TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO

RUSSIA'S IMPERIALISTIC AMBITIONS: THE IMPACT OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE ON THE INTERNATIONAL LIBERAL ORDER

AUTHOR: MIRIAN GÓMEZ VÉLEZ

TUTOR: GUILLERMO ROCAFORT

GRADO GLOBAL EN RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES/

GLOBAL BA IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Academic year 2022/2023

FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y DE LA COMUNICACIÓN

UNIVERSIDAD EUROPEA DE MADRID

ABSTRACT

The outbreak of war in Europe evidenced the profound imperfections of the current multilateral system, thus questioning the plausibility of interdependency-based structures. In this study, the defeat of Russia is observed as definitive for Ukraine and the international liberal order, as it reaffirms the commitment to the international legal principles institutionalized in the post-war world order. The wave of remilitarization of Western democracies underlines the existential threat posed by alternative forms of governance to democratic values and norms. Thus, the importance of assessing the underlying conflictual potential that thrusted the Russian Federation to militarily invade Ukraine. In order to comprehend the inherent character of conflict in Russo-Ukrainian relations, the armed dissension is analyzed on the basis of historical implications. Accordingly, the articulation of a neorealist approach legitimized the verification of three primary assumptions. Firstly, the Ukrainian crisis signifies a long-standing ethno-nationalistic confrontation. Secondly, Russia's state behavior is partially reasoned according to the Western expansion towards the former Soviet sphere of influence. Thirdly, the internationalization of the conflict significantly potentializes the adoption of zero-sum policies.

Keywords: Soviet Union, Ukraine, security dilemma, NATO.

RESUMEN

El estallido de la guerra en Europa ha evidenciado las profundas imperfecciones del actual sistema multilateral, cuestionando de este modo la plausibilidad de la interdependencia estructural. En el presente estudio, la derrota de Rusia es observada como categórica para Ucrania y el orden liberal internacional, puesto que reafirma el compromiso con los principios jurídicos internacionales institucionalizados en el orden mundial de posguerra. La tendencia de remilitarización de las democracias occidentales acentúa la amenaza existencial que suponen las formas alternativas de gobernanza para las normas y valores democráticos. De ahí, la importancia de analizar el potencial conflictivo subyacente que conllevó a la Federación Rusa a invadir militarmente Ucrania. Con el objetivo de comprender el carácter inherente conflictivo en las relaciones ruso-ucranianas, se analiza la disensión armada a partir de las distintas implicaciones históricas. Por consiguiente, la articulación de un marco neorrealista legitima la verificación de tres supuestos principales. Primeramente, la crisis ucraniana constituye un enfrentamiento etno-nacionalista de larga duración. En segundo lugar, el comportamiento estatal de Rusia está parcialmente razonado en función de la expansión occidental hacia la antigua esfera de influencia soviética. En tercer lugar, la internacionalización del conflicto potencializa significativamente la adopción de políticas de suma cero.

Palabras-clave: Unión Soviética, Ucrania, dilema de seguridad, OTAN.

INDEX OF FIGURES

INDEX OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACRONYM	English	Spanish
IR	International Relations	Relaciones Internacionales
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	Unión de Repúblicas Socialistas Soviéticas
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	Comunidad de Estados Independientes
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic	República Socialista Soviética
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization	Organización del Tratado del Atlántico Norte
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty	Tratado sobre la No Proliferación
SBU	Ukraine's Security Service	Servicio de Inteligencia Ucraniano
OUN	Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists	Organización de Nacionalistas Ucranianos
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe	Organización para la Seguridad y la Cooperación en Europa
UNSC	United Nations Security Council	Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly	Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas
EU	European Union	Unión Europea
EPF	European Peace Facility	Fondo Europeo de Apoyo a la Paz
UN	United Nations	Naciones Unidas
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute	Instituto Internacional de Estudios para la Paz de Estocolmo

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the following dissertation, the impact of the war in Ukraine on the post-Cold War international liberal order is examined on the basis of the following question: why is defeating Russia definitive for Ukraine and the international liberal order? The subsequent research is aimed at comprehending the main factors that shaped the Ukrainian crisis, while focusing on the underlying conflicting dynamics of Russo-Ukrainian relations. On that account, three primary objectives are stated. Firstly, assessing the historical implications of Ukrainian crisis in order to verify the causal relationship between the memorialization of the Soviet Union and Ukraine's national identity. Secondly, understanding the reasoning behind the launch of the Russian large-scale operation in the context of NATO-EU expansion. Thirdly, examining the geopolitical implications of the internationalization of the war, most notably concerning the security dilemma resulted from zero-sum policies.

As a result, this dissertation is divided in three primary sections: firstly, a conceptual theory section is built on neorealist international relations theory in order to identify the most transcendental definitions and doctrines for the research. Secondly, a historical contextualization of the former Soviet order is provided with a focus on the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Thirdly, an analysis is developed via application of the framework stated in the previous sections. For narrowing purposes, a temporal fragmentation of the Russo-Ukrainian war is established. On the one hand, Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula is examined according to the preliminary events and its posterior internationalization. On the other hand, Russia's large-scale operations in Ukraine are analyzed on the basis of a politico-military approach, which is geographically delimitated to Ukraine's internationally recognized borders. Ultimately, special emphasis is made in the posterior extrapolation of the on-going conflict.

On that account, the conclusions stated at the end of this study demonstrate the importance of applying international relations theories and doctrines in the analysis of global politics. Consequently, this research contributes from two different perspectives.

Academically, it contributes to the discipline of international relations, especially when it comes to the impact of Russia's unilateralist policies on the rest of global political configurations. Socially, it facilitates the understanding of 20th Century history and therefore, the underlying assumptions in Russo-Ukrainian relations.

1.1 Methodology

The methodology used throughout the analysis of this paper is a bibliographical revision methodology based on deductive reasoning. In order to carry out the analysis, bibliographical research is the method that best fulfills all aspects of the topic due to the factors that are taken into consideration. For instance, definitions and doctrines. Furthermore, concerning the use of sources, primary and secondary sources are used in order to complement and support arguments. Firstly, among the primary sources, the collection of original statements and documents is prioritized in order to answer the research question. For instance, Vladimir Putin's televised address to the nation or the interview to Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. Secondly, in order to supplement what was previously mentioned, secondary sources such as books or online newspapers are used for the easier collection of information and synthetization of complex ideas. As a result, most of the analysis of the content is based on secondary data especially retrieved from prestigious authors such as John J. Mearsheimer or Mikhail Minakov.

2. THEORETICAL-CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The present section introduces a conceptual framework built on the basis of International Relations (IR) Realism in order to critically assess the statement advocated at the beginning of this research. Accordingly, a set of concepts and doctrines is examined before proceeding with its respective application to the case-study. On that account, a neorealist-based approach is articulated in order to answer the research question.

The selection of Neorealism as the primary doctrine better explains the impact of the war in Ukraine on global political dynamics. This is justified by the validity of realist assumptions in the understanding of current policies. For instance, the remilitarization of Western democracies or the actual challenges to the international liberal order. As a result, the development of realist thought together with its scientific study of international politics is thoroughly assessed.

2.1 Realist international Relations Theory

IR Realism is one of the mainstream traditions in international relations. In his analytical approach, William C. Wohlforth introduces the set of assumptions that realist scholars adopt in order to comprehend live politics (Wohlforth, 2016). This doctrine underlines the understanding of power and security in the configuration of a potentially conflictual system, therefore placing individual thinkers such as Thucydides or Carl von Clausewitz at the core of its thinking (Lebow, 2003).

The timeless nature of realism is subjected to the extension of basic arguments. The theoretical consolidation of realist thought is materialized in Hans Morgenthau's reformulation of Classical Realism. In his work *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (1948)*, Morgenthau adapted the realist tradition to the new realities of the international system (Morgenthau, 1978). His conceptualization of U.S. power politics laid down the foundations for the development of a deductive method, hereby consolidating a new scientific approach to international relations.

Throughout the 20th Century, political realism became one of the most predominant doctrines in the understanding of interactions among states. Kenneth Waltz realized the need for building up a comprehensive theoretical framework through the systematization of core realist ideas in order to analyze the impact of structural variables on state behavior (Waltz, 1990). In *Theory of International Politics (1979)*, he assesses the concept of "balance of power" by way of defining the international structure in material terms (Little, 2007). For instance, the anarchic nature of the system is observed as a structural condition in the conduct of relations. Eventually,

Waltz's approach to the study of politics became known as Neorealism or Structural Realism.

2.1.1 Foundational Assumptions

The following section examines shared foundational assumptions in Classical Realism and Neorealism. Posteriorly, neorealist specificities are assessed while developing the set of concepts significant for the case-study.

Despite conceptual differences, there exist shared assumptions in Classical Realism and Neorealism. Both theoretical schools observe the world from a Hobbesian lens, hence placing the axiom "today's friend could be tomorrow's enemy" at the core of its thinking.[1] In the realist tradition of statecraft, the world is synthetized according to the premises of groupism, egoism and power-centrism (Wohlforth, 2016, p. 36). On that account, three primary features are underlined.

Firstly, the prospective for conflict among nation-states is rooted in the systematic differentiation of cohesive groups via the reinforcement of nationalism. In his work *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (2016)*, Benedict Anderson defines nationalism as an element of linkage conformed by cultural traits.[2] Furthermore, focusing on the case of Ukraine, Eleanor Knott conceptualizes it as an "existential nationalism" that embodies the right of Ukrainians to merely exist (Knott, 2022). Thus, the importance of taking into consideration contextual implications in the case-study.

Secondly, the pursue of self-interests shapes the behavior of a state in its interactions with other states (Meibauer, 2020). The political entity is conditioned by the anarchic nature of the system, therefore potentializing the exertion of power and dominance (Edward, 1995). In that respect, John J. Mearsheimer argues that the global distribution of power conditions the type of international order in place, hence questioning the longevity of liberal structures (Mearsheimer, 2019). As a consequence,

---

[1] Hobbes, T. & Tuck, R. (1996). *Leviathan* (Rev. ed.). Cambridge University Press.
[2] Anderson, B. (2016). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Rev. ed.). Verso.

the arrangement of power and resources yet determines the degree of inequality among state actors, notably between Russia and Ukraine.

Ultimately, the centrality of state actors as single political units remains central to the realist thought. Power maximization and self-reliance are considered vital for international security.[3] In opposition to Liberalism, realist scholars remain skeptical to the liberal conception that greater interdependence among states potentializes the reach of long-lasting peace (Moravcsik, 1997). Consequently, realists adopt a more pessimistic view of the system, therefore arguing that the selfishness of state actors nullifies this utopian statement.

2.2 Neorealist Theory

Whereas Classical Realism is rooted in human nature, Neorealism or Structural Realism focuses on how systemic pressures shape state behavior while acknowledging the effect of domestic politics on foreign policy outcomes (May, Rosecrance, & Steiner, 2010).

Neorealist scholars argue that the possibility of war is always present.[4] As a result, balancing against major threats constitutes a permanent interest in the case of weaker states. Barry R. Posen argues that the resilience of the transatlantic security agreement requires Europe's hierarchization of contemporary challenges (Posen, 2021). Following Posen's argument, the level of European defense capabilities conditions the proactiveness of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict. Ultimately, the balance of power is assessed.

Balance of power refers to the distribution of capabilities among the number of great powers present in the system (Niou, Ordeshook, & Rose, 1989). Accordingly, the shaping of global political dynamics is rooted in the basis of this concept. The US-led postwar order continues to be questioned by the rise of other countries such as Russia or China, therefore shifting towards a more multipolar-based system (Ozsaglam,

---

[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

2019). The multipolar character of the current international order accentuates the potential for competition and conflict, hence underlining the realist understanding of Russia's large-scale attack on Ukraine.

Neorealist scholars observe power and influence as a question of national security that is not strictly limited to military capabilities. In that respect, Andrej Krickovic analyzes the transgression from interdependence to conflict in the case of EU-Russia energy relations (Krickovic, 2015). The inequality among states together with the multiplication of powerful countries gives rise to the security dilemma, notably concerning military technologies. Tristan A. Volpe examines the security implications and incentives for arms racing originated from 3D-printing technology, especially due to the high degree of adaptability of production lines (Volpe, 2019).

The security dilemma is the domino effect produced when a particular state reinforces its security, ultimately leading others to follow security-seeking goals (Glaser, 1997). For instance, according to John J. Mearsheimer, the EU and NATO enlargement was a transcendental motive for Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine (Mearsheimer, 2014). Although this notion is based on action-reaction processes, it is pertinent to acknowledge other alternative outcomes such as the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons between neighboring countries.[5]

2.2.1 Defensive and Offensive Realism

Neorealism advocates for the retroactive character of state competition. On that account, Kenneth Waltz's claim about the limits to cooperation has divided scholars into two types of positioning within the doctrine, also known as offensive neorealism and defensive neorealism.

Offensive realists provide alternative responses to state affairs in the context of anarchy, thus arguing that great powers dispose of offensive military capabilities that shall be articulated in order to foster their survival (Edinger, 2022). Among the set of

---

[5] Roehrig, T. (2017). The U.S Nuclear Umbrella over South Korea: Nuclear Weapons and Extended Deterrence. *Political Science Quarterly, 132(4),* 651-684. Link

authors, John J. Mearsheimer remains the most predominant advocate of this approach. The uncertainty about others' intentions potentializes the need for power maximization in order to acquire new security advantages (Kleinschmidt, 2019). Accordingly, offensive neorealism underlines the primacy of major powers and the exertion of dominance and hegemony through the development of aggressive policies, hereby justifying the inherent character of conflict in states (Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, 2001).

In opposition, other neorealist scholars argue that the aggressive expansion of state policies depletes the possibilities for the realization of national goals.[6] Jeffrey W. Taliaferro argues that "states often, although not always, pursue expansionist policies because their leaders mistakenly believe that aggression is the only way to make their state secure" (Taliaferro, 2000-2001, p. 129). This approach denominated as defensive neorealism stresses the transcendence of articulating reserved policies in order to achieve greater levels of security (Shiping, 2010). As a consequence, the rejection of state competition is observed as the most reliable method to materialize the set objectives.

In that respect, defensive realists acknowledge the importance of cooperation as well as the limitations to power (Shiping, 2010). Besides, this includes the possibility of conforming alliances on the basis of security-seeking goals. As a result, even though both subfields refer to the security dilemma and whether you assume the worst or not of your adversary, defensive realists see power maximization as a source of mutual insecurity. On that account, structural pressures and incentives shall be taken into consideration.

3. HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION

3.1 The International Liberal Order

In his preliminary article *The End of History? (1989)*, Francis Fukuyama examines the profound shift in world history produced after the Cold War (Fukuyama,

---

[6] Jalil, G. Y. (2019). China's Rise: Offensive or Defensive Realism. *Strategic Studies, 39(1)*, 41-58. Link

1989). He observes the triumph of the Western ideals as "the end point of mankind's ideological evolution", hereby arguing that the ultimate form of governance is that of a Western liberal democracy (Fukuyama, 1989, p. 4). Although Fukuyama's vision shall be historically contextualized, it is possible to argue that the application of a Western lens in the analysis of Russia's invasion of Ukraine immediately undermines the understanding of alienated points of view.

The outbreak of war in Europe questions the mere existence of democratic values in the preservation of long-lasting peace.[7] The prolongation of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict opens a window of opportunities for those countries pursuing alternative forms of governance. Thus, the direct challenge to the international liberal order. The magnitude of the outcome is yet to be seen, nonetheless, on-going structural changes in the geopolitical sphere underline a premature process of reorganization of the international scene (Pattison, 2022).

Harald Edinger identifies arguments that attempt to validate Putin's reaction to liberal expansionism (Edinger, 2022). The double-sided approach to power politics also attributes responsibilities to NATO-EU advancements in the Eastern European hemisphere. In that respect, Mearsheimer's consistency in accentuating Russian strategic imperatives surpasses the limit of academic theories.[8] Although the history of modern Ukraine is a complex one, it is pertinent to examine the political shifts that laid down the premises for the posterior armed conflict.

Roman Szporluk observes Lewis Namier's *1848: Seed-plot of History* as the point of departure in the making of modern Ukraine (Szporluk, 2001). Although the nation-building process of Ukrainian peoples dates back to the late 19th Century, the present study predominantly initiates with the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1991.

---

[7] Russet, B., Layne, C., Spiro, D. E., Doyle, M. W. (1995). The Democratic Peace. *International Security, 19(4),* pp. 164-184. Link
[8] The Economist. (March 12th, 2022). *John Mearsheimer on why the West is principally responsible for the Ukrainian crisis.* Link

3.2 The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)

The artificial reconciliation of occupied independent republics was determined by the locus of the Russian Communist Party, which later became the core of the Soviet political structure (Kenk, n.d.).

Alexander Riley observes the reconceptualization of people's will as the primary justificative element for the consolidation of Lenin's Bolshevism (Riley, 2019). On the basis of communist ideals, the unplausible rise of the newly established Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was posteriorly translated into one of the world's most relevant military and economic powers of the twentieth century (Marshev, 2006). The controversial unification of all "Russian populations" under the Stalinist state in 1922, included the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic as a founding member of its constitutional treaty (Dewdney, McCauley, & Pipes, 2023). After decades of indisputable hegemony, the USSR eventually became a stagnated project in need of modernization.

On 11 March 1985, Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev became the figure of an era of unprecedented change (Marples, 2004, p. 9). The period of the late 1980s was characterized by the convergence of economic stagnation and widespread social unrest. By 1989, circumstances had changed in the territories of the Soviet Republics (Marples, 2004, p. 57). A series of failed reforms had fueled the popular discontent towards Communist leaders in Eastern European governments (Zubok, 2021). Among the set of initiatives, *glasnost* (official openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring) yet remain representatives of Gorbachev's attempt to reconstruct the existing Soviet structures.[9]

Although the fragmentation of the Soviet Union is attributed to the confluence of different factors, the process of decentralization of the USSR also comprised the de-legitimization of Stalinism, ultimately producing an ideological vacuum in Soviet history. The deep ideological and economic crisis was exacerbated due to other variables such

---

[9] Gorbachev, M. S. (1987). *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World* (1rst ed.). Harper & Row.

as the costs of the war in Afghanistan or the environmental disasters produced in Chernobyl and Armenia (Marples, 2011). In addition, countries located "behind the Iron Curtain" realized the widening gap in technology, productivity and trade between East and West, hence questioning the monopoly on Soviet politics (Ther, 2016).

The fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, became the ultimate representation of the geopolitical divisions imposed during the Cold War (Gerstenberger & Braziel, 2011, p. 3). Although the "Western socioeconomical victory" is commonly associated with the international triumph of neoliberalism, the posterior dissolution of the Soviet Union needs to be observed from Gorbachev's orchestrated leadership. In that respect, Mark Kramer stresses the minimal violence exerted in the majority of Soviet Republics as one of the most unexpected outcomes of the Soviet rupture (Kramer, 2022). He examines the implications of Gorbachev's permissive policies, including the gradual relinquishment of political and social control over the Republics. Consequently, this further fueled nationalist and ethnopolitical pressures in the communist territories.

The alienation of the Soviet Republics reflected the lack of public support for the survival of the central state (Connor, 2003). In August 1991, a vain *coup d'état* to save the union reaffirmed the inevitable dismantling of the Soviet structures (Beissinger, 2010). Separatist governments began to acquire political control in multiple regions such as in Georgia or Moldavia. Meanwhile, Ukraine remained ambivalent at first in regard to complete partition.[10] Eventually, the secessionist sentiment spread after the impossibility of reaching a confederal agreement. In sequence, the Soviet Republics started to proclaim independence one after another. In August 1991, Ukraine declared itself an independent state as well (Rupérez, 1994).

On December 8, 1991, the Belovezha Accords officially ended the internal dismemberment of the USSR and established the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).[11] According to Mark B. Beissinger, "the decision was adopted by the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian governments – governments of cultural groups traditionally closely associated with Soviet power" (Beissinger, 2010, p. 442).

---

[10] Ibid.
[11] Russian Presidential Library. (2023). *The Belavezha Accords Signed, 8 December 1991*. Boris Yeltsin Presidential Library. Link

Subsequently, the CIS supported the continuation of USSR membership in international institutions by the Russian Federation (European Commission for Democracy Through Law, 1991). In Moscow, the Soviet flag was replaced by the Russia Federation's after Gorbachev's presidential resignation, thus ending over 69 years of Soviet history (Associated Press, 2021).

3.3 The Post-Soviet Era

The commencement of the Post-Soviet era was determined by profound changes in global political dynamics. Francis Fukuyama argued "it is hard to avoid the feeling that something very fundamental has happened in world history", and that was essentially true (Brands, 2016). The Soviet hemisphere was suddenly transformed into a multiplicity of newly independent states. Cindy Wittke stresses the "imaginary power of the term "post-Soviet"" due to the conflict potential of the Eastern European region (Wittke, 2020, p. 151). On that account, the ambivalence between East and West conditioned the state-building process of former Soviet republics.

The ideological crisis of the Soviet system potentialized the success of democratic liberalism as the predominant form of political and economic governance (Brands, 2016). The U.S. established itself as the uncontested hegemonic power, therefore expanding its global security presence. In that respect, Nuno P. Monteiro examines the American security strategy on the basis of its offensive and defensive character, ultimately considering its conflict-generating dynamics (Monteiro, 2014). The strategically offensive approach was primarily articulated via the consolidation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which eventually integrated Eastern European states such as Czech Republic or Poland as official members of the defense alliance (Cooper & Jones, 2009).

On that account, the shift towards Western institutions such as the European Economic Community conditioned the reconfiguration of the Eastern hemisphere. After the establishment of an international liberal order, the boundaries between the two spheres of power began to converge. In the case of the newly created Ukrainian state, the premature government encountered significant social fragmentation concerning

institutional interpretations (Abdelal, 2001). Although nationalistic pressures were primarily influential, the geographical location of Ukraine between the European and Asian regions reflected the complex character of contemporary political and economic realities.[12]

Accordingly, the Russian Federation continued to preserve its influence over the generality of former Soviet Republics. The proclamation of Boris Yeltsin as the first President of the Russian Federation underlined the success of a polarizing game of politics (Breslauer, 2002). Whereas Gorbachev acknowledged the termination of the Soviet empire, Yeltsin proceeded with an arguable path towards democracy (Steele, 2007). Furthermore, the USSR's memorialization process constituted a key variable in posterior power struggles. According to recent Presidential statements, the governmental independence of Russia is observed as the greatest demise of Russian history (Osborn & Ostroukh, 2021). In sequence, the grievances generated within post-Soviet societies laid down the foundations for future conflictual narratives (Cooper & Jones, 2009).

3.3.1 Ukraine

Despite symbolizing a thousand years of history, Ukraine did not exist as an independent sovereign state until the official dismantlement of the Soviet Union (Hagen, 2016). In order to comprehend the different implications in Russo-Ukrainian relations, it is pertinent to underline the most notable historical factors affecting the course of its development. Throughout the 19th Century, a Ukrainian identity started to thrive within the region (Szporluk, 2001). On the basis of ethnical closeness, the Russian Empire observed Ukrainians as "little Russians", hereby neutralizing any possible attempt for breakup. Although Ukraine is almost always situated under Russia's political sphere, it is necessary to acknowledge its brief independence before becoming part of the USSR in 1922 (Davis, 2022).

The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) emerged as a founding member of the Soviet Union. The republic began to be considered the breadbasket of the union

---

[12] Ibid.

because of its agricultural and industrial value, therefore constituting a critical part of the USSR (Grennes, 2022). Despite the socio-economic implications, a state-sponsored famine was orchestrated in order to fund broader Stalinist policies (Hagen, 2016). Brent Bezo and Stefania Maggi analyzed the intergenerational impact of this period (1932-1933) and concluded that there exists a trauma transmission that reiterates the collective memory (Bezo & Maggi, 2015). The genocide, known as the Holodomor, yet resonates in the Ukrainian society. In his analysis of the transgression from colonization to an anti-colonial Ukraine, Mark von Hagen describes it as the "brutal re-Russification and the reassertion of central power and Russian nationality" (Hagen, 2016, p. 172).

Since the beginning of the 20th Century, Ukraine suffered the consequences of power politics. Following the "Crimea Acts" of 1954, the USSR transferred the governance of the Crimean peninsula in the Black Sea to the Ukrainian SSR (Lafitsky, 2020). Although the dissolution of the Soviet structure was implausible at this time, Crimea constituted indeed a pro-Russian territory. Posteriorly, on April 26, 1986, an accident in the Chernobyl nuclear power plant triggered one of the greatest nuclear disasters in history (IAEA, n.d.). As a consequence of this event, the reputation of Gorbachev's leadership in the Soviet Republics worsened, especially after preliminary denials of the incident. As a matter of fact, Ukraine still envisages the consequences of radioactive contamination as a core part of its memorialization.[13]

The Ukrainian decision for rupture determined the implausibility of continuing to promote a unionist project. Yuriy Savelyev argues that as "the second largest and symbolically most important Soviet republic – the Russian-led empire would never be able to survive" without Ukraine (Savelyev, 2019, p. 237). The act of independence was proclaimed on August 24, 1991. Nonetheless, it was not consolidated until the celebration of a national referendum on December 1, 1991, which underlined overwhelming results (Potichnyj, 1991, p. 123). Despite territorial divisions, over 90 percent of the electorate voted in favor of succession from the Soviet Union.[14] Peter J. Potichnyj argues that "a vicious campaign of misinformation" was promoted in regard

---

[13] See Cardis, E., Hatch, M. (2011). The Chernobyl Accident – An Epidemiological Perspective. *Clinical Oncology (Royal Collage of Radiologists (Great Britain)), 23*(4), 251-260. Link
[14] Ibid.

to social minorities and nuclear weapons in Ukrainian soil.[15] Notwithstanding, the narrative supporting the state of Ukraine eventually prevailed.

The rise of the Ukrainian state was determined by the presence of nuclear weapons on its territory, hence altering the international balance of power. In his analysis on the importance of Russo-Ukrainian relations for Europe's security, Peter van Ham stated that "Ukraine's problematic relationship with Russia and its reluctance to become a non-nuclear power" could actually evolve into a major conflict (Ham, 1996, p. 1). As a result, Ham's vision reflects the ambivalence between the emotional meaning of Ukraine for Russian politicians and the attempt to establish an official delimitation of sovereign borders.[16]

In the post-Soviet era, Ukraine automatically became the 3rd largest holder of nuclear weapons in the world system, including 176 intercontinental ballistic missiles (Budjeryn, 2015). Although the consequences of the Chernobyl incident were still suffered, new challenges to nuclear ownership were raised due to the deterioration of Russo-Ukrainian relations. Western countries immediately adopted a non-proliferation policy, ultimately pressuring Ukraine in exchange of recognition. Subsequently, its integration to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1994, determined the transfer of all nuclear arsenal to the Russian Federation in 1996.[17] Eventually, the inheritance of the defunct USSR was incontestably handed over to the Russian state.

The reinforcement of international norms and nuclear policies accompanied the beginning of the international liberal order (Börzel & Zürn, 2021). The security competition among states adopted a new form of market liberalization and economic interdependence known as neoliberalism.[18] In that respect, the Ukrainian state eventually recalled its crucial role in international oil production processes, most notably due to the ownership of significant offshore gas reserves in Crimean Ukraine (International Energy Agency, 2021).

---

[15] Ibid., p.126.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid., p. 204
[18] Kashwan, P., MacLean, L. M. & García-López, G. A. (2019). Rethinking power and institutions in the shadows of neoliberalism. *World Development, 120*, 133-146. Link

The presence of geostrategic interests in the Eastern European region potentialized the convergence of multilateral policies. In the case of Europe, the Europeanization process in Ukraine was primarily aimed at consolidating democratic practices (Thomson, 2019). Notwithstanding, the attractiveness of the EU via promotion of liberal values was conditioned by Russian influences on internal politics (Bradford, 2020). Overtime, the Ukrainian society began to experience the evolution of ethno-cultural identities, ultimately leading to the pursue of socio-political change.

3.3.1.1 The Orange Revolution

The post-communist transition consolidated new social progresses, ultimately thriving the support to democratic values. Oleksandr Reznik examines the dynamics of protest actions in Ukraine. In his article "From the Orange Revolution to the Revolution of Dignity", he advocates that "there appeared two mutually inclusive identities: pro-European and pro-Russian", which were eventually framed by "the historical circumstances" characterizing the territory (Reznik, 2016, p. 753). On that account, the junction of geographical divisions and ethno-cultural dissimilarities determined the conflictual coexistence between the Western-Central and Southern-Eastern parts of Ukraine.

The *de facto* and *de jure* recognition of the Ukrainian state came alongside Western expectations concerning stabilization and democratization processes in former SSRs (Bianchini & Minakov, 2018). The first Presidential elections resulted in the victory of Leonid Kravchuk with almost 61.59 percent of the votes (Potichnyj, 1991, p. 132). His candidature was overwhelmingly supported in the Central, Eastern and Southern parts of Ukraine, notably because of his previous experience as a statesman (Bianchini & Minakov, 2018). Furthermore, although there was no clear promotion of future policies, the independence question remained crucial for all the parties. During his tenure, Kravchuk parallelly pursued the consolidation of Ukrainian sovereignty and the estrangement of former ties with the Kremlin (McKee, 2009). Posteriorly, discontent in the Eastern parts of Ukraine ultimately led to the presidential victory of pro-Russian

candidate Leonid Kuchma in 1994, who controversially served the maximum two terms.[19]

The social cleavage was materialized in the 2000s when the young generations started to embody a more democratic understanding of Ukrainian identity (Reznik, 2016). Simultaneously, the influence of Soviet institutions relatively remained important for the rest of age groups, thus underlining the inflationary effect of identity politics. Accordingly, Taras Kuzio argues that "civic nationalism played a positive role in mobilizing mass protests against election fraud in the 2004 presidential elections" (Kuzio, 2010, p. 285). The youth represented a collective shift in mental outlook together with another merging social group comprised of entrepreneurs. More precisely, medium-class businessmen and private enterprises in favor of economic liberalization.

The mobilizing effect of nationalism in modern Ukrainian civil societies subsequently fueled institutional discontent. Vlad Mykhnenko and Adam Swain analyze the development of the Ukrainian economy through the establishment of a regional comparison. According to their findings, the uneven economic development had a negative impact on Ukraine's territorial integrity and social cohesion (Mykhnenko & Swain, 2010). The need for modernization underlined the political control retained over the economy, hence emphasizing the support for a less state-regulated market economy. For clarification purposes, the economic initiatives yet remained prevalent in the pro-European Western-Central parts of Ukraine (Kuzio, 2010).

In 2004, the falsification of electoral results fueled massive protests in the country (Reznik, 2016). On November 21, nonpartisan polls estimated the victory of presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko with 52 percent of the votes (Karatnycky, 2005, p. 36). Eventually, the official results claimed the victory of pro-Kremlin leader Viktor Yanukovych by a margin of 2.5 percent.[20] Adrian Karatnycky argues that the

---

[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.

Ukrainian Central Election Commission radically shifted the turnout figures in the Eastern regions, most notably Donetsk and Luhansk, attributing an extra of approximately 1.2 million votes to Russia's preferred candidate in order to securitize his victory.[21] Despite discreditation campaigns, the electoral monitors were crucial for the verification of massive fraud, including statements from governmental institutions such as Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) (Reznik, 2016).[22]

In addition to the antidemocratic campaign, Viktor Yushchenko suffered an assassination attempt via dioxin poisoning, which immediately fueled further instability (McKee, 2009). Alongside mass demonstrations, the EU and the U.S. expressed their reticence to recognize the results (Thomson, 2019). The political deadlock pressured the Ukrainian Supreme Court to order a second round of elections under international scrutiny, ultimately proclaiming Yushchenko's victory in 2005.[23] Subsequently, the political setting in Ukraine dramatically shifted under Ukraine's new foreign policy, especially due to the collective willingness to promote further rapprochement with Western institutions (Gretskiy, 2013). The policy of band-wagoning articulated since the proclamation of the state of Ukraine radically changed. After Yushchenko's willingness to join NATO membership geopolitical controversies started to exponentially arise (Arel & Driscoll, 2023). Notwithstanding, the Ukrainian aspirations to become a consolidated democracy were undermined by a fierce internal opposition as well as the lack of compromise presented by European institutions.

The shift of Ukraine's foreign and security policy during Yushchenko's presidency evidenced infighting in regard to national orientation. Martin Malek argues that "Moscow is firmly convinced" about NATO's attempt to undermine Russian strategic interests, therefore leading the Kremlin to pursue "integration plans" within the "post-Soviet space" (Malek, 2009, p. 515). On that account, it is pertinent to stress that Russo-Ukrainian relations are not limited to security seeking-goals, but also comprise important emotional implications. In the Yushchenko era (2005-2010), the widespread

---

[21] Ibid.

[22] See Kuzio, T. (2005). Russian Policy toward Ukraine during Elections. *Demokratizatsiya, 13*(4), Politics Collection, pp. 491-517. Link

[23] Ibid.

expectations that followed the Orange Revolution were undermined by insufficient reforms (Kuzio, 2011). Posteriorly, the celebration of new Presidential elections in 2010 finally attributed the victory to pro-Russian candidate Viktor Yanukovych.[24]

4. THE RUSSO-UKRANIAN WAR

The following section decouples the Russo-Ukrainian war into three predominant paradigms. Firstly, the pre-armed conflict conceptualized as "the revolution of dignity", also known as Euromaidan, is preliminarily assessed in order to better comprehend Russia's evolutive foreign policy. Secondly, the 2014 illegal annexation of Crimea is analyzed in order to examine the conflictual dynamics that laid down the foundations for the war outbreak. Lastly, the 2022 large-scale operation is examined from a politico-military perspective in order to underline major shifts in international geopolitics, eventually produced as a result of the European armed conflict.

On that account, it is pertinent to clarify that even though all sections are interconnected, the present paper does not observe the Russo-Ukrainian war as a continual conflict. For narrowing purposes, a temporal division is articulated between the Crimean annexation and the full-scale military invasion of Ukraine in order to guarantee greater levels of qualitative accuracy. An offensive-defensive paradigm is stated in order to comprehend Russia's security concerns in the Eurasian region. Posteriorly, the internationalization of the conflict is examined from a Western-European basis.

4.1 Political instability

4.1.1 The Revolution of Dignity

After years of independence, Ukraine managed to preserve peace in a context of potential crisis between opposing narratives. Language differentiation was placed at the core of Ukrainian nationalistic tendencies, notably because of the symbolism attributed to the Russian language (Arel & Driscoll, 2023). Furthermore, the

---

[24] Ibid.

reformulation of shared historical events continued to destabilize both social groups. In fact, it is possible to observe the reminiscence of the interwar period in both narratives. Whereas the Holodomor genocide remains object of dissimilar acknowledgement in regard to the gravity of the events, Ukrainian nationalism is associated with fascism due to the collaboration between the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and Nazi Germany during World War II (Arel & Driscoll, 2023). Hence, the weaponization of historical narratives as an instrument for segregation.

Regional polarization was increasingly translated into greater fragmentation of the Ukrainian-speaking West and the Russian-speaking East, ultimately thrusting the Ukrainian society to the adoption of a zero-sum positioning.[25] Subsequently, the geographical division included dissimilar political standings. The influence of identity politics determined the social willingness to consolidate a distinct Ukrainian identity, which was later translated into the pursuit of democratic changes in the Western regions (Kulyk, 2016). Opposingly, Yanukovych's support for Russian policies was increasingly observed in pro-Eastern policies such as the renewal of the lease of Sevastopol for Russia's Black Sea Fleet (Arel & Driscoll, 2023). Nonetheless, it was not until the government's refusal to sign an Association and Free Trade Agreement with the European Union that significant political turmoil would occur (Diuk, 2014).

The political ambivalence between West and East introduced a complex scenario for the Ukrainian future. The uncertainty about the extent of EU support together with the pressures exerted by Russian influences clearly conditioned Yanukovych's capacity for maneuver (Piper, 2013). In 2013, he abandoned the signature of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, hence giving rise to the revolution of dignity (Reznik, 2016). On the basis of civil rights, the convergence of a number of factors such as widespread corruption either economic stagnation or political instability led to the orchestration of peaceful student protests in Ukraine. On November 21, 2013, a group of protesters reunited in Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square) situated in Ukraine's capital Kyiv, calling for the reversal of the Ukrainian regime (Afineevsky & Tolmor, 2015).

---

[25] Ibid.

After police assaults on peaceful protesters, the social movement was translated into mass demonstrations comprising peoples from ranging backgrounds (Pinkham, 2016). Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians converged on Maidan in spite of the ban on street protesters in Kyiv (Arel & Driscoll, 2023). The exertion of extreme state force fueled the anti-institutional mistrust, ultimately inferring a spiral of violence between the two conflictual sides. Accordingly, the tipping point of political instability was reached on December 17 with Yanukovych's signature of a new agreement, which enabled Russia to significantly decrease prices on Ukraine's natural gas and acquire 15 billion dollars in Ukrainian bonds (Diuk, 2014, p. 9).

Despite mass demonstrations, the governmental willingness to strengthen ties with the Russian Federation was yet manifested. On January 16, the Ukrainian Parliament passed new legislation similar to the one implemented in Russia's 2011-2012 mass protests (Arel & Driscoll, 2023, p. 78). This ensemble of legislative measures, also known as the "dictatorship laws", was introduced in an attempt to tackle public unrest by way of reinforcing criminal liabilities. Unprecedentedly, the governmental repression exerted against Ukrainian civilians escalated into a violent revolution opposing the authoritarian regime (Onuch & Sasse, 2016). On January 22, the first fatalities were produced (Diuk, 2014, p. 9).

The spiral of violence reached its peak with the shooting and killing of protesters. Sophie Pinkham describes the situation as "a series of violent episodes: protesters abducted and tortured, mysterious snipers […] shooting from rooftops" and "masked protesters throwing Molotov cocktails" (Pinkham, 2016, p. 99). Whereas the power struggle in Ukraine was evident, Moscow attributed responsibilities to "fascists" supported by Western governments (Arel & Driscoll, 2023). On that account, the social mobilization against the established regime constituted the point of departure of an increasingly assertive Russian state behavior.

In February 2014, the pro-democratic movement eventually removed the Pro-Russian administration from power (Arel & Driscoll, 2023). After months of socio-political turmoil, Viktor Yanukovych exiled to Russia and a new pro-Western government was established. Accordingly, this systematically constituted a point of no return in Russo-

Ukrainian history.[26] The internationalization of the Revolution of Dignity accentuated state challenges to respond to internal conflict. Nevertheless, the course towards democratic change and political accountability seemed predetermined from a Western lens (Nitsova, 2021). Ukraine's willingness to become an official member of the European Union clearly conditioned the dynamics of Russia-Ukraine-West correspondence. Certainly, the Euromaidan protests served to consolidate the so-called Ukrainian identity.

Figure 1. Euromaidan protests

Source: NBC News. (February 20, 2019). Link

4.2 The Annexation of the Crimean Peninsula

4.2.1 Preliminary events

---

[26] Ibid.

The popular destitution of Viktor Yanukovych constituted the landmark for the posterior deterioration of Russo-Ukrainian relations. The power change in Kyiv systematically accelerated Vladimir Putin's strategic approach towards Ukraine, therefore embodying a more assertive political standing (Tsygankov, 2015). The Euromaidan protests created a context of political uncertainty that eventually weakened the established governmental structures. Andrei Tsygankov argues that the escalation of bilateral tensions "also reflected a broader policy pattern of Russia's assertive relations with the Western nations", especially after the Western difficulties to acknowledge the importance of Russian interests in the Eurasian region.[27] As a result, the weaking of the central government systematically facilitated the advancement of Russian interests in the Eastern Ukrainian region (Mankoff, 2014).

The causal relationship between a possible rapprochement to the West and the subsequent security implications for Russia certainly exposes the complex nature of the dissension. Despite pro-democratic groups, the ethno-cultural fragmentation that characterizes Ukraine led to the undermining of state structures (Mankoff, 2014). On late February 2014, the escalation of tensions vis-à-vis the Russian Federation fueled responsive demonstrations in the Eastern and Southern Ukrainian regions, which are yet determined by their Russian orientation (Nitsova, 2021). Moreover, the promotion of secessionist sentiments potentialized the success of popular revolts in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, collectively denominated as the Donbas, whereas in other pro-Russian cities such as Kharkiv or Dnipropetrovsk eventually stalled.[28]

4.2.2 Illegal annexation

In addition to public unrest, unidentified militants began to take over public buildings in Crimea. The articulation of an interventionist approach evidenced the amalgamation of political and military resources in favor of "Crimea's self-determination" (Treisman, 2016). On February 27, 2014, the newly proclaimed government officially alleged Russian military interference in its sovereign territory (Sullivan, 2014). Daniel Treisman

---

[27] Ibid., p. 279.
[28] Ibid.

observes the seizure of the peninsula as "the most consequential decision" in Putin's presidential era (Treisman, 2016, p. 47). Despite the preliminary derivation of responsibilities to the "local forces of self-defense", the Russian administration later confirmed the deployment of Russian troops on Ukrainian territory (Reuters Staff, 2014). In sequence, the post-Cold War order was dramatically disturbed.

Under the premise of protecting ethnic Russians, President Vladimir Putin obtained the necessary parliamentary support to exert military force in Ukraine (Reuters Staff, 2014). Special operations forces were deployed in order to proceed with the annexation of the peninsula to the rest of Russian territories (Bukkvoll, 2016). While adopting an offensive approach, the strategic implementation of hybrid instruments highlighted the covert action role of Russian soldiers in the reconfiguration of local events (Carbonnel & Prentice, 2014). The "unofficial" presence of troops enabled the take-over of Ukrainian military compounds and the consequent securitization of Crimean political institutions.[29] Although the operation included elements of surprise, efficacy and most importantly, non-direct action, the seizing of power was justified via complementary legislative procedures (Bukkvoll, 2016).

On March 16, 2014, the celebration of a Crimean referendum consolidated the success of Russia's intervention (Wilson, 2016). A compelling majority of voters supported Crimea's secession from Ukraine, hence evidencing a collective interest in developing closer ties with its neighbor. The Ukrainian state eventually lost its effective control over the peninsula, thus forcing the remaining Ukrainian military to withdraw from the area.[30] Henceforth, the territorial transgression opened a window of opportunity for other eastern regions seeking autonomous administration, for instance, Donetsk and Luhansk, where proxy conflict remained the predominant destabilizing agent (Nitsova, 2021).

---

[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

In that respect, Kremlin-backed secessionist groups perpetuated the face-off with Ukrainian conventional forces. Despite condemnations from the international community, Russia yet observed the referendum as a legitimate expression of the right to self-determination of Crimean inhabitants (Bellinger, 2014). From a strategic outlook, an increased military presence in the Black Sea systematically reinforces Russia's ability to protect "legitimate" geostrategic interests in the region (Nitsova, 2021). Hereby, the perceived responsibility of foreign powers influenced people's preferences. The zero-sum positioning enlarged the division between those instilling fierce opposition to subordinating policies and those observing the Kremlin as the unique viable alternative in the near future (Kulyk V. , 2016). As a result, it is pertinent underline the immediate effect of Russia's interventionist approach on the ethnocultural foundation of independent Ukraine.

The local support to the territorial transfer opposes the consecutive international condemnation. John O'Loughlin and Gerard Toal examine the attitudes of Crimean inhabitants by way of carrying out a representative survey in the peninsula (O'Loughlin & Toal, 2019). According to the results, with the exception of the Tatar minority, the majority of the population expressed their positive conformity with the integration into Russia.[31] In fact, it is possible to argue that the "proclamation" of self-determination explains the "passive" response of the international community. The consideration of Crimean's thinking remains crucial for the understanding of the frozen conflict, especially because no state had militarily invaded another country since the end of the second world war in 1945.

On March 18, 2014, the Russian Federal Council was characterized by Putin's reference to Crimea and Sevastopol as citizens of Russia.[32] In that respect, the *de facto* control constituted the preliminary step towards "Russian reunification" (Nitsova, 2021). Vasile Rotaru analyses the use of Western terminology in the legitimization process of contested actions (Rotaru, 2020). His analytical comparison of NATO's

---

[31] Ibid.
[32] President of Russia. (March 18, 2014). *"Address by President of the Russian Federation"*. Presidential Executive of Office. Link

intervention in Yugoslavia and Moscow's initiative to "solve" the Crimean conflict highlights the interchangeable character of acceptability standards.[33] From a more realist approach, the counterbalance of power exerted in the East-Asian sphere of influence enables Russia to retain its great power status, therefore evidencing the hierarchy in states' membership of international society.

Meanwhile, the "national consolidation" of a Ukrainian identity intensively shaped the public opinion after the annexation. According to Harley Balzer, "Russia has engaged in a "war without war and occupation without occupation" in Ukraine", thus emphasizing the causal effect of a European Ukraine on Putin's long-lasting regime (Balzer, 2015, p. 79). Although the author refers to the preliminary advancement of Putin's foreign policy, it already exposes the persisting existential threat to Russia's governing elite. Consequently, the polarization of Russo-Ukrainian relations thus far demonstrated the inexorable nature of an all-out conflict.

4.2.3 Internationalization of the conflict

The declaration of independence of the Republic of Crimea certainly constituted a violation of the 1996 Ukrainian Constitution, which confers exclusive competences to the Parliament of Ukraine to call a referendum on secession (Grant, 2015). On that legal basis, the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe issued a statement acknowledging the illegal nature of the territorial integration of Crimea into the Russian Federation.[34] Accordingly, Didier Burkhalter, at the time chairman of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), publicly acknowledged the importance of an alternative approach to the Crimean question (OSCE, 2014).

Although the legal position was straightforward, the lack of a supranational authority led to a latent response. Notwithstanding, the illegal annexation of Crimea thrusted geopolitical changes. The U.S. and the EU allocation of sanctioning measures against

---

[33] Ibid.
[34] On March 21, 2014, the European Commission for Democracy Through Law (Venice Commission) published Opinion no. 762/2014 on the compatibility of the Annexation of Crimea with constitutional principles. It is still possible to access the English version of the case CDL-AD(2014)002-e in the official website of the Council of Europe. Link

Russia deteriorated the multilateralism characteristic of the post-Soviet order, ultimately institutionalizing geopolitical motivations (Hanousek & Bělín, 2019). The policy of *quid pro quo* had a negative impact on trading flows, thus affecting the dynamics of international trade. In the period 2014-2016, the estimations of value trade lost as a result of Western sanctions accounted for 1.3 billion dollars, whereas the Russian countersanctions translated into approximately 10.5 billion.[35]

Ultimately, the violation of international law principles by a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) brought about the adoption of a United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution on the non-recognition of a status change in the Crimea region (General Assembly, 2014). The results reflected a number of 100 members voting in favor out of the 193 total membership (General Assembly, 2014). As a result, the political condemnation of Russian actions yet evidenced the states' willingness to preserve a rules-based international order (Sengupta, 2014).

4.3 Large-scale operations

4.3.1 Preliminary events

Following the annexation of Crimea in 2014, Eastern Ukraine continued to suffer the consequences of active armed conflict. The Donbass was fragmentated into two predominant groups, the Russian-backed separatists, and the Ukrainian conventional forces. Kimitaka Matsuzato analyses the proactive confrontation in the Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk, while observing Russia's interventionist policy as part of a political continuum (Matsuzato, 2017). Despite the Cold War perception of the Ukrainian society, which is yet analyzed from the radical positioning between two poles, the Donbass region was not considered of vital strategic interest.[36] On March 21, 2014, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) started to operate on the ground in order to report further changes in the region (OSCE, 2022).

---

[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.

Figure 2. Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk
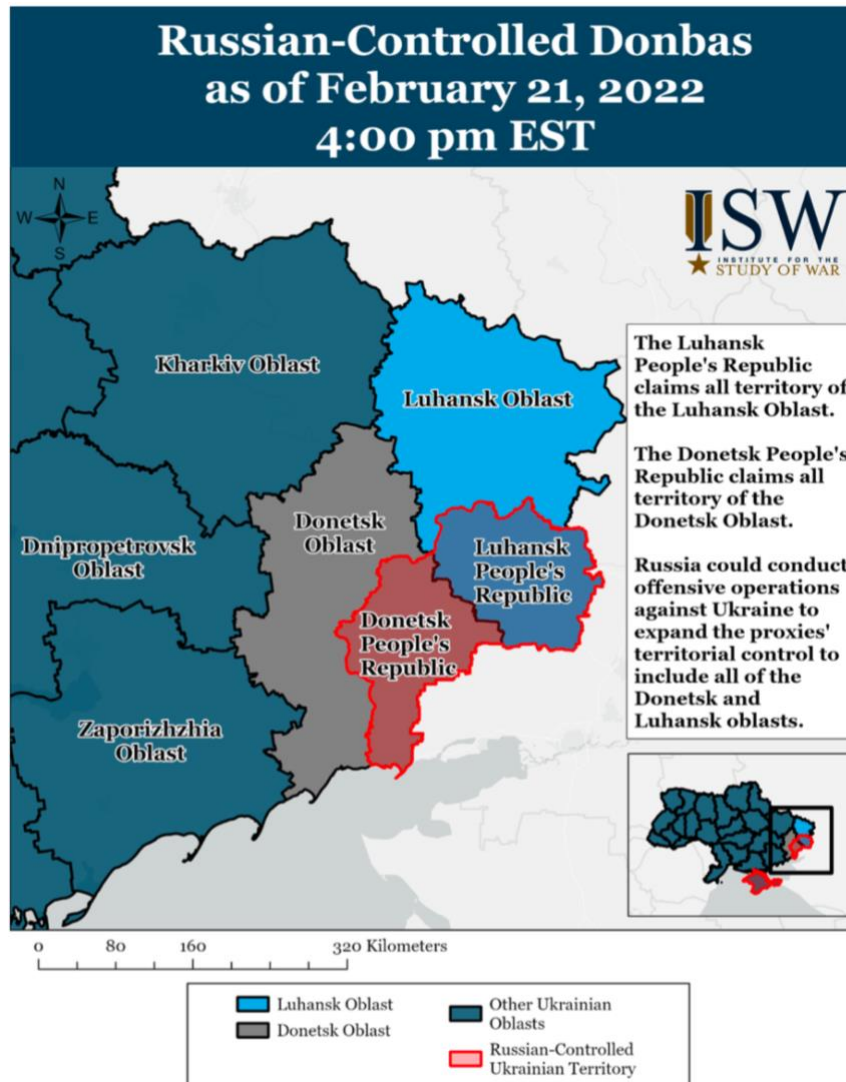
Source: Institute for the Study of War & The Critical Threats Project.
(February 21, 2022). Link

In 2014-2015, the conceptualization of peace via the signature of the Minsk Agreements and Protocol established the politico-legal course of action for conflict management in Eastern Ukraine (Wittke, 2019). Although compliance was persistently questioned, it is important to acknowledge a significant decrease in infighting (Matsuzato, 2017). Accordingly, the conflict zone was eventually transformed into one of the most mine-contaminated territories in the world (Crisis Group, 2023). Subsequently, on the basis of preserving peace, around 75,000 troops remained

stationed in the frontline.[37] Indeed, it is possible to argue that the persisting Russia-Ukraine crisis became an extension of the scope of intensity.

The security dilemma was accompanied by further Ukrainian rapprochement to Western institutions. Eventually, the strengthening of relations was materialized with the 2017 Association Agreement that opened the EU market to Ukrainian citizens (European Union, 2022). On the one hand, the "Brussels effect" was observed as a tool that undermined the Russian capacity to preserve its influence in the Eurasian region (Bradford, 2020). On the other hand, NATO's presence in the post-Soviet space significantly conditioned Russia's state behavior, most notably due to the historical, political and security implications of the alliance (Glebov, 2009).

In 2019, the Ukrainian Presidential elections resulted in the proclamation of populist leader Volodymyr Zelensky as the new President of Ukraine (Yanchenko, 2023). On the basis of pro-Western policies, Zelensky's government reinstated the course of action towards NATO membership, hence fueling concerns over a possible high-scale armed conflict (Quinn, 2021). After the implausible annexation of Crimea, U.S. President Joe Biden advocated for a more offensive political standing (Macias, 2021). In sequence, the unprecedented military build-up of Russian troops in the Russian-Ukrainian border evidenced the political will to exert the use of force (Amiel, 2021).

By the end of 2021, over 90,000 Russian soldiers were stationed in the Eastern Ukrainian frontier.[38] Consequently, this constituted the largest concentration of military might in Europe since the end of the Cold War order. Despite diplomatic efforts, Vladimir Putin's call for a NATO withdrawal from Eurasia, together with the subsequent rejection of Ukraine's candidature for membership, ultimately remained the most viable alternative for the easing of tensions (Antony, 2022). On that account, the Western expansion via institutional enlargement and democracy promotion involved "Russia's political backyard", therefore consolidating the vision of NATO expansion as a direct threat to its national security.[39]

---

[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid., p. 7.

On February 21, 2022, Russia recognized the Republic of Donetsk and the Republic of Luhansk as independent territories, therefore replacing the Minsk Agreements with a new treaty of "friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance" (Kagan & Clark, 2022, p. 1). Accordingly, the state of Ukraine was defined as intrinsically Russian, clearly questioning the actions of Soviet leaders (Perrigo, 2022). In his speech three days prior to the invasion, President Vladimir Putin referred to the thousand years of history shared by Russia and Ukraine. Subsequently, the Ukrainian statehood was refused.[40]

> *"We demand for those who took over and retain the power in Kyiv to immediately stop combat activity. Otherwise, the responsibility for continuing the bloodshed will lay on the shoulders of the Ukrainian regime".*
>
> *Vladimir Putin's televised address to the nation. (February 21, 2022).*

The Russian offensive was immediately extrapolated to other regions, notably as a result of the assertiveness demonstrated by Russia's leader. The military invasion was prepared to be launched, whereas the U.S. decided to send additional forces to NATO member states in Europe (Kagan & Clark, 2022).

4.3.2 Four-front military invasion

The retroactive character of the Ukrainian crisis including the Euromaidan protests either the Crimean referendum or the Donbass separatist movements, certainly potentialized the security dilemma on a possible war outbreak in the region. Accordingly, the Western trust in the endurability of the liberal order indirectly conditioned the offensive approach towards the threatening implementation of sanctions and political reprisals against the Russian regime (Eichensehr, 2022). Notwithstanding, Putin's zero-sum policy determined the conclusive escalation of events. On February 24, 2022, Russia operationalized the large-scale invasion of the

---

[40] President of Russia. (February 21, 2022). *Address by the President of the Russian Federation.* Presidential Executive Office. Link

state of Ukraine, hereby fueling a profound crisis of the international liberal order (Hanappi, 2022, p. 116). Hereby, an analysis of the first days of the invasion is developed.

The depiction of the "special military operation" was justified following the objectives of "demilitarizing" and "de-nazifying" the territory (Clark, Barros, & Stepanenko, 2022). Correspondingly, the seizing and holding of Ukrainian territory was primarily orchestrated on the basis of a four-front invasion. [41] Therefore, a division was established into four offensive scopes: the Northern Front, which comprised the advancement of Russian forces from Belarus towards Kyiv, the Northeastern Front, which included the fusion of troops from the Russian territory towards Kyiv, the Eastern Front, which incorporated the region of the Donbas and Kharkiv, and ultimately, the Southern Front, which involved the movement of Russian forces from Western Crimea towards Odesa and Mariupol (Jones, 2022).

Figure 3. Deployment of Russo-Ukrainian forces
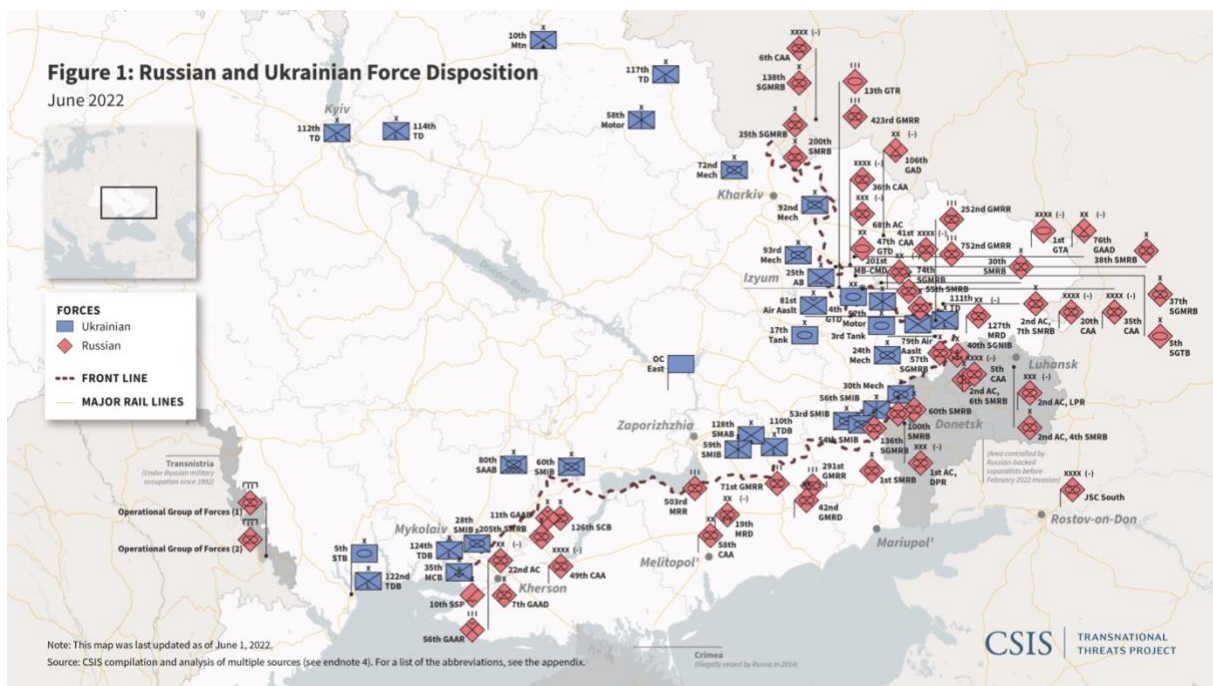
Source: Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS). (June 1, 2022). Link

---

[41] Ibid.

The preliminary prospects for the durability of the conflict were significantly limited. Russia's military power was overwhelmingly surpassing Ukrainian regular forces, thus accentuating its capacity to subordinate the regime in Kyiv (Clark, Barros, & Stepanenko, 2022). Considering the allocation of 190,000 Russian troops for a full-scale *Blitzkrieg* military operation, numerous setbacks evidenced miscalculations in strategic planning (Luzin, 2022). Among the set of operations, the advancement of ground forces was predominantly successful in the Southern Front, which secured the access to the Crimea canal and eventually captured the city of Kherson (Clark, Barros, & Stepanenko, 2022). Opposingly, the air campaign remained incomplete, especially due to the failure to neutralize the Ukrainian Air Force and secure territorial gains such as Kyiv's primary international airport, the Boryspil airport (Dettmer, 2023). In the following figure, it is possible to observe a visual representation of Ukraine's military might in comparison to Russia.

Figure 4. Comparison of Russia-Ukraine military

Source: Global Firepower; Statista (January 26, 2022). Link

Despite quantitative calculations, Ukraine successfully articulated a range of counteroffensives through the operationalization of the remaining Ukrainian air force, including its command and control (Clark, Barros, & Stepanenko, 2022). In an attempt to deescalate the likeliness of an all-out war, the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky appealed to the Russian population to respond (Graham-Harrison, Harding, Roth, & Borger, 2022). Alongside his intervention, the political will to protect Ukraine's territorial sovereignty from a foreign aggression was restated.[42] Posteriorly, on February 25, the major cities of Kyiv and Kherson were reached, thus triggering a coordinated anti-war movement. Although Russian forces managed to isolate the capital via Dnipro River, the organized resistance in Kyiv and Kharkiv impeded the rapid extension of the occupation (Gumenyuk, 2022). Simultaneously, a dual narrative was developed in order to legitimize further advances and therefore sustain the war effort.

On February 26, the unequal evolution of Russian forces underlined new challenges to retain effective control over the newly occupied territories. The shortage of crucial materials such as fuel or food underlined an ill-conceived logistical structure.[43] In sequence, growing domestic discontent led to the censorship of Kremlin-based independent media in an effort to contain public unrest. As a result, strategic recalibrations led to an operational pause that responded to Western statements. On February 28, Russian and Ukrainian representatives agreed to negotiation talks in Belarus (Clark, Barros, & Stepanenko, 2022). Notwithstanding, the impossibility to reach a cease fire accentuated the escalation of the armed conflict.

Henceforth, the challenges to topple the Ukrainian government obliged Russian forces to refocus on the Eastern and Southern borders.[44] In that respect, Jokull Johannesson advocated for the unlikeness of a Russian victory due to the multiplicity of threats faced by Putin's regime (Johannesson, 2017). According to his argument, Russia needs to redistribute its resources whereas "Ukraine can concentrate its military power for a single purpose".[45] In fact, it is possible to argue that the shaping of the military balance

---

[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid., p.63.

of power constitutes a causal variable in the development of events. Russia's great power status is directly observed from its overwhelming nuclear arsenal, which unquestionably confers a deterrent effect on potential adversaries in case of aggression (Fink & Oliker, 2020). Nonetheless, the existential dangers presented by a possible direct confrontation with NATO systematically frame Russia's room for maneuver.

Although the Ukrainian war is expected to be proactive, the operation was gradually translated into an alternating conflict. Since the beginning of armed confrontations on February 24, 2022, the international order has experienced profound geopolitical transformations. As a result, it is pertinent to analyze the Western transgression from politico-economic measures towards a more comprehensive military approach, ultimately accentuating the causal relationship of the outcome in Ukraine and the prevalence of a rules-based international liberal order.

4.3.3 Internationalization of the conflict

The recentness and persistency of the dispute depletes the possibilities for a thorough examination. For narrowing purposes, the present section primarily limits the internationalization of the conflict to the most consequential actions since the unfolding of events. On that account, three primary domains are examined through the scope of three international institutions. Firstly, the political condemnation is assessed through the United Nations outlook. Secondly, the security and defense environment is analyzed on the basis of NATO activities. Thirdly, the institutionalization of far-reaching measures against the Russian Regime is examined following EU groundwork.

4.3.3.1 The United Nations (UN)

The emerging crisis was materialized at the United Nations level. On February 25, 2022, Albania and the United States introduced the first draft resolution condemning Russia's intervention in Ukraine (Security Council, 2022). Despite the support of eleven members of the council as well as China's abstention, the permanent status of the Russian Federation at the Security Council determined the continuity of the war

because of its rightful exercise of veto power.[46] Subsequently, the "responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security" led to the establishment of a special session of the General Assembly (Security Council, 2022, p. 1). On March 2, 2022, the General Assembly adopted a non-binding resolution calling for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine in respect for the Charter of the United Nations and international law principles (General Assembly, 2022). Eventually, the final results comprised 141 votes in favor, 5 votes against and 35 abstentions.

Figure 5. General Assembly voting results

Source: United Nations. (March 2, 2022). Link

The generality of state actors recognized the illegal nature of Russia's unlawful territorial occupation alongside the UN Charter prohibition on the use of force.[47] Nonetheless, the presence of Russia at the Security Council yet questions the functionality of the organization. Tim Murithi argues that the organ failed to establish a

---

[46] Ibid.
[47] Russian Invasion of Ukraine Draws Widespread - but Not Universal - Condemnation. (2022). *American Journal of International Law, 116*(3), 605-614. Link

comprehensive framework for mediation, notably "due to the systemic constraints created by the veto powers of the Permanent Five" (Murithi, 2022, p. 65). Although the likeliness of greater UN involvement is primarily restrictive, it is pertinent to acknowledge its efforts to appease the humanitarian crisis, especially because of Ukraine's role as the "world's breadbasket" (United Nations, 2023).

The scalation of tensions at the diplomatic level have been frequent and most notably, at the Security Council meetings. On that account, UN Secretary General António Guterres has publicly declared that the mere implicit threat to exercise the use of nuclear weapons is entirely objectionable, therefore restating the importance of adherence to the NPT (António Guterres, 2022). In that respect, Michal Parízek introduces the three-level institutional dimension of the war on Ukraine (Parízek, 2023). Following with Parízek's argument, the UN is observed from the SC's standing and its capacity to authorize the use of force via application of the UN Charter mandate. Accordingly, the organization continues to represent the organ determining the normative framework of global politics (Sakwa, 2023, p. 11).

4.3.3.2 The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

There exists the reasoning associated with the existential threat posed by NATO to Russia's national security. In that respect, the Ukrainian war fueled geopolitical debates, including the questioning of NATO enlargement as a source of the conflict. The enlargement of NATO membership from sixteen nation-states to thirty posteriorly to the Cold War raises new questions on the motives for Russia's state behavior (Tardy, 2022). The absence of conventional conflicts in the Western-European sphere since the second world war, eventually attributed an obsolete character to the defense alliance. John Andreas Olsen argues that NATO's capacity to adapt to changes in the security environment involves the dual use of political and military instruments (Olsen, 2020).

After the annexation of Crimea, the transatlantic alliance fostered its security cooperation throughout the Eurasian region in light of avoiding the decline of national

defense budgets.[48] On the basis of the 2% GDP defense spending, a NATO Response Force was created in order to potentialize the preemptive capabilities of the allies (NATO, 2023). Subsequently, the expansion of NATO's presence in the Eastern European region, which included the deployment of combat-ready groups in Russian neighboring countries such as Poland or Estonia, accentuated the transcendence of the principle of collective defense conceptualized in the Article 5 of its founding treaty (NATO, 2023).

On that account, Ukraine's attempt to join the organization was systematically translated into an existential threat to Putin's regime. John J. Mearsheimer argues that the reasons for the outbreak are subjected to "a larger strategy to move Ukraine out of Russia's orbit and integrate it to the West" (Mearsheimer, 2014, p. 77). Although Mearsheimer's neorealist approach does not take into consideration Ukrainian historical implications, it is important to acknowledge the existence of a relationship between the "American incursion" in the former Soviet sphere and Putin's ethnonationalism.

"When the United States declared that there was a threat to the United States 10,000 kilometers away […] there was no hysteria like the one we witness today when Russia, having warned for many years that this is going to be a problem, that we cannot tolerate a threat which NATO and the United States have been building just on our borders not 10,000 kilometers away".

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov (April 29, 2022)[49]

Among the set of conditions advocated before escalations, it is pertinent to reassess the demands for the withdrawal of NATO forces from Eastern Europe. The security challenges to Russia's foreign policy were perceived as imminent. On the basis of both approaches, a zero-sum policy was predominantly articulated. For the first time, the alliance's positioning transgressed from far-reaching sanctions and political pressures to the historical activation of NATO's 40,000-troop Response Force (Starr & Herb,

---

[48] Ibid.
[49] Al Arabiya News. (April 29, 2022). *Full Interview with Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov*. Al Arabiya English. (53:44-54:19). Link

2022). Subsequently, the unprecedented military support to Ukrainian conventional forces evidenced the U.S. standing in the context of game power politics. In the concrete, for the first time in history, Joe Biden became the first U.S President to officially attend a European Council meeting (General Secretariat of the Council, 2022).

The triggering of war immediately coaxed nation-states to recalculate their respective security and defense policies, ultimately thrusting major geopolitical shifts. Richard Sakwa argues that "Cold War has returned to dominate international politics", hence highlighting the vulnerabilities of neoliberal structures (Sakwa, 2023, p. 11). The absence of war was mistakenly construed as durable peace, even though the conflict potential remained latent. The extrapolation of the security dilemma challenges the international balance of power, especially due to its increasing multipolar character. On that basis, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg clarified that "Ukraine's rightful place is in the Euro-Atlantic family" and that "Ukraine's rightful place is in NATO" (Cook & Kullab, 2023). As a result, the articulation of a dual offensive-defensive positioning certainly continues to foster the tilt towards remilitarization.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the global military expenditure reached 2240 billion dollars in 2022, thus demonstrating an increase of 3.7 per cent in comparison to the preceding year (SIPRI, 2023). In the case of the military alliance, the war in Ukraine has justified the overall defense expenditure of 2.2 percent by member states in 2022 (NATO, 2022). U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III advocated that "NATO has responded robustly and decisively to Russia's imperial invasion", finally underlining that the "determination to protect every inch of NATO territory is unwavering" (Ferdinando, 2022). Accordingly, the commitment to 2 percent spending yet represents a difficult target to achieve, most notably in European countries. In the following figure, it is possible to observe the degree of fulfillment of NATO guidelines based on an estimated comparison between the years 2014 and 2022 respectively.

Figure 6. Defense expenditure as a share of GDP (%)

(based on 2015 prices and exchange rates)

Note: Figures for 2022 are estimates.
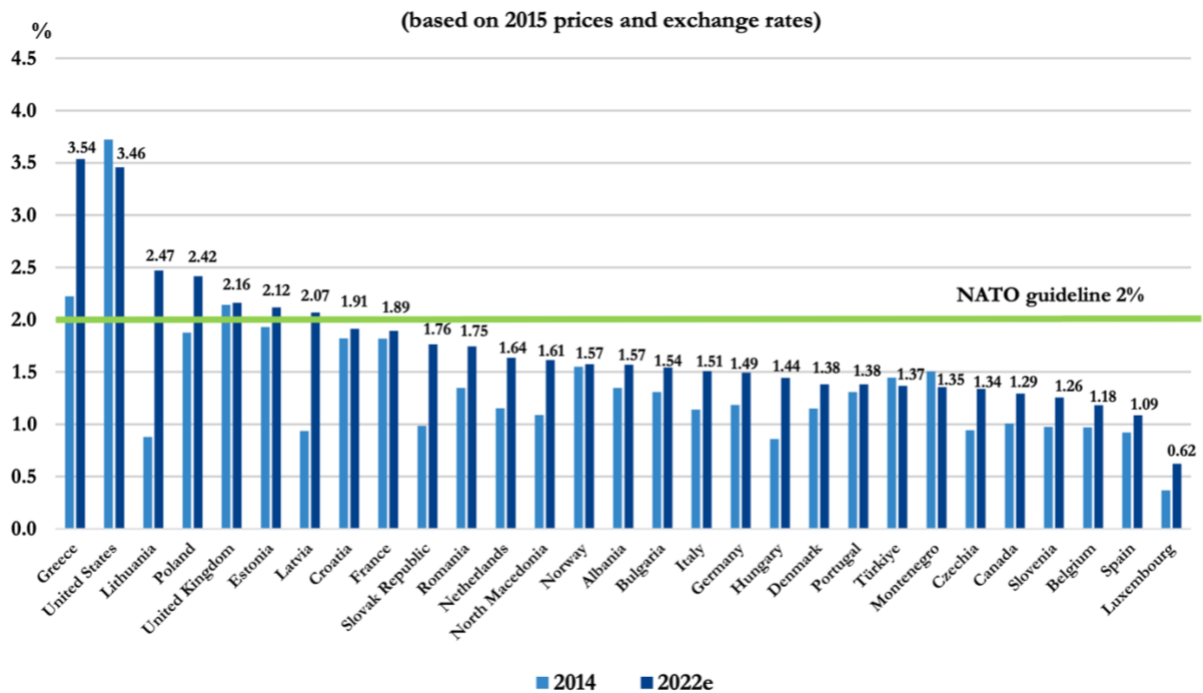
Source: NATO. (February 7, 2023). Link

In the case of Western democracies, the collective military spending directly challenges the foundational assumptions of the liberal order. Richard Sakwa reiterates that Russia's centrality to international politics could be attributing it greater power and status in non-Western areas of influence (Sakwa, 2023, p. 11). In that respect, it is pertinent to mention the relocation of security hotspots in the Global South as well as East Asia, including NATO-Japan-South Korea strengthened cooperation (Alexander, 2022). Ryan Alexander argues that "if we set aside Putin's irrational behavior, the Russian Federation's position is at least understandable", more precisely as a result of "the eastward encroachment of NATO toward Russia's western flank".[50] In that respect, it is necessary to comprehend the underlying reasoning of Russian representatives in regard to the condemnation of Russia's state behavior.

"If you cannot sleep because of Russian-Ukrainian conflict […]
imagine that this is happening in Africa, imagine this is happening in

---

[50] Ibid., p. 10.

the Middle East, imagine Ukraine is Palestine, imagine Russia is the
United States".

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov (April 29, 2022)[51]

Coming back to John J. Mearsheimer's argument on the responsibilities attributed to Western institutions, it is possible to agree to some extent on the numerous grievances and frustrations experienced by Russian citizens, which eventually became the foundational engine of Russian's aggression on Ukraine (Mearsheimer, 2014). Although the provision of military support remains crucial for Kyiv's survival, the isolation of Putin's regime required the adoption of a series of self-harming policies. On March 16, 2023, the NATO-EU Task Force on Resilience of Critical Infrastructure was established in order to counterbalance Russia's weaponization of the energy sector (NATO, 2023).

In that respect, Europe's natural gas dependency on Russia constituted a primary structural pressure resulted from the Ukrainian crisis, which certainly undermined the stability of the European members of the alliance (European Commission, 2023). Subsequently, the sabotage of gas import routes such as the Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 pipelines signified the escalation of geopolitical challenges and recalled potential future risks in interdependence-based structures (Virág & Tancsa, 2023). On that account, the strategic interests of the two Western organizations of NATO and the EU yet converged (NATO, 2023). Consequently, it is pertinent to examine the transcendence of the EU unilateral response to the Ukrainian crisis.

4.3.3.3 The European Union (EU)

The declaration of war within Europe's sphere of influence constituted a shifting paradigm in European security. Although expectations remained highly subjected to the implausibility of an official invasion, the European response to Russia's interference requires further observation. At first, it was repetitively stressed that "the use of force and coercion to change borders has no place in the 21rst century" while

---

[51] Al Arabiya News. (April 29, 2022). *Full Interview with Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov*. Al Arabiya English. (54:34-54:55). Link

stating that "[t]ensions and conflict should be resolved exclusively through dialogue and diplomacy" (General Secretariat of the Council, 2022, p. 2). Eventually, new challenges were introduced to the predominant neoliberal narrative. The state-to-state aggression violated the core principles of international law, ultimately questioning the foundations of the liberal ideals-based structure.

The EU long-standing efforts to develop a comprehensive diplomatic mechanism were dramatically undermined due to the failure of multilateral negotiations. On the basis of the first special meeting conclusions of the European Council on the war, the political willingness to enforce accountability was restated (General Secretariat of the Council, 2022). Consequently, the deployment of further restrictive measures involved multiple sectors including "the financial sector, the energy and transport sectors, dual-use goods as well as export control and export financing".[52] In addition, the target of sanctions equally comprised Russian individuals and the state of Belarus.

The European Council's conclusions constitute an important instrument of analysis for the evolvement of interactions. From a more realist-based outlook, it is possible to comprehend the gradual assessment of the European security and defense, which demonstrates a major shift in the Union's neutral standing (General Secretariat of the Council, 2022). The Ukrainian crisis immediately brought about alternative ways to crisis management. In that respect, it is pertinent to acknowledge the extraordinary evolution of European instruments in a limited period of time. In fact, one example is the repurposing of the European Peace Facility (EPF) established in March 2021, which alongside the Strategic Compass for the EU, institutionalize the course of action for the strengthening of EU's security and defense policy (European Commission, 2023). On that account, Europe's military building raises new debates about the time for Europeans to build-up their own defense.

The complex character of the security environment directly potentializes the dilemma among major powers. The purchase of military equipment via the EPF certainly constitutes a major step towards the articulation of a more comprehensive approach. In that respect, the causal relationship between the collective allocation of funds and

---

[52] Ibid., p. 1.

the unprecedented repercussions of the war on European economies accentuate the domestic *versus* global continuum, which recalls that popular opinion remains crucial for sustaining the war effort. Moreover, Ukraine's application for EU membership status in February 2022 and its posterior acceptance as candidate in June 2022, was translated into a paramount geopolitical gesture (European Commission, 2022). Notwithstanding, there exists significant reluctance to accept the state of Ukraine as part of the organization, even though it has been implementing the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement since its establishment (Zygierewicz, 2020).

Furthermore, the long-term assistance devoted to Ukraine ranges from macroeconomic policies, which include economic, social, and financial resilience, to *ad hoc* initiatives, which compromise humanitarian aid programmes and reconstruction plans (European Commission, 2023). In that respect, it is pertinent to stress the cruciality of maintaining the balance between the different forms of assistance and the deterioration of European strategic sectors, which are primarily conditioned by significant dependence on external actors. Indeed, the sore of energy prices constitutes the predominant illustration of the sequential effects.

5. CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the previous analysis, it is possible to conclude that the war in Ukraine represents a serious challenge to international security. The impact of the armed conflict embodies an exponential degree of complexity, especially due to the dual adoption of zero-sum policies. In accordance with the question stated at the beginning of the research, the defeat of Russia is crucial for Ukraine and the international liberal order due to the need for guaranteeing the international community's commitment to the general principles institutionalized in 1945, which yet advocate for a rules-based order.

Among the set of challenges, it is pertinent to accentuate the remilitarization of democracies and its collateral effect on non-European states. The existential threat to liberal values and norms questions the capacity of Western countries to adopt alternative policies. In fact, the conflictual potential that characterized the Russo-

Ukrainian relations could be extrapolated to other state actors, most notably those situated in the Asian continent. On that account, the three preliminary objectives advocated at the beginning of this paper are assessed.

Firstly, it is possible to verify that the Ukrainian crisis is the result of latent historical grievances subjected to a long-standing ethno-nationalistic confrontation. Secondly, even though John J. Mearsheimer's argument does not take into consideration implicit connotations, it is possible to agree to some extent on the consequential effect of NATO and EU expansion on Russia's state behavior and thus, the articulation of a more aggressive foreign policy. Thirdly, the internationalization of the conflict and the comprehensive Western approach towards Ukraine questions the inability of political institutions to react in the case of the Global South due to a lacking political will.

Ultimately, it is pertinent to stress the complexity of the object of study due to the recentness of the war in Ukraine and the lasting nature of the conflict. In addition, the thorough selection of qualitative resources stresses the need for acknowledging implicit assumptions, especially since the promotion of a Western lens in the analysis of Russia's invasion of Ukraine immediately undermines the understanding of alienated points of view. Hence, the importance of requestioning the applicability of international relations theories.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abdelal, R. (2001). Ukraine: Between East and West. In R. Abdelal, & P. J. Katzenstein (Ed.), *National Purpose in the World Economy: Post-Soviet States in Comparative Perspective* (pp. 103-126). Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Afineevsky, E., Tolmor, D. (Producers), Tolmor, D. (Writer), & Afineevsky, E. (Director). (2015). *Winter on Fire: Ukraine's Fight for Freedom* [Motion Picture]. Ukraine: Netflix.

Alexander, R. (2022). A Message from the Editor: War of Position: Russia and Ukraine in Global South Studies. *Journal of Global South Studies, 39*(2), pp. 9-14. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1353/gss.2022.0024

Amiel, S. (2021, December 6). *Russia's military build-up near Ukraine is different this time, say experts.* Retrieved May 10, 2023, from Euronews: https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2021/11/24/russia-s-military-build-up-near-ukraine-is-different-this-time-say-experts

Antony, S. (2022). Escalation of Ukraine Crisis and Russia-West Geopolitical Rivalry: Implications for Regional Stability, Security and Peace. *ICFAI Journal of International Relations, 16*(1), pp. 7-25.

António Guterres. (2022, August 1). *'Humanity is one miscalculation away from nuclear annihilation'- UN Chief | Nuclear Non-Proliferation.* Retrieved May 13, 2023, from United Nations: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0My9xhgxVE

Arel, D., & Driscoll, J. (2023). Before Maidan. In D. Arel, & J. Driscoll, *Ukraine's Unnamed War: Before the Russian Invasion of 2022* (pp. 46-66). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from DOI: 10.1017/9781009052924

Associated Press. (2021, December 25). *Gorbachev's resignation 30 years ago marked the end of USSR.* Retrieved April 20, 2023, from Politico: https://www.politico.com/news/2021/12/25/gorbachev-resign-soviet-union-russia-526141

Börzel, T. A., & Zürn, M. (2021). Contestations of the Liberal International Order: From Liberal Multilateralism to Postnational Liberalism. *International Organization, 75*, pp. 282-305. Retrieved from doi:10.1017/S0020818320000570

Balzer, H. (2015, Winter-Spring). The Ukraine Invasion and Public Opinion. *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, 16*(1), pp. 79-93. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/43773670

Beissinger, M. R. (2010). Russian Mobilization and the Accumulating "Inevitability" of Soviet Collapse. In M. R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (pp. 385-442). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511613593.008 P

Bellinger, J. B. (2014, March 16). Why the Crimean Referendum Is Illegitimate. (J. Masters, Interviewer) Retrieved from https://www.cfr.org/interview/why-crimean-referendum-illegitimate

Bezo, B., & Maggi, S. (2015). Living in "survival mode:" Intergenerational transmission of trauma from the Holodomor genocide of 1932-1933 in Ukraine. *Social Sciences & Medicine, 134*, pp. 87-94. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2015.04.009

Bianchini, S., & Minakov, M. (2018). State-Building Politics after the Yugoslav and Soviet Collapse - The Western Balkans and Ukraine in a Comparative Perspective. *Southeastern Europe, 42*(3), pp. 291-304.

Bradford, A. (2020). The Brussels Effect. In A. Bradford, *The Brussels Effect: How the European Union Rules the World* (pp. 25–66). Oxford: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190088583.003.0003

Brands, H. (2016). Toward the Neoliberal Order. In H. Brands, *Making the Unipolar Moment: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Rise of the Post-Cold War Order* (pp. 172-223). Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt20d89k9.8

Breslauer, G. W. (2002). Yeltsin Ascendant. In G. W. Breslauer, *Gorbachev and Yeltsin as Leaders* (pp. 141-173). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Budjeryn, M. (2015). The Power of the NPT: International Norms and Ukraine's Nuclear Disarmament. *The Nonproliferation Review, 22*(2), pp. 203-237. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/10736700.2015.1119968

Bukkvoll, T. (2016). Russian Special Operations Forces in Crimea and Donbas. *Parameters, 46*(2), pp. 13-21. Retrieved from DOI: 10.55540/0031-1723.2917

Carbonnel, A. d., & Prentice, A. (2014, February 28). *Armed men seize two airports in Ukraine's Crimea, Yanukovich reappears*. Retrieved April 30, 2023, from Reuters: https://www.reuters.com/article/ukraine-crisis-idINDEEA1Q0JL20140228

Clark, M., Barros, G., & Stepanenko, K. (2022, February 28). Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment. *Institute for the Study of War & The Critical Threats Project*, pp. 1-10.

Clark, M., Barros, G., & Stepanenko, K. (2022, February 24). Russia-Ukraine Warning Update: Initial Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment. *Institute for the Study of War & The Critical Threats Project*, pp. 1-4.

Connor, W. D. (2003). Soviet Society, Public Attitudes, and the Perils of Gorbachev's Reforms: The Social Context of the End of the USSR. *Journal of Cold War Studies, 5*(4), pp. 43-80. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1162/152039703322483756

Cook, L., & Kullab, S. (2023, April 21). *NATO chief: Ukraine's 'rightful place' is in the alliance*. Retrieved May 13, 2023, from Associated Press: https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-war-stoltenberg-dd2432f52abc743a5f3592cec210a69e

Cooper, N., & Jones, K. (2009). Introduction: Memories of Conflict in Eastern Europe. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies, 17*(1), pp. 3-7. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/14782800902844636

Crisis Group. (2023). *Conflict in Ukraine's Donbas: A Visual Explainer*. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from International Crisis Group: https://www.crisisgroup.org/content/conflict-ukraines-donbas-visual-explainer

Davis, J. (2022, December 21). *The Birth of the Soviet Union and the Death of the Russian Revolution*. Retrieved April 21, 2023, from Jstor Daily: https://daily.jstor.org/the-birth-of-the-soviet-union-and-the-death-of-the-russian-revolution/

Dettmer, J. (2023, February 24). *Ukraine: The day the war broke out*. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from Politico.eu: https://www.politico.eu/article/ukraine-the-day-the-war-broke-out/

Dewdney, J. C., McCauley, M., & Pipes, R. E. (2023, May 10). *Soviet Union: The Civil War and the creation of the U.S.S.R.* Retrieved April 28, 2023, from Encyclopaedia Britannica: https://www.britannica.com/place/Soviet-Union/Brest-Litovsk

Diuk, N. (2014, March-April). Euromaidan: Ukraine's Self-Organizing Revolution. *World Affairs, 176*(6), pp. 9-16. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/43555086

Edinger, H. (2022). Offensive ideas: structural realism, classical realism and Putin's war on Ukraine. *International Affairs, 98*(6), pp. 1873–1893. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiac217

Edward, M. (1995). *The perils of anarchy : contemporary realism and international security.* (M. E. Brown, S. M. Lynn-Jones, & S. E. Miller, Eds.) Cambridge : The MIT Press.

Eichensehr, K. E. (Ed.). (2022). Russia Invades Ukrain. *The American Journal of International Law, 116*(3), pp. 593-604. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1017/ajil.2022.26

European Commission. (2022, June 17). *Commission Opinion on Ukraine's application for membership of the European Union*. Retrieved May 11, 2023, from European Commission: https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-06/Ukraine%20Opinion%20and%20Annex.pdf

European Commission. (2023, May 8). *EU assistance to Ukraine*. Retrieved May 12, 2023, from European Commission: https://eu-solidarity-ukraine.ec.europa.eu/eu-assistance-ukraine_en

European Commission. (2023, March 16). *Launch of the EU-NATO Task Force: Strengthening our resilience and protection of critical infrastructure*. Retrieved May 13, 2023, from European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/es/statement_23_1705

European Commission. (2023, May 10). *The European Peace Facility*. Retrieved May 12, 2023, from European Commission: https://fpi.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-05/EU-peace-facility.pdf

European Commission for Democracy Through Law. (1991, December 21). *Agreements establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States.* Retrieved April 17, 2023, from Council of Europe: https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL(1994)054-e

European Union. (2022, July 27). *Association Agreement with Ukraine.* Retrieved May 10, 2023, from Official Journal of the European Union: https://eur-

lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/association-agreement-with-ukraine.html

Ferdinando, L. (2022, October 13). *NATO Unified, Resolute in Face of Russia's 'Illegal' Ukraine Invasion, Austin Says*. Retrieved May 14, 2023, from U.S. Department of Defense: https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3188194/nato-unified-resolute-in-face-of-russias-illegal-ukraine-invasion-austin-says/#:~:text=Allies%20have%20placed%20tens%20of,into%20Russia%27s%20war%20of%20choice.

Fink, A. L., & Oliker, O. (2020). Russia's Nuclear Weapons in a Multipolar World: Guarantors of Sovereignty, Great Power Status & More. *Daedalus, 149*(2), pp. 37-55. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1162/daed_a_01788

Fukuyama, F. (1989, Summer). The End of History? *The National Interest, 16*, pp. 3-18. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/24027184

General Assembly. (2014, April 1). *Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 27 March 2014.* Retrieved May 6, 2023, from Security Council Report: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/a_res_68_262.pdf

General Assembly. (2014, March 27). *Territorial integrity of Ukraine : resolution*. Retrieved May 6, 2023, from United Nations Digital Library: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/767565?ln=en

General Assembly. (2022, March 2). *General Assembly Overwhelmingly Adopts Resolution Demanding Russian Federation Immediately End Illegal Use of Force in Ukraine, Withdraw All Troops*. Retrieved May 12, 2023, from United Nations: https://press.un.org/en/2022/ga12407.doc.htm

General Secretariat of the Council. (2022, March 24-25). *European Council meeting (24 and 25 March 2022) - Conclusions.* Retrieved May 11, 2023, from European Council: https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-1-2022-INIT/en/pdf

General Secretariat of the Council. (2022, February 24). *Special meeting of the European Council (24 February 2022) - Conclusions.* Retrieved May 11, 2023,

from European Council: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/54495/st00018-en22.pdf

Gerstenberger, K., & Braziel, J. E. (Eds.). (2011). *After the Berlin Wall: Germany and beyond* (1rst ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Retrieved from DOI 10.1057/9780230337756

Glaser, C. L. (1997, October). The Security Dilemma Revisited. *World Politics, 50*(1), pp. 171-201. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/25054031

Glebov, S. (2009, September-October). Concerning "Strange" Relations: Extensive Perceptions of Security Spaces Within the Ukraine-Russia-NATO Triangle. *Russian Politics and Law, 47*(5), pp. 52-65. Retrieved from DOI 10.2753/RUP1061-1940470504

Graham-Harrison, E., Harding, L., Roth, A., & Borger, J. (2022, February 24). *Ukraine president vows to defend country as Russia says separatists 'ask for military help'*. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/23/ukraine-urges-its-citizens-to-leave-russia-immediately

Grant, T. D. (2015). Annexation of Crimea. *The American Journal of International Law, 109*(1), pp. 68-95. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.5305/amerjintelaw.109.1.0068

Grennes, T. (2022, Summer). The New World and the Ukraine–Russia Breadbasket . *Regulation, 45*(2), pp. 42-44.

Gretskiy, I. (2013). Ukraine's Foreign Policy under Yushchenko. *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs, 22*(4), pp. 7-28.

Gumenyuk, N. (2022, February 24). *I'm in Kyiv and awake at the darkest hour – as Putin's bombs rain down*. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/feb/24/kyiv-putin-bombs-invasion-airstrikes-ukraine-russia

Hagen, M. v. (2016). Wartime Occupation and Peacetime Alien Rule: "Notes and Materials" toward a(n) (Anti-) (Post-) Colonial History of Ukraine. *Harvard Ukrainian Studies, 34*(1/4), pp. 153-194. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/44364491

Ham, P. v. (1996, February). *Ukraine, Russia and European security: Implications for Western Policy.* Retrieved April 28, 2023, from Institute for Security Studies of WEU: https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/cp013e.pdf

Hanappi, H. (2022). Russia: The Background of the Invasion of Ukraine. *Theoretical and Practical Research in Economic Fields, 13*(2), pp. 116-129. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.14505/tpref.v13.2(26).02

Hanousek, J., & Bělín, M. (2019, April 29). *Making sanctions bite: The EU–Russian sanctions of 2014.* Retrieved May 6, 2023, from Centre for Economic Policy Research: https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/making-sanctions-bite-eu-russian-sanctions-2014

IAEA. (n.d.). *The 1986 Chornobyl nuclear power plant accident.* Retrieved April 21, 2023, from IAEA International Atomic Energy Agency: https://www.iaea.org/topics/chornobyl

International Energy Agency. (2021, September). *Ukraine Energy Profile.* Retrieved April 29, 2023, from IEA: https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/ac51678f-5069-4495-9551-87040cb0c99d/UkraineEnergyProfile.pdf

Johannesson, J. (2017). Russia-Ukraine balance of military power. *Journal of International Studies, 10*(1), pp. 63-73. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.14254/2071-8330.2017/10-1/4

Jones, S. G. (2022, June 1). Russia's Ill-Fated Invasion of Ukraine: Lessons in Modern Warfare. *Center for Strategic & International Studies*, pp. 1-14.

Kagan, F. W., & Clark, M. (2022, February 21). Russia-Ukraine Warning Update: Russian Military Operations in Southeastern Ukraine Imminent. (G. Barros, & K. Stepanenko, Eds.) *Institute for the Study of War & The Critical Threats Project*, pp. 1-4.

Karatnycky, A. (2005, March-April). Ukraine's Orange Revolution. *Foreign Affairs, 84*(2), pp. 35-52. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/20034274

Kenk, J. (n.d.). *30 de diciembre de 1922: el Congreso de los Sóviets aprueba la creación de la Unión Soviética en Moscú.* Retrieved April 30, 2023, from El Orden Mundial: https://elordenmundial.com/hoy-en-la-historia/30-diciembre/30-

de-diciembre-de-1922-el-congreso-de-los-soviets-aprueba-la-creacion-de-la-union-sovietica-en-moscu/

Kleinschmidt, J. (2019). Offensive realism, differentiation theory, and the war in Ukraine. *International Politics, 56*(4), pp. 427-443. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1057/s41311-018-0150-4

Knott, E. (2022). Existential nationalism: Russia's war against Ukraine. *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 1-8. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12878

Kramer, M. (2022). The Dissolution of the Soviet Union: A Case Study of Discontinuous Change. *Journal of Cold War Studies, 24*(1), pp. 188-218. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1162/jcws_a_01059

Krickovic, A. (2015). When Interdependence Produces Conflict: EU–Russia Energy Relations as a Security Dilemma. *Contemporary Security Policy, 36*(1), pp. 3-26. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2015.1012350

Kulyk, V. (2016, June). National Identity in Ukraine: Impact of Euromaidan and the War. *Europe-Asia Studies, 68*(4), pp. 588-608. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2016.1174980

Kuzio, T. (2010). Nationalism, identity and civil society in Ukraine: Understanding the Orange Revolution. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies, 43*, pp. 285-296. Retrieved from doi: 10.1016/j.postcomstud.2010.07.001

Kuzio, T. (2011). Political Culture and Democracy: Ukraine as an Immobile State. *East European Politics and Societies, 25*(1), pp. 88-113. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325410388410

Lafitsky, V. (2020). "Crimea Acts" of 1954: International Legal Principles. *Russian Law Journal , 8*(4), pp. 4-29. Retrieved from https://doi.org/1 0.17589/2309-8678-2020-8-4-4-29

Lebow, R. N. (2003). *The Tragic Vision of Politics: Ethics, Interests and Orders.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511491504

Little, R. (2007). Kenneth N. Waltz's Theory of International Politics. In R. Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths and Models* (pp.

167-212). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from doi:10.1017/CBO9780511816635.006

Luzin, P. (2022, September 21). *Russia's Military Manpower Crunch Will Worsen*. Retrieved May 11, 2023, from Center for European Policy Analysis: https://cepa.org/article/russias-military-manpower-crunch-will-worsen/

Macias, A. (2021, December 8). *Biden didn't accept Putin's 'red lines' on Ukraine – here's what that means*. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from CNBC: https://www.cnbc.com/2021/12/08/biden-didnt-accept-putins-red-line-on-ukraine-what-it-means.html

Malek, M. (2009). The "Western Vector" of the Foreign and Security Policy of Ukraine. *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies, 22*(4), pp. 515-542. Retrieved from DOI: 10.1080/13518040903355760

Mankoff, J. (2014, May-June). Russia's Latest Land Grab: How Putin Won Crimea and Lost Ukraine. *Foreign Affairs, 93*(3), pp. 60-68. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/24483406

Marples, D. R. (2011, September). Revisiting the Collapse of the USSR. *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne des Slavistes, 53*(2/4), pp. 461-473. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/41708351

Marshev, V. (2006). Formation of management thought in Russia and early USSR from the 1800s to the 1920s: Heroes and their creations. *Journal of Management History, 25*(3), pp. 285-303. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1108/JMH-12-2018-0068

Matsuzato, K. (2017, Spring). The Donbass War: Outbreak and Deadlock. *Demokratizatsiya, 25*(2), pp. 175-201.

May, E. R., Rosecrance, R., & Steiner, Z. (2010). *History and Neorealism.* (E. R. May, R. Rosecrance, & Z. Steiner, Eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://doi-org.gate3.library.lse.ac.uk/10.1017/CBO9780511778551

McKee, M. (2009). The poisoning of Victor Yushchenko. *The Lancet, 374*(9696), pp. 1131-1132. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(09)61027-8

Mearsheimer, J. J. (2001). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics.* New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Mearsheimer, J. J. (2014, September/October). Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin. *Foreign Affairs, 93*(5), pp. 77-84, 85-89. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/24483306

Mearsheimer, J. J. (2019, Spring). Bound to Fail: The Rise and Fall of the Liberal International Order. *International Security, 43*(4), pp. 7-50. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00342

Meibauer, G. (2020). Interests, ideas, and the study of state behaviour in neoclassical realism. *Review of International Studies, 46*(1), pp. 20-36. Retrieved from doi:10.1017/S0260210519000214

Monteiro, N. P. (2014). Conflict in the Post–Cold War Era. In N. P. Monteiro, C. Reus-Smit, & N. J. Wheeler (Eds.), *Theory of Unipolar Politics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from doi: 10.1017/CBO9781107449350

Moravcsik, A. (1997, Autumn). Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics. *International Organization, 51*(4), pp. 513-553. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/2703498

Morgenthau, H. J. (1978). *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (5th ed.). (H. J. Morgenthau, Ed.) New York: Knopf.

Murithi, T. (2022). The Failure of the United Nations Security Council in Creating the Framework Conditions for Mediation in the Russia-Ukraine Crisis. *Strategic Review for Southern Africa, 44*(1), pp. 65-92. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.35293/srsa.v44i1.4082

Mykhnenko, V., & Swain, A. (2010). Ukraine's diverging space-economy:The Orange Revolution, post-soviet development models and regional trajectories. *European Urban and Regional Studies, 17*(2), pp. 141-165. Retrieved from DOI: 10.1177/0969776409357363

NATO. (2022, December 14). *NATO agrees 2023 budgets, reflecting higher ambitions for the new security reality.* Retrieved May 13, 2023, from North Atlantic Treaty Organization: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_210091.htm

NATO. (2023, April 14). *Collective defence and Article 5*. Retrieved May 13, 2023, from North Atlantic Treaty Organisation: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_110496.htm#:~:text=Article%205%20provides%20that%20if,to%20assist%20the%20Ally%20attacked.

NATO. (2023, April 14). *Funding NATO*. Retrieved May 13, 2023, from North Atlantic Treaty Organization: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_67655.htm

NATO. (2023, March 16). *NATO and European Union launch task force on resilience of critical infrastructure*. Retrieved May 13, 2023, from North Atlantic Treaty Organization: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_212874.htm

NATO. (2023, April 4). *Relations with the European Union*. Retrieved May 14, 2023, from North Atlantic Treaty Organization: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49217.htm

Niou, E. M., Ordeshook, P. C., & Rose, G. F. (1989). System stability and the balance of power. In E. M. Niou, P. C. Ordeshook, & G. F. Rose, *The balance of power : stability in international systems* (pp. 75-114). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nitsova, S. (2021). Why the Difference? Donbas, Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk After Ukraine's Euromaidan Revolution. *Europe-Asia Studies, 70*(10), pp. 1832-1856. Retrieved from DOI: 10.1080/09668136.2021.1912297

O'Loughlin, J., & Toal, G. (2019). The Crimea conundrum: legitimacy and public opinion after annexation. *Eurasian Geography and Economics, 60*(1), pp. 6-27. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/15387216.2019.1593873

Olsen, J. A. (2020). Understanding NATO. *RUSI Journal, 165*(3), pp. 60-72. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/03071847.2020.1777772

Onuch, O., & Sasse, G. (2016). The Maidan in Movement: Diversity and the Cycles of Protest. *Europe-Asia Studies, 68*(4), pp. 556-587. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2016.1159665

Osborn, A., & Ostroukh, A. (2021, December 12). *Putin rues Soviet collapse as demise of 'historical Russia'*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from Reuters: https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-rues-soviet-collapse-demise-historical-russia-2021-12-12/

OSCE. (2014, March 11). *OSCE Chair says Crimean referendum in its current form is illegal and calls for alternative ways to address the Crimean issue*. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from OSCE: https://www.osce.org/cio/116313

OSCE. (28 de April de 2022). *OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Secretary General announce upcoming closure of Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine*. Recuperado el 9 de May de 2023, de OSCE: https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/516933

Ozsaglam, M. T. (2019). Complicated Multipolar International Relations System: Russia and China As New Power Centers. *Business and Economics Research Journal, 10*, pp. 749-760. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.20409/berj.2019.198

Parízek, M. (2023, February 27). Worldwide Media Visibility of NATO, the European Union, and the United Nations in Connection to the Russia-Ukraine War. *Mezinárodní Vztahy*, pp. 15-44. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.32422/mv-cjir.60

Pattison, J. (2022). Ukraine, Intervention, and the Post- Liberal Order. *Ethics & International Affairs, 36*(3), pp. 377-390. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1017/S0892679422000399

Perrigo, B. (2022, February 22). *How Putin's Denial of Ukraine's Statehood Rewrites History*. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from Time: https://time.com/6150046/ukraine-statehood-russia-history-putin/

Pinkham, S. (2016). Returning to Maidan. *Dissent, 63*(4), pp. 99-108. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1353/dss.2016.0080

Piper, E. (2013, December 19). *Special Report: Why Ukraine spurned the EU and embraced Russia*. Retrieved April 30, 2023, from Reuters: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-russia-deal-special-report-idUSBRE9BI0DZ20131219

Posen, B. R. (2021). In Reply: To Repeat, Europe Can Defend Itself. *Global Politics and Strategy, 63*(1), pp. 41-49. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2021.1881252

Potichnyj, P. J. (1991, June). The Referendum and Presidential Elections in Ukraine. *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne des Slavistes, 33*(2), pp. 123-138. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/40869291

Quinn, C. (2021, December 10). *Why Biden's Russia Talk Makes NATO Allies Nervous.* Retrieved May 10, 2023, from Foreign Policy: https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/12/10/biden-ukraine-nato-russia/

Reuters Staff. (2014, April 17). *Putin admits Russian forces were deployed to Crimea.* Retrieved April 30, 2023, from Reuters: https://www.reuters.com/article/russia-putin-crimea-idUSL6N0N921H20140417

Reuters Staff. (2014, March 4). *Russia's Putin denies Russian troops took Crimea.* Retrieved April 30, 2023, from Reuters: https://www.reuters.com/article/ukraine-crisis-russia-crimea-idUSL6N0M122M20140304

Reznik, O. (2016). From the Orange Revolution to the Revolution of Dignity: Dynamics of the Protest Actions in Ukraine. *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures, 30*(4), pp. 750-765. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325416650255

Riley, A. (2019). Lenin and His Revolution: The First Totalitarian. *Society, 56*(5), pp. 503-511. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-019-00405-1

Rotaru, V. (2020). Silencing the contestant. Legitimizing Crimea's annexation by mimicking the West. *European Security, 29*(1), pp. 96-118. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2019.1688303

Rupérez, I. (1994, April-May). Ucrania, un país en busca de Estado. *Política Exterior, 8*(38), pp. 133-144. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/20643454

Sakwa, R. (2023, March 1). East vs. West: A New Cold War? *Transatlantic Policy Quarterly, 21*(4), pp. 11-20. Retrieved from DOI: 10.58867/NMWR9892

Savelyev, Y. (2019). Mikhail Minakov, Development and Dystopia: Studies in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Eastern Europe. *International Sociology, 34*(2), pp. 237-240. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580919831638a

Security Council. (2022, February 27). *Resolution 2623 (2022).* Retrieved May 12, 2023, from United Nations Security Council:

https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-
8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2623.pdf

Security Council. (2022, February 25). *Security Council Fails to Adopt Draft Resolution on Ending Ukraine Crisis, as Russian Federation Wields Veto*. Retrieved May 12, 2023, from United Nations: https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14808.doc.htm

Sengupta, S. (2014, March 27). *Vote by U.N. General Assembly Isolates Russia*. Retrieved May 6, 2023, from New York Times: https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/28/world/europe/General-Assembly-Vote-on-Crimea.html

Shiping, T. (2010). Reassurance: A Defensive Realism Theory of Cooperation-Building. In T. Shiping, *A Theory of Security Strategy for Our Time* (1rst ed., pp. 129-162). New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Retrieved from https://doi-org.gate3.library.lse.ac.uk/10.1057/9780230106048_6

SIPRI. (2023, April 24). *World military expenditure reaches new record high as European spending surges*. Retrieved May 13, 2023, from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute: https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2023/world-military-expenditure-reaches-new-record-high-european-spending-surges

Starr, B., & Herb, J. (2022, February 25). *NATO Response Force activated for first time*. Retrieved May 13, 2023, from CNN Politics: https://edition.cnn.com/2022/02/25/politics/nato-ukraine-russia/index.html

Steele, J. (2007, April 23). *Boris Yeltsin*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from The Guardian: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/apr/23/russia.guardianobituaries

Sullivan, T. (2014, March 1). *Russian troops take over Ukraine's Crimea region*. Retrieved April 30, 2023, from Associated Press: https://apnews.com/article/94305e58d1574ec0bde5aa8d42538f1e

Szporluk, R. (2001, Spring). The Making of Modern Ukraine: The Western Dimension. *Harvard Ukrainian Studies, 25*(1/2), pp. 57-90. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/41036825

Taliaferro, J. W. (2000-2001, Winter). Security Seeking under Anarchy: Defensive Realism Revisited. *International Security, 25*(3), pp. 128-161. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/2626708

Tardy, T. (2022). *The Nations of NATO: Shaping the Alliance's Relevance and Cohesion.* (T. Tardy, Ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780192855534.003.0001

Ther, P. (2016). Where the East Meets the West: Crisis and Reform Debates in the 1980s. In P. Ther, *Europe since 1989 : a history* (C. Hughes-Kreutzmuller, Trans., pp. 33-48). Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1wf4db8.5

Thomson, V. (2019). Europeans but outside of the EU - the EU Soft Power of Attractiveness in Ukraine Between the Orange Revolution and Euromaidan. *Canadian Journal of European and Russian Studies, 13*(2), pp. 64-86.

Treisman, D. (2016, May-June). Why Putin Took Crimea: The Gambler in the Kremlin. *Foreign Affairs, 95*(3), pp. 47-54. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/43946857

Tsygankov, A. (2015). Vladimir Putin's last stand: the sources of Russia's Ukraine policy. *Post-Soviet Affairs, 31*(4), pp. 279-303. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1060586X.2015.1005903

United Nations. (3 de March de 2023). *The UN and Ukraine: year-long war spreads global fallout.* Recuperado el 13 de May de 2023, de UN News: https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/03/1134122

Virág, A., & Tancsa, G. (2023). Turbulent energy transformations in Central Europe: Nord Stream projects in the context of geopolitics. *Politics in Central Europe, 19*(1), pp. 113-144. Retrieved from DOI: 10.2478/pce-2023-0006

Volpe, T. A. (2019). Dual-use distinguishability: How 3D-printing shapes the security dilemma for nuclear programs. *Journal of Strategic Studies, 42*(6), pp. 814-840. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2019.1627210

Waltz, K. N. (1990, Spring/Summer). Realist Thought and Neorealist Theory. *Journal of International Affairs, 44*(1), pp. 21-37. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/24357222

Wilson, G. (2016, September 27). Secession and Intervention in the Former Soviet Space: The Crimean Incident and Russian Interference in Its 'Near Abroad'. *Liverpool Law Review, 37*(3), pp. 153-175. Retrieved from DOI 10.1007/s10991-016-9187-x

Wittke, C. (2020, March). Post-Soviet Conflict Potentials. *Europe-Asia Studies, 72*(2), pp. 151-154. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2020.1732119

Wohlforth, W. C. (2016). Realism and foreign policy. In S. Smith, A. Hadfield, & T. Dunne (Eds.), *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* (Third ed., Vol. 3, pp. 35-53). Oxford: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from https://librarysearch.lse.ac.uk/permalink/44LSE_INST/3p3b2r/alma991491570 09002021

Yanchenko, K. (2023). Making Sense of Populist Hyperreality in the Post- Truth Age: Evidence from Volodymyr Zelensky's Voters. *Mass Communication and Society, 26*(3), pp. 509-531. Retrieved from DOI: 10.1080/15205436.2022.2105234

Zubok, V. M. (2021). Release. In V. M. Zubok, *Collapse: The Fall of the Soviet Union* (pp. 43-69). New Heaven and London: Yale University Press. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1zvccnm.9

Zygierewicz, A. (Ed.). (2020, July). *Association agreement between the EU and Ukraine: European Implementation Assessment (update).* Retrieved May 12, 2023, from European Parliamentary Research Service: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/642844/EPRS_S TU(2020)642844_EN.pdf