

THE PUTIN DOCTRINE: WHAT IS IT? THE RUSSIAN STRATEGIC ISSUE AND THE ENLARGED NATIONAL SECURITY

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Introduction

There are several ways that help us to understand Russia's political option in Ukraine's War in the 2022 year². Considering this conflict, one can mention Russian expansionist drive, represented by its governing elite and Vladimir Putin's government. This drive, as well as the international system revisionism, is a product of the Soviet Union's demise in 1991, a tragic moment for the Kremlin. At that time, as Tim Marshall (2018) points out, the fear was the State's political dismantling due to regional clashes, first at Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Geopolitical, sociological, historical perceptions, linked to a social psychology view, may be tools for investigating the reasons why Russia intends to rebuild its imperial policy stance, as a second nature of its Slavic soul. It may be considered an ethos that in some historic moments emerges and has the impact of changing great powers actions that are competing against each other for areas that are relevant for Russian political interest. In the 19th century, the dispute was against the British Empire. Nowadays, the struggle is focused on the United States and its armed, and European body, the Atlantic Alliance (BRZEZINSKI, 1987).

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² The analysis of this war is circumstantial, it is not our goal to explain its developments. Even though there is no way to set apart the ongoing war from the Putin Doctrine, it was not conceived to justify or explain this conflict.

Contemporary social sciences usually do not present reductionist analysis of their object or search for broader investigations that adopt several conceptual tools. Methodological moderation is a convenient starting point for studying Russian present or past issues. Research that combines geopolitical, historical, and economic factors may be convenient.

Therefore, one issue that deserves to be researched in our point of view, can be found in the matter of the Putin Doctrine by Sergei Karaganov (2022), head of the Moscow Council of Foreign Policy and Defense, that is not well-known for several reasons, one of them the current European war. In this sense, the goal of this article is to analyse the Putin Doctrine, its birth and evolution in Russian politics, its link to the past and its agenda.

Although a political conservative, Karaganov also presents the relevance of making use of Social Sciences to understand Russia, including the rescue of Marxism-Leninism and its contributions for the country. Learning from these disciplines is essential for the development and understanding of national matters. The author stresses the inconvenience of the “national question”, of Western critical assumptions and the new Academic US left, whose focus is attached to Identity politics and the appraisal of anti-traditional social movements (KARAGANOV, 2022).

So, we can put forward some characteristics of the Putin Doctrine: 1- Admit Russian’s frustration for believing in the West’s good will in the worst political and economic moment faced by the country; 2- A concentrated effort to rebuild political power in the face of the United States and European Union opportunism, as exemplified by 2014 Euromaidan in Ukraine and Washington’s attempt to lure some former ex-Russian satellites for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), such as Georgia; 3- The Atlantic Alliance own enlargement, without security guarantees for a weak Russia due to its institutional crisis; and 4- To evaluate the best way on how to frame democracy, social order and university education (KARAGANOV, 2022).

For its turn, doctrine is a concept present in Diplomacy, Canonical and International Law, as a coherent set of basic ideas, supported by philosophy and “universal” values³. This concept gained ground in interstate politics, mostly during the Cold War with the launch of the 1947 Truman Doctrine, and other agendas in the 20th century such as the 1980s Carter Doctrine (BENETTI, 1986).

³ Regarding this issue, we focus on the analysis of Christian Caubet, that is closely linked to our arguments in this article, as it focuses on fundamental geopolitical matters, as the occupation of space and international rivers (CAUBET, 1991). For this author, the relation between power politics and the international law doctrine is not mutually exclusive in principle.

One can mention that this essay is only a contribution for an urgent issue in International Relations that is igniting debates in part of the academic community and the press in general, Russian expansionism and its conception of international security that, in our view, can be defined as enlarged national security. For Moscow, the dividing line between the international and the domestic whereas considering this issue is very thin⁴. This is why it is not a part of our objective to exhaust such a broad and complex topic, but to present some of its features.

The period analysed in this article begins in 1991, with the demise of the Soviet Union, till January 2022, that marks the beginning of military exercises in some parts of Ukraine, namely the Donbass region, promoted by Putin's government. Our theoretical and methodological framework is based on classical and contemporary geopolitical literature, Halford Mackinder and Zbigniew Brzezinski, and International Relations realist thinkers such as Henry Kissinger and John Mearsheimer. Nevertheless, that does not mean that we will not be able to reference some liberal authors, such as Francis Fukuyama and Joseph Stiglitz.

Apart from this Introduction, our essay is divided as such: a first part in which we propose a brief review of the concept of doctrine, as used by interstate politics and the State's national power principle. Following, we present an analysis of the Putin Doctrine, seen as both a result and as a drive for Moscow's revisionism in the face of the current geopolitical balance. In the third part, we examine some passages of the 1990s and of this emerging system, as an era of globalization, liberalization and "shock therapy" that disturbed the Russian **quantum**. Last, but not least, in our Final Thoughts some reflections will be brought.

Doctrine Characteristics

In the frame of this article, it is convenient to explain the concept of Doctrine and, later, of Power Doctrine. This will help us to better understand what is represented by the Putin Doctrine and its call to dispute the current State system at play, that is under the challenge of other powers beyond Russia, such as China, Iran and possibly India.

⁴ We consider that the "enlarged national security" concept is convenient due to Russia's historic stance on this issue. For Moscow politics, security matters do not have a clear-cut frontier. For Russia, the perception of frontier is not exclusively linked to the physical aspect or demarcation of territory, but it also implies cultural issues. The notion of "near abroad", frontier States with Russian-Slavic tradition is an example of this view.

In a more specific definition, added to the above statement, Doctrine is a concept that can be seen as a moral and programmatic framework of certain social and political institutions that keep the compromise of change or positioning. In the catholic movement, one can define the Papal Bull *Rerum Novarum* proclaimed by Leo XIII as a Doctrine. In this document, the Pope criticized the effects of the urban and industrial capitalism in the first decade of the 20th century: poverty increase, the loss of moral values and financial greed. The cure for these maladies was in a culture of Christian charity, tradition, and solidarity. This was the Church's social Doctrine (BENETTI, 1986).

Going even further, Doctrine was also a concept linked to the documented condemnation of the abusive relationship of great powers with poor countries in the Southern hemisphere. As an example, the 1902 Drago Doctrine criticized the use of US military in Venezuela and other nations to collect their debts. The statement by Argentinian diplomat Luís Maria Drago tried to be recognized as a rule by International Law, against the violation of sovereignty in exchange for external and other debts (CORREA, 1967).

For those well versed in these matters, although it may sound as common sense, one should not forget the 1947 Truman Doctrine, which role was to contain Soviet expansion in Western Europe and to offer military cooperation to concerned third nations. This concept was a call to end US policy behaviors seen as inconvenient such as the withdrawal from the European war stage after the conflict (as in the 1919 Versailles Treaty) or the adoption of isolationism since US power was the holder of the world's balance.

The 1980s Carter Doctrine could also be mentioned as it proclaimed US right to military intervene to uphold the freedom of sea routes, mostly in the Middle East and its surroundings since they affected its energy security: the control of international waters for the navigation of oil-tankers (MELLO, 1997). Also, this document was used to justify US position against the Soviet Union in its war with Afghanistan and to stop the export of Iran's fundamentalist revolution both in 1979.

In our point of view, not all interstate political reactive policies should be seen as Doctrine, as considered in its full meaning. Nevertheless, we cannot argue against the fact the Truman's mission was doctrinaire if one considers the well-known document written by George Kennan, the Long Telegram (and the article *The Sources of Soviet Conduct*) in which the American diplomat proposed an effective way of facing Soviet Union power. Mostly, a Soviet power that should be accounted for and contained for the defense of the Western European territory (KENNAN, 1947).

Kennan's report gained ground in US strategic community as it

proclaimed that the tools for dealing with the Soviet Union could not be conventional, as if the country was like others. An understanding of the Russian soul was needed, such as its undying compromise to the goals that should be reached. As an example of this attitude, the Soviet Union actions in Greece could be mentioned, despite the higher costs it was generating for Moscow in its quest to be at the core of Europe's politics. So, the Truman Doctrine was created.

Similarly, Carter's stance can be seen as a Doctrine as the government envisioned US power projection overseas, in Nicholas Spykman geopolitical theory of Rimland, in which Brzezinski interpretations were based. Brzezinski agenda was to promote US penetration in Eurasia's periphery, to counterbalance the intended Soviet Union's expansions into the Indian Ocean, disturbing US influence. This view of the "Struggle for Eurasia" was an updated version of the old power clash amongst land and sea powers (BRZEZINSKI, 1987).

In line with our analysis, we state that a Doctrine needs to be conceived in a document (or moment) that considers its psyche. Carlos de Meira Mattos believes that the Power Doctrine cannot be created without considering the reality of governing elites as well as the investigative and selective work to define the real goals that one given State should follow, to reach the condition of a great power in a context of power politics. We are making use of the concept of Power Doctrine because we believe it will be a useful contextualization for the analysis of the Putin Doctrine, as both are linked to similar issues, being one of them the idea of the territorial State.

Mattos, sharing Arnold Toynbee analysis that was very popular in Brazil in the 1960s and 1970s, argues that the Power Doctrine needs to offer *National or Critical Goals*. In the Brazilian case, the rise to the status of great power was expected in the long run, because of urgent State reforms such national integration. Even though the document mentions Brazil, its analysis can be applied to other States and parts of the world, as many players intended to build their power in face of global conflicts (MATTOS, 1970).

Therefore, the Brazilian military, as inspired by the British intellectual, sees that some goals in the Power Doctrine are of geopolitical nature. Some issues that are common for great powers could be found in the following lines, even somewhat dated, and limited, as some are present in Russia and its efforts to regain its decision-making role:

- 1- Its sovereignty must be projected over a significant territory;
- 2- nowadays, a great power can be defined as the one that projects its management influence in world dimensions;
- 3- A modern power should be characterized

by its capacity to manage a larger area than its own territory. This directive power does not need to be political and military. It could be, mostly, economical, or ideological (MATTOS, 1970: 44).

So, we can put forward, as an operational concept, that the Putin Doctrine bears a set of specific contents that compose a program destined to contribute for the elevation of Russian power, in the areas that seem most urgent in its geopolitical condition and enlarged international and national security. We consider that an analysis of such a document is relevant and would help us to understand two connected actions, free of any moral value that one may have towards the Putin government.

First, the existence of the Putin Doctrine is linked to the coming of age of Kremlin's criticism of Russia's secondary (or subordinate) condition during the 1990s. In particular, the relative dismantling of State power inherited from the Soviet Union, such as its international clout, including the chance of a larger territorial crumbling due to the 1994 Chechen War. For its turn, the liberal government of Boris Yeltsin that came into power into 1991 till 1999 brings back bad memories for the ones who imagined a better place for "Mother Russia" in a challenging world, as he was the architect of many of these deconstructing measures.

Second, the document is useful as Russia is taking part into a war which is not limited to the clash with Ukraine but extends to the combination of US and NATO power that is trying to strategically encircle Russia. Indeed, a measure linked to a protracted Washington goal to project its hegemony in the post-Soviet Caucasus and to contain the rise of the other competing powers. Reagan's government in the 1980s was based on Brzezinski analysis of choosing strategic linchpins to counter the Soviet Union such as Western Germany and Poland and instigate a psychological war with the support of Pope John Paul II to undermine communist ideology. Brzezinski was a thinker that was very useful in the Cold War and, in the 1990s, had suggested ways to stop Russian power.

This task still goes on in *El Gran Tablero Mundial*, a book in which the former National Security Advisor of Jimmy Carter's government suggests that the US should be at Eurasia's Heartland (BRZEZINSKI, 1997). It is not by chance that we mention Brzezinski's name in our article, as he is extremely relevant in the current Russian geopolitical debate and is mentioned in Putin Doctrine as an engaged intellectual that had represented Western's efforts against Moscow (KARAGANOV, 2022).

The Putin Doctrine Framework

Sergei Karaganov believes that his manifest has two features: first, as mentioned, it is a reaction to Russia's fate in the 1990s, a decade of limited strategic and economic capacities. It can be called reactive to the balance of the recent past, seen as detrimental, since Russia had not opposed the Atlantic Alliance enlargement and NATO's interference in areas that were not under its umbrella, as in Libya and Syria cases in 2011. In Libya, Russia was not able to act, but in its Middle Eastern ally Moscow was able to relatively counter US military presence.

The negative condition in which Russia was living was not only limited to structural issues, economics, and geopolitics. Some matters, such as university education in the country had their standards lowered. The abandonment of relevant issues for Russia and the adoption of Western "acritical" views of the free market, deregulation, and some academic trends that would prove harmful to the national spirit would affect foreign policy and security. For some, these views were helping to build an opinion that it would be better for Russia to accept its historical defeat and fatalism.

Second, the Putin Doctrine can also be defined as forthcoming, as it prescribes the methods to reduce Russia's vulnerabilities, inherited from the Draconian treaties, that could reestablish the country as a viable power and help build some qualified regional relations in areas of Moscow's significant interest and historical projection, namely the Central Asia and the Caucasus. These were regions in which the attempt to create sovereign States, with all the weight that this concept brings, was a broken failed promise as there were no communities of stable and economically modern people (KARAGANOV, 2022).

There were no cultural and historical tradition amongst the population that could cement the centralization of the State. How is it possible to promote national values and democracy in a region that first was under the czarist rule and later under Soviet control till its end in 1991? There was only an attachment to natural resources, hydrocarbons, which promoted Western interest in the global energy economy (SÉBILLE-LOPEZ, 2007).

During the period in which the United States and the European Union searched to promote the existence of these sovereign States, the reality found was the one of several political units and collectivities that had not planned to live as a State, as it is conceived in the West: a minimally coherent entity, with a national cultural, territorial and political identity. In this sense, this is like a traditional European reality, of national values, that is slowly disappearing (FERNANDES, 2017).

Agreeing with Fernandes, the Putin Doctrine thinker see two divergent political realities: on one side the European Union argues in favor of a post-national reality, with the decentralization of political power, in favor of Brussels and international institutions such as NATO that, truly, is led by Washington; on the other side, Russia values national, popular, and religious unity. Specifically, a sovereignty that is seen as sacred for its country and the near abroad, that includes Ukraine, which sovereignty is linked to Russia's (PUTIN 2021).

Regarding democracy, national will and political organization, Karaganov evaluates that this form of government should project Russia social values, and not only reflect a culturally different stance. In other words, one should not expect that the concept of democracy is limited to the Western liberal view.

But, this time, what the Putin government must do is establish a project of regional cooperation and not hierarchical reproduction of political units, in the same way that happened with czarist Russia or the Soviet Union itself – basically, multinational experiences more of domination and less of complementarity and cooperation in the broadest sense of the term (KARAGANOV, 2022). The Putin government took into account the economic slowdown the West is going through, its acknowledged decline and, paradoxically, the hostility that international security institutions have started to show not only against Russia, but also against other countries, including China. It was as if the frustration of losing power was compensated with more aggressiveness:

There is no need to interfere or to try to influence the internal dynamics of the West, whose elites are desperate enough to start a new cold war against Russia. What we should do instead is use various foreign policy instruments – including military ones – to establish certain red lines. Meanwhile, as the Western system continues to steer toward moral, political, and economic degradation, non-Western powers (with Russia as mayor players) will inevitably see their geo-economic and geo-ideological position strengthen (KARAGANOV, 2022: 11).

Nowadays, Russia would be in a peculiar and favorable situation. As a great power, domestically satisfied, the country has access to all its needs regarding economy and raw materials. Considering diplomatic relations, the author believes that the rapprochement with China is useful. Nonetheless, Beijing has expansionist plans, in areas that interest Russia. Even though, this relevant neighbor is the best partner to establish a block to counter the West. One cannot disagree that the dynamic core of the international economy is in

Asia.

There is no doubt that if there is Russian resentment against the West, it is found in the expansion of NATO to the East, without reflecting on whether there was such a need, and whether it was worth ignoring a country that, despite everything, kept geopolitical relevance and importance. The integration of Poland into that organization, in 1999, already pronounced the maxim that the future would hold conflicting situations, of high intensity, as Russia sought to gain self-respect.

Warsaw's entry into the Atlantic Alliance gave clear signs that Moscow would not be able to oppose it; the country did not have enough power resources to assert its position against the West, in the same way that the Soviet Union would in preserving its area of interest. The author writes that after Poland, all that remained was to wait for the expansion of the Atlantic Alliance with the participation of the Baltic countries, which were not embarrassed to exchange their sovereignties for the "supposed Western protection". Now, if Western strategic expansion wants to rely on Ukraine, it must stop, or there can be no mutual respect and peaceful coexistence in Europe (KARAGANOV, 2022).

In an analysis, which may be critical of the Putin Doctrine, there is no doubt that there were efforts to make the US the holder of the balance in the international system, in which Russia would be subordinated with the end of the Cold War; not just her, but the entire European continent, deprived of the Warsaw Pact. However, for Angela Stent, the observation made is that Putin overplayed his hand to defend his objectives, even implying that he wants to recreate the Soviet Union.

The evolution of this behavior would come to the point of "underestimating" US power, considered weak to face major challenges. Likewise, this would extend to Germany, whose concern is "putting the house in order" and the European Union in general. In this respect, the invasion of Ukraine would only be a first step towards giving Russia what it thinks is politically just, even if this claim throws the world into chaos (STENT, 2022).

In the Putin Doctrine, according to Karaganov, there would be no Russian commitment to violence. However, war would not be ruled out if the US and the European Union put Russian security at risk, that is, if they call on Ukraine to become a "testing ground" for hypothetical NATO geopolitical exercises to intimidate Russia through the stationing of long-range tactical weapons, in the same way as in Poland and the Czech Republic.

Furthermore, the use of Kiev to wage irregular, propaganda, ideological warfare through Western-funded organizations against the Russian worldview must also be resisted. In defense of the spiritual and historical unity between Ukraine and Russia (daughters of the Principality of Kiev), Putin explains his criticism in line with Karaganov's article, since the work to disrupt the

Ukrainian national culture is essential for anti-Russia policies:

Along with that we are witnessing not just complete dependence but direct external control, including the supervision of the Ukrainian authorities, security services and armed forces by foreign advisers, military “development” of the territory of Ukraine and deployment of NATO infrastructure. It is no coincidence that the aforementioned flagrant law on “indigenous peoples” was adopted under the cover of large-scale NATO exercises in Ukraine (PUTIN 2021: 13).

Within this vision, if there is an area that is really affected, for some purposes, it is Western Europe. The Old World, ancient arena of civilization and vigor, became a military appendage of the United States, without its own will, to design its destiny and interests to pursue. Collective security, coordinated in Washington, undermined continental autonomy, and did not improve it. The withdrawal of command over strategic matters, from London, Berlin, or Paris, did not help to improve European security, it only demonstrated the apathy of those centers, as follows:

As for NATO, it is very clear what we should do. We need to undermine the bloc’s moral and political legitimacy and refuse any institutional partnership, since its counterproductivity is obvious. Only the military should continue to communicate, but as an auxiliary channel that would supplement dialogue with the DOD and defense ministries of leading European Nations. After all, it’s not Brussels that makes strategically important decisions” (KARAGANOV, 2022: 9).

To think that the existence of NATO would be a sign of guarantee for Europe would be misleading. Those powers that now live under Washington’s guidance would have to know that Russia’s role is not to create animosity, but to be able to cooperate with the continent. To help with issues that truly contribute to obtaining advantages for all sides, and not to feed principles, whose aim is the immobilization of power and political hierarchy, according to what is found under cosmopolitan, technocratic, and anti-popular elite governments (KARAGANOV, 2022).

Even if Russia is close to territorial satisfaction, or essential raw materials for its economy, there are a good number of issues to be overcome by a national program consistent with what is thought to be the spirit and needs of the country. University reform, in social sciences, international relations and economics, has already been mentioned. But Russia still suffers from having lost technological dynamism and more advanced science, compared to the West.

Another worrying item for the Kremlin is the demographic weight loss that has occurred since the end of the Soviet Union. Regarding this, there is the view that population is power; that is to say, high demography is important to occupy empty spaces in a wide territory. With a population of around 140 million inhabitants, Russia would not be able to spread across Siberia and, from there, avoid demographic imbalance, a matter of national security. Indeed, there are estimates that even point to a loss of population mass below 140 million, if the country does not reverse the low birth rate and prevent deaths through new health policies (KAPLAN, 2013).

A less known fact is that Russia's standard of living, after the end of the Soviet Union until the 2000s, was closer to the group of countries of the former Third World, far from the European industrialized powers. In fact, the life expectancy of the population in general dropped to unknown levels for that type of society, with modern and cultured traits. The resurgence of malnutrition and the increase in alcoholism can be cited as an explanation for the country's demographic issue (GOWAN, 2003). Perhaps Russia was the only case of a great power that sees its quality-of-life plummet without suffering military defeat in the strict sense.

With the elements exposed above, we can say that the Putin Doctrine is a reflection on events and political distress that Russia went through shortly after its resurgence as a territorial State in 1991. The 1990s are considered the lowest moments of self-esteem in that country in recent times. We will try to demonstrate this reasoning in the next part of this essay.

The Roaring 1990s

First, we would like to inform you that we would like to use a stylistic-methodological resource found in famous human sciences books: increasing or decreasing certain periods of analysis according to the circumstances. Our 1990s, for long term purposes, does not end in 1999 or 2000. It ends in 2010 for two reasons: 1 – It defines the power ceiling of the US and Western Europe because of the financial issue, brought about by the breakdown of 2008 and the rise of China; 2 – by Vladimir Putin's quest to restructure Russia's power.

The Russian restructuring, even if it took time, because of the country's economic limits, had managed to maintain the power of President Bashar Al Assad, of Syria (Russian ally), in the face of American harassment from 2011 onwards, a variant of the Arab Spring, whose objective was to remove rulers considered anti-democratic and anti-Western. Russia was not able to take the same action in 2003, in the deposition of the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein, which until the 1980s received Soviet support.

The title of this part of the essay, reproduces how the economist Joseph Stiglitz named his book about the success that was the economy of the United States in the 1990s which promoted a prolonged period of economic growth, and full employment, through free trade, financial deregulation, services, and greater freedom for the banking system (STIGLITZ, 2003).

The author does not fail to show some perplexity about certain policies signed by the Bill Clinton administration (from 1993 to 2000) that contributed, albeit involuntarily, to the financial crisis of 2008, which dragged almost the entire international economic system into instability. A problem that affected the United States itself in its scale of power. The preservation of the same economic policy of the Reagan government in the Federal Reserve, already with Alan Greenspan (1987), can serve as an example of the “contradictions” of that democratic government.

Also in military matters, there was the impression that the United States, in the 1990s, lived in “clear skies”, since its budget for the area was greater than that of all the great powers combined. There was no parallel in the history of the international system for such a phenomenon – not even the British Empire enjoyed such distance in its time of hegemony. In the view of Henry Kissinger, US dominance was atypical in all terms (KISSINGER, 1994).

It is not feasible to observe a great power keeping so much advantage over its competitors due to hegemony or the assembly of a competing block. In the current century, the pro-United States war condition had already begun to change due to the economic crisis of 2008 and 2009, diluting itself a little. However, we can see that the budgets still indicated a good lead for Washington. Let’s look at the data for 2010 and 2011, in billions of dollars:

Country	2010	2011
United States	698,3	689,6
China	121,1	129,3
Russia	58,6	64,1
France	59,1	58,2
United Kingdom	58,1	57,9

(Source: SILVA FIHO; MORAES, 2013)

The economic and military situation of the United States was unique in the international system, and this allowed them to formulate plans for expansion in other areas of the globe, as well as preserving those that were created during the Cold War. Because of the events of September 11, 2001, the Carter Doctrine, even without being mentioned, was reinforced with the military takeover of Iraq and the engagement of US naval forces in the

waters of the United Arab Emirates. There was an effort to enforce the “Bush Doctrine” that, in part, survived in the government of Barak Obama, rethought so that the United States closely followed Russia and China in Eurasia.

All this allowed Washington to choose Central Asia and the Caucasus as new testing grounds of American power, as it sought to bring former protectorates of the Soviet Union under its influence. Kazakhstan, Georgia, and Azerbaijan could be new “strategic linchpins” that the US would use to build a safety net against a renewed Russia. Otherwise, they encouraged the war of secession that Chechnya had waged against the Russian central power in 1994.

On the European side, the operation was also carried out, even starting with the debacle of the Soviet Union in 1991. Therefore, a task that could not be delayed was to know what to do with NATO, since its counterpart, the Pact of Warsaw, had disappeared. The initial debate on the Atlantic Alliance considered that it should not end, but rather become a guarantee of European balance, since German unification, hailed as political and moral progress, aroused fear in its former enemies, such as Great Britain. (GOWAN, 2003). Berlin’s admission to the Organization would be instrumental in easing some parts of the continent. Nevertheless, the core of the issue had changed as the organization was spreading eastwards, in countries that were once part of the Soviet regional security bloc: Poland, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Romania and Hungary migrated to NATO under the feeling that they could make a stand against Russia and, from that, receive Western economic help.

After the first expansion stage, the Atlantic Alliance reached the Baltic countries, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia with the aim of setting up a type of anti-Russian “cordon sanitaire”. And the plan would be even more complete if it included Ukraine, whose location and importance, as a territorial entity, would give the West greater projection. The Ukrainian State is the best served in natural resources and with the best strategic position, including its exit to the Black Sea. But Ukraine was not yet on the agenda.

The situation was tense even if the US did not have a large projection of power and if Russia could offer a minimum of resistance. In 1999, even though Moscow had shown opposition to NATO in the former Yugoslav war, in support of Serbia, it could not show more than protests and discontent. Even so, within the scope of the debates, a Russian deputy appeared, an ultranationalist, who made a mark by invoking a new role for Russia in the conformation of a new Europe, which no longer ignored the weight of Moscow in the international order.

Vladimir Jirinovski presented a very sensitive point of view for that situation. In an interview provided in 1994 he preaches that the Eastern part of Europe must be geographically reshaped between the two major

continental powers: unified Germany and Russia, which should be militarily rebuilt. Some countries, for that matter, would have to be incorporated into these two political units that, effectively, matter in the balance of continental power.

In the spatial conception of the Russian member of parliament, it is convenient to let the nature of politics take its course: the three Baltic countries and Ukraine must be reincorporated into Russia, in the same way they were in the imperial and Soviet period. Poland is expected to concede territory to “Greater Germany” in the center of Europe; it should also integrate with Berlin, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and perhaps Kaliningrad. The result of this expansionist manifestation would be cooperative activity between Germany and Russia, rather than a ludic and falsely virtuous vision of European integration (FSP, 1994).

Leonel Mello understands that Jirinovski’s vision is a small manifestation of Russian geopolitical culture, of Mackinder, in search of pre-eminence and solidification of power in Eastern Europe and Eurasia. The new arrangement sought by the Kremlin resembles a map prior to the First World War, in which European policy was clearer: a military power in the center, Germany, and another in the East, Russia:

Broadly speaking, the current context presents the following configuration: a reunified Germany emerging as a great power in the center of Europe; a Russia amputated in its peripheral territories but retaining control of most of the Eurasian Heartland; a mosaic of buffer States from the Baltic Sea to the Black and Adriatic Seas oscillating pendularly between the two powers (MELLO, 1994: 64).

When former President George H. Bush announced the New World Order in 1990, he followed the path opened by theorists who had gained publicity for having tried to predict a better, more democratic, and fair international system, compared to the one that ended with the Cold War. Francis Fukuyama was one of these minor prophets. His text, *The End of History?* states that there would be no more high-intensity conflicts, the fall of the Berlin Wall ended the ideological conflicts.

Taking advantage of the philosophy of the German George F. Hegel Fukuyama believes that if there are wars, they will be fought for minor reasons, they will not carry the germ of contesting the international values that would subdue democracy and liberalism. Democracy and liberalism would be the Cold War winners, thus becoming references for the New Order (FUKUYAMA, 1989). The problem is that the Stanford professor limited himself to citing communism as a practical ideology in international relations,

other ideologies were not on his radar, not least because they did not exist or were not mature enough to become contestation tools (FERNANDES, 2017).

Even Kissinger was touched by the good news for America. Of course, more mischievous, and knowledgeable about world affairs, in his deepest state, the former adviser to the Nixon government knew that that international order would be permeated with contradictions, which would lead to challenges from all sides. The idea that the United States would be the leader of the interstate world based on moral and idealistic examples, typical of a frugal and self-contained power, would not take shape for a long time. Washington's message, with this content, would be seen as cynical by enemies and counterproductive by allies (KISSINGER, 1994).

However, the student of international politics had a feeling that the Russian bear, injured by the bites of the American whale, would recover enough to be a nuisance to the American ideals of balance of power, in which only the United States would profit without having to do much work. The world was supposed to be multipolar, despite the pain this could cause. In terms of Russia nowadays, this is what the Putin government seeks to demonstrate by claiming that the rise of the Global South, also incorporated by the BRICS, is the opposite of the traditional Western weight that even seeks to secure itself through neocolonial measures (PUTIN in RT, 10.13.2022).

It is evident that a great power, practically uncontested militarily, that expresses moral values of great scope, for having defeated the grouping of totalitarianisms, will not admit losses without at least fighting to conserve some specific advantage, however: "The relative military power of the United States will gradually go into decay. The absence of a well-defined adversary will produce internal pressure for resources to be directed to other priorities, a process that has already begun" (KISSINGER, 1994: 16).

Perhaps the principle that the world was fomenting a second (or third) Cold War would be a sample of the anguish that the United States, in the first place, would demonstrate by seeing the rapid changes that occur in the international system, allowing greater space to players who, not so long ago, were just supporting actors in the great game of international politics. It may be that all this appears as a symptom of the changes that Kissinger predicted.

Final Thoughts

In 2014, during the hot events at Maidan Square, called Euromaidan, in the Ukrainian capital, there was an alert that caught the attention of Putin government in Russia. The reason for this was not unimportant, but of a geopolitical nature, especially for a power that for centuries has seen its

foreign policy from the perspective of Eastern Europe, not separating what is its national interest from other countries in the region (MARSHALL, 2018).

Soon after the defection of the Ukrainian government allied to Moscow of Viktor Ianukovytsch due to the protests of the Euromaindan, Russia, quickly entered the Crimea, until then an Ukrainian territory. In Putin's political calculations, the replacement of a former representative to install a representative politically, closer to the European Union, should not go unnoticed.

After all, Crimea was not just any region in the Russian mind. In addition to the cultural and historical imagery of being part of "Mother Russia", there is the strategic port city of Sevastopol, where the Russian navy stations a substantial part of its fleet for its access to the Mediterranean Sea. The warning appeared to Russian policy makers due to the fact that opening Ukraine to suggestions from the European Union could possibly promote the country's entry into NATO and, consequently, make Russia lose the right to use Sevastopol. In 1991, with the independence of Ukraine, Moscow began to use that port through a bilateral treaty.

One of the effects of Western, pro-NATO operations could be the launching of a new "naval doctrine" in which the Putin government calls for the weight of the Russian navy to be realized, initially, in the areas of the Baltic and Black Seas and parts of the Pacific. In fact, the rise of the Russian fleet would be an essential component to integrate the configuration of a larger doctrine and indicate changes that may occur in the present global geopolitics (PUTIN in RT: 05.08.2022).

In a practically zero-sum political climate, Kiev's possible relationship with the Atlantic Alliance could mean a loss of prestige for the Kremlin, which would raise doubts as to whether Russia would even have the strength to bankroll its projection of force as a relevant power. We know that in "great politics" discredit usually exacts a high price from the inattentive ruler.

Perhaps countries not used to, or not participating in, the heightened tensions of international politics, can afford the luxury of indifference. But this logic cannot be valid for Russia, China, the USs, Israel (plus a few) because they cannot show any signs of vacillation or stalemate, without this being interpreted as weakness by their opponent. Namely, an opponent who can later get excited, and grow politically, on the indecisions of his opponents.

There are practically no disputes about the maxim that the international system is changing. Whether the change will be for a better, fairer, or democratic one is not on the agenda. It would not be expected, within the systematic use of power, for the US to descend in the management of global affairs without, at least, showing some resistance or leaving obstacles in the way of those who intend to rise to the top. Therefore, trying to leave

some mines in the Russian path, in its traditional area of operation, should not show signs of novelty.

Fostering policies to attract former members of the Warsaw Pact to join NATO; infiltrations of all sorts in the Caucasus, and even in Russia itself (Chechnya), were tools for the diversification and disruption of Russian power as far as possible. A power that enjoys having the largest economy in the world, and having the largest military budget, does not let itself fall without at least disturbing the lives of those who want to share the world command.

It is certain that, even in a country resistant to losing space, with an open deadline, considering that there is democracy and freedom of opinion, voices can arise asking for moderation in the descent or care in confronting those who compete for hegemony. John Mearsheimer stresses his opinion on the erratic trajectory of the US vis-à-vis Russia (MEARSHEIMER, 2015.02.08). The more cautious professor at the University of Chicago suggests that Western powers, especially the United States, admit that certain issues are beyond Washington's will. The realistic nature of international politics makes it clear that Ukraine is an area of Russian geopolitical interest. Ignoring this premise would be cheap provocation, without achieving anything useful.

The well-known proverb "do not do to others what you would not want them to do to you" seems to be accepted by Mearsheimer when he says that the US would also show opposition if Russia or China tried to establish a foothold in Canada or Mexico. What was the Monroe Doctrine made for anyway? In this regard, it seems that his moderation is not necessarily opposed to the designs of the Putin Doctrine and the attempt to divide world politics from agencies, one of which is dedicated to Russia. After all, it would be the most convenient.

In this arrangement, Ukraine's role should be to be a buffer state, a transition area between Western Europe and Russia, militarized only for its own defense, but without formal commitment to any power bloc, in the same way that there was with Finland or Austria after 1945. Even so, nothing would prevent Ukraine from being integrated into the European Union economy.

The Putin Doctrine was not written for the clash between Russia and Ukraine or any other country. The document stresses that Moscow would not accept seeing its immediate neighbor become a testing ground for Western forces, without at least reacting. Whether the reaction employs military forces (now employed) will depend on the will of whoever is on Kiev's side (KARAGANOV, 2022). In 2022, the military clash in Eastern Europe is a proxy war.

Whatever happens in Ukraine, whether in 2014 or 2022, reminds us of Raymond Aron, when he understands that the loss of the Suez Canal, former Franco-British heritage in the capital of Egypt, to the nationalism

of Colonel Nasser, shook the world. What happened in 1956 may have been contrary to international law, but a gain for the balance of power, as it preserved the system and avoided a war that could involve nuclear powers. (ARON, 1986). By different means, it seems that Aron, Mearsheimer and Karaganov converge in their appraisal for prudence.

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this essay is to analyse the paper called the *Putin Doctrine*, published by Sergei Karaganov, in January 2022, its relation to Russian expansionism found in the annexation of the Ukrainian region of Crimea, in 2014, and its criticism on the emerging international system with the end of Cold War. This is a period considered quite harmful for the Russians and this country's power restoration and its rise as a great power. The research covers the period from 1991, the end of the Soviet Union, till January 2022, the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian hostilities over Donbass. The main argument and theoretical-methodological framework of this paper is based on geopolitics literature and on thinkers that belong to the Realist school of International Relations.

KEYWORDS

Russian Power; Putin's Government; European Geopolitics; Political Doctrine.

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