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زبانهای اروپایی

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## *Will Ukraine Become Another Ceaseless War?*



Photo by [Nick Tsybenko](#)

I have reported on at least a dozen wars in the Middle East and North Africa in the last 30 or more years and they have several features in common. First of all, modern day wars seldom terminate and consequently people in these war-ravaged countries, who see no end to the conflict, choose to leave the country and become refugees, most of them heading for central and western Europe.

Refugees who are at first warmly accepted as victims of tyranny may outstay their welcome and become resented and even hated. This is what happened to the five million Syrians who fled to Turkey and one million to Lebanon after 2011. The wars in Somalia and Yemen are not only endless, but are escalating.

Will the Ukraine conflict become another of these ceaseless wars? It is difficult to see why it should not, since neither Moscow nor Kyiv is likely to win a decisive victory but they

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still hope to improve their political and diplomatic position on the battlefield. The Russians are using precision-guided missiles and drones to destroy the Ukrainian infrastructure and the Ukrainians are beginning to fire missiles back at ostensibly military targets. It may not be long before they decide that if they are going to sit in the dark, so too will the Russians.

A crucial question is whether or not the progressive destruction of the Ukrainian electrical-generating and transmission system is unstoppable, however many anti-aircraft missiles are sent by the Nato powers.

If the missile barrage cannot be intercepted then we can expect another great exodus of refugees from Ukraine into the rest of Europe with no reason for them to return. Some 4.4 million Ukrainians applied for temporary protection in the EU in the first nine months of the year. Poland alone received 1.3 million. Migration fatigue is visible and is likely to grow. Resentment at the influx will benefit right-wing groups as did the Syrian influx in 2015-16.

### **Beneath the Radar**

Much excitement over progress at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California in harnessing nuclear fusion so as to produce clean energy without too much radioactive waste. A few years ago, I met a Czech professor in Prague who is a fusion expert and had previously worked in the US. He explained to me that progress in nuclear fusion in the US might have been faster had not President Ronald Reagan announced in 1983 his Strategic Defence Initiative, universally known as “Star Wars”, that was designed to flummox the Soviet Union with an effective anti-missile system.

Few thought that “Stars Wars” was feasible, but the Defence Department felt that it should justify its giant budget by at least appearing to do something to give reality to Reagan’s nebulous plan. My Czech friend and other fusion scientists were told to stop thinking about nuclear fusion and start thinking instead about “Star Wars”, and missile defence, about which they knew nothing. My friend and many of his colleagues went back to Europe.

### **Cockburn’s Picks**

For a prize-winning piece of investigative reporting on the great PPE scandal read ‘The PPE Rich List: Covid Firms Unmasked’.

*Patrick Cockburn is the author of War in the Age of Trump (Verso).*

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