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The Russian-Ukrainian war 2014-2023: Interference factors of the War

Abstract. At the end of February 2022 Russian aggression against Ukraine escalated into a full-scale war. This provoked strong resistance from the Ukrainian state and society, as well as Western anti-Russian sanctions. The Russian-Ukrainian war has gone far beyond the borders of Ukraine and Russia and has acquired regional and global significance. The interim results and outcomes of the war encourage understanding and generalisation of experience for Ukraine, Europe, and the world. The purpose of this study was to analyse the key aspects of the full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war in the context of their impact on national, regional, and global processes. The methodology of the study is based on the principles of scientificity, historicism, systematicity, generalisation, multifactoriality, combined with the use of methods of analysis and synthesis, historical-comparative and historical-genetic, systemic, and structural-functional analysis. The coverage of aspects of the large-scale stage of the Russian-Ukrainian war is based on the analysis of the current state of the situation at the front, military-technical, and diplomatic efforts to ensure Ukraine's victory. This is necessary to stop Russian aggression and the crimes of the Russian occupiers, restore Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, punish the aggressors, return to international law and order, and ensure lasting and stable peace in Europe and the world. Another generalisation is that Ukraine's allies and partners understand that it opposes militarism and authoritarianism and defends democratic rights and freedoms and universal human values. Ukrainians, through their resilience and struggle, have given new impetus to the North Atlantic partnership and European integration. In the long run, this is of great practical importance for strengthening the democratic priorities of European and global civilisational development. The applied aspect of the study of the aspects of the full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war is also important for the establishment of democratic trends in the evolution of modern international relations and the world order

Keywords: Russian-Ukrainian war 2014-2023; full-scale aggression; aspects of war; international relations; world order

Introduction

The Russian Federation's hybrid aggression against Ukraine (since 26 February 2014) and its subsequent escalation into a large-scale war (since 24 February 2022) have factually marked the beginning of a major transformation of the post-bipolar system of international relations, which was formed in the main after the collapse of the USSR and the world system of socialism (1991). Russia has

single-handedly endangered not only Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity but has also begun to dismantle the entire international legal structure of the modern world order. Its aggressive steps provoked a response of resistance not only from the Ukrainian state and society, but also led to sanctions pressure from the vast majority of the international community. This is evidenced by the

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individual and sectoral sanctions imposed since 2014 (and especially since the end of February 2022) against Russia, Russian companies, legal entities and individuals, and the support of the UN General Assembly for 14 resolutions (adopted in 2014-2023) on the restoration of Ukraine's full territorial integrity and sovereignty within the internationally recognised borders of 1991 (Sullivan & Bowman, 2023). Understanding the role and significance of the Ukrainian struggle against Russian aggression (and especially at the stage of the full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war) brings the issue to the forefront and leads to many important consequences for Ukraine and the world.

Being in the zone of objective response, amid tumultuous and life-changing events for Ukraine, Europe, and the world, it is clear that it is still difficult to make in-depth generalisations. At the same time, the specific features of the perception of war that are relevant to our time need to be properly identified and recorded for further comprehension and theoretical construction. Existing meanings, unlike material artefacts, are fleeting and changeable. Therefore, the "experience of direct observation" during the war appears to be indispensable for the researcher. The sets of meanings associated with the war will continue to be modified and transformed into sustainable narratives (the latter ensure the continuity of collective memory and are aimed at maintaining the identity of communities). Therefore, it is inevitable that the understanding of the meaning of events by those who write history and the perceptions of those who create it will differ. Given these observations, we offer a few reflections.

Due to the incompleteness of the war and the current course of events and their impact on regional and global processes, the declared issues have found only partial or situational reflection in the scientific discourse. This is also evidenced by the historiography of the problem. Dutch political scientist and expert on Eastern European security M.H. Van Herpen (2016) and Ukrainian historian and political scientist Ye. Mahda (2017) considered the factors of Russian President V. Putin's wars in general and specifically the Russian-Ukrainian war only in relation to the initial stage of Russia's hybrid aggression against Ukraine. The well-known American political scientist and journalist F. Zakaria (2021), who devoted his investigation to the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic, which chronologically coincided with the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict, however, does not directly interconnect these events. At the same time, a comprehensive approach to understanding the impact of global and regional crises, including the Russian-Ukrainian war, on the current world order is of great practical and scientific importance in the future. The analysis of the aspects of the full-scale stage of Russian aggression by Ukrainian and foreign authors is marked by a list of individual lessons, brevity of presentation and argumentation (Korsunskyy, 2022; Sasse, 2022; Volt, 2023). The global and regional dimensions of Russia's war against Ukraine have been partially addressed by foreign and Ukrainian scholars in collective monographs (Bodak *et al.*, 2022; Bocancea, 2023). The authors of the proposed article have also revealed a range of meanings of the Russian-Ukrainian war in their publication in the book

"The Turning Point" (Kyrydon & Troyan, 2023). Thus, while the historiographical base is growing, as noted by T. Sydoruk (2023), a researcher of Eastern European integration and security issues, not all factors of Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine have been considered.

The purpose of this study was to systematise and summarise the main factors of the full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war, and to highlight their significance from the Ukrainian, European, and global perspectives. The scientific originality of this study lies in the comprehension and systematisation of the basic factors of the full-scale stage of the Russian-Ukrainian war with the emphasis and analysis of military-historical, state-identity, integration and security, and historical and prospective aspects.

The complexity of the problem under study necessitates the use of a wide range of methodological research tools. The principle of the methodology of understanding (according to M. Weber) was chosen as the basic methodological tool for understanding the experience and nature of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the main cognitive strategy. To understand the complex and multifaceted processes of Russia's war against Ukraine, the methodology of interpretive research was chosen. Using the method of historiographical analysis, the author examines the vision of the problem of Ukrainian-Russian relations in the modern scientific discourse for 1991-2023. The method of historiographical synthesis is used to systematise the position of different points of view, to identify current trends in the understanding of political scientists, historians, sociologists, and researchers of other scientific fields of the current political situation in Eastern Europe. The use of the historical-comparative method in its two modules (synchronous and asynchronous) made it possible to compare the policies, rhetoric, and peacekeeping initiatives of different countries during the hybrid and full-scale stages of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. The historical and genetic method helped to analyse the origins of the modern attitude towards the events of the Ukrainian-Russian war in the world, its development and impact on Ukrainian and European society. To systematise and structure the main aspects of the Russian-Ukrainian war of 2014-2023 at the national and supranational levels, the author uses the systemic and structural-functional methods.

Military and Historical Factors

The full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war confirms the fact that the era of great wars is not a thing of the past. The official Kremlin's attempts to defeat Ukraine with lightning speed and impose capitulation under the guise of "peace" on Russia's terms have failed completely. The substantial advantage in artillery, armoured vehicles, military aircraft and helicopters, warships and submarines, as well as in manpower, did not give Moscow the desired effect or advantage. The steadfast and heroic resistance of Ukrainians has substantially weakened the military potential/number of Russian troops. As of 2023, the Ukrainian army has virtually destroyed the personnel of the Russian military, which is one and a half times the number of almost 200,000 at the beginning of the full-scale aggression on 24 February 2022. According to the General Staff of the

Armed Forces of Ukraine (hereinafter – the General Staff of the AFU) (as of 20.10.2023), over 292 thousand Russian occupiers were killed, which is almost a third of the personnel that the Russian army had at the beginning of the full-scale aggression. More than 5,000 tanks and 9,500 armoured combat vehicles, over 7,000 artillery systems and almost five and a half hundred air defence systems, nearly 650 combat aircraft and attack helicopters, etc., of the enemy were also destroyed (Smutok, 2023). The Armed Forces of Ukraine are much more powerful in all respects than they were a year ago, thanks specifically to the support of Ukraine's foreign allies and partners. This conclusion is also based on the latest data from the Global Firepower military power rankings: Ukraine rose from 22nd place in 2022 to 15th in 2023 (Global Firepower, 2023).

The war imposed by Russia combines elements of traditional conflicts of the 20th century, but at the same time is completely new due to the use of modern digital technologies that broadcast “war online”. Modern warfare at the stage of hybrid aggression, and then the full-scale phase of hostilities, has all the hallmarks of the so-called fourth generation or network-centric wars. Its characteristics include the use of high precision “smart” weapons, organisation and conduct of hostilities through information and computer networks, psychological operations and cyberattacks, the disappearance of boundaries between the categories of war and peace, front and rear, armed forces and paramilitary formations, etc. Thus, scholars have even defined the Russian-Ukrainian war as “the first world war of the Internet age” (Bocancea, 2023). Russia is waging a war of words against Ukraine to destroy the vital functions of the Ukrainian state and society.

For the first time in history, a large-scale war became available in real time to millions of viewers through television channels and social media (Kuleba, 2019). The American historian T. Snyder (2022) noted that “the provision of the latest Western weapons, ammunition, and constant financial aid from Ukrainian allies and partners became possible because citizens of the free world were well informed about the crimes... committed by Russian terrorist forces on Ukrainian territory”. This has influenced public opinion in many leading countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Japan, and South Korea. That is why Ukraine has been able to receive such unprecedented support from both Western allies and partner states from virtually all parts of the world.

The asymmetry of the potentials (including military) of the parties should be considered a feature of the current Russian-Ukrainian war as a fourth-generation war already at the stage of hybrid warfare and then a full-scale armed conflict. However, such asymmetry does not necessarily mean directly proportional consequences. Economically powerful and militarily stronger international actors do not always win in a war of conquest. In this sense, the “special military operation” organised by the Russian president turned out to be a strategic failure in almost all respects.

Despite the lack of sufficient weapons at the first stage of the war, Ukrainian defenders have demonstrated high morale and professionalism since the first days of the full-scale aggression. Relying exclusively on hard power and

appropriate rhetoric in the information sphere, nuclear blackmail and the use of terrorist methods, unjustified killings of civilians and destruction of civilian infrastructure did not help Russia gain an advantage. The military invasion of Ukraine, which was planned by the Russian state and political leadership and military commanders as a lightning-fast triumphal march, turned into a threat of total defeat for them, especially in the context of the growth of Western military aid to Ukraine. At the same time, only joint further comprehensive (military, political, diplomatic, sanctions) actions by Ukraine and its allies and partners in the anti-Putin coalition can help defeat the Russian aggressor, facilitate the complete de-occupation of Ukrainian territory, and avert the threat of an expanding armed conflict, including its escalation into a nuclear one.

The policy of appeasement of the aggressor, as in previous times (specifically on the eve of the Second World War), is wrong and ineffective. During its confrontation with Ukraine, Russia has demonstrated to the international community its disregard for international law and the laws for the conduct of war. That is why any agreement with the Russian dictatorship is unacceptable: it must be defeated. To establish a just and sustainable peace, it is necessary to ensure Ukraine's victory in the war and the support of the democratic international community aimed at developing comprehensive national, regional, and global security guarantees and preventing the escalation of armed conflicts of varying intensity as those that pose an existential threat to peace.

The Director of the Rafik Hariri Centre, V.F. Veksler (2022), noted in August 2022 that “six months of genocide against the people of Ukraine, years of occupation of Ukrainian lands, and a hybrid war against the West have clearly shown that any agreements with the Putin regime are unviable and counterproductive”. Therewith, Russia's leadership openly disregards the existing norms of international law and agreements at the interstate level. Russia is committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in Ukraine, violating the basic principle of freedom of navigation, weaponizing food and refugees, and pursuing a policy of energy and nuclear blackmail. Thus, the existential threat created by the Putin regime is of an international nature.

The democratic world's response should be to impose harsh, restrictive sanctions. The main point is to take corresponding actions in relation to the entire (without limitation) Russian energy sector, the Russian nuclear agency, transport, logistics, and financial relations with Russia. Ukraine's allies and partners should finally stop contemplating the so-called “red lines” invented by the Kremlin and maximise both the defensive and offensive capabilities of the Ukrainian Armed Forces by supplying more modern air defence systems, long-range weapons systems, F-16 aircraft, etc. This will seriously enhance the prospect of Ukraine regaining control over its temporarily occupied territories much sooner.

State-identity factors

The Russian-Ukrainian war is an expression of the confrontation between the Russian discourse of war and the

Ukrainian discourse of peace, based on the direct analogy of “friend-or-foe”. The Russian war paradigm is based not only on the desire to implement the modern neo-imperial idea of geopolitical spatial expansion and return Russia to the status of the USSR during the Cold War. The strategy of Russian military and political thinking is also based on the ideology of the “Russian world” and the complete subordination of Ukraine, without which any “European” Russia is unthinkable. Considering this, as noted by Ukrainian researchers at the National Institute for Strategic Studies B. Parakhonskyi & G. Yavorska (2022), “since 2004, the ruling elite of the Russian Federation has identified its strategic priorities for restoring dominance in the post-Soviet space and began intensively preparing for war with Ukraine and other states: it has been deploying programmes to rearm and modernise its armed forces, while testing the international community’s reaction to possible aggressive actions against neighbouring states”.

However, within the Ukrainian paradigm of peaceful coexistence in the post-establishment world, the very possibility of any considerable conflict with a neighbouring state was excluded. Even before the outbreak of a full-scale war, Russia was not considered as an existential threat. It was only after 24 February 2022 that a paradigm shift in the Ukrainian peace discourse occurred: the war against Russia acquired the national liberation and existential character of an armed struggle for victory on the battlefield, de-occupation of Ukrainian territories, punishment of the aggressor, and Ukraine’s future within the European and Euro-Atlantic integration and security alliances. Russia’s main strategic goal in this war is the destruction of the Ukrainian ethnos and Ukrainian statehood. The impunity of those who started the war leads to negative consequences both for the direct target of the aggression – Ukraine – and for the entire international legal order of the functioning of the entire system of world politics.

For millions of Ukrainians, the war was a trauma and a collective tragedy. Russian aggression has caused Ukraine enormous losses, as highlighted by Prosecutor General A. Kostin (2023). During the year of armed conflict, over 81,000 civilian objects were damaged and destroyed, including residential buildings (62,000), educational (2,300) and medical (over 450) institutions (2,300); over 4,000 gas and water pipelines and electricity networks were damaged and destroyed. The environmental damage caused by the ongoing war is estimated at 46 billion USD. Since October 2022, Russia has been attacking the energy infrastructure. The war has also affected the private sector of the economy, with a decrease in the number of entrepreneurs in Ukraine (Audretsch *et al.*, 2023). These actions are aimed at deliberately creating unfit living conditions in Ukraine, which is one of the signs of genocide under the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide.

An essential factor in successfully resisting the Russian invaders is the national unity and consolidation of Ukrainians. This refers to the cohesion of the people, both at the political and psycho-emotional levels (Khraban, 2022), to counteract full-scale aggression and defend state independence and the return of Ukraine’s territorial integrity.

“The latest Ukrainian history – especially its 31st year – will reflect the panorama of cementing the nation and creating a powerful national idea right in the middle of a brutal, bloody war. From Crimea, Ilovaisk, and Donetsk airport to Bucha and Mariupol with unyielding Azovstal, the distance in years appears to be small, but the panorama of confrontation with the enemy is impressive”, as Ukrainian scholars V. Gorbunin & V. Badrak (2022) rightly emphasised.

The influence of information and semantic levers, the power of the “propaganda machine” of authoritarian regimes, should not be underestimated. The war unleashed by Russia against Ukraine and Ukrainians is a permanent war of cynically distorted meanings and contents inherent in Orwellian dystopia. For more than two decades of Putin’s rule, the influence of the Kremlin’s official anti-Western and anti-Ukrainian propaganda has led to dramatic changes in the worldview of the majority of Russian citizens. As a result, it was this that became the decisive moment for Russians to support first a hybrid and then a full-scale war against Ukraine.

One of the important goals of the war unleashed by Russia was to establish comprehensive (total) control over Ukraine, as well as to turn Europe and the entire world into a dystopia. The danger of replacing concepts with contradictory brands and symbols is that this will allow the Russian authoritarian regime to justify its aggressive motives and actions. The Russian leadership has given itself the right to occupy Ukraine, declaring the war a “special military operation”. The Kremlin uses anti-Ukrainian and anti-Western rhetoric to justify its illegal actions in direct violation of international law and interstate treaties. The government claims that the war it unleashed was a legitimate act of preventive self-defence against neighbours who, by seeking to join the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance, were demonstrating allegedly hostile intentions towards Russia.

Integration and Security Factors

The Russian-Ukrainian war has radically changed the relations between Ukraine and the European Union and NATO, as well as the prospects for Ukraine’s European and Euro-Atlantic integration (Sologoub, 2022; Genschel, 2023). The main content of the transformation is the transition from cooperation under the terms of the Association Agreement without the possibility of Ukraine’s accession to the European Union to the official status of a candidate for EU membership on 23 June 2022. Therewith, on 30 September 2022, Ukraine submitted an official application signed by the country’s top political leadership for accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation under an accelerated procedure (Report on implementation..., 2022; Kyrydon & Troyan, 2023).

As of 2023, 87% of Ukrainian citizens support joining the European Union, and 86% support joining NATO (Barsukova, 2023). Among the Alliance’s real steps in terms of military and political assistance, it is worth noting political support, energy support, funding for medical care for soldiers, rehabilitation of the wounded, etc. In February 2023, at the Ukraine-EU summit in Kyiv, EU leaders confirmed

the irreversibility of Ukraine's European integration. At that time, the Ukrainian authorities announced their main expectations regarding the European integration course, including immediate negotiations on Ukraine's accession to the EU, strengthening of sanctions against the aggressor state, and provision of urgent military assistance to Ukraine, including modern air defence systems, armoured vehicles, artillery, etc.

Although more than a year and a half of full-scale war has united the Western world, it has not eliminated the differences that still exist in it. Specifically, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who has actually turned into a kind of Kremlin's fifth column in the EU and NATO, constantly makes statements and strongly supports Russia in its intentions to achieve "peace" on Russia's terms. In fact, this "peace" means not only retaining 20% of the illegally occupied Ukrainian territories, but also providing Russia with further opportunities to manipulate international law in its interests and disregard the territorial integrity and sovereignty of not only Ukraine but also other neighbouring states. However, despite this position of Orban's Hungary, no substantial sanctions have been imposed on it by the European Community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Kyrydon & Troyan, 2023).

Europe and the world must "mature" to understand the inevitability and necessity of Russia's unconditional defeat in its groundless and treacherous war against Ukraine and abandon the Russia-centric view of Eastern Europe that prevailed until 2022 (Vorburgg & Bluwstein, 2022). The West should be more resolute in its support of the Ukrainian state and make bold strategic decisions in its favour, rather than providing military aid in small increments. Substantial progress in this regard is being made thanks to the activities of the Coalition in Support of Ukraine to Counter Russian Aggression, known as Ramstein Meetings, which currently unites 54 countries. It has become "a true coalition of the free world in support of Ukraine" (Reznikov, 2023).

The powerful security community of more than 140 states that support Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity, with a consolidated West at its core, still does not see a clear prospect of a new global security architecture. What scares it the most (given both the statements of the French president and the rhythms of military cooperation with Ukraine) is the future without Russia as an influential actor in international relations, despite its open act of aggression against Ukraine (Kyrydon & Troyan, 2023).

Ukraine's post-war security is guaranteed by its membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. Despite the development of cooperation with NATO and the conclusion of the Association Agreement with the EU, Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic and European integration prospects were limited (Report on implementation..., 2022). The explanation was that Ukraine had no prospect of EU membership and only general declarative assurances from NATO of such a possibility in the vaguely distant future. This ambiguity in the position of NATO and EU member states finally convinced the Russian president that in case of a military invasion of Ukraine, the collective West would not provide it with the necessary military, technical, and

other assistance. The situation has changed dramatically since Ukraine was granted EU candidate status and applied to join NATO. There is a realistic prospect that after Ukraine's victory in the war, Western countries will continue to pursue an enlargement policy and that Ukraine will be integrated into the Euro-Atlantic security architecture and the European integration community as soon as possible. As a result, Ukrainian diplomats made every effort, but without success, to receive an invitation from NATO to the 2023 Vilnius Summit. This is still a vital task for Ukraine in the near future, and the best solution would be a positive decision by the NATO Summit in Washington (2024), which will mark the 75th anniversary of the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

During the Russian-Ukrainian war, some international organisations, including the UN, proved incapable of acting. The preservation of the UN Security Council in its current form, the Kremlin's veto power and even the presidency of the Russian Federation give official Moscow many opportunities to block many steps of the international community aimed at countering Russia's aggression and war crimes. The Russian-Ukrainian war clearly indicates the relevance and necessity of reforming the UN and its structures to transform it into a real and effective guarantor of peace and security in the regional and global dimensions.

A essential factor in a full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war is a clear understanding of the threat and danger of nuclear blackmail. This is the first war where a nuclear power has seized through occupation and is holding nuclear facilities – nuclear power plants – of another state. The international community and international institutions designed to guarantee security, including in the field of nuclear energy – the UN, OSCE, IAEA – were unprepared for Russia's illegal actions. As a result of Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine and the Kremlin's threats to use nuclear weapons, it has become clear that nuclear status provokes dictators like Putin to irresponsible steps in the international arena, aggression, and war. This is done both to intimidate other states and to achieve its annexationist goals, specifically with regard to Ukraine. Therefore, the problem of comprehensive control in the nuclear sphere (peaceful and military), denuclearisation of Russia, and possible deprivation of its right to nuclear weapons requires urgent expert, scientific, and theoretical analysis and practical solution.

Historical and Prospective Factors

Effective and efficient military support and consolidation of the Ukrainian society and the Armed Forces of Ukraine is the key to victory in the war against the Russian occupiers. This will play a key role in expelling them from the territory of Ukraine, protecting European values and returning to the current international legal norms. In total, for example, the US military and economic aid to Ukraine during the term of the Joe Biden Administration exceeded 66 billion USD (Sokolenko, 2023), and the EU's total contribution to Ukraine under the European Peace Facility (EPF) increased to 3.6 billion EUR. According to an analysis by the Stockholm International Peace Research

Institute (SIPRI), Ukraine ranked third in arms imports in 2022 (Surge in arms..., 2023). The steady growth of comprehensive military assistance from allies and partners has fundamentally strengthened both Ukraine's defensive positions and its offensive capabilities to fully de-occupy Ukrainian territory. In the long run, this will not only bring Ukraine's victory in the war closer but will also allow it to preserve its invaluable human resources, as well as material objects and cultural values.

To defeat Russian militarism, it is important to consolidate measures in various areas: military, information, sanctions, cultural, diplomatic, legal, and religious (Kolodnyi & Fylypovych, 2022; Kyrydon & Troyan, 2023; Reznikov, 2023). Consolidation of efforts in this regard became particularly effective after the outbreak of a full-scale Russian war against Ukraine. Notably, Ukraine receives support not only from Western countries, primarily EU and NATO members. Countries and peoples from all continents have become Ukraine's partners in organising a comprehensive response to the Russian invasion and restoring full territorial integrity and sovereignty. According to experts, only such a "collective Ramstein" can be the key to Ukraine's victory, de-occupation, punishment of those responsible for the act of Russian aggression against Ukraine and the crimes it caused" (Bunyak, 2023), rebuilding Ukraine, and creating a new international – European and global – security configuration.

Therewith, as noted by V. Fisanov (2022), the European idea and practices of democracy should be inextricably linked in the Ukrainian state. The researcher draws on the opinion of Denis de Rougemont on the role of medium and small states: "The small state exists to provide a green corner in the world where as many inhabitants as possible can enjoy the status of a citizen. The small state has nothing but true and real freedom, which ideally compensates for the power of the great powers." But now, as the Ukrainian historian very appropriately notes, independence and sovereignty must be reliably protected, and "Ukraine and Ukrainians must be a kind of model for their neighbours, abandoning the shackles of neocolonialism and Machiavellianism and paving their own difficult path to European democracy".

The historical perspective of the democratic component for Ukraine, Europe, and the world should be emphasised. This is especially important in terms of the overall liberal-democratic development trend. Ukraine's struggle against Russia at the stage of countering full-scale aggression is becoming crucial for the future pattern in the national (Ukrainian), regional (European), and global dimensions. Ukraine's successes on the battlefield and ultimate victory in the war strengthen democratic forces and their ability to effectively counter the rise of authoritarian manifestations in all spheres of life in the past two decades in both individual countries and regions.

Ukraine's victory on the battlefield also paves the way for peace in both the regional and global dimensions. The Ukrainian victory will not only stop Russian aggression, killings, destruction of infrastructure and civilian objects, but will also lay the foundation for negotiations at all levels. This refers not only to reaching a Russian-Ukrainian

understanding, but also to concluding and signing comprehensive peace and security arrangements and agreements within the framework of establishing a new international and global legal order that would guarantee reliable protection against aggression for all members of the international community. Therewith, the violation of the prohibition of war is still the basis of both the current and future international system. This approach concerns not only Russia and counteracting its aggressive policy towards Ukraine but is also aimed at preventing any other state from pursuing its foreign policy goals through expansion and annexation of foreign territories. It is also intended for any state that plans to follow in Russia's footsteps in the future. This means that a decisive rebuff to Russian aggression in Ukraine and Russia's defeat in the illegal war will force states that would consider a similar invasion of another country in the future not to attempt to implement plans that contradict the norms and principles of the current international legal order.

As Ukrainian scholars rightly point out, "achieving sustainable peace is possible either by destroying the enemy as a capable force or by incorporating it into one's system of power, through its subjugation or enslavement. Then the subject of the action is deprived of identity and free will" (Parakhonskyy & Yavorska, 2022). In other words, Ukraine's victory in the Russian-Ukrainian war will have a direct impact on the expansion of the space of democratic peace and strengthening of regional and global security.

International Consequences of Full-Scale Russian Aggression against Ukraine

In general, Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine was the result of a slow and ineffective response of the guarantor states of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, international institutions, primarily the UN and the OSCE, to Russia's hybrid aggression and annexation of part of Ukrainian territory in February-March 2014. Even then and later, Ukrainian and foreign scholars addressed the Russian Federation's comprehensive violation of international law, including the UN Charter and existing treaties and agreements concluded with Ukraine on a bilateral or multilateral basis in 1991-2013 (Van Herpen, 2016; Mahda, 2017; Felshtinsky & Stanczew, 2022). The sanctions imposed by Western powers were limited and partial and did not affect the main industries and sectors of the Russian economy, primarily the energy and military-technical sectors. Moreover, in the context of military-technical cooperation with Russia, Western states and companies fulfilled their commitments made before February 2014 (Kyrydon & Troyan, 2023).

The negotiation process within the so-called Normandy format involving France, Germany, Ukraine, and Russia also proved to be ineffective. The latter actually took part in it on an equal footing with other states, using it to exert direct pressure on Ukraine. Western partners limited themselves to diplomatic attempts to influence the Kremlin but did not discuss the illegality of Russia's annexation of Crimea and the presence of Russian troops in eastern Ukraine. Moreover, as historians and experts

point out, in parallel to the ineffective negotiation process, which eventually reached a deadlock, large-scale programmes of economic cooperation with Russia were implemented (Gorbulin & Badrak, 2022; Kyrydon & Troyan, 2022; Watling *et al.*, 2023). An example of this is the construction of a new branch of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, which was supposed to connect Russia and Germany. Its implementation was completed by early 2022, and only the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine led to the veto of Nord Stream 2.

First the hybrid, and then the full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine has grave international legal consequences. Scholars have focused primarily on Russia's destruction of the European architecture of international relations, which emerged after the dismantling of the global socialist system and the collapse of the USSR (Akande, 2022; Bellinger III, 2022; Dib, 2022). At the same time, they point out the strengths and weaknesses of the international legal order that have emerged under the influence of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war. "The modern legal order is based on the prohibition of war, even if it is not always fully respected," emphasises international law judge S. Breyer. "When Putin launched his war, he put this basic principle at risk. But the test of a legal norm, whether national or international, is not only determined by whether it has been violated. It is also determined by the response to its violation... Accordingly, legal consequences are not only aimed at punishing the perpetrator, but also at deterring others from engaging in future violations" (Hathaway, 2023). Therewith, the war unleashed by Russia has also affected a range of other areas, specifically, researchers note the increase in oil prices for the population of not only Europe but also the United States of America (Appiah-Otoo, 2023), the beginning of an artificial food and energy crisis (Behnassi & El Haiba, 2022; Orhan, 2022), a decline in the GDP of EU countries (Liadze, 2023), and the risk of complex vulnerability for the global financial system (Qureshi *et al.*, 2022).

Russia's conventional full-scale war aimed at destroying Ukraine's state independence and destroying the material and value foundations of Ukrainian society has also created a powerful existential threat to Europe and the international order. There was even discussion of the end of the "modern global legal order" (Hathaway, 2023). This resulted in a change in the Western paradigm of countering Russian aggression, especially under the influence of national consolidation and the heroic resistance of the Ukrainian people. The consolidated fight against Russian aggression was based on four types of response from the Ukrainian and international community. These should include condemnation of the Kremlin's illegal war, expulsion of Russia from international institutions and sanctions against it, arming Ukraine, and legal and material liability of Russia and its citizens, including the president and other high-ranking officials.

As a result, it was after 24 February 2022 that Ukraine began to receive powerful, comprehensive Western military, technical, humanitarian, financial, and diplomatic support to successfully fight against Russia. It was for this purpose that the Ukraine Defence Contact Group, which includes

more than 50 countries, was created. The fundamental outcome of the full-scale phase of Russian aggression against Ukraine was a general understanding of the need for Russia's defeat in the war, as evidenced by the explanation of American historian T. Snyder and the statement of NATO Secretary General J. Stoltenberg (Snyder, 2023; Stoltenberg, 2023). Specifically, they addressed Ukraine's crucial role at the present stage in the struggle to preserve democratic human values, overcome authoritarian tendencies, prevent genocidal practices, reduce the risk of nuclear war and nuclear proliferation, eliminate the threat of a slide into chaos in international relations, and restore the basic principles and foundations of the international legal order. In this context, T. Snyder (2023) emphasised: "Ukrainians have given us a chance to turn this century around, a chance for freedom and security that we could not have achieved on our own, no matter who we are. All we must do is help them win".

Conclusions

To summarise the analysis of the full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war, we will highlight four main aspects: military-historical, state-identity, integration, and security, and historical and prospective. In the military-historical dimension, the key conclusion is that it is necessary and possible to successfully counteract aggression by a powerful state, namely Russia, in the context of modern asymmetric network-centric warfare of the fourth generation. The focus of the state-identity dimension is on the fact that national unity and consolidation of Ukrainian society is the key factor in successfully countering Russian aggression to preserve Ukraine's independence and full sovereignty within the 1991 borders. The integration and security aspect determines three basic factors of Ukraine's current situation and future development: comprehensive assistance from Western countries to wage a successful war against Russia, and Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic perspective, i.e., its membership in the EU and NATO. Finally, the fundamental historical perspective of the full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war is Ukraine's victory and return to the current international legal norms.

The prospective plane of analysing the nature and essence of full-scale Russian aggression from the standpoint of Ukrainian, European, and global development prospects deserves further research. Ukraine's perspective envisages the complete de-occupation of its territory, security guarantees as a result of full membership in NATO and the EU, and Ukraine's transformation into a powerful regional player. The European perspective should be based on the awareness of all European actors of the primacy of security principles and foundations for building vertical and horizontal mutually beneficial relations in the economic, financial, scientific and technical, and other spheres. The global perspective should envisage the development of the world's profound interdependence based on strict adherence to the international legal framework of interstate interactions as the basis for a new architecture of the world order.

Comprehension and generalisation of the full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine opens a scientific,

theoretical, and applied perspective for a comprehensive investigation and development of ways and means to minimise the risks of increasing conflict potential in the system of modern international relations at the inter-state, regional, and global levels. Further results of such studies will be based on a broader empirical and theoretical framework but will certainly consider the experience already gained in the field of historical research and

understanding of the key factors of the full-scale stage of Russian aggression against Ukraine.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Російсько-українська війна 2014-2023: інтерференційні чинники війни

Анотація. Російська агресія проти України наприкінці лютого 2022 року переросла у фазу повномасштабної війни. Це викликало потужний опір української держави та суспільства, а також західні антиросійські санкції. Російсько-українська війна вийшла далеко за межі України й Росії, набула регіонального і світового значення. Проміжні підсумки й результати війни спонукають до розуміння та узагальнення досвіду для України, Європи і світу. Мета дослідження спрямована на аналіз ключових аспектів повномасштабної фази російсько-української війни в контексті їхнього впливу на національні, регіональні, глобальні процеси. Методологія дослідження ґрунтується на принципах науковості, історизму, системності, узагальнення, поліфакторності в поєднанні з використанням методів аналізу і синтезу, історико-порівняльного й історико-генетичного, системного і структурно-функціонального аналізу. Висвітлення аспектів широкомасштабного етапу російсько-української війни базуються на аналізі сучасного стану ситуації на фронті, військово-технічних і дипломатичних зусиль для забезпечення перемоги України. Це необхідно для припинення російської агресії та злочинів російських окупантів, відновлення територіальної цілісності та суверенітету України, покарання агресорів, повернення до міжнародного правопорядку та забезпечення тривалого і стабільного миру в Європі та світі. Ще одне узагальнення полягає в усвідомленні союзниками і партнерами України того, що вона протистоїть мілітаризму і авторитаризму, захищає демократичні права і свободи, загальнолюдські цінності. Українці своєю стійкістю та боротьбою дали нові імпульси північноатлантичному партнерству та євроінтеграції. На перспективу це має вагомое практичне значення для зміцнення демократичних пріоритетів європейського і світового цивілізаційного розвитку. Прикладний аспект дослідження аспектів повномасштабної фази російсько-української війни важливий і для утвердження демократичних тенденцій еволюції сучасних міжнародних відносин і світового порядку

Ключові слова: російсько-українська війна 2014-2023; повномасштабна агресія; аспекти війни; міжнародні відносини; світопорядок
