



SPECIAL ISSUE: THE DAY AFTER THE WAR IN UKRAINE AND THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

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Thematic Editor: Professor Andreas Theophanous

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CYPRUS CENTER FOR EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
University of Nicosia

1993-2022 TWENTY NINE YEARS OF POLICY FORMULATION AND ANALYSIS

PERSPECTIVES ON THE RENEWED STRATEGIC ANTAGONISM BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE WEST



*Andreas Theophanous
Professor of Economics and Public Policy
President, Cyprus Center for European and International
Affairs,
Head, Department of Politics and Governance
University of Nicosia*

When the Cold War ended in 1991 Francis Fukuyama put forward the view that this was the end of history. For Fukuyama, the triumph of liberal democracy pointed to a new era without ideological antagonisms. Nevertheless, the ideological as well as the strategic antagonisms remained part of the politics of the post-Cold War era. In this sense, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack against the US was a major event with multiple repercussions in international politics. For several analysts, September 11, 2001 provided further support to Huntington's theory on the Clash of Civilizations.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022 tragically served as a reminder of the continued antagonism between Russia and the West and its intensification. Indeed, this is a far more critical conflict between Russia and the West than the one posed by the Cuban crisis of 1962. Judging from the results, it is regrettable that there was no meaningful dialogue between Russia and the West following the end of the Cold War.

The Western narrative is that Putin and Russia have violated international law and that this is part of an overall plan to reestablish the Russian Empire. In other words, Russia is pursuing a revisionist policy. And the West cannot accept this. Furthermore, there are serious accusations in relation to violations of fundamental rights and freedoms in the Russian Federation and beyond. Russia puts forward the position that its "intervention" had to do not only with the protection of the Russian speaking population of the eastern part of Ukraine but also with its own national security. Moscow blames the US for the NATO expansion eastwards since 1991, increasing member states from 18 to 30 members, despite promises that this would not have taken place.

In addition to the humanitarian dimension of this tragedy, it is important to acknowledge that escalation creates further dangers. It should not escape our attention that Western efforts to isolate Russia have turned it into the most sanctioned nation in the world. According to the relevant theory when such sanctions, are imposed, the objective is to contain and weaken the targeted country; furthermore, a related objective may be regime change.

We can hardly ignore the impact that this situation has on the EU. All the member states already experience higher inflation. Moreover, the fear that the EU will soon face stagflation looms large. Unfortunately, the EU may have to live with less security and less prosperity in the years to come.

These events are unfolding while a debate for the future of Europe is taking place. Encouraged by the institutions of the EU, this debate had started more than a year before the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. It is obvious that the content of this debate has now changed dramatically as the war is leading to tectonic changes in the international system.

Currently, the EU and the West need to reexamine their options at the backdrop of an unprecedented conflict that is likely to develop into a protracted new antagonism between Russia and the West. In this regard, I must also note that the interests and objectives among the various member states of the EU are not identical. And certainly British views are quite different from those of Germany and France. In addition, the interests of the US and the EU are not the same in relation to this critical issue.

Broadly speaking, three major scenarios emerge as to the future development of this crisis:

- (a) Continued conflict and antagonism until one of the two sides succeeds in its declared objectives;
- (b) End of the war in Ukraine and the achievement of a cold peace; this will entail the perpetuation of most sanctions against Russia and the development of the current war into of a frozen unresolved conflict;
- (c) Serious negotiations between Russia and Ukraine and between Russia and the West for achieving an enduring peace which will entail normalization of relations and cooperation.

Unfortunately, the third scenario presents itself as the most unlikely prospect currently.

The question of whether the response of the West has been prompted by Russia's violations of international law or whether the major incentive was to contain Russia remains a largely theoretical treatise. Yet, one cannot simply ignore double standards. International Law was violated on multiple occasions. The Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 is only one of them. And while the Turkish occupation of the northern part of Cyprus continues to this day and while Ankara continues its hybrid warfare against this island state, the reflexes of the West so far proved inadequate. In a crux, Turkey remains an ally while Russia never ceased to be a foe.

Last though not least, we need to recall that the EU was built through economic synergies. One of the stated goals of the EU was to achieve reconciliation and enduring peace by utilizing economic means. The ultimate aim was to create interdependencies and economic cooperation among countries that had previously fought each other, such as France and

Germany. It is unfortunate that the EU and the West did not extend the same philosophy to Russia.

Given the current circumstances, the EU should undertake initiatives for the end of this bloody war. And, eventually, the US and Russia must negotiate. It is encouraging that such suggestions have been put forward by high ranking State and EU Officials.

FROM THE WAR IN UKRAINE TO THE FUTURE WITHOUT WARS



Nina Rzhevskaya
Head of International Relations, Information and Regional
Studies academic department
International Relations Department
National Aviation University
Doctor of Political Sciences (D.Sc)

The end of XX and the beginning of XXI century is determined by a number of serious international crises, that are escalating tensions on the international arena. Despite the fact that large-scale wars that took part on the half of the continent (or even half the world) have disappeared, humanity has not yet learned how to coexist peacefully.

On February 24, 2022, the day when the Russian army launched a full-scale invasion in Ukraine, I did not think about when and how this aggression would end and what the first day after the war in my country would be like and how this war would change Europe and the world in general. Probably, like for the vast majority of people, it was important for me to explain how it happened that in the globalized world of the 21st century, when the memory of two bloody World Wars is still alive, aggression of unprecedented scale since 1939 became possible.

Analogies with what Nazi Germany at the time do not answer the question of what caused it, but some associations with the consequences are already visible.

This war is the first one in the history of mankind, which takes place against the background of social networks, mobile phones from which you can control satellites and being controlled by the satellites yourself, which give you a chance to see everything on our planet, as for example, nuclear power plants, drones and other technological wonders of modern civilization. This is a completely different war than has ever taken place before.

There are many political, psychological and technical reasons for this war. But the most important thing is that more than two decades ago Russia hopelessly stuck in the past. At a time when the world is making some progress, despite bloody terrorist attacks and regional conflicts on religious or ethnic grounds, Russia has desperately degraded.

The Chechen wars should be the world's first alarming signal of how political issues are being resolved in a country ruled by a former KGB maniac. In Europe, where there are still many separatist movements, it never occurred to anyone to solve such issues with "carpet" bombings, as was the case, for example, in Grozny. The world should have drawn some conclusions for us so far, but it didn't.

Moreover, year after year, the gap between the mentality of creating the world of the future and the endless "immortal regiments" of the past became increasingly apparent. History should be remembered, but not rewritten.

Articles by "historians" from Lubyanka, associated with the building that is housing the state security bodies of the RSFSR and the FSB, seemed absurd until it became clear that this was the ideological basis of the 2014 war and its current phase of escalation, which became one gigantic crime against humanity.

It is no coincidence that Putin used the narrative of Lenin's alleged creation of Ukraine to explain the aggression. Unable to see and bring the future closer, he decided to try not to let others do the same. Yes, it was this failure that led to the exact opposite result. Literally before in the eyes and within days of a full-scale invasion, Russia not only suffered unprecedented losses in human strength and technology, but lost hundreds of billions, if not trillions of dollars of investment, the slightest opportunity for technological development, became a political and economic outcast, rapidly becoming a giant North Korea prototype.

A few years ago there was thesis voiced in Russian ideology that a world that does not recognize Russia's "greatness" should not exist. Its practical embodiment in this war has already been felt by Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy and, of course, the South-Eastern part of Ukraine.

Ukraine will definitely win. There will be international funds created for the reconstruction of destroyed infrastructure, as well as a tectonic shift in the perception of our country in the world.

We have already felt the incredible support gained by our army and the unconquered people.

If we keep the same spirit and unity after the war, Ukraine will be different. In the context of political and economic reforms, much has been said that we have almost the last chance to make the leap into a new technological system, but no one has imagined that this chance would come in the form of such a terrible war.

Inevitable complete and radical overload, a new Constitution and new laws on the Government and political parties, a fair Tax Code, maximum freedom of enterprise and a social system returned to the people. All these can be done within months.

But Russia will have to pay for everything by means of political repentance as well as the payment of reparations. Most likely, it will cease to exist within its current borders.

As for the global world, it will be different, both in the West and in the East.

Only a change in the paradigm of capitalism can prevent future wars, when net income is not the main goal, but balanced development based on fair distribution of public goods, limited consumption of resources, respect for the environment and environmental protection.

All this will be possible only when the world manages to level the aggressor with nuclear weapons, who directly announces the intention to return the world to reality which was at least in 1997.

And Ukraine in a difficult bloody war is becoming a key factor in creating another future of humanity which is a future without wars. It is important for Ukraine to bring the case to an end with honor.

Taking into account the scale of the conflict, most international experts note that situation in Ukraine is unique and has no direct analogues in world practice. So, Ukraine needs to find new models of economic reconstruction of damaged areas and socialization of internally displaced persons.

EUROPEAN SECURITY AFTER THE UKRAINE WAR



*Nadia Alexandrova-Arbatova
Head, Department of European Studies, Institute of World
Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), Russian
Academy of Sciences*

There can be several scenarios about “the day after the war in Ukraine”. However, to date, there is one scenario that could make all others absolutely irrelevant, first and foremost “the day after”. It is a threat of a new world war as a result of the escalation of the Ukraine conflict to a global nuclear catastrophe. If we discard this apocalyptic scenario, then the remaining ones will depend on how the Russian “military special operation” in Ukraine ends. The array of possible options can be reduced to two main scenarios, but in any case the future developments will depend on the substance and terms of a peace agreement between Russia and Ukraine. A “good” agreement will result in durable peace; a “bad” agreement will result in delays, setbacks, or even the collapse of the peace process.¹

Under the best possible scenario, the way back to normal will be very long and painful. Solely, a good treaty”- a set of mutually acceptable compromises between Moscow and Kyiv – could provide a long lasting peace in Europe. Its general contours are already clear: first of all, this is an agreement on a ceasefire and massive humanitarian assistance to the civilian population of the territories engulfed in hostilities. On the basis of a truce under international control, there should be peaceful negotiations on the neutral and non-nuclear status of Ukraine, multilateral guarantees of its sovereignty and territorial integrity within the agreed borders, compensation to the conflict victims and restoration of the destroyed infrastructure. Hopefully, it will help to end the sanctions war and reestablish trade and economic cooperation in Europe and beyond.

A peace treaty on Ukraine can become a prerequisite for the renovation of the European security architecture. In line with the guarantees to Ukraine, a new system of European security should include guarantees of sovereignty and territorial integrity to other neutral non-nuclear states. Such guarantees

¹ Arnault Jean. GOOD AGREEMENT? BAD AGREEMENT? AN IMPLEMENTATION PERSPECTIVE. Available at: https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/Good%20AgreementBad%20Agreement_Arnault.pdf

could be reinforced by the restoration of arms control regimes and restrictions on military activities in Europe. The latter involves the ban on INF deployment in Europe, the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from forward bases and their reduction, a deep reduction in the general forces of NATO and Russia, and the coordination of many other measures proposed by Russia in December 2021.

After that, or even in the process of moving towards peace in Ukraine and beyond, it is possible to resume the dialogue between Russia and the United States on arms control. It is likely that overcoming the humanitarian, moral, political and economic consequences of the conflict in Ukraine will be a much more laborious and lengthy undertaking. However, the resumption of arms control is an absolute imperative for European and global security, as is the normalization of relations between Russia and the West.

In the worst case - in the absence of a "good treaty" - there won't be stability in Europe. The Russia - West relations will continue to deteriorate but unlike the Cold War era they will be deprived of commonly recognised rules of behavior and solid legal foundation. The EU and US/NATO will never reconcile themselves with Russia's victory - even partial - over Ukraine and incorporation of Novorossiya. The sanctions war will intensify, as will the political, military and ideological confrontation.

To date, the sanctions adopted by the EU and its allies have not fulfilled their main task - they have not stopped Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, but only demonstrated the most severe rejection of its actions. At the same time, they showed how deeply Russia was integrated into the global economy, and how much has been achieved over the past decades in the field of international cooperation. Russia is likely to survive the sanctions, but will be set back in its economic development, and its modernization will face enormous difficulties and disappear by itself. The European Union will not give up its principles, but will get a poor and hostile country at hand.

In the context of the current situation in Ukraine, Europe and the rest of the world, a good scenario may seem like a naive good wish. But eyewitnesses to the history of the last decades should remember the situation and prevailing moods of 1983: the height of the war in Afghanistan, the destruction of the South Korean Boeing in the Far East, the beginning of the deployment of American Pershing missiles in Germany and etc. Then the prospects also seemed the darkest. But only four years have passed, and the INF Treaty was concluded, then the CFE Treaty and START-1, and then the Cold War and the arms race ended. Surely, this did not happen by itself, but as a result of the efforts of many people who saved the world from the threat of a nuclear apocalypse for the next quarter of a century.

THOUGHTS ON THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS AND BEYOND



Van Coufoudakis
*Professor Emeritus of Political Science, Indiana University-
Purdue University*
Rector Emeritus, University of Nicosia

On February 24, the long anticipated Russian invasion of Ukraine commenced. Satellite intelligence photos and other selected information was leaked to international media primarily by the US and the British governments. The release of vital information on pending Russian actions may have frustrated but did not deter President Putin. In many ways the situation reminded me of the days leading to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. The intelligence circulated was accurate, in contrast to the misleading information deliberately presented to the UN by the late Colin Powell prior to the US action against Saddam Hussein.

The early Western response to the emerging Ukrainian crisis included pledges of economic, military and political support for Ukraine and the imposition of severe economic sanctions on Russia, Russian leaders and oligarchs. Thankfully, NATO members have resisted Ukrainian calls for NATO's direct engagement in Ukraine, which would have brought the world closer to a nuclear war with Russia. By the time this commentary is published, we will have celebrated the 77th anniversary of the end of WWII in Europe. This anniversary finds Europe in the midst of a new major international crisis, a crisis raising the specter of a new global conflict. Those of us who grew up during WWII remember well the consequences, let alone the victims of aggressive wars. As the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues, Europe is also faced with a new major humanitarian crisis, while the economic consequences of the conflict will be long lasting and will be felt worldwide.

We have been asked to comment on the "day after" the war in Ukraine and the future of Europe. I will not make any grandiose predictions like those heard at the end of the Cold war. These predictions ranged from the "creation of a new world order", Washington's favorite post-Cold war slogan, to Francis Fukuyama's "end of history". The crisis unfolding in Ukraine and its consequences will be felt long after the guns fall silent, making any predictions premature and difficult. What we need now is a calm assessment of how we got to the most serious crisis in post-War Europe, its meaning for the future of European unity, regional and global peace. The Ukrainian crisis brought out in stark terms the absence of political leadership in Europe and in the EU in particular. The crisis occurred at a time of political transition in

influential countries like Germany and France. We also have the rise of populism that threatens the very foundations of post-war democratic Europe not only in countries like Poland and Hungary but even in France, Italy and Germany. Ironically these populist movements are also more tolerant of Russia's authoritarianism.

Following the tragedy of WWII, Europe was lucky to have visionaries like Monet and Schumann, whose brilliance and vision gave birth to European economic, social and political integration. Unfortunately, these visionaries have been replaced by an impersonal European technocratic bureaucracy that is out of touch with the needs and aspirations of European citizens. Once the political dust of the French and German elections settles down, European leaders and their counterparts in the US, Canada, Australia, and Japan will need to address not only the consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, but also many of the assumptions that guided Western post-Cold war policy, and the causes of the rise of populism.

The policy of sanctions imposed on Russia was a necessary non-military response to the Ukrainian crisis. However, sanctions showed in stark terms the limits and consequences of globalization and economic interdependence as it evolved since the end of the Cold War. Will globalization end? The answer is clearly "no", but no one knows or can predict at this time what form globalization and interdependence will take in the post Ukraine period. Business, political elites, and think tanks in Brussels, London, New York, Washington, Moscow and Beijing will be examining these issues long after the Ukrainian crisis subsides. Military and security experts will also be examining global security issues in the aftermath of the rather poor performance of the Russian forces in Ukraine, the weapons and tactics used, etc.

As the Cold War ended, the US and other key Western European governments engaged in a strategy aiming to incorporate Russia and China in Western created international institutions in the belief that such engagement would temper their ambitions and encourage their liberalization. Significant financial assistance was extended to Russia in particular to encourage and support domestic change. Even though many observers argued that domestic liberalization, particularly in China, was not guaranteed, most Western leaders believed that integration would encourage good behavior by these countries abroad. Not enough attention was paid to Russia's 2008 actions in Georgia, the annexation of Crimea in 2014, and its involvement in Syria's Civil war. At the same time, China pursued an expansionist policy in the Pacific with the construction of artificial islands and aggressive economic engagement policies. At the same time, President Trump withdrew the US from the Trans Pacific Partnership. The post mortem of American post-Cold War policy has already started, particularly with new US security arrangements with countries like Australia and India. The US is also reviewing the consequences of its withdrawal from Afghanistan. The decision was correct and politically courageous, but it may have created wrong impressions among certain revisionist powers.

The invasion of Ukraine raised questions about our assumptions of the post-Cold War system. The EU has failed to provide political leadership or develop a serious security role. It has only cautiously legitimized NATO's policies. This Cold War security organization has become the dominant international player during the Ukrainian crisis. The UN, once again, was limited by the inherent weaknesses of its Charter and the total ineffectiveness of the current Secretary General. It will take a long time and a new Secretary General to restore credibility to this organization. At a most critical time, there is no credible international mediator to address not only the Ukrainian problem but also relations among the superpowers. During the Ukrainian crisis we heard various negative, if not insulting, characterizations about the leaders of Russia and China. These characterizations were one of the mobilizational tools used to generate public support for US and NATO policies in Ukraine. However, the reality remains that today's superpowers and their leaders will still have to face each other and eventually cooperate in addressing common problems like climate change, the control and spread of nuclear weapons, migration and the economic and social consequences of globalization. Energy questions and energy dependence will remain in the forefront of these discussions. Name calling does not provide the confidence needed to address these difficult issues.

Before discussing the future of superpower relations, Western powers will need to engage in an unemotional study of what went wrong in the post-Cold War period that brought us to today's point of no return. Influential voices in the US and Europe including George Kennan and Henry Kissinger, had warned about NATO's unwarranted expansion. These voices were not heard or were dismissed. Why? Time has come to consider objectively the consequences of Western policies in the aftermath of the Cold War. For example, what lessons did other countries draw from the involvement of the US and NATO in the breakup of former Yugoslavia and the recognition of Yugoslavia's breakaway states? What did these actions signal to Russia in its formulation of policies toward Georgia and now in Ukraine? Turkey, a major NATO member, invaded the Republic of Cyprus on 1974. It still occupies 37% of the territory of an EU member and is a candidate for EU membership! It has also recognized the pseudo state it created in occupied Cyprus by the force of arms in violation of international law. It has carried out documented war crimes, engaged in the ethnic cleansing of occupied Cyprus and flooded occupied Cyprus with settlers from Turkey in violation of international law. Other than perfunctory Western condemnations no actions have been taken to remedy the situation. What did Russia learn from this situation? And now, Turkey is feverishly working to overturn the penalties imposed by the US Congress for its acquisition of Russian S-400 anti-aircraft missiles, a missile system posing a major threat to the region and compromising NATO and US security. Turkey, the traditional "evasive neutral," is trying to use the Ukrainian crisis to convince President Biden to overturn the Congressionally imposed sanctions...Do we ever learn? At a time of energy dependence, the US took steps to derail cooperative action between Israel, Egypt, Cyprus and Greece because it did not include Turkey in the program. Ironically, we accuse Russia

of using energy to blackmail European countries. Including Turkey in regional energy arrangements would give Turkey an opportunity to black mail these countries. Do we ever learn?

As I close this difficult commentary, I want to remind the readers about the collateral damage of the Ukrainian invasion on the last remaining historic Greek presence in the Black Sea. The Greek communities of Mariople, Odessa and Crimea survived the ravages of WWII. There are doubts as to whether this last remaining historic Black Sea presence will survive the current tragedy. For the first time in centuries Greek communities that contributed so much to the region may become sad footnotes of the Ukrainian tragedy. Unfortunately, there are no angels in the tragedy unfolding in Eastern Europe since February 24. More than ever before we need a calm assessment of how we got to this point of no return, how we can end this humanitarian disaster and avoid the threat of nuclear conflict whether by calculation or by mistake. I wish I could end this essay in a more optimistic note, but I cannot. Having been born before WWII and raised during the war, I celebrated the emergence of detente and European unity. Now, as I approach the end of the road, I find it necessary to ask what is the legacy we are leaving to the next generation?

THE FUTURE OF RUSSIA AS THE CHALLENGE FOR EUROPE



*Daniel Przystek, Ph.D.
Faculty of Political Science and International Studies
University of Warsaw*



*Maciej Raś, Ph.D.
Faculty of Political Science and International Studies
University of Warsaw*

Introduction

The Russian-Ukrainian conflict has a huge impact on the transformation of the international order in the global, regional and sub-regional dimensions, as well as it will affect the future of the parties directly involved in the war (Russia and Ukraine) and the European Union (EU). It is actually a truism. The end of the war, understood as the end of the military phase of the struggle, will not mean the end of the ongoing conflict. The real causes of the conflict will not automatically disappear. Regardless of the outcome of the war and the costs incurred, the current Russian authorities will not accept further shifting of Western influence into the post-Soviet space, perceived by the Kremlin as the zone of Russia's 'privileged interests'.

Only the decomposition and decline of the importance of the West (very unlikely), a fundamental change in Kyiv's policy to a pro-Russian (even less likely) or a deep, systemic transformation of the Russian Federation (its westernization: democratization and economic modernization towards a competitive free-market economy) can remove, or at least limit a field of conflict between Russia and the West and with Ukraine itself. Is the last of the presented conditions able to be fulfilled? Possible but uncertain. Russia might as well plunge into isolation or chaos, while being ruled by authoritarian regime or decomposed. Even if not, Russia's Western-oriented transformation may begin in a few months, as well as in a few or several dozen years.

The global level of analysis

As a result of the ongoing war, it can be assumed that the West will strengthen its cohesion (at least in the short- and medium-term perspectives) and its position in the system of international relations. Also for the People's Republic of China (PRC), for whom Russia's defeat in Ukraine will be a warning against taking rash actions that could conflict it with the West and lead to economic tensions.

The role of the United States (USA) as the leader of the West, capable of efficiently initiating and coordinating decisive actions of the entire bloc of states, will increase parallelly. The non-Western powers seeking to increase their position will balance between a pro-Western and 'sovereign' attitude rather than openly challenging the US and its allies. The international behavior of the PRC will largely depend on its internal situation, especially in the socio-economic dimension.

The European Union

The conflict with Russia and the clear political-military domination of the United States (the EU's dependence on the US) will result in the development of the debate on the further integration of the Union and increasing the effectiveness of its external influence, not only in the 'soft' dimensions (development aid, foreign economic policy etc.), but also on its defense and power projection capabilities.

Will some federal concept become the 'winning' solution? Perhaps, although it is difficult to forecast, especially in the political dimension. Undoubtedly, external threats will accelerate the related processes. However, for example, the rapid weakening of Russia or the PRC's 'rapprochement' policy may weaken such tendencies again. Moreover, the EU is a structure that is too complex to judge its future solely through the prism of geopolitical or geo-economic rivalry.

The role of central and eastern Europe – the sub-regional factor

It is quite obvious that the position of central European countries (often referred to by the West as east European) - members of the Western institutions: the EU and NATO, is growing. The EU and NATO 'eastern flank' attracts more attention from the US and Western European allies. Not only in the area of military security, but also socio-economic, especially energy security.

The countries of the sub-region, proud today of a more realistic perception of Russia's policy than a vast majority of its allies, can raise their position within those Western structures. The increase in their position, however, will depend

on the ability to further absorb the EU funds and avoid political and economic perturbations as well as populisms and nationalisms. In other words, it will depend on the ability to fit into the European 'mainstream', which will not forge, and even strengthen the effectiveness of the implementation of their own national interests at the international level. Another challenge will be related to the skillful balancing between the interests of the European community and the attractiveness of relying on the strategy of bandwagoning in their relations with the USA.

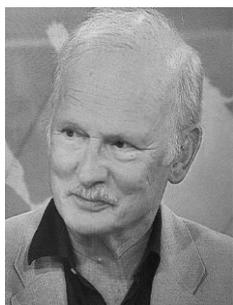
Conclusions

Any predictions based on social sciences are burdened with a high dose of risk. Social sciences, including the study of international relations, are not experimental sciences. Too many currently unknown or underestimated factors can destroy even the most professional analysis.

The above considerations are therefore a drawing of one of the possible scenarios, quite optimistic from the point of view of the West and the EU itself. Undoubtedly, however, the world - compared to the post-Cold War period - is entering the stage of uncertainty, related not only to the struggle for a new shape of the international order, but also to a number of existential challenges related to e.g. the natural environment, access to raw materials, and increasing competition. economic conditions (in the West) of the will to maintain the current standards of living, demographic problems, including the problem of aging (the developed countries) and the migration pressure from 'young' societies.

The crisis in relations with Russia, despite its sharpness and uniqueness (nothing like it has happened in Europe since World War II), remains one, though the most important today, of the many threats and challenges facing the Old Continent.

CUTTING THE GORDIAN KNOT



Robert Ellis
International advisor at RIEAS (Research Institute for European and American Studies) in Athens

Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24 has not only signalled an end to the rules-based international order established by the UN in 1945 but also upended some of the assumptions on which our Western society is based.

For example, Francis Fukuyama, author of the celebrated "The End of History", has [conceded](#) that the invasion is a critical turning point in world history and marks the end of the post-cold war era.

Fukuyama admits the rise of illiberal authoritarian regimes such as Russia, China, Syria, Venezuela, Iran and Nicaragua. Furthermore, he characterizes Putin's Russia as a resentful, revanchist country intent on reversing the entire post-1991 European order.

Seen in this context, Turkey can be characterized as an illiberal democracy with all of the trappings of a democracy but little of the reality. In reality, Erdogan's Turkey is beholden to Russia as an 'abi' (big brother) for much of its economy, for example, gas, trade and tourism.

Although Turkey has joined the [Eurasianist](#) camp with its purchase of Russia's S-400 anti-missile defence system, it is still pro forma a member of NATO. But Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has [made it clear](#) Russia has never truly considered Turkey as a strategic ally but only as a close partner.

Nevertheless, both Putin and Erdogan share the same revanchist dream of extending their country's borders, which in Turkey's case has led to the occupation of northern Cyprus and areas of northern Syria.

Michael Rubin, senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, has drawn [a parallel](#) between Turkey's occupation of northern Cyprus and Russia's claim to Donetsk. Here I would add that Turkey with its policy of 'Heim ins Reich' towards Cyprus has in Ersin Tatar found its Konrad Henlein, the leader of the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia.

One of the revisions of foreign policy that Russia's invasion of Ukraine has led to is an appraisal of Europe's dependency on Russian gas. This in turn brings into play the role played by [the gas resources in the Levant Basin](#) in the Eastern Mediterranean, which has been a bone of contention between Turkey and Cyprus.

The U.S. State Department has in [a non-paper](#) already sounded the death knell for the EastMed pipeline, the main reason being the prohibitive cost of establishing the 1900 km. pipeline and also Turkey's objections.

Because of the collapse of Turkey's economy and '[Erdoganomics](#)' Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who together with his governing party AKP (Justice and Development Party) next year faces reelection, is a man backed into a corner.

As Tim Ash, emerging markets strategist concludes, Erdogan's strategy is clear. Try and make friends with everyone internationally so as to secure bilateral external financing. It is for this reason that Erdogan invited Israel's President Isaac Herzog to visit in March with [the main aim](#) of securing a deal with Israel on a pipeline from Israel's gas reserves to Turkey.

This would benefit both Europe and Turkey, as it would reinforce Turkey's claim to be an energy hub. However, this ambition has been met with [scepticism](#) in Israel. According to Professor Efraim Inbar, president of the Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security, the optimal solution economically and practically will be a pipeline from Israel to Turkey via Cyprus.

This [could involve](#) a pipeline from Israel's Leviathan field through Cypriot waters, which would imply Cyprus' permission. In the event, the most practical solution would be to run the pipeline overland through Cyprus, leaving only 65 km for the undersea pipeline to Turkey.

The main obstacle here is political. On the one hand, there is Ankara's insistence on a two-state solution for the island's reunification and on the other, President Anastasiades' [insistence](#) on Turkey's recognition of the Republic.

The Cyprus Mail has in [an editorial](#) called on the Anastasiades government to give up the fantasy about the EastMed pipeline and look at possible ways of Cyprus becoming a part of the new regional order being shaped.

The SWP (German Institute for International and Security Affairs) has in [a report](#) indicated how the Eastern Mediterranean can be a focus for the EU's energy transition. This indicates the possibilities for regional cooperation and opportunities for dialogue.

At the beginning of April Israel's foreign minister Yair Lapid met with his Greek and Cypriot counterparts in Athens and [addressed](#) the opportunities to reduce dependency on Russian gas. "There are risks here, but there are also opportunities," he stated.

Hay Eytan Cohen Yanarocak, the Jerusalem Institute's Turkey expert, [believes](#) there are four players, Greece, Cyprus, Israel and Turkey, who all want to eat this delicious pie. The trick, Cohen said, is to find a common denominator that shares the pie.

THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS AND THE EU: IS AN INDEPENDENT EUROPE STILL POSSIBLE?



Matthieu Grandpierron
Assistant Professor in political sciences, Catholic
University of Vendée (ICES)



Eric Pomès
Dean of the faculty of law and economics, Catholic
University of Vendée (ICES)

The question of strategic independence is an old sea serpent that goes back to the very foundations of the European Union. Its founding fathers, led by Jean Monnet, shared troubled ties with American power. The US needed a substitute domestic market to solve its post-war crisis of overproduction. Since the creation of NATO, any plans for a European army outside NATO control (as envisaged by the European Defence Community project) have been stifled. Moreover, Europe occupies an unambiguous place in American geopolitical thinking: that of a bridgehead against the Soviet Union, then Russia. Brzezinski spoke of the vassalization of Europe in his book *The Grand Chessboard*. The presidency of Donald Trump and the fierce criticism of NATO meant that Europe had more room to manoeuvre, and NATO was described as 'brain dead'. The European Union's desire for independence, marked in particular by the desire to develop an autonomous defence, seems to have faded in the face of the foreign policy of the Biden administration and by the Russian special military operation in Ukraine.

The Ukrainian crisis is important both for the international order and for the future of Europe in general and the European Union in particular. Since last February, we have been witnessing a particular moment in the process of European construction. The Ukrainian crisis accelerated the vassalization of Europe vis-à-vis the US in all aspects: economic, geopolitical and industrial.

First of all at the economic level. Europe wanted to be an industrial giant capable of competing with Japan and the USA. But what is the economy? The transformation of energy into goods, and this is Europe's main weakness: it is dependent on its supplies of raw materials (oil and gas), imported mainly from Russia, Algeria or the Persian Gulf. This dependence has been accentuated by the aberration of European energy policies (attack on French nuclear power favoured by Germany and its disastrous ecological policy). This dependence has been accentuated since the coercive economic measures decreed against Russia in 2014: wheat must now be imported. But what does the Ukrainian crisis allow? It has allowed the US to put pressure on Europe to abandon its Russian supplies. The Americans are desperately looking for a buyer for their shale gas and oil, which is only profitable if prices are high, which the Ukrainian crisis has made possible.

On the industrial side, the situation is no better. The Ukrainian crisis put an end to joint military projects: Franco-German stealth fighter; Franco-German tank. The Germans chose to buy the F-35. Moreover, when Poland transferred its Russian equipment to Ukraine (Migs fighters, T-72 tank), it did not buy European equipment, but American equipment (F-16 fighters and Abrams tank). The argument of interoperability (especially for ammunition) with the American army is fallacious since the European military industry is NATO standard. It should be noted that the purchase of American military equipment is never without concessions in terms of sovereignty. Indeed, all American military equipment sold to non-priority allies (Japan and Israel) includes a double-key system: Washington's agreement is required to use the equipment.

This double-key procedure de facto alienates Europe and its foreign policy. Very concretely, it implies that without US agreement, most European weapons would be inoperative. In this condition, it is hard to imagine the development of an autonomous foreign policy without autonomous military capacities. Then, this patent failure of self-defence by the European Union implies that the European Union cannot compete with the great powers in a classical international order. The only configuration in which the Union could play a leading role would be in the construction of an essentially normative international order in which the existing and emerging powers would have definitively abandoned the use of force as a means to advance their interests.

Indeed, at no time has the Union been able to determine a foreign policy different from that of the United States or even to appear as a credible conciliator between the Russians and the Ukrainians. Moreover, the idea that the EU model is based on its particularity as a civil power shows its limits, if not its weakness, when other international actors act according to the classical principles of power. Therefore, what should distinguish the European Union from other powers shows its inadequacy in the international order, even its inefficiency. Although we do not know exactly what the future holds, the

events of the last few months allow us to put forward a certain number of hypotheses on the future of the European Union after the Ukrainian war.

The Ukrainian crisis has revealed deep divergences among EU members. It is therefore possible to put forward the hypothesis that the Union is at a turning point in which its future is at stake. Several scenarios can be imagined.

- (1) The first would be a kind of status quo in which, in a form of denial, the European Union would continue to function as if it could really influence world affairs.
- (2) A second scenario would consist of a refoundation through a profound reflection on the project and the functioning of the European Union, leading to the integration of the factors of a world that remains, contrary to the dominant thinking in Brussels, marked by conflicts of interest and the importance of military force.
- (3) The third scenario could be that of a kind of pause in the European project in order to strengthen it.
- (4) A fourth scenario, on the opposite, could involve either a deepening of the EU or an enlargement, or both simultaneously.
- (5) Finally, the fifth scenario could be a kind of headlong rush in which the treaties would be revised with the aim of abandoning unanimity in order to overcome the blockages emanating from certain members opposed to the liberal normative policy promoted by the Commission.

Whatever the scenario, the question that remains is whether the European Union is strong enough to survive its implementation.

FEDERALISM AND ETHNO-NATIONAL CONFLICTS

Francesco Palermo
Professor of Comparative Public Law, University of Verona
and Head of the Institute for Comparative Federalism,
Eurac Research, Bolzano/Bozen www.eurac.edu/fpalermo

While territorial solutions have always been used to accommodate ethno-national diversity, this trend has strongly increased in the last decades, as it often represents the only peaceful instrument to this end. However, not all federal forms are the same and an exclusionary approach to federalism runs the risk to replicate the damages of the nation states by limiting instead of promoting the rights of minority groups. For this reason, the practical effects and the usefulness or the danger of resorting to federalism to solve territorial claims of ethno-national groups depend on what type of federalism is used and on what kind of accommodation is underpinned by federal solutions in each context.

The war in Ukraine is a tragic example of misinterpretation and mismanagement of territorial solutions to diversity claims. The issue has been politicized since the country's independence, and spilled over dramatically in the last decade. On the one hand, it is obvious that such a large and diverse country could not effectively be ruled only from the centre. On the other, calls for stronger autonomy of certain regions and even the federalization of the country were advocated essentially by pro-Russian segments of society, and the experience of Crimea was seen as a self-realizing prophecy of secession. Even worse, the war has probably destroyed, among other things, the expectations for a diverse society, including in territorial terms.

In the last wave of constitutions, the response to the proliferation of ethno-national conflicts has often been granting autonomy to territories predominantly inhabited by minority groups. This way, federalism in the sense of "holding together" countries, rather than being driven by governance ideas, has been used massively throughout the world as a sort of compromise between fully-fledged statehood on one hand, that some minority groups claimed, and keeping together existing states without damaging their territorial integrity on the other. The accommodation of national diversity is now not only the main but probably the sole reason for resorting to federalism and related concepts (autonomy, regionalization, decentralization) in the last constitutional generation. This testifies of the potential of federalism to solve such issues, but on the other hand it undermines other very important aspects

of federalism, such as governing pluralism far beyond the ethno-cultural dimension, including also territorial, societal and political diversity.

The advantages of resorting to the “federal toolbox” to accommodate ethno-national claims are manifold. In the first place, a federal or federal-type arrangement often brokers an agreement that can solve a territorial dispute, or at least it helps channel it into a pre-determined procedure, which establishes a framework to address the potential claims of each community; an agreement and a procedure, while open in the outcome, are inherently peaceful in the approach, and this is usually the main common denominator which makes it attractive for all parties involved. Secondly, a federal solution allows for internal self-determination of certain groups, preventing an external one: in this way it is accepted also by the central power because it preserves the territorial integrity of countries and it has the potential to overcome marginalization originated by past oppression; it also gives the chance to build trust by means of cooperation. Third, there are no other serious alternatives to forced assimilation, ethno-cultural violence, ethnic cleansing. Therefore, federalism is the most peaceful and often the only viable instrument to address these issues.

At the same time, some severe risks exist when using the federal toolbox to accommodate minority claims while neglecting all other facets of federal arrangements. The main conceptual mistake that often occurs is the potential downside of one of its main strengths, i.e. the fact that it allows for internal self-determination of groups. But this is often seen as a plan B when full statehood is not achievable. Following this understanding of internal self-determination as a back-up for statehood simply perpetuates the logic of group ownership over a territory (including power over such territory and its natural resources) that has marked the idea of the nation-state and has created so many problems in accommodating minority communities throughout the history.

The main consequences of such an approach are little commitment towards minority groups in the autonomous territory and frequent over-ethnicisation of politics. While it is important to bring the ethnic element into politics in order not to ignore issues emerging from society, over-emphasising such element is extremely dangerous because it generates a loop whereby ethnicity becomes the most important or even the only category of politics, which creates a conflictive spillover. It inevitably encourages groups to ask for more in terms exclusive ownership over “their” territory, generating an exclusionary approach towards internal diversity.

When autonomy or federalism are not seen as a chance to improve the quality of the governance in and over a territory, but as a non desirable alternative to fully-fledged statehood, they often produce a vicious circle that might lead

to more claims for external self-determination, undermining stability and the strength of the state as a whole and decreasing trust and cooperation, rather than strengthening them as federalism normally does.

In other words, federalism is essential in accommodating group claims, but it should be seen as a tool (also) for territorial and not (only) for ethno-national self-government, and it should be inclusive of all diversities of society rather than promoting its alleged homogeneity. If only the ethnic element comes to the fore, then the numerous other chances that federalism offers as positive tool for governance get lost and the potential of federalism not only is not used to its entirety, but can produce disintegration rather than integration, which is historically its main goal and its main strength.

WE MUST MASTER THE CHALLENGES OF PEACE BETTER THAN THOSE OF WAR



Robert Mood
Retired Lieutenant General
Former President Norwegian Red Cross

While witnessing the physical destruction in Ukraine it might be tempting to conclude that modern wars are primarily about weapons, equipment, and destruction. However, the leadership of president Zelensky and heroic collective resistance of Ukrainians confirm that, in line with military philosophy, war is still a duel among human wills. The effect of destruction on morale, is more important than the destruction in itself.

Generals that have seen the consequences of war generally advice against it, while politicians seek to demonstrate vigour and determination. The cruelty of war related not least to civilians, as we have seen in the Balkans, Syria, Yemen end elsewhere leaves a lasting impression. No words written on paper - or spoken - can express the drama and suffering of innocent people.

We should also remember that inside each of the Russian vehicles outsides of Kyiev, 65 km long, there were young boys. Scared, afraid, confused, tired, and hungry. War is about human beings.

While our political leaders wage war by economic and diplomatic means and fuel its flames with shipments of modern weapons, while trying to avoid any sacrifice at home, we must remember that few - if any - conflicts have a purely military solution. Not to forget that it is most often harder to win the peace, than to win the war.

We tend to forget that our political leaders are human beings too. They may be taken by hybris when they feel invincible, or demand revenge when wounded. As did US presidents after the Cold War and 9/11. Sometimes political leaders resemble little boys with hurt feelings and inferiority complexes, rather than wise leaders with a humble approach to their position and the immense responsibility they carry on behalf of us all.

After “winning” the cold war western politicians failed to establish an inclusive security architecture in Europe. Later they led first Georgia, then Ukraine to believe that they would be welcomed speedily into NATO and the EU, while

they at the same time closed their ears, pretended not to hear, the concerns and warnings from Moscow. Western leaders were so entangled in their popularity contests, and in love with their own rather shallow rethoric that they were unable and/or unwilling to fathom that not only for Russia, but for the majority of the world the double standards were obvious.

Interventions with economic and military means had become the western norm for international behaviour, while their violations of international law when killing with drones across state lines or torturing prisoners were defended as necessary in order to protect civilians or help establish democracy. No leader were held responsible at the International Criminal Court (ICC). The economic and military power of the US made most European leaders into obedient followers, competing for their friendship, while ignoring the old truth that the US has no friends, only self-interests.

While these double standards do not justify the invasion of Ukraine, that hopefully will have several Russian leaders end up prosecuted in the ICC, it should be a serious wake up call and lesson to all of us. The atrocities in Ukraine have sent the major challenges of our time; climate change, destruction of nature, the continuing pandemic, as well as the millions that starve at the horn of Africa into the shadows while a nuclear exchange come closer. We are fighting a meaningless war that should have been prevented.

We need to accept that struggle for domination, however well intended, is destructive and dangerous. That our self-appointed role as judge and juror over any other system than our own struggling liberal democracies, ruled by the market more than its voters, will lead to even larger confrontations. We need to vitalice democracy and establish the interests of mankind as our only leading beacon. To confront any aggression, destruction of nature, and violation of international law. Neither the US, nor China or Russia have any right to intervene in order to replace other regimes. Only the people own that right.

We need to hold our own leaders and ourselves responsible before we claim the right to set standards for others. We need to reform the UN, or replace it with an organisation that is representative for the world today rather than yesterdays. We need to understand that the world looks very different from Washington, Moscow, New Delhi, Beijing, Cairo, Teheran, Johannesburg, Rio de Janeiro and Oslo and that neither world view earned the right to be the one and only. The only viable view is one that accepts differences and search for common ground, while confronting aggression of any kind.

When moving forward, whether it will come in five years, after terrible destruction on an even larger scale or next month as a result of diplomatic efforts and wise leadership we do well in remembering the lessons that

neither hybris nor revenge or humiliation constitute a solid foundation upon which we will win a better peace.

CRITICAL CHALLENGES FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION



Kyriakos Revelas
Former EU official, Brussels

Three months after the Russian aggression against Ukraine, with human suffering and material destruction unthinkable before 24 February, we are left with a *de facto* stalemate on the battle field and no signs of a way out any time soon. Humanitarian concerns and compelling political logic require that absolute priority should be given to avoid further escalation, agree a ceasefire and conduct negotiations for a settlement. A prolongation of the armed conflict is not in the interest of those directly involved and would further destabilize the entire European continent with far reaching consequences. Yet, a protracted war and/or another frozen conflict in the periphery of Russia cannot be ruled out.

Could the war have been averted? How did the EU and the West react? What needs to be done? The fact is that warnings and intensive diplomatic activity immediately preceding the aggression have failed to avoid the war. The EU reaction (in concert with the US) was swift, massive and innovative, including unprecedented economic sanctions, purchase and delivery of weapons to Ukraine, hosting of over 4 million refugees, intensified efforts to reduce energy dependency from Russia as well as examining the accession candidature of Ukraine (also of Moldova and Georgia). A united front of the international community against the Russian aggression needs to be maintained; however, several countries, albeit for different reasons, do not follow the economic sanctions imposed by the West; and it will be increasingly difficult to maintain the unity the longer the war lasts given that the economic impact varies between the sanctions imposing countries, in particular related to availability and skyrocketing prices of energy, as well as the ramifications of large numbers of refugees and social unrest in poor countries because of rising food prices / food insecurity.

While the massive delivery of weapons is justified in supporting Ukraine to defend itself, they risk prolonging the conflict unless there is a consistent commitment from all sides to reach a settlement safeguarding the independence and integrity of Ukraine and stability in the broader region. The conflict could become yet another proxy war fuelled by arms deliveries, raising questions of prestige of the great powers involved and possibly leading

to destabilisation in other regions. These are real dilemmas as demonstrated in military campaigns in recent decades. Furthermore, while the nuclear risk might be limited for the moment, it cannot be excluded altogether as a step of further escalation. Ultimately, establishing a functioning relation with the Russian Federation must be a priority for the EU and for the international community, to avoid a paralysis of the UN system and disrupting the cooperation on many crucial global issues; and this irrespective of internal changes in Russia.

Beyond these important questions from a global perspective, a thorough reflection is particularly needed in and for the EU. The war in Ukraine will have a lasting impact on European security and the international system. It is therefore essential for Europeans to take active part in efforts for a settlement. And to reconsider fundamental issues about the EU external action and way of functioning.

European challenges

The traditional view of the EU as a peace project crucially relates to the establishment of an internal legal order (direct application and the primacy of EU law and the rule of law enforced by the EU Court of Justice). While the term international law might suggest the existence of an international legal order, the reality of international politics is that it is deprived of effective means of enforcement available to the EU. Thus, power still dominates the course of international politics; it is a rather long shot for all international actors to reach an agreement to abide by the norms and procedures of international law. This qualitative difference between internal and international legal order implies that the natural preference of the EU for a rules-based order and multilateralism cannot be taken for granted. Instead, the EU as an international actor should take geopolitical realities as a starting point in its external action (when defending its values and promoting its vital interests), while in parallel pursuing, together with like-minded countries, its efforts for the consolidation of a rules-based multilateral system.

The international system has moved from bipolarity during the Cold War to the so-called unipolar moment with US hegemony in the 1990s, followed by an emerging multipolar system with the US, China, Russia, India and the EU as the main poles; currently there are tendencies towards a new bipolarity around the US and China. The growing assertiveness of China under Xi Jinping and its aggressiveness in relation to the pandemic have contributed to this trend, as have the renewed claim of the US for global leadership, fuelled by polarised domestic politics and the fear of losing the race for technological supremacy. What risks giving this rivalry the character of a new Cold War is, in addition to nuclear arms, the tendency to ideologization, in the sense of the two blocks representing, respectively, democracies *versus* autocracies (according to the US) or formal democracy *versus* democracy working for the

people (according to China). International relations should be based on rational choices referring to interests and forms of cooperation and not on ideology which risks mobilising states to 'crusades' for regime change in other countries, leading to conflicts.

The US understandably want to rally the EU and other Western countries behind them in their antagonism with China, Russia being effectively pushed into that same camp. For the EU it is imperative that, while defending its own, Western values, it strives to be a paragon of stability, reason and measure in this new regional and international geopolitical upheaval; the EU should work against sleepwalking into a new global bloc-to-bloc confrontation which would be contrary to its ambition for peaceful international relations. This does not imply necessarily that the transatlantic partners will be drifting apart; it all depends on the degree of commonality of the EU and US foreign policy choices. The EU should, on an equal footing and in close cooperation with the US (and other NATO allies), work towards forging a new, inclusive framework for the European security architecture reflecting its own needs and preferences. The EU should also avoid being held co-responsible in other parts of the world for ill-conceived US policies. The democratic principle must always be respected, EU citizens must fully back the choices made; when siding with the US, EU external action must be democratically legitimised. This latter condition is, however, difficult to achieve as long as the EU crucially depends on US protection for its security; this is the reason why the EU taking care for its own security is foremost a democratic requirement.

In the multipolar system the EU does not represent one of several poles by its very existence. Only with a high degree of internal cohesion and a sense of common purpose will the member states collectively and the EU as an entity qualify as one of the poles of the international system. This is what is meant by the expression strategic autonomy introduced in recent years by French President Macron. Strategic autonomy presupposes the political will of member states to create the conditions for European sovereignty, in other words decisions by and for the Europeans themselves. Unlike earlier assumptions that have driven European integration over several decades, economic integration does not automatically lead to political integration. Many elected national leaders understand the need to overcome divergencies stemming from particular and short-term preferences in order to be able to focus on the big picture, namely the shared values and common interests, and that only together they can be confident to achieve them. Having said that, the EU assets and strengths built over time in terms of economic integration can and must be used strategically, which means that they must be put in the service of common objectives defined by the EU values and interests. The single European market, the common currency, research and technology as well as soft power must all serve the common purpose. In addition, effective defence cooperation in both capabilities and operations must be further developed; reducing fragmentation and spending more

together on defence will enhance the potential and the credibility of EU external action. The appropriate institutional adaptations must be agreed to this effect.

To sum up, the war in Ukraine is not only a stark reminder but underscores the urgency for the EU to act in accordance with the common values and vital interests of Europeans. First priority must be given to an early ceasefire and a negotiated peace settlement of the ongoing conflict; followed by efforts to ensure lasting stability and cooperation in the common neighbourhood of EU and Russia, also taking into account lessons from the so-called frozen conflicts.¹ On the other hand, the EU actors, member states and institutions, can no longer postpone *ad infinitum* important discussions and decisions which are crucial for the EU. These decisions concern the internal cohesion with mutual commitment and solidarity, effective decision-making and the democratic underpinning of the EU system of governance. The Conference on the future of Europe concluded on 9 May clearly indicates that European citizens would strongly support such course of action by the political elites.

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¹ The tension between self-determination of peoples and territorial integrity of states was addressed by the so-called Badinter criteria based on borders which had been designed in the communist federations of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia; this has served perhaps a purpose when the two federations disintegrated but did not prevent conflicts resurfacing in many regions. The EU could take the initiative for establishing an agreed international procedure to prevent in future this tension turning into a conflict.

HOW THE WAR IN UKRAINE MAY END - OR NOT



Klaus Larres

Richard M. Krasno Distinguished Professor of History and International Affairs at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA. He also is the director of the Krasno Global Affairs and Business Council. www.klauslarres.org

Russia's war against Ukraine is still continuing. The war may yet even escalate further and draw in some of the neighboring countries, such as Moldova and others. Russian President Putin may also once again try to take the war to Kiev and western Ukraine, if he manages to conquer eastern Ukraine and the wider Donbas area. But one aspect has already become clear in the months that have followed Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022: Putin has badly miscalculated regarding his entire war strategy. It is thus unlikely that an end of the war in Ukraine can be expected any time soon.

Putin's Miscalculation

Russia's military capabilities are much less formidable than both Putin and the West assumed while Ukraine's willpower and military skills to resist the Russian onslaught have proven to be much stronger than assumed. Russia, after all, has been unable to conquer the Ukrainian capital Kiev and much of the surrounding area and has thus re-focused its war effort on eastern Ukraine, at least for the time being. Thus, the military strategy of Putin and his military command have turned out to be seriously flawed. Desertions, obstruction and a general lack of professionalism and discipline among Russia's soldiers have contributed to this and undermined the Russian war effort.

Moreover, both the NATO alliance and the EU have become much more united and determined to resist Russia's aggression than many analysts predicted. In fact, the heavy weapons which Ukraine has received from the US and some other western countries have proven to be highly effective in preventing Russia's conquest of most of Ukraine. The massive western sanctions imposed on Ukraine have also seriously undermined the Russian economy and the country's warfare capabilities.

The above factors will profoundly affect the settlement and aftermath of the war as Russia is in a much weaker position than was envisaged by Putin when he embarked on the war. He quickly had to abandon his *blitzkrieg* strategy

and instead became involved in a protracted war with a formidable enemy, supported by the western alliance, which has greatly damaged and weakened Russia's image and strength in global politics.

How the War in Ukraine May End – Four Options:

Regarding the end of the war in Ukraine there are essentially four options, with the last one being the mostly likely outcome in my view:

1. There might be regime change in the Kremlin due to the development of a revolutionary movement in the streets of Moscow, St. Petersburg and elsewhere as a consequence of the worsening military and above all economic situation in Russia (or in the case of Putin's fatal illness or incapacity). On the model of the 1918 Brest-Litovsk peace agreement with Germany during World War I, Putin's successor(s) would then perhaps sue for peace and try to obtain the best deal available in the context of a possibly looming defeat in the war against Ukraine. At present, however, such a scenario appears to be highly unlikely.
2. The war will continue until Putin feels he has achieved at least some of his war objectives and is prepared to proclaim victory. This would still require the readiness of Ukraine to join Russia at ceasefire negotiations, which may or may not be brought about with the help of an international mediator such as Turkey or another country. Unless strongly pressured by the US or having being decisively militarily weakened, it is highly doubtful that the Zelensky government in Kiev would agree to an armistice on such a basis. After all, in all likelihood it would mean the division of the country and the annexation of much of eastern Ukraine by Russia. Zelensky would hardly survive politically the subsequent referendum the Ukrainian President has promised to enable the Ukrainian people to either accept or reject any ceasefire agreement with Russia.
3. Both sides will continue to fight until they are both utterly exhausted and agree to an armistice along the lines of the pre-February 2022 territorial situation in Ukraine. Such a situation may be based on the model of the armistice in the Korean war which was eventually signed on 27 July 1953. It re-confirmed the 38th parallel as the demarcation line between the two Korean states prior to the North Korean invasion of South Korea in late June 1950.
4. The war will not end properly for a long time to come. While in due course military action – not least due to the exhaustion of and economic consequences for both sides – will be tuned down to some extent, brutal skirmishes and even outright battles will frequently flare

up in the wider Donbas region. In general, there will be a military stalemate. Moreover, this situation will be accompanied by a long drawn-out guerilla war in eastern Ukraine. Thus, Ukraine will remain in a state of precarious instability and economic weakness for a prolonged period of time. This will also have highly negative political and economic consequences for Ukraine's neighboring countries. The whole region will thus remain quite unstable and will not return to political and economic stability and an externally secure environment for a long time. This appears to be the most probable scenario.

(The question of the use of tactical nuclear weapons and its consequences, if Putin were pushed into a corner and about to lose the war decisively – though an unlikely result in my view - cannot be addressed here; this requires a separate article).

The Future of European Security and the Transatlantic Alliance

In any case, the above means that in particular eastern Europe - though in fact the entire European continent - will be exposed to a prolonged period of political, economic and military instability. Indirectly Putin and Russia would thus have achieved one of their major long-standing objectives.

While it can be expected that NATO will be expanded further beyond Finland and Sweden and might well become ready to include Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and perhaps even some of the Balkan states, Europe would be faced with a politically and economically volatile Russia and certainly with a continuing Russian security threat for an extended period of time.

Fissures and tension among EU states about the continuation of sanctions on Russia, the costly delivery of military and economic aid to Ukraine and the disputed energy question, to name but a few controversial issues, can be expected to become more contentious than they have been so far. The EU will thus become much less united and stable than has been the case during the war.

The question would also arise whether or not the US - in particular in the post-Biden years - would be prepared to continue to cover the majority of the costs for Ukrainian and European security. If the US were to become more skeptical about whether or not Washington should remain to be so deeply and decisively involved in European security matters and would probably expect the Europeans to do significantly more than hitherto, this would lead to further volatility and tension on the European continent as well as within NATO and the entire transatlantic alliance. It goes without saying that Russia and also China would attempt to exploit the rising friction within the EU and in transatlantic relations to their own advantage.

Outlook

In the mid- to long-run we can expect a prolonged period of volatility in Europe and rising tension among the transatlantic partners. As seldom before the future and fate of the European continent appears to depend to a high degree on policymakers and parliamentary representatives to skillfully maneuver between these conflicting fault lines. Simultaneously they will have no choice but to attempt to de-escalate the tense situation with Russia and on the ground in Ukraine as much as possible. Perhaps the only other period of time in recent history when politicians were exposed to similar profound challenges were the late 1930s. Let's hope western leaders will do a lot better this time round.

THE PERIL FROM WITHIN. THE DANGEROUSLY INCOMPETENT EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP



*Soteris Kattos PhD
Political Sociology, Senior Fellow CCEIA*

I do not intend to attempt any novel ideas to add to the discussion on who is to blame for the war in Ukraine.

However the recent historical developments in Europe, and here I take the collapse of the Soviet Union as a point of analytical reference to map out the political contour within which the West, and its military agency NATO, failed to address Russia's geostrategic security needs. In my view the West was not willing to give due consideration to collective security. The West as a matter of fact did not honor assurances given to the Soviet leadership by previous US administrations that no eastward NATO expansion was intended to upset Russia's security concerns; thus sending a clear political message to Russia that its geostrategic security will be observed and respected.

Instead, the containment of Russia as a strategic policy resurfaced once again as the modus operandi by the West. Nevertheless European energy needs provided an unprecedented impetus of massive investments in infrastructure for Russian fossil fuel and natural gas to address the energy needs of the European economy. Germany, in bilateral consultations with Russia, moved a step further to address its own economic imperative and energy constraints as the largest European economy. In a joint venture with Russia they put in place in North Sea, Nord Stream 2 to facilitate uninterruptedly the supply of energy directly to the German economy.

These developments slowly and gradually informed the debate in inner Western elitist circles and 'refuge centres of power' regarding European strategic dependence on Russian energy. These western political factions, e.g., European Institutions which engage in clandestine consultations with powerful private interests, contributed to the elevation of climatic change as the most important issue, not only of the European political agenda but globally as well.

Therefore in order to gain an insight on current developments on the European geostrategic landscape, it is necessary to adequately comprehend the narrative of climate change. First and foremost, it requires analytic competence to understand the political framework within which the rationale of the narrative unfolds. When public reference to climate change is made, it implies an equilibrium among three parameters; namely: Biology, the Natural Environment and a Social system of how to manage social development. In the broad sense of a cultural value system these parameters simply constitute the survival mechanism of planet earth.

Within the WTO framework, and particularly Article XXIV which came into effect in 1995, international trade is guided by the principle of the least restrictive barriers in order for global economic activity to operate with the minimum of protectionism. Therefore, environmental protection, labor rights, health issues pertaining to the labor process are severely compromised. Control mechanisms regarding environmental pollution are rudimentary. It is not accidental that deforestation of the Amazon region covers an area roughly equal to that of Greece: 140.000km², in the name of economic growth.

The International Community has demonstrated unprecedented tolerance on an issue that is the earth's 'Green Lung'. Instead of taking collective action against the Brazilian Government, all of a sudden the conventional fossil fuel combustion engine is demonized.

In 2009 in Pittsburgh, 2015 in Paris, 2021 in Glasgow, in all these Conferences on the Environment a concerted effort by vested economic interests to promote the electric car and generally the battery as an alternative to the conventional engine and not only, has been intensely promoted.

Tesla and its founder Mr. Musk is envisaging the replacement of hydrocarbons by 100 gigantic factories producing batteries supposedly to achieve energy sustainability. It is apparent that reason and rationality have been replaced by schizophrenic and arrogant threats, if not systematic attacks by the European political leadership at the highest level. They don't purposely get into details of this perilous paradigm change. It is Politically, economically and socially, a destabilizing project in the name of the circular economy and sustainability. A project that fails on both counts.

The European political leadership in an effort to persuade European society is resorting to idiotic, non sensical arguments. Yet arguments that entail tremendous risks for the cultural continuity of European civilization. In this effort they employ the Russian threat to implement these insane proposals. It has already been reported that the vice president of the European Commission Mrs. Vestager suggested to European society to avoid frequent bathing where as Mrs. Von der Leyen, suggested to lower the thermostat of households central heating systems to limit the dependency on Russian oil

and thus punishing Putin. In fact, they urge Europeans to re-socialize themselves to camping practices.

Concluding this short article, a new global system is in the making at the expense of the well-meant interests of European society. Perhaps it is not far fetched a claim, the transition to this perverted economic system requires the massive pauperization of people. And in this transitory stage the war with Russia is utilized as a the catalyst of this surreal European predicament. Putin or any Putin for that matter would have to be invented.

GREAT POWER HEGEMONISM AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS REFLECTIONS ON RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE



Michalis Kontos
Department of Politics and Governance
University of Nicosia

Russia's invasion of Ukraine constitutes the most resounding event of 2022 and, most likely, it will define international politics and relations among great powers for the years to come. One of its many interesting aspects is the debate regarding whether the war is a brutal expression of Putin's imperial vision or the outcome of NATO's eastern expansionism and Russia's subsequent geopolitical suffocation. Despite harsh disagreements on these two hypotheses, they might both be correct, but each one by itself is deficient. In terms of decision making, it might be President Putin's war but the flow of events that preceded directed Moscow's perceptions and options in such a way that the decision to start a war turned out to look like a rational choice. Whether Russia is to be blamed foremost is a question that looks pointless: Russia obviously breaches international law by violating the UN Charter (obligation to abstain from use of force and respect other countries' territorial integrity) and other well-established international norms (i.e., inviolability of borders, *uti possidetis* doctrine that urges for the preservation of colonial borders after independence etc). However, for political scientists, international responsibility of states is only a part of the overall debate. In such cases, they need to understand the deeper causes of conflicting attitudes and their repercussions at all levels of analysis, which suggests a colossal work. In this article I will not try to provide answers to these big questions. Instead, my main purpose is to contribute to the debate on the causes of the war in Ukraine by illuminating an aspect that has not gained that much attention: not how great powers react when perceiving foreign hegemonic encroachment in their surrounding area as direct security threat, but when they believe that their own hegemonic aspirations are jeopardized.

Great powers and hegemonism

As already said above, one of the flashpoints in Russia's relations with Ukraine and the West is NATO's enlargement eastwards after the end of the Cold War. President Putin's statements and speeches have made clear that Moscow does not approve this enlargement and, more importantly, the inclusion of Ukraine

in future enlargement waves, while he projects security concerns due to the West's expansion in Russia's backyard. Russia's moves in Ukraine, both in 2022 and in 2014, as well as the war with Georgia in 2008, are characterized by profound revisionism, a predisposition to undo "historic misfortunes" and deter further shrinkage of Russia's influence in its neighborhood. In fact, whether NATO's expansion has provoked Russian aggression is one of the most debated issues in international politics since 2014. In an interesting report, published in April 2022, *Foreign Affairs* magazine presented a survey asking around sixty experts whether NATO's expansion was a mistake. The majority disagreed with this hypothesis, but a significant number agreed (including prominent American scholars like J. J. Mearsheimer, S. M. Walt and C. Kupchan), which manifests its strong appeal. In this framework, experts have offered many potential explanations regarding how and why NATO's enlargement may have stimulated Russian aggression: homeland security considerations, Russia's alienation from Europe, formation of anti-Western perceptions etc.

As we cannot be certain how the line of motivation and decision making exactly goes, all these explanations seem theoretically valid. However, they are mostly inclined towards a specific underlying assumption: that Russia manifests revisionism because it fears potential losses. In my view, we should also examine an alternative assumption: that Russia fears potentially lost profit. An explanation stemming from this argument would relate with great powers' strategic reflexes, which are mainly stimulated by systemic developments (or perceptions of them). States may grow aggressive and revisionist when they believe that they are threatened. Furthermore, states generally tend to balance opponents who grow excessively powerful, especially when they see malign intentions on their part. Balancing acts may be either internal (by own means) or external (by creating alliances). Great powers though, apart from deterring aggressors, may also succumb to an expansionist temptation: when they believe that the overall distribution of power allows them to opt for hegemony, namely, to form a regional order that will let them set the rules of the game in their neighborhood, they will most probably do so. To reach this point (or to protect their favorable position afterwards), they are usually willing to take serious risks. This leap towards hegemony is what we may call "hegemonism". It constitutes a behavioral pattern that may be traced in great power security strategy and foreign policy objectives and, in bilateral terms, is usually exercised against resisting weaker actors whom the revisionist great power attempts to influence or to subjugate.

For example, the United States declared the Monroe Doctrine in 1815 as a version of neutral foreign policy with mainly defensive purposes. During the 19th century though, the United States grew economically and expanded territorially throughout North America, thus becoming the most powerful state in the Western Hemisphere (and soon, in the whole world).

Unchallenged and safe from foreign intervention (especially after its victory in the Spanish-American war in 1898), Washington transformed the Monroe Doctrine from a policy of neutrality to one of intervention in other American states' domestic affairs, with the Platt Amendment (1901) and the Roosevelt Corollary (1904). This new, hegemonic version of the Monroe Doctrine provided a solid base of legitimacy for US interventionism in the Western Hemisphere in the early 20th century and, particularly, during the Cold War era. Indicatively, whenever a communist government was taking over in Central America, Washington would perceive this as a form of Soviet expansion in the Western Hemisphere and, therefore, intervene to restore regional order and protect US regional hegemony. The Johnson Doctrine, enunciated in 1965 after US invasion in the Dominican Republic, constitutes the most explicit form of this hegemonic strategy. Tiny states like the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua or Grenada were not qualified to threaten US security. It was Washington's urgency to protect US hegemony in the Western Hemisphere that armed Washington's hand against its lilliput neighbors.

Another example (*mutatis mutandis*) is Turkey's vehement reaction against Cyprus' purchase of an advanced anti-aircraft system in 1996. Back then, Turkey threatened to use military force in case Cyprus received the S-300 surface-to-air missiles, which it had ordered from Russia. Turkey's ultimatum eventually created a sense of urgency with international impact, which became evident by the concerted pressure exercised by several western governments on Nicosia, requesting the cancellation of the Russian missiles' deployment in Cyprus. Turkey's coercive diplomacy succeeded in enforcing Ankara's will, as the Cypriot government, following Greece's strong recommendation, decided in December 1998 to comply and send the S-300 system to Crete, instead of its initially scheduled deployment in Cyprus. The S-300 is a defensive system, and its possession could not pose any credible threat against Turkey's security. Neither did the overall power equilibrium excuse Ankara's reaction to the S-300 purchase based on security considerations. Instead, Turkey's resoluteness to retain its overwhelming air supremacy, which safeguards its hegemonic preponderance over Cyprus, and maintain the diplomatic advantage that derives from it, provides a better explanation of Ankara's true motives.

Russian hegemonic aspirations and the perils of overextension

Russia's reaction to NATO's expansion came at a time when Russia was truly able to react, following a period of weakness and retreat after the end of the Cold War. The war in Georgia, the annexation of Crimea and, particularly, the invasion of Ukraine could be interpreted as three consecutive steps aiming to upgrade Moscow's regional influence to a hegemonic extend. We could also place other moves in the same context of analysis, like systematic efforts to increase the influence of Moscow's patriarchate in the post-Soviet world and beyond. Furthermore, Russia's hegemonism in Ukraine reveals an escalating

pattern: while in 2014 Russia achieved the annexation of Crimea through hybrid means and indirect military intervention, in 2022 it preferred overt military invasion. This is probably the clearer indicator of growing hegemonism. Like Washington in the early 20th century, Moscow's strategic moves display a self-perception of upgraded regional status. Moreover, like Washington during the Cold War and Ankara in mid-90s, Moscow manifests its willingness to use force to preserve and enlarge its comparative advantage. The trouble with this choice though is that great powers often make self-defeating mistakes in times of high self-esteem. Napoleonic France and Nazi Germany provide the most characteristic examples. This usually happens because overwhelming hegemonic moves may raise concerns among the overextending power's opponents and urge them to unite against it. Furthermore, their cost may exceed original estimations, while exit options could inflict critical damage to the aggressor's great power prestige and, therefore, make otherwise unthinkable options (i.e., use of nuclear weapons) more attractive. In a less terrifying (and most probable) scenario, such moves could trigger a long-term spiral of great power tensions that could damage all parties involved. Unfortunately, in great power politics, hegemonism often goes hand in hand with violence, overextension, economic crises, and human suffering.

Editorial Team: Andreas Theophanous (Editor)
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Cyprus Center for European and International Affairs (CCEIA)
University of Nicosia

Makedonitissis 46, CY-2417, Engomi, Cyprus

P.O. Box 2405, CY-1700 Nicosia, Cyprus

T: +357 22841600 F: +357 22357964

E: cceia@unic.ac.cy

W: <http://cceia.unic.ac.cy> www.emgr.unic.ac.cy

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