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European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

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10.12.2022

## *A Russian establishment view on the Ukraine war*



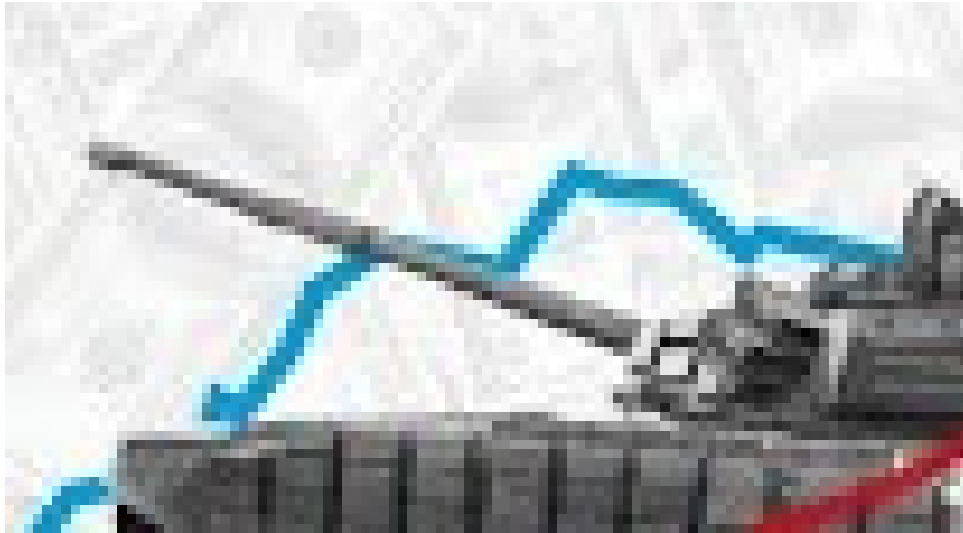
To understand the war in Ukraine it is essential to know the points of view of all warring parties. We understand that of Ukrainian nationalism defending its country against the imperial aggression of its neighbor and at the same time imposing its identity on the less nationalist regions accused of "collaborationism" with the invader. We also understand the interests and role of the United States in this "proxy war" in which it seeks to defeat in an exemplary way the Russian military challenge initiated in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea. Important strategists and Washington officials have explained it to us very clearly and admit that it is a "warm-up to what is to come" against China (Charles Richard, head of Stratcom and one of the top military leaders of the United States). But we understand Russia's motives much less.



This article by Sergei Karaganov, honorary chairman of the Russian Council for Foreign and Defense Policy, presents a Russian *establishment* view on the conflict, banned from our media by censorship and the unilateral focus on Atlanticist theses.

Karaganov was a typical "Westernist" during the Yeltsin era in which the great embezzlement of privatization that established the plunder of the national patrimony took place. At that time the Russian Westernist elite of the nouveau riche and the liberal intelligentsia celebrated their rise to "civilization" and dreamed of homologation with their Western partners. The "ideological" obstacles of the cold war were no longer there and it was assumed that Russia would automatically be given a place in the new arena of global capitalism.

Today Karaganov expresses the frustrations and evolution of the Russian *establishment* at not having been accepted on an equal footing by his Western capitalist counterparts. The irritation grew over the years as the geopolitical roller of the United States in Europe, via NATO, advanced, which complicated and poisoned any attempt to integrate a European Union into geopolitical inopia with its main Russian energy partner and its first Chinese trading partner, until it gave rise to the shift in the priorities of the Russian elite that we are aisting today.



What did it mean to be accepted "on an equal footing"? Fundamentally, the West recognized the sovereignty and primacy of the Russian elite in the plunder of the national patrimony and the rich resources in its own country, including in that recognition that of Russian interests in its geographical environment, a kind of "Monroe Doctrine" of the post-Soviet space even if it was in conditions of condominium with the West, Turkey and China, as is the case in Central Asia and Transcaucasia.

In Moscow it took years to understand the seriousness of the Western globalist project that contemplated a subaltern Russia with a buying national elite subordinated to the large Western transnationals and which is not intended to recognize "sovereignty" or private reserves derived from the traditional state control of business and embezzlement in the largest country in the world. Westerners wanted free unfettered access for their multinationals to Eurasia's resources, and, of course, did not recognize political, economic, or military "zones of influence" beyond their own hegemonic dominance. Moscow's initial collaboration was seen as weakness and Putin's repeated complaints ignored for years. All this is contained, in my view, by Karaganov's reproach to the West for not having been able to "agree with Russia and China on the terms of the new world."

Karaganov expresses the change of mood and mentality of the Russian elite in the heat of the harsh realities and lessons learned, which now lead to the disaster of war. He subscribes to an anti-Western discourse denouncing "globalist imperialism" in the world, and defends the need for a purge of "Westernist and comprador elements" in Russia itself, which seems to herald fundamental changes in that country. Rafael Poch-de-Feliu



## *WE ARE WITNESSING THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW WORLD*

[Sergey Karaganov](#)

The crisis did not begin in 2022, but in the mid-90s, just like World War II, which really began with the Peace of Versailles, which was unjust and laid 100% the foundations of it. 25-27 years ago, the West refused to make a just peace with Russia. And, as it seemed to many at the time, he created a new system for his domination based on "rules." Others later referred to it as global liberal imperialism. But the system was built on sand. In it was placed a mine of the Third World War that sooner or later could explode. Veterans like me often share memories, often made up. In my case I can document that since 1996/1997 I already wrote and said that a world based on NATO expansion and Western domination leads to war.

The West's hegemony began to crumble in 1999 when, in a frenzy of impunity, it violated Yugoslavia. The collapse was further when, euphoric, he got into Afghanistan, then Iraq and lost, devaluing his then military superiority and moral leadership. At the same time, two even more important processes were taking place. Russia – convinced after Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq and the US withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty – that it was impossible to build a just and lasting peace with the West, began to re-establish its military might. And so, once again, as he had done in the 60s and 80s, he began to tear down the foundations of Western domination in world economy, politics and culture, which was based on military superiority. This dominance lasted five hundred years and began to crumble in the 1960s. In the 1990s, due to the collapse of the

USSR, it seemed to have returned, but now Russia has begun to tear down those foundations again.

At the same time, the West passed up the rise of China. At the same time he made an even more surprising mistake. In the late 2000s, the West began to restrain China and Russia at the same time, pushing them into a common military-political bloc that would not conflict with their core interests.

The manifestation of the West's powerful collapse was the crisis of 2008, which took as a backdrop the aforementioned processes and undermined confidence in its moral, economic and intellectual leadership. Since the late 2000s, the West began to unleash the Cold War. But there was still a window of opportunity to agree with Russia and China on the terms of the new world. It existed sometime between 2008 and 2013. This window has not been used. Since 2014, the West has intensified its active policy of containment of China and Russia, including a coup in Kiev to prepare shock troops and try to undermine Russia to regain hegemony.

The West, losing military, political and moral ground, including its moral core (remember Europe's rejection of Christianity as early as 2002), went on the hysterical counterattack. War became inevitable, the question was where and when.

At the same time, the global problems facing humanity – climate, energy, water and food shortages, the explosive growth of inequality within the West itself, and the erosion of the middle class – were not solved, but worsened. Its non-resolution required delaying maneuvers. That was a powerful factor in the direction of the war.

For two years, Covid was used as a substitute for war, but once its effect has faded, it became inevitable that a clash would occur here or there. Aware of this, Russia decided to attack first.

This war has several objectives: to prevent the West from creating an offensive military bridgehead on Russia's borders, which was rapidly being created, and to prepare Russia for a long-term existence in a world of conflict and rapid change, which requires a different model of society and economy: a model of mobilization.

The next goal is to purge the Russian elite of pro-Western elements and buyers. But perhaps the main content of this war or operation in terms of world history, not only Russian history, is the struggle for the final liberation of the world from five hundred years of Western yoke, which repressed countries and civilizations, imposing on them unequal conditions of interaction. First simply plundering them, through colonialism, then neocolonialism, and then through the globalist imperialism of the last thirty years.

The war in Ukraine, like many events of the last decade, is not only and not so much about the collapse of the old world, but also about the creation of a new, freer, fairer, more plural and politically and culturally polychrome world.

The overall significance of the struggle in Ukraine is the return of freedom, dignity and autonomy to non-Westerners (we propose to call them by another name: the *World Majority*, which was previously repressed and robbed and culturally humiliated). And, of course, a fair share of the world's wealth.

Russia cannot fail to win this war, although it will be difficult. Many of us had not counted on such a high willingness of the West to fight militarily, nor on such a high willingness on the part of the Ukrainians, turned into something like the German Nazis pitted against the USSR in the past, for fighting desperately.

Probably, given the general trends of the world and the global balance of power, we should have struck earlier. But I don't know the level of preparedness of our Armed Forces. But I think that in 2014 we should have acted more decisively, abandoning hopes of an agreement.

We are living in a dangerous period, on the verge of a full-blown third world war that could end the existence of humanity. But if Russia wins, which is more than likely, and the conflict does not escalate to all-out nuclear war, we should not regard the next few decades as a time of dangerous chaos (as most of the West says). We have been living in these conditions for too long.

The old system of institutions and regimes has already collapsed (freedom of trade, respect for private property), institutions such as the WTO, the World Bank or the IMF, the OSCE I fear and the EU, are reaching their last years. New institutions begin to emerge to which the future belongs. They are the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, ASEAN+, the Organization of African Unity and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). The Asian Development Bank already lends far more money than the World Bank.

Not all new institutions will survive, let us hope that some of the old ones will survive, especially in the UN system, which is in urgent need of reform, mainly for the representation of the World Majority, and not the West, in the secretariat. The main thing is not to allow the losing West to slow down history or derail it with a world war.

Not only the countries of the World Majority, but also the Western countries can live quite happily in this world, in which the latter have invested many of their scholars, writers. Cervantes, Shakespeare, Stendhal, Hemingway, the great Russians. The West will simply

lose the opportunity to plunder the rest of the world, it will have to shrink a little. Live within your means.

I fear that this new world that is taking shape is now created beyond my intellectual or physical life. But my young colleagues and surely their children will see that world. But we must fight for this beautiful world, first of all avoiding a third world war, for the West's attempt at revenge. It was in Europe that the first two world wars broke out. Russia is now fighting, among other things, so that the necessary conditions for a third are not in place. But the conflicts will occur at a time of rapid change. Thus, the struggle for peace should be one of the main themes of our intellectual community and the world in general, perhaps also the focus of the [Valdai Club](#).

*Rafael Poch de Feliu, for La Pluma*

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*Source: [Rafael Poch de Feliu](#) – Blog, December 7, 2022*

**La Pluma.net 08.12.2022**