

**LEPL - DAVID AGHMASHENEBELI
NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY OF GEORGIA**



**THE NEW REALITY OF EUROPEAN SECURITY AFTER
THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR**



INTERNATIONAL COLLECTION OF PAPERS OF THE STUDENT CONFERENCE

GORI, 2023

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Content

The Importance of South Caucasian Energy Corridor after Russo-Ukrainian War of 2022 Giorgi Tavartkiladze	7
Successful Practice of Implementing Finland’s Defence Priorities Against the Backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine War-Capacity Building and NATO Membership Tamar Zagashvili	13
New momentum for NATO open door policy, the importance of eastern enlargement for the security of Europe Captain Giorgi Jgushia	18
“Strategic Narratives in the Background of the Russia-Ukraine War and the Role and Impact of Information Operations in the New Reality of European Security” Salome Melkadze	23
The New World Political Order and Georgia Lieutenant Colonel Giorgi Toidze	27
The Importance Of Strategic Communication Against The Backdrop Of The Russia-Ukraine War In The Context Of Information Warfare And The Existence Of A Cyber Security Policy Irakli Oniani	32
Prerequisites of Russo-Ukrainian War, Present Situation and Foreseeable Unfolding of Processes Lieutenant Shota Gabisonia	37
The Implications of the Russia-Ukraine War on Transatlantic Relations Sophio Chuntishvili	42
The Development of the “Middle Corridor” Parallel to the War between Russia and Ukraine Major Besarion Sigunava	48
“Rashism” - the Myth, or the New Severe, Esoteric Challenge for European Security? Colonel Shalva Chubidze	52
European Foreign and Security Policy Challenges During the Russia-Ukraine War Major Gela Kizikelashvili, Nikoloz Samkharadze	59
Cybersecurity in the Age of AI: Challenges and Opportunities Tamar Areshidze	63
The Future of European Security after Russia-Ukraine War Lieutenant Davit Koberidze	70
Russia’s Eurasian Policy in The Context of the Russia-Ukraine War Zurab Kvetenadze, Salome Gogeshvili	74
New World Order and Georgia Lieutenant Colonel Simon Tsiklauri	79
“New Reality of European Security After the Russia-Ukraine War” Przemysław Kidoń	82
Enhancing NATO’s Forward Presence in the East a Qualitative Analysis Maj. Lisman Marian	86
“New Reality of European Security After the Russia-Ukraine War” Maciej Osiński	94

The Importance of South Caucasian Energy Corridor after Russo-Ukrainian War of 2022

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Abstract

Against the background of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and its Green Deal initiative, EU, one of the biggest energy markets in the world is seeking to diversify both the supply chains and the type of energy it consumes. Eventually, the resources of Caspian basin is becoming more and more important, and the route it shall take to reach Europe as well. The South Caucasian energy corridor is relevant not only due to the transit potential, but for the untamed renewable green energy it may produce from sun, wind and waterways. The current capacity of Southern Gas Corridor could be supplemented by additional gas from Azerbaijan or Turkmenistan, but may also be overshadowed by the Black Sea submarine cable that could provide Europe with electricity produced in Caucasus. To comprehend the opportunities of the ongoing processes, South Caucasus shall overcome certain political, economic and security obstacles. Search for the investments must be accompanied by guaranteeing the security of the route, especially vis a vis the Russian regime.

The prospects of South Caucasus role in energy security of the West is promising for three states of the region. Using the current capacity in a full and gradual realization of potential of producer and transporter may not be a game changer for the Europe, but will definitely boost region's economy and security to a whole new level.

Some of the impedances on the way could be solved by the region itself, by enhancing the political locus among them, making it more attractable for investments. Especially, the case for the EU investments could be the rule of law and human rights issues, since this is one of the priorities of the Union as well as something that South Caucasian states need to take care of more.

Keywords:

South Caucasus energy corridor, Southern Gas Corridor, Caspian energy, EU energy security.

Introduction

In the 21st century, the energy card became Kremlins most effective foreign policy tool along with its military threats. The fatal full scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 finally united Europe against Russian energy politics. Searching for alternatives, South Caucasus energy corridor became far more important than previously seen.

The first chapter of this Article reviews the history of the South Caucasus corridor, which some point played more important role in world affairs, but at another was almost completely forgotten. Some of the issues that hindered the development of the corridor after the dissolution of the USSR are still present. However, the new role of the region, as discussed in chapter two, gives much incentives for the stakeholders to overcome the obstacles. Chapter three analyzes the current capacity of South Caucasus corridor, which may contribute to the full realization of the transfer and production potential of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia in terms of traditional or renewable energy. In the final fourth chapter, the obstacles remaining at the agenda are considered. This mainly concerns the lack of infrastructure and security concerns originating from the aggressive Kremlin regime.

Main Part

The South Caucasus Corridor Before the Russo-Ukrainian War of 2022

From Nobel brothers to the Contract of the Century

The history of the South Caucasus energy corridor dates back as far as the late 19th century, when the first investments were made by the Rothschild family and famous Nobel brothers. By that period, the oil of Baku was produced massively and transported through modern day Azerbaijan and Georgia to the Georgian Black Sea port of Batumi. Rich in energy, Baku and the oil route attracted first the WWI participants and then the Nazi's in WWII, who ultimately failed to take control of the part of the Caspian Sea or even the South Caucasus.

It was that time when the Soviets decided to move their oil and gas production from Absheron peninsula to the North of the Caspian Sea. This diminished the importance and share in total oil/gas production of Azerbaijan. Though, shift started to appear on the horizon after the dissolution of the USSR.

Initially, Europe was restrained to engage in any solid business with the newly independent Caucasian states, which were perceived as a "Russian Backyard" back then. However, it was already in September 1994, when the "the Contract of the Century" was signed by the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR) and consortium of 11 oil companies of six countries, regarding the Azeri, Chirag and Gunashli oil fields. All of these fields oil were to be transported through the Southern Route Export Pipeline (Baku-Supsa) and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline.¹

An attempt for Diversification

The most important energy type transferred through the South Caucasus to the Europe is natural gas. There are the Eastern Gas Corridor from Russia, the Northern Gas Corridor from the Norway, the Western Gas Corridor from the North Africa and finally, the Southern Gas Corridor from the Caspian Sea which enters the European market from four directions.²

For Europe, energy security, defined by the International Energy as "an uninterrupted energy supply at a reasonable price and with environmental considerations"³ was threatened from the very beginning of the 20th century. In 2006, the Russian state-owned Gazprom and Ukraine had a dispute regarding the gas prices, which, eventually, led to the shutting off gas to Ukraine.⁴ As a result, since the Russian gas was transported to Europe through Ukraine, Eastern EU states such as Poland and Hungary were in a serious shortage of gas supply. That year marked the moment when EU directed its attention towards alternative providers of natural gas, eventually signing a memorandum of understanding with Azerbaijan.⁵

From Nabucco to TANAP and TAP

The "energy bullying" from Kremlin continued after 2006. In 2009, Gazprom again did shut off the gas to Ukraine, causing harsh effects on Czechia, Austria, Poland, Croatia and Slovakia.⁶ For that time, Southern Gas Corridor was already initiated by the European Commission, which aimed at supplying gas from the Caspian Sea

1 The contract of the century – a national strategy for success n.d, https://www.bp.com/en_az/azerbaijan/home/who-we-are/operations/projects/acg2/the-contract-of-the-century---a-national-strategy-for-success.html

2 Stefan Meister and Viëtor Marcel 2011, Meister, Stefan, and Viëtor Marcel. 2011. "The Southern Gas Corridor and the South Caucasus." South Caucasus – 20 Years of Independence, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung 335-353.

3 <https://www.iea.org/topics/energy-security> n.d

4 Sasha Slobodov 2022, "European Energy Security and Pipelines in the South Caucasus: Carriers of Energy and Conflict." Eurasiatique.

5 Sasha Slobodov 2022, "European Energy Security and Pipelines in the South Caucasus: Carriers of Energy and Conflict." Eurasiatique.

6 Sasha Slobodov 2022, "European Energy Security and Pipelines in the South Caucasus: Carriers of Energy and Conflict." Eurasiatique.

to Europe.⁷ This led to the Nabucco project, which was never to be realized. Initially, it was meant to tap not only the Caspian Sea resources, but on Iranian and Iraqi gas as well. However, the economic, political and security concerns affected the investors in addition to the US strategy that no pipeline should pass through Iran.⁸

Finally, in alternative, the TANAP pipeline of 1 814 km was initiated connecting the South Caucasus Pipeline to the TAP, which starting operation since 2018.⁹ The TAP, which is transferring gas from Turkey to Italy is operating since.¹⁰

The Old-New Role

European Union's dependence on Russian produced and transfer energy resources may have continued for much longer if not Kremlin's decision to launch a full scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. 24 of February 2022 became a turning point in many aspects of international relations, and the EU's energy policy was no exception. From that time, European states decided to once and for all cut the Eastern energy corridor coming from Russia. Up until that time, Russia supplied 40% of Europe's natural gas.¹¹ The need to abandon the Russian supplies was moreover strengthened when Kremlin once again played its energy card by cutting the provisions to Bulgaria and Poland on 26 of April 2022 referring to the refusal of these 'unfriendly states' to pay in Rubles.¹² The war on the one hand and continuous 'energy bullying' is a strong motivation for search of the alternative supplies. To that extent, the Southern Gas Corridor can once again get the attention from the West. Existing energy routes and infrastructure could be just a portion of the total potential of what Caucasus may transfer through it.

EU's energy policy however, is more complex than just the diversification of routes. In 2019, the EU Green Deal was presented, a policy aiming to make the Europe first climate neutral continent by 2050.¹³ The plan is to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions which could limit the global warming to some degree. While natural gas contains methane, a strong greenhouse gas, the EU bids to cut its dependency on it generally, not to speak about specific country origins. In this regard, the South Caucasus may play a crucial role as well. As the EU tries to switch to the green energy, the demand for electricity produced by renewables is going to grow gradually. Caucasus could be both the producer and corridor for the green energy altogether with gas and oil.

Current Capacity and Potential

Gas and Oil

Currently, South Caucasus's role in energy security is solely limited to production or transfer of oil and gas. Baku-Supsa, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipelines and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline and its expansion SCPX as the main infrastructure. The later, operating since 2006, has and being expanded in 2014, has a capacity of 24.5 bcma per year.¹⁴ The TANAP and TAP projects presently transfer 16.2 bcma and 10 bcma respectively.¹⁵ In 2022, Azerbaijan has exported 12 bcma to Europe, however, there infrastructure has a potential to increase to quantity of the TAP at least by 20 bcma per year by 2027,¹⁶ since the SCP and TANAP also have potential of transferring more than 30 bcma.¹⁷ This, is a significant rise for the Azerbaijan, but it offers not much of a replacement for Russian gas deliveries to Europe which amounted to around 146 bcma annually as for 2021.¹⁸

Even though, it is noteworthy, that Azerbaijan has estimated 1.3 trillion cubic meters of natural gas re-

7 Sophie Miniconi 2022, "Can the Southern Gas Corridor be a solution to Europe's Energy Crisis?" Rondeli Foundation – Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (Rondeli Foundation – Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies) 4-5.

8 Mamuka Komakhia 2018, "The "New Great Game" in Central Asia: Struggle for the Transportation of Caspian Energy Resources." Expert Opinion, 8.

9 Sophie Miniconi 2022, "Can the Southern Gas Corridor be a solution to Europe's Energy Crisis?" Rondeli Foundation – Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (Rondeli Foundation – Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies) 4-5.

10 Sophie Miniconi 2022 "Can the Southern Gas Corridor be a solution to Europe's Energy Crisis?" Rondeli Foundation – Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (Rondeli Foundation – Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies) 4-5.

11 Yeghia Tashjian 2022, Tashjian, Yeghia. 2022. „The South Caucasus and the "Great Game" of Energy Security.“ The Armenian Weekly.

12 Yeghia Tashjian 2022, Tashjian, Yeghia. 2022. „The South Caucasus and the "Great Game" of Energy Security.“ The Armenian Weekly.

13 Anne Lapierre and Katie McDougall 2021, Lapierre, Anne, Katie McDougall. 2021. „The EU Green Deal explained.“ Norton Rose Fulbright.

14 n.d. South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP). <https://www.sgc.az/en/project/scp>. [26.11.2023]

15 TANAP in Numbers n.d.

16 Shamar Hajiyev, and Giorgi Mukhigulashvili 2023, Hajiyev, Shamar, and Mukhigulashvili Giorgi. 2023. „Azerbaijan-Georgia Partnership as a Key for EU's Long-term Energy Security.“ Warsaw Institute.

17 TAP Starts Transporting First Gas 2022, TANAP in Numbers. <https://www.tanap.com/sayilarla-tanap>. [26.11.2023]

18 Szymon Kardaś 2023, Kardaś, Szymon. 2023. "Own goal: How Russia's gas war has backfired." European Council on Foreign Relations.

serves¹⁹ while Turkmenistan is in top 5 countries of worlds' largest natural gas deposit owners.²⁰ This potential could be tapped in two ways. One way is to transfer the gas to Europe through existing or future pipelines. Another option is the AGRI project, which stands for Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania Interconnector project. It envisages transportation of Azeri and Central Asian gas through Georgia where the gas will be liquefied. After transportation via Black Sea, regasification under the project shall occur in Romania.²¹ In any case, setting up of a Trans Caspian pipeline is required, directing Caspian or Turkmen gas to West through Caucasus. Since the Chinese market for Turkmen gas lately has been taken over by the Russian gas, such kind of a project might seem more and more important for Turkmenistan.

Except the natural gas, the Central Asian oil is being transported from Kazakhstan to Europe through Batumi Port. The state owned KazTransOil, which owns Batumi oil terminal, plans to increase the load through GEO-AZ rail system, which would allow 1.5 million tons of petrol to be exported by that route.²²

Green Energy

On 17 December 2022, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Romania and Hungary signed an Agreement on Strategic Partnership in the Field of Green Energy Development and Transmission. The main topic of the agreement is 1100 km long submarine cable stretching between the shores of Georgia and Romania²³ (Kubiak 2023). The cable will transfer electricity from Azerbaijan and Georgia to Europe, additionally strengthening EU's energy independence in line with its Green Deal policy. The importance of the event for the Union was highlighted by Ursula von der Leyen's attendance and speech at the signing ceremony of the agreement.²⁴ EU also decided to allocate 2.3 Euro in support of the said project.²⁵

Green, renewable energy is not something that South Caucasus is producing for export right now. However, there is huge wind and sun energy potential in Armenia and Azerbaijan, whilst Georgia is famous for its still merely touched hydro energy. According to the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the country will produce around 3 GW of green energy by 2027, increasing it to 5 GW by 2030.²⁶

The ever growing energy market of EU will be in constant need of a diversified green energy. Even though South Caucasus does not offer much in that regards, the vast potential for green energy originating from reliable partner might already be in the minds of decision makers in the West.

Obstacles

The role of South Caucasus energy corridor seems to be re-emerging. In spite of that, there are still infrastructural, economic and political obstacles at hands, First and foremost, the lack of infrastructure does not allow critical amount of natural gas to be transported from South Caucasus to the Europe. At the same time, the consumption is rising each year in the region and Turkiye itself, leaving less gas available for further export. While natural gas represents 69% of Azerbaijan's total energy consumptions,²⁷ Georgia's demand is projected to increase by around 45% by 2030, according to the Georgian Gas Transportation Company.²⁸ This makes Trans Caspian pipeline no less important connectivity link than the one directed to the Europe.

Apart from the gas transportation infrastructure, production of green energy in Georgia, Azerbaijan or Armenia necessitates significant amount of investments as well. Potential interests could arise from the West or even from the gulf states, since recently huge Saudi investments in Azerbaijan's green energy was announced²⁹ (Murshud 2022).

19 International Energy Agency 2020, . "https://www.iea.org/topics/energy-security." *iea.org*. Accessed November 26, 2023. <https://www.iea.org/topics/energy-security>. Azerbaijan Energy Profile Report. International Energy Agency.

20 Mamuka Tsereteli 2023, The Strategic Value of Connectivity in Central. "The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst (The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst) 5.

21 Lidiya Parkhomchik, "Current Situation over the AGRI Project (Azerbaijan-Georgia-Romania Interconnector)." Eurasian Research Institute.

22 Mamuka Tsereteli 2023, „The Strategic Value of Connectivity in Central.“ The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst (The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst) 5.

23 Mateusz Kubiak, "Azerbaijan Set to Become a Green Energy Supplier to the EU." Eurasia Daily Monitor. 2023.

24 European Commission. 2022. Statement by President von der Leyen at the signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding for the development of the Black Sea Energy submarine cable. 17 December. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_22_7807. [26.11.2023]

25 Agenda.ge 2022 Agenda.ge. 2022. Georgia, Azerbaijan, Romania, Hungary sign Black Sea Submarine Electricity Cable deal. 17 December. <https://agenda.ge/en/news/2022/4925>. [26.11.2023]

26 Report.az 2023, Energy minister: Azerbaijan plans to realize more than 3 GW of green energy projects by 2027. 6 September. <https://report.az/en/energy/energy-minister-azerbaijan-plans-to-realize-more-than-3-gw-of-green-energy-projects-by-2027/>. [26.11.2023]

27 U.S. Energy Information Administration 2021. U.S. Energy Information Administration. 2021. Country Analysis Executive Summary: Azerbaijan . . Energy Information Administration.2021. "What is the European Green Deal?" The Economist.

28 Comersant.ge 2023, How does Georgia plan to increase production of electricity and thermal energy. 3 September. <https://comersant.ge/news/economic/rogor-gegnavs-saqartvelo-eleqtroenergiisa-da-tboenergiis-gamomushavebis-zrdas#:~:text=NECP%20%E1%83%A1%E1%83%AA%E1%83%94%E1%83%9C%E1%83%90%E1%83-A0%E1%83%98%E1%83%A1%20%E1%83%9B%E1%83%98%E1%83%AE%E1%83%94%E1%83%93%E1%83>. [26.11.2023]

29 Rena Murshud 2022. Saudi Arabia to invest in Azerbaijani energy sector. 21 December. <https://www.azernews.az/nation/203878.html>. [26.11.2023]

Security concerns are the toughest to solve. Decades long conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia has had a negative effect on region's economy and investment environment. However, positive signs for resolving the rivalry has been voiced from both sides. In October 2023, on a Tbilisi Silk Road Forum, Prime Minister Pashinyan stated his initiative Crossroads of Peace, which, even if not warmly welcomed by the counterparts, indicated a good prospect of setting the issues between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

On the other hand, problem of Russian military presence in occupied territories of Georgia as well across the Black Sea coastline of occupied Ukrainian territories does not seem to be resolved in a near future. This poses a critical threat to any project that might include Georgian or Black Sea territory. Hence, securing that perimeter militarily is of an utmost importance.

Conclusion

The prospects of South Caucasus role in energy security of the West is promising for three states of the region. Using the current capacity in a full and gradual realization of potential of producer and transporter may not be a game changer for the Europe, but will definitely boost region's economy and security to a whole new level.

Some of the impedances on the way could be solved by the region itself, by enhancing the political locus among them, making it more attractable for investments. Especially, the case for the EU investments could be the rule of law and human rights issues, since this is one of the priorities of the Union as well as something that South Caucasian states need to take care of more.

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Successful Practice of Implementing Finland's Defence Priorities Against the Backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine War-Capacity Building and NATO Membership

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to outline the prerequisites, opportunities, and actions needed for the successful implementation of defense priorities against the backdrop of the Russian Federation (RF)-Ukraine war, for such small countries that are bordering the RF and at the same time are active allies of the North Atlantic Alliance. The paper presents an overview of the changes in Finland's defense priorities and ways for their successful implementation. In particular, the country's active involvement in NATO peace operations and exercises, which first led to compatibility with the alliance, and then to its membership after the change of the security environment. In terms of the defense economy, attention is focused on the growth of the country's defense budget and the change in its priorities, which increased the military capabilities needed for deterrence and defense, in parallel with the disruption of the national economy amid the war. In this context that it is very important to understand the practices of those states that have successfully adapted their policies to the new reality. From this point of view, Finland's case is interesting, since the beginning of the RF-Ukraine war, it can be said that it has been successfully implementing a policy of both direct and broad containment. In particular, on April 4 of this year, the country officially joined the NATO, and at the same time, from 2022, it has been increasing its military capabilities more intensively.

The following document assesses the challenges and security environment that Finland faced after the RF's invasion in Ukraine. It also describes the country's path to joining the NATO and gives examples of a successful implementation of the defense economy, which maximized military potential.

Keywords:

Finland under NATO conditions; Finnish defense policy after the start of the Russian-Ukrainian war; Finnish defense priorities; Finnish Defense Economics; Finland's defense capabilities.

Introduction

Today, it is clear that current processes are leading to the confrontation between the two countries and are drastically changing the world order, therefore the countries have started to review their defense policies and change their priorities. After the full-scale invasion of the RF in Ukraine in February 2022, the world order has changed and the need for changes in the political and military map of Europe has emerged. Countries which had a border strip and trade-economic ties with the RF became especially vulnerable to threats. Despite the mentioned difficulties, the example of Finland clearly shows how the state adapts to new threats even in a difficult geopolitical situation, when, despite decades of neutrality, it deliberately and rationally develops its military capabilities. In turn, all this can be achieved through the formulation of priorities and the rational spending of the defense budget.

The paper aims to highlight the prerequisites, opportunities, and actions needed for the successful implementation of the defense priorities, for such small countries that are bordering the RF and at the same time are active allies of the NATO, using the example of Finland.

Main Part

Impact of the RF-Ukraine War on Finland's Security Environment and National Economy

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the RF has dramatically changed the security environment of its neighboring countries, and their futures have become increasingly uncertain and undesirable. In particular, since Ukraine's 44 million population and more than 200,000 active military personnel did not prove to be a deterrent factor to the Kremlin, there was a need to strengthen the measures necessary for the containment and defense policy of the small neighboring countries of the RF. The mentioned historical context is also sensitive for Finns because they are seeing many parallels between the actions taken by the RF in Ukraine and the events of 1939 when the Soviet troops invaded Finland to return them to "Historical Russia". Taking this into account, the attitude of the population has also changed, before the start of the war, 24% of the population was in favor of Finland joining the NATO, and after February 2022, this indicator reached 85%.¹

Against the background of the current processes, the prospects of the RF's neighbors and/or trade-economically related countries are weakening. Finland was no exception in this regard. In particular, after the start of the war, trade relations with the RF were cut off, and the level of inflation and uncertainty in economic forecasts increased. All this has affected the investment environment, production, and product prices.²

Finland and NATO: from Active Partnership to Membership

There have long been common values and almost thirty years of intensive cooperation between the NATO and Finland, although, before the RF-Ukraine war, Finland's priority was not a NATO membership. Throughout this period, Finland's values were based on the policy of military neutrality, and NATO, in turn, respected the country's values. Before joining, Finland was one of the most active partners of NATO and participated with its contingent in the missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Balkans. In particular, the close partnership between Finland and NATO began in 1994. Since the mentioned period, the country has joined the program "Partnership for Peace" and "Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council" (1997), which unites all allies and partner countries in the Euro-Atlantic space.³

The interaction between Finland and NATO has been beneficial for both sides, for Finland - in terms of capacity development and interoperability, and for NATO in terms of being a strong partner in peacekeeping operations. More specifically, Finland has been involved in alliance exercises in various infantry, engineering, naval, and air capacities, and at the same time has participated in the NATO Interoperability Platform since 2014. In 2017, with the support of NATO and the European Union, the Helsinki European Center focused on overcoming hybrid threats was established. In the same period, an agreement on cooperation in the field of cyber defense was signed, and Finnish specialists participated in pieces of training held in this field (so-called smart defense projects). Also, in 2001, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization officially recognized the International Center of the Finnish Defense Forces, which trains personnel employed in international organizations.⁴

1 M. Armstrong "How War in Ukraine Pushed Finland and Sweden Toward NATO", 2023. How War in Ukraine Pushed Finland and Sweden Toward NATO. <https://bit.ly/3FWdo2I> [12/11/2023]

2 Bank of Finland Bulletin "Forecast for the Finnish economy", Bank of Finland Bulletin. 2022. FORECAST FOR THE FINNISH ECONOMY. <https://bit.ly/3FVxUQT> [12/11/2023]

3 NATO "Relations with Finland", Ministry of Defence. 2023. Finland and NATO. https://www.defmin.fi/en/topical/finland_and_nato. [12/11/2023], NATO. 2023. Relations with Finland. <https://bit.ly/3SyihGH> [12/11/2023]

4 CIMIC Centre of Excellence "Visit of Finnish Defence Force International Centre", CIMIC Centre of Excellence . 2016. <https://www.cimic-coe.org/news/visit-of-finnish-defence-force-international-centre/>. [12/11/2023]

In addition to the abovementioned, Finland actively cooperated with NATO in regional security assessments, critical infrastructure protection, and dealing with the consequences of natural disasters in the Euro-Atlantic area. The country has been involved in joint programs, including the Science for Peace and Security (SPS), which is focused on the activities related to counterterrorism, cyber defense, chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear defense.⁵ Finland's participation in the DEXTER program, which develops an integrated system for the detection of explosives and firearms in public spaces, was also noteworthy.

Since the beginning of 2022, after the invasion of the RF in Ukraine, the change of the defense policy and adaptation to the new reality has been especially critical for Finland, as a neighboring state of the RF. Because by this time, the country already had all prerequisites and compatibility with NATO standards, on May 18, 2022, three months after the start of the war, Finland together with Sweden submitted an official application for membership of the alliance. After that, the negotiations ended at the NATO Madrid summit, all members of the alliance supported the accession, and the integration protocols of Finland and Sweden were signed the very next day, giving them the status of "invited". On April 4, 2023, Finland officially became a member state of NATO.

The security guarantees provided by the Article V may be considered the biggest benefit of joining NATO for Finland. Consequently, the country has much greater capabilities for deterrence and defense. On the other hand, for the North Atlantic Alliance, Finland's membership means the expansion of its territory and its approach to the Russian Federation, since the length of the border strip between the Russian Federation and Finland is 1340 km.⁶

The Growth of Finland's Defense Capabilities and the Impact of the RF-Ukraine war

Since the defense economy is derived from the national economy, the economic situation of Finland and the impact of the RF-Ukraine war should be discussed. As mentioned above, the ongoing processes in Ukraine have significantly weakened the prospects for sustainable development of the country's economy. Consequently, from 2021, the country had fewer resources, both for other areas and for the development of defense capabilities.⁷

To illustrate the connection between the defense budget and the threats facing the country, consider Finland's military spending from 1945 to the present. During the Cold War, Finland's defense budget represented 1.6% of GDP, and in 1990-1992 it increased to 1.9% (In this period, the increase was caused by the purchase of American F-18 combat aircraft). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, defense spending declined to 1.1% over the next 9 years. Also, the low rate (from 1.3% to 1.4%) was maintained until 2020. From 2021, after the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, the defense spending of Finland, the neighbor of the RF, reached 1.85%, and in 2022 - 1.96%.⁸

That being said, the defense budget, and thus the ability to develop capabilities, is closely dependent on the national economy. Since during the war and its aftermath, the economy of the countries experienced a significant crisis, it can be said that the growth of the defense potential is most successful in a time of peace. Accordingly, while there was a more or less stable environment in the region, Finland tried to implement a policy of deterrence by increasing its defense capabilities with less military expenditure. In 2012-2017, AGM-158 missiles were purchased from the USA, jet systems and Leopard 2A6 tanks from the Netherlands, and K9 self-propelled howitzers from South Korea.⁹

Defense economics supports the implementation of defense policy, which in turn derives from national security strategy. In the case of Finland, in terms of strengthening military capabilities, such priorities as upgrading defense systems, manpower reserve, international cooperation in the field of defense and others have been allocated.¹⁰ Accordingly, the country is trying to increase the defense budget and spend rationally to implement the mentioned priorities.

From 2022, a large share of the increased budget comes from the priorities that are written in the conceptual documents. In particular, after the RF-Ukraine war, a large part of the budget (27.8%) was allocated for the HX Program, which involves the replacement of "Hornets" (F/A-18 fighter-bombers) with American F-35s until

5 NATO "Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme: 2023 Open Call for Proposals", dox. 2023. NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme: 2023 Open Call for Proposals. <https://bit.ly/3uek5uo> [12/11/2023]

6 S. Baker, E. Snodgrass "Map shows how Russia's border with NATO more than doubles with Finland as a member". 2023. Map shows how Russia's border with NATO more than doubles with Finland as a member. <https://bit.ly/47arNnL> [12/11/2023]

7 Bank of Finland Bulletin "Russia's war in Ukraine is stifling Finland's economic recovery", Bank of Finland Bulletin. 2022. FORECAST FOR THE FINNISH ECONOMY. <https://bit.ly/3FVxUQT> [12/11/2023] 2022. Russia's war in Ukraine is stifling Finland's economic recovery. <https://www.bofbulletin.fi/en/2022/2/russia-s-war-in-ukraine-is-stifling-finland-s-economic-recovery/>. [12/11/2023]

8 CIA "The World Factbook", CIA . 2023. The World Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/finland/>. [12/11/2023]

9 Koivula Ossa, "War On The Rocks", Ossa H. Koivula T. 2022. War On The Rocks. <https://warontherocks.com/2022/05/what-would-finland-bring-to-the-table-for-nato/>. [12/11/2023]

10 Finnish Government "Government's Defence Report", Government's Defence Report. 2021. Finnish Government. <https://bit.ly/3MGqQeR> [12/11/2023]

2030. Based on the fact, that only 0.1% of the budget was allocated for the mentioned program in 2020, it can be said, that Finland increased the intensity of the implementation of the program after the war. This also indicates, that the priorities of the defense budget have changed, although spending a large sum of money would cause a delay in the development of other directions, therefore, in the following year (2022), more money (28.6%) was allocated for the mentioned program. In the same period, an increase was observed in salary expenses, which in 2020 was 14.9%, in 2021 - 15.4%, and in 2022 it was 15.5%. Since the additional expenses allocated from the budget for any one program imply a decrease in the financing of other areas, the Finnish defense allocated less money from the budget in 2021-2022 for the following directions: Maintenance of existing resources and other economic expenses.¹¹

Despite the abovementioned, there has been almost no change in Finland's defense spending in terms of reserve training. With a population of almost 6 million, Finland's defense forces employ approximately 8,000 military personnel and 4,000 civilians, distributed among the land, air, and naval forces.¹² In this regard, the country's defense economy is also interesting, since the low number of active military personnel means less expenditure on their salaries, equipment, training, food, etc. All this helps to redirect the saved financial resources to another priority of the country's security strategy - to strengthen the reserve. In particular, 20,000-22,000 people are retrained annually, and currently up to 900,000 people with the knowledge and skills needed in a war situation are enrolled in the reserve.¹³ Statistics published in December 2022, after the RF-Ukraine war, are also significant. According to the report, 82% of the population is ready to participate in military actions to defend their country in case of an attack.¹⁴

Although almost all of Finland's armaments are foreign, the defense industry, which consists of private companies producing communication systems, transporters, and protective equipment, also contributes to the development of military capabilities. They do not belong to the state, therefore they are not funded by the defense budget. It should be noted, that more than a half of the products are exported, therefore the income from the sale allows private companies modernization. Private companies operating in the defense industry can participate on their own in the process of developing military capabilities.

Conclusion

On the example of Finland, we can see the successful practice of how important it is to clearly define defense priorities and successfully implement them in times of peace in the region, even in the periods of military disobedience. Although NATO membership was not Finland's goal before the start of the RF-Ukraine war, the country was an active partner of the alliance in the process of developing its military capabilities and was gradually able to align its military capabilities with NATO standards. And when the need to strengthen broad deterrence arose, it took Finland less than a year to join, the fastest integration process in NATO history. In this regard, the necessity of deepening partnership relations and bringing defense capabilities in line with NATO standards for the integration of other small neighboring countries of the Russian Federation into the alliance is highlighted.

On the other hand, in the case of Finland, the effective and efficient spending of the budget and the rational use of available resources, even when the national economy was in a state of crisis, had a significant impact on the process of strengthening defense capabilities and aligning them with the alliance. Accordingly, it can be said that Finland's integration into NATO was determined by constant cooperation, clearly defined defense priorities, and the right economic policy necessary for their implementation. All of this allowed the country to implement both a direct and broad deterrence policy by increasing its defense capabilities, and in the end, in parallel with the hostilities of the neighboring RF in Ukraine, it ensured both the pursuit of its interests and the security of the country.

11 J. Clausnitzer "Defense budget in Finland 2020-2020, by sector", 2023. Defense budget in Finland 2020-2020, by sector. <https://bit.ly/3SDDOOb> [12/11/2023]

12 The Finnish Defence Forces "Personnel Strategy of the Finnish Defence Forces", The Finnish Defence Forces. 2022. "National Defence Is Everybody's Business." <https://bit.ly/3sv2M7L> [12/11/2023]

13 The Finnish Defence Forces "National Defence Is Everybody's Business", The Finnish Defence Forces. 2022. "National Defence Is Everybody's Business." <https://bit.ly/3sv2M7L> [12/11/2023]

14 PFI "FINLÄNDARNAS ÅSIKTER OM UTRIKES- OCH SÄKERHETSPOLITIKEN, FÖRSVARET OCH SÄKERHETEN", FI. 2022. "FINLÄNDARNAS ÅSIKTER OM UTRIKES- OCH SÄKERHETSPOLITIKEN, FÖRSVARET OCH SÄKERHETEN." <https://bit.ly/40A3jlq> [12/11/2023]

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New momentum for NATO open door policy, the importance of eastern enlargement for the security of Europe

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Abstract

Today, world events may change the course of life in Eastern Europe, which could lead to further long-term consequences. With this condition, Georgia increased the cost of its partnership with Western allies. Considering that, our country announced being part of the North Atlantic alliance, we aim to discuss partnership perspectives after the Russian-Ukrainian ongoing War. The analysis below aims to explore ways, in which Georgia can advance its interests within NATO, the steps that are already done to integrate with the alliance, and discuss new opportunities after the ongoing War.

The war between Russia and Ukraine has already entered the phase of total war, and predicting the results is difficult, but it can still be assumed that the results of the war may lead to new chances. Our goal is to find an opportunity for security guarantees within this process. We believe that at the moment, we are in the middle of epochal processes, and it is important to monitor developments in the security field very closely to find opportunities to join Euro-Atlantic organizations and act effectively.

Since its beginning, the North Atlantic organization has considered its goal to maintain security within the framework of international relations, as well as to assist in protecting the interests of member countries from possible threats and aggression from the Soviet Union/Russia. Despite the fact, that the process of integration into NATO has gone through several stages, recent events have clearly shown the instability of the factors necessary to ensure European security. We mean those countries that represent the continental parts of Europe and which play an important role in the architecture of European heritage. We are talking about Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova.

The people of this country have declared a vision for the future and security, and it is related to NATO and the European Union. Their European choice became the cause of Russian aggression and hybrid warfare, which first affected Georgia and Moldova in the 90s, and since 2014 also the eastern part of Ukraine (Donbas, Lagans) as a result of occupation. From the current scale of the conflict, it can be concluded that the results of the war will determine the new world order, and therefore its importance is highly valued, and the role of the UN is also sure to strengthen in this case.

This is especially important for small countries such as Moldova and Georgia, as parts of them are already occupied by Russia in the context of separatist conflicts, and it is obvious that, without Western partners, these countries can escape from Russian occupation. Our discussion also concerns the assessment of the consequences of the war and the review of NATO's capabilities and guarantees for Georgia for future, post-war situations.

We can't bypass Georgian-occupied regions as a security dilemma for Georgia and as a Russian lever for pressure on Georgia's integration into the European space. As an end state, we all know that it is a corresponding barrier for Georgia from the Russian Federation. Everything depends on the current course of military operations and results, so all our conclusions will be made based on the expected results of military operations.

Keywords:

Georgia, diplomacy, Russia-Ukraine War, threats, economics, challenges.

Introduction

After Vladimir Putin came to power in Russia, the idea arose of restoring Russia's influence in the post-Soviet space. This implies Russia's orientation towards restoring its influence and implementing certain political and foreign policy steps that were noted and criticized by historians and neighbors in the region.

The first large-scale conflict was with Georgia in August 2008, after which Russia intensified its actions in Ukraine. The Five-Day War exposed Russian imperialism and statements of widespread solidarity and reaction to Russia's violation of the territorial interests of neighboring countries, but as already noted by experts, a significant part of the countries in the east bore responsibility and sympathy towards Russia for the use of force to achieve territorial interests.

The five-day war in 2008 was the first act of the Putin regime, before the European integration of Georgia, which led to long-term consequences. It is important to take a good look at the results obtained from the 2008 war to best prepare for the future issue of European security.

It all started with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and Russian imperialism could not simply allow the sphere of influence of the post-Soviet space to break apart and escape its control. Therefore, a hidden war began, which led to separatism. For Russia, the desired outcome was to make Georgia a failed state. It was the way to finish Georgian's aspiration of creating an Independent and sovereign country.¹

The ethnic conflict mainly concerned not only pressure on Georgia but also it always was a mechanism of complete full-scale military aggression from Russia since in conditions of ethnic confrontation events could more easily develop in an undesirable direction, especially taking into account Russia's capabilities and experience.

In all likelihood, it must be recognized that the Russian narrative, of achieving peace between Georgia and the separatist regions, from the very beginning was crafted in mind with the possibility of military intervention. In reality, Russia had a long-term plan to punish Georgia for independent and had prolonged preparations to initiate full-scale military operations against the small country, to demonstrate power and decrease Georgia's military capabilities.

In August 2008, Russia carried out its part of the armed conflict plan and was waiting for a reaction from the West.

West indeed declared unconditional support of the sovereignty of Georgia, and it was a Western effort to stop the Russian invasion of Georgia, but a further way of events was not fully effective, in terms of making Russia stop the occupation. We mean frozen conflict and after a period, which makes Russia gain time. Despite the intervention, the soon USA suggested to Putin a "Big reset" for the next period of the relationship. For Russia, it was a way of gaining time, and Georgia received a message that we should develop strategic patience. This last one had a significant role in Russia's invasion in 2014 in Ukraine. During this crisis, hybrid warfare was used to capture eastern Ukraine and annex Crimea, which is strategically important for the security of the Black Sea.²

Main Part

Mistakes made with attitude to Russian aggression in the past was some kind of initiator to make Putin use rude power. From today, it is obvious that key leaders in Europe should be less optimistic about Russian policy. They claim that they had to use strengthened preventive steps towards Russia in case to follow international rules.

In this context, it comes to mind the Bucharest Summit of 2008, was expected to support Georgia and Ukraine, as countries striving for higher and more progressive democratic standards, as well as a plan for their integration. But, mostly "not to make Russia angry" policy, which was by the time performed by several key leaders of Europe, not Georgia and Ukraine as well, did not receive MAP. It will not be extra if we say that they had mimetic confidence in Putin's Russia. Unfortunately, this was the result of events that unexpectedly affected Georgia and subsequently Ukrainian territorial integrity and sovereignty. The results of the 2008 Bucharest Summit particularly were perceived as a step that could be interpreted as Russia's green light for military intervention. Of course, NATO's goal was not to increase Russia's influence outside the post-Soviet space, and in this context, it can be argued that any political concessions from Western allies were misinterpreted against the backdrop of the results of this summit. It is important to note that the summit approved a specific vision for Georgia and Ukraine's membership in NATO, namely: 'Georgia and Ukraine will become members of NATO.' This represents the best result against the backdrop of the state's desire to join the alliance, but, of course, this is a natural conclusion from all future actions that are necessary to meet NATO standards. We worry that this factor has not been taken into account correctly from the perspective of the West, and this has probably become the basis for all the scenarios that we know in the future regarding relations with NATO and the prospect of democratic change, both in response to the East and in the context of Russian prospects.

We mean what the could West do after the Bucharest summit and how they were able to avoid Russian aggression after the summit? It is a necessary decision that should be taken into account to protect Georgia and

¹ Karl-Heinz KAMP - After the Summit: Long-Term Consequences for NATO. May 2008.

² <https://old.civil.ge/geo/article.php?id=17931&search=MAP>

Ukraine as well. Not taking all necessary steps generated Russian action in terms of accomplishing the planned invasion in Georgia. The idea expressed at the Bucharest summit that Georgia and Ukraine should become members of NATO, defined the perspective of European security, which indicated the integral role of the main participants. We mean West, Russia, and Georgia with Ukraine, as a subject of the processes. Unfortunately, Georgia and Ukraine had a lack of options and with low resources, they had to continue developing governmental institutes and democracy as well. Considering that, they had not any tangible mechanisms to balance threats coming from Russia with its resources. On the other side, by that time Russia was well organized and ready to escalate the conflict to push away potential threats. It is the point, where we can notice the weakness of the West. despite the political rhetoric, it should have been clear that, time was working for Russian interests and that more active steps must take to ensure Russian aggression.³ The above is not a critic of West, or trying to find guilty. We realize that decision-making processes in NATO are based on consensus and we can't blame an organization for its individual member's position, despite political motivation. It is obvious, that those NATO members, who were against MAP for Georgia and Ukraine were hoping for long-term stability and cooperation with Russia.

The goal of this work is to find ways to solve problems based on previous experience and build on future efforts to reduce the costs of overcoming past challenges. Moreover, security challenges remain the same today as they were in 2008 when Russia entered into limited armed conflict with Ukraine. After analyzing the results of the previous review, we agree that to achieve democratic de-escalation, it is necessary to go through stages of rapprochement with the East. Today this is manifested in unique support for Ukraine, which has economic and military consequences and calls into question their security priorities.

On February 24, 2022, Russia moved to a new phase of a full-scale armed conflict, which was previously a hybrid war against Ukraine, and if not an unbelievable fight of Ukrainians, it can complete the implementation of Putin's plan. The people of Ukraine had shown fighting ability and mental strength against the total invasion of the "second army" in the world. Ukrainians' resistance is the reason for the situation on the front. Despite a long time of preparation, Russian army collapsed at the beginning of the war.

As noted earlier, the current state of hostilities and its possible consequences directly affect the future of security in Europe, so it is imperative to pay attention to this topic since the security of the region is directly related to the outcome of this war. "Special Military operation" (as it is called by Russian officials) was oriented on fast results, at last, rapid advance and occupation of Kyiv, isolation of governance, and broke Ukrainians morally. fortunately, it did not according to Putin's plan and Ukraine survived after the first effect of the war and still is trying to regain occupied territories. As a result, we have exhaustion-oriented total war, where Russian forces are trying to retire seized territory, and Ukrainians trying to build combat power, gain experience in Western weapons and technology, and organize well-planned and flexible counterattacks, to force Russians to withdraw. The desired result for Ukraine is to reach the 1991 border with Russia. The current situation allows us to say that Ukraine does not have sufficiently mobilized reserves to counterattack, while Russia is developing defense lines and is oriented to retain advance for the long period. In other words, we see a long-time-oriented exhaustion war, where the formula of victory is owning resources for future operations. Once we are trying to model the future around the question "What would be after the war?", I suggest to overview of the current situation from the aggressor (Russian) perspective.⁴

After the failure of the rapid assault, Putin tried to maintain an advance and freeze conflict for 10-15 years. It was the reason, why belligerents had negotiations in a neutral area (Turkey). With Russia's terms of negotiation, Ukraine should declare itself as a neutral country and the Russian army would withdraw to Donetsk and Lugan's administration area. (By the time, these regions were not declared as part of Russia). From the Ukrainian perspective, these conditions were a capitulation and of course not acceptable to Ukrainian officials, and the war continued in the next stage. Russian answer was declaring occupied regions as a part of Russia. It was strange that Russia's view of the borders of that region was based on the Ukrainian administrative division and by that time, Russia couldn't control fully that region. Russia since 2014 continuing seizing territories of Ukraine, declaring it as an organic part of the Russian Federation and capturing them under Nuclear protection. Despite of nuclear threat level, the Ukrainian side announced that their goal was to reach the 1991 border and it left fewer chances to solve this problem with the way diplomacy.⁵

The above-discussed took the war over a long period and for success both sides needs to coordinate capabilities in terms of supporting counter-side abilities. For Russia, this would be an almost impossible task at the moment, because of colossal losses as a personal and military technique as well. It takes actuality after the sanctions initiated by the West. It disrupted the main logistical cells and capabilities of Russia. It made the Russian army resupply the front rapidly and effectively. This is a time when the West plays a key role, which is important for resolving the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and ensuring security. Every day we hear new information about assistance packages aimed at solving Ukraine's strategic problems, which represent a non-alternative path to solving Ukraine's strategic problems.⁶

3 <https://old.civil.ge/geo/article.php?id=17931&search=MAP>

4 <https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/nato-after-putins-war-chance-new-breath-or-beginning-death-and-where-place-ukraine>

5 Karl-Heinz KAMP - After the Summit: Long-Term Consequences for NATO. May 2008.

6 <https://www.cfr.org/event/russias-war-ukraine-how-does-it-endv>

Despite this, procrastination actions in the front and earned time always work for Russians. The counterattack started slower than it was planned, so it gained time for Russia to find partners in that world, which always opposes the West. Primarily, these countries include Iran, China, and now North Korea. We have legitimated doubtless that these countries are proxy partners of Russia in this war. It increases the Security dilemma for Ukraine and NATO as well. In this context, Russia's desired outcome may be to retain the conquered territories. Despite this, we can't find any realistic statement from Russian officials about the end of the war. It can be explained that there are colossal losses and success is not equal from a Russian perspective. Even for Vladimir Putin, it is too hard to explain to Russian electorates the price they have played for the results of the current situation. It seems, despite of mass concentration of political power, Putin is trying to avoid this explanation. Realizing This is crucial for the future of European security. West must not allow radical changes in the front against Ukraine. It means an unstoppable process of rearming Ukraine with modern weapons, missiles, and aircraft. Immobility of the front against Russia might have a fundamental major impact on the future weakening of Russian imperialism. It can be argued, that already restoration of Russian military power is a far-off perspective. It looks like, after the 90s, Russia will meet next decade from the weakest point of view. This weakness should be effectively used by the West. from the point of view of ensuring the security and stability of European borders and guaranteeing security. This is a window of opportunity in terms of making active steps to accomplish the eastern enlargement process. We understand that, despite any scenarios around ongoing war, Russia is already as exhausted as can't rival NATO. It creates perfect conditions for a brave decision as it is an eastern enlargement of the Atlantic alliance.⁷

After the end of the Cold War, the initiative in all conflicts had passed into the hands of Russia, but the time has come to intensify the eastern direction. This option must be used, and Ukraine must join the North Atlantic Alliance along with Georgia and Moldova even though the NATO statute's 5 paragraphs do not apply to occupied territories. Indeed, conflicts in separatist regions will not disappear in this case, but it is guaranteed that Russia will not return influence over these states.

We must emphasize that for Russia the occupied regions remain important until Georgia becomes a member of NATO. NATO's initiative for Georgia to join the alliance will certainly change the functions of the separatist regions in Russia's favor. This Security formula has no alternative for regional stability and will cause economic integration in European space. Joining Georgia in the EU and NATO can be translated as a security guarantee for Abkhazians and Samachablo separatists. From this point of view, Russia will not be able to constantly maintain control over areas that have not fulfilled their role in relations with Georgia and the information war. An example of our proposed scenario is the so-called Artsakh Republic – Mountain Qara-bakh. With the background of the current armed conflict with Ukraine, Russia was unable to carry out its own initiated separatist conflict. As a result, Azerbaijan used the momentum to re-establishment of territorial integrity. Of course, we exclude military ways to reestablish Georgian territorial integrity, but This is one of the indicators of the degree of criticality of the situation in the Russian Federation. This situation can be assessed as a potential option that should be wisely used by NATO for enlargement to the eastern direction. If all members of NATO realize this option and agree on the membership of Georgia and Moldova's well, before the process ends up, these countries will need strong power to protect from any escalation with Russia. This is the main point of the security dilemma according to international relationship science. Once the membership decision needs the consent of all members, not to repeat past mistakes of 2008, we think that only the USA can lead this process and as an act of strong power demonstration, can put solid military personnel in the territory of Georgia and Moldova. Only this step can disrupt Russian aggression before NATO officially declares its enlargement and will bring this country under NATO statute's 5-paragraph protection (even without ongoing separatist regions). We think that without these brave steps, as small countries as Georgia and Moldova, are unable to keep their territorial integrity or minimum safety guarantees from Russian threats.

⁷ <https://www.cfr.org/event/russias-war-ukraine-how-does-it-end>

Conclusion

We note with optimism that, we are on the verge of an epoch-making event, and not to seize this chance would be to waste the opportunity to bring NATO's eastern axis back into focus. If there are no active steps for Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova on the way to integrate into NATO, In Russia definitely will appear forces, that will translate these wasted chances as an opportunity to try one more time, but in that case, results would be more dramatic for candidate states than it was after Bucharest summit for us. Under these conditions, it is necessary for strong forces, such as the United States of America, to take responsibility for the security of the region and through military measures, prevent the advance of Russian aggression in the region. Without solid military power as it has USA, Georgia, and Moldova cannot resist Russian forces before the NATO joining process ends if all members agree with NATO eastern enlargement. We hope shortly, the advance of Ukraine will be enough tangible to give Western partners ability to force Russia to leave post-Soviet space, and the voice of peace-lover people as Ukrainians, Moldavians, and Georgians will rich that high that will be considered by NATO key decision-makers.

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“Strategic Narratives in the Background of the Russia-Ukraine War and the Role and Impact of Information Operations in the New Reality of European Security”

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Abstract

The specifics of information operations include strategy development, information acquisition, and analysis to plan and implement this strategy. One of the important ways in which information is provided to the “audience” is to realize its purpose.

Dissemination of narratives in itself includes strategic components since it is planned in the long term and is intended to achieve a specific result. Through accents, leaders can inform the public about an ongoing problem and draw attention to it, and as a result, the information or knowledge provided will lead to change. The most important thing is what form and channels the entity chooses when conducting the campaign. Given the growth in the use of social media and technology, information campaigns are adapting and using social media as an innovative way to reach a wider audience.

In today’s digital age, strategic communication aims to both sabotage the enemy, spread viral messages, often disinformation, to gain an advantage, and suppress opposing narratives. The purpose of disseminating strategic narratives is to gain support through various actions and methods that constitute “public discourse.” Effectively planned, tailored to the audience, and transmitted through the right channels, the information campaign and relevant narratives can play a decisive role - in bringing victory in the information war to the country, to create a useful information background for it, which will contribute to the support of the states in the world, as well as in the long term, the issue of power distribution. .

Someone who spreads strategic narratives must understand how to use any media channel or medium to their advantage, to highlight advantages, in itself, must choose the main communication channels according to who their audience is.

In the article, we would like to discuss the importance of conducting information warfare against the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine war and the role and place of narratives in the issue of balance and distribution of power, both in wartime and postwar European reality. We will discuss the information war carried out by the Russian Federation, Ukraine’s response narratives and steps, and attempts to create the ideological foundations of the Russia-Ukraine war against the background of concrete examples, we will outline the preconditions and indicators of the start of the war in Urayna by Russia, and the ideological factors by which the Kremlin tries to achieve the goal: “to return the Kremlin to its natural state” ... Russia is restoring unity - after the tragedy of 1991, which was devastating for Russian history”.¹

Keywords:

information war, narratives, strategy, Russia-Ukraine war, European security.

¹ Петр Акопов, Наступление России и нового мира, 2022 <https://web.archive.org/web/20220226051154/https://ria.ru/20220226/rossiya-1775162336.html>

Introduction

In addition to success on the battlefield, wars are often won or lost by information advantage. What is Russia's strategic goal in Ukraine? - Weakening of Ukraine's economy, which contributes to Russia's military-political goal - the destruction of Ukraine as a strong, sovereign state. At the same time, Ukraine has no choice but to remind Europe of Russian imperial intentions and create a feeling that you will be next.

The topicality of the topic is determined by the current political processes in the world, where power is being redistributed against the background of the ongoing war. By discussing the methods of conducting information warfare, and outlining the strategic narratives of the war participants, we will discuss what role information operations will play and what results they can bring in the current and future European security situation.

Based on all of the above, the research problem can be formulated as follows - the spread of deliberate disinformation by the Kremlin, which serves its geopolitical interests and is a continuation of the Russian rigid policy and represents a threat to the balance of power in the region, while Ukrainian narratives and information strategy once again present the hybrid ways of waging war in the world, The real meaning of informational and psychological operations.

Main Part

Ukrainian and Russian historical narratives go back many years. Some Russian nationalists do not even consider Ukraine as an independent state. The Russian government was also the bearer of the same discourse. A disinformation campaign built on historical narratives intensified in Ukraine in 2013-2014 when Kremlin-affiliated media referred to Euromaidan demonstrators as "Banderovts" (a Soviet Russian term for Ukrainian nationalists who fought alongside the Nazis in World War II). Even in the background of the annexation of Crimea, Soviet and Russian imperialist narratives were actively spread. These narratives were also voiced by the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, at the official level: "Everything in Crimea speaks of our common history. This is the ancient, Tavrian Chersonese territory, where the great chief Vladimir was baptized. In the hearts and minds of the people, Crimea has always been and is still an integral part of Russia." In the same speech, Putin referred to Euromaidan as a revolution organized by Ukrainian neo-Nazis: "Nationalists, neo-Nazis, Russophobes, and anti-Semites carried out this coup d'état." With all this, the annexation of the Crimean peninsula to Russia was justified, and the battles in the east of Ukraine were not seen as a battle between Russia and Ukraine, but as a battle against Ukrainian fascists.

Disinformation and information warfare by the Russian Federation preceded the invasion of Ukraine. Russia began preparing the background for the invasion in 2021 when information was spread about the crossing of "red lines" in response to NATO activities, the Deputy Chairman of the Russian Security Council, Medvedev, referring to Ukraine as a "vassal" of the West, the deployment of American warships in the Black Sea by the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, regional security declare as a threat. "Russian President Vladimir Putin spoke about the discrimination of the Russian-speaking population outside Russia: "I must say that Russophobia is the first step towards genocide. You and I know what is happening in Donbas. This, of course, is very similar to genocide (Gozalishvili and Kalandadze 2022)."²

In the first days of 2022, Russia began withdrawing employees from its embassy in Kyiv, at the same time, cyber-attacks began on the websites of Ukrainian state institutions. On February 17, 2022, the situation in Donbas worsened, and 60 armed clashes were recorded on this day alone, and on February 18, Russian troops were deployed to the borders of Ukraine through Belarus, under the pretext of conducting military exercises. Here, for the first time, suspicions were raised in the West that this was an attempt to cover up the impending invasion of Ukraine.

Parallel to all this, of course, disinformation narratives began to spread from the Russian side: "Putin addressed the population in a 1-hour speech, where he presented an extensive historical analysis of Russia, Ukraine, and the Soviet Union in general, which was saturated with all the false, disinformation and propaganda narratives that for years it came from the Kremlin. The fact that Ukraine was created by the Soviet Union and Lenin personally, that if the region wanted "real de-Sovietization", then, in his opinion, it should start with the return of the countries created at that time to Russia. At the same time, he connected Ukraine's desire for Western integration with the social and economic situation in the country, thereby trying to use the well-known propaganda narrative - the supposedly strong economic situation during the Soviet Union."

The scale of Russian disinformation, as well as the tone of Russian disinformation, has increased and intensified since Russia's aggressive invasion of Ukrainian territory. The main narrative has been that Ukraine is fighting this war alone and has been abandoned by the West.

In the initial stage, Ukraine built its narrative mainly on gaining support by emphasizing that Russia is an

2 Nino Gozalishvili; Mariam Kalandadze, "Tendencies of Russian Disinformation in Georgia Along with the War in Ukraine", . Annexation of History - Russian Hybrid war and Ukraine. 27 04. 2023. 18 10. https://idfi.ge/en/annexation_of_history_russian_hybrid_war_and_ukraine.

aggressor who is carrying out an unprovoked attack on a state with a Euro-Atlantic course. Since the invasion, the narrative of government institutions has meant portraying them as confident. The main message was that the government was brave and consistent. The president, Volodymyr Zelensky, became a symbol of a brave fighter equal to the soldiers. His speeches, staying on the battlefield, and his style of dressing spoke about it. Ukraine also changed its communication strategy. Ukraine created an image of courage and bravery and used this weapon against the Russian discourse.

„Further, Ukraine has glorified war stories and myths demonstrating bravery and military exploits, such as the Ghost of Kyiv, a fighter who reportedly shot down several Russian fighter jets single-handedly“.³

Also, we should not forget the message “Русский военный корпаль, иди на хуй!”, which became a symbol of patriotism and perseverance and was adopted by the whole world. These strategic messages were of great importance in motivating the population, as well as in gaining the courage of the troops and international support.

The Russian Federation is trying to present itself as an alternative force in Europe, defending traditions and popularizing the idea of a great Russia. “Unlike the classical methods and strategies of war, the Russian hybrid war is characterized by a very broad and diverse strategy and means. Its implementation, through the ways of horizontal dissemination of disinformation, is less centralized and includes several thematic, strategic and targeted aspects at the same time. Falsifying history, distorting facts, and using them without context is one of the strategies that occupies an important place in the modern Russian hybrid war... The Kremlin’s modern hybrid war, it can be said, prioritizes the strategies of “intimidation-love” and the decline of the Western value system.”⁴ In this way, Russia appears as an alternative civilization to Western liberal democracy, which is the so-called It protects traditional values, and for this, the Russian government also successfully uses historical narratives, through the manipulation of which it tries to make the countries that it considers part of the Eurasian civilization suffer not only from their political present and future but also from their past.

The article “Наступление России и нового мира”, which was published on February 26, 2022, against the background of the invasion of Ukraine, also expresses the hidden goals of the Russian Federation’s war. The main message of the author is the idea of restoring the great, Soviet-era Russia: “A new world is being born before our eyes. Russia’s military operation has ushered in a new era in Ukraine. Here begins a new period, both in ideology and in the model of the Russian socio-economic system. Russia is restoring unity - after the tragedy of 1991, which was devastating for Russian history” . The Soviet Union is equated with Russia, the author depicts the invasion of Ukraine as a natural situation when Ukraine should return to its old borders. According to the author, the return of Ukraine to Russia would become more and more difficult after each decade, as the codification, de-Russification of the Russians (meaning the Ukrainian people), the inciting of anti-Russian sentiments by “small Russian-Ukrainians” were underway “if the West strengthens full geopolitical and military control over Ukraine.”, his return to Russia will be completely impossible.” Here, Vladimir Putin is brought out as a person taking historical responsibility, who decided not to leave the solution of the Ukraine issue to posterity. The article attempts to present the West as a united force acting against Russia, while Russia tries to oppose it with “the Russian world, that is, three states, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, which act geopolitically as a whole”.

Ukraine, as a country on the European course, seems to have become a symbol of Russia’s “stretching out its hand” to Europe. Accordingly, in the background of gaining international support, the country was sending messages in the direction of Western values and patriotism. Ukraine is particularly active in using internet platforms to spread its narratives.

At the beginning of the war, Ukraine called on its citizens to take up arms, succeeding in putting up an initial staunch resistance. In addition, the Western media emphasized the narrative that thousands of Ukrainians volunteered to fight in the war. Following the Russian invasion, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky tweeted a pathetic message to his citizens, regardless of gender or age, that he would hand out weapons to anyone willing to defend the country. Civilians broadcast war footage to aid propaganda and aid IT specialists in hacking Russian websites.

As for the narratives directed outside the country and towards Europe, Ukraine emphasized Russia’s stronger military power, creating the myth of “David and Goliath”, Zelesnyky, addressing both European countries and other supporting states, called for sanctions against Russia and the severance of economic ties. And NATO, the so-called He aimed for a narrative of crime to embarrass NATO countries. In doing so, he wanted to get help in defense both in terms of weapons and political support.

Russia’s efforts are primarily aimed at influencing and spreading narratives within its borders, indicating a significant lack of interest in spreading narratives in Western countries.” In contrast, Ukraine has embraced popular media channels in Western countries to influence Western audiences and gain support from their governments.

As can be seen from the discussion, Russia and Ukraine conduct information operations and propaganda

3 Mario Blokken., 2023. “Narrative Warfare in the Russo-Ukrainian War: A Comparison between Ukraine’s and Russia’s Strategic Communication“, Narrative Warfare in the Russo-Ukrainian War: A

4 Nino Gozalishvli, Megi Kartsivadze, Eka Kalandadze, 2022 “Annexation of History - Russian Hybrid war and Ukraine“ , nnexation of History - Russian Hybrid war and Ukraine. 27 04.2023,18 10. https://idfi.ge/en/annexation_of_history_russian_hybrid_war_and_ukraine.

with different approaches. The Kremlin is focused on disinformation operations, censorship, and false narratives, while Ukraine builds diplomatic ties with the West, promotes civic self-awareness, and courage, and appeals to Russia's brutality.

“Ukraine has moral authority because it is using information operations to fight a war of necessity, – an existential battle of survival. The Kremlin meanwhile, is trying to fulfil an ambition to rebuild the Soviet empire that had been shattered after the Cold War. In what looks increasingly likely to be a war of attrition, winning the information war will provide a big advantage on the battlefield (The Conversation 2022)”.⁵

In the digital age, even live on the Internet, any information can be disseminated in seconds, which has helped the spread of Russian disinformation campaigns, although Ukrainians are blocking sources through organized groups. It works well to limit the opponent's narratives. Russia manages this through censorship, and Ukraine through counter-narratives

„Since the 2014 annexation, Ukraine has focused on restricting the dissemination of Russian narratives. These policies, adopted between 2014 and 2022, remain relevant in the ongoing conflict as they have shaped information sharing. The Ukrainian government was particularly keen on tackling this issue since Ukraine has served as a testing ground for Russian disinformation campaigns before and after 2014. This prompted both the Poroshenko and Zelensky administrations to prioritize combating this issue”.

Conclusion

Based on all of the above, as we can see, Russia hides its imperialist intentions again under the guise of “savior”, and before any military invasion, it produces large-scale so-called disinformation. “Brainwashing” campaign, portraying himself as a defender of Christianity and strong Russia.

Both sides, Ukraine and Russia, have created their versions of the conflict to gain support and influence perceptions, both domestically and internationally.

Russia's strategic narrative is based on misinformation and historical revisionism. With this, he justifies his action in Uraina. However, Ukraine met strong resistance to this narrative, as a result of which Russia was unable to achieve a quick victory, and its discourse changed over time.

As for Ukraine's narrative, it presents itself as a brave nation united against an aggressor country. In the aftermath of the invasion, he continued a consistent, confident campaign, garnering international support and arguably a turning point in the imposition of sanctions and international pressure on Russia. Therefore, we can say that Ukraine's narrative turned out to be more successful than Russia's. Russia became an aggressor in the eyes of the international community and actively supported Ukraine. Against this backdrop, Russia continues to maintain a strong disinformation discourse within its internal borders to create false myths and gain public support.

This war showed us that the channels for spreading narratives have evolved significantly compared to previous wars. The widespread use of social media, the Internet, and sanctions allowed both sides to influence public opinion. Russia is focused on maintaining domestic support, while Ukraine is focused on spreading information internationally, especially to the West. Based on the above, we can conclude about how many changes can be caused by properly and efficiently planned strategic narratives.

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⁵ The Conversation, 2022, “Ukrainian propaganda: how Zelensky is winning the information war against Russia“, The Conversation . 2022. Ukrainian propaganda: how Zelensky is winning the information war against Russia. 11 05. 2023, 18 10. <https://theconversation.com/ukrainian-propaganda-how-zelensky-is-winning-the-information-war-against-russia-182061>.

The New World Political Order and Georgia

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Abstract

The Russia-Ukraine war marked the beginning of the new world order, where the problems of democratization, the impact of globalization on the information environment and social issues were clearly visible. Technological developments accelerated the globalization process and contributed to the formation of a global information environment, which in turn influenced both international security policy and countries' domestic policies. The social economic environment plays a significant role in shaping domestic political processes, and despite whatever information and psychological operations a confronting country may face, the global globalization process will likely accelerate economic development and expand the information environment. The conduct of foreign policy in the international system is influenced by domestic politics, and states react to it with different mechanisms. Non-democratic countries try to stop globalization and obstruct democratic processes in order to maintain and increase their regional influence. Predicting the outcome of the war is very difficult, however it can be said that it has certainly exposed problems and challenges in international security policy. Globalization processes are multifaceted, yet it is notable that significant attention is still paid to geopolitical processes in today's environment, which also plays an important role in the new world order. Georgia is gradually becoming part of global globalization despite obstacles on the path to democratization. In order to strengthen its position in the new world order, Georgia should take into account the influence of globalization, democratization and non-democratic states in geopolitics.

Keywords:

Georgia, Russo-Ukraine War, globalization, Politic, economic, challenges, information, threats.

Introduction

The anarchic processes in the world often remind states of the importance of creating and maintaining an international security environment. Despite the fact that the First and Second World Wars established some practices regarding how powerful states should care for international security, and a legal framework was formed on the basis of certain agreements, tangible results are still impossible after the end of the Cold War. Although the post-World War II period did not feature direct confrontation and active hostilities between superpowers, the situation was periodically very tense, and they often supported conflicts in other territories in order to maintain or increase influence. Views on the past and present have changed significantly in international relations, but despite the potential of human nature, confrontation and conflict in the world do not cease, as evidenced by the Russia-Ukraine war.

Predicting the outcome of the war is very difficult, however it can be said that it has certainly exposed problems and challenges in international security policy which, regardless of any ending scenario of the war, require significant attention stemming from the new reality in the world, and creates a need to transform international security. International relations have evolved and refined over time, yet still encountered new challenges that may have been difficult to imagine, but certainly required adaptation to the new environment. Technological developments accelerated the globalization process and contributed to the formation of a global information environment, which in turn influenced both international security policy and countries' domestic policies.

Despite the fact that existing perspectives in international relations theory emphasize many factors in international security, it can be said that a major challenge of globalization is the proper conduct and presentation of states' foreign policies to both domestic and foreign audiences. The challenges in implementing foreign policy vary significantly depending on the political system a particular state is developing along and the specific geographic area it is located in. Georgia's difficult geographic situation poses significant threats and challenges to the country. The country is trying to join Western organizations and establish democratic institutions, yet like other young democracies, it faces problems and challenges in state-building that the country cannot overcome alone. For Georgia to conduct its foreign policy, it is crucial to take into account domestic threats, challenges, problems and risks so that in the event of any path of development of a possible new world political order, it has defined and formulated concrete and sound steps that will preserve the country's sovereignty and pave the way for developing new opportunities for the country.

Main Part

The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war has exposed the significant problems that emerged in the post-Cold War international order, when countries agreed on protecting states' sovereign rights. Globalization and economic development processes created new challenges, which turned out to be unacceptable for non-democratic governments and were seen as direct interference in sovereignty. The interpretation of agreed rules differed substantially between democratic and non-democratic countries, and neither state really sought to resolve the problem, since there were greater expectations of maintaining a safe environment in a unipolar system at the expense of globalization. Powerful and influential states have different understandings and perceptions of adhering to a rules-based order. The understanding of developed Western countries does not really match the perceptions of today's Russia and China. In their view, the military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq were very humiliating.¹ According to experts, shattering these expectations is the credit of the military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, which paved the way for military interventions under the guise of protecting human rights, while the real goals were to protect U.S. national interests. These perceptions also created some doubts in Western countries themselves and caused a rift in liberal relations. As a result, they found it difficult to fulfill international obligations and focused on their own national interests. It is possible that Ukraine and the above mentioned military campaigns differ greatly from each other, yet it is a fact that they are perceived as military aggression in non-democratic countries, regardless of the purposes of those military campaigns. It can be said that Western perceptions, as values, differ greatly from non-Western countries.

The decision to open up and integrate into the globalized international environment has improved conditions for some populations, but also led to loss of skills and rapid increase in dependence on international markets.² These processes have made it especially difficult for non-democratic governments to steer domestic political processes in their preferred direction. Regardless of the political systems countries have and their geographic locations, globalization continues, and while approaches may differ under certain political rulers, these processes directly impact countries' socioeconomic dynamics. The global political order consists of the foreign policies pursued by states, which require substantial domestic support regardless of a country's political agenda, its depen-

1 Fyodor Lukyanov (2022) "Interview: Ukraine, Russia, and the New World Order" <https://shorturl.at/bkPY4>.(has been verified10.09.2023).

2 Fyodor Lukyanov (2022) Interview: Ukraine, Russia, and the New World Order <https://shorturl.at/bkPY4>.(has been verified10.09.2023).

dence on public sentiment, the decisiveness of public attitudes, and the importance of considering their opinion on ongoing national processes.

When discussing states' systems, the focus is usually on democratic states, non-democratic states, and young democratic states, which are the most fluid and vulnerable in this regard.³ If a country faces an economic development downturn that requires covering it up through foreign policy actions, while such moves may also effectively "sell" in democratic countries. Clearly, autocratic countries efficiently use covering domestic political failures by presenting an enemy image and convincing people that defeating this enemy requires the stockpile of finances and resources. And if experts need to tighten their belts during peacetime crises, during wartime everyone must tighten their belt. In this case, domestic and foreign policy goals are compatible, though they may have no connection to the country's interests and only serve the interests of a narrow group.

The globalization process in the world is greatly accelerated by mass media and easy access to information, which is an important means for both correctly conveying messages about information topics to each individual and properly shaping public opinion, as well as for disinformation and propaganda. The use of disinformation and propaganda is actively and effectively carried out in authoritarian countries through total control. Notably, unlike in democratic countries, disinformation in autocratic countries shapes a type of public opinion that is difficult to re-evaluate and transform. The information war requires daily attention regardless of the system a country has chosen for its governance and how successful it is in developing democratic institutions. Still, the chances are high that it becomes difficult to discern disinformation and truth, especially in conditions where educating the population poses a major challenge for the country's development. In countries where democratic institutions function effectively and it is easy to identify disinformation through the use of effective levers. The elements of disinformation and propaganda closely resemble the truth, though over time propaganda may be exposed, but it is also possible for disinformation to achieve its intended goal, and exposing them may come so late that changing the outcomes becomes impossible.

The West's winning of the information war enters an important phase. There is an opinion that the problem of stopping globalization is real and portends a bleak future for the world.⁴ It is important to realize that controlling the information environment poses a significant challenge when both state structures and private business depend on this environment, and it may reveal weaknesses in mechanisms of total control that may not be able to change the situation in the near future, although it will greatly complicate processes in countries with political systems like non-democratic ones that control their own populations through state resources. Geopolitical influence on international security is very strong, hinders globalization processes, and strengthens national interests at the expense of the international order.

The Russia-Ukraine war has created preconditions for establishing a new world political order, however it can be said that this represents seeing the existing anew, and the nature of the conflict remains unchanged. Proceeding from the fact that the goals of the Russian Federation have never been focused on protecting human rights, it perceives the globalization process as a threat, and accordingly, their foreign policy course is tailored not to meeting the needs for the well-being of the country's population, but for how the country's ruling group or individual envisions when the country achieves success. Relying more on military force and domestic social control is undoubtedly Russia's path forward in the near future.

The causes of the Russia-Ukraine war are linked to the political reality that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The dissolution of the Soviet Union was perceived by its successor, the Russian Federation, as a transition to a unipolar world system with regional hegemonies, which was doomed to fail from the outset, since no one guaranteed the Russian Federation the preservation of regional hegemony in the process, and failure to achieve its political goals is a well-packaged lie of blaming the West. To achieve regional hegemony, it actively uses military components. In 2008, the Russian Federation occupied 20% of Georgia's territory, and in 2014 annexed Crimea, but its political goals for regional hegemony could not be achieved. Accordingly, on February 24, 2022, Russian armed forces invaded Ukraine, and the world began preparing for a new order.

Russia cites Western expansion as the reason for military intervention and has resorted to kinetic actions to defend its national interests. In reality, it is trying to stop the globalization process because despite significant preparation since the end of the Cold War to maintain its influence, it failed to transform the military component, the best means of achieving its political goals, and compete with developed countries technologically. Russia emerged as a creator of hybrid threats, yet it was the failures in the creativity of generating hybrid threats that accelerated the process that has now come to the world in the form of war. Regardless of the possible outcomes of the war, the main thing is to make the right emphases on what caused the possibility of covering up achieving political goals by achieving military objectives.

It can be said that in the context of an active information campaign parallel to the military campaign, it was not possible to gain support for launching the military campaign from external audiences, and states still recorded their initial positions at the start of the war with measured political messaging, as they had thoroughly analyzed what developments the war would continue with. The actions of Ukraine's population, territorial de-

3 Allen Faulton (2021), "The Weaknesses of Democracy". <https://shorturl.at/bpKO1>, (has been verified 10.09.2023).

4 Lincicome Scott, 2022, "It's the End of Globalization as We Know It and That's Probably Fine", Part 1 <https://shorturl.at/qORX9>. (has been verified 11.09.2023).

fenses, and armed forces, as well as their combat capabilities, changed the possible war scenario that was initially presented by the Russian military leadership. Notably, gaining superiority in the information war suppressed the use of military capabilities for the confronting sides, and the way to continue the war with today's circumstances is the information campaign taking place domestically and creating a prerequisite for steering internal political processes. The total control implemented by the Russian Federation domestically hinders the capabilities of broad masses to critically deliberate on ongoing processes, which in itself determines its strong side for managing domestic political processes, and it is difficult to take into account the effects of globalization in conditions when the country is engaged in a war and the deterioration of social conditions is perceived as a normal process in every country. While, in the critical thinking and reasoning conditions of Ukraine's young democracy, an important test has to pass, which is to some extent heading towards a positive indicator due to strong Western support and wartime conditions.

The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war has played a significant role in transforming political processes worldwide. It can be said that achieving Russia's political goals through military capabilities remains ambiguous, and Ukraine's effective political process management, which united the population around one goal - to defend the country's sovereignty and not allow Russia to set the agenda - played a major role. Accordingly, Ukraine's domestic political processes truly played a significant role in forming a new world political order, where effective information themes and notifications formed against the Russian information campaign were important.

Most countries are divided into three main positions - Western countries supporting Ukraine, countries agreeing with Russia's stance, and countries trying to refrain from taking sides in this conflict to protect their national interests, often stating that this is a rivalry between Russia and the West to establish a new world order, with close attention paid to China's growing economic power and its political goals, which will pose significant competition to the United States in shaping the new world order.⁵ Accordingly, domestic political processes in these countries are indirectly involved in the course of the war.

In the new world order, democratic countries will have to pursue a foreign policy that cares for the global political order and is consistent with the country's domestic politics, because the large amount of disinformation in the information environment hindering globalization significantly impedes convincing external and domestic audiences about the correctness of taking specific actions. As for autocratic countries, which may maintain some distancing from the war in the new world political order, they too will have to satisfy the preferences existing in their own populations, and instantly transforming their opinion will become impossible. In the current environment, conditions are changing rapidly, and the possibilities to achieve political goals also require rapid transformation. Despite non-democratic countries' ruling forces trying to maintain total control to shape public opinion and stop the globalization process, the world is changing, and against the backdrop of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, Western countries will also try to strengthen democratization principles in the international system with more activity.⁶

It should be considered that there are also very significant differences among non-democratic countries, which is essential for properly analyzing the new world political order. Statements by Chinese officials are very balanced, always trying to make decisions and spread messages consistent with public opinion, taking into account attitudes that China has chosen to resolve the Taiwan issue peacefully.⁷ In the conditions of such a new world order, it is difficult for developing countries to form an articulated position if one does not feel messages that do not emphasize the dominance of any participant in the new world order. Georgia needs partnerships with the type of countries that provide a guarantee for maintaining sovereignty when 20% of the country is occupied, and despite pragmatic political goals, public sentiment will have great importance for domestic and foreign political processes.

The formation of a new world political order has begun, and regardless of the outcome of the Russia-Ukraine war, it will certainly change. Georgia must take into account that despite the continuation and conclusion of the war, the process of transforming the world political order will likely be prolonged over time, and determining the right foreign policy vector will again become difficult for developing democracies. Accordingly, Georgia will have to consider public preferences on its path to democratization. Sending the right messages through information means will come to the fore, so as not to mislead the population in conditions when the level of hybrid threats is very high, and developing education systems to combat disinformation will require a significant period to achieve tangible results. While in Western countries, the spread of disinformation causes some discomfort for the population, in Georgia it poses significant risks stemming from the inability to carry out proper domestic political processes and determine the right directions for foreign policy, which will have grave consequences for the country. For example, it can be said that despite European countries trying their best to maintain energy security and giving energy diversification an important role, given Georgia's energy resource availability, it struggles to take steps towards energy independence, which will create a major obstacle going forward, and it will not be able to pursue effective foreign policy in establishing itself in the new world political order.

5 2023 Declaration of the Summit for Democracy, Bureau of Democracy, Human rights, and labor. <https://shorturl.at/gtEG6>. (Has been verified 10.09.2023).

6 2023 Declaration of the Summit for Democracy, Bureau of Democracy, Human rights, and labor. <https://shorturl.at/gtEG6>. (Has been verified 10.09.2023).

7 Nika Burduli (2022) article: China and Russia's war in Ukraine – BBC <https://shorturl.at/oyEIO>. (Has been verified 10.09.2023).

Based on the above, it can be said that in international relations, non-democratic countries are trying to hinder globalization processes, as they will be left without geopolitical power. For managing domestic political processes and responding to domestic threats, a country's economic development is critical, as it increases the population's demands, which directly impacts the formation of domestic political directions. So, the population's awareness and active participation in economic processes increases their potential to participate more broadly in determining the country's domestic political processes. In the new world order, re-examining geopolitical processes and defining the demands countries have of each other in the international system is required. It is the new political order that will shape new relationships, both among Western countries and with developing democracies and non-democratic countries, considering their populations' needs. The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war revealed and accelerated exposing the weaknesses in the existing global order. Despite accumulating significant experience after the end of the Cold War, it is impossible to return to the past processes and correct admitted mistakes, which have already brought negative consequences. From this, under the right analysis conditions, Western countries clearly identified focusing on political processes that bring globalization and attempts to stop it will inevitably affect the new world political order, so that democratization processes do not fail and their negative results are not received in the long run.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that young democracies face significant threats on the development path, and fluctuations in this direction are noticeable based on existing practice, supporting them in the long run will lead to the success of democratization processes, which is partly linked to domestic political processes and influences that will ultimately be able to transform global political processes, given that the real cost of war is very high, and allocating these funds to wage war often leads to deteriorating social security and tensions in domestic political processes within a country. The West's support for the Ukraine war requires significant resources, and these funds are lacking for countries struggling to develop. Accordingly, this will increase tensions to some extent in the social security of countries distanced from the Ukraine war. The social economic environment plays a significant role in shaping domestic political processes, and despite whatever information and psychological operations a confronting country may face, the global globalization process will likely accelerate economic development and expand the information environment, which will itself lead to accepting the reality that will be shaped in humans as the best and most acceptable.

Georgia is gradually becoming part of global globalization despite obstacles on the path to democratization, and it may play a significant role in mega-economic processes through the South Corridor. For Georgia, expanding, strengthening and improving the information environment will create a reality where the country's population will have the opportunity to choose those domestic political directions themselves that will enable the country to pursue such a foreign policy course that will serve as a means of achieving the most clearly formulated pragmatic and rational goal of the country's population. Georgia must necessarily take into account that the new global political order depends on both the outcome of the Russia-Ukraine war and the subsequent globalization development processes. Globalization processes are multifaceted, yet it is notable that significant attention is still paid to geopolitical processes in today's environment, which also plays an important role in the new world order. Due to its geographic location, Georgia will have to comprehend and adapt to new global geopolitical processes.

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The Importance Of Strategic Communication Against The Backdrop Of The Russia-Ukraine War In The Context Of Information Warfare And The Existence Of A Cyber Security Policy

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Abstract

“The Russian-Ukrainian war represents a new chapter in world politics, which at the same time serves as a clear example of both temporary and international reaction. Russia’s actions are assessed as a desire for complete control and are perceived as a threat to both temporary and world security. The actions of the Russian Federation are aimed to maintain its influence inside and outside the country. An example is the 2008 war between Russia and Georgia, as a result of which Russia occupied 20% of Georgian territory.

Contemporary events demonstrate the intensification of the Russian Federation’s strategy and the use of conflict tactics. At the same time, the role of the Russian soft power is highlighted as a political instrument, an information war tactic that actively uses elements of democratic culture and values, while targeting not so much the domestic population as the global society.

It is important to emphasize that the manifestation of the potential influence of the Russian Federation in conditions of increasing the likelihood of the country’s national defense emphasizes the use of such cunning tactics as “information warfare”, which interests the internal processes in the enemy country, as well as democratic countries, which leads to destabilization of the decision-making process, which in turn makes it easy to influence simple decisions at all levels within the state.

Keywords:

Georgia, Russo-Ukraine War, Politics, threats, economics, challenges, information, cybersecurity, cyberspace.

Introduction

The Russian-Ukrainian war represents a new chapter in world politics, which is at the same time a striking example of both temporary and international reaction. Russia's actions are assessed as a desire for total control and are perceived as a threat to both temporary and international security. The actions of the Russian Federation are aimed at maintaining its influence inside and outside the country. The 2008 war between Russia and Georgia, which resulted in Russia occupying 20% of Georgia's territory, serves as an example.

The current processes clearly showed the aspiration of the Russian Federation and the methods of struggle with it. On the one hand, this is based on the Russian soft power policy, an insidious tactic of conducting an information war, where it is actively used to undermine the culture and values of democratic countries, thus aiming to support the population inside their own country. The Russian Federation actively uses cyber attacks, which are gradually developing. It is important to note the offensive potential of the Russian Federation in terms of effectiveness, and therefore the damaging effect is striking. It is important to emphasize that the manifestation of the potential influence of the Russian Federation in conditions of increasing the likelihood of a national defense of the country emphasizes the use of such cunning tactics as "information war", which interests the internal processes in the enemy country, as well as democratic countries, which leads to destabilization of the decision-making process, which in turn ensures ease of influence on simple decisions at all levels within the state.

Main Part

Russia and Ukraine in the context of modern history, the policy of "Russian soft power" was based on religious and ethnic factors. The Russian Federation constantly attracts Russia and the Ukrainian people to unity. It is these elements that form the basis of her information campaign, which is actively used both in front of the Ukrainian people and in front of her population.

The information war launched by the Russian Federation influenced all stages of the development of society. During periods of crisis, when religious diversification was emphasized, it also affected state ideology, and in some cases, Christianity was used as a control mechanism over the state, which was partially implemented by the Russian Federation. These actions led to changes in culture, language, and history, in connection with which it was reminiscent of the so-called "Russification" in the main postulate.

The policy of "Russian soft power" addresses the same opportunities as the desire for self-reliance based on national and cultural identity, freedom, and protection of one's rights in the security sphere. An element of hybrid warfare is constant activity that supports the current measures of the Russian Federation and its interests in the ethnic and cultural fields. In addition, history is constantly changing to accommodate such facts. This element of hybrid warfare is constantly at work, emphasizing Russia's historical and ongoing activities, leading to constant changes in the perception of history. However, each such activity was accompanied by undesirable consequences.

Despite these results, the security sphere continues to exist as a "battleground" and remains constant, accompanying defense mechanisms.¹

Strategic communication, actively used by Russia during the armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine, has significant consequences. Russia's intervention in Ukraine confirms that the information war led by the Russian Federation was precisely planned and continues with skillful strategic communication on the part of Ukraine, especially among senior Ukrainian representatives, including President Volodymyr Zelensky, and other public figures who are actively posting videos on live broadcast, calling on the population not to leave the country and defend their homeland.² The live video broadcast in the Ukrainian capital after the crisis with the Russian Federation brick firm is proof that it was a deliberate attempt to convey to the people of Ukraine the message about the freedom of that country's leadership from Russian occupation, which was a key motivation for many Ukrainian citizens to take up this challenge.

As a result of this strategic communication by the Russian Federation, confidence in itself has increased in the Ukrainian society, which again gives Russia a clear opportunity to annex Ukraine. It should be noted that after the crisis, of the Crimea annexation several patriotic songs were created.³

The Russian Federation's information warfare required more than just increased use of technology. The production of information warfare served the main goal, which was to attract neighboring countries into regional and world politics.

An information campaign (hereinafter referred to as information war) covers a wide range of possibilities, including intelligence, counterintelligence, propaganda, disinformation, information (television-radio-Internet space) collapse, and cyber blackmail.⁴

1 Frank G. Hoffman Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars, 2007

2 <https://shorturl.at/lsG13>

3 <https://shorturl.at/fmwO5>

4 A. Gotsiridze, Defending Cyberspace in Georgia, Journal of European Security and Defense Issues, Volume 7, issue 2 ISSN 2166-322X

The implementation of information warfare methods requires a variety of approaches. On the one hand, this is the main way to achieve the goal of national leadership in the field of communications, and on the other hand, it is constant control over this process and adaptation to changing factors.

It is important to note that following the Russian aggression in 2008, cyber blackmail was actively used against Georgia, which significantly constrained the country's communications and banking sectors. During this period, a large number of attacks were not noticed, since Internetization and dissemination of information via the Internet accounted for only 30%. However, today such attacks, with the high frequency of Internet use, create anxiety in society, which makes the national leadership more vulnerable to the implementation of their strategic plans.⁵

In 2019, such cyber blackmail resumed in the country, mainly aimed at web pages of government, non-government sectors, and partly financial entities. This process demonstrates how destructive the impact of propaganda and disinformation can be in parallel with the cyber defense of national critical infrastructure and how this can lead to its destruction.⁶

During the war between Russia and Ukraine, cyber operations figure prominently, with both sides actively employing them. The Russian Federation's cyber capabilities are not new to the region. Experts believe that the Russian Federation uses well-known tactics before launching active cyberattacks, assessing its capabilities and using them taking into account the critical infrastructure of other countries.⁷

Among them, the cyber attacks on Georgian cyberspace noted in 2019 should be highlighted. In such cases, Russia has access to technical means and chips, which makes its interference an important source of threat. Iran, in turn, has some of the best cyber capabilities that can be effectively deployed and have the potential for significant impact.⁸

Ensuring the cybersecurity of critical infrastructure is of particular importance, especially in a globalized environment where many interactions and information management occur programmatically and electronically. The banking sector, which plays an important role in the economic development of a country, represents one of the key sectors in both cash flow and important services and functions.⁹

Cyber espionage, which provides intelligence and counterintelligence collection services in the public sphere, including servers and databases, is of significant interest to the state. This sector of the country is becoming increasingly active, improving the quality of national security and, accordingly, influencing development processes.

We should not forget that the factors of cyber espionage can be very unpredictable, and may include not only software but also other technical means, which makes the process of hacking on a network instantaneous and more difficult to detect. An example is the Russian Federation's use of antivirus programs, which were widely used to protect against leaks of confidential information.¹⁰ However, not only software but also other technical means are used to be included in the network, which makes it possible to instantly transmit information to the enemy side.

In the production of information warfare, one of the approved methods is the involvement of influence agents created by companies, including the spread of disinformation and the promotion of propaganda. Such methods can be applied not only within the country but also widely used in social networks. It should be noted that the strategic communication that Ukraine is undertaking significantly reduces the impact of Russia's plans. This is confirmed by the fact that Russia's spying from reduced because of Ukraine and its ability to make Russia's tactics visible.¹¹

The activities of "agents influence" (group of people sponsored directly or indirectly by the Russian Federation or its satellite objects) the destabilization and improvement of the situation in the country. It is thanks to their efforts that disinformation television channels can be opened and false information spread. In cases where the manipulation of information is too significant, it is difficult to distinguish true information from a multitude of lies.

The formation of public opinion is based on religious beliefs, which is not suitable for the Russian Federation. This aspect poses a serious obstacle, especially when Christianity is mixed with state identity. People who identify as Christians can commit destructive acts "in the name of God" that harm both the country and their own religious beliefs, which serve the interests of the Russian Federation. Their goal is not to act initially as Christians, but rather to unite the population through religious dogma and to strengthen the consolidation of the population based on common values.

5 ა. გოცირიძე, რუსეთის კიბერშეტევები - მზარდი საფრთხე საქართველოსთვის, საქართველოს სტრატეგიისა და საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობების კვლევების ფონდი GFSIS (რონდელის ფონდი). ISSN 1512-4835

6 Ibid,

7 J. Hakala, J. Melnychuk, „Russia's Strategy in Cyberspace, NATO Strategic Communication Center of Excellence“, 2021

8 P. James Farwell and D. Arakelian, "What Does Iran's Cyber Capability Mean For Future Conflict?" "The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations,

9 G. Frank Hoffman, Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars, 2007

10 Nicole Perlroth and Scott Shane, The New York Times, How Israel Caught Russian Hackers Scouring the World for U.S. Secrets, 2017

11 <https://shorturl.at/psxGT>

Propaganda and disinformation are not new to the Russian Federation. The creation of an ideology of the Russian World is their main goal, opposition to foreign countries that are already successful in other developing countries of the world. The mentioned method is a hybrid war, which is often uncertain, but in the case of interest in state interests, does not contribute to strategic communication, which can deteriorate state management and ultimately lead to the loss of the country's independence.¹²

Russia's war with Ukraine, which began with the annexation of Crimea, led to an active Russian information war, supported by the annexation of Crimea.¹³ Ukrainian foreign and domestic policies are subject to control, and the Ukrainian population is under pressure, which leads to constant resistance.¹⁴

In the process of information war, it is necessary to highlight the Russian information war, which differs in the selection strategy. The Russian information war is directed both against external enemies and against its population, as a means of influence and manipulation. On the one hand, it serves to spread misinformation and achieve access to correct information, and on the other hand, there is a lack of access to alternative sources. In the area of the population, the threat of disruption to the stability of society is carried out by disinformation companies acting as proxies of the Russian Federation. This aspect represents an effective opportunity to destabilize a country, especially when Christianity is mixed with statehood. Since Christianity has become part of the official identity, its representatives often carry out destructive actions "in the name of God," which leads to damage to both the state and the population itself, which serves the goals of the Russian Federation. Their goal is not a Christian perception of actions, but the consolidation of the population on a religious basis, which undermines the consolidation of the population in support of the state and trust in their community, which serves the goals of the Russian Federation.

Conclusion

Information companies are not new to the Russian Federation. The creation of an information cavern by the Russian Ministry of Defense is the main operation directed against enemy countries and other successfully diversified countries. This method is hybrid warfare, which is often successful in spreading misinformation and undermining fear. Essentially, this represents a mixture of religious norms with feudal ideas, which ensures that the Russian Federation can use religion as a tool to control the population and achieve its political goals.

These companies influenced events and preceded the invasion of Ukraine, emphasizing the dominance of the Russian-speaking population. This method of information warfare is new to Russia, but even though it has many forms of action, its implementation is important for the implementation of strategic communication. It ensures excellence in disseminating correct information and maintaining public order. However, it is important to emphasize that this total control of information poses a threat to freedom of speech, especially in the field of Internet resources, which limits the access of the majority of the population to correct information provided by legitimate organizations not associated with the Russian Federation. "Inner Angel" is a means of the Russian Federation to suppress the ability of the population to become familiar with uncensored information and perceive reality following an alternative norm.¹⁵

It is important to note the presence of strategic communication in the state. The direct relationship of such individuals, their popularization, and the education of the population contribute to the sustainable growth of society, which is critically important for improving the quality of life. As a result, the country has seen an increase in the level of state security and an increase in the size of the educated population, which contributes to both economic and cultural development.

The global community demonstrates persistent resistance to phenomena such as the Russian information war. It should be noted here that the Russian information war is actively used against Ukraine, Georgia, and all neighboring countries that find themselves in Russia's neighborhood and promotes manipulation on religious, cultural, and national grounds.

It is also worth noting that actions taken within a religion can have a significant impact on society. The Ukrainian population, having received accurate and timely information, has a greater ability to resist the negative influences and manipulations offered by the Russian Federation. This is especially true after the annexation of Crimea in 2014. That is why strategic communication within the country allows for the consolidation of the population and supports the democratic transformation of neighboring countries.

12 Mandaville P., How Putin Turned Religion's 'Sharp Power' Against Ukraine, United State Institute of Peace, 2022.

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Prerequisites of Russo-Ukrainian War, Present Situation and Foreseeable Unfolding of Processes

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Abstract

When discussing the Russo-Ukrainian War, part of society has trouble understanding Russian motives and finding a logical explanation for an invasion. Ukrainian pursuit of Western values and attempts to become a part of the West should logically be in Russian interests, because that will potentially result in Russia having a successful, strong democracy at its borders. On the contrary the differences between Russia and the West are value differences in the first place, and that is the reason why facts are portrayed as two different realities. This paper is about worldview differences between Russia and the West. These worldviews could be helpful to understand (and not necessarily agree with) Russian point of view about the war and see the reality that they perceive, which will be helpful to respond to the threat more effectively.

Russia's actions are unanimously thought to be unlawful and unjustified, so how come that after almost two years of war Russians are still refusing to admit they are doing something wrong? To truly understand the reasons of why they are refusing to stop the war, I believe it is vital to observe the grim reality through the Russian lens: unlike some of the world leaders Russians do not think about this problem as it was happening somewhere distant. This is happening right at their doorstep and they are willing to do anything it takes to make sure they are safe.

Keywords:

Russian-Ukrainian War, NATO, Realism, Zero-sum game, Western values.

“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.”
— Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

Introduction

In this paper I argue that prerequisite of the Russo-Ukrainian War is the Russian way of looking at the reality through the different lens, compared to the rest of the world. I suggest, that this difference can best be explained by Realism, which aids us to better understand not only the reasons that have led Russia and Ukraine to war, but also to explain the ongoing processes in Eastern Europe, as well as predict the possible development/results of the war that will hit the two year mark very soon.

Almost everyone in the civilized world agrees that Russian aggression in Ukraine is Unjustified. A full-scale war that Russian officials still refer to as a Special Operation has been going on for more than a year and a half. Since the very first day of this war it earned non-stop critique from the international community; financial, technological, industrial and military sanctions against Russia; political isolation of Russian officials; arrest warrant for the President of Russia and many other actions that have one common goal amongst them: to weaken Russia to the point where it can no longer continue the war. We can blame the Russian stubbornness for them not giving up, or maybe we can berate the Western leaders for not being as categorical as they need to be, but the main goal of the war coming to a halt has yet to be achieved.

Russia’s actions are unanimously thought to be unlawful and unjustified, so how come that after almost two years of war Russians are still refusing to admit they are doing something wrong? To truly understand the reasons of why they are refusing to stop the war, I believe it is vital to observe the grim reality through the Russian lens: unlike some of the world leaders Russians do not think about this problem as it was happening somewhere distant. This is happening right at their doorstep and they are willing to do anything it takes to make sure they are safe.

Main Part

Political Prerequisites of War

When asked about the most hideous failures of the twentieth century politics one would expect an average person to answer one of two things: World War I or World War II. But as one would also expect the President of the Russian Federation does not think like the average person and that is why he thinks that the fall of the Soviet Union was “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century”.¹ Ukraine (like other post-soviet countries) dissociated from previously powerful Russia’s sphere of influence and became independent. That in theory meant that Ukraine was independent in making its political decisions. That was not exactly the case as there were occasions when Russia tried to interfere with Ukrainian political life.² In fact, the Russo-Ukrainian war (both in 2014 and 2022) is itself an example of Russia not allowing Ukraine to make an independent political decision to join NATO.³

One of the most important prerequisites for the Russo-Ukrainian war is the different way Russians think the international relations work. It is absolutely bizarre that this tremendous difference can be explained by the simple theory that almost all graduates learn in the political science class in college – Realism. Realism is a theory that stresses the state survival as an ultimate goal for the state-actors and evaluates their actions through the lens of responsibility, not taking the moral obligations into account.⁴ Two of the most important ideas that are relevant to Realism and help us to get a hold of the Russian actions are “no one to call” and the “zero sum game”. The first one incorporates the proposal that because there is no such thing as a world government, there is not a higher power that states can turn to to ask for help. This concept basically means that states are all by themselves and there is no one coming to help them.⁵ This explains why Russian officials act shocked and betrayed when the West supplies weapons to Ukraine: while the civilized world agrees that this is the right thing to do, Russians

1 Andrew Osborn. “Putin rues Soviet Collapse as demise of historical Russia”.
<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-rues-soviet-collapse-demise-historical-russia-2021-12-12/>

2 John Herbst. “Foreign interference in Ukraine’s election.”
<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/foreign-interference-in-ukraine-s-election/>

3 Center for Preventive Action. “War in Ukraine.” Global Conflict Tracker (2023).
<https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-ukraine>

4 Duncan Bell. “Realism.” Duncan Bell, “realism”. Encyclopedia Britannica (2023) <https://www.britannica.com/topic/realism-political-and-social-science>

5 Kevin Ramkisson. “Perspectives on Global Governance: The Efficacy of the System from a Liberal Institutional View”. Ryerson Journal of Policy Studies (2017). <https://www.torontomu.ca/content/dam/policystudies/journal/2017/Ramkisson-Perspectives-on-Global-Governance-7.pdf>

think it is none of their business. The second idea called “the zero sum game” in simple words means that no state can get stronger without making the other states weak. The process of state-strengthening happens at the expense of the other states.⁶ When matched with the reality of the Russo-Ukrainian war it is perspicuous why Ukraine joining NATO is perceived as a threat by Russia: even if Ukraine just by itself might not be getting stronger it helps NATO to take steps to be more impregnable. By definition of the zero-sum game, this must mean that Russia is inevitably getting weaker.

Even if one has just trivial knowledge about international relations, they possibly know that NATO and Russia do not get along well. While this seems like a simple truth, when Russo-Ukrainian war is discussed parties struggle to incorporate it to understand that stronger NATO does not mean assured peace in Europe for everyone. From Western perspective powerful NATO indeed translates into tranquility since that means more democracy, more openness and more cooperation among states. However, for Russia that is just another wave of NATO expansion, which actually brings NATO unprecedentedly close to Russian borders. While it is true that the Baltic States joined NATO in 2004, they arguably did not pose an imminent threat to Russia back then. On the other hand, Ukraine’s possible acceptance in NATO is a no-go for Russia: back in 2008, when on the Bucharest Summit it was announced that Ukraine and Georgia would eventually become NATO members, Russians sent a clear message: “Georgia’s and Ukraine’s membership in the alliance is a huge strategic mistake which will have most serious consequences

for pan-European security”.⁷ Russians were playing no games when they said NATO expansion was going to cause security issues in Europe and to make sure everyone understood how serious they were, they started a full-scale war against Georgia just after four months.⁸ Russia’s actions in Ukraine have intrinsically the same goal as they had in Georgia: to make sure these countries do not join NATO.

Present Situation

As Russian “Special Operation” proved to be unavailing and their ability to move deeper into Ukrainian territory came close to zero, Russians started to prepare their defense lines because Ukrainian counter offensive was unpreventable. It was just a matter of time and Russians did not waste any of it. They dug deep and prepared for Ukrainians who are trying their best to find the weak spots in Russian defense lines. While Ukrainians do have some great West-provided weapons, it is still very hard to breach the Russian defense lines with anti-tank trenches, dragon teeth and anti-tank mines.⁹ And just a food for thought: actual defense positions are behind all of that mentioned above.

The sheer difference between Russian and Ukrainian military capacities leaves Ukraine no other option than to seek political (followed by military aid) help in the West. Ukrainians already tried sitting down with Russians for negotiations but it ended with little to no results, as “Russian state tradition’s imperial drive is too strong to allow for a meaningful and lasting agreement”.¹⁰ Considering Russian attitudes about peace talks with Ukraine, Ukrainian officials see no point in negotiations with Russia in one-on-one format. They very well know that Ukraine need international help to achieve peace, and that is why Ukrainian government with Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy came up with the 10 point peace plan.¹¹ This plan consists of supposed solutions for 10 urgent Russo-Ukrainian war related issues. The first one is about Nuclear Safety and Radiation and the problem is caused by Russians occupying the Zaporizhzhia Power Plant which endangers continuous supply of electricity to Ukrainian power plant reactors.¹² Second point is Food Security since Ukraine exports more than 32 million tons of food worldwide and threatening these supply lines endangers every single human being who is on the end of that supply line.¹³ Third is Energy Security: attacking power lines and power plants leaves Ukrainian citizens susceptible to cold especially in winter. Fourth is about releasing the prisoners of war and those who were expelled from the country. Fifth is Restoration of Ukrainian Territorial Integrity as Ukrainian officials are not willing to negotiate what is accepted by the international community. Sixth point demands withdrawal of all Russian troops and Ceasefire, since with Russian troops on Ukrainian land no long term peace can be achieved. Seventh point regards to all the atrocities that the Russian troops have committed in Ukraine and that these criminals of war

6 Himanshu Singh. “Zero Sum Game (and Non Zero Sum).Wall Street Oasis (2023).<https://www.wallstreeoasis.com/resources/skills/economics/zero-sum-game-non-zero-sum>

7 Osborn Anderson. “Natopolitanism: The Atlantic Alliance since the Cold War”; “Putin rues Soviet collapse as demise of ‘historical Russia’”. Reuters,2021. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-rues-soviet-collapse-demise-historical-russia-2021-12-12/>

8 George Donovan. “Russian Operational Art in the Russo-Georgian War of 2008”. US Army War College (2009) <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a500627.pdf>

9 Danylo Kramarenko. “Three lines: Experts detail Russian defensive fortifications.”<https://newsukraine.rbc.ua/news/three-lines-experts-detail-russian-defensive-1692979666.html>

10 Andreas Umland. “Why Ukrainians see no sense in negotiating with Russia now.” Politico 2023. <https://www.politico.eu/article/ukraine-negotiate-russia-peace-war/>

11 Lidia Kelly. “Explainer: What is Zelenskiy’s 10-point peace plan?” Reuters, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/what-is-zelenskiys-10-point-peace-plan-2022-12-28/>

12 Lidia Kelly. “Explainer: What is Zelenskiy’s 10-point peace plan?” Reuters, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/what-is-zelenskiys-10-point-peace-plan-2022-12-28/>

13 Lidia Kelly. “Explainer: What is Zelenskiy’s 10-point peace plan?”. Reuters, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/what-is-zelenskiys-10-point-peace-plan-2022-12-28/>

have to be punished. Eighth point addresses the environmental damage that the war has already caused and still continues to cause. Ninth point stresses the importance of future assurance of peace and essential steps to be taken in order to make sure no one is able to repeat what Russia has done to Ukraine. This point basically asks for guarantees for Ukrainian security. And the final, tenth point of the peace plan suggests that parties should sign an official document about ending the war after the war is over. Ukrainian government alongside with the President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is working incessantly to gain as much international support for this 10 point peace plan as possible. This is to ensure that whenever political environment allows and the peace talks/negotiations continue, Ukraine is not there just by itself, but it has the international community backing it.

Foreseeable Unfolding of Processes

With numerous actors involved in the Russo-Ukrainian war, it is definitely hard to guess what the future holds. With diplomatic, military, economic and many other types of talks and negotiations going on simultaneously, possible outcome can be changing every day. Instead of trying to take every single one of them into account in great detail (which I believe is almost impossible) it is wiser to focus on the trends that have been established for more than a decade: Russian officials openly speak about NATO's Eastward expansion being the red line for them. They have proven that they are willing to do whatever it takes to halt that expansion. A little history lesson from Georgia shows that if Russia does not want a certain country to join NATO they start a war, and make sure that after that war there are disputed territories that significantly slow down the momentum of that country to join the alliance. As of today, the world has seen the exact same thing happening in Ukraine that happened in Georgia: Russia's neighboring post-soviet country gets close to joining NATO and then out of nowhere the war breaks out. After the war there are disputed/occupied territories that pose security threat to the NATO countries as in the case of the country joining NATO the Article 5 could be invoked, dragging the NATO countries into the war, which might deepen the European crisis.

In my opinion, Russia will use every option available at their disposal to make sure there is a disputed piece of land in Ukraine. Ending the war is not in their interests since peace will bring Ukraine closer to NATO and there will be a need for another war in order to drag Ukraine further away from its goals. Continuous or even 'frozen' war will get the Russian job done: not only will it ensure that NATO expansion stops, but it will also keep Ukraine destabilized. Other than that as the war is supposedly prolonged, Russia hopes that the world will 'lose interest' in Ukraine, which will eventually leave Ukraine one-on-one with Russia. And that is just what Russia wants. In today's fast-paced world there is something new happening every minute. This takes world's attention away from Ukraine.

Conclusion

Differences in Russian and the Western worldviews and values result in dissimilar perception of reality. While Russian war in Ukraine is violation of Ukrainian sovereignty for the West, it is the right of self-defense for Russia. This striking difference is rooted in the Russian way of looking at the world: Russians are realists, which means that they believe if one is getting stronger, another has to be weakened. They also believe that because there is no such thing as a world government, everyone is on their own. By joining these two principles together, we get Russian viewpoint: if Ukraine is getting stronger (or joins an alliance that is more powerful than Russia) that has to happen on the expense of Russia. It is Russian national interest not to allow Ukraine to get stronger, so they have a right to trump Ukrainian development. More importantly, when Russians try to stop Ukrainians to achieve their goals, no one else is justified to step in and help. This viewpoint, no matter how unacceptable or how intolerable it sounds, is the key of understanding what Russians are trying to do in Ukraine.

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The Implications of the Russia-Ukraine War on Transatlantic Relations

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Abstract

The presented article discusses the implications of the Russian-Ukrainian war on transatlantic relations. Based on the peculiarities of the document, comparable works have been taken into consideration and properly cited.

More specifically, the paper examines the transformation of transatlantic relations - from pre-war Russia-Ukraine relations to post-war consensus, and how the Russia-Ukraine war became the basis for a fundamental restructuring of the transatlantic union. At the same time, it is discussed whether this unanimity is strong and stable enough to be able to cope with geopolitical challenges for a long time.

The article discusses the challenges and possible collapse in transatlantic relations. China's role as a possible obstacle in Ukraine's moment. Additionally, the US's ability to maintain its hegemonic position in the scenario if China joins the second front. Also, if this fact leads to a softening of the attention of the transatlantic actors towards Ukraine?

In addition, the paper discusses Ukraine as a possible source of discord in future transatlantic relations, especially in light of the fragility of European leaders and the challenges that exist in European countries.

However, it is interesting to discuss the unpopular viewpoint that the transatlantic alliance was never in danger of disintegrating, and NATO's existence or non-existence was never raised. Accordingly, the Russia-Ukraine war did not have a significant impact on strengthening this alliance.

Transatlantic unity has always been like a roller-coaster, often fraught with disagreements and obstacles, Russia's invasion of Ukraine simply created another wave that further strengthened the centuries-old chain of cooperation.

Keywords:

Russia-Ukraine War, Transatlantic, NATO, West, Euro-Atlantic, Hegemon, China.

Introduction

The roller-coaster of transatlantic relations before the Russia-Ukraine war

It is obvious that a lot of things changed in the transatlantic security space on February 24, 2022. However, the question remains: Was the war the only thing that united Western civilization? And was transatlantic cooperation really on the verge of total collapse before coming together for the Russia-Ukraine War?¹

After winning the American presidential elections in 2021, Joe Biden promised that all the institutions that Donald Trump ignored, left or insulted, returned to the agenda of the United States, therefore, with Biden's policy, NATO again rose to the list of priority issues of the States. In short, the United States returned to its usual role as the leader of the West, as the country that always led the transatlantic partnership, until the unexpected victory of Donald Trump changed the government policy of the States.²

However, it is interesting to discuss the unpopular viewpoint that the transatlantic alliance was never in danger of disintegrating, and NATO's existence or non-existence was never raised. Accordingly, the Russia-Ukraine war did not have a significant impact on strengthening this alliance.

Transatlantic unity has always been like a roller-coaster, often fraught with disagreements and obstacles, Russia's invasion of Ukraine simply created another wave that further strengthened the centuries-old chain of cooperation.

In terms of global geopolitics, the transatlantic relationship's strength has been evident since February 24, 2022. However, it may be argued that in some areas, the transatlantic alliance already existed fairly firmly before the war. For example, as outrageous as some of Trump's rhetoric may have been, the facts of the time do not point to the collapse of the transatlantic relationship at all. In 2017-21, NATO not only weakened but also witnessed another expansion when North Macedonia joined the alliance in 2020. The dominant narrative in Russia and popular in the "West" about the provocative nature of NATO expansion could not prevent the strengthening of the transatlantic relationship.

The partnership has never been in danger of disintegrating or facing irrelevance. The alliance's primary objective—to establish a system of collective security for the Euro-Atlantic region—has never been substantially endangered by past debates over burden-sharing and differences over activity outside the region. Additionally, the alliance has become a more active player outside of its immediate region as a result of NATO's expansion into North Macedonia, thus enhancing its significance as a security actor. It's also noteworthy that a year ago, two long-standing NATO members, Greece and Turkey, were on the verge of war over natural gas fields found close to Cyprus, an island nation where both Athens and Ankara already had competing long-term interests. However, the alliance's unity has since given way to various forms of infighting, which has threatened to undermine the collective security pact.³

However, did this alliance suffice to preserve the transatlantic unity, or did it require further encouragement to convince the nations on both sides of the ocean that they were not drifting aimlessly down the Pacific Ocean like a dead fish? Before the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war, there was widespread pessimism about the alliance's future despite some of the above-mentioned victories, which may not have been entirely unreasonable. Early in the twenty-first century, NATO appeared to be deeply divided, with leaders on both sides of the Atlantic casting doubt on its goals and future prospects. Throughout this time, Trump has regularly referred to the alliance as being out of date; in 2019, French President Emmanuel Macron discussed NATO's "brain death."⁴

Europe had to reflect and take the necessary action to safeguard its own security objectives in light of the apparent breakdown between Europe and Trump. PESCO was founded in Europe in 2018. As part of the European Union's (EU) security and defence strategy, 26 of the 27 national armed forces pursue structural integration under PESCO, with Malta being the lone exception. Initially, many experts even suggested that PESCO could serve as a replacement for NATO in Europe, however, these "hopes" were shattered, because the organization has yet to make any notable contributions to European security and will take a very long time to significantly increase its military capabilities and achieve a significant degree of strategic autonomy.⁵ In light of this, it may be concluded that Europe's attempt to establish a separate defensive posture from the US has so far failed.⁶

The coexistence of conflict on both sides of the Atlantic is a normal state of transatlantic relations, and it is largely due to the work put forth to successfully establish the relationship as well as its growing complex nature,

1 J. Ellison, M. Cox, J. M., Hanhimäki, H. M., Harrison, N. P., Ludlow, A. Romano, K. Spohr & V. Zubok, 2023. The War in Ukraine. *Cold War History*, 23(1), 1–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2023.2162329>

2 J. Ellison, M. Cox, J. M., Hanhimäki, H. M., Harrison, N. P., Ludlow, A. Romano, K. Spohr & V. Zubok, 2023. The War in Ukraine. *Cold War History*, 23(1), 1–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2023.2162329>

3 J. Ellison, M. Cox, J. M., Hanhimäki, H. M., Harrison, N. P., Ludlow, A. Romano, K. Spohr & V. Zubok, 2023. The War in Ukraine. *Cold War History*, 23(1), 1–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2023.2162329>

4 The Economist, Emmanuel Macron warns Europe: NATO is becoming brain-dead. *The Economist*, 2019, November 7 <https://www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-warns-europe-nato-is-becoming-brain-dead>

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6 V.M. Patil and S. (2022, June 16). Ukraine crisis and its impact on the transatlantic relations. ORF. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/ukraine-crisis-and-its-impact-on-the-transatlantic-relations/>

which opens up endless opportunities for both, cooperation and rivalry. It is also a natural result of the fact that there are numerous democracies with an infinitely varied range of security interests. But, paradoxical as it may seem, the disagreement itself will remain one of the greatest strengths of the close but contentious relationship between the United States and Europe. The war in Ukraine will probably confirm this fact in the end.⁷

Overall, American foreign policy actions have not led to a weakening of transatlantic cooperation in security issues, despite Donald Trump's unpredictable and erratic behaviour and the extreme polarization of the American political system.⁸ However, transatlantic relations, both throughout its history and in the period before the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war, were somewhat in crisis. However, the war in Ukraine proved and showed the west itself, which had descended into pessimism, the main thing is that the west did not die with the end of the Cold War, it was only sleeping and waiting for the right moment to achieve the old unity. This is how the transatlantic unity returned to the policy of containment at its best.

Main Part

“The Ukraine Effect” on Transatlantic Relations

The war in Ukraine had an immediate impact on the whole of Europe. The West seemed to have a new incentive for cooperation, as the security paradigm was turned upside down. There is no longer any doubt as to whose side is right in a democratic world because this is not just a war against Ukraine in Europe, it is a war against Europe. The conflict in Ukraine has served as a reminder to the Euro-Atlantic community that sometimes established comfort zones—in this case, peace—are unexpectedly destroyed. NATO countries realized that the issues of collective security had not changed and remained the same as they were before the collapse of the USSR.⁹

War returned to the European continent with bombs that killed or displaced millions of civilians. The Atlantic alliance has never been so united on the Russian factor, Russia has been declared a terrorist state and a war criminal.¹⁰

Accordingly, Europe has taken retaliatory steps, and in some cases, these steps would have been unthinkable if not for the start of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Among the many significant changes was Germany's sudden decision to dramatically increase its military spending and reduce its dependence on Russian energy as quickly as possible. Along with Germany's declaration, several European NATO members also announced their intention to increase their defence budgets. Most notably, for the first time in its history, the European Union has announced a grant of 500 million euros to buy arms and defence equipment for Ukraine, a country embroiled in a brutal war. An equally important step is the will to join NATO by the neutral Scandinavian countries - Finland and Sweden.¹¹

None of the above, of course, means that the Euro-Atlantic Union should prepare for war. However, a return to a firm policy of containment by the alliance is now the West's best option. The fundamental goal will remain the same as before: to counter Russian expansionism, to inflict real damage on the Russian regime, and to encourage internal changes that will lead to the ultimate collapse of Putin and Putinism.¹² Deterrence now requires greater unity and effort than it did before Russia attacked Ukraine. NATO must make it obvious that without it, it cannot achieve success in collective security. It should act as a strong deterrent in the East and increase spending in the long run. Germany's decision to spend now 100 billion euros and at least two percent of GDP on defense is a big step in the right direction.¹³

Following the invasion, the US and Europe reacted rapidly to support Ukraine militarily, diplomatically, and financially. Effective transatlantic coordination led to what can be called a “NATO moment” in Europe, as the Ukraine effect added a new dimension to transatlantic relations, allowing NATO to fully awaken. Even centuries-old neutral states decided to contribute to NATO due to its rising image.¹⁴

Big transformation or big acceleration

For the Ukrainian side, the transatlantic aid turned out to be crucial. This unity gave rise to the hope that the democratic countries in Europe would never again be alone in the face of such an enemy as Russia, although it is interesting whether this is truly a significant and lasting transformation in transatlantic relations or merely a

7 J. Ellison, M. Cox, J. M., Hanhimäki, H. M., Harrison, N. P., Ludlow, A. Romano, K. Spohr & V. Zubok, 2023. The War in Ukraine. *Cold War History*, 23(1), 1–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2023.2162329>

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9 G.R Olsen, “America is Back” or “America First” and the Transatlantic Relationship. *Politics and Governance*, 10(2), 2022, p. 154–164. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v10i2.5019>

10 G.R Olsen, “America is Back” or “America First” and the Transatlantic Relationship. *Politics and Governance*, 10(2), 2022, p. 154–164. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v10i2.5019>

11 J. Ellison, M. Cox, J. M., Hanhimäki, H. M., Harrison, N. P., Ludlow, A. Romano, K. Spohr & V. Zubok, 2023. The War in Ukraine. *Cold War History*, 23(1), 1–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2023.2162329>

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significant acceleration and an effective, however short-term, response to Russia's attack.

It may be argued that such unity would never be absolute and permanently stable given the discussion of the ups and downs of transatlantic ties that were just made. The refusal of Hungary and Turkey to confirm Finland and Sweden's participation in NATO even after the start of the war was a glaring example of this. Many people in Europe, most notably French President Emmanuel Macron expressed worry that their continent will suffer significantly more from the conflict than North America. Indeed, the European drive to end the war and find some sort of diplomatic solution is likely to intensify as time goes on. The war in Ukraine has hardly transformed NATO into an alliance aiming for complete unanimity. Although many things have changed, NATO has always been and remains an alliance of nations with a variety of security concerns.¹⁵

Although the Russian invasion at least temporarily brought NATO together, economic worries emerged on both sides of the Atlantic. Unquestionably, some economic actions taken by the United States and its European allies since February 24 are related to the growing inflation that is being fueled by rising energy costs as Europe attempts to get itself off dependence on Russian oil and gas. In addition, some European nations are concerned about how often Americans participate in decision-making in Europe. Despite considering the US to be a vital ally, France does not want Washington to be involved in all European decisions. France is paving the way in Europe's fight to acquire new energy sources to prevent over-dependence on the US for its energy requirements.¹⁶ Some European countries also fear being drawn into the US-China rivalry, while others are willing to compromise if it means they can continue to exist under the American security umbrella.¹⁷

The United States, once again emerging as the leader of the West, must listen carefully to its allies and be willing to change course to keep everyone on board. There may come a time when internal divisions will raise questions about the strength of the coalition. Another lesson from the history of transatlantic ties is that, throughout the Cold War, NATO appeared to be in crisis all the time, except when it mattered most.¹⁸

Compared to the Cold War era, China is now Washington's largest geopolitical opponent in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond, which is a huge change. At a time when relations between China and Russia were exceptionally close, the Ukrainian issue emerged. Beijing has accused the Euro-Atlantic Union of insufficient consideration of Russia's security interests. At the same time, China is expected to help Russia mitigate the economic consequences of the sanctions within its capabilities.

Therefore, deterring Russia requires paying attention to China. One way to increase the West's leverage over Beijing would be to strengthen political, economic and military ties between the advanced democracies of Asia, Europe and North America. For instance, the leaders of the European Union and NATO may attend an expanded G-7 meeting along with Australia and South Korea. In order to effectively compete with China as well as contain Russia, these states and organizations will need to create shared strategies and policies.¹⁹

According to Biden's national security plan, which was released in October 2022, China continues to be the United States' top security concern. China has the potential to cause transatlantic conflict in the long run. Finding a unifying strategy inside Europe will be difficult in some nations, particularly in Eastern Europe.²⁰

There is a risk that the US and its European allies won't be able to pay adequate attention to Ukraine, which is at war with Russia, as a result of the relocation of US forces in Europe and the Indo-Pacific. Although the US is still the dominant military power and can compete with Russia and China in Eurasia and the Indo-Pacific simultaneously with equal or matching capabilities, it may not be able to compete with both China and Russia on two fronts. Furthermore, unlike the European continent, where transatlantic alliances have been pursuing common interests for years, the Indo-Pacific region involves cooperation with a vast number of nations, each with diverse interests and agendas, making it difficult for the US to compete with China there.²¹

The rise of other strong actors throughout time reduced the impact of US hegemony on the global geopolitical landscape, and the liberal international order suffered under US hegemony.²² But America continues to be the most active ally and a significant supporter of transatlantic relations.

Despite the great transformation experienced by the transatlantic relations after the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, the question is still being asked - will the US remain the main guarantor of European security, despite the latter's new strategic and political risks, or the resources, provided by the alliance after the start of the war, will remain only the express of the "big acceleration".

15 J. Ellison, M. Cox, J. M., Hanhimäki, H. M., Harrison, N. P., Ludlow, A. Romano, K. Spohr & V. Zubok, 2023. The War in Ukraine. *Cold War History*, 23(1), 1–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2023.2162329>

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18 I.H. Daalder, 2022, March 1. The Return of Containment. *Foreign Affairs*. <https://shorturl.at/rzDOW>

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Ukraine as a potential source of discord

We all remember well the unity of the world after 9/11, when for a few days “we were all Americans” and for the first time in world history, NATO’s Article 5 on collective defense was invoked, even though on that day the ultimate geopolitical hegemon of the time, the USA, was threatened, this unity lasted a short period in politics. The Russia-Ukraine War will probably not be an exception to the rule, depending on the nature of world politics. The present level of unity may deteriorate along with the rise of issues in European nations, and Ukraine itself may soon become a possible source of discord. The linings of such disagreements are slowly appearing in various European countries.²³

European leaders believe that this war has far more negative consequences for Europe itself than for North America, and that it is time for the US to stop pretending that it is not the case and to motivate the European side to contribute as much money as possible to the war in Ukraine, because Washington wants to be more active to play the role of leader. Some in the US foreign policy establishment worry that Europe is dragging its feet on this issue.²⁴

After some time, it’s expected that European leaders would want to terminate the conflict in any way possible and will put more pressure on Ukraine to propose diplomatic solutions. An uneasy truce may be agreed upon between Russia and Ukraine.²⁵

Although the post-2022 transatlantic relationship appears on a strong footing, affirming alliance solidarity and multilateral cooperation, it is quite possible that this will not last long after creating a crisis in subsidies and tariffs, military involvement or defence spending.

As of today, such a leading politician as the French president is trying to undermine the basis of transatlantic cooperation with his comments. which may create cataclysms of disagreement in the transatlantic unity regarding the Russia-Ukraine war.

Conclusion

The Russia-Ukraine war of 2022 clearly showed us that this conflict became the basis for a fundamental restructuring of the transatlantic union. The Russian attack proved the strength of the transatlantic alliance with strong and common reactions from all European governments and the US government. Dormant Euro-Atlantic unity seems to have been reinvigorated by coming together in support of Ukraine.

Putin, who thought the West was weak and divided and had picked the right time to strike, was wrong. The West has shown remarkable unity in its response to Russia by demonstrating tough, firm leadership. The result was significant: strong sanctions, enhanced deterrence, and full political solidarity with Ukraine.

Despite the US’s obvious leadership in this unity, we cannot conclude that it has reestablished itself as an invincible hegemon because China has emerged as a powerful competitor in the global system. Despite the strong interest and motivation of the US to go all out with its policy against Russia, it may simply not have the strength to fight on two fronts at once if it needs in order to mitigate the risks to its security.

Therefore, it is important to analyze how the current unity of the transatlantic alliance can be maintained, how easily it can be broken and what should be done to prevent this from happening.

As the Russian-Ukrainian War continues, it is important to keep in mind that European leaders are becoming more fragile. In light of this, the difficulties the European governments are confronting should be examined, and appropriate action should be taken to protect both, those nations’ interests and those of Ukraine. In the absence of such action, Ukraine might soon emerge as a possible cause of division for the Euro-Atlantic community and as a very weak and problematic indicator for transatlantic relations.

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The Development of the “Middle Corridor” Parallel to the War between Russia and Ukraine

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Abstract

The article examines the process of development of the “Trans-Caspian International Transport Road”, the so-called “Middle Corridor”, parallel to the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. The reason for the increased and accelerated interest in the specified transport corridor is emphasized. Russia’s attempt to use energy resources, logistics, transit, and the economy as a whole as a weapon of influence on Europe. Mutual sanctions and Russia’s withdrawal from global economic structures, restriction of access to banking, customs, and other financial processes. As a result, rising inflation, declining real wages and rising consumer prices for EU countries have also led to increased interest among EU leaders in developing transport corridors bypassing Russia. The article also describes the interest and participation of China, Central Asia, the South Caucasus, and Turkey in the creation and development of various infrastructures and agreements on simplified customs procedures, which will improve the throughput of the Middle Corridor, increase freight turnover in the East-West direction, and therefore reduce the dependence of all these regions, including the eurozone, from Russia as the main transit hub between Asia and Europe.

Keywords:

Trans-Caspian International Transport Road, Middle Corridor, on simplified customs procedures.

Introduction

The Second World War significantly changed the geopolitical situation of the world, especially Europe. The borders of countries changed, various economic and political blocs were created, and there was a hidden conflict between the collective West and the social camp, an era of indirect wars, which manifested itself in the fact that one side or the other encouraged conflicts by providing weapons and finance, or at least training of fighters. Europe was effectively divided into two parts: Western Europe, which slowly united into a single economic space and is today known as the European Union, and the second part - the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Eastern Europe participating in the Warsaw Pact. The warring parties often used elements of hybrid warfare, which manifested themselves in information operations, through the production of disinformation propaganda, the creation of intelligence networks, the creation of conflict hotspots in different parts of the world, or economic sanctions to undermine the financial sector and weaken its influence. However, despite all this, cooperation between Europe and the Soviet Union in various fields, including trade, did not stop until the collapse of the latter. In parallel with these events, after reforms and opening of borders in the 1970s-80s, the People's Republic of China is slowly being drawn into the world economy and is actively developing cooperation with Europe.¹ It should be noted that the geographical position of the USSR, which was naturally located between Europe and Asia, allowed it to be one of the important hubs of trade between them, through the so-called Northern Corridor. The Soviet Union also controlled the Trans-Caspian route, which was mainly used to transport Azerbaijani and Kazakh oil, although its overall capacity was significantly inferior to the Northern Corridor.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation continued to cooperate with Europe as an independent entity. Their relationship has not been stable for three decades. It included cooperation, conflict, and sanctions. In the early 1990s, Russia sought to establish closer economic ties with Europe and the European Union. In 1994, a partnership and cooperation agreement was signed between Russia and the European Union, which provided for cooperation in various fields, including trade and economics. In the early 2000s, Russia became a more active partner of the European Union. Exporting energy resources, especially natural gas, to Europe has become an important element of the Russian economy. However, along with cooperation, relations between Russia and the European Union were negatively affected by the Kremlin's military actions inside and outside the country. The first war was in 1994-96, then the second in 1999 in Chechnya, 2008 in Georgia, which was followed by an unfavorable reaction from Europe, followed, respectively, in 2014 by the first crisis in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea. On the Russian side, this event led to a cooling of relations between Russia and the European Union; sanctions were introduced against Russia, which significantly affected the Russian economy, to a certain extent limiting access to international markets and other financial resources. However, despite tensions, trade continued in limited volumes amid sanctions and political pressure.² Russia remained one of the main arteries connecting Asia and the European Union in the process of trade, but without the former Soviet republics, that is, it could no longer directly influence the trans -Sipian, less relevant, but existing "middle corridor".

Main Part

The Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, caused a huge shock to the global economy, especially in energy and food markets. Supply chains were disrupted, which automatically resulted in unprecedented price increases. Like other economic regions, the Eurozone was vulnerable to the negative economic consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This was mainly caused by Europe's over-dependence on Russian energy resources and its logistics corridor. 40% of gas imported into Europe came from Russia. Also, Russia and Ukraine played a large role in the import of food and fertilizers to the European Union, their total share was 34% for wheat, 17% for corn, 27% for barley, 55% for sunflower oil, 10% for vegetable oil, 29 % for various fertilizers.³ Controversial sanctions have disrupted trade relations with Russia, affecting virtually everything from energy and logistics to ongoing banking and customs procedures. Western countries have realized that Moscow can use its geopolitical position and logistics networks as a weapon. European consumer markets have faced adverse consequences due to restrictions on agricultural and energy exports from Russia, as well as dependence on economic and logistics routes (source), a cascade of sanctions and counter-sanctions has forced Russia out of global economic structures. (source) This development of events made cooperation with Russia, including on the Trans-Siberian Railway, impossible. The so-called Northern (Russian) corridor is the main East-West land corridor. The war significantly increased inflation, which in turn led to higher consumer prices, especially for energy and food. In 2022, EU inflation rates have soared to levels not seen in three decades. From 1997 to December 2021, the maximum annual inflation in the EU was only 4.4% (July 2008). In October 2022 it reached 11.5%.

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According to data from the first quarter of 2023, real hourly wages have fallen in 22 European countries over the past 12 months. That is, nominal growth was lower than inflation, which led to a fall in real wages. The decline in real wages ranged from 0.8% in Luxembourg to 15.6% in Hungary. Which means an increase in consumer prices. Thus, there was a need to find alternative markets and supply networks. Today, one of the important means and ways to bypass the Russian Federation and ensure cargo transportation from Asia to the European Union is the “Trans-Caspian”. “International transport route”, that is, “Middle Corridor”. which has the resources to become a competitive alternative to the Northern Corridor and reduce Europe’s dependence on economic pressure from Russia.

The Middle Corridor is a multimodal land and sea transport corridor that transports various types of products from China to Europe via Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan to Georgia, and on to Turkey or via the Black Sea directly to EU ports. The route consists of more than 4,250 km of railway tracks and 500 km of sea routes. Which is 2000 km shorter than the Northern Corridor through Russia.⁴ The main projects associated with this concept were the Trans-Caspian gas and oil pipelines, the construction of which began in the 2000s and ensured the transportation of energy resources from Central Asia. and Azerbaijan to Turkey and then to Europe.

After the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the South Caucasus and Central Asia became more attractive as a trade route. At the end of 2022, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Georgia presented a road map for the development of the “Middle Corridor” until 2027. According to the Prime Minister of Georgia, “All three countries are interested and working together to remove all obstacles and make the Middle Corridor even more attractive to China, Central Asian countries, and Asia as a whole.”⁵ The support of large states and organizations in the development of road communications between the South Caucasus and Central Asia is also important. China is interested in the Middle Corridor, having signed an agreement with Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to continue work on a railway connecting the three countries,⁶ which will make the Middle Corridor even more effective, although this is aimed more at supporting the Chinese “One Belt, One Road” project, its development is important for increasing the permeability of the Middle Corridor. Beijing has also signed a strategic partnership agreement with Georgia that could allow it to participate in the construction of the Anaklia deep-sea port, further increasing investment and improving the corridor’s capacity. Chinese Ambassador to Georgia Zhou Qian emphasized China’s interest in the infrastructure projects of the “Middle Corridor” and noted that “in general, we, Chinese companies and enterprises, are interested in all infrastructure projects “One Belt - One Road”, “Middle Corridor”. Corridor”. “If conditions are good, Chinese companies will be able to participate in the construction of the Anaklia port or other projects without any problems.”⁷ The EU’s interests regarding the route also overlap. In addition to discussing the prospects for Georgia’s accession to the EU, Europe is considering the development of the “Middle Corridor” as a way to reduce dependence on Russian energy resources and logistics routes. As confirmed by the visit of the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen to Azerbaijan and the signing of an agreement that provides for doubling the transportation of energy resources to Europe, according to her statement, the European Union seeks to double gas supplies from Azerbaijan to the European Union in a few years, which will be crucial for the security of gas supplies to Europe, Also in 2022, the European Union supported the construction of the Black Sea Electric Cable, which will supply energy from Azerbaijan to Europe.⁸ Moreover, Central Asia fits perfectly into the EU’s Global Gateway initiative, a multibillion-dollar program to develop ports and railway infrastructure, which is Brussels’ response to China’s Belt and Road Initiative. (Source) Reinhard Buttikofer, a representative of the Green Party of the European Parliament, noted - “The very discussion of the global gateway has already influenced China. Those who listen carefully to the voice of Beijing will notice that Xi Jinping suddenly started talking about quality projects - this is something new. He suddenly talks about sustainable development as news. The fact that China is now moving towards these criteria is already a positive effect that we have produced. And in this regard, I welcome any competition.”As a rule, in conditions of healthy competition, competitors try to produce products⁹ more high quality to be firmly present in the market, which should have a positive impact on the development of the middle corridor.

Conclusion

It is also important that the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh is coming to

4 Waldemar Walter, Article: Challenges and opportunities of the Middle Corridor, 2022. <https://bit.ly/4083EeJ>

5 Tamar Elisashvili, Article: ირაკლი ღარიბაშვილი - საქართველო, აზერბაიჯან და ყაზახეთი ვიანამშრომლობთ, რათა შუა დერეფ ანი გახდეს მეტად მიმზიდველი, მათ შორის ცენტრალ ური აზიის ქვეყნებისთვის, 2023. <https://bit.ly/4040n0f>

6 Joanna Lillis . 2022. “China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan sign landmark railroad deal”. <https://eurasianet.org/china-kyrgyzstan-uzbekistan-sign-landmark-railroad-deal>

7 Civil.ge. 2023. “Chinese Ambassador Confirms Chinese Interest in Anaklia Port”. <https://civil.ge/archives/558042>

8 Euroactiv.com. 2022. “EU, Azerbaijan launch Black Sea electricity” . <https://bit.ly/3QacdB8>

9 Jorge Liboreiro & Christopher Pitchers. 2021. “Brussels has presented a “true alternative” project to Beijing rival’s massive Road and Belt Initiative. <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2021/12/01/eu-plans-to-raise-300bn-to-counter-china-s-infrastructure-spending>

an end, creating a sense of stability that was considered one of the obstacles in the development of the “Middle Corridor”, since there was a risk that the conflict would spread to neighboring countries, which would complicate the movement of goods. On October 15, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev raised the State Flag of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the city of Khankend and noted in his speech: “Today is a historic day. Today the flag of Azerbaijan was raised in the central square of Khankendi. I cordially congratulate the Azerbaijani people on this day.¹⁰” Armenia recognized the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, including the Karabakh region, which was the main source of the conflict.¹¹ Accordingly, there is an opportunity to develop the format of the Eastern Partnership, taking into account Azerbaijani-Armenian relations and the integration of Georgia into the European structure.

Thus, against the background of the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, starting in February 2022, the “Middle Corridor” is becoming an important, competitive alternative to the “Northern Corridor” through Russian territory. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine caused a significant stir, the West was unanimous in its decisions, which resulted in a package of 11 economic sanctions against Moscow. This limited the Russian economy’s access to international markets and other financial resources.¹² Also, under the conditions of the current war and sanctions, it was almost impossible to use the Northern Corridor; they fell out of the world economic structures. This became the reason for China, the countries of Central Asia and the South Caucasus, as well as the European Union, to look for transit routes bypassing Russia. Turkey is interested in the project and takes one of the leading roles, which has strategic cooperation with countries of Turkish origin, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, and is trying to play an important role in cargo transportation between Asia and Europe. As a result, for the first time since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia is losing economic power. By influencing Central Asia and the South Caucasus, Europe supports the development of a middle corridor, since this project will allow them to reduce their dependence on the energy resources of the Russian Federation and its logistics routes. It should also be noted that new political interests are emerging in parallel with new economic blocs, and therefore Russia’s influence in this direction is also decreasing in Central Asia and the South Caucasus, which accordingly strengthens the representation of Europe in both regions.

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“Rashism” - the Myth, or the New Severe, Esoteric Challenge for European Security?

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Abstract

A bloody war is going on in Ukraine, almost in the middle of Europe. In connection with the mentioned war, the term Rashism, which is an expression of Russian fascism, is mentioned more and more often in the world press and scientific societies. The purpose of the present study is to identify the mentioned issue and determine whether this concept is used only superficially, or if it actually has esoteric prerequisites and similarities with fascism and Nazism, which destroyed the whole of Europe, in the 20th century? For this purpose, taking into account the relevant experience, an analysis of the Russian propaganda system was carried out and a particularly important area for research was determined: the political-philosophical basis of propaganda - a set of doctrines developed by Alexander Dugin. Among the objects of research, the theory of “Noomakhia”, presented by Dugin as a new philosophical direction, was especially important. The term “Noomakhia” means the “wars of minds”. At the same time, was performed a content analysis of the materials, related to Dugin’s political orientation and his interest in esoteric teachings, taken from the world’s scientific and open media sources. After summarizing the obtained results, it was revealed that the main ideological vector of the modern Russian propaganda machine is aimed at the demonization of the so-called “collective West”; In this case, Dugin’s political philosophy has a fundamental role. However, at the same time, the roots of Dugin’s teachings are deeply rooted in occult, Nazi, and fascist, Nordic, pagan teachings. Based on the above-mentioned issues, it was concluded that Rashism is not a myth. It is just a serious threat to European and world security.

Keywords:

Rushism, Fascism, Nazism, Dugin’s Political Philosophy, Noomakhia, Propaganda, Occultism.

Introduction

French journalists, Louis Pauwels, and Jacques Bergier published the book “The Morning of the Magicians”, in 1960. Its main theme was the esoteric, occult ideology of the 3rd Reich. The authors argued that Adolf Hitler, his closest entourage, and almost all Nazi Party were obsessed with a kind of esoteric worldview, which eventually caused tens of millions of victims, unprecedented destruction, and social cataclysms not only in Europe but the whole world.¹ Although the above-mentioned book became an instant bestseller and was translated into many languages, it was described by Mircea Eliade, a great scholar of religion and specialist in occult traditions, as “a curious mélange (mixture) of popular science, occultism, astrology, science fiction, and spiritual techniques”.² Nevertheless, time has shown that Bergier’s and Pauwel’s work was not baseless. Moreover, scientists from many countries consistently substantiated the occult roots of the Italian-fascist³ or German-Nazi⁴ regimes. At the same time, the high authorities of science warn us that the threat of sacralization of politics and turning it into a kind of religion is still a constant and dangerous reality not only in the authoritarian environment but even in the democratic world itself⁵ (Gentile 2006); Moreover, as past experience shows, the possibility of subordinating the scientific field to these processes is also very real.⁶ After all the above, it should be noted that during the ongoing bloody war in Ukraine, in the middle of Europe, the term “**Rashism**”, which is used as an expression of Russian fascism, appears in the world media more and more often. **The present research examines whether the mentioned concept is used only superficially, for anti-Russian propaganda, to falsify Russian politics, or if it actually has esoteric prerequisites and similarities with fascism and Nazism, which destroyed the whole of Europe, at the beginning of the 20th century?**

British scientist, David Welch, an expert in propaganda and public relations, for a better understanding of National Socialism, performed a study of Nazi propaganda-specific aspects.⁷ The same method is used in this work. The Content Analysis of data from open scientific sources and world media, related to the modern Agitprop system, will make it possible to enlighten some deep features of contemporary Russian politics.

Main Part

The term “Propaganda” apparently comes from the Latin name of the organization created in 1622 by the Roman Catholic Church: “Congregatio de Propaganda Fide”.⁸ As a political tool, it was mentioned in Vladimir Lenin’s work “What Is to Be Done?”, which was first published separately in 1902), and was associated with the term “**agitation**”.⁹ The new term, “**Agitprop**” (“agitation-propaganda”), was formed in Soviet reality¹⁰ (Smith 1999). Though the propaganda machine’s most terrifying and unbelievable results were demonstrated during the Nazi regime in the Third Reich, real conceptual development and transformation, even into nowadays actual fields of “public relations” and applied sociology, “Propaganda” had undergone in the United States, in the early 1910s, by such great scientists and public figures as Walter Lippmann (1889-1974), Paul Lazarsfeld (1901-1976), and Edward Bernays (1891-1995) were. Edward Bernays’ book “Propaganda” is a classic of the above-mentioned spheres. The current Russian System of “**Agitprop**” inherited the accumulated knowledge, experience, and methods of all its predecessors.

In the present research, the Kremlin Propaganda System is divided into five layers:

1. **I layer** – “On Battlefield Level” - the most superficial level
2. **II layer** – “Mass-Media level”
3. **III layer** – “Military Experts’ level”
4. **IV layer** – “Scientific level”
5. **V layer** – “Philosophy level” – the deepest level of the System

Each of them requires a detailed discussion, but the purpose of this work is to cover the deepest layer of the system - **The political philosophy** that underlies the contemporary Russian “**Agitprop**” – because, as it will be shown, this sphere has a cardinal influence on all the upper components. Also, **the special interest of the research is to clearly show where the mentioned philosophy takes its roots.**

1 Louis Pauwels, Jacques Bergier. 2009. The morning of the Magicians. Destiny Books.

2 Eliade Mircea. 1976. Occultism, Witchcraft, and Cultural Fashions: Essays in Comparative Religion. London: The University of Chicago Press Ltd.

3 Emilio Gentile 1996. The Sacralization of Politics in Fascist Italy. Harvard University Press.

4 Richard Steigmann-Gall, 1999. The “Holy Reich”: Religious Dimensions of Nazi Ideology, 1919-1945. National Library of Canada.

5 Gentile. 2006. Politics as Religion. Princeton University Press.

6 Hans Kelsen, 2012. Secular religion: a polemic against the misinterpretation of modern social philosophy, science, and politics as ‘new religion’. Springe.

7 David Welch, 1983. Nazi Propaganda: The Power and the Limitations. Taylor and Francis.

8 Lannes B. Smith, 1999. Propaganda. July 26. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/eBN58>

9 Vladimir Lenin, 2008. What Is to Be Done. Accessed November 16, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/iuFG6>

10 Lannes B. Smith, 1999. Propaganda. July 26. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/eBN58>

In this case, it should be discussed the metaphysical doctrine “Noomakhia”, developed by Alexander Dugin, a famous propagandist, historian, and political philosopher in Russia. The term “Noomakhia” was coined by himself. In the ancient Greek language, it means “wars of minds”. This cycle of books includes up to 24 volumes. Dugin has the ambition to establish an alternative to traditional philosophy.¹¹ However, after listening to his lectures, anyone will be convinced that we are dealing with an ideological theory based on religious mysteries.

Dugin’s “Noomakhia” is built on the principles of the so-called “3 Logos”. In his understanding, “Logos” is the basis of worldview, which characterizes both, - an individual person and various micro-social and macro-social associations, including nations.¹²

He separates the logos of **Apollo, Dionysus, and Cybele**.¹³ After that, he determines the civilizations and the nations, carrying each of these logos. According to him, the historical past and subsequent destiny of each nation are determined by their inclination to a certain Logos:

- The Logos of “**Apollo**” - is the logos of “Great Father”, “Olympus”, and “spiritual, vertical consciousness”. It is a “**Bright Logos**”;¹⁴
- The Logos of “**Cybele**” - is the Logos of “Great Mother”, Underworld, “Hades”, and “Material Consciousness”. It is a “**Black Logos**”;¹⁵
- According to Dugin, the logos of “**Dionysus**”, is the intermediate concept between them, having a connection with both, - to Olympus (heaven) and to Hades (underworld). The Logos of Dionysus is the “**Dark Logos**”, though **not black** - this is the important aspect.¹⁶

The main aspects of Dugin’s ideology are related to the eternal struggle between the logos of Apollo and Cybele:

- » The carriers of the “Apollo Logos” are Indo-European ethnicities, nomadic, militant, conqueror people who originated in the central and southern regions of Eurasia; The conspicuous representatives were the ancient Hellenes; Nowadays, the “Logos of Apollo” is most strongly expressed in the Slavic ethnos;¹⁷
- » As an exemplary representative of “Cybele Logos” nations, Dugin considers the Pelasgians, the inhabitants of the archaic age of the Balkan Peninsula, whom the Indo-European Hellenes conquered. According to him, the logos of “Cybele” includes all the ethnic groups of Anatolia, the Caucasus, the Mediterranean, and Western Europe, which followed an indigenous, agricultural way of life. The vast majority of these people disappeared into the Indo-European “Apollo logos” people. Some Caucasian ethnos, like Georgians, Chechens, or Basks in Europe can be considered as Cybele logos people nowadays;¹⁸
- » **Dugin’s most important ideological postulate is that:** despite the victory of the “Apollo people” over the “Cybele People”, it was historically difficult to defeat the Cybele Logos’s material, matriarchal spiritual roots and worldviews, itself. **Over time, these roots and worldviews successively arose again and spread in the “Apolonian” conquering people, causing them to “degenerate”**.¹⁹

According to the above-mentioned, reviewing European history, he concludes that the **fate of the Western European people developed in the same direction of degradation, after the late Middle Ages when the Lutheran and Calvinist Reformations in Christianity began and the Cartesian era came in philosophy and science. All this was followed by the so-called “Enlighteners”, the French Encyclopedists. Finally, a materialist, modernist, matriarchal, “Cybele Civilization” had been established in the “West”**.²⁰

With Noomakhia cycle, there are lots of his other monographs, articles, interviews, conference speeches, and videos-monologues, which are distinguished by one sharply defined narrative: **Western liberal civilization is a dark, corrupt, hellish, “satanic” civilization, and the sacred mission of the “Russian World” is to stand up against it**.²¹ (Дугин 2023 - 1)

During the Scientific and practical conference “Nazism in Ukraine: a view through the prism of a special

11 Александр Дугин, 2019 -1. Беседы о Ноомахии (1). Введение в Ноомахию. Ум как война. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/bjG1>

12 Александр Дугин, 2019 - 2. Беседы о Ноомахии (2). Три Логоса. Обнаружение Кибелы. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/eflvH>

13 Александр Дугин, 2019 - 2. Беседы о Ноомахии (2). Три Логоса. Обнаружение Кибелы. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/eflvH>

14 Александр Дугин, 2019-3. Беседы о Ноомахии (3). Логос Аполлона - Небесный Патриархат. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/nwBU7>

15 Александр Дугин, 2019 -5. Беседы о Ноомахии (5). Логос Кибелы. Нигилистическая метафизика Демокрита. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/euyGS>

16 Александр Дугин, 019 - 4. Беседы о Ноомахии (4). Логос Диониса. Феноменология центра. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/bgwSX>

17 Александр Дугин, 2014. Ноомахия: войны ума. Три Логоса: Аполлон, Дионис, Кибела. Москва: Академический Проект

18 Александр Дугин, 2014. Ноомахия: войны ума. Три Логоса: Аполлон, Дионис, Кибела. Москва: Академический Проект

19 Александр Дугин, 2021. Мечь, отложенная на 1000 лет. Как сложилась одна из главных цивилизаций Европы. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/adqKX>

20 Александр Дугин, 021. Мечь, отложенная на 1000 лет. Как сложилась одна из главных цивилизаций Европы. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/adqKX>

21 Александр Дугин, 2023 - 1. Философ и общественный деятель Александр Дугин: «Сатанизм — как постановка материи над духом». Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/fBDE0>

military operation”, one of his replicas Dugin finished with the phrase: “In order to effectively fight fascism, as our president (Putin) says, we have to be well aware of the satanic essence of Western civilization”.²²

In this sentence from the Russian Ideologist, **the components of the modern Russian ideological trends are well-shown:**

1. The **Patron** of the campaign - **President Putin’s** administration;
2. The **Adversary** - “**Collective West**”;
3. The **Strategy** - **Demonization** of the “Collective West”- (literally);
4. The **Main Message** - **Russia is in a Holy War against Western Satanism and Fascism;**

The “Noomakhia” is just a war instrument, developed by Dugin.

The next very important expression from Dugin is the following: “Noomakhia - on the one hand, is **an aspiration to give the theory of a multi-polar world a systematic basis**, and on the other hand, it is **an activity aimed at obtaining and protecting the sovereignty of the soul**”.²³

With this sentence, he clarifies two main directions of his “struggle”: The Political and The Esoteric.

Dugin’s political narratives are built on the basis of the terms like “**Great Russia**”, “**Russian World**“, “**Greater Eurasia**”, and “**Multipolar world**”. Where do these concepts come from? According to Russian historian Andrei Zubov, the ambitions of the “Russian Empire’s greatness” and the “Russian Nationalism”, take their roots from the so-called “Slavophiles” – the political-philosophy association of 19th century’s beginning;²⁴ The other above-mentioned terms (“**Russian World**“, “**Greater Eurasia**”, and “**Multipolar world**”) are intellectual products of the first “Evracists” – politicians in the Russian emigration in 1920th.²⁵

For presented research especially interesting are the beginnings of Dugin’s esoteric ontology. As it was found out, there are lots of scientific works and media articles, dedicated to this subject. It is no longer a secret that Dugin was deeply fascinated by occult, magical, and alchemical doctrines and practices.²⁶ As a member of the Soviet underground occultist group “Yuzhinsky Circle”, he shared the esoteric teachings available in this organization, which were divided into two main groups: “**Traditionalism**” (René Guénon (1886-1951), Julius Evola (1898-1974)) and **Völkisch Occultism** (People’s Occultism – Eng.) (Guido von List (1848-1919), Herman Wirth (1885-1981) and others). These years have dapple influenced Dugin’s mentality and further activities.²⁷ He was particularly influenced by the works of Hermann Wirth, which he got for study with the help of his father, a KGB officer, in the archives of this organization²⁸ (Лихачев 2002) He dedicated special works to Wirth’s inventions, like the book - “Signs of the Great Nord - Hyperborean Theory”²⁹ (Дугин 2008), and the article – “Herman Wirth: the sacred proto-language of humanity. In search of the holy grail of meanings”.³⁰

There must be a little bit told about **Herman Wirth’s** personality. He was a Dutch-German historian, **Nazi ideologist**, member of the **National Socialist German Workers’ Party** and **Schutzstaffel**, known best - as **SS**. Wirth was co-founder of “**Ahnenerbe**” – the pseudo-scientific organization into **SS**.³¹

How did Dugin manage to bind Nordic Nazism to the Great Eurasian theory and to the Great Russia concept? This becomes clear through his above-mentioned work, “Herman Wirth: the sacred proto-language of humanity. In search of the holy grail of meanings”, in the last chapter of which - “The Secret Word of Tatar”- he claims that Hermann Wirth regretted not having the access to carry out an archaeological study of the Siberian spaces in order to complete his concept. Dugin also relies on the words of the Swedish philosopher, theologian, and mystic, Emanuel Swedenborg, that the ancient knowledge, the so-called “lost word”, “Parole Delassee”, must be found „between the “wise men of Tartaria”. That means - here with as, in our mysterious and great Russian-Tatar Fatherland. But we can open this Word only with the help of sacral polar knowledge”.³²

How influential is Dugin’s ideology in Russia and in the World? According to specialists from different countries, Dugin’s influence is really significant:

- on public opinion,

22 Александр Дугин. 2023 - 2. Дугин: надо осознать сатанинскую сущность современного Запада, тогда мы победим. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/etFV8>

23 Александр Дугин, 2019 -1. Беседы о Ноомахии (1). Введение в Ноомахию. Ум как война. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/bijG1>

24 Андрей. Зубов, 2020. История Западной философии. Лекция №35. «Философия в России: славянофилы и западники». January 28. Accessed November 16, 2023. <https://bit.ly/3ulBLV2>

25 Савитский, Совчинский, Фларовский, Трубецкой. 1921. Исход к Востоку. Sofia: Balkan

26 Andreas Umland, 2010. Aleksandr Dugin’s Transformation from a Lunatic Fringe Figure into a Mainstream Political Publicist, 1980–1998: A Case Study in the Rise of Late and Post-Soviet Russian Fascism. Vol. 1(2). Journal of Eurasian Studies.

27 Jafe Arnold, 2019. Mysteries of Eurasia: The Esoteric Sources of Alexander Dugin and the Yuzhinsky Circle. Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam.

28 Вячеслав Лихачев, 2002. Рассизм в России. Panorama. <https://shorturl.at/bwCIK>

29 Александр Дугин. 2008. Знаки Великого Норда - Гипорборейская Теория. Москва: Вече.

30 Александр Дугин, 2002. “Герман Вирт: священный праязык человечества. В поисках Святого Грааля смыслов.” Философия Традиционализма 135-166. <https://shorturl.at/yDL04>

31 Horst Junginger., 2013. “Nordic Ideology in the SS and the SS Ahnenerbe.” Civilization and History N24 39-69.

32 Александр Дугин, 2002. “Герман Вирт: священный праязык человечества. В поисках Святого Грааля смыслов.” Философия Традиционализма 135-166. <https://shorturl.at/yDL04>

- on the system of secondary and higher education,
- and even on the narratives of the highest political and religious hierarchies.

In international media, Dugin has been called: “Putin’s Brain”³³ (Barbashin Anton, Thoburn Hannah 2014), “Putin’s Rasputin”³⁴ and “Kremlin Guru”.³⁵ He is evaluated as “the most dangerous philosopher in the world”³⁶ and as “the best-marketed of all Russian ideologists, both in Russia and in the West.”³⁷

Dugin is the founder of the “International Eurasian Movement”, which has 33 representative offices in 17 countries of the world. Experts note Dugin’s special influence on right-wing political forces operating in many countries of the world.³⁸

Some strategic characteristics of the ongoing war in Ukraine are sharp proof of Dugin’s Geopolitical Concepts’ influence on modern Russian politics: Dugin published his book, “Foundations of Geopolitics” in 1997.³⁹ In chapter 4.4.-“The problem of sovereign Ukraine”, of the book’s 5th part, named “Domestic Geopolitics of Russia” (“domestic!”), is told – “The sovereignty of Ukraine is such a negative phenomenon for Russian geopolitics that, in principle, it can easily provoke an armed conflict... Ukraine as an independent state with some territorial ambitions poses a huge danger to the whole of Eurasia, and without solving the Ukrainian problem, it makes no sense to talk about continental geopolitics”; Moreover, in chapter 5.6.-“Geopolitical Decomposition of Ukraine”, Dugin represents the plan of fragmentation of Ukraine: **“The continued existence of unitary Ukraine is unacceptable (!). This territory should be divided into several zones corresponding to the gamut of geopolitical and ethnocultural realities:**

1. **Western Ukraine (belongs to Central Europe);**⁴⁰
2. **Malo-Russia (so-called “Little Russia” - left bank of the Dnieper)**⁴¹ - **now occupied by Russia;**
3. **The right bank of the Dnieper (regions facing Great Russia)**⁴² - **now partially occupied by Russia;**
4. **Crimea (“an independent pro-Eurasian formation”)**⁴³ - **now occupied by Russia.**

It’s clear, that after such obvious strategic geopolitical aspirations of the “Russian World” ideologists and its Patrons, declared even yet in 1997, there is no need to talk about Ukrainian traces of the war causing and about Ukrainian Fascism. Also, **it must be considered, that the above-discussed book was dedicated as a manual for the Russian Army’s General Staff Academy’s education programs.**

Dugin has very well organized the education system for wide-spreading his Eurasian political philosophy and Noomakhia. He has huge support not only in Russian media but from different intellectual associations as well. A good example of this is the **“United Movement - Russian Philosophy”**. Exactly for this organization, and with its assistance, he has recorded the cycle of video lectures on Noomakhia. Now this Movement organizes a wide range of activities to propagate Dugin’s Noomakhia and Eurasian Political Philosophy across the whole Russia.

Before drawing conclusions, it is necessary to summarize the above-presented discussion in relation to the 5 layers of the modern Russian Propaganda System (as the “Agitprop” is identified in the present study):

- The Russian government and its special services state their demands on political ideology - in this case, an anti-Western course, in which anti-Western is equated with anti-fascist;
- A corps of scholars analyze Western scientific and political material and presents it according to a pre-planned scheme: Collective West is going to establish a new world order, “Post Capitalism”, a “caste society”, where the Elites will have unlimited power; but for others, - **“digital slavery”, “Eco-Bio fascism”** and so on; the way to “western fascism”⁴⁴ (Фурсов 2021) - IV layer of Agitprop - **Scientific level;**
- Military experts represent the war in Ukraine as the Liberation battle of Russia against the entire NATO bloc, which will win anyway - III layer of Agitprop - **Experts level;**
- Russian media is mobilized for hard brain-washing of the population, whose relatives are sent to the battlefield and who can be mobilized next with the main message: **“The “collective West” created the “anti-Russia” – Ukrainian Nazism, and now it is necessary to fight again (!) in a “holy war” against fascism, for the homeland, and for the “reunification of the Russian and Ukrainian nations”**⁴⁵ (Putin 2021)- II layer of Agitprop -

33 Anton Barbashin, Hannah Thoburn. 2014. Putins Brain. Foreign Affairs.

34 Scan MacComac, 2015. Alexander Dugin: Putin’s Rasputin? Center for Security Policy

35 Goce Trpkovski, 2018. “Kremlin ‘Guru’ Rouses Anti-Western Feeling in Macedonia.” Balkan Insight

36 Paul Ratner, 2016. “The Most Dangerous Philosopher in the World.” Big Think.

37 Laruelle. 2018. Alexander Dugin and Eurasianism. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

38 Tara Isabella Burton,. 2022. “The far-right mystical writer who helped shape Putin’s view of Russia.” The Washington Post, May 12.

39 Александр Дугин, 2000. Основы Геополитики. АРКТОГЕЯ-центр.

40 Александр Дугин, 2000. Основы Геополитики. АРКТОГЕЯ-центр.

41 ојјо.

42 ојјо.

43 ојјо.

44 Андрей Фурсов, 2021. Великое обнуление. О чём проговорились Клаус Шваб и Герман Греф. Андрей Фурсов. February 2. Accessed November 16, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/aQTWZ>

45 Vladimir Putin, 2021. On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians. May 12. Accessed November 16, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/bjWZ8>

Mass-Media level:

- The people sent directly to the front are encouraged to believe that they will profit by looting the conquered territories of the fascist State – Ukraine,⁴⁶ - The most superficial, I layer of Agitprop – **On-battlefield level**;
- All this is based on Alexander Dugin's political philosophy of Noomakhia, Great Eurasia, and a Multipolar World, and all the above levels dominate two main principles that emerge as a common feature: The aspiration to demonize the collective West and the presentation of Russia as the very only power, capable to stand against this satanic force in a holy war. – The deepest, V layer of Agitprop – **Philosophy level**;
- But there are very special circumstances that turn upside down the World-vision that the Russian propaganda system tries to establish: Dugin's ideology and the roots of its sacred doctrine of "Noomakhya" originate from the depths of Nazi, Nordic, pagan occultism.

Conclusion

Based on all of the discussed above, it is clear that Europe and Western democracy are facing severe danger from Russia. European history well knows the cruelty and horror of religious wars. World scholars have proven, that even WWII was driven by occult, sacral politicians. The materials presented in this research prove that the regime currently rolling Russian politics is also waging an irrational, sacralized war in Ukraine. **R A S H I S M is not a myth! It is a hard existential reality not only for European security but for the whole humanity.**

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⁴⁶ Daria Demianik, 2023 . Choose the city of your dreams. September 19. Accessed November 16, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/ntzI8> ; Omolesky, Matthew. 2023. *The Cohesion of Error: Russia's Rationales for War*. October 2. Accessed November 16, 2023. <https://shorturl.at/oqrwZ>

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European Foreign and Security Policy Challenges During the Russia-Ukraine War

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Abstract

The article reviews the structural and institutional shortcomings of the European Union against the background of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which became more acute in the background of the war. Also discussed will be the EU's policy of partnership and cooperation with Russia, and the reduction of defense capabilities by European and NATO countries, as a result of which the positions of the EU and NATO were not ready to properly respond to threats and be a sufficient deterrent factor for a potential aggressor. The defense and security policy, as the only mechanism of the EU's military and security capabilities, is highlighted as weak and ineffective as of today. Due to complex bureaucracy and decision-making difficulties, as well as lack of sufficient funding and political will, showing strategic plans as a clear example of ineffective countermeasures, the paper highlights the need for change. implementation, the necessity in the shortest possible period and in real-time, as well as the strengthening of cooperation with NATO and the USA on the part of the European Union, as the importance of guaranteeing the effectiveness of the defense and security policy in the future.

Keywords:

Russia-Ukraine war, common defense, and security policy, EU and NATO cooperation, geopolitics, strategic deterrence, "strategic compass", development of defense capabilities, institutional improvement, Consensus.

Introduction

When, with the Maastricht Treaty of 1993, the European Union created the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP),¹ and in 1999, to prevent threats arising from small local conflicts due to the Balkan wars and the Yugoslav crisis, it developed the Common Defense and Security Policy (CSDP),² the European politicians and experts probably It would be unimaginable to think that two decades later,³ the European Union would have to overcome the risks and challenges of a full-scale war at its borders, not just a small conflict, in which one of the world's most powerful countries - Russia - would be involved. With the end of the Cold War, there was no way for Western peasants to see full-scale war return to Europe. As a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, weakened by the crisis caused by the breakdown of the economic and political system of the Eastern Bloc, Russia depended on the economic assistance and political support of the countries of the West and the European Union. It found itself in such a crisis economically that in 1998, inflation exceeded 80%, while economic growth was only 5.3%. Accordingly, Russia declared an economic default. Therefore, there was no physical reason for Russia to pose any threat to democratic sovereign and independent countries. Therefore, with economic support and investment, the leading countries of Europe and the world began to establish partnership relations with Russia.

Demilitarization of EU and NATO Military Capabilities

In parallel with the establishment of partnership relations with Russia, NATO and EU member states are beginning to sharply reduce military capabilities and the number of armies and think about a different role for NATO in the changed geopolitical reality. The indicators of the numerical decline of the leading European armies are:

1. Germany: 545,000 military in 1990 - 189,000 military in 2021. A decrease of 65%;
2. Italy: 493,000 military personnel in 1990 - 174,000 military personnel in 2021. A decrease of 65%;
3. France: 548,000 military personnel in 1990 - 208,000 military personnel in 2021. a decrease of 62%;
4. Spain: 263,000 military personnel in 1990 - 124,000 military personnel in 2021. a decrease of 53%;
5. United Kingdom: 308,000 military personnel in 1990 – 156,000 military personnel in 2021. a decrease of 49%;
6. Turkey: 769,000 soldiers in 1990 - 445,000 soldiers in 2021. a decrease of 42%;
7. USA: 2,181,000 military personnel in 1990 - 1,352,000 military personnel in 2021. a decrease of 38%;⁴

The given data show how much the military potential of the Western and European countries and the level of militarization of the economy of the countries have decreased, which was caused by the pace of hidden armament during the Cold War. EU countries have directed their defense and security policies in the external arena to maintain the EU's leading role in peacekeeping, as well as in response to low-intensity conflicts, their prevention, as well as response and management of internal and external crises. Therefore, the common defense and security policy (CSDP) as a mechanism of prevention and protection will not be useful as a mechanism for protection against a full-scale war. Even before the Russia-Ukraine war, in response to the increasing intensity of Russia's hybrid actions, an analysis of the EU's response showed that the EU was waging a hybrid war with Russia. Because of the complex bureaucracy, duplicated state structures, and the difficulty of reaching consensus, the European Union often had a hard time finding adequate measures and responses to current events in real-time. The analysis of hybrid actions and the process of the EU's response to them probably became a litmus test for Russia to assess the EU's weaknesses and not to be afraid of an effective military response in case of aggression. This is supported by the fact that the European Union, apart from NATO's security guarantees, does not have an adequate military contingent and capabilities. A good way for Russia to save intelligence resources is the European policy of transparent institution-building when information about shortcomings in any field and possible preventive measures to eliminate them is openly and officially placed on various platforms. This gives the adversary a clear picture of the real capabilities and naturally simplifies the development of various impact mechanisms.

Main Part

The Russia-Ukraine conflict is a regional threat

Russia's invasion has already made it clear to the highest political circles of the European Union that a full-scale war, which they thought was a thing of the past, has not left the planet. An attack by one of Europe's largest countries on another has made the real danger more obvious. "Strategic Compass", an "ambitious and unprecedented plan to increase military and security capabilities" initiated and adopted by the European Union, was adopted at the end of 2021 as a mechanism to eliminate own weaknesses and deter the opponent. However, the

1 The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), cyber risk GMBH

2 The Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), An official website of the European Union, 12.08.2021

3 Keith Gessen, "How Russia went from ally to adversary", New York Times, June 12 2023

4 Benjamin Tallis, "Why Europe's Strategic Compass Points to Trouble". International Political Quarterly, January 14, 2022

compass is still not the necessary supporting mechanism that should make European defense a real force. Compass no longer talks about the creation of a 50-60,000-strong European army, which, according to the Helsinki Agreement signed in 1999, EU member states had to withdraw within 60 days. Compass only talks about the creation of a rapid reaction force of 5,000, and not for the near term, which once again points to the complexity of the bureaucracy within the EU.⁵ Accordingly, the development of an effective defense policy and making the military component a reality should be put on the agenda in a short period. On this issue, a question may arise: the absolute majority of EU member states are NATO members, therefore, will an attack on the territory of any NATO member state (within the EU) automatically create a legitimate basis for the activation of the 5th paragraph on NATO's collective security? Therefore, NATO's security umbrella covers the EU, and this is undisputed. Some experts also believe that the increase of the European army will lead to the reduction of the role of the USA as one of the security providers on the European continent. But is it so? Also, after Brexit, Germany becoming the leader of the European Union may cause some kind of fear in European political circles. However, one thing is certain - the creation of a military contingent of the European Union will be an additional factor to deter Russia., in case of further escalation of the war, due to the dependence of the European Union on Russia (strategic resources, oil products, gases), without further diversification of the market, prices will rise.⁶ This will lead to a serious impact on the internal economic stability of the European Union increase dissatisfaction, and will also create some disagreements between the member states, which was also manifested in the excess import of Ukrainian grain: in the case of Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia, which, despite the decision of the European Union, landed on the territory of the Union to import Ukrainian grain - separately, on their own. An embargo was imposed on Ukrainian grain within the sovereign borders.⁷ It is the difficulty of consensus and the lobbying of national interests by countries that is one of the main challenges for the European Union in the way of building strong defense and security mechanisms and tools. As well as increasing the level of trust between the leading countries and agreeing on the goals, tasks, financing, and use rules of the united European army.⁸ Otherwise, a contingent mobilized only on the principles given by the "Strategic Compass" will be a duplicated use of NATO's capabilities by Europe and will give the EU not an effective military contingent, but soldiers with three chevrons on their arms (insignia of NATO, their own country and the EU). As such, there can be no adequate countermeasures to the growing threat without unified command and control and logistics systems.

As for political mechanisms and instruments, the Common Defense and Security Policy (CSDP) should focus on domestic defense and security in addition to foreign affairs.⁹ Also, the governing circles of Europe should change their attitude towards the military industry as a "socially harmful" industry.¹⁰ Because military capabilities and effective defense and security policies cannot be built without adequate economic and industrial capacities.

Conclusion

Although the European Union is sometimes seen as "an extension of America's shadow", its geopolitical positioning and economic and political opportunities allow it to act as an independent global player.¹¹ Therefore, it must strengthen cooperation and partnership with its traditional allies in the NATO format, as well as within the framework of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, to overcome the shortcomings revealed by the war, eliminate institutional and structural gaps, and strengthen all the mechanisms that should ensure its position as a world-class country in the coming decades. The strength of the position of the economic and political actor. Otherwise, the longer the process of improving defense and security mechanisms drags on, the more the EU's position as one of the world's economic and political leaders in international politics will be under threat.

That is why the leaders of the European Union must reevaluate the main approach to international politics, the internal structure of the European Union, and other important issues and reach a consensus to reach a consensus in the shortest possible time to resolve the vital issues for the European Union in real time and space, which will be a worthy response in terms of effective response to any threats and challenges.

5 Benjamin Tallis, "Why Europe's Strategic Compass Points to Trouble". *International Political Quarterly*, 14 January, 2022

6 David Shatakishvili, "Future of Europe Energy - challenges and opportunities" . March 22 , 2022

7 "Poland , Hungary and Slovakia of Ukraine village farming on products Embargo established" . Merchant . 18.04.2023

8 Giorgi Antadze, "European Army , political Challenges and perspectives" . *Geocase* , January 9 , 2020

9 Benjamin Tallis, "Why Europe's Strategic Compass Points to Trouble". *International Political Quarterly*, 14 January, 2022

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11 Zachary Paikin, Shada Islam, Sven Biscop, Regional Agent, *Global Player: "Can the EU get the best of both worlds?"* 08-2023

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Cybersecurity in the Age of AI: Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract

The open Internet is a gift to humanity that has not only enabled scientists, companies and organizations to become more efficient, but has also enabled an unprecedented exchange of ideas, information and cultures between previously disconnected people or groups. The Internet has brought about a global revolution in doing business, relationships and communications.

Cyberspace is defined by the diversity of connections that simultaneously make it a risk zone, and its ever-expanding scope, capabilities, and functions increase the possibilities of both law-abiding citizens and hostile actors. For an adversary, it is enough to attack the weakest link in the network to gain new footholds and advantages. Seemingly local problems can rapidly grow, spread and create threats and systemic risks.

Vulnerability in cyberspace is a serious, real, and rapidly growing process. Critical infrastructure facilities, intelligence, communications, command and control, trade and financial transactions, logistics, emergency preparedness and response, or disaster relief all depend on networked IT systems. Cyber security breaches, theft of data and intellectual property knows no bounds. They affect everything from personal information to state secrets.

Recent breakthroughs have taken place in the field of artificial intelligence, and it is already surpassing human-level productivity in tasks such as image recognition, natural language processing, and data analysis.

AI systems can be manipulated, evaded, and tricked, leading to serious security implications for applications such as network monitoring tools, financial systems, or autonomous vehicles. Therefore, safe and sustainable methods and best practices are vital.

The article discusses the relationship between artificial intelligence systems and cyber security. According to the modern interpretation, artificial intelligence systems are machine learning (machine science) systems. Sometimes, this understanding is further narrowed down to artificial neural networks. If we are talking about the ever-wider penetration of machine learning in various areas of information technology use, then, naturally, there should be an intersection with cyber security. But the problem is that such an intersection cannot be described by any single model. Combinations of artificial intelligence and cyber security have different application aspects. The article focuses on the prospective development prospects of the mentioned problems and the methods of solving them at the state and international level.

Keywords:

artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, cyber threats, digital world, digital systems, digital data.

Introduction

Cyberspace is the fifth battlefield (after land, sea, air, and space) and consists of all the world's computer networks and everything they connect and control via cable, fiber optic, or wireless connections. It's not just the Internet - an open network of networks. In addition to the Internet, cyberspace includes many other computer networks, including those that, in theory, cannot be connected via the Internet. Some of these private networks are very similar to the Internet, but they are (in theory at least) isolated. Another component of cyberspace includes transnational networks that transmit data on cash flows, stock market trades, and credit card transactions.¹ In addition, there are control and data acquisition systems that allow machines to "relate" to other machines - for example, control panels connect to pumps, elevators and generators. This phenomenon is known as the "Internet of Things", in which inanimate objects can communicate with each other using radio frequency identification technologies.²

Cybercriminals can hack, destroy or control such networks. If the network is taken over, there is the risk of stealing all the information or planting instructions that can be used to transfer money, spill oil, release gas, blow up oil refineries, pipelines and generators, derail freight trains and subway cars, and even launch missiles early on. To explode (or launch in the wrong direction).³ If the networks are destroyed, the data will be deleted and the computers will turn into passive fighters (botnets), which may lead to the collapse of the financial system, disruption of the supply chain, interruption of electricity supply, loss of space satellites from orbit, disruption of air traffic.⁴ Loss of trust in financial information and bank transfers may cause problems in the economic sphere. Losing control over everything for a few days will result in a series of economic problems, especially in conditions of lack of cash and food.⁵

These events have happened before, sometimes as a result of experiments, sometimes as a result of mistakes, and sometimes as a result of cyberwar or cybercrime. Information on computer networks that govern energy supply, transportation, banking and finance, healthcare, personal or corporate data, and government secrets may be exploited or exposed to attack from remote locations. Many aspects of cyberspace make this possible. Among them are failures in the Internet system itself, errors in hardware and software, the desire to use important systems online, the lack of effective means of containment and the absence of adequate defense mechanisms. Thus, the threats associated with cyberspace are as numerous and varied as cyberspace itself. They are embedded in the nature of the network itself: their interconnectedness, and the scale, speed and complexity of understanding what is happening - all characterize cyber threats. There is no absolute protection against cyber-attacks, which are carried out not only from abroad, but also outside the physical space - in the digital ether of cyberspace. Broadband Internet has made it possible to increase the speed of attacks and organizations can no longer keep up with their own security systems. As a result, it is becoming easier to launch a destructive cyber-attack anonymously, and more difficult and expensive to defend against. This growing asymmetry is seriously changing the rules of the game. Tomorrow's terrorist can do more damage by using a keyboard than by detonating a bomb. The mentioned problems are already present and it is unlikely that the current situation will change in the near future.

Main Part

Cybercrime is a threat of today, which has become a global digital epidemic. The concept of cybercrime covers a range of offenses, including the hacking of computers, data and systems, carried out by means of computer-aided fraud and fraud - phishing.⁶

Phishing - a form of Internet fraud and cybercrime, sending emails or other messages with the name or logo of a known real organization. The purpose of the phishing entity is to force the receiver (object) to reveal personal protected information in order to gain access to it.⁷

Cybercrime arose as a result of cyber vandals' desire to demonstrate their superiority and quickly turned into a profitable criminal business. There is an increasingly clear link between cybercrime and other threats, such as industrial espionage, foreign intelligence services and terrorism.

Like other aspects of globalization, the rapid development of the Internet has outpaced the development of

1 Another component of cyberspace includes transnational networks that transmit data on cash flows, stock market trades, and credit card transactions.

2 F. Dian and R. Vahidnia, "LTE IoT Technology Enhancements and Case Studies", IEEE Consumer Electronics Communications, Nov./Dec. 2020.

3 Arnold Douglas - "The Patriot Missile Failure", August 2000 ima.umn.edu/~arnold/disasters/patriot.html

4 "Massive DDoS attacks reach record levels as botnets make them cheaper to launch"; Network World, June 2016 www.networkworld.com/article/3079987/massive-ddos-attacks-reach-record-levels-as-botnets-make-them-cheaper-to-launch.html

5 B.S. Thakur & S. Chaudhary, 2013. Content sniffing attack detection in client and server side: A survey. International Journal of Advanced Computer Research, 3(2), 7.

6 A. Kumar Phishing - challenges and solutions, Article in Computer Fraud & Security. Cleveland State University, January 2018

7 A. Kumar Phishing - challenges and solutions, Article in Computer Fraud & Security. Cleveland State University, January 2018

regulatory mechanisms, leading to further delays and disruptions. Cybercriminal attacks are becoming more and more regular, complex and sophisticated, which are virtually impossible to detect or can only be detected after the attacks have taken place. Cybercriminals attack organizations and individuals anonymously with malware, bypassing existing security measures.⁸ Currently existing intrusion detection systems, virus databases and anti-virus programs no longer provide the necessary level of protection and are rapidly becoming obsolete. Thus, cybercriminals are using innovations to their advantage so quickly that organizations and developers of information security systems can no longer keep up with them. Moreover, cybercriminals can now attack the weakest link in most security models (the end user) over the Internet using social engineering. Using fraud and various tricks, they make the victim think that he is communicating with a colleague or another legitimate user.⁹ Methods of achieving “invisibility”, which are constantly being improved, allow cybercriminals to be detected in time and act without fear of punishment.

In the recent period, the number of cyber-attacks carried out using malicious software increased sharply, most of which were directed against the financial sector, and in particular, the target of the attacks was the computers of financial institutions.¹⁰

There are at least three reasons why cybercrime in general, and organized cybercrime in particular, will continue to evolve and evolve in the future. First, the technologies for committing cybercrimes have become more accessible. Software tools can be purchased online that give users the means to identify open ports and bypass passwords and other security measures. Such tools are turning more and more people into criminals who do not possess special computer skills. For example, the authors of the recently discovered Mariposa botnet, possibly the largest to date, did not have any special hacking skills.¹¹

Second, web visitors are changing. For example, in 2005, the number of Internet users in developing countries was significantly higher than in developed countries. Even if these new consumers are not prone to crime, the number of criminals will increase, while the number of wealthy victims from more affluent regions will remain roughly the same. As a result, intensive attacks on these entities are likely to increase as the Internet and broadband communications become as accessible to criminals as they are to the local affluent.

Third, thanks to the use of automated systems and the expansion of the frequency range, the number of attacks can increase in geometric progression. With automated management, millions of spam can be sent in a short period of time. Currently, hacking attacks are automated. Every day there are up to 80 million attempts to attack a computer using software tools that allow thousands of attacks to be carried out in a short period of time. A botnet was recently discovered that carried out millions of automated attacks and controlled 12.7 million computers, most of which were owned by the world's largest corporations.¹² In addition, such schemes allow cyber thieves to carry out theft without being noticed, withdrawing small amounts of funds from the accounts of many victims, which reduces the likelihood of detection of the perpetrators.

Revenues from cybercrime are significantly higher than those from other crimes, including drug trafficking. Some estimates put the annual cost to society at around €750 billion¹³ in Europe and 1 trillion dollars in the USA.¹⁴

Hostile players vary in their potential, scale, intentions, sources and resources. This may include foreign governments, intelligence services and militaries; well-organized and financed non-state actors such as organized crime and terrorist groups; Individual hackers and criminals, as well as disgruntled employees and other insiders. All of them can use the Internet to cause physical damage and bring down essential elements of digital infrastructure.¹⁵

Moreover, cyberspace is an ideal field for asymmetric warfare. Individuals or groups are attracted by the low cost and relatively low level of technical training required to attack important government economic, financial, and military facilities. In 2008, on the eve of Russia's attack on Georgia, a series of cyber-attacks on Georgian government structures, media and military facilities clearly revealed the “face of future wars”.¹⁶

Armed forces must constantly be aware that their networks, systems, and communications may be compromised, infected, externally controlled, and disabled as a result of cyber warfare. Malicious code can spread undetected and create a digital springboard from which data flows to foreign controlled servers, leaving important

8 Identity Theft Prevention – ID Theft Facts and Figures 2016, Kaspersky Lab, May 2016, youtu.be/Fztuohj3Fck

9 „One in two users click on links from unknown senders“, Fau.eu, August 2016, www.fau.eu/2016/08/25/news/research/one-in-two-users-click-on-links-from-unknown-senders

10 Economic and Social Council, ECOSOC/6444, 37th & 38th Meetings, Council briefed on Cybersecurity, 16 July 2010, p. 1

11 Arthur Charles, “Alleged controllers of ‘Mariposa’ botnet arrested in Spain,” Guardian, 3 March 2010

12 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), The Globalisation of Crime. A Transnational Organised Crime Threat Assessment (Vienna: UNODC, 2010), p. 204

13 UNODC, The Globalisation of Crime, op. cit., p. 204

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15 Dissecting the Top Five Network Attack Methods: A Thief's Perspective, McAfee & Intel Security, 2015, www.mcafee.com/us/resources/reports/tp-dissecting-top-5-network-methodsthiefs-perspective.pdf

16 L. D. Buresh – “Russian Cyber-Attacks on Estonia, Georgia, and Ukraine, Including Tactics”, Techniques, Procedures, and Effects, Journal of Advanced Forensic Sciences 1(2), 2021, 15-26. <https://openaccesspub.org/jafs/article/1686#ridm1849731892> (23.04.2023)

information in the hands of unknown competitors.

Information technologies and digital infrastructure are used in almost all areas of the armed forces: management and control, providing intelligence information, surveillance data, radio intelligence and information on the coordinates of targets in real time mode; Logistics and management systems. Through these technologies, military personnel can not only gain a significant advantage over an adversary, but also provide information about the latter's intentions and capabilities, which may hinder or disrupt an operation.

To the extent that cyber warfare is asymmetric and the means of its production are cheap, an adversary does not need to develop expensive weapons or develop traditional military forces to pose a threat. If vulnerabilities are discovered, a small number of well-intentioned programmers can obtain information about national military forces, steal operational plans, block intelligence flows, and disrupt targeting and logistics systems. Therefore, many militaries are developing offensive cyber capabilities. However, the problem for countries with advanced militaries is that not only do they have cyber offensive capabilities, but they also have an adversary to defend against. In the nuclear age, strong offensive capabilities must serve defensive purposes and therefore deter the adversary from attacking. This formula for deterrence in relation to cyber conflicts seems logical, but the concept of cyber deterrence is very imperfect. In cyberspace, no one can be sure of the ability to identify attackers. Sophisticated attackers can not only hide their identity, but also shift the responsibility to someone else. It is also difficult to predict the extent of consequential damages, including unintended damages to the entity and damage to third-party networks connected to or dependent on the victim's network. While uncertainty has always been part of warfare, understanding the combat environment in cyberspace is extremely difficult. And the consequences of uncertainty are particularly important for cyber threat deterrence, which involves countermeasures—countermeasures that alter the gains and costs of an adversary's attack. The challenge lies not only in demonstrating confidence to an unknown adversary, but also in the changed context of deterrence. During the Cold War there was a symmetry of vulnerability that no longer exists. Developed countries are more dependent on digital networks, and this asymmetric vulnerability means that even in an equal cyber-attack "exchange", one side will lose more than the other. Moreover, an anonymous adversary may have nothing to lose because he is unknown and therefore cannot be retaliated against. It is much more difficult to deter non-state adversaries with the threat of retaliation. Their willingness to take risks will be much higher than that of most states because they do not have the capital, infrastructure, or assets to put at risk. In addition, they are not subject to the same political constraints that apply to states operating in cyberspace. Some players welcome revenge because it will justify their actions and add supporters. The best evidence of the weakness of deterrence in cyberspace is the United States, which has the best cyber offensive system in the world, but it does not provide the necessary deterrent effect.¹⁷ Therefore, unlike nuclear weapons, which deter a potential aggressor, cyber weapons do not produce the same result.

It is significant that the recent period has seen global trends in the use of artificial intelligence technologies by the armed forces of the technologically developed states of the world. Artificial intelligence technologies have become one of the most promising directions in terms of rearmament of the armed forces of the leading states of the modern world, which, along with clearly expressed positive prospects, poses a great challenge to its users due to possible negative consequences arising from its use, and should take into account innovative cyber security tools and methods for their reliability and To improve resistance to liars.¹⁸

Integrated artificial intelligence systems include four components: perception, learning, decision, and action. These systems have to operate in a complex environment that requires the interaction and interdependence of each component (for example, errors in perception may lead to incorrect decisions). Additionally, each component has unique vulnerabilities (for example, perception is prone to learning attacks, while solutions are susceptible to classic cyber exploits). Finally, the concept of correctness is not a purely logical matter; Noise and uncertainty require boundaries for each component to protect the system from misbehaving.

There is a need for formal methods for validating artificial intelligence components and machine learning both independently and collaboratively.¹⁹ As it relates to logical correctness, decision making theory and risk analysis. New methods are needed to define what a system should do and how it should respond to an attack. In traditional quality systems, the relevant specifications may be adapted for each component. To the extent that AI systems are highly complex, their implementation and configuration are difficult to evaluate. Research into architectural frameworks and analysis methods that allow for the verification of these components is needed and is part of a larger effort to develop manageable standards, best practices, tools, and methods to document system behavior.

Artificial intelligence systems need innovative cybersecurity tools and methods to improve their reliability and resilience to fraud. Cybersecurity can use artificial intelligence to increase awareness, respond in real-time,

17 The United States Army's Cyberspace Operations Concept Capability Plan 2016-2028, TRADOC Pamphlet 5 2 5 - 7 - 8 (Department of the Army, 22 February 2010).

18 Artificial Intelligence & Cybersecurity: Balancing Innovation, Execution and Risk, The Economist Intelligence Unit / Pillsbury, September 09, 2021 <https://www.pillsburylaw.com/en/news-and-insights/ai-and-cybersecurity-balancing-innovation-execution-and-risk.html>(23.04.2023)

19 Preeti Mishra, et al. "A detailed investigation and analysis of using machine learning techniques for intrusion detection." IEEE Communications Surveys & Tutorials 21.1 (2018): 686-728.

and improve its overall effectiveness. This includes self-adaptation and adaptation to ongoing attacks that change the current attacker-defender asymmetry. Strategies that identify an adversary's weaknesses, use observational methods, and gather lessons learned can use artificial intelligence to classify different types of attacks and inform the extent of an adaptive response (e.g. quickly detecting inconsistencies and knowing how to fix them). It is clear that a small team of experienced cyber defenders can effectively protect networks used by thousands of people. The use of artificial intelligence may extend the same level of system protection,²⁰ make it ubiquitous and also provide the domain knowledge needed to address issues such as quality of service limitations and degradation of system behavior.

Artificial intelligence technologies can capture and process large amounts of data produced by modern technological systems.²¹ In turn, this capability provides the learning data needed to innovate and develop artificial intelligence systems. AI-based reasoning aligned with cybersecurity priorities can make both fully automated and human-closed systems more reliable. Two potential areas are the creation, implementation and management of more reliable software systems. Promising research includes the use of artificial intelligence to detect software bugs, test best practices, identify security vulnerabilities, and make it easier for software engineers to design security systems.

In modern development practices, code often evolves rapidly. It would be useful to use artificial intelligence-based "coding partners",²² to help less experienced developers and analysts understand large and complex software systems and to advise on the safety and reliability of proposed code changes. Artificial intelligence can also help in the safe opening and operation of software systems.²³ Once the code is developed, AI can be used to detect low-level attack vectors, check for domain and application configuration or logic errors, and monitor networks and make recommendations for safer system operation. Open source software development provides a unique and highly effective opportunity to improve security based on artificial intelligence, due to its widespread use by commercial and government organizations. However, due to its public nature, open source is vulnerable to adversary AI-based malicious actions.

Another promising area of application of artificial intelligence is identification and admission/access control. Adversaries can compromise many methods simply by stealing authentication tokens. An AI-based system can use a method based on interaction history and expected behavior that is also easy, transparent, and difficult to bypass. Artificial intelligence for biometric authentication systems can improve accuracy and reduce threats.²⁴ However, AI monitoring of behavior patterns may lead to privacy violations. Further research is needed to develop methods that consider both ethical and technical aspects,²⁵ as well as the potential abuse of AI-assisted identity management.

Conclusion

If we summarize the above, it should be said as a conclusion that the mentioned discussion represents a point of view from one point in time. Rapid advances and developments in technology, new areas of application and interaction with the Ministry of Defense,²⁶ Artificial intelligence and cybersecurity continue to create new opportunities and challenges. A number of aspects may be formulated that present a challenge to the armed forces. In particular:

- The military has become completely dependent on cyberspace for its operations. Any threat from cyberspace may have serious consequences for the armed forces;
- Robotization caused by the revolution in the military field and the possibility of precise application of kinetic energy made the armed forces more vulnerable to cyber-attacks;
- The traditional conservatism of the military is an obstacle (historical examples may include the military's initial negative assessment of inventions such as the machine gun, the tank, or the aircraft carrier). There is some truth in the saying that the military always prepares for the past war;
- The power of cyberspace has not yet been fully demonstrated. Most of today's threats are the product of

20 Role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Cybersecurity; <https://www.fortinet.com/resources/cyberglossary/artificial-intelligence-in-cybersecurity>

21 F. Iafrate., 2018. "Artificial intelligence and big data: The birth of a new intelligence". John Wiley & Sons.

22 A. Serguei , Joey Mokhov, Paquet, and Mourad Debbabi. 2014. The Use of NLP Techniques in Static Code Analysis to Detect Weaknesses and Vulnerabilities. In *Advances in Artificial Intelligence*, Marina Sokolova and Peter van Beek (Eds.). Springer International Publishing, Cham, 326–332

23 N.Haefner, Wincent Parida, V. & O. Gassmann, 2021, "Artificial intelligence and innovation management: A review, framework, and research agenda". *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 162120392.

24 Alhakamy A'Aeshah, A Comprehensive Overview on Biometric Authentication Systems Using Artificial Intelligence Techniques, (IJACSA) International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications, Vol. 13, No. 4, April 2022

25 J. Drexland et al., Technical Aspects of Artificial Intelligence: An Understanding from an Intellectual Property Law Perspective, Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition Research Paper 19-13, 2019

26 Applications for artificial intelligence in Department of Defense cyber missions <https://blogs.microsoft.com/on-the-issues/2022/05/03/artificial-intelligence-department-of-defense-cyber-missions/>

individual criminals and small organized crime groups. The real military potential of the cyber component, when used as a weapon by a developed country, was only lightly demonstrated in the case of Estonia and Georgia, and was more strongly demonstrated by the “Stuxnet” attack on Iran;

- Stuxnet is considered the first example of using software as a weapon, the targets of which were industrial control systems. It was meant to cause physical damage to systems that are not part of a computer or computer network, so such programs herald a new era of cyberwarfare;

- Large-scale cyber defense requires cooperation between the private sector and the military;

- If the cyber component replaces kinetic energy as the main indicator and measure of military power, the consequences of operations, their strategy, logistics, structure, weapons and the nature of military forces are likely to be significant; - Progress in cyberspace will have a serious impact on the relative military strength of countries and the balance of international forces;

- The cyber space asks questions to the military, which not only do not have answers, but even their essence is not yet clear.

Based on the above discussed aspects and identified problems, measures against cyber threats and risks may be proposed in the form of recommendations, which may be effective in strengthening individual, corporate, national, regional or international cyber security. In particular, it would be good to:

- Creating a more reliable, durable and reliable digital infrastructure for the future;

- Development of comprehensive and effective measures and methods that ensure quick and undeniable identification of the source of the attack;

- Developing a cyber-security strategy, the task of which will be to shape the international climate and unify the positions of allied countries regarding technical standards, acceptable norms, sovereign obligations and the use of force;

- conducting a proper complex audit to identify weaknesses in key assets and critical infrastructure, including identifying and assessing the risks of specific types of attacks;

- Development of a comprehensive national plan to eliminate the mentioned weaknesses;

- Integrating all relevant information, analysis and vulnerability assessment to determine priority protection and support measures, ways to reduce potential risks and their economic cost-effectiveness;

- Better definition of the government’s role and responsibilities to ensure the security of critical infrastructure, government networks and IT systems;

- Ensuring the security of networks and IT systems by reducing the number of potential and real weaknesses, protecting against intrusion attempts, predicting future threats; identify trends by promoting research and development, education and investment in technology;

It should be noted here that, in the future, it is certainly expected that the national (and global) thinking regarding the given issues will change over time and it will be necessary to review and update them periodically.

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The Future of European Security after Russia-Ukraine War

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Abstract

The Russia-Ukraine war developed in 2022 became relevant and significant for the whole world. Russia's aggression has been a disturbing problem for the world since the beginning of the war in Ukraine. Especially important for the European countries, because the developed war showed that Ukraine is a retaining wall for the European countries. The ongoing war between the two countries is harming the security of European peace. The process and actions of Russia's invasion of Ukraine are discussed in the paper. The importance of Europe in this war and the issues that the European Union has seen since the beginning of the war are also discussed. The paper also demonstrates the scale of importance regarding the Ukraine's fighting ability and territorial integrity for Europe and with what means does the European Union fight against Russia. Many countries of the world condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The European Union and its member states oppose both Russia's actions and Belarus' active involvement in military operations. From February 2022, the Council of Europe has regularly held briefings and discuss the situation in Ukraine. The security of Ukraine is important for the European Union, because Russia's aggression is directed not only towards Ukraine, but also poses a threat to Europe. The European Union started helping Ukraine with military and humanitarian means. Including sanctions, which were imposed after the start of hostilities by the Russian invasion, which are crucial tool as a lever for weakening Russia.

Keywords:

Russia's aggression, developed war, European Union, military and humanitarian means.

Introduction

The Russian-Ukrainian war began on February 24, 2022, with Russia's military operations on the territory of Ukraine. Before the last war, Russia invaded Crimea in 2014. Russia's declaration of Ukraine as a neo-Nazi state, accusations that Ukrainians were ethnically oppressing Russians, led to military actions by Russia in Ukraine. In 2021, Russia joined the military force at the border of Ukraine. On February 21, 2022, Russia recognized the Donetsk People's Republic, After which President Putin ordered to send troops to Dolban.

On February 24, the Russian forces started military operations in Ukraine, at the same time Russian air bombardment was taking place on Ukrainian cities. Russian military forces attacked from three directions, from the north-eastern front, from the direction of Belarus and from the eastern front. From the end of February to the end of March, the Russian invasion was unsuccessful. Due to the great loss, on April 3, Russia left Kiev region. On April 19, the Russian military launched an attack, and on July 3, Luhansk District was completely captured. Along with the ground attacks, Russian air bombardments continued.¹

Since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war, Ukrainian civilians were actively involved. They tried to fight with the available means before the Russian military. Ukrainian citizens in great numbers volunteered to fight, prepared Molotov cocktails, started building barriers and more. As a result of the clashes and the air force, Ukrainians, both military and civilians, were injured.

Many countries of the world condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The European Union and its member states oppose both Russia's actions and Belarus' active involvement in military operations. From February 2022, the Council of Europe has regularly held briefings and discuss the situation in Ukraine. The security of Ukraine is important for the European Union, because Russia's aggression is directed not only towards Ukraine, but also poses a threat to Europe. The European Union started helping Ukraine with military and humanitarian means. Including sanctions, which were imposed after the start of hostilities by the Russian invasion, which are crucial tool as a lever for weakening Russia.

Main Part

Russia-Ukraine War

Russia's invasion of Ukraine began on February 24, 2022. Before the last war, Russia invaded Crimea in 2014 and managed to conquer it. Russia, with the help of separatists, occupied a part of Dolbans in South-Eastern Ukraine, which led to war in the local region. In 2021, Russia gathered a large force near the border of Ukraine. The reason for this is that the commander-in-chief of Russia, Vladimir Putin, made a televised address and declared that Ukraine was ruled by neo-Nazis and ethnically harassed and punished Russians. On February 21, 2022, Russia recognized the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic. After the recognition of independence, Putin ordered to send Russian troops to Dolbas, which he called a "peacekeeping mission". Five Ukrainian soldiers were killed by the Russian military, which Russia explained by the fact that they tried to cross the border. Kiev denied this information, and today Russian military forces crossed the border of Ukraine and hostilities were announced.²

Russian military forces invaded Ukraine On February 24, within a few minutes, the Russian Air Force began airstrikes on Ukrainian cities, including Kiev. At the same time, the armed forces of Ukraine began to act, war readiness was declared. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky declared martial law and mobilization for all men between the ages of 18 and 60. Russian military forces initially had three directions of attack on the northern front, invading from the direction of Belarus towards Kiev, from the north-eastern front and on the eastern front towards Donetsk and Luhansk. The hostilities that started at the end of February and continued in March were ineffective for Russia. The Russian military forces could not advance and suffered heavy losses, Both equipment and manpower. As a result of resistance, the Russian military left Kyiv region on April 3. Even though the other fronts were unchanged, on April 19 Russian attacks were renewed, and on July 3 Luhansk region was completely captured. At the same time, Russian air attacks continued in Kiev, Lviv, Odessa and Kremenchuk.

Since the entry of Russia into Ukraine, Ukrainian civilians have tried to engage in the fight and resist the enemy with the available means. Ukrainian civilians volunteered to be members of the defense units, prepared Molotov cocktails, built barriers, and more. As a result of various skirmishes and air attacks, Ukrainians, both military and civilians, were injured.

On April 13, Russian forces intensified their attacks on the territory of the Mariupol steel plant on the territory of the fortified Ukrainian military. On April 17, a factory was besieged, where 500 Ukrainian soldiers and 1000 starving citizens were taking refuge. On April 28, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres announced that he would seek an immediate evacuation of Mariupol. On April 30, civilians were allowed to leave the territory of Mariupol, under the protection of the United Nations. On May 3, the attacks on Mariupol were resumed by the Russian forces, at this time only 100 civilians were evacuated from the city. On May 7, after a three-day ceasefire,

1 <https://www.interpressnews.ge/>

2 https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eu-ukraine-relations-factsheet_en#top

all civilians left Azovstal. After the evacuation of civilians, about 2,000 Ukrainian soldiers and 700 civilians were in the factory.

On May 16, the General Staff of Ukraine announced that the final evacuation from the Azovstal plant had begun. 264 servicemen were transferred to Olenivka under Russian control, and 53 servicemen who were badly injured were taken to hospitals. After the evacuation, Russian and Donetsk People's Liberation Army forces took control of Mariupol.³

On August 9, 2022, there were reports of a large explosion at Saki Air Base in western Crimea. The base is located near Novofedorovka, which is a popular tourist region. It was the first attack on the Crimean peninsula. The following week, an explosion was reported at the Yarari storage facility in north-eastern Crimea. On August 18, explosions were reported at Belbek Air Base, north of Sevastopol.

On September 6, 2022, the Ukrainian armed forces launched a counter attack in Kharkiv Oblast. On September 12, Russia recognized the withdrawal of positions. September 21 mobilization was announced in Russia, the Minister of Defense of Russia, Sergei Shoigu, announced that 300,000 reservists would be drafted into the army. Ukrainians launched counter attacks in Kherson and Kharkiv.

Position of Europe

The European Union and its member states condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine. They also oppose Belarus's supportive engagement with Russia. From February 2022, the Council of Europe and the European Union has regularly held meetings and discussed the situation on the current events in Ukraine. According to the statements by the member states and the EU institutions, Russia should promptly stop hostilities against Ukraine. The European Union opposes Russia's actions, stands on the side of freedom. In addition, Russia has been trying to break the ideology of security and peace on the territory of Europe for a long time. It started in 2008 with Moscow's attack on Georgia, in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea and finally in 2022 with a large-scale attack in Ukraine. For Europe, Russia is a threat that can become stronger if Ukraine weakens. The strengthening of the forces of the Russian Federation means a violation of territorial integrity, as well as security and economic problems for Europe. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has changed the plans for the accession of new states to the European Union. The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine showed the EU the importance of Ukraine for the security of European region. Based on the recent events, the EU realized how much of a threat the Russian invasion poses to Europe and how much influence the expansion of Russia's territories can have on Europe. The war in Ukraine has become an all-European war, against Russia, to protect Europe. European leaders have long rejected Ukraine's membership in the European Union, but the war changed that opinion. Throughout its history of existence, the European Union did not allow a country that was in a war situation to become a member. The European support towards Ukraine is not only expressed by the enhanced relationship and cooperation in accession of Ukraine in the EU, but also by the latter's increased technical, logistical, financial, and political assistance. The EU has implemented significant reforms in the fight against Russia in the form of sanctions. Also, the European Union and its member states have been helping Ukraine with military equipment and humanitarian reinforcement since the beginning of the war.

International Community Military Support

International friends, especially European countries, responded to the start of the Russia-Ukraine war. In 2022, Western allies took the responsibility of upgrading Ukraine's military capabilities and supporting them with necessary equipment. In 2019, Ukraine began to receive the Turkish Bairaktar, which was actively used in 2021 confrontations on the battlefield against the separatists. After Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, many countries responded and provided military support to the Ukrainian armed forces. NATO members increased the supply of weapons, the USA provided military aid worth of 260 million dollars, with a special composition : Anti-armor weapons, firearms, bullets and other equipment. Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal and Great Britain also joined in helping Ukraine.

On February 2, the European Union concluded an agreement on the purchase of weapons, which are fully used by the Ukrainian military forces. According to the agreement, the European Union would purchase 450 million euros worth of high-class equipment for Ukraine, and Poland would be the facility from which Ukraine would be supplied.

EU sanctions against Russia

The sanctions imposed against Russia are the largest in the history of the European Union. The EU has agreed several sanctions packages with its partner and allied countries. The following are involved in it: USA, the United Kingdom, Canada, Norway, Japan and Australia. The European Union has disconnected leading Russian banks from SWIFT, which is the world's largest system of international financial transactions. Sanctions were imposed on March 2, 2022, and then they blocked three Russian credit institutions. This restriction includes a complete ban on transactions for the Russian regional bank. In addition, restrictions were imposed against the Central Bank of Russia, which is one of the most important financial institutions in the Russian Federation.

On June 3, 2022, the European Union agreed to ban specific business-related services: auditing, accounting and tax consulting, business and management consulting, financial accounting. Access to these services is restricted to the Russian government and organizations established in Russia. The target of these sanctions is 70 percent

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/commentisfree/2023/jul/10/russia-threat-europe-defence-military>

of Russian banking markets. The EU has also closed European airspace to all Russian-registered aircraft. On May 30, 2022, the European Union banned oil imports from Russia. The European Union has banned the sale of oil refining products and technologies to Russia. This restriction hurts the Russian oil sector and will not allow the renewal of oil refineries.

The European Union has imposed restrictions on the export of dual-use products and technology. Restrictions have been imposed on technologies that contribute to the technological strengthening of Russia's defense and security. On March 9, 2022, a restriction was imposed on the export of marine navigation and radio communications technologies. On March 15, 2022, the European Union introduced restrictions on trade in iron and steel, due to which Russia experienced a loss of income of 3.3 billion euros. The European Union has implemented trade-related sanctions, which have significantly affected the economic market in Russia, as well as limiting broadcasting rights and cutting off communication channels. This restriction will remain in force until the aggression against Ukraine is stopped. Restrictions include 1,800 private and corporate legal entities. The European Union, with its related restrictions and sanctions, challenges and weakens the economic side of Russia, helps Ukraine and Europe to win the fight against Russia.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Russia-Ukraine war is not just a war between two countries, as we have analyzed on the international level, major actors, including the European institutions are involved in the conflict. In order for Europe to maintain economic and political stability, it is necessary to strengthen and support Ukraine. The guarantee of the security of Europe is the protection of the sovereignty of Ukraine. The Russia-Ukraine war of 2022 showed the world that Ukraine is a wall for Europe and protects it from Russian aggression. The circumstances that arose during the course of the war clearly showed the importance of Ukraine's strength to Europe. Therefore, since the beginning of the war, the EU has been involved and is trying to strengthen and protect the security of Ukraine. with sanctions and military assistance, to weaken Russia's aggression and resist its illegal actions.

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Russia's Eurasian Policy in The Context of the Russia-Ukraine War

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Abstract

Russia's attack on Ukraine once again convinced humanity of the correctness of one of the most important aspects of political realism, that the international arena is an arena of mutual struggle and confrontation between great powers. At the beginning of the war, the West imposed severe economic sanctions on Russia in the hope that it would deal a heavy blow to Russia. Moreover, many thought that the Russian economy would collapse or will collapse in the future due to the protracted war, but if we look closely at the essence of the events, we will see that Russia has been preparing for this war for a long time. He knew very well that sooner or later he would have to clash with the West, that's why he directed his economic efforts in the Eurasian direction. Undoubtedly, he had the prerequisites for such a policy. This primarily concerned the post-Soviet space, especially Central Asia, and relations with a number of other states. The experience of living together in the Soviet Union allowed Russia to get some "economic insurance" in the Eurasian space. This war continues today. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers, civilians, including children, have died. Everyone should face this sad reality. All the more so that it was added to the outbreak of a new conflict in the Middle East.

Russia has been preparing for war in Ukraine for a long time. After the collapse of liberal reforms in the 90s of the last century, Russia clearly set out on the path to the realization of new global goals and made the Eurasian direction one of its priorities. At the expense of strengthening the economic potential in the direction of Eurasia, it would be able to confront the West in one way or another. Indeed, against the backdrop of the current Western sanctions, it was the Eurasian direction that helped the Russian Federation. So it has been well prepared for at least two decades to wage war in Ukraine, which is a vital strategic geopolitical arena for it.

Keywords:

geopolitical arena, liberal reforms, Western sanctions.

Introduction

February 24, 2022 completely changed the modern world. Russia's attack on Ukraine once again showed the face of imperialist policy. It became clear that the world could not continue to exist after that. Today, there is a lot of discussion about what the country will look like after the end of the war. Many political experts assume that the world configuration will be multi-polar, some focus on the unconditional victory of Ukraine and the West, and some even predict the end of the war with a "quiet" where neither Russia will achieve its final goals and Ukraine may have to give up some territories. It all depends on the forecast. No one really knows how this great bloodshed will end, but the fact is that civilians, women and children are dying along with the soldiers. In the middle of Europe, it seems that no one expected this, but in history it does not often happen like that. Everything has its reason and logical result.

The war in Ukraine, like all wars, had its reasons. Although the Western political opinion refers to this war as an unprovoked war, in which the grain of truth is clear, but its reasons are deeper. In our opinion, this is another modern manifestation of the conflict between the West and the East in the deep historical past. The Western rationalist worldview has always had a hard time finding a common language with Eastern irrationalism. Civilization resistance among them remains an unsolved problem to this day. Although a significant part of Russia is located on the European continent, this was not enough for close rapprochement with the West. Russia chose a different path.

At the beginning of the war, the West imposed severe economic sanctions on Russia in the hope that it would deal a heavy blow to Russia. Moreover, many thought that the Russian economy would collapse or will collapse in the future due to the protracted war, but if we look closely at the essence of the events, we will see that Russia has been preparing for this war for a long time. He knew very well that sooner or later he would have to clash with the West, that's why he directed his economic efforts in the Eurasian direction. Undoubtedly, he had the prerequisites for such a policy. This primarily concerned the post-Soviet space, especially Central Asia, and relations with a number of other states. The experience of living together in the Soviet Union allowed Russia to get some "economic insurance" in the Eurasian space.

Today, economic integration is considered the main driving force of integration processes in the Eurasian space. However, it has the most important political component for Russia. From an economic point of view and to some extent from a political point of view, Eurasian integration has a natural character and it depends on economic, political, socio-cultural, ethno-psychological, religious and many other factors.

Main Part

The socio-cultural proximity of the integrating countries can be considered as a socio-cultural guide for the integration in the Eurasian space. Despite the negative attitude of scientific circles towards the Soviet Union, one cannot fail to recognize that during the Soviet period these countries and their people were closely connected. That's why the countries interested in this integration, and above all Russia, on the path of long-term economic and political integration, give preference to socio-cultural integration. At the same time, such integration, unlike political and economic integration, which is related to official political-diplomatic procedures, processing and acceptance of official documents and has an externally formal character, is not characterized by the existence of strict integration process boundaries. It is a much more difficult and long process, but at the same time, it is the main driving force of economic and political integration. In the post-Soviet countries, socio-cultural integration was paid less attention until now. Experience has shown that the arguments for the economic and political integration of the CIS were not distinguished by attractiveness and persuasiveness neither among the national elites of these states nor among the scientific circles. Therefore, attention was shifted to socio-cultural interests. First of all, the political elite of Russia takes this into account. In other words, it is learning from the mistakes of the Soviet Union.

Although the two biggest projects in Eurasia's historical experience failed in the form of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, we must admit that these projects had fundamental consequences. Unified economic and socio-cultural systems were created on the vast space of Eurasia. For a long time, these systems ensured the safe development of different ethnic groups, nationalities, which had different cultures, including different languages and beliefs. In the basis of these systems, in the integrative core, the Russian language and Russian culture were wrapped around themselves, even in an imperialistic way, but only in this way different peoples were connected to world cultures, world economy and politics. When the unified economic and political systems of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union were broken, this core remained one way or another. This means that the task of unifying the heterogeneous parts of the huge Eurasian space was solved in the course of the XIX-XX centuries, within the framework of greater or lesser conformity with Russian Slavophile or Eurasian ideas. Although both the Tsarist Russian Empire and the Soviet Union were states based on force, their successors, Russia and other CIS countries, inherited an integrative culture, including the experience of creating and functioning multi-ethnic, multi-confessional states for many centuries. Of course, this did not apply to everyone. That's why, for example,

Georgia was outside the scope of this integration (not to mention the Baltic states, which escaped Russian influence), which chose the Euro-Atlantic course, but nevertheless, from a cultural point of view, it also received some influence from the Russian Empire, even in terms of relations. It doesn't matter if you were an enemy or not, historical contact always creates something in common. World history, both old and new, speaks of this. The Baltic states had the shortest historical contact with the Soviet Union. Belarus was united by a very deep civilizational unity with Russia. Central Asian republics are tasked with the fundamental development of secular government in general and modern integration into the Eurasian union. It was through their relationship with Russia that they avoided Islamic fundamentalism. As for Ukraine, in this case we think we are dealing not only with the mistakes of the Russian Federation in relation to this state, but also with a number of complex factors, including the influence of foreign factors on Ukraine.

Despite such contradictions and civilizational differences, the cultural sense of unity still exists, has been preserved, and it is quite possible that it will become the fundamental principle of modern Eurasian integration processes.

The unified integrated culture of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union is not only the result of internal development, the evolution of their primary elements, but at the same time it is also the sum of external interrelated cultures borrowed from each other.

Cultural processes of world history, including the history of Russia and other Eurasian states, are mainly represented by the synthesis of two forms of cultural development: evolution and diffusion. This was reflected in the creation of two concepts of the cultural process. Evolutionism pointed to the internal and orderly growth of the original culture (from minimum to maximum). At the beginning of the 20th century, evolutionism lost its dominant position and began to develop diffusionism, which was based on the spread of ideas of cultural phenomena through migration of peoples, trade, colonization and conquest.

The founder of diffusionism was the German geopolitician Friedrich Ratzel. Later, his ideas were developed in the concept of "cultural morphology" by L. Frobenius and in "cultural circles" by F. Gribnes. Also, in "cultural-historical" concepts by V. Schmidt. Of course, such processes were conditioned by objective historical laws.

For Diffusionism, the common understanding expressed in the spatial characteristics of cultural manifestations was "cultural areas". The existence of similar elements in the cultures of different peoples was explained by their common origin, and their mutual contacts were considered the main source of changes in cultures. Material and spiritual cultural innovations created in the center of the "cultural area" were spread by concentric circles. The process is like this: simple forms of culture occupy the periphery, it evolves and takes different forms, after which we adapt to a new situation in a specific geographical space. That is why the history of culture is the mutual fusion and interaction of "cultural circles". This is a series of "cultural circles" based on the original culture.¹

In the Eurasian civilizational context, this means that its enormous diversity ultimately converges to a single foundation, and similar elements and events of such culture in the Eurasian system converge into a single cultural area and originate from a single center. We do not necessarily want to talk about any special role of Russia. As we mentioned earlier, the Russian Empire always had imperialist goals, just like any big state at different stages of history, but the historical contact of peoples prepared the ground for a new civilizational space, where a new arena was opened for economic, social and cultural activity.²

During the 19th century, a number of famous Georgian figures (including Ilia Chavchavadze) pointed to the common characteristics of Georgian and Russian culture. During the Soviet period, real masterpieces of Georgian culture were created in Georgia, but this did not prevent Georgia from making a pro-Western choice after the collapse of the Soviet Union. But there are states in the Eurasian space that had the greatest historical and cultural heritage (for example, the Central Asian republics) and do not refuse Eurasian integration. That is why we consider Eurasian integration not an artificial but a natural phenomenon.

Both the Russian Empire and the Soviet political, economic and cultural models were based on the "center-periphery" integration scheme. The cultural, political and economic development of the center automatically led to the development of the periphery. Consequently, the weakening and decline of the center led to the disintegration and decline of the peripheries. Moreover, the empires themselves had many mechanisms for this in the peripheries, even in the form of autonomies.³

In the context of the past and present integration processes of Eurasia, one of the system-forming elements of Russian culture was Orthodoxy, which in its external forms had a Byzantine origin as a result of the Great Schism (1054). This was the result of cultural acceptance or diffusion. Nevertheless, Orthodoxy became the social basis on which the cultural-civilizational foundations of Muscovite Russia, the Russian Empire, and even the Soviet Union were created. The Orthodox Church performs the integrating function even today, taking into account the historical values for the Russian society and the state.⁴

Myths about the "icon of the enemy" are often propagated by the Russian political elite. For example, Russian President Vladimir Putin, in 2012, wrote in the pages of "Независимая газета" that "the main blow is being

1 И. Тюнен, Изолированное государство. М.: Экономическая жизнь, 1926; 326 ст.

2 И. Фихте, Замкнутое торговое государство. М., 1923; 175 ст.

3 В. Вундт, Проблема психологии народов. М., 1912; 49 ст.

4 Г. Лебон, Психология народов и масс. М., 1896. 329 ст.

carried out (and will be carried out in a scenario aimed at the disintegration of modern Russia and a new Eurasian interest) against in the direction of Russian integrative culture, Russian people and Russian culture. Moreover, preparations are underway for the creation of a Russian national state, which will be the shortest way to destroy the Russian people, Russian culture and Russian statehood.”⁵ Obviously, such evaluations are intended for a more domestic audience, but the real danger for Russia is indeed the wave of migration (especially from China to Siberia) in terms of ethnic and confessional tensions. On the other hand, we are dealing with purely political statements, which sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly contain narratives of the creation of a new Russian empire.

The problem of cultural diffusion exists all over the world, including in Russia. Recent developments have shown the power of the migration wave, which can threaten certain cultures. It was due to the identity crisis that the so-called Visegrad countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary) did not allow immigrants into their countries, which caused the heartbreak of the European Union. Russia has the same fear from the side of Central Asia, which can be conditionally called “the new great migration of people”. All this can change the old image of the Eurasian continent, including Russia. Here it is also acceptable to take into account that closed national-religious communities are forming in Russia, which refuse to adapt, which can increase nationalism, social tension and religious intolerance.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, in the post-Soviet countries, including Georgia, the revival of ethnic and national origins had a positive character. But in the modern world, national development is continuously connected with economic and political achievements, which in turn should lead to progress in various spheres of public life. Often this is achieved through relations with higher level countries, one of the main cultural characteristics of which is language. Therefore, it is no coincidence that in the post-Soviet countries, the cultural area of the English language is expanding (it can be safely said that it has become an international language). This is the most important factor in the way of globalization and integration of the Western economy, and this is when during the last hundred years, and in some cases even more, the Russian language sometimes played a greater role in the post-Soviet space. But the difference was colossal. Nobody has spread the English language by force, which cannot be said about the Russian language. Let’s not say anything about tsarist Russia, when the Russian language was spread by fire and sword. Even during the Soviet period, there were attempts at forceful cultural influence by chauvinistic Russian circles, famous emissaries of which were Nikita Khrushchev and Tsekya Secretary Mikhail Suslov. Let’s recall the events that took place in Georgia in 1978, when Georgian youth, at the cost of struggle, preserved the status of the Georgian language in the constitution.

Despite the mentioned events, in the post-Soviet space, as far as the Russian language was the main means of communication, it still plays a significant role in the path of Eurasian integration. In many countries of this space, the Russian language is used in business circles, financial and banking systems. About 70% of the population of these countries speak Russian. Moreover, this language remains one of the world languages and it is one of the official and working languages in large international organizations. including the United Nations and UNESCO. Nevertheless, the state status of the Russian language is suspended and expelled from the post-Soviet space, replacing it with the status of the titular languages of the indigenous nations. It is not excluded that the situation for Russia will change even more negatively after a generation.⁶

Conclusion

Thus, there are problems on the path of Eurasian integration, as on the path of any integration, but we must look at this phenomenon scientifically, not from the perspective of good and bad. In any case, this type of integration, in our opinion, helps to control uncontrolled migration waves, to preserve the already existing forms of integrative culture, to more or less peaceful coexistence of different cultures, communities, and religions. With Eurasian integration, the Russian Federation also thinks about improving the demographic situation, which will block the possibility of managing Russia from the outside. Russian President Putin wrote in this regard: “40% of the world’s natural resources are concentrated in our territory, while the population is only 2% of the Earth’s.” If we do not implement a large-scale, long-term project of demographic development, growth of human potential, utilization of our own territories, in the global opinion, we may become an “empty space” whose fate will not be decided by us.⁷ Therefore, the Russian political elite is trying to implement a special domestic and foreign policy, increasing the Russian cultural and educational potential, which is why it attaches vital importance to the integration in the Eurasian space.

Russia continues to move in the economic direction in the Eurasian space. Recently, another gas pipeline project was signed, Uzbekistan will be supplied with gas from Russia via Kazakhstan. This agreement was signed on October 7, 2023 by the presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. In addition, the Eurasian Economic Union is functioning, Russia is also a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

5 В. Путин, Россия: национальный вопрос, Независимая газета, М.,23.01.2012.

6 Е. Пивовар, Постсоветское пространство: альтернативы интеграции. М., 2008. 160 ст.

7 В. Путин, Россия и меняющийся мир, Московские новости, 27.02.2012.

In our opinion, the political elite of the West should have realized the above-mentioned factors and should have seen that Russia was preparing for a big war. The political elite of the West, especially Germany, cooperated closely with Russia in the field of energy. Obviously, there was nothing wrong with this, the parties acted on the principle of mutual benefit, but especially after the speech of the Russian president at the Munich conference on February 10, 2007, the Western alarm bell should have sounded, which was not done. However, it was after this speech that the Russia-Georgia war of 2008 took place, the so-called the recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states, the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the bloody conflicts in the eastern part of Ukraine. Everything ended with a large-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. The war is still going on with a passing advantage. Therefore, the superficial conclusions of some political experts that Russia's Eurasian integration direction was unpromising did not turn out to be correct. Taking these mistakes into account, even belatedly, will undoubtedly be good for the civilized world.

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New World Order and Georgia

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Abstract

Against the background of the world's conflicts, everyone is trying to gain more influence in the region and is doing what they can. Georgia is also involved in this process. There are no open threats for Georgia in the coming period, but what kind of continuation these conflicts will have, In any case, Georgia must be aware that big players use small countries for their own interests. At the same time, in order to represent a more stable place in the world order, small countries are trying to unite, balance their weaknesses and become stronger economically. Everyone understands that for a weak state, any disturbance in the neighborhood, even a distant one, is dangerous.

As a result of the current processes in the world, global supply chains are changing. The continued viability of the global economy, especially in the face of any potential future crisis, depends on the extent to which stakeholders can stabilize new supply routes and access vital resources. From this point of view, the South Caucasus and Central Asia seem to be the only option for transit in the background of the conflicts around the Caucasus. Therefore, the possibility of increasing cargo turnover through Central Asia, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Georgia. Accordingly, the possibility of diversification of the existing trade routes is the subject of discussion by all parties. At the same time, the poles of the world mentioned above are trying to increase their influence on the supply route countries and divide them around their own pole.

Keywords:

South Caucasus, Transit corridors, World Order, economic cooperation.

Introduction

The tendencies of forming a multipolar world order - the existence of ongoing aspirations in the “Western world” and the possibility of presenting it as a homogeneous unity, presenting them as “poles” by force and competing with each other, are currently in an active phase.

The periods of political instability were the most frequent in the history of Georgia, and their reason was due to the fate caused by the geopolitical location. This applies not only to Georgia, but to the entire Caucasus region, which is distinguished by a heavy historical legacy, which, according to politicians, is a historical feature, a Caucasian specificity. This region, as one of the “delicious morsels” of the planet has become a hostage of its geopolitical location. “East-West-North-South roads, a crossroads of trade and, most importantly, power interests, a strategic stronghold in the never-ending and not-so-peaceful conflict of the surrounding powerful states; This is where the spring of suppression and resistance with all the accompanying historical results is laid”.

For now days The political and economic aspects of the Russia-Ukraine war, the Karabakh conflict and the end of Israel-Hamas will definitely affect Georgia, and attention should be focused on the trends of the balance of power in the region and its impact on Georgia.

International situation, the relationship between the United States and China is of great importance. China's attempt to become a superpower poses a threat to the United States. China's growing military potential, strengthening its position and the world's first growing economy pose a threat to the United States. At the regional level, Turkey's positions and existing interests in the South Caucasus are interesting, including the changed situation resulted from the Russia-Ukraine war.¹

Main Part

It is possible to assume that war and its events are changing the world order, affecting both the region and the countries in the region. Wars are not similar, although they have superficial similarities. For example, if Russia's tasks in the August War were more local (increased control of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, punishing Georgia, demonstrating to the West, that the Kremlin was a Hegemon in the region), Russia had a global task in the Ukrainian War. When war begins, no one knows how it will end, and until the end of war and cease fire or capitulation, it is always provisiona.²

The term World order is used to understand the reality of political life at the global level. On the one hand, world order refers to the structure of distribution of power and authority, which provides a framework for conducting diplomacy and world politics at the global level. In the second sense, world order refers to the distribution of power and authority related to the realization of such values as peace, economic growth and equality, human rights, environmental quality and sustainability.³

For several centuries, the defining framework of the world order was primarily associated with the Treaty of Westphalia, which is seen as the beginning of the modern world. This modern world order, geographically derived from the European experience, was based on the emergence of the sovereign, territorial state as the dominant political actor. This statist world order was clearly Eurocentric in its essence, perceiving international society in terms of relations between major European states. The relations of non-European states were considered according to the hierarchical subordination of European states. The character of this hierarchical subordination was based on colonial empire.

The world order is largely based on the power of the main states. International law evolved over time. Through diplomatic exchange, maritime security, communications and transport, the states can stabilize the cooperation aspect of international relations. It also legitimized the dominant and abusive behavior of the powerful through various theories and practices that justified intervention, including the broad concept of “humanitarian intervention” used by the European powers to protect the Christian minority. Monroe's document, dated 1823, had the same purpose, which prevented the United States from carrying out attacks.⁴

In the 19th century, Georgia and the entire Caucasus were part of the Russian Empire, and therefore the region was completely dependent on it. After the end of the First World War, Georgia's independence was declared, which was followed by Soviet occupation in 1921.

Since 1945, the global liberal order has been the cornerstone of peace and stability. It was deliberately conceived to prevent the armed conflicts and economic nationalism. It consists of many treaties and agreements including the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the G20 and the United Nations. The environment of the Cold War that dominated world politics for 40 years since the end of the 1940s led to tensions between the liberal capitalist or

1 J. G. Ikenberry “After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraints, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars”. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001. 293 p

2 Shota Utiashvili. “The war and Georgia”. <https://gfsis.org.ge/blog/view/1450>

3 J. A. Agnew, S. Corbridge “Mastering Space: Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy”. London: Routledge, 1995. 260 p

4 Misashi, Encyclopedia Prinstoniensis “World Order” <https://pesd.princeton.edu/node/696>

Marxist socialist movements over the choice of their domestic futures, leading to intense interventionist struggles. In fact, the struggle against colonialism lasted for many years and intensified, and non-Western people gained political independence. At the same time, the governments inspired by Western fascism (the right to wage wars) tried to preserve the integrity of the country by strong means, avoiding the fragmentation of the country because of these separatist demands of ethnic or religious minorities.⁵

The shape of the world order was profoundly affected by the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and America's response through the global "War on Terror." The declaration of war on the non-state shadow network of extremists Al Qaeda came from the neo-conservative position of the US government, within the framework of the post-Westphalian nature of the world order. This discourse was supported by the insistence that the Charter's notions of self-defense were no longer adequate, and should be augmented by the right to preemption based on threats, failing to achieve decisive status, as well as a highly controversial policy of disregarding the "Geneva Conventions on the Conduct of War".

Considering the changes that happened after September 11, we realize how the world order has changed in our understanding. It is clear that the war on terrorism has been waged on both sides without the restraint of law or respect for the borders of sovereign states. It was truly a borderless war on a global scale. This new phase of the conflict cannot be understood within the statist framework of the world order.⁶

Conclusion

Russia's aggression in the Caucasus in 2008 gave rise to a new reality, where Russia was declared the occupier, however, this action of Russia reduced the influence of the West and postponed the prospect of Georgia joining NATO and the European Union, which would bring stability and economic prosperity to the country. Russia's aggression, the seizure of territories and the growth of its role as a global player continued even with the annexation of Ukrainian territories.

For the current period, due to the influence of the conflicts in Ukraine and Karabakh, it is clear that a new reality is emerging in the South Caucasus, although Russia maintains a significant influence and forces are represented in the region. Its traditional alliance with Armenia is coming to an end, and the final political orientation of Turkey and Azerbaijan depends on the results of the end of the Russia-Ukraine war.

With a new image in the South Caucasus, Russia, despite maintaining a significant influence, is gradually becoming not a dominant, but one of the powers represented in the region, Turkey and Azerbaijan are mainly focused on the war in Ukraine and its probable outcome for Russia.⁷

Thus, as mentioned above, despite the fact that historical experience due to ethno-conflicts and constant struggle for redistribution of spheres of influence between neighbors and global powers does not give grounds for optimism, the fact is that it is in the strategic interests of all parties interested in cooperation with the states of the South Caucasus to normalize the situation in this still troubled region and gradually transform into a region of stable cooperation with unconditional consideration of the interests of all parties. However, experience shows that when making political decisions, objective facts are not always taken into account.⁸

Each side is looking for its own ways to resolve the contradictions and ensure national and regional security, believing that time is working in its favor. But it is increasingly clear that the main and most painful problems, including political-ethnic conflicts, Caspian oil transportation and transport routes, can be solved only jointly and, if necessary, with the help and mediation of other interested parties.

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“New Reality of European Security After the Russia-Ukraine War”

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Abstract

On February 24, 2022, the world was changed by the decision of President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin. The decision of this man changed the lives not only of the citizens of Ukraine or Russia but of all the countries of the world. The Western world understood that the threat of conventional war is not an illusion or conspiracy theory but a reality. The consciousness of European citizens has changed. The ongoing conflict also shows us how important it is to adequately secure a reserve of people trained to fight. The drawn-out war requires replenishment of personnel and without adequate advance preparation, this would not be possible. If it were not for adequate preparation and securing in specialists there would probably no longer be an independent Ukraine at this point. But unfortunately, as in the course of any war, not only soldiers die. Many times, we have witnessed the shelling of civilian buildings including houses, schools or kindergartens by the Russians, and many times in these situations many human lives were saved by the proper medical training of not only medical personnel who came to the scene, but also ordinary people.

Western society saw how important a skill it is to put on a tactical stasis or handle a firearm. A great example is the action periodically carried out by the Polish armed forces “train with the army” which I will describe in detail in my work. A greater level of public awareness also translates into a willingness to arm. Once again, using the example of the Polish armed forces, I will show how such a process can take place. I choose the Polish armed forces not so much because I serve in them myself, but because recently we have been massively replenishing not only land forces equipment, but also the air force, which I will describe in more detail in my work. Weapons provide a sense of security, which is important from a psychological point of view. Psychological influence on the societies of neighboring countries is something Russia has mastered perfectly, which is why it is so important that we do not fear them, because fear will be the first step to our downfall. Regardless of the outcome of this war, we must act so that we do not show weakness in front of Russia because they only understand the language of brute force with which they are unable to compete in any way.

Keywords:

Russian Federation, Ukraine, European Union, Polish Armed Forces, Awareness.

Introduction

The order issued by President Vladimir Putin on February 24 starting the war on Ukraine forever changed the fate of citizens around the world. It is a new-generation armed conflict, starting another chapter in the history of this world-with significance for the citizens of Ukraine, Russia-but also Europe.

First of all, in my opinion, in the course of the war between Russia and Ukraine, called “Special Military Operation” by Russia, we can see a completely new front of action and fighting on a hitherto unknown battlefield, which is the Internet.

The experience of the Armed Forces of NATO member countries and the European Union, although rich in war experience (both after World War I and World War II) and the implementation of many missions abroad, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, for the first time stood up to fight on this dangerous training ground that is the Internet, including Social Media and widely covering disinformation.

Fending off relentless attacks by the Russian Federation on the Ukrainian front also demonstrates the importance of basic training of the country’s civilian citizens, or so-called “Reserve Personnel.”

In the following article, I will try to give my point of view, describe hitherto unknown problems and propose an innovative solution that I see as a Cadet of the Academy.

Methodology

In delving into the above problem of the “New Reality of European Security After the Russia-Ukraine War,” I used primarily my own experience and observations. At the same time, I analyzed the literature of the Institute for Eastern Studies and the experience gained after the Conference with Cadets from Ukraine under NATO’s DEEP program.¹ I can also base my analysis of the problem primarily on a critical assessment of Social Media and what, and how, false propaganda and disinformation has been spread - primarily relying on Telegram and Twitter.

Main Part

1. Disinformation as the biggest caliber rifle of the 21st century

Let’s start with an explanation of the fundamental concepts that are often used interchangeably, which is incorrect. “False information” and “Disinformation” are two distinct terms that are not related. False information refers to false information created or disseminated unintentionally (this often occurs in the media when reporting on events without prior verification), whereas Disinformation is also false information but created deliberately with the intent to cause harm.²

Citing data from the European Council, the fight against disinformation was triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic. It was in December 2020 when the Council adopted conclusions that called for an even more resolute response at the EU level to hybrid threats, including disinformation.

In line with the Council’s guidelines, it was necessary to significantly strengthen the task forces for strategic communication operating within the European External Action Service and the early warning system, making it a comprehensive platform for Member States and EU institutions. This directly impacts the security of all European Union citizens. The actions driven primarily by the Russian Federation’s disinformation campaigns can be identified by their efforts to sow uncertainty or hostility on the internet, often disseminated or intensified through automated and aggressive techniques, such as microtargeting, social media bots, and the use of artificial intelligence. These tactics are evident on the official social media accounts of politicians, particularly in the comments section on platforms like Twitter.

Through these aforementioned actions, citizens who are unaware of these tactics are susceptible to experiencing dangerous emotions, including fear, panic, and uncertainty. These emotions can serve as a basis for fostering internal conflicts and divisions.

European Union can take several steps in the fight against disinformation during the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine and beyond. It is important to recognize that this issue is likely to persist, and addressing it comprehensively is of utmost importance.

First and foremost, raising awareness among citizens about the threat of disinformation is a crucial step. This can be achieved through various media channels, including print, television, the internet, and radio. It is imperative to understand that disinformation affects individuals of all ages, including elderly individuals who may not have easy access to free media. Implementing an informed campaign on this issue is likely to promote critical thinking among the population.

1 Jarosław Tokarczyk and Bartosz Tokarczyk, “Deep Portal,” DEEP Portal – NATO DEEP ADL Portal, November 14, 2023, <https://deeportal.hq.nato.int/eacademy/>.

2 Fighting disinformation - official sources on Covid-19 - Consilium, accessed November 22, 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/coronavirus/fighting-disinformation/>.

The strategic communication teams of the European Union, as well as individual governments within the EU member states, should work towards enhancing transparency and supporting independent and honest journalism. Simultaneously, introducing appropriate regulations and standards, including the certification of quality, is essential.

Personally, I am convinced that tackling the issue of disinformation should begin as early as primary education. Educating young minds about this threat at such an early stage will help shape a generation that is less susceptible to manipulation, at least in terms of information. Currently, the Russian Federation effectively exploits the ignorance of its citizens.

As a university student, I would like to add that the European Union's decision to increase the budget for combating disinformation is a positive step. Young researchers are eager to conduct more extensive studies on this topic. The process of surveying and engaging in an open dialogue with European society may lead to better preparation for the new direction in the battle against disinformation.³

2. A well-trained reserve is a strong support

In this paragraph, I will address another critical area of European Union security - reserve soldiers. It is indisputable that the mainstay of security lies with the Regular Army, which is appropriately trained and prepared to engage in military operations, defense, and safeguarding national borders.

In the event of a direct threat to a country, the reserve cadre is expected to become an integral part of the armed forces, providing support to professional soldiers. Consequently, reservists must be proficient in operating and efficiently utilizing the equipment regularly introduced into military units and various branches of service across EU member countries.

In Russia, conscription into the military is mandatory and applies to all males aged 18 to 27 years, with the theoretical possibility of enlisting sixteen-year-olds. They are called to serve twice a year. The spring draft takes place from April 1st to July 15th, while the fall draft occurs from October 1st to December 31st. Each year, Russia has approximately 1.2 million people at its disposal, but it summons only half of that number to report to recruitment offices, eventually enlisting around 260,000 recruits (267,000 in 2019, 263,000 in 2020, and 261,000 in 2021). According to the Regulations of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, soldiers who have undergone at least four months of training may be deployed to the front, including in Ukraine, unless mobilization requirements dictate otherwise.

As citizens of the European Union, we can actively engage in preparations and support for our national defense and security by taking several important steps. The first of these steps is to create and implement a professional training plan that encompasses both individuals and civilian personnel. In today's battlefield, in addition to traditional roles such as drivers, medical personnel, or sharpshooters, there is also a demand for specialists with various skills, such as carpenters, locksmiths, or mechanics, who can quickly and precisely repair military equipment. Even basic skills in areas such as marksmanship, handling chemical protective gear, topography, or field medicine can provide valuable support to the military, even if someone is not an expert in a particular field.

Another crucial step is to conduct civilian society exercises. Such exercises help citizens understand their roles in the event of mobilization and potential threats within the European Union. It's not just about preparedness but also about raising public awareness of the importance of national defense and security. Regular and repetitive training is vital. Just like with regular armed forces, reserve training should include regular repetitions to develop and maintain the necessary skills and habits. Engaging with local communities is important as well. Fostering a sense of responsibility for national defense and promoting a culture of volunteering and public service can contribute to a strong and well-prepared reserve force. Finally, cooperation with military authorities and strict adherence to their guidance are essential for the effective integration of the reserve force into the overall national security strategy. By taking these steps, we can contribute to a stronger and more resilient national defense within the European Union while also fostering a sense of civic duty and preparedness among its citizens.⁴

Conclusion

In summary of my conducted research and analysis, we can unequivocally conclude that the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has permanently altered the concept of a Secure Europe. Since the war began, this conflict initiated a race - a race of increasing and more professional armaments, an information race, and a technological race. Poland, as a direct neighbor of the conflict, is well aware that this war is unlike any other. New tanks, aircraft, professional artillery - these are just one, although crucial, aspect of the current conflict. The ongoing war is a hybrid war - a new type of conflict that will be studied for many years to come, and we as young Europeans must be prepared for it. This is why the role of international conferences, strategic communication, think tanks, and increased academic activity is currently so vital. We are facing a global challenge - developing

³ "Tackling Online Disinformation," Shaping Europe's digital future, accessed November 22, 2023, <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/online-disinformation>.

⁴ "Rezerwiści - Ważne Ogniwo Systemu," Polska Zbrojna, accessed November 22, 2023, <https://polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/15507?t=Rezerwisci-wazne-ogniwo-systemu>.

innovative technologies to combat a cunning adversary who operates faster than even the world's best intelligence - with information. Currently, as I hope I have demonstrated in the above article, the internet is a double-edged sword. It can inflict significant harm but can also be a powerful means of conveying accurate and essential information to citizens.

The conflict in our eastern neighboring countries has opened our eyes, Europeans, very wide, showing us how close danger can be. I hope that a well-trained reserve force will never be needed, and Europe will remain safe for thousands of years. This is only possible if we take appropriate actions today to secure the future generations, for which we are responsible.

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Enhancing NATO's Forward Presence in the East a Qualitative Analysis

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Abstract

In the wake of Russia's aggression in Ukraine, in 2022, NATO has made significant strides in fortifying its eastern flank, resulting in heightened military presence near Russia's borders. The new Allied footprint bordering the Eastern Flank reflects NATO's international commitments and obligations and was tailored following principles such as proportionality and transparency.

This article delves into NATO's strategic response, particularly the expansion of its "enhanced forward presence" (eFP) missions in Eastern European countries. The way this concept was designed back in 2017 required significant adjustments in order to answer the fast dynamics of the security environment, switching slightly from a pure strategic communication tool to a reliable combat capability. That translated into more robust battlegroups able to cope with a wider spectrum of threats. Moreover, the whole associated planning concept witnessed significant changes so that the potential use of these formations to meet the desired operational outcomes.

Using a qualitative approach, the research aims to offer deeper insights into the multifaceted aspects of NATO's Forward presence in the East, providing a short analysis of today's functionality while equally focusing on the threats and opportunities that could impact or improve the concept in future times. Through an inductive methodology, and a cross-sectional study framework, this article examines the geopolitical motivations, the overarching strategic rationale, and military factors that have driven NATO's decision to expand its presence in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, it sheds on the strategic imperatives and the subsequent repercussions of this expansion, both for NATO and its adversarial counterpart, Russia. This study also assesses the military implications for nations hosting battlegroups as part of NATO's Forward presence.

Keywords:

NATO, Eastern flank, battlegroups, vigilance, forward presence, Russia, Ukraine, strategic concept.

Introduction

Global security environment is more and more dynamic with various actors aiming either at consolidating the position hardly gained through military and diplomatic means throughout decades or claiming to deserve superior influence in specific areas. Being among the key stakeholders, both NATO and Russian Federation have permanently adjusted their policy and military footprint worldwide and things seemed normal until the latest played all-in by invading Ukraine in 2023. The reason behind this decision is still under debate as the declared objective of the so-called special military operation switched from denazification and liberation of the Russian minorities living in Ukraine to a pure conquering medieval battle whose finality is annexation of territories against people's will and out of the agreed international treaties. On the other side stays NATO, whose deterrence policy was questioned by the before mentioned invasion.

The way NATO reacted to Russian Federation's repeated attempts to preserve the historical influence over the former USSR territories in Europe has been continuously under observation by military and political strategists mainly because of two reasons. First, due to Western countries apparent success of seeding European values over nations in the buffering Eastern Europe and secondly, because Russian Federation had occupied Crimea back in 2014 without being severely contested by the Alliance at that point in time. Studies went deep to origins, identifying causes and depicting facts, but very few of them have provided feasible way-ahead actions.

Given the context above, we initiate this research seeking answers to a series of questions such as: Where stays the enhanced Forward Presence within NATO's deterrence policy? Is the concept flexible enough? What was the aim behind the establishment of the battlegroups? Did battlegroups help gaining the desired effects? Can battlegroups perform better than they did it so far?

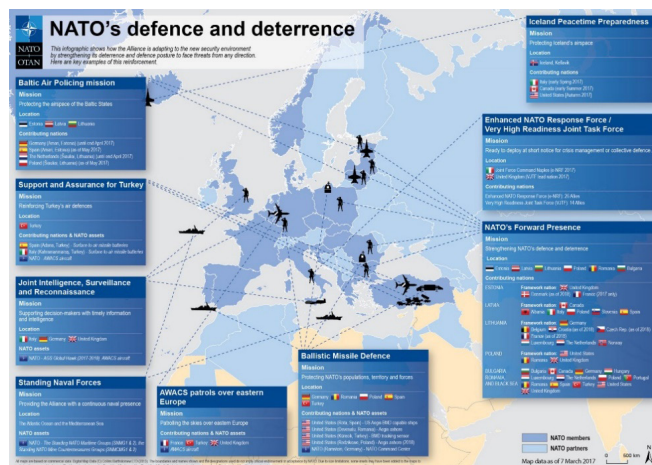
Main Part

In order to answer these questions, we decided to embrace a qualitative type research using both facts and uncountable data. Given the fact that threats to our organization's performance are mainly externals, we found TOWS analysis as being the most appropriate way to better understand the problematics and find the answers that guided us towards this endeavor.

Thus, resulted a well-balanced content which goes from the origin of the eFP concept, spinning around the transformation of NATO's wholistic deterrence approach and ending with counting boots on ground along the Eastern Flank. All data captured was carefully collated and included into a TOWS matrix that led us to a series of actions to be taken that answer, even partially, to our initial research questions.

1. Enhanced Forward Presence – concept's origin

Within the framework of NATO's strategic posture, deterrence has remained a foundational tenet. As highlighted in the 2022 Strategic Concept, NATO delineates its three pivotal tasks as: deterrence and defense, crisis prevention and management, and cooperative security. Worldwide experts see deterrence as an integrated set of actions aiming at discouraging an opponent from taking actions that could impact one's interests. Within a military framework, deterrence refers to the strategic display or potential application of significant military strength to prevent hostile actions and includes, among others, the military posture in terms of boots on ground. Therefore, the forward presence is just one of the pieces complementing 8 others, as depicted in the picture below.¹



Picture no. 1 – NATO's defense and deterrence posture

¹ NATO Deputy Spokesperson, "#NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence in the #baltics & Poland Is Aimed at Strengthening Deterrence & Defence [#EFP Pic.Twitter.Com/Eumi2jrcz](https://t.co/Ibgyemmugu)," Twitter, April 20, 2017, <https://twitter.com/NATODepSpox/status/855079371241132033>.

Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) concept dates back to 2016 and is said to be one of the main outcomes of 2016 NATO summit in Warsaw.² The Allies' original aim was to demonstrate, solidarity, determination, and ability to act by triggering an immediate response to any aggression. That translated into a permanent presence comprising multinational forces provided by various contributing nations, on a voluntary and rotational basis. Therefore, battlegroups (BGs) were not settled to meet pure military expectations, but political desires as well by targeting both internal and external audiences. First, it served as an opportunity for Alliance's big nations to show their reliability. On the other hand, the confidence of small countries facing a potential Russian raised significantly. The second end behind the concept was to send a clear message to military adversaries. The establishment of the battlegroups wanted to make clear that an attack on one Ally would be considered an attack against the whole Alliance.

One year later, four battalion-sized battlegroups were established in host nations (HN) Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland with four other countries assuming the leading role for the settlement. As framework nations (FN), United Kingdom, Canada, Germany and United States of America were to be the main contributor within their battle group and to tailor the required force packages. Further on, under strict rules of relevant ACO directives dealing with the transfer of authority and allocation of forces,³ the bidding process by troop contributing nations (TCN) continued until the newly created units reached full operational capability. Multinational NATO force structures headquarters such as MNC-NE, MND-NE and MND-N provided sponsorship for training related purposes while HNs supported their integration into NATO's command structure to ensure the necessary readiness and responsiveness.



Picture no. 2 – Enhanced Forward presence as of 30 October 2017

To summarize, eFP in its original form was not built as a fearing military body but as a useful STRATCOM tool. Interim assessments made by various authors in the early years following battlegroups establishment indicates a successful story but “we should acknowledge the uncertainty we face in drawing any firm conclusions so far. Yes, Russia has not launched an attack or seriously mounted effective “grey area” offensive actions.”⁴

2. NATO's response to Russian invasion of Ukraine

The European security environment has been significantly impacted by Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine launched on 22 February 2022. Just days later, NATO announced the activation of their own applicable defense plans, that included the employment of the standby force package commonly known as NATO Reaction Force (NRF). The weeks after, a complete set of vigilance activities was developed aiming at delivering a message to the aggressor. Therefore, NATO's reaction was focused on two strands.

First of them was a tangible one that included mainly an increase of the force posture in the countries being located along the eastern Flank. In the enhanced forward presence framework, the first kinetic action that was taken by Allies was to boost its current military posture by increasing the existing battlegroups by around 100% and establishing 4 others in Slovakia, Hungary, Romania in Bulgaria. Additionally, a series of bilateral agreements brought the total Western presence along the Allies bordering NATO at East to 40000 troops along with 1300

² The 139 points Declaration issued following 2016 NATO summit in Warsaw includes a dedicated Readiness Action Plan portion (para 35 to 42) that deals, among others, with the establishment of an enhanced forward presence in Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and Poland.

³ Such directives are classified but the key take away for the reader is that the employment of troops serving in international security missions has to be done in accordance with national regulations of the bidding nations.

⁴ Alexander Lanoszka, Christian Leuprecht, Alexander Moens. Lessons from the Enhanced Forward Presence 2017-2020, Nato Defence College, Rome, 2020.

allied fighter jets on high alert and more than 200 allied ships at sea in the region.⁵ No doubt, NATO's kinetic reaction was a quick one but it is worth investigating the effects these actions gained.

The second one was a conceptual one, focused on tailoring the existing strategic concept into one better answering to the new European reality. The most recent one was adopted by Heads of State and Government at the NATO Summit in Madrid in 29 June 2022 and depicts a narrative slightly different from before. The threats did not change but the wording regarding Russian Federation includes more sharp and clearer statements. "It's brutal and unlawful invasion, repeated violations of international humanitarian law and heinous attacks and atrocities have caused unspeakable suffering and destruction. Moscow's behavior reflects a pattern of Russian aggressive actions against its neighbors and the wider transatlantic community".⁶ Moving forward to our topic, the before mentioned concept widely sets the way-ahead for all further developments that could be associated with forward presence. Apart from the strategic concept, the entire NATO doctrine seems to be more focused on multinational operations, admitting that "multinational" means "complicated" and seeking to continuously mitigate this fact.

Allies diplomatic and logistic support for Ukraine could be seen as third pillar of the overall NATO reaction but this is subject to further analysis.

3. Current force posture along NATO's Eastern Flank

As things evolved, one following NATO's official channels would notice that "enhanced forward presence" became simply "forward presence". This change was not officially introduced within any forums by the Alliance but experts believe that NATO realized the Eastern Flank is the main stage, deep switched to close from a military perspective, and enhanced became normal given the threat from the East.

Since Russian invasion of Ukraine NATO's forward presence have witnessed not only a change in the overall conceptual approach, but a countable transformation in terms of boots on ground as well.

First, TCNs for the battlegroups in Baltic States and Poland almost doubled their presence by transferring additional troops under SACEUR's authority in less than 10 days.

Secondly, as part of some developments commonly known as vigilance activities (VA), the basis of four new battlegroups in Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria was set reflecting the decision made by Allies within the before mentioned summit in Madrid, according to which "Allies agreed to scale up the multinational battlegroups from battalions to brigade size, where and when required. Allies are now exercising the ability to deploy rapidly available reinforcements in order to expand the battlegroups to brigade-size formations".⁷

Last, but not least, the footprint of some NATO nations such as United States of America, Germany or United Kingdom along the Eastern Flank increased significantly due to bilateral agreements with HNs. This runs separate from NATO's forward presence but strengthens it.

The table below depicts some basic information about the battlegroups along the Eastern flanks as of August 2023.

#	Host Nation	Framework Nation	Troop contributing nations
1	Estonia	United Kingdom	Denmark, France, Island
2	Latvia	Canada	Albania, Czech Republic, Iceland, Italy, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain
3	Lithuania	Germany	Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, United States
4	Poland	USA	Croatia, Romania, United Kingdom
5	Slovakia	Czech Republic	Germany, Slovenia, United States
6	Hungary	Hungary	Croatia, Italy, Turkiye, United States
7	Romania	France	Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, United States
8	Bulgaria	Italy	Albania, Greece, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Turkiye, United States

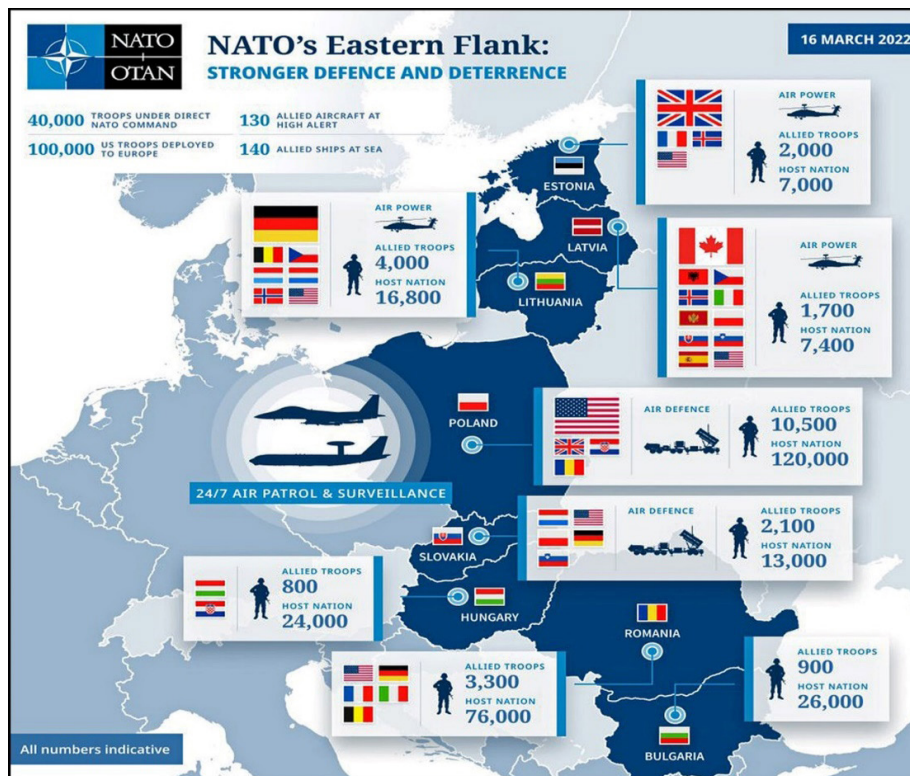
Table no. 1 – Summary of TCNs bidding battlegroups

To conclude, zooming into each of the eight existing battlegroups, one will notice a variety of size, composition, number of contributors and endowment. They were tailored to meet specific threats in various environments. Nowadays, force posture looks definitely better than it looked back in 2017 when eFP concept was initially developed. It is worth comparing the picture below with the one delivering similar information about NATO's footprint along the Eastern Alliance dated six years ago.

5 Russia's invasion of Ukraine: NATO response - CRS reports, accessed November 23, 2023, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IN/IN11866>.

6 NATO 2022 Strategic Concept adopted by Heads of state and Government at the NATO summit in Madrid, 29 June 2022

7 NATO, "NATO's Military Presence in the East of the Alliance," NATO, March 15, 2023, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm?selectedLocale=en.



Picture no. 3 – Enhanced Forward presence as of 16 March 2022

TOWS Analysis

As already emphasized previously, it was believed that forward presence concept as a pure strategic communication (STRATCOM) tool had served the original purpose of deterrence. However Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 raised some questions marks towards NATO’s deterrence policy as a whole. That triggered a quick reaction by Allies that translated mainly into a more robust posture along the Eastern Flank. Even so, the complex Russian threat and associated dynamics of the security environment requires periodical reviews of forward presence concept’s functionality.

In order to address it, we propose a SWOT analysis aiming at identifying where we are with this concept. As military is about planning, we will take our analysis further, seeking actionable links between our battlegroups and the security environment within a TOWS analysis. Therefore, the table below captures the main SWOTs of the 8 battlegroups grouped under the forward presence concept.

	Positives to be exploited	Negatives to be minimized
Internal to battlegroups	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - high level of readiness; - confidence providing tool for HN; - multinational working environment; - multiple employment options for commanders. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - C2 associated challenges for leaders and planners; - applicable caveats for most of the stationed troops; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rotation timings; - language barriers at pl/coy level; - logistic burden for sending nations.
External to battlegroups	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - training in unfamiliar geographical environment; - creating multinational leaders; - personal development for personnel manning the battlegroups; - starting point for solving political issues; 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - escalation risks taken if STRATCOM not managed properly; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NATO aggressor Russian narrative; - increased TESSOC⁸ associated threats; - IMINT/SIGINT opportunities for adversaries.

Table no. 2 – SWOT collection table

As of today, battlegroups stay as a credible force with high level of readiness that borders NATO to the East. This complements other deterrence concept such as NATO reaction force (NRF), Enhanced Air Policing or NATO Readiness Initiative (NRI). Countries hosting them receive a strong cohesion message from partners

not being located in Russian federation's proximity. They serve as well as a multinational working environment where nations share techniques, tactics and procedures (TTPs) that could feed the lessons learnt processes. Last but not least, the capabilities diversity within each battlegroup offers commanders the opportunity to allocate the right asset in the right place at the right time. For instance, engaging a target located 5 kilometers away with HIMARS seems like a waste of resources when smaller artillery is available.

Regarding weaknesses, there are a few aspects that negatively impact battlegroups' functionality. First are the caveats placed over troops which seriously challenge leaders as tasking/employing decisions have to be made accordingly. Secondly, the way reliefs in place are conducted does provide continuity but does not help reaching the desired cohesion level. Thirdly, language barriers could lead to communication shortages as some contributions are so small that going through the chain of command one can find leaders from 4 nations up to the company level (team/squad/platoon). Finally, it is obvious that the costs for running a similar formation would be lower if manned exclusively by a single nation.

Moving to opportunities, it is worth seeing battlegroups as the right place for units to experience war conditions in peace time different from those units are familiar with. It is not only the weather and terrain that shape the training conditions but the proximity to Russian Federation and the war in Ukraine as well. Additionally, manning a battlegroup can be seen as a chance for one's self development as many cultures are brought together and promoted within MWR associated events. Lastly, from a political perspective, forward presence can be used as a negotiation tool for countries when treaties or agreements are signed.

In terms of threats, decision makers have to take into consideration the escalation risk. Instead of deterring, battlegroups might trigger a more hostile presence close to NATO's borders which already happened in Belarus with deployment of tactical nuclear weapons. If not managed properly from a STRATCOM perspective, forward presence could feed as well NATO aggressor narrative that address internal audiences in Russian Federation. Finally, so many personnel and equipment concentrated in a well-defined area close to the border, with filo Russian minorities seems perfect scenario for secret services to run TESSOC associated activities. On top of that, the closer an area is, the easier is for IMINT and SIGINT collection to perform.

In order to increase battlegroups' effectiveness, it is worth trying to address all inputs within our matrix. This is pretty challenging as further developments of the forward presence concept will reflect evolutions of the security environment in NATO's territory proximity, therefore we'll seek actions impacting external factors by using internally identified weaknesses and strengths.

		External factors	
		Opportunities	Threats
TOWS Matrix		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -training in unfamiliar geographical environment; - creating multinational leaders; -personal development for personnel manning the battlegroups; -starting point for solving political issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - escalation risks taken if STRATCOM not managed properly; - NATO aggressor Russian narrative - increased TESSOC associated threats; - IMINT/SIGINT collection opportunities for Russian Federation
Internal factors	Strengths	Strengths/Opportunities	Strengths/Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -high level of readiness; -confidence providing tool for HNs; -multinational working environment; -multiple employment options for commanders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - keeping multiple nations within a single battlegroup helps individuals to improve their personal development; - managing personnel from different countries and operating a wider range of equipment helps tomorrow's general officers to better perform in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - maintaining the readiness at high standards would decrease the IMINT/SIGINT collection for Russian Federation; - HNs addressing properly Russian minorities would mitigate escalation risk.
	Weaknesses	Weaknesses/Opportunities	Weaknesses/Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - C2 associated challenges for leaders and planners; - applicable caveats for most of the stationed troops; - rotation timings - language barriers at pl/coy level; - logistic burden for sending nations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - balancing contingents manning a single battle group would prevent a contributor from overwhelming the others when decisions are made; - the fewer the caveats are, the better the training process works; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - raising the minimum contribution by a nation within a single battlegroup to company level would decrease the TESSOC associated risks; - extending rotations periods from 6 to 12 months would generate fewer ammunition for NATO aggressor Russian narrative

Table no. 3 – TOWS matrix

Finding solutions seems easy but finding the proper ones is pretty challenging. Therefore, developing the matrix above we aimed at identifying a couple of actions that would help NATO to reach the desired deterrence effects targeted through the implementation and subsequent transformation of the forward presence concept.

The matrix indicates multinationalism within battlegroups as being a reliable basis for turning strengths into opportunities. First, because very few of the current leaders within NATO force structures served as commanders for multinational tactical level units previously, just because they did not have this chance. Watching ahead, tomorrow's leaders require a superior understanding of having under command troops provided by various Allies. Additionally, going to individuals, the perspective of serving within a multinational environment might be seen as motivator for regular service men to join deployable units. Performing within groups that share different cultural values would feed one's curiosity to discover values that other nations believe in.

Using strengths to address threats indicates as well a couple of actions that would bring benefits to battlegroups. Centric role here is played by the level of readiness that can be exploited to disrupt enemy's intelligence communities attempts of collecting information using IMINT and SIGINT associated tactics. By exploitation we mean concealment, deceive like actions and show of force if needed. From a STRATCOM perspective, the way the HNs deliver their confidence messages to minorities could help as well in decreasing the supporters' number of NATO aggressor narrative promoted by Russian Federation.

Switching from strengths to weaknesses, few other potential actions have to be taken into consideration. The way battlegroups look today in terms of contributors needs to be balanced. Framework nations man most of the subunits within the battlegroups they have sponsorship for which might lead to an overwhelming decision process within countries bidding less have no authority. Balancing contributions would positively impact the way decisions are made mainly because weaknesses such as caveats would definitely become fewer.

Finally, weaknesses addressing threats deliver new options for decision makers. Normally, the bigger the number of contributors is, the higher a battlegroup's exposure to TESSOC is as enemy's applicable TTPs get more and more. In such conditions, hostile intelligence services benefit from a wider basin of potential targets using lower qualified personnel. Another weakness preventing a threat is the period contributors relieve in place the troops serving within battlegroups. Rotations usually feed both domestic and hostile media's activity. Therefore, the rarer such information is spread, the fewer ammunition hostile media have for promoting the NATO aggressor narrative among its audiences. Longer tours of duty would lead as well to a better cohesion within battlegroups with more training objectives achieved.

Conclusions

Building a better understanding about the way battlegroups perform, requires a quick investigation about Russian Federation's reaction towards the development of the forward presence concept. First official Kremlin's reaction to NATO's announcement of the new strategic concept was to blame the Alliance for feeding its own unjustified fear. In terms of force posture the already mentioned deployment of nuclear tactics weapons in Belarus followed a reinforcement of the troops stationed in Kaliningrad. These clear statements have been complemented by a questionable propaganda.⁹ The key takeaway for readers is that Russia have cared about forward presence concept's transformation.

To conclude, TOWS analysis reveals that there is still room for battlegroups to perform better while keeping costs in the current margin. Moving forward and daring to draw a perfect forward presence concept, we propose a couple of recommendations, as follows:

- keeping the flexibility Allies have showed since February 2022 regarding the continuous adjustment of the force posture on the Eastern flank;
- improving STRATCOM constantly by addressing audiences not only within alliance territory but beyond its borders as well;
- keeping caveats at the minimum possible extent as this would positively impact the training processes and the employment of troops in case of escalation;
- extending the rotations to 12 months in order to increase the cohesion level and preventing hostile media to use rotations for own propaganda;
- limiting to 5 the number of TCNs within a single battlegroup in order to balance the decision process and to mitigate the potential negative impact of language barriers.
- not establishing military camps in the very close proximity of the Russian Federation;

Such a model would meet both the deterrence purpose and cohesion message to small nations in the Alliance. Additionally, battlegroups would become a credible and fearing force able to deal with a wider spectrum of military threats.

9 "(Un)Powerful Propaganda: Russia's Ineffective Use of Information Activities against NATO's," Air University (AU), accessed November 23, 2023, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Wild-Blue-Yonder/Article-Display/Article/3521788/unpowerful-propaganda-russias-ineffective-use-of-information-activities-against/>.

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- Terrorism, Espionage, Subversion, Sabotage and Organized Crime.

“New Reality of European Security After the Russia-Ukraine War”

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Abstract

The Russian Federation’s war with Ukraine, which has been going on for more than a year and a half, is a war that is reverberating around the world. European society in particular, by the proximity of this conflict, has been affected by the problems that arise from what is happening beyond Poland’s eastern border. European society has been violently awakened in this way from a lethargy that has been going on for a long time, and which would probably have continued had it not been for the order issued on February 24, 2022 by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin. An order that changed the lives of millions of people not only in Ukraine or Russia itself, but all over the world. For the European public, in addition to economic considerations, the awareness of the threat posed by the aggressive policies of the Russian Federation has also changed. We were all aware that such a threat existed, but no one anticipated that it was so real.

Before the Russian-Ukrainian war, there was an information war in Europe as well as we saw other elements of hybrid warfare. A good example is the situation on the Polish-Belarusian border where there has been a migration problem for two years. The Italians and Greeks, who have been fighting illegal migration even longer than the Poles, have exactly the same problem. The order issued by Putin showed us that conventional war is possible even in the 21st century in Europe. This was not the first such order issued by this man, which unfortunately the Georgian public remembers very well. As Europe we are asking ourselves many questions: What will happen next? What will happen after the end of the war? The answer to these questions is unfortunately not obvious. The most important variable is who will win this war. As I write this thesis, we are seeing a counter-attack by Ukrainian troops, but this is neither an easy operation nor one whose consequences can be predicted. In this work, I will try to answer these questions by focusing on one of the possible scenarios for the end of the war, i.e. what if Ukraine recovers the lost lands or they go with the Russian Federation keeping only part of the seized territory. In both cases, Europe’s reaction should be similar. Of course, if Russia would completely win then the reaction will be different, but a complete victory by Russia is not expected because it is unlikely due to the strategic importance of an independent Ukraine. However, it should be said that the actions of our authorities will not change regardless of the scenario. In my opinion only scale of our reaction will change.

Keywords:

International Security, Russian Federation, Ukraine, European Union, Hybrid Warfare.

Introduction

What is going to happen is really difficult to predict however Europe's reaction should be quite firm. The order issued by Putin has shown us that we cannot completely get rid of armies and thinking about conventional war. It is said that a wise king does not seek war, but is always ready for it. Lessons from history should also be learned. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, it wasn't 10 years when Russia started pursuing an aggressive foreign policy again. According to Podoljak,¹ if Russia loses this war Russian Army will disintegrate. This is, in my opinion, an unlikely scenario. The Russian Federation, regardless of the outcome of the war in Ukraine, will continue to wage a hybrid war against all of Europe. In this case, the organizations existing in the EU member states as well as those existing in the EU itself come to our aid. As far as the European Union is concerned, I will contract organizations operating in the eastern part of the Union due to better knowledge of their activities. However, I want to mention that similar organizations were also created in the Balkans or southern Europe. Using example of the Polish state, I will present an organization that for years has been fighting against false information spread by the Russian Federation. The following will also be developed the theme of the "Memorial" association, which is already officially outlawed in Russia and it is worth remembering that this organization is a Nobel Peace Prize winner. In addition, I will also discuss the topic of armaments, which I will describe using a Polish example.

Methodology

In studying this issue, I used materials available through the Polish Institute for Eastern Studies and by researching the topic myself through observing Russian and Ukrainian speaking media. In addition, of course, I followed "Western" sources. I also benefited from the experience I gathered from writing the paper 6th CSDP Olympiad organized under the EMILYO program. After gathering all the materials and analyzing them, I came up with the conclusions below.

Main Part

1. Fight against Disinformation

East Strategic Communication Task Force

An important part of hybrid warfare is information warfare. The East Strategic Communication Task Force has a number of projects but their flagship project is the EUvsDisinfo project through which a database of articles and the media itself that reported false or partial information was created.² The organization was created to fight Russian disinformation and their growing budget in 2018-2021³ shows that this fight is taking place with increasing intensity. It is worth mentioning that the organization also reaches beyond the eastern borders of the European Union and supports countries such as Ukraine and Georgia. The fight they are waging is difficult due to the fact that it does not take place in a face-to-face confrontation but in cyberspace, which is definitely harder to control. In the era of social media, which has practically taken over modern society, it is extremely easy to spread false information. Organizations like this one are needed by society, which is perfectly demonstrated by the recent situation with fake photos spread by Belarusian or Russian services. There has been a lot of tension on the Polish-Belarusian border for the past two years due to the immigration crisis. However, incoming waves of illegal immigrants who sometimes literally storm the border are no longer unusual for us. We have been and will continue to deal with them. Recently, President Lukashenko decided to "store" the Wagner Group mercenaries on his soil. The whole situation took place after the so-called "revolt" of Prigozhin.⁴ Since then, President Lukashenko has managed to tell the public that the mercenaries of the Wagner group would like to come for a "trip" to Poland⁵ which has raised tensions between the two countries. The tension was also raised by a photo released on the Internet, which was obviously fake.⁶ The first photo is original and the second is a fake. It is certain that

1 Podolyak muses on how 'russian army will disintegrate after ... - NV, accessed November 23, 2023, <https://english.nv.ua/nation/podolyak-muses-on-how-russian-army-will-disintegrate-after-defeat-50299942.html>.

2 "About," EUvsDisinfo, October 2, 2023, <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/about/>.

3 "Questions and Answers about the East Stratcom Task Force," EEAS, accessed November 23, 2023, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/questions-and-answers-about-east-stratcom-task-force_en.

4 "Появление ЧВК "Вагнер" в Беларуси – Это Часть Сделки". Зачем Лукашенко Роль Миротворца – Рассказывает Политолог Валерий Карбалевич," Настоящее Время, June 28, 2023, <https://www.currenttime.tv/a/why-does-lukashenka-need-role-of-creator/32480516.html>.

5 Rfe/rl, "Лукашенко: Вагнеровцы Хотят На Запад, в Варшаву и Жешув," Радио Свобода, July 23, 2023, <https://www.svoboda.org/a/lukashenko-vagnerovtsy-hotyat-na-zapad-v-varshavu-i-zheshuv/32515362.html>.

6 Фото бійця ПВК "вагнер" на кордоні з польщею виявилось фейком ..., accessed November 23, 2023, <https://newsyou.info/en/2023/08/foto-bijcu-pvk-vagner-na-kordoni-z-polshheyu-viyavilosya-fejkom-socmerezhi-foto>.

regardless of the outcome of the war in Ukraine, Russian services will not stop waging an information war against Europe. This is crucial to our security, which is why he anticipates another increase in the budget of organizations like the East Strategic Communication Task Force. As we can see, these organizations were and unfortunately will continue to be needed so that we can move safely in cyberspace.



Picture no. 1. “example of disinformation at the Polish-Belarus border”

As we can see it is a mirror image and the only change is the flag and the patch on the uniform.

Institute of National Remembrance and Memorial Association

Both organizations are particularly important for the history of Poland and Poles. The Memorial Association gave Poland the declassified Katyn files. Poles, after years of occupation by the Soviet Union, learned what happened in the Katyn forest in 1940. Of course, these were not the only files that “Memorial” declassified because the general outline of its activities can be described as the promotion of knowledge about Soviet repression⁷ and these, unfortunately, continued from the very creation of the Soviet Union until its collapse at the end of 1991. The Institute of National Remembrance, on the other hand, fulfills the function of “defender of history” of our nation in Poland. Thanks to this organization, we can trace the fate of many heroes who died so that today we can be an independent state. Now the question can be asked: what connection does this have with what awaits Europe after the Ukrainian-Russian war? In my opinion, the connection is extremely large. As I mentioned earlier, regardless of the outcome of this war, the Russian Federation will continue to wage a hybrid war against Europe. History is an irreplaceable element of any nation because it creates its identity. It is much easier to wage war, whether hybrid or conventional, against a nation whose representatives feel no attachment to their country or land. A great example is Russian attempts to steal Ukrainian history even before the war escalated. Many publications have been written on this subject in which this is even described as a way of psychological warfare.⁸ Also, the fact that the Memorial Association was banned shows that the Russians are acting with full premeditation, and I believe that these actions should not be taken lightly because such a mistake was already made by Europe in 2014 when the actual start of the war took place in Ukraine. We are watching the effects of this lack of reaction today and count them in the hundreds of thousands of casualties.⁹ Our reaction to these events should be the development of organizations such as the INR, so that we can be sure that there is someone who watches over the identity of our nation and does not allow the enemy to spread false information about important events of our past.

2. Armament

This is a step that unfortunately cannot be avoided. Without a properly trained and equipped army, we cannot effectively deter the enemy. An important element of rearmament is also the preparation of an adequate reserve of personnel and equipment in case of the need to mobilize the army and suddenly increase the number of personnel. In the following paragraphs, I will show, using Poland as an example, how rearmament can be carried out in an effective way. This is a good example especially for the former Warsaw Pact/Soviet Union states, because in Poland we have undergone a complete change of the armament system to NATO-standard weaponry in the last 10-15 years.

⁷ Международный Мемориал, accessed November 23, 2023, <https://www.memo.ru/ru-ru/>.

⁸ Olga Wasiuta, Siergiej Wasiuta „Przywłaszczenie historii jako sposób walki informacyjno-psychologicznej Rosji przeciwko Ukrainie” ISSN 2084-3291

⁹ Helene Cooper et al., “Troop Deaths and Injuries in Ukraine War near 500,000, U.S. Officials Say,” The New York Times, August 18, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/18/us/politics/ukraine-russia-war-casualties.html>.

Selection and purchase of appropriate equipment

Over the past few years, Poland has been undergone a major change in its equipment system. Not only the tanks or aircraft we use, but also small arms have changed. The money allocated to armaments has gradually increased, but the biggest leap was recorded in 2022, the year Russia invaded Ukraine. At that time, GDP allocated to armaments reached 4.3%¹⁰ which, in the scale of the entire North Atlantic Alliance, ranked Poland first in this respect. It is worth noting that armaments spending has also increased in other Central and Eastern European countries. Is this an appropriate response to what is happening beyond our eastern border? Of course it is, because only with adequate deterrence are we able to avoid war. Unfortunately, but for so many years the Russian Federation has not changed its approach and the Russians continue to understand only the language of force. So it is obvious that if we want to be well understood we must speak this language fluently. Poland has purchased not only Abrams tanks or Korean K2 tanks, but also in 2023 HIMARS launchers were purchased in huge numbers, that is 500 units. We also took delivery of the first Patriot anti-missile sets. After these purchases, we can see that we are learning from Ukrainian defense operations, learning lessons and then buying actually battlefield-proven top-of-the-line weapons. In my opinion, regardless of the outcome of the war, rearmament attempts in all NATO countries will continue due to the aggressive foreign policy of the Russian Federation. In the future, I foresee a decidedly greater rearmament not only in Poland, but also in the Baltic States,¹¹ since these were countries attacked by the Russians basically continuously during all the years of their existence.

Personal reserve training

In my opinion, this is actually the most important and difficult part of the whole preparation of the country's defense. Equipment or ammunition can be bought, but where to get specialists who will know how to use it all? We no longer live in the days when a soldier dug a trench and then defended himself in it, but in the days when a soldier must know how to operate advanced information systems or drones because these are things that give a real advantage on the battlefield. The example of the Ukrainian-Russian war shows that it is basically impossible to fight a war if you don't have such a personnel reserve. In Poland we are trying to solve this problem with the Voluntary Basic Military Service. Unlike the Basic Military Service, for which every man over the age of 18 used to be forced to do, here only volunteers are considered. This is definitely a better system because logically a volunteer will show more commitment to training. However, there was a question of where to get volunteers to serve? Unfortunately, in the 21st century this is not so obvious due to the greater choice of career paths that the Internet, among other things, provides. That's why a great program called "Train with the Army" has been launched in Poland. Under this program, any civilian, after signing up, can come to a training course that shows what training in the Polish army actually looks like.¹² This training is a one-day program and anyone between the ages of 15 and 65 with Polish citizenship can participate. This is a great way to encourage young people to join the army later on because it eliminates the fear associated with first contact with the army. As statistics show, this program is popular among Polish citizens as the fourth edition is currently being organized.¹³ In Poland, there is also an alternative to professional military service and Voluntary Basic Military Service and that is service in the Territorial Defense Forces, which consists of weekend training after a prior sixteen-day basic training.¹⁴

Conclusion

Putting together the results of the research I have done, I am able to conclude that regardless of the outcome of the war in Ukraine, Europe's armament efforts will be greater than before. Especially Central and Eastern Europe stands out here, which is due to its neighborhood with the Russian Federation. The rearmament will be a complicated process and will take place on many levels because it will not only be purchases of tanks or aircraft, but also of air defense systems or artillery. One can predict these purchases by observing the war in Ukraine because most of the modern weapons are currently in use there. I believe that the citizens of other European countries will understand as well as the Poles that the fight against the Russian Federation is also being fought by us, except that it is hybrid. The information war in which we are engaged can manifest itself in different ways, and

10 Zbigniew Lentowicz and Grzegorz Siemionczyk, "Polska Zbroi Się Na (Światową) Potęgę. Wydatki Na Obronność Poszybowały," *Rzeczpospolita*, May 17, 2023, <https://www.rp.pl/biznes/art38483321-polska-zbroi-sie-na-swiatowa-potege-wydatki-na-obronnosnosc-poszybowaly>.

11 Sin´ad Baker, "Kraje Bałtyckie Szykują Się Do Obrony. 'Nie Jesteśmy Darmozjadami Z Amerykańskimi Gwarancjami,'" *Businessinsider*, April 29, 2023, <https://businessinsider.com.pl/wiadomosci/kraje-baltyckie-nato-obawiaja-sie-ze-po-inwazji-rosji-na-ukraine-moga-byc-nastepni/g8crr9s>.

12 Wojsko, accessed November 23, 2023, <https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/articles/tym-zyjemy-v/trenuj-z-wojskiem-szkolenia-wojskowe-dla-kazdego/>.

13 "Trenuj Z Wojskiem - Czwarta Edycja - Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej - Portal Gov.Pl," Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, August 25, 2023, <https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa/trenuj-z-wojskiem---czwarta-edycja>.

14 Wojsko, accessed November 23, 2023, <https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/terytorialna-sluzba-wojskowa/>.

I believe that regardless of the outcome of the war in Ukraine, there should be more emphasis on organizations like the Institute of National Remembrance, which I described in my paper. This is extremely important because taking proper care of our own history will drastically reduce the choke points for Russian intelligence services trying to modify history. Postwar reality will be tough for Europe, but timely action can at least partially offset the negative effects and secure us for the future. Of course, I do not include here Ukraine itself for which the consequences of this war even with a full victory will be tragic. For us, it is not too late to take action, and we should do so to secure our future.

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