Igor Senčar

KOGNITIVNI VIDIKI EVROPSKIH VARNOSTNIH IN OBRAMBNIH IZZIVOV

THE COGNITIVE ASPECTS OF EUROPE'S SECURITY AND DEFENCE CHALLENGES

Povzetek

Evropski posthladnovojni red je temeljil na panevropskem konsenzu, da je demokracija edini vir legitimnosti, dokler se niso udejanjanju vizije celovite in svobodne Evrope, ki je v miru sama s seboj, uprle kremeljske oblasti. Prišlo je do spremembe paradigme – sistemsko tekmovanje namesto sodelovanja. Ruski revizionizem pomeni največjo varnostno grožnjo za Evropo. Narava grožnje ni bila pravočasno zaznana. Pri napadu na posthladnovojni red ni šlo le za klasično vojno, ki temelji na trdi moči, saj vojna poteka tudi v kognitivni sferi, kar za odprte, demokratične družbe pomeni poseben izziv. To je bil tudi normativni napad. Za učinkovit odgovor sta nujna mentalni premik in krepitev kognitivne odpornosti ter tudi solidarnosti kot eni najpomembnejših temeljev varnosti.

Ključne besede

Kognitivna odpornost, Evropska unija, informacijska vojna, normativni konflikt, revizionistična sila.

Abstract

The European post-Cold War order was based on a pan-European consensus that democracy was the only source of legitimacy – until the Kremlin opposed the realization of a Europe whole, free and at peace with itself. There has been a paradigm change from cooperation to systemic competition. Russian revisionism poses the greatest security threat to Europe. The nature of the threat was realized rather late. The assault on the post-Cold War order was not just a classic war, which relies on hard power; instead, the war also took place in the cognitive sphere, which represents a particular challenge for open, democratic societies. Furthermore, it was also a normative assault. An effective response requires a mental shift and the strengthening of cognitive resilience as well as solidarity as the key foundations of security.

Key words

Cognitive resilience, European Union, information warfare, normative conflict, revisionist power.

Introduction The Conference on the Future of Europe was launched on 9 May 2021. The Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe defines its aim as to »open a new space for debate with citizens to address Europe's challenges and priorities« (Sassoli et al., 2021, p 1). The Conference should reach its conclusions by Spring 2022, building on citizens' concerns and ambitions, as well as on lessons learned from the multiple crises the EU has experienced in the past decade, including the financial crisis which morphed into a crisis of the euro area, the crisis of the post-Cold War order in Europe, the migrant crisis, and Brexit. These conclusions should provide guidance on the course that the European Union should take to tackle common challenges effectively.

Geopolitical challenges and security also figure among the issues mentioned in the Joint Declaration. The Conference offers an opportunity for reflecting on the geopolitical and security challenges as well as on the appropriate orientations and ambitions of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

This article discusses the nature of the present geopolitical and security challenges in view of the fact that Europe's security landscape has changed to such a degree that the assessment given by the European External Action Service in its EU Global Strategy states that »peace and stability in Europe are no longer a given« (2016, p 33). At the outset, the article analyzes the basic structural elements of the European post-Cold War order, which, theoretically speaking, correspond to the Kantian tradition of thought. They also serve as an analytical framework for further discussion, which stems from realizing the limitations and weaknesses of the concept of liberal cooperative interdependence and the post-Cold War European order in the face of the present geopolitical and security challenges.

There are several diverse sources of these challenges and threats. The southern and south-eastern flanks of the EU are facing a variety of threats and challenges – be they terrorist threats, irregular migration flows, or the consequences of possible state collapses. The northern and eastern flanks face a different challenge: the European security order has been severely violated and remains under pressure from a revisionist power. In addition, the EU is faced with a rapidly rising China, which the EU categorizes simultaneously as a cooperation partner, a negotiating partner, an economic competitor, and a systemic rival (European Commission, 2019, p 1). Since the end of World War II, Europe's defence has been based on the principle that the US is Europe's pivotal power and has underwritten Europe's security and defence. Due to the effects of a rapidly rising China, which has become the main strategic challenger of the US, and assuming its security and defence commitments in Europe, the US is faced with »the American security dilemma: the rise of China's military capability and European military weakness« (Allen et al., 2021, p 148). This will have profound implications for the strategic assumptions upon which European defence stands.

Reflecting on the events that have taken place on the eastern European flank since 2008 and especially in 2014, the article identifies the immediate and basic source of security and defence challenges that Europe is facing in Russia as a revisionist power. This is also the subject of discussion in this article. In doing so, the discussion draws on the way that awareness of the nature of this challenge has developed. Only gradually has a different awareness of Russia – distinct from the one based on the West's hopes and expectations – come into existence. Its development resulted from the confrontation between the expectations and the reality of the post-Cold War order. Theoretically speaking, the key assumptions of the structural elements of the post-Cold War order have been confronted by a paradigm that in important ways corresponds to the Hobbesian tradition of thought – but due to its focus on a normative aspect, surpasses it. When considering an appropriate credible and effective response, this discussion focuses on the primacy of the cognitive domain of the challenge. Its objective should be to facilitate a corresponding mental shift as the necessary basis for strengthening the resilience of States and societies, as well as European solidarity. This will help it to »promote peace and guarantee the security of its Member states and citizens«, as stated by the Council of the European Union (2016, p 2). This should be a basis for informed decisions about the realistic trajectory of the development of the CSDP.

1   THE EUROPEAN POST-COLD WAR MINDSET

If peace and stability in Europe are no longer a given, the initial question needs to be about the kind of security challenge Europe is confronting. The answer to this question, which is also the premise of our discussion, is that the challenge it is facing is a crisis that concerns the European post-Cold War order.

The fall of communism in Europe in 1989 made it possible to establish free, democratic societies based on respect for human dignity and the rule of law. In this spirit, all European countries, including the Soviet Union, together with the United States and Canada, have formulated the values and principles of the European post-Cold War order and committed themselves to respecting them. This resulted in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, which represents a consensus between former Cold War adversaries. On these foundations the historical tasks of *Europe whole and free*, as well as *a Europe that is free and at peace with itself* (Bush, 1989) would actually be feasible. The fundamental notions of the Charter are democracy, peace, unity, cooperation, human rights and fundamental freedoms. Important common objectives are defined as »steadfast commitment to democracy based on human rights and fundamental freedoms; prosperity through economic liberty and social justice; and equal security for all our countries« (Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, 1990, p 3). The expectations of a new perception of security in Europe were thought possible on the basis of the unprecedented reduction in armed forces and new approaches to security and cooperation. These would enable a transformation of relations between European states as a foundation of »a just and lasting order of peace for a united, democratic Europe« (Ibid., p 6). The basic structural principles

of the European post-Cold War order that represented a consensus agenda include the following: 1) democracy as the only legitimate system of government based on respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law; 2) equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination, respect for territorial integrity, political independence and freedom of choice of any participating State; and 3) friendly relations between participating states and equal security for them. These basic structural principles comprise the foundations of the post-Cold War order. Its basic code of behaviour is defined by respect, cooperation, and solidarity. Cooperation and solidarity thus unite nations in a common destiny, in a *community of fate* (Senčar, 2020). These structural principles form the consensus agenda and the type of order that corresponds to the Kantian or universalist tradition of thought (Bull, pp 23-26). They also serve as an analytical framework for further discussion.

The only source of legitimacy in the post-Cold War European order is democracy. »We undertake to build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only system of government of our nations« (Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, 1990, p 3). On this basis, the vision of Europe as a community of democracies became possible. The Charter points out the adherence of all parties to shared values and common heritage. Having also in mind the consensus on the structural principles of the European post-Cold War order, it can be argued that what emerged in Europe was a *society* of states, i.e. an international – or more concretely – European society as defined by Bull (2002, pp 13-16). Democracies, however, are peaceful in their relations with each other and will in themselves be guarantors of peace.[1] A basic assumption of the European post-Cold War order is that European security and peace are therefore based on the victory of democratic values across Europe. »Friendly relations among us will benefit from the consolidation of democracy and improved security« (Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, 1990, p 3). European security order would therefore not be based on the principle of balance of power, but on the common norms and values of a free democratic society. It would be based on universal rules, and not on blocs with their exclusive areas of influence. What is allowed and what is forbidden does not depend on the power of the state, but is defined by international law. On these foundations of universal normative ambition, the Council of the European Union in 2003 conceived the first European Security Strategy (ESS): »The best protection for our security is a world of well-governed democratic states. Spreading good governance, supporting social and political reform, dealing with corruption and abuse of power, establishing the rule of law and protecting human rights are the best means of strengthening the international order« (2009, p 37). At that time, the EU approved the draft Constitutional Treaty (defeated in the referendums held in France and the Netherlands in the spring of 2005), the big bang enlargement of 2004 was rapidly approaching, and parallel to it the neighbourhood policy concept was to be launched the following year.

---

[1] *The concept of the theory of democratic peace was conceived by Immanuel Kant (Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch; Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Perspective). A similar thesis in terms of the theory of democratic peace was also put forward by Alexis de Tocqueville (Democracy In America).*

Robert Cooper characterized this order as postmodern, inclusive, and based on a voluntary association of states that share common values and their openness – thus a sort of voluntary cooperative empire: »The postmodern, European answer to threats is to extend the system of co-operative empire ever wider« (2003, p 78). The basic building block of a postmodern order, according to Cooper, is a postmodern state, which »is one that above all values the individual, which explains its unwarlike character« (2003, p 78). This vision could have been developed on the assumption of a pan-European consensus: that the only source of legitimacy in the post-Cold War European order is democracy based on human rights and free elections. In this context, the EU has come to understand itself as a soft power that acts as a transformational and normative power (Manners, 2008). There is no room for traditional geopolitics within this vision. »The very language of geopolitics was an anachronism« (Colby and Mitchell, 2020) not only in Europe, but also in the US.

In accordance with the assumptions of the post-Cold War European order, the ESS identified key threats: terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure, and organized crime (European External Action Service, 2009). The corresponding policy implications for the CSDP have been to develop a full spectrum of instruments for out-of-area crisis management and conflict prevention, both military and civilian. Since 2003, the EU has launched 36 operations and missions on three continents (as of now, 11 civilian and 6 military are on-going). The emphasis has been on a widened security agenda, mainly of a civilian nature (mediation, security sector reform, the rule of law, police missions). Military operations carried out within this agenda have been characterized by a relatively non-coercive approach.

2 THE COLLAPSE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE EUROPEAN POST-COLD WAR ORDER

The expectations stemming from the fundamental principles and values of the European post-Cold War order – the exercise of democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, democratic self-determination, the »freedom of States to choose their own security arrangements« (Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, 1990, p 6), the option of eventual association with the EU – led Ukrainian citizens, in autumn 2013, to express their determination to *return to Europe* through widespread anti-government protests. Their determination, which was fully in line with the expectations legitimized by the European post-Cold War order, and the subsequent collapse of the government that had acted differently, resulted in the Russian annexation of Crimea and the encouragement of separatist uprisings in eastern Ukraine, ultimately with the aid of its military forces.

This development took everyone completely by surprise. The ESS had not mentioned any traditional threats or geopolitical challenges to Europe or its security order. However, frozen conflicts already existed in the post-Soviet area at the time (Moldova: Transnistria, Georgia: Abkhazia and South Ossetia). EU support for

the de-escalation and resolution of these disputes was rather modest. The EU and its Member States took care to maintain equidistance, and did not question the controversial role of Russia as a neutral mediator, which, however, always supported the separatist parties against the legitimate authorities in order to maintain leverage and dominance. Frozen, freshly staged, and still hot conflicts in the post-Soviet space act as a force preventing an escape to the opposite, European pole of attraction. These countries are thus prevented from developing their own, autonomous, independent choice and closer relations with the EU and NATO (Snyder, 2018, p 173). Lo argues that in this way »today's 'arc of instability' around Russia's borders would evolve gradually into a zone of Russian-led stability. And outside actors would engage with the region only in conjunction with Russia or in ways that did not threaten its interests« (2015, p 105).

Five years later, the Report on the Implementation of the ESS also noted some causes for concern. Frozen conflicts in Georgia led to the military invasion of Georgia by Russia in August 2008. The EU led the international response through mediation between the two parties, and EU relations with Russia deteriorated accordingly. And yet, in the EU – and in the West as a whole – there was clearly no realization at the time that Russian military intervention was in stark contrast to post-Cold War arrangements: »The EU expects Russia to honour its commitments in a way that will restore the necessary confidence. Our partnership should be based on respect for common values, notably human rights, democracy, and rule of law, and market economic principles as well as on common interests and objectives« (Council of the European Union, 2009, p 23). The Report reflects the EU's normative approach without realizing its limitations and without assessing its real transformative power in the face of Russia's increasingly active role in blocking democratic reforms in the post-Soviet space. Assuming a pan-European consensus for a post-Cold War agenda was no longer valid. However, the EU had not yet fully grasped this fact and its fundamental consequences. The Report added only cyber security, energy security and climate change to the list of key threats identified in the ESS. Youngs therefore claims that at that stage »the EU did not see any major danger coming from Russia's territorial and civilizational understanding of security« (2017, p 62). In the very same year, 2009, the EU included the Russian Federation in the list of 10 Strategic Partners.

3   THE NATURE OF THE VIOLATION OF THE EUROPEAN POST-COLD WAR ORDER

After Russia's military invasion and occupation of Crimea, and its subsequent illegal annexation, as well as its full spectrum activities to destabilize Ukraine, it became very clear that peace and stability in Europe were no longer a given, which the EU Global Strategy also stated.

There were several signals indicating a fundamental change in the Kremlin's view of the European post-Cold War order and its interests from the period of the first years

after the fall of communism. There were growing signs of the authoritarian instincts of the ruling structures, and the desire for domination over countries that once were part of the former Soviet Union. This development was no longer in line with the principles of the Paris Charter for a New Europe. Several prominent experts, as well as numerous politicians from the European countries that were most exposed to Russian influence, began to publicly express their worries. Zbigniew Brzezinski (1994) warned against idealistic optimism based on the amnesia of history, and wrote the following axiomatic statement: »Russia can be either an empire or a democracy, but it cannot be both«. In addition there were also two signals from President Putin announcing new times. In 2005, he stated that the collapse of the Soviet Union was the great geopolitical catastrophe of the century (2005). This was President Putin's view of the consequences of the events that made the vision of a *Europe whole and free and at peace with itself* a reality. Furthermore, Putin very clearly rejected the post-Cold War security order in Europe in a February 2007 speech to the Munich Security Conference (2007). However, Russian revisionism was not a reaction to some concrete actions of the West, although the later rhetoric of the Russian side increasingly emphasized various reasons for resentment. Instead, Russian revisionism was a response to the perceived threat that Western identity, principles and values represented to Russia's political system (Snyder, 2018, p 91; Krastev and Leonard, 2014, p 4). The fundamental vulnerability of Russian political identity, however, is not a lack of power but of legitimacy, as Sherr (2013, p 98) also claims: »Moscow's cardinal anxiety is not that its political order is vulnerable, but that it is illegitimate. To preserve its legitimacy, it must ensure that no alternative take root on its doorstep. It must be proactive in its defence«. The reaction of the Russian authorities was thus not merely military and geopolitical; it was also a normative assault on the European post-Cold War order (Liik, 2018, pp 2-5).

4   THE REALIZATION OF A CHANGED SECURITY ENVIRONMENT: COGNITIVE ASPECTS

The realization that Russia had turned out to be a revisionist power came quite late in Europe and in the West in general. In November 2014, the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, became one of the first leaders to articulate the difficult predicament the EU had found itself in (Foy, 2014): »For Putin, and Russia today, the EU is a problem. And we have to understand, and I think we are close to this moment, that Russia is not our strategic partner. Russia is our strategic problem«. The EU's Global Strategy, which was adopted two years later, reflects the realization of the changed security environment in exactly the same way: »Managing the relationship with Russia represents a key strategic challenge« (European External Action Service, 2016, p 33). A country that so far had been categorized as a strategic partner had become a strategic challenge. Three years later, there were no grounds for a different assessment (European External Action Service, 2019, p 19).

The realization of the fundamentally changed security environment came only after the understanding of how the occupation and annexation of Crimea and the staging

of separatism in eastern Ukraine took place. A whole range of means and approaches short of war were used (an information campaign, psychological warfare, economic measures, intelligence activity, special forces actions, subversive activity, infiltration, use of criminal activities, corruption, etc.), from unconventional, asymmetric warfare all the way to overt, classical military intervention in the later stages. The novelty of this particular approach lay in the flexible integration of military tools with other, non-military tools and means of pressure; escalation control; the skilful orchestration and management of a soft, seamless transition from peace to conflict; and the exploitation of an ambiguous intermediate state between what was no longer normal peace, but was not yet clear military conflict according to formal, conventional criteria. Thus, such hostile and offensive activities were hidden behind the veil offered by the possibility of formal, credible denial. Deception was an extremely important element in the execution of these operations. An analysis of the means used by the aggressor in this war reveals that this was not only a classic war in which the key category was *hard power*[2], it was also a war that took place in the cognitive sphere in the form of *information warfare*[3], the central driver of which was the need to legitimize the regime. What went on, therefore, was also a *normative conflict*. The contemporary Russian strategic approach is based on the fact that modern wars are fought primarily on the information battlefield, and that the main battlefield is the cognitive sphere.[4] With regard to the term »war« or »warfare« in the Russian cognitive context, the following explanation is important: »/…/ the use of military strategy does not imply an actual war or conflict and has significantly influenced the Kremlin's foreign policy. Warfare in Russian understanding is more of an art of deception rather than a military act and can be used on multiple levels of policy or adjusted to any particular situation. Moreover, Russian military science itself is being transformed to better suit peacetime conditions and has shifted towards asymmetrical measures« (Morozova, 2017, p 27).

Russia's strategic approach was based on an excellent understanding of the cognitive filter and the weak points of the West, which were confirmed by every encouragement of de-escalation as well as by statements that it did not intend to resort to the use of military force. Thus, fixing the West on the issue of war and skilfully promoting the threat of escalation created room for an ambiguous situation between a clearly identifiable conventional war and its absence, which was exploited to achieve strategic objectives and establish an irreversible reality. Crimea was seized and occupied without a single shot being fired. Because soldiers without insignia (dubbed the »little green men« by journalists) did this, it was not formally possible to talk about occupation, although that was exactly what took place. The West was confused, and before it had realized and acknowledged what was going on, Russia

---

[2] *Sherr (2013, p 12) defines the Russian concept of hard power as »the ability to compel others to comply with our wishes by means of force or other direct forms of coercion«.*

[3] *Bērziņš, 2014; Chekinov and Bogdanov, 2013; Giles, 2015, pp 46-48; Liik, 2018; Morozova, 2017; Pomerantsev and Weiss, 2014; Sherr, 2015, pp 23-32.*

[4] *Bērziņš (2014, p 5), where the author states: »/.../ the Russian view of modern warfare is based on the idea that the main battle-space is the mind«. A similar claim is also made by Giles (2015, p 45).*

had achieved its strategic objectives without facing any sharp reaction, and the new situation was already irreversible. In addition, when armed conflict broke out in eastern Ukraine, the European Council once again stressed its support for a peaceful settlement (European Council, 2014, p 2).

It is necessary to point out the cognitive challenge posed by Russian revisionism. There was no uniform or perfectly clear awareness in the EU of the seriousness of the threat to the European order, not even during the aggression against Ukraine. In May 2018, the European Council on Foreign Relations conducted an analysis of Member States in which eight of them, including Slovenia, fell into the category of those who believe that there is a lot of hype around Russian interference but are not certain that there is any substance to the allegations (Liik, 2018, p 4).[5]

Conclusion   The assault on the EU's eastern flank suggests that an analytical framework for understanding actual security threats and challenges should also be informed by the Hobbesian[6] or realist vision of the world, rather than being based solely on Kantian aspirations. At the heart of this vision is the anarchic character of the international system, characterized by fundamental antagonism between states: competition, conflict and war, instead of cooperation; the context of a zero-sum game instead of mutual benefit (Bull, pp 23–26). The foundation of the post-Cold War order in Europe is *legitimacy* based on respect for the equal dignity of people, nations and states, freedom, rule of law, and democracy that enables self-government and thus the sovereignty of the people. Yet the central category of this alternative, challenging vision is *power* which strives for domination.[7] The specificities of the assault on the EU's eastern flank also suggest that it was not only about geopolitics and the question of influence and dominance in a territorial sense. This was also a *normative conflict*, the central driver of which was the need to legitimize and ensure the survival of the regime. However, this crucial fact cannot be captured by an approach based on classic realist categories – power, balance of power, spheres of influence. Instead, a focus on warfare in the cognitive domain is required.

---

[5]   *The same analysis also finds the following (p 6): »In some states – including Slovenia, and parts of Bulgaria and France – Russia is seen as a counterweight to other powers, usually the US.« Nevertheless, there is also a noticeable increase in awareness of the strategic challenge among such members (p 9): »Moscow's ambition to have a sphere of influence no longer disturbs only – or even primarily – eastern EU Member States. Croatia and Slovenia, for example, are both concerned about Moscow's attempts to create obstacles to the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans.«*

[6]   *Hobbes defined the state of nature as a state of war in the sense of bellum omnium contra omnes. In such a state there are no objective, absolute norms of good and bad, there is no justice, only the law of the stronger. In fact, this state of affairs applies especially to interstate relations: »/.../ so in states and Commonwealths not dependent on one another, every Commonwealth, not every man, has an absolute liberty to do what it shall judge, that is to say, what that man or assembly that representeth it shall judge, most conducing to their benefit. But withal, they live in the condition of a perpetual war, and upon the confines of battle, with their frontiers armed, and cannons planted against their neighbours round about« (Hobbes, 2008 [1651], pp 142-143).*

[7]   *The concept of power in this case is defined, as suggested by James Sherr (2013, p 12), in relational terms as »the utilization of resources and capacities to achieve one's ends with respect to others.« In the specific case of the assault on the eastern flank, it is particularly important that it is not only about the possession of resources and capacities, but especially about the use of these resources and facilities, about the willingness to actually use them.*

In order to be able to effectively and efficiently protect and defend their freedom, democracies must firstly realize that the assumption of a pan-European consensus for a post-Cold War agenda is no longer valid. There has been a paradigm change from cooperation to systemic competition. Secondly, this is a state of affairs that democracies will need to be able to coexist with and manage. Thirdly, democracies must face the realities of great-power competition, conflict, and war – and take them into account when shaping their strategy and deciding on priorities. Or, according to Hobbes's dictum, »covenants, without the sword, are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all« (Hobbes, 2008 [1651], p 111).

Allen et al. defined future war as warfare across the 5D spectrum of deception, disinformation, destabilization, disruption, and destruction (2021, pp 27–30). 5D warfare will be made possible by revolutions in many areas of civilian technology that will find their application on the battlefield.[8] The year 2014 was marked by a foretaste of this: it ranged from complex intimidation and coercion from the low end of the warfare spectrum (deception, disinformation, and destabilization), through disruption to the high end of the warfare spectrum with destruction. This type of warfare represents a challenge from both the security and the defence aspects.

On the lower level of the warfare spectrum, there is *information war* (Sherr, 2015) with the objective of wakening the adversary from within. It could be argued that the liberal order itself has proven to be a source of vulnerability. Within the context of a liberal order, openness and interdependence are supposed to strengthen cooperation and weave stronger bonds with new partners, even a strategic partnership. Yet when confronted with a power that opposes an existing order and is willing to use force, openness and interdependence suddenly turn into vulnerabilities, since they can be exploited as levers for pressure and extortion (*weaponization of interdependence*). Confronting revisionist power reveals the limits of the concept of liberal cooperative interdependence, as well as the cognitive problem of recognizing that a partner has become a rival and even an adversary.

The focus of this reflection is on the activities of the lower level of the warfare spectrum, which easily exploit the values and principles of an open, liberal order. These forms of warfare can cohabit with open, democratic societies and weaken them from within, with the aim of turning a state of society at peace with itself into a Hobbesian *war of all against all*[9]. Societies with multiple communities and multiple identities are particularly vulnerable to this type of assault, particularly the exploitation of existing societal conflicts and grievances. Information warfare is the first phase of an attack, and because of its non-kinetic nature, open societies can be

---

[8] *Radical and disruptive technologies such as artificial intelligence, computer vision, quantum-computing, nano technologies, big data analytics, hypersonic weaponry etc.*

[9] *»Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war, as if of every man, against every man. For WAR, consisteth not in battle only /.../ so the nature of war, consisteth not in actual fighting; but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary« (Hobbes, 2008 [1651], p 84).*

constantly exposed to this type of warfare without themselves realizing that they are actually already in a new generation warfare context. The goal of the information war and its instruments (disinformation, propaganda) is to weaken loyalty to the values of democratic societies where they are established, as well as their attractiveness in societies where they have not yet (fully) established themselves (Liik, 2018, pp 2-5). The vulnerability of open, free, democratic societies to such attacks depends on a sense of belonging, the strength of loyalty, members' identification with the values, principles and goals that enable fundamental mutual solidarity in a society, and the ability to recognize such attacks. In this sense, the initial, key resistance to the nature of future war is cognitive resilience. One of the key enablers to stimulate, develop and strengthen cognitive resilience is the strengthening of the potential for critical thinking through enhancing the societal situational and threat awareness. Since ensuring safety and security are the basic responsibilities of political authorities, it is necessary that electorates within democracies are informed about and involved in discussions about these questions and the shaping of the answers. Thus, they could more firmly identify themselves with the strategies developed on the basis of democratic deliberations. The embeddedness of issues of security within democracy could also enhance domestic resilience (Strachan, 2020, p 76). In this way, societal solidarity is also strengthened. Given the assumptions on which European self-perception was based, the European post-Cold War order, challenged by a revisionist power, clearly could not provide »equal security« (Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, 1990, p 3) for all European countries. In these conditions, a pan-European solidarity as articulated in the *Charter of Paris for a New Europe* can only be a desirable but distant goal. Instead, it is now urgent to put European geopolitical solidarity into practice. A very important step in this direction is the initiative labelled the »Strategic Compass«. This initiative is a 2-year process that should refine the EU Global Strategy, with Member States' initially discussing how they perceive the threats they face and analyzing the types of vulnerabilities that may arise related to the identified threats. This should hopefully lead to a common threat perception. What is most important in this exercise from the context of this article is that the process of deliberation be truly inclusive; further, it must emphasize the importance of the cognitive aspect. New types of threats that are not of a kinetic nature pose a great challenge also from the perspective of solidarity, i.e. how to understand and determine the threshold of threat or aggression on a Member State, albeit non-military, which would require the EU and its Member States to act jointly in a spirit of solidarity?

Russian non-kinetic and kinetic assaults on Ukraine – and especially the annexation of seizure of Crimea – are case studies and harbingers of the future face of war. The lessons learned from the crisis on Europe's eastern flank need to inform necessary reflections on security and defence challenges when thinking about the course the EU should take and how to best to promote its interests in the face of existing and future challenges.

Acknowledgement

Bibliography

1. Allen, J., R., Hodges, F., B. and Lindley-French, J., 2021. *Future War and the Defence of Europe. Oxford: Oxford University Press.*

2. Bērziņš, J., 2014. *Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy. Riga: National Defence Academy of Latvia, Center for Security and Strategic Research.*

3. Brzezinski, Z., 1994. *The Premature Partnership. Foreign Affairs. 73-2. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/1994-03-01/premature-partnership, 31. 3. 2019.*

4. Bull, H., 2002. *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics. New York: Columbia University Press.*

5. Bush, G., 1989. *A Europe Whole and Free. U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Germany. http://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/ga6-890531.htm, 30. 9 2019.*

6. Chekinov, S., G. and Bogdanov, S., A., 2013. *The Nature and Content of a New-Generation War. Military Thought. 4, pp 12-23.*

7. Colby, E., A. and Mitchell, A., W., 2020. *The Age of Great-Power Competition: How the Trump Administration Refashioned American Strategy. Foreign Affairs, 99-1. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2019-12-10/age-great-power-competition, 8. 11. 2020.*

8. Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, 1990. *Charter of Paris for a New Europe. Paris: Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.*

9. Cooper, R., 2003. *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century. London: Atlantic Books.*

10. Council of the European Union, 2009. *European Security Strategy – A Secure Europe In A Better World. Brussels: General Secretariat of the Council.*

11. Council of the European Union, 2016. *Council Cnclusions on Implementing the EU Global Strategy in the Area of Security and Defence, Council Conclusions (14 November 2016), 14149/16. Brussels: General Secretariat of the Council.*

12. European Council, 2014. *Special Meeting of the European Council (16 July 2014) – Conclusions (EUCO 147/14). Brussels: General Secretariat of the Council.*

13. European Commission, 2019. *EU-China – A Strategic Outlook. Strasbourg: European Commission.*

14. European External Action Service, 2019. *The European Union's Global Strategy: Three Years On, Looking Forward. Brussels: European Union.*

15. Foy, H., 2014. *'Lunch with the FT: Donald Tusk'. Financial Times. https://www.ft.com/content/72d9b928-7558-11e4-b1bf-00144feabdc0, 15. 6. 2021.*

16. Giles, K., 2015. *Russia's Toolkit. In: Giles, K., et al. (Eds.), The Russian Challenge: Chatham House Report. London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House), pp 40-49.*

17. Giles, K., 2016. *Russia's 'New' Tools for Confronting the West: Continuity and Innovation in Moscow's Exercise of Power. London: The Royal Institute for International Affairs (Chatham House).*

18. *Hobbes, T., 2008 [1651]. Leviathan. New York: Oxford University Press.*

19. *Krastev, I. and Leonard, M., 2014. The New European Disorder. London: European Council on Foreign Relations.*

20. *Liik, K., 2018. Winning the Normative War with Russia: An EU-Russia Power Audit. London: European Council on Foreign Relations.*

21. *Lo, B., 2015. Russia and the New World Disorder. London, Baltimore: Royal Institute of International Affairs/Brookings Institution Press.*

22. *Manners, I., 2008. The normative ethics of the European Union. International Affairs. 84-1, pp 45-60. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2008.00688.x/epdf, 20. 7. 2015.*

23. *Morozova, O., 2017. Russian Politics of Deception: The Kremlin's Reaction to the Revolutions of 2004-2014 and Information Warfare in Russia-Ukraine Relations. The Hague: Leiden University, Faculty of Humanities.*

24. *Pomerantsev, P. and Weiss, M., 2014. The Menace of Unreality: How Kremlin Weaponizes Information, Culture and Money. New York: The Institute of Modern Russia.*

25. *Putin, V., 2005. Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. President of Russia. http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/22931, 30. 9. 2019.*

26. *Putin, V., 2007. Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy. President of Russia. http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/ transcripts/24034, 30. 9. 2019.*

27. *Sassoli, D., Costa, A. and von der Leyen, U., 2021. Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe: Engaging With Citizens for Democracy – Building a More Resilient Europe. https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/en_-_joint_declaration_on_ the_conference_on_the_future_of_europe.pdf, 15. 6. 2021*

28. *Senčar, I., 2020. Crisis context and the community of fate. International Journal of Diplomacy and Economy. 6-2, pp 156-170.*

29. *European External Action Service, 2016. Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy. Brussels: General Secretariat of the Council.*

30. *Sherr, J., 2013. Hard Diplomacy and Soft Coercion. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs.*

31. *Sherr, J., 2015. A War of Narratives and Arms. In: Giles, K., et al. (Eds.), The Russian Challenge: Chatham House Report. London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House), pp 23-32.*

32. *Snyder, T., 2018. The Road to Unfreedom: Russia, Europe, America. London: The Bodley Head.*

33. *Strachan, H., 2020. Strategy and Democracy. Survival. 62-2, pp 51-82.*

34. *Youngs, R., 2017. Europe's Eastern Crisis: The Geopolitics of Asymmetry. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*