's alignment with Western civilisation as a carrier of high cultural and spiritual ideals, providing a foundation for critically assessing modern geopolitical challenges, especially in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war.

The opposition of these values to Eastern influence establishes a methodological framework for analysing the mechanisms of societal mobilisation and legitimisation of power, which becomes particularly significant in the conditions of modern Russian aggression.

Data Analysis and Results

The article aims to explore the concept of Occidentalism by Dontsov as a methodological foundation for analysing the contemporary Russia-Ukraine war, specifically to reveal the existential nature of Ukraine's confrontation as a Western civilisation against imperial Russia in a hybrid war.

Western scholars studying the concept of Occidentalism, including James Carrier, Avishai Margalit, and Ian Buruma, perceive this phenomenon as a conceptual antithesis to Orientalism. They interpret Occidentalism as the East's perception of the West, shaped through a socio-cultural lens in which the West is portrayed as a society driven by materialistic values and individualistic perceptions. In particular, researcher J. Carrier analyses how the self-image of the West determines its perception by representatives of other cultures, leading to the emergence of stereotypical images of Western civilisation.¹ Meanwhile, A. Margalit and I. Buruma emphasise that Occidentalism is a reaction to the dominant Western ideology and cultural expansion,

1 Carrier J.G. 1992.

acquiring a negative connotation in the context of criticism of hostility and imperialistic approaches.² While these scholars do not focus directly on Dontsov's Occidentalism, their works contribute to shaping a general scholarly paradigm for understanding this phenomenon within the global cultural context.

Ukrainian scholars have examined Dontsov's concept of Occidentalism in the context of political, philosophical, and cultural paradigms of modernity. For instance, Oleh Bahan analyses the specificity of Dontsov's cultural Occidentalism, emphasising the distinction between his approach and modern interpretations of the term. Dontsov viewed Occidentalism as an organic component of Ukrainian mentality, shaped by historical trials and influenced by Western traditions, contrasting with despotic Eastern influences.³ Meanwhile, Viktoriya Kolkutina focuses on the essayistic, nation-centred, and hermeneutic aspects of his works, highlighting the synthesis of nation-centric, voluntarist, and heroic ideas, which form the basis of Dontsov's Occidentalist views.⁴

In Serhiy Kvit's research, Dontsov's Occidentalism is presented as a key element in the ideology of 'will-driven nationalism', fostering the development of a new Ukrainian national identity through the implementation of Western ideas in political thought.⁵ Oleksandr Zaitsev views Occidentalism as an integral part of Dontsov's ideological system, aimed at integrating Western cultural-spiritual values and resisting Eastern imperialism, which conceptually justifies strategies for building strong national consciousness.⁶

In his monograph *The Ukrainian National Idea in the Interwar Period: An Analysis of Selected Concepts*, Polish scholar Tomasz Stryjek places particular emphasis on the Occidentalist dimension of Dontsov's thought — that is, on his consistent orientation towards the Western civilisational model as an alternative to the Russian imperial sphere. The historian underscores that, for Dontsov, the Russian-Ukrainian confrontation is not merely a geopolitical conflict but a metaphysical clash between two worlds. Stryjek highlights that Dontsov's position was shaped by historical traumas, particularly the loss of Ukrainian statehood, and emerged as a response to the threat of Bolshevik expansion, which, in Dontsov's view, brought not only political subjugation but also spiritual degradation. In Stryjek's interpretation, Dontsov's concept of Occidentalism serves as a key to understanding not only his nationalist doctrine but also the broader civilisational choice facing Ukraine in the context of its confrontation with Russia.⁷

However, despite the significant attention given to Dontsov's Occidentalist theory, there remains ample space for further reconsideration of existing ideas and the development of new conceptual approaches.

2 Buruma I., Margalit A. 2004.

3 Bagan O. 2015.

4 Kolkutina V. 2015.

5 Kvit S. 2013, 119–120.

6 Zaitsev O. 2013.

7 Zaitsev O. 2000.

The scientific novelty of the approach we present lies in the application of Dontsov's concept of Occidentalism as a methodological basis for analysing the contemporary Russia-Ukraine war. The integration of traditional Occidentalism ideas with an analysis of modern political conflicts opens new perspectives for understanding the transformations of global political processes and the interaction of cultural narratives with national self-determination strategies.

Results of the Study

Occidentalism is a concept that reflects the distinctive perception of the East toward the West as a socio-cultural system, characterised by innovation, material values, individualism, secularisation, and democratic ideals. The term originates from the Latin words *occidens* (West) and *occidentalis* (Western), emphasising the geographical and ideological-cultural orientation of this approach.

Occidentalism, as a study of Western cultural identity images, emerged in the theoretical explorations of Ukrainian nationalists during the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1920, when the first forms of Ukrainian statehood appeared. This approach, concerning both Dontsov's concept of state-building and the understanding of civilisational confrontations, does not function as a separate monographic position but rather permeates the entire spectrum of his journalistic legacy.

In particular, the fundamental theoretical principles of Dontsov's Occidentalism are found in his extensive journalism, including:

- *The History of the Development of the Ukrainian State Idea* (1917)
- *The International Position of Ukraine and Russia* (1918)
- *Ukrainian State Thought and Europe* (1918)
- *The Foundations of Our Politics* (1921)

He emphasised Ukraine's belonging to Western civilisation (the Occident), contrasting it with the Eastern (Asian) model, which he associated with Russian imperialism.

The concept of Occidentalism developed by Dmytro Dontsov is based on the combination of historical-philosophical analysis with a critical re-evaluation of Western (Occidental) ideological narratives. According to Dontsov, statehood and national self-awareness are shaped not by universal ideals of modernism but through a specific historical experience, spiritual traditions, and the cultural uniqueness of the Ukrainian people. This perspective provides grounds to view the current Russia-Ukraine war not merely as a territorial or military conflict but as an expression of a deep civilisational and ideological struggle.

The analysis of the 2014–2025 war from the standpoint of Dontsov's theory of Occidentalism allows the identification of the following key methodological components:

- The dichotomy between the West and the East and the imperial distribution of power
- Ukraine's civilisational alignment with Western Europe

- Strategic models of international alliances
- Ukraine's historical-geopolitical mission

Dmytro Dontsov's work *The History of the Development of the Ukrainian State Idea* represents the first systematic articulation of his Occidentalist orientation — that is, an ideological commitment to the Western civilisational model as a source of political culture, spiritual strength, and national self-assertion. In this work, the author consistently substantiates Ukraine's belonging to Western civilisation, contrasting it with Eastern, and particularly Russian, despotism. Dontsov emphasises that Ukraine was 'a typical example of a Western European country.'⁸

Therefore, the Ukrainian state idea should be regarded not merely as a political project but as a deeply rooted worldview grounded in willpower, individualism, spiritual autonomy, and the aspiration for independence — values that are fundamental to the Western political tradition. In this context, the author emphasises that the historical development of Ukrainian territories occurred under the significant influence of Western European institutions, cultural norms, and educational practices, particularly during the period when Ukraine was part of the First Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

One of the key arguments presented by Dontsov is the transfer of Western values through the political and educational integration of Ukrainian territories into the Western European sphere. During the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, a significant portion of Ukrainian lands — namely the regions of Kyiv, Volhynia, and Podillia — were part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, a state that operated on the principles of noble democracy, legal culture, and religious pluralism. In urban centres, Magdeburg Law was in effect, granting communities the right to self-governance, judicial independence, and the election of local authorities. These institutional practices shaped the population's understanding of rights, freedoms, and civic responsibility — foundational principles of Western political culture. In the field of education, a clear orientation toward Western standards can be observed: Latin was actively taught in Ukrainian schools and universities, as it was the principal language of science and philosophy throughout Europe. A particularly illustrative example is the higher educational institution in Kyiv, where Latin was a mandatory subject, reflecting deep integration into the European educational tradition. In contrast, Latin remained largely unfamiliar in Russia, indicating the limited influence of the Western educational model there.⁹

In a broader political context, Dontsov emphasises that the Ukrainian state idea has always been orientated toward the attainment of full independence, rather than autonomy or federation within imperial formations. He argues that only a sovereign

⁸ Dontsov D. 1991, 36.

⁹ Dontsov D. 1991, 37.

state can ensure the development of Ukrainian culture, language, and national spirit. In this sense, the Ukrainian idea is not merely political but also civilisational — it envisions Ukraine's integration into the European space as an equal subject that shares common values of freedom, dignity, and the rule of law.

Thus, Occidentalism in Dontsov's thought is not merely a geopolitical inclination but a profound conviction that the Ukrainian nation can realise its full potential only within the framework of the Western civilisational paradigm.

The starting point of Dontsov's Occidentalist reflections in his article *The International Position and Ukraine* was the analysis of the directions of World War I through the lens of imperial confrontations, which defined the new political dynamics of the European continent. He regards Austria-Hungary as a state with a deep historical heritage but burdened by internal contradictions and national divisions, significantly limiting its ability to adapt to the new challenges of a multipolar world.

In contrast, Germany demonstrates determination and economic energy, directing its efforts towards exploring new directions with strategic potential, particularly through southern routes, marking a shift in imperial balance. Nevertheless, according to Dontsov, the West is characterised as a regular, adaptive, and economically dynamic entity in global politics.

At that time, Russia was perceived by him as a state whose foreign policy strategy is based on expansionist ambitions and the strategy of exploiting internal contradictions in neighbouring states. It is worth emphasising that, from Dontsov's point of view, it was precisely Russia's expansionist ambitions, which shaped its foreign policy strategy, that served as the direct catalyst for the outbreak of the First World War: 'The direct cause of the current war was given by Russia.'¹⁰

In 1914, Russia was a great power whose strength was recognised by all states, and its diplomacy, marked by swift adaptability, a precise set of tactics, and characteristic Asiatic cunning, systematically ensured a series of successes in international relations: 'Skillful, indiscriminate in its means, diplomacy, its purely Asiatic cunning and deceit secured success after success for this diplomacy. The method remained the same for hundreds of years: to destroy its neighbour with the help of another neighbour.'¹¹

Russia's long-term strategy, which consisted of weakening its opponents through manipulation of interstate relations, had contributed for centuries to the shifting of the geopolitical balance in Europe. Indeed, as a result of the political processes of the sixteenth century — particularly following the conclusion of the Union of Lublin — the Ukrainian lands lost the characteristics of an independent subject of international politics, which led to their disappearance from the European political map as a distinct

¹⁰ Dontsov D. 2011, 92.

¹¹ Dontsov D. 2011, 92.

state entity.¹² Similar strategies included plans for the partitioning of Germany with France and the reorganisation of Austria through influence over the Balkan Slavs, as well as complex actions concerning other regions, demonstrating Russia's systematic orientation toward altering the traditional balance of power.

The concept of Dontsov, which considers Russia as an expansionist state, becomes particularly relevant in the context of the modern Russia-Ukraine war. In the current war, Russia's strategy manifests through the use of destabilisation methods, informational manipulation, and military actions aimed at weakening Ukraine and its allies. The aggressive foreign policy strategy of the Russian state apparatus contradicts the efforts of Western countries that are forming a coalition to support Ukraine. In this context, Ukraine is perceived not only as an object of conflict but also as a strategic buffer capable of maintaining equilibrium between two imperial models.

Such an approach allows us to view the conflict as an expression of deep historical and civilisational contradictions that have developed over centuries.

In his study, *The Foundations of Our Politics*, Dontsov distinguishes between two civilisations — the Latin-Germanic civilisation, which includes Western Slavs and Ukrainians, and the Moscow civilisation. The Western world is characterised by historical dynamism, the role of individuals, and the priority of law and logic, while the Moscow world stands out for its primitive social structure, collectivism, and excessive role of the state.

The thinker emphasises the differences in the structure of family and church institutions, highlighting the dependence of the Russian Church on political power, which led to the formation of a cult of formalism and absolutism in Russia.

The primitivism of the entire social ideal of the nation, the suppression of the individual, the underdevelopment of autonomous morality and legal consciousness, the boundless cult of the masses — this is the general idea that has turned the Muscovite people into a nation of slaves, a horde incapable of resisting any will imposed from above; a mass that, by its sheer numbers, poses a terrible danger to the Occidental world; a mass that opposes activity with chaos, human energy with the energy of nature, which it cannot even master, organization with brutality, the primacy of reason and will with obedience and instinct, the complexity of forms with Muscovite formlessness in everything, both in social and interpersonal life.¹³

According to Dontsov, this is precisely where the geopolitical antagonism between Russia and Europe lies, rooted in Russia's hostility towards European values. Russian society, amorphous by nature, requires absolutist governance, whereas the independent

¹² Dontsov D. 1991, 9.

¹³ Dontsov D. 1957, 62.

and self-sufficient European community is based on the principles of individualism, law, and self-organisation.

Ukraine, in turn, has always culturally belonged to Europe. Despite the negative influence of Russian ideology, European values remain at the core of the social, political, spiritual, and religious life of the Ukrainian people — values such as co-operation, an understanding of political freedom, the development of individuality, and legal consciousness.

Dontsov emphasises that these values are the key to national development and serve as a counterbalance to the aggressive influence from the East.¹⁴

Dontsov emphasised that national identity grows from historical memory, spiritual traditions, and cultural values, which cannot be universalised or reduced to the standards of Western liberalism.

In Dontsov's understanding, 'Ukraine appears as a people with its own (predominantly drawn from the West) culture, its own language, a strong sense of unity and distinctiveness...'¹⁵

Occidental differences between the Western world, to which Ukraine belongs, and the Eastern world, embodied by Russia, are examined by Dontsov in the context of Ukrainian history, where political, state-building, and ecclesiastical processes demonstrate a consistent orientation towards Western European ideals of freedom, self-governance, and cultural autonomy.

Thus, the Russification policy in Ukrainian territories, which began in 1734 in the Left Bank and intensified in the Right Bank from 1793, allows Ukraine to be considered an element of the Occidental space. At the core of Occidentalism, as well as of modern academic discussions about civilisational confrontations, lies the idea of preserving, developing, and protecting European political, legal, and cultural norms. Ukrainian political tradition of that period exhibited a clear break from the centralised despotism of the Muscovite monarchy, defending aristocratic-republican principles as the foundation of its own system. During the implementation of the Pereyaslav Agreement, Ukrainian political elites insisted on the recognition of the inviolability of regional rights — a demand that sharply contrasted with the Muscovite view of relations between the sovereign and his subjects. Thus, the Ukrainian experience demonstrates a tendency towards Occidental principles of collective will and legal autonomy.

A distinctive feature of Ukrainian statehood was the formation of institutions that reflected a certain synthesis of European political tradition and local historical conditions. Compared to the model of absolutism characteristic of Moscow, Ukrainian political structures exhibited elements of democratic choice and independence in decision-making. The Hetmanate represented yet another unique variant of power

¹⁴ Dontsov D. 1957, 84.

¹⁵ Dontsov D. 2011b, 137.

organisation: the elected figure of the Hetman, having gained societal support, was not subject to formal institutional constraints, allowing them to act based on personal authority and a patriotic mission.

The church structure also became an arena for the implementation of Occidental ideals. Ukrainian society, shaped under the influence of Western European cultural traditions, rejected subordination to the central authority of Moscow patriarchs, symbolising a protest against Caesaropapist models of spiritual governance. Both the Union and the Orthodox tradition in Ukraine experienced influences from both Eastern and Western elements, indicating the multidimensional process of civilisational formation.

The historical analysis of Ukraine's social organisation, conducted by Dontsov through the lens of Occidentalist theory, confirms the orientation of Ukrainian society towards Western European principles. Ukrainian political, administrative, and cultural institutions created a space dominated by pluralism, legal self-determination, and free will — characteristic of the Western scheme, in contrast to the centralised, vertically organised autocracy inherent in Russia's Eastern system.

In Ukrainian lands, unlike the Russian model of the 17th century, various political estates emerged, not only participating in public life but also actively constructing their class interests. The landowning nobility, senior leadership (the foundation of the future 'Little Russian aristocracy'), peasants, and the urban population of free cities are examples of such decentralised power. They represent the Occidental paradigm, a society where each social group is characterised by the ability to defend its rights and ideals, which contrasts with the Russian tradition, dominated by the image of 'Tsar's slaves' without clear estate organisation and disregard for class dignity.

Urban formations in Ukraine functioned as living organisms, developing in accordance with the principles of Magdeburg law. Such a city, with a developed administrative, cultural, and economic foundation, is a clear expression of Occidental models of civilisational development. In contrast, Russian cities, which functioned solely as defensive-administrative and military centres, reflect primitiveness, characteristic of the Eastern governance model, where the spatial manifestation of public self-government was limited.

As Dontsov notes, the education system and cultural development in Ukraine evolved under the direct influence of Western European civilisation. Until the 17th century, Ukrainian schools for clerics and the Kyiv Academy, where Latin and Greek were taught, contributed to the growth of erudition among the local clergy and the formation of national cultural consciousness. Against this backdrop, the Muscovite state, which viewed Western cultural elements as foreign, imposed administrative and cultural restrictions, significantly hindering the free development of art and science.

The psychology of citizenship, according to Dontsov, also reflects the Occidental character of Ukrainian society. Activity, expressed in the conscious defence of rights and participation in political life, was evident in numerous uprisings. This activity

is a classic example of the Occidental spirit of independence and resistance to autocratic methods of governance, which dominated Russian tradition, where inertia and a tendency toward submission to autocracy shaped the perception of state structure.

Thus, Ukraine's confrontation with Russia takes on the characteristics of an existential struggle between universal, often imposed Russian concepts and the authentic, historically formed essence of Ukrainian existence. The events of 2014–2025 became the culmination of years of accumulated historical, cultural, and political contradictions caused by the dichotomy between the West and the East.

Dontsov's words about the existential confrontation with Russia — 'on the social, familial, political, religious, and spiritual-cultural fields'¹⁶ — reinforce the idea that this struggle operates at all levels of societal life. Today, in the Russia-Ukraine war, this has been realised through Russia's hybrid warfare, which employs non-military combined influence methods, covering political, social, informational, cultural, and psychological spheres, alongside traditional military operations. Dontsov foresaw this approach, highlighting in his comparison of Ukrainian and Russian mentalities that Russia seeks to influence all aspects of public life — from family values to religious beliefs and cultural traditions. Thus, the Russia-Ukraine war (2014–2025) acquires a multidimensional character, significantly complicating Ukraine's defence.

According to Dontsov's Occidentalist theory, Ukraine's political position in 1918 served as a key element in countering Russia's revanchist ambitions through the formation of dynamic international coalitions.

In Dontsov's concept, Germany during this period acted as a guarantor of stability for Ukraine, temporarily countering Moscow's expansionist aspirations. However, this cooperation was conditional and temporary: if the geopolitical landscape changed and Russia, pushed out of the European space, began seeking new strategic footholds, the formation of alternative alliances would be possible, including those based on shared antagonism towards Great Britain.

An analysis of alternative scenarios suggests that Ukraine's orientation towards the Western vector could lead to its integration into existing blocs of Central Powers with Turkey, forming a protective barrier against potential German expansion towards Asia Minor, Persia, and India. Additionally, potential cooperation with Great Britain would allow Ukraine to act as a restraining factor against Russia's efforts to expand its influence in the Black and Mediterranean Seas, as well as in India, given that Britain has traditionally recognised the strategic role of buffer states.

This approach allows Dontsov to position the Ukrainian question at the centre of geopolitical reconfiguration, viewing it not merely as a regional issue but as a key element in global shifts in the balance of power. He emphasises that, in 1918, Ukraine's territory served as a strategic space where the interests of major conflicting forces

16 Dontsov D. 1957, 29.

intersected. Moreover, Dontsov defines Ukraine not as a peripheral region but as a central arena, where contradictory imperial ambitions clash and new geopolitical power distributions emerge.¹⁷

The signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918 created a new political situation in which Ukraine effectively became an independent state, protected by the German army from the aggressive actions of its former metropolis. Based on this political reality, Dontsov formulated two possible paths for Ukraine's future: one leading to full state sovereignty and the other entailing a closer political or economic connection with Russia.

A crucial element of Dontsov's Occidental concept is his criticism of the idea of Ukraine's federation with Russia. He emphasises that, considering Russia's ethnographic conditions and traditionally defined economic priorities, the Russian state is predominantly orientated toward a south-eastern vector, which clearly contradicts the integration processes natural to Ukraine's territory.

Dontsov compared the possibilities of political unity in the manner of a federation between Austria-Hungary and Germany, pointing out that such unity is based on shared economic-geographical conditions, which do not exist in the case of Ukraine and Russia. He argued that the distinct river system of the Dnipro serves as a defining factor, proving the authenticity of Ukraine's economic-geographical conditions, which prevent its integration into a structure built on the principles of Russian imperial expansionism.

Dontsov highlights the danger of Ukraine becoming a tool of Moscow's policy. According to Dontsov, accepting such a role would strengthen Moscow's position against Western civilisation. Meanwhile, Kyiv's refusal to act as Moscow's vanguard increases the Western world's ability to resist Russian influence.

Dontsov defines the main principles of Ukrainian policy as complete separation from Russia and the preservation of national independence, which he views as a necessary condition for fulfilling Ukraine's historical mission. He emphasises the importance of adapting Ukraine's social, political, and cultural life to European standards, ensuring the nation's resilience against external threats.

At the same time, Dontsov warns that control over Ukraine's territory has always been regarded by Russia as a key factor in manifesting its expansionist ambitions. However:

Russia will not be able to keep Ukraine in its hands. One state after another has fought Moscow for possession of this land, realising that such possession is the foundation of Russia's colossal preponderance, dangerous to the existence of its neighbours. First, it was Poland, then Turkey, later Sweden, and now Austria and Germany.

17 Dontsov D. 2011a, 91–92.

Blood was shed over Ukraine for generations, like spring waters! And he who thinks it would be different now if Ukraine were once again taken by Russia is mistaken.¹⁸

Thus, Dontsov viewed the Ukrainian question not merely as a regional issue but as part of the global geopolitical balance. This is confirmed by modern international support for Ukraine, which places it at the centre of Europe's security architecture.

According to the Occidentalism concept, Ukraine must continue its integration into the European space and counteract Russian influence through the consolidation of state and military resources. In current conditions, this approach is reflected in the strategy of Western countries, which are actively uniting to support Ukraine against Russian imperialism. The 2014–2025 war has become an arena for the realisation of multilateral alliances, where defensive cooperation and the shared use of informational, economic, and military resources strengthen Ukraine's position on the international stage, confirming the theoretical foundations of strategic cooperation outlined by Dontsov.

The modern security paradigm requires the active formation of strategic alliances and partnerships. For Ukraine, this means not only integration into already existing Western structures (such as the European Union and NATO) but also creating its own partnership model, which accounts for all aspects of modern threats — from traditional military challenges to informational and cyber warfare.

Such a strategic model allows Ukraine to combine internal mobilisation with external diplomacy, establishing a reliable front against aggressive imperialist ambitions and ensuring Ukraine's active role in maintaining regional stability.

In his study, *Ukrainian State Thought and Europe*, Dontsov focuses on another component of his Occidentalism concept — the definition of Ukraine's historical mission as a factor in European equilibrium.¹⁹ Relying on historical and political studies of his time, Dontsov argues that concepts of state thought directed against the imperialist ambitions of European centres were justified and legitimised by the idea of political balance. Each such concept contained not only foreign policy objectives but also a defined historical mission, aimed at preserving the balance of power on the international stage. Within this framework, a particular example is the role of certain states as protective barriers. Belgium, on one hand, was understood as a strategic barrier for Germany against French influence, while the Habsburg monarchy, on the other, served as the first line of defence for Western Europe against Ottoman expansion. This approach demonstrates how state ideology and political rhetoric served as tools for justifying foreign policy strategies. A similar conceptual model, according to Dontsov, can be observed in the Ukrainian question. Ukraine's historical

¹⁸ Dontsov D. 2011a, 99.

¹⁹ Dontsov D. 2011b, 105.

mission was shaped by the foundations of European equilibrium, which was seen as a guarantee of preserving the West and the entire Occidental culture in the face of the threat of Pan-Muscovism.

Dontsov emphasises that Ukraine has played a key role in curbing the expansion of Russian absolutism towards the West, which has had far-reaching consequences for European civilisation. The fifty-year struggle of Ukraine (1654–1711) delayed the dominance of Russian absolutism in regions such as Central and Eastern Europe for centuries. Similarly, the religious conflict between the Orthodox Kyiv Metropolis and the Moscow Patriarchate in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries limited the ideological influence of the Moscow Church on the western territories, thereby safeguarding the intellectual space of Europe. According to Dontsov, the preservation of the autonomy of the Kyiv Metropolis represents a factor of civilisational resistance.

According to Dontsov, at the beginning of the 20th century, Ukraine once again found itself at the centre of a struggle between two principles — the European one, based on the right of nations to self-determination, and the Russian one, which embodies the principle of ochlocracy and absolutism.

Dontsov highlights Ukraine's historical mission as Europe's bastion against Russian expansion, regardless of whether that expansion manifested politically, socially, culturally, or religiously. Ukraine's victory in this struggle is decisive for ensuring European superiority: 'Victory in defending our national independence is inseparable for us from Europe's victory over Russia.'²⁰

In the historical context of Russia's continuous geostrategic activity, aimed at expanding its influence and establishing political hegemony in Europe, the question of Ukrainian statehood has gained particular relevance. Historically a part of the Russian Empire, Ukraine, with its high economic and territorial significance, has functioned as a boundary between Russia, the Black Sea, and the Western world. Thus, the Ukrainian state idea, perceived as a protective barrier against Russian expansion, maintains its importance as a key postulate of political balance in Europe.

Conclusions

The concept of Occidentalism developed by Dontsov serves as an important analytical tool for examining modern events, allowing the Russia-Ukraine war (2014–2025) to be understood as a confrontation between two fundamentally different civilisational models. In their entirety, the four components of Dontsov's Occidentalism form a unified methodological basis for analysing the 2014–2025 war, not only as a geopolitical struggle but also as a deeply rooted historical and cultural dichotomy.

20 Dontsov D. 1957, 89.

Dontsov's Occidentalism concept offers a comprehensive analysis, integrating cultural-historical aspects, a critical deconstruction of Russian narratives, a dialectical examination of existential confrontation, and an understanding of contemporary global processes.

At the same time, the methodological foundation of Occidentalism not only reveals deep civilisational contradictions but also provides a framework for assessing the prospects for establishing a secure and stable international order in the region. According to Dontsov, Ukraine's historical mission transforms its territorial uniqueness into a distinct factor in Europe's security balance. This approach has a dual significance:

- It confirms the historical legitimacy of Ukraine's position as a buffer state between different civilisational models.
- It stimulates integration processes, contributing to the formation of new alliances and partnerships in response to external threats.

As before, the Occidental confrontation with Russia, which continues today, is a continuation of the struggle for sovereignty and the protection of national identity.

Modern international coalitions opposing Russia, viewed through the lens of Occidentalism theory, demonstrate historical experience and the potential for establishing new international alliances that ensure Ukraine's security and sovereignty.

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