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**U.S. Foreign Policy and the Legacy of the Cold War: The Case for
Obama Administration and the Ukraine Crisis**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree in Anglophone Language, Literatures,
and Civilizations

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Dedication

I am deeply grateful to my beloved parents, uncles and their wives for the support they provided in the preparation of this dissertation. I appreciate their sacrifices and I would not have been able to get this stage without them. May Allah bless them with good health and righteous long life.

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Abstract

Ukraine's strategic location is a double-edged sword, as it is the link between two superpowers, Russia and the European Union, which is the ally of the United States. Due to its location and abundance of natural resources, Ukraine has been contested between regional powers for centuries that struggled but failed to assimilate the minorities. The independence of Ukraine came as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Ukraine has been unexpected nation to the rest of the world in general and to the United States in particular. Following Ukraine's independence in 1991 from the Soviet Union, the United States established diplomatic ties with it. The Budapest Memorandum committed London, Moscow and Washington to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, but Russia has violated those commitments and seized Crimea. Since the Ukraine crisis erupted, the United States has provided non-lethal military aid as well as economic and political support to Kyiv. It has also worked with the EU to impose tough sanctions on Russia. This crisis is the Obama administration's biggest challenge that is the only outlet for the Obama administration to prove the merit of its foreign policy and ensure their global standing. Ukraine is a trump for the Obama administration because it is a form of pressure on Russia, to which the USA wants Ukraine to be a substitute in the Black Sea Region after the successive failures of its foreign policy.

ملخص

إن الموقع الاستراتيجي لأوكرانيا سلاح ذو حدين, حيث يربط بين اثنين من القوى العظمى روسيا والاتحاد الأوروبي الذي هو حليف الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية. ونتيجة لموقعها ووفرة الموارد الطبيعية كانت دائما محل تنافس بين القوى الإقليمية لعدة قرون، هذه الأخيرة كافتحت ولكنها فشلت في استيعاب الأقليات. وجاء استقلال أوكرانيا نتيجة لانتهيار الاتحاد السوفياتي مما جعل أوكرانيا دولة غير متوقع ظهورها لبقية العالم بصفة عامة والولايات المتحدة الأمريكية بصفة خاصة. بعد استقلالها في عام 1991 أقامت الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية علاقات دبلوماسية مع أوكرانيا. وألزمت مذكرة بودابست كل من لندن وموسكو وواشنطن باحترام سيادة أوكرانيا واستقلالها وسلامتها الإقليمية، لكن روسيا انتهكت تلك الالتزامات واستولت على شبه جزيرة القرم. ومنذ اندلاع الأزمة الأوكرانية قدمت الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية مساعدات عسكرية غير فتاكة بالإضافة إلى الدعم الاقتصادي والسياسي لكيفيف. كما عملت مع الاتحاد الأوروبي لفرض عقوبات صارمة على روسيا. فالأزمة الأوكرانية هي التحدي الأكبر لإدارة أوباما، فهي المنفذ الوحيد لإثبات جدارة سياستها الخارجية وضمان مكانتها العالمية. أوكرانيا ورقة رابحة لإدارة أوباما لما تشكله من ملف ضاغط على روسيا التي تريدها الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية أن تكون بديلا عنها في منطقة البحر الأسود بعد الإخفاقات المتتالية لسياستها الخارجية.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIA	Commonwealth of Independent States
EU	European Union
GWA	Green World Association
G8	Group of Eight
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OFAC	Office of Foreign Assets Control
RUKH	Popular Movement of Ukraine for Perestroika
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
UHU	Ukrainian Helsinki Union
UHG	Ukrainian Helsinki Group
UKP	Ukrainian Communist Party
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics
WTO	World Trade Organization

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter One: Historical Background: Overview of Ukraine during the Cold War and its Aftermath	6
1.1. Ukraine under the Soviet Rule.....	6
1.2. Collective Leadership and Khrushchev’s Reforms.....	8
1.3. Gorbachev Era and Ukraine on the Track to Independence.....	13
1.4. Ukraine toward Capitalism and Nation Building	20
Endnotes	24
Chapter Two: Ukrainians Together in Noah’s Ark	25
2.1. The Orange Revolution Zero Positive Outcomes.....	25
2.2. The Outset of Violence.....	31
Endnotes	37
Chapter Three: The U.S. Foreign Policy toward the Ukraine Crisis during Obama Administration	38
3.1. Russia’s Annexation of Crimea and the American Reactions.....	38
3.2. The U.S. Media Coverage of the Ukraine Crisis.....	48
3.3. The Future Perspectives on Ukraine Crisis and the Road Ahead.....	51
Endnotes	54
Conclusion	55
Bibliography	59

Introduction

The disintegration of the Soviet Union on December 1991 resulted in the emergence of Russia and a number of independent countries, including Ukraine, in Central Asia and Eastern Europe. The outcomes of the epic battle and the end of the East-West conflict changed the world's geopolitical balance. After the dissolution, most independent countries were still governed by those who had occupied government positions in the Soviet Union, and lacked experience in good governance.

Ukraine emerged independent from the wreckage of the Eastern bloc and its geopolitical significance was widely realized after the Soviet disappearance. But over time, the geopolitical importance seemed to decline as the outside world began to recognize the country's territorial integrity and its independence. A gray zone was created by the Cold War's bothersome legacy and restrained the progression of standards of international law and will be far reaching. The situation in Ukraine projects the first serious competition for the world's leading powers since the Cold War. Since the Ukraine independence, the United States policy of support for Ukraine's sovereignty has been powerful and strong across the United States sphere.

The United States policy is focused on achieving and strengthening a prosperous united and democratic Ukraine with stable political and economic dealings more closely integrated into Euro-Atlantic and Europe frameworks. From the geostrategic terms, Ukraine commands a lot of significance between Russia and Europe. For this obvious reason, there were inevitable tensions in and around Ukraine. With a second phase of Cold War, the Ukraine crisis seems pregnant again. As a smart trick, Obama's foreign policy has demonstrated an

amalgamation of the pragmatic approach to the present world and the accelerating approach to a future world that he plans to create.

The United States and European Union want Ukraine to join NATO as well as the European Union to move Ukraine out of the Russia's orbit. Since Ukrainians favor European Union accession which is seen as a means of enhancing the country's territorial integrity, economic, and energy security. Despite the illegal annexation of Crimea and the Russia-Ukraine dispute, Obama wisely pursued diplomatic policies and sanctions over destabilizing armed confrontations in the Black Sea.

In an attempt to display the significance of this study, it is necessary to mention a sort of different references and sources besides the literature review of major works that dealt with the subject of the United States foreign policy toward Ukraine crisis under Obama's administration and its main challenges there. From this perspective, the issue under discussion is highly debated by experts, journalists, and politicians who are either praising or criticizing the Obama administration.

A large number of books and articles have shown the U.S. foreign policy toward Ukraine crisis. Orset Subtelny, professor in the Department of History and Political Science at New York University provides in his book entitled *Ukraine: a History* an overview of Ukraine's most recent history, stressing on the dramatic socio-economic and political change and the hard transition that occurred during the Kuchma and Yushchenko presidencies, particularly the 2004 Orange Revolution. He examines the achievements and failures of the new independent Ukraine and its future challenges facing this country.

Likewise, in his book *Ukraine: Birth of a Modern Nation*, Serhy Yekelchuk shows the strategic location of Ukraine between Russia and the West, the ugly face of new order, regionalism that characterized the Ukraine's past. More precisely, Yekelchuk describes Ukraine as the largest state in Europe appeared on the world map after the dissolution of the

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and it dominated the newspapers headings since the events of 2004-2005, which brought Victor Yushchenko to power. According to him, Ukraine is symbolic of the relationship between the United States and Russia.

In their paper “The Ukrainian Crisis: A disputed Past and Present” Anthony Ramicone and others spotlight on the removal of the old regime and the beginning of unrest in the country. In addition, they examine the Crimean crisis, focusing more on the underlying reasons behind this crisis and the involvement of the United States. They also discussed the love-hate relationship between Russia and Ukraine as well as the post-Cold War power shifts between the U.S. and its allies, on the one hand, and Russia on the other hand.

Moreover, Steven Woehrel discusses in his report *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy* the long-standing competition between the United States and Russia and the role has played in Ukraine. Also, he analyzes the U.S. foreign policy reactions and responses to the annexation of Crimea and how Obama’s administration planned to control Russia’s neighbors by offering economic and security grants to keep them away from Russia. In addition, the U.S. worked to impose tough sanctions on Russia. Woehrel outlines how Obama’s administration should act to avoid direct confrontation with Russia.

Although the Ukrainian crisis is an internal crisis blown by external factors, it widened and dropped repercussions on US-Russian relations, on the one hand, and EU countries on the other hand.

The main objective that rose to be reached in this research work is highlighting the fundamental foreign policy under President Obama in Ukraine. This latter as a democratic country is important to his administration’s interests and requires a powerful and sustained policy. Notwithstanding many distractions and challenges the Obama administration is facing, its ability to stay connected with Ukraine will be decisive to its success as well as to the future of the transatlantic and European political and security order.

The major concern of this research is to find answers to the following questions: Why did Barack Obama intervene in Ukraine and which strategy did he follow to intervene? And who are the major political actors? What is the nature of core motives of the United States intervention in the region? Is the ongoing crisis in Ukraine a Second Cold War? How effective is the U.S. foreign policy under Obama's administration for retuning normalcy in Ukraine? How and to what extent did the Obama administration recognize the transformations and limitations to its foreign policy in Ukraine and adapt it accordingly? How did the Obama administration draw the future of Ukraine? What are the challenges?

For the sake of providing a deeper understanding of the topic, this dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter entitled "Historical Background: Overview of Ukraine during the Cold War and its Aftermath", briefly explains the history of Ukraine and covers the major historical and political events in Ukraine under the Soviet rule and how the Ukraine geopolitical significance was widely realized after the Soviet disappearance and attracted attention, particularly of the United States. The chapter also sheds light on different reforms and Ukraine toward capitalism and nation building. At the end of the chapter, there will be a reference to the intensity of competition which will certainly change the track of the relationships between the major political actors.

The second chapter, "Ukrainians Together in Noah's Ark", seeks to analyze the track of transition and change that characterized the first two decades of the new millennium. The chapter highlights the presidential election, the 2013 revolution and the Orange Revolution implications for Ukraine's transition and change of the political face of the country.

Finally, "The U.S. Foreign Policy toward the Ukraine Crisis during Obama's Administration" is the title of the third chapter. This chapter assesses the EU-Russian relationship and the U.S.-Russian relationship in the wake of the latter's invasion and seizure of Crimea and its continuous sabotage in Ukraine. It examines Ukrainian crisis and its

evolution, crisis management to deduce the major political players in the Ukrainian arena, and the U.S. coverage of the Ukraine crisis. In this chapter, analyzing the different priorities and stances for U.S. foreign policy toward Ukraine in Obama's administration is the major concern. Finally, this chapter contains the future perspectives on Ukraine crisis and the road ahead.

The research requires the use of historical analysis since it can cover a wide range of any phenomenon's dimensions and give time to show the evolution of events. Besides, the geopolitical analysis due to the nature of the topic itself which was imposed by the correlation between the motives and dynamics of political sphere and geographic location; this latter makes Ukraine a key country between Asia and Europe. In addition to the descriptive and qualitative approaches which focus on foreign policy priorities in the world and particularly in Ukraine.

Chapter One

Historical Background: Overview of Ukraine during the Cold War and its Aftermath

History has not been open-handed to Ukraine because of foreign conquests and invasions; consequently, this history was bloody, violent and pushed Ukrainians to live in two different worlds until the end of the Second World War (Suntelny 201). Ukraine's geopolitical position can be considered as the focal point for the apparent disputes, this latter influenced the entire world. After the German Army's surrender in 1945, Europe marked the end of the Second World War and the task of the Soviet authorities was to drive Ukraine to its sphere and reestablish the totalitarian rule where the Communist Party controlled all state realms.

As a result of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Ukraine gained independence and emerged as the second largest country. Since that period Ukraine has experienced significant economic, political and social changes. Ukraine's rise to independence was comparatively gradual and lengthy. Soon, the euphoria over independence was vanished in the face of growing complications and problems especially those sensitive disputes with Russia over the issue of the Black Sea Fleet in Crimea. Undoubtedly, the most important achievement was the democratic constitution and the introduction of a national currency and this was reinforced when the power of people defeated the totalitarian acts of the old rule in the presidential election of 2004 and drew a new track for transition.

1.1. Ukraine under the Soviet Rule

Ukraine is a direct successor state to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. After the Second World War, this state was different from what it had been formerly. Its economic and political importance in the Soviet Union grew, its frontiers had been largely expanded and the composition of the country's population changed.

This radical change called the Ukrainians and the Soviet regime to adjust to the new situation. Harry Rositzke, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) station chief in Munich,

describes: “Everyone thought the Soviets were plotting war and that we had to have an early warning of their plans if we were to survive. . . . It was conspiracy-time in Washington, and the CIA took the brunt of it” (qtd. in Burds 8). The atmosphere of that era indicated that the shift of U.S. policy was to destabilize Soviet power via supporting Ukrainian nationalist guerrillas. As a result, it was intended that the latter would foster U.S. operational interests targeted at destabilizing the situation in the Soviet Union, and simultaneously they would become the watching eyes of U.S. intelligence. The explicit goal of using nationalist rebels was just one of many tactics in a covert operation against Stalin (Burds 9-10).

Paul Robert Magocsi, an American professor of history, political science, and Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Toronto, in his book *A History of Ukraine the Land and Its People* notes that Stalin was stubborn that the Soviet borders should be outstretched westward to incorporate lands taken during the German and Soviet conquest of Poland at the commencement of the Second Cold War as well as territories obtained from north to south (685). These territories were the former independent states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the Karelian region of Finland, northern Bukovina and Bessarabia that had been in Romania; and the Belarusian and Ukrainian territories which had been portion of Poland. From November 28th to December 2nd 1943 was the first summit meeting held at Teheran between Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin, the latter obtained the two Heads of Government’s agreement to achieve his demands (685).

As for Ukraine, the three Heads of State agreed to the new Soviet-Polish border at Yalta Conference in which Stalin figured out how to secure utilization of the Curzon line¹ as the eastern border of Poland, in this way maintaining all Ukrainian and Belorussian lands under Soviet’s orbit of influence (“The Cold War (1945–1989)” 5). This period marked the end of agreement and cooperation. The three Great Powers were not yet split into contradictory viewpoints. USSR’s agreement was obtained by the United States to start war against Japan;

this occasion was suitable for Roosevelt to implement his plan for creating a United Nations organization (UN) on 25 April 1945 (5). Later on, Ukraine became a founding member and an entrant in that body's international organizations. Also Ukraine became an identifiable entity in the international stage (Magocsi 695). Whereas, the atmosphere had changed at Potsdam, the world was divided into two spheres of influence; each one's aim was to be ready for the post-war period (Kramer 19). This was clear when East European countries were forbidden from accepting aids of the Marshall Plan in the mid of 1947 (19).

On the one hand, a single task of the fourth five-years plan (1946-1950) concentrated rebuilding heavy industry, and by 1950 the state's industrial output overran the prewar levels (Cook 1279). On the other hand, the fifth five-year plan (1950-1955) the government achieved such a giant leap by cancelling the foreign investment and reduced the consumption to a lower level (Yekelchuk 202). Unlike industry, the agriculture moved at a snail's pace because it lacked investment, ineffectual collectivization² and also climatic conditions such as a horrific drought in 1946 and a famine in 1947 (Yekelchuk 202). Although Stalin was a murdered dictator, he was also the father of contemporary Ukraine. Stalin's rule witnessed the creation of a territory with powerful Ukrainian national consciousness (Kotkinov). Stalin told the 10th Party Congress: "Clearly, the Ukrainian nation exists and the development of its culture is a duty of Communists" (qtd. in Kotkinov). In the same context, Serhy Yekelchuk, a Ukrainian Canadian historian of Ukrainian and Russian history, adds that the old nationalist dream was to achieve the unity of the Ukrainian territories but the Ukrainians did not succeed, however, the Stalinist unification accomplished it.

1.2. Collective Leadership and Khrushchev's Reforms

The death of Stalin was supposed to shape a new political life to the Soviet Union and All-Union Communist party. Obviously, the need for change could not be achieved without overcoming the fear of change.

Following Stalin's death in March 1953, both the Soviet Union and the states that embraced its ideology including Ukraine entered new era of transition (Nutti 3). Orest Subtelny, a Canadian historian, in his book *Ukraine a History* argues that the main change was "collective leadership" instead of Stalin's rule. This was only a transitional phase and short-lived that was ruled by committee (496).

Unlike Stalin, Khrushchev gained a close and mutual relationship with the Ukrainians. Consequently, he became a prominent and controlling figure when he allowed a number of Ukrainians to hold key positions in Moscow (Cook 1280). Furthermore, during the three hundredth anniversary celebrations of the Pereiaslav Treaty³, the Soviet transferred the Crimea to the Soviet Ukraine in February 1954. In addition to, Bernard A. Cook adds on his book that the new cooperation was as a token of trust and brotherly love between the two peoples and a continuation of Ukraine's Russification⁴ (1280). A justification was provided by International Committee for Crimea that some chief reasons which made this transition important among them, the economy of Ukrainian Republic and Crimean were exceedingly related and geographically Crimea was once a common stretching of the Southern Ukrainian plains ("The Transfer of the Crimea to the Ukraine").

Khrushchev, however, adopted a policy of de-Stalinization and made a sharp break with Stalin's approach which was a combination of coercion, terror and rigid control in order to ensure Soviet's development (Subtelny 500). In 1956, Khrushchev delivered his speech, it was accompanied by an attack on Stalin; this does not mean that the radical change took place and the features of the old regime had disappeared just the tone of Ukraine's Russification turned down (500). Furthermore, Orest Subtelny shows that Ukrainians were sure that the time to react rationally for change has come; in a cultural climate, eloquent spokesmen denounced their dissatisfaction about the Ukrainian language, most of the workers, students, intelligentsia and also party officials defended their rights not to be

discriminated carrying slogans like: “Speak Ukrainian” and “Defend the Ukrainian Language”, thereby, the situation became worse as the quality of Ukrainian scholarship was affected by the new atmosphere (500). The same view is expressed by Paul Robert Magocsi who said about the *Ukrainian encyclopedia* which was published in seventeen volumes between 1959 and 1965 under the Soviet sponsorship (704), other essential achievement in 1957, a permission was received by Ukrainian historians to institute their journal, in addition, the thaw reached the other domains such as: cinema, painting, music and decorative design (705).

De-Stalinization policy, however, reached the economic sphere. Stalin’s heirs focused on ameliorating the economy sector of the Soviet Union. Khrushchev emphasized on the Soviet project, communism, where people would enjoy better conditions of life rather than the American project.

Khrushchev’s attention oriented toward agriculture without making food shortage or lack of consumer goods. He succeeded and met his expectations in his first years. Yet the economy had to experience some troubles especially the steady growth of technological innovation and new products. He added, despite Khrushchev gave a major concern to agriculture, his reforms failed to overcome problems of this sector (Byung-Woo Kim). Thus was obvious with “virgin-lands” project, which demanded human and material resources, millions acres of virgin lands, overall, this project was announced to be failed, in which many innovations and experiments had made but were unproductive (Subtelny 504).

In the early 1950s Ukraine’s industry enjoyed its golden age, whereas Ukraine’s agricultural sector stayed suffering. Paul Robert Magocsi provided an explanation about the permanence of food shortage in the Soviet Union as well as in Ukraine, there was a steady increase in crops for human consumption coupled with increase in production of industrial crops between 1950 and 1960 (706). Khrushchev favored decentralization and rejected

market competition. As a reaction, He fired the central economic ministries and divided the Soviet into economic regions to give chance to regional councils to perform their plans, as a result, the number of these bodies increased in Ukraine, the Ukrainian Economic Council was founded and Ukraine managed over 97 percent of its industrial sector (Yekelchik 211).

In 1964 Khrushchev obliged to retire, he was replaced by a collective leadership then Leonid Brezhnev, whose era was no longer totalitarian, and so, the collective leadership abolished the policy of decentralization that Khrushchev aimed to accomplish (Subtelny 511). Brezhnev tenure synchronized the period of détente with the west. Simultaneously the need for stabilization inside the Union necessitated coming back to the Stalinism; during Brezhnev's rule, the Soviet Union witnessed the beginning of social and economic stagnation (511). Boris Rabbot, a journalist and sociologist, published on November 6, 1977 on *The New York Times* "A Letter to Brezhnev" "The circumstances that render your regime untrustworthy to the opinion makers of this country have conspired to damage your personal credibility at home" (Rabbot). Serhy Yekelchik presented Petro Shelest and Volodymyr Shcherbysky as "two models Soviet Ukrainian identity" during Brezhnev era, the former model advocated Ukraine's culture and economic interests against Russian influence and the latter promoted assimilation and centralization (212).

Serhy Yekelchik in his book *Ukraine: Birth of a Modern Nation* declared that Shelest's position as the first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist party lasted from 1963 to 1972 and it reflected the continuous emphasis on heavy industry at the expense of the production of the consuming goods, it also reflected his efforts towards Ukrainian elites. He was accused of being soft on nationalism in Ukraine and fostering economic localism rather than encouraging the interests of the entire Soviet Union (212). Petro Tolochko, vice president of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, reported: "He was a party man in the Soviet mold, but in

his heart he felt where Ukraine's interests lay and acted in favor of national development, as much as this was permitted” (qtd. in *New York Times*).

Shelest was replaced in 1972 by Shcherbytsky, who headed Ukrainian Communist Party (UKP) from 1972 to 1986 and it is noteworthy that economic and cultural stagnation, ideological conservatism, political repression and strengthened Russification marked his political term in Ukraine as a neo-Stalinist rule (Senkus). To a large degree, the climate change, especially drought, affected the agricultural production also change took place in Ukraine’s economic performance that suffered throughout the 1970s and 1980s (Zesenko et al. 14). Through the policies of these two leaders of the Ukrainian Communist Party, a conclusion was drawn by Orest Subtelny about the position of Ukraine in the Soviet Union and its future, neither took into account the idea of Ukrainian statehood, and any attempt to crack the eggshell of the Soviet Union to give birth to the independent Ukraine is still rejected to Moscow (513).

It is important to note that during the 1950s a new era began thanks to a number of young, talented Ukrainian artists and writers known as the Sixties Generation⁵ (Shistdesiatnyky). This latter was inspired by Khrushchev’s thaw and rebelled to revive culture. The sixtiers lacked a unified single creative genre, equal opportunities with government and modern forms (Yekelchyl 217). However, Paul Robert Magocsi used the expression the Sixties Group to refer to this generation who were amalgamated and supported by older writers and literary figures (704). The main theme of this intelligentsia was to restore national Ukrainian cultural values, Ukrainian language and combat against russification (Zakharov).

Due to several reasons, Yevhen Zakharov noted that a combination of civic, nationalist and religious movements formed the dissident movement, as a reaction against the organizations that preferred non-violent struggle. Fierce suppression dominated the period between 1954 and 1962 that indicated the first era of the dissident movement (Zakharov).

According to Orest Subtelny, the most prominent group of Ukrainian dissent was the “Jurists’ Group” headed by the jurist Levko Lukianenko. It was a secret group and demanded the secession of Ukraine from the Soviet Union; this appeal led them to be arrested (516). In November 1976, an open group was organized “Ukrainian Helsinki Group” led by the writer Mykola Rudenko, it worked with other groups throughout the Union as an attempt to internationalize its interests. Its members faced the same fate of the secret groups (517-518).

1.3. Gorbachev Era and Ukraine on the Track to Independence

Scenario of the Cold War continued throughout the world significantly in Eastern Europe. Economic changes and political events in the late of 1980s played a major role in transforming Europe’s geopolitical situation and open the doors to many issues that had been suppressed by the Soviet’s regime. By the coming of Mikhail Gorbachev to power in Kremlin in 1985, the political arena witnessed radical diversion in the relationship between the two great power rivalries.

Nonetheless, it is evident that the Helsinki Summit in 1975 tentatively revived the soul of détente between the two superpowers; it was a necessity to maintain international peace and to reduce tensions all over the continent. Unlike his Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman presented the policy of containment, which aimed at granting military and financial aid to stop the spread of communism. U.S. became the police of the world and its isolationism was no longer a choice (“The Cold War (1945–1989)” 6). According to Antony Kalashnikov, despite the fact that the Soviet Union achieved a huge number of political, economic and social accomplishments, the country was at the heart of the jeopardy in 1985, especially with Gorbachev’s programs that drew an ambiguous path to Soviet future (76).

In all cases, Gorbachev’s mission was not an easy task. Although he was a religious Marxist, Gorbachev advocated a new thinking and valued and welcomed the exigency for

radical reform to put an end to the economic deterioration (Castellano). For Orest Subtelny, Ukraine had been a backbone of the Soviet imperial rule and it was not without benefits. To a large extent independence spark was produced thanks to unfavorable merits of the Soviet rule, these latter served as a chance for Ukrainians to adopt the path of freedom (573). However, Serhy Yekelchuk illustrated that the period between 1985-1991 in Ukraine resembled the event of 1917 through 1920 (232).

Hence, as an attempt to push the Soviet Union forward through restructuring its political and economic systems, Gorbachev introduced Glasnost⁶ and Perestrioka⁷ policies. The former eradicated Stalinist's marks and granted more freedom to people. Whereas the latter encouraged private sectors and gave freedom of strike to express discontent. These reforms were fruitless ("Fall of the Soviet Union"). About Stalin's collectivization system, Gorbachev writes: "collectivization was a great historic act, the most important social change since 1917. Yes it proceeded painfully, not without serious excesses and blunders. But further progress of our country would have been impossible without it" (qtd.in Crozier 49). Like other countries of the Soviet Union, Ukraine was deeply influenced by Gorbachev's policies. Initially, Chernobyl accident preceded this impact and jolted Ukraine on April 26, 1986 due to plan operators error coupled with reactor design flaws. Above all the Soviet authorities refused to announce the negative and serious effects of radioactivity. The outrage over the Communist Party spread in Ukraine (Yekelchuk 234-235).

After introducing the policy of Glasnost, however, the most serious disaster in the history occurred. According to Gorbachev, Chernobyl accident was a pivotal point that would threaten the existing system and the current situation necessitated this policy. Under this turbulent situation, he stated "made absolutely clear how important it was to continue the policy of *glasnost*" (qtd. in Stern). He tried to be a reformer in order to gain the support of the intelligentsia. In contrast to this, Gorbachev failed to realize the dream of the Soviet citizens

as a result the dissent and a new form of opposition grew and the relationship with the government got worse. Eventually, Gorbachev claimed that Chernobyl explosion was “perhaps the real cause of the collapse of the Soviet Union” (qtd. in Stern). Chernobyl was the catalyst for many informal movements through shedding light on the disinterest that the republics suffer and the absence of the Ukraine sovereignty (Kuzio 78).

Gorbachev was not aware of the potential nationality problem in the Soviet Union until a series of serious events took place in the country. Glasnost was a suitable and fertile ground for dissent movements to grow. The most influential informal group was the Ukrainian Helsinki Union (UHU), a successor to the Ukrainian Helsinki Group. Many new independent groups were influenced by the principles of this group. The UHU called dissidents to reform the forerunners’ demands. Thus the union was not an ideal dissent movement and did not reach the underlined aim as the predecessors did in the Brezhnev epoch (Kuzio 67-68). Levko Lukianenko, a prisoner of conscience, the leader of the UHU in 1988 wrote his programmatical essay “What Next?” that “Restructuring means infinitely more for Ukraine – ultimately the life or death of our nation. The continuation of pre-perestroika policies would have meant total assimilation and the destruction of our nationality” (69). The Ronald Reagan administration explained how advocating and defending human rights and international norms in the Western bloc and its republics could be reached as the arm control (Rumer et al.).

Much more active organization in late 1987 was the Green World Association (GWA), whose members were nondissident intelligentsia and worked openly. When the need for a political transformation arose under Gorbachev’s reforms, national civic bodies emerged in 1989. The first truly civic one was the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society, also the local branch “Memorial” Society. Whilst the most significant of all was the Popular Movement of Ukraine for Perestroika, known as Rukh (Yekelchik 237). Rukh was a fruit of

writers meetings in October and November 1988. In its agenda, Rukh addressed serious issues among them preserving the Ukrainian language and culture and harmony between all the ethnic groups. By the time the popularity of the group spread and attracted other groups' desire to join this organization thanks to the glasnost approach (Subtelny 575-576).

For its part, the religious revival swam with the tide of change and challenged the Communist ideology. Historically, Ukrainian religiosity derived from different faiths: Greek Catholicism, Russian Orthodoxy and autonomous Ukrainian orthodoxy, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalic Churches were active in underground and came to light with Gorbachev's perestroika when they received an official recognition (Piddulph 322-325). This recognition did not come without a price, in which Greek Catholic and Ukrainian autocephalic believers demonstrated in western Ukraine because the Ukraine's government encouraged Russian Orthodox Churches' legal registration and rejected theirs, but the "Law on Freedom of Conscience" of 1990 gave them an official registration and allowing religious pluralism as well, hence, this paved the way for nationalism in the country to rise (326-328).

For Gorbachev to achieve his agenda, all fields should be managed especially the switch to a market economy would improve the situation to benefit from new opportunities, whereas the Communist party monopolized all spheres in the lack of a mature country and pushed other republics to experience a harsh misery, Consequently, the stability of the Soviet Union was troubled since the popular organizations embraced the idea of independence (Subtelny 580). Also, the fate of the Soviet Union's hegemony in the Eastern Europe lost strength as the political infighting fueled between the republics and the Soviet government, and the situation reached the climax when Gorbachev reacted passively toward the downfall of the eastern bloc (Kalashnikov 77).

More importantly, the year 1988 signaled that a drastic change took place in the Soviet Union at both levels domestically and globally and reached the climax with Gorbachev's initiative to decrease the Soviet military troops unilaterally in Warsaw Pact countries, a meeting was held between Gorbachev and his foreign policy advisers in which they discussed the main issue, particularly which kind of forces and weapons should be reduced and the fast method to do that (Kramer, "The Demise of the Soviet Bloc" 194- 195). This reduction aimed at improving the economic sphere and ameliorating relation between the two blocs through disarmament, on the other hand, the U.S. intelligence community saw the project as a modest step to maintain stability and eradicate any possibility of a violent action in Eastern Europe (196).

The ongoing events in Ukraine indicated that the death of the Soviet Union was soon and the hunger for power increased, mainly in March 1990, elections for local councils and a new parliament were held in all republics among them Ukraine thereby the first Ukrainian parliament was established and became the most powerful organ to managed the political life in the country, this opened the appetite for major achievements as the declaration of Ukrainian sovereignty on 19 July that disillusioned the Communists' ambitions but did not undermine their dominance (Subtelny 576-577). Sehry Yekelchuk added that Leonid Kravchuk was elected as a chairman of the parliament by the supreme Rada but the Democratic Bloc did not welcome his coming, despite this refusal, he was clever in managing demonstrations and preventing them to reach the violence (242-243).

In early October 1990, a group of Ukrainian students organized a hunger strike in Kiev then reached other regions in the country; demanding new parliamentary elections to be held, the resignation of the Prime minister Vitalii Masol, the nationalization of the Communist Party of Ukraine territory and the refusal of new Union Treaty, and as a positive step was done by Kravchuk in which he proposed a meeting to discuss these demands and the

government would reach a resolution that fits all the sides, so the parliament deleted from the Ukrainian constitution the Article Six that gave power to Communist Party over all the Soviet republics after responding to just one of their demands to remove the Prime Minister Vitalii Masol from his post (Yekelchuk 243).

Therefore, the major events in the Soviet Union and in general in Ukraine gave birth to mass politics and the emergence of small political parties each one had a specific nationalist agenda but still lacked financial and moral support, and the most prominent was Rukh whose positive image and idealistic program reflected in demanding the independence of Ukraine (Yekelchuk 244). Almost the same view was concluded by Taras Kuzio, an academic and expert in Ukrainian political, economic and security affairs, that almost all parties in Ukraine required not only a regional support but a larger one and most of them played no role in both the Supreme Council and the local councils, those drawbacks hindered them from taking an active action by themselves (Kuzio 156-157).

By 1991, the dramatic signs of change were evident as the Soviet Union was breaking down and Ukraine with its natural characteristics drew attention of the rival bloc, principally most important when George Bush, the American president, visited Kiev and spoke about the serious consequences of nationalist groups (Subtelny 580). According to Serhy Yekelchuk, this visit discouraged Ukrainian statehood and advised them to adopt the idea of new union. In his lecture, Bush announced “will not aid those who promote a suicidal nationalism based upon ethnic hatred” (qtd.in Yekelchuk 247).

The day before the signing of the new Union Treaty, the emergency committee was founded instead of Gorbachev, who was arrested in Crimea by plotter because he was at odds with them, to run the country, but thanks to Yeltsin’s efforts against these conspirators the coup defeated in three days without making considerable confrontations but it proved that republics’ sovereignty was not strong enough (Yekelchuk 247). In the meantime, most

political parties denounced this coup and called for protest, strike, demonstrations and civil disobedience to undermine the attempted putsch, as a result, in Ukraine Leonid Kravchuk only came to the spotlight on 21st August after the coup was over, and he found himself obliged to convene an emergency session of the Supreme Council (Kuzio 181-183).

The desire for independence increased, it was boosted by strong arguments starting from the famine of 1932-1933 during Stalin's rule and Chernobyl accident to the most important one the abundance and richness of land that would play a major role in country's prosperity ; consequently a referendum of 1 December proved these arguments in which over 90 % vote yes for independence and at the same time Leonid Kravchuk elected president of Ukraine after defeating his opponent Viacheslav Chornovil in the presidential elections (Subtelny 582-583). So, the referendum paved the way for Ukrainians to choose a new direction away from the Union and brought it to an end and Ukraine split from Russia for this Gorbachev announced that "the Soviet Union without Ukraine is inconceivable" (qtd. in Subtelny 583). Yaroslav Trofimov declares in *The Ukrainian Weekly* that the ballot obtained international recognition and Poland was the first county that recognized its independence also the United States saw elections as fair and free and it hoped to develop relations with the newborn state (3).

The Communist Party of Ukraine was on the edge and fell after the unsuccessful coup; this last action led to the end of Gorbachev's presidency and provided Ukraine with a unique opportunity to announce the independence of the country and the complete dissolution of the greatest empire in the world (Subtelny 581). Serhy Yekelchuk added that after the defeated coup the Soviet Union dissolved and the republic gained its independence peaceably without a revolution, thus the independent Ukraine inherited from the Soviet authority enormous problems and believed that the time had come to turn the page and took the way of transition as a first step toward democratization and nation building (Yekelchuk 249-252).

1.4. Ukraine toward Capitalism and Nation Building

Upon independence, Ukraine started to follow a new orientation toward modernization, democracy, market economy and to cope itself with rapid change that altered the political and economic structures of Eastern Europe as well as the world.

The Kremlin formed the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to integrate Russia and other republics that were formerly portion of the Soviet Union in which Russia adopted new policy towards these republics and Ukraine for its part refused any control of the CIS that might violate its supreme power, despite Leonid Kravchuk and Leonid Kuchma, presidents of Ukraine respectively, had contrastive approaches; they agreed to preserve the Ukrainian sovereignty (Subtelny 599). This was apparent in 1991 and 1992 when Russian parliament considered the transfer of Crimea in 1954 unconstitutional because the Soviet Black Sea Fleet was in Crimea therefore, Yeltsin and Kravchuk agreed about bilateral control over the region (Yekelchuk 253-254).

Overall, the geopolitical significance attracted attention; mainly the United States of America that improved relations with independent Ukraine and in January 1994 Ukraine, the USA and Russia signed the Trilateral Treaty in which Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons to Russia to maintain security and integrity of its territory, also U.S. granted Ukraine aids for economic recovery (Subtelny 600). Taraz Kuzio saw that the relationship between Ukraine and the West was cold during 1992-1994 and was described as “a period of disinterest” when the Ukrainian president Leonid Kravchuk gave a little attention to economic and political reforms and focused on state building, in contrast Russia attained amiable relations with the West (Kuzio, “Ukraine’s relations with the West ...” 22). The United States provided Kyiv with Technical and economic aids during the denuclearization process.

During Leonid Kravchuk presidency, Ukraine introduced a new currency to react against price liberalization and to keep away from any possible crisis, also Ukraine lacked

constructive reforms in economy and oriented by nationalist interests (Yekelchuk 256-257). Deteriorating economy proved that the country required depending on elites who pursuit to establish democratic organizations and to move toward a market economy rather than depending on old Soviet Bureaucrats who sought no need to make change (258).

During the first years after Ukraine's independence, Russia directly controlled the energy corporations the fact that Ukraine was still dependent on Russia and this latter used energy as a weapon for achieving its goals and keeping the bridge between them through the intimidation, debt or lowering prices (Balmaceda 25). In 1993, Massandra summit was held between Kravchuk and Yeltsin where Russia proposed a deal that would have cleared Ukraine's gas debt in return for this Russia enjoyed complete control of the Black Sea Fleet with no competitor, disarmament and signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; under these harsh conditions Kravchuk agreed but the parliament opposed the ratification, consequently gas supplies sharply declined as Russia applying a "stick-and-carrot" approach pushing Ukraine to fulfill all Russia's ambitions (26-27).

However, Margarita M. Balmaceda, Professor of Diplomacy and International Relations, explained that within 1994 indirect means and goals have been embraced by Russia importantly prompting Ukraine to join the CIS Customs Union, although Russia still exerted considerable pressure on Ukraine to get full control over pipelines, Ukraine outlawed the privatization among the energy industries. This strong response gradually ended the energy tensions and Ukraine thanks to financial aids was able to pay gas debt as scheduled. Also, during Kuchma's first term in office, the most prominent linkage between the two states was the 1997 agreements on the Black Sea Fleet in which compensation was made around Ukraine's debt and the Black Sea Fleet bases in Crimea (Balmaceda 27-28).

Unlike Russia's cold relations with the West during 1995-1999, Ukraine under Leonid Kuchma became a paramount supporter of the West orbit after signing the Nuclear Non-

Proliferation Treaty; this latter gave Ukraine a golden opportunity to develop “strategic partnership” with U.S. (Kuzio, “Ukraine’s relations with the West ...” 22). According to Subtelny, Ukraine found itself at a crossroads and whether to welcome North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s call and thereby developing relationship with the West or to follow assertive Russia, but on February 1995, Ukraine was the first CIS state to cooperate with the alliance under “Partnership for Peace program”, they were intervened in Crimea, western Ukraine and Yugoslavia (Subtelny 601).

The relations between Ukraine and its neighbors were in tense, particularly with Poland, Romania and Hungary, in April 1993, Eastern European countries refused to accept Kravchuk’s proposal to arrange mutual security at a large scale. Later on, these neighbors realized the need to drop the hostility and to turn the page of the page, from their part, Poland and Ukraine signed a Declaration of understanding and Unity in May 1997 that invited their citizens to cooperate with each other and preserve mutual relations, the same would said about Romania that signed, in June 1997, a Treaty on Cooperation and Good Neighboring Relations in which set away all old tensions (Subtelny 601-602).

From 2000, during Kuchma’s second presidency, a set of factors redirected the relations between the west and Ukraine to disillusionment due to the growing cavity between domestic and foreign policies in Ukraine, this was accompanied with corruption and distorted image of Ukraine’s international credibility (Kuzio, “Ukraine’s relations with the West ...” 23-25). In addition, since 2000, Ukraine witnessed the return to the Russian influence, especially when Vladimir Putin came to power and followed a dogmatic policy toward post-Soviet states and the Ukraine’s relations with the west disillusioned, building close relations with Russia facilitated Russian investments in Ukraine’s energy industry and spread control over Ukraine’s companies (Balmaceda 29-31).

Clearly, the Ukrainians sought themselves as Europeans and should join the European Union (EU) in order to improve their living standards, whereas the EU did not welcome Ukraine's membership and claimed that political and economic improvements were necessary, the same demand was proposed in 1998 and received no positive response (Subtelny 644-645). Unlike EU, Ukraine's relations with NATO were active and fruitful due to the event of 1992 when Ukraine accepted to relinquish its nuclear weapons; despite the widening relationship between Ukraine and the alliance, the latter did not set Ukraine's membership in its agenda (645). According to Taras Kuzio, Ukraine was the only CIS state to support NATO units to deploy military forces in Iraq in 2003 but did not yield productive outcomes to achieve the membership plan (Kuzio, "Ukraine's relations with the West ..." 38).

The Clinton Administration eliminated the distance and engaged in Ukrainian politics as a mediator. Sherman Garnett, the former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia, and his contemporaries had recommended establishing a trilateral platform for Ukraine, Russia and the United States to debate common issues provided that the participant states should be democratic and act to meet their peoples' needs, the predictable actions by each state should promote regional security, and the great important one is that two states could not conspire against the third. Ironically, Garnett informed the post-Soviet play. Later on, due to Kuchma's greed and breaking the first condition, a strategic relationship with Washington bounced back and the bilateral platform dissolved (Haran and Burkovsky).

To round up, throughout its history, Ukraine has been subjected to many forms of occupation, due to its unique location between the continents of Asia and Europe, in addition to its natural resources, which has made it coveted by many countries. It seems that the Ukrainians have learned the lessons and they are obliged to unite to become one nation. But the ongoing events in Ukraine may turn it out to be unachievable dream.

Endnotes

¹ Curzon line, in 1920, Great Britain had proposed as an armistice line and temporary boundary between warring Poland and Soviet Russia. Paul Robert Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine the Land and Its People*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010) <https://books.google.dz/books?hl=fr&lr=&id=TA1zVKTTsXUC&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=the+role+of+the+ukraine+in+modern+history&ots=X79Rl44SBs&sig=ZMJ2KXfkOXla_nXIRoqvPU2Tsmw&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=the%20role%20of%20the%20ukraine%20in%20modern%20history&f=false>.

² Collectivization was only in 1947-1948, after the Soviets had broken the UPA resistance, that collectivization could begin full swing. Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine a History*, (New York: Oxford University Press) 491.

³ Pereiaslav Treaty of 1654, a fateful alliance the Hetman state under Bohdan Khmelnytsky concluded with Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich during the Cossack-Polish War. After the Crimean Tatar army betrayed the Cossacks for the third time during the siege of Zhvanets in 1653, and Khmelnytsky realized he could no longer rely on Ottoman support against Poland, the hetman was forced to turn to Muscovy for help. Moscow responded favorably to an alliance with Ukraine because it would prevent closer Ukrainian-Turkish ties. Oleksander Ohloblyn, “Perseiaslav Treaty of 1654,” *Internet Encyclodedia of Ukraine*, 1993. <<http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CP%5CE%5CPereiaslavTreatyof1654.htm>>.

⁴ Russification was a set of policies or processes encouraging non-Russians to adopt the Russian language and culture and thus increasing Russian political domination in Ukraine and other Eastern European countries. Bohdan Kravtsiv and Volodymyr Kubijovyč, “Russification,” *Internet Encyclodedia of Ukraine*, 1993. <<http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CR%5CU%5CRussification.htm>>.

⁵ The Sixties Generation was a renewal of democratic norms and principles of coexistence created favorable conditions for national and cultural renaissance - the development of literature and art of Ukraine, the rise of creative and civil activity artistic intelligentsia of the republic, the growing interest of people to its achievements, activities in the social and political life. “The Emergence of “the Sixties” in Literature and Art,” Ebrary. <http://ebrary.net/385/history/emergence_sixties_literature>.

⁶ Galsnost, actually intended to mean something more like the English word ‘publicity’, glasnost came to mean an opening of discussion, a freeing of all the constraints on expression, whether in journalism, literature or the arts, that Stalin and his heirs had imposed on the Soviet Union. Above all it involved freedom of the press, freedom to criticize and freedom of forms of activity, like religious worship, which had for so long been denied. David Roberston, *The Routledge Dictionary of Politics*, (London: Routledge, 2004) 208.

⁷ Perestroika, simply means ‘restructuring’, but it rapidly took on extra ideological meaning. The proposal for perestroika was made in January 1987 at a meeting of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) Central Committee, and combined plans for both economic reorganization and some limited democratization, mainly in local government. David Roberston, *The Routledge Dictionary of Politics*, (London: Routledge, 2004) 375.

Chapter Two

Ukrainians Together in Noah's Ark

Throughout the Cold War between Western and Eastern poles, Germany was the symbolic center, split into two by the iron curtain. But after the peaceful dissolution of the USSR, Ukraine has thus emerged as the pivotal state and new center in the West-East geopolitical rivalry, dividing the cradle of the Russian statehood in ways that could demonstrate just as continued as the division of Germany.

While Ukraine is no longer directly governed by outside powers, it continues to be torn between the USA and the EU, on one hand, and Russia on the other. The two upheavals in 2004 and 2013 symbolized the desire of Ukraine to secure its position in the West. Moreover, the historical borders affect Ukraine's political orientation; the country's south and east lean toward Russia while its center and west pull toward Europe. The major elections in the country have reflected these tendencies.

The battle between West and East put Ukraine on the edge of the EU and paralyzed any attempt to keep it in a secure orbit. Pessimism has flowed in the west about the Ukraine's ability to change; civilians lost their lives because they wanted freedom, nuclear weapons could destroy the world, and U.S. and European interests converge in Ukraine. This is not the events of the 1960's, the climax of the Cold War, this is Ukraine now.

2.1. The Orange Revolution Zero Positive Outcomes

Under the labels of "color revolutions", from late November 2004 to January 2005, Ukraine witnessed a series of protests following the run-off in the presidential elections against allegations of fraud, corruption, voter intimidation, and poor economic conditions. The phenomenon of color revolutions such as Georgia's Rose Revolution and Ukraine's Orange Revolution, was adopted and supported by the United States and its allies with the aim of building new democratic societies and achieving the objectives of their foreign policy.

After years of troubled transition, the 2004 presidential election put Ukraine at crossroads between authoritarianism and democracy. In order to save their interests, Kuchma and many oligarchs endorsed Victor Yanukovich's arrival to power in late 2004 but failed to secure his victory against the leading opposition candidate Victor Yushchenko (Gromadzki et al. 5-6). Yanukovich and Yushchenko had distinct goals toward European choice to boost reforms in Ukraine, the former preferred economic cooperation with EU at the expense of EU membership and he did not prioritize to build close ties with the union (7-8).

The second round of the presidential elections held on November 21, 2004, Yanukovich was announced the winner and Ukraine witnessed a black day as the basic human rights were violated. This winning was a result of massive falsification in the central Electoral Commission's database along with undemocratic and inequitable practices during the presidential campaign. Consequently, hundreds of thousands of people immediately protested on Independence Square demanding fair and free elections and led what was known as the "Orange Revolution"¹, the non-violent uprising, mediation endeavors of the United States and the EU as well as the Supreme Court's decision to repeal those results gave a chance for third round of elections (Yekelchuk 278-281).

In the re-run of the second round on December 26, the people elected Victor Yushchenko to be their new president in a fair and free election; he was inaugurated on January 23, 2005 (Yekelchuk 281). In addition, the new president brought new policies and aimed to make closer ties with the west and to be member in NATO and the EU specifically the meeting with George Bush in Washington gave Ukraine a hope to join NATO with the United States help (Subtelny 648). In the parliamentary elections in 2006 problems arose when Yushchenko was forced to accept Yanukovich as prime minister whose policies clearly differed from the president's policies, as a result, the tensions between Ukraine and Russia

would not be reduced and Russia punished Yushchenko using the threat of rising gas prices (649).

However, another hard task for new government was to meet Ukrainian people hopes and expectations that cannot be achieved overnight. Optimistically, the process of modernization and democratization of Ukraine should be irreversible and should challenge the difficult phase of transition from strong central power to democracy and from a centrally controlled economy to market economy.

Despite the fact that the U.S.-Ukrainian relationship deteriorated, the Ukraine sent special brigade to support the Bush administration as it invaded Iraq in 2003. When the Orange Revolution rippled across Ukraine, Washington saw it as a chance to snatch Ukraine out of the Russian fist, and backed its decision to join NATO. According to Putin, offering Ukraine membership to the Alliance was another intervention from the United States in Russia's orbit. The Russian reaction was to defend itself against "American unilateralism"² and to cut off the flow of its gas pipelines to Ukraine (Haran and Burkovskyi).

During the first decade of the third millennium, regardless of repeated confrontations, corruption and myriad weaknesses, Ukraine saw the revitalization of the old Soviet rule as an inevitable change to enter a new age. Yushchenko's pro-western policies was beneficial to Ukraine especially in 2008 when it became a member in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and received loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to face the banking crisis, indeed the U.S. had more of a role in manipulating these international organizations for what serve the Ukraine's interests (Subtelny 650). As a kind of punishment for his pro-western policies, Vladimir Putin used gas as a weapon in what is called "gas war" and he aimed at eliminating any possibility that would facilitate the joining of Ukraine to the EU, thus, the tensions fueled again between Russia and Ukraine (Subtelny 651-652).

Starting from Ukrainian independence, the relations between Ukraine and the United States have matured on pragmatic and ideological aspects, on a one hand, Ukraine saw the United States as a possible investor and a security guarantor, on the other hand, Ukraine was important to the United States as a potential threat to U.S. concerns and a fundamental transit region, particularly for energy (Shcherba 56-57). Shcherba added that the bilateral relations were negatively affected by winds of change that the Orange Revolution brought, unlike his predecessor; the President Obama did not have any idea to promote a “strategic partnership”, he believed that Ukraine’s troubles could only be Ukraine’s to resolve, since the U.S. objective was to reset relations with Russia. So, anticipating positive support from the United States was pointless and Ukraine had to reset and reorient its own foreign policy not toward any external influence but toward Ukraine’s interests (60).

In addition, Obama won the US presidential election on the promise that he would be the president who puts an end to America's involvement in foreign wars and that the era of war is nearing completion. He has already fulfilled his promise by withdrawing US forces from Iraq in late 2011 and is on his way to withdraw the majority of US combat troops from Afghanistan later that year. Instead of a policy of force and sending US troops on foreign missions, Obama has bet on diplomacy and action through strong regional and international alliances, as in the case of Libya (Salonius-Pasternak 3-4). Obama did not consider himself a war president, unlike his predecessor, President George W. Bush. Thus, he tried to open diplomatic lines with US political adversaries such as Russia, whose relations had been strained with the United States in the final months of Bush's presidency in 2008 because of the Russian invasion of some of Georgia's territories (Glenn 4).

The Orange Revolution passed the political power to the majority; the Ukrainians backed Viktor Yushchenko and Yulia Tymoshenko because they promised to apply the rule of law, end corruption, conduct elections that meet international standards, and establish good

governance. William Miller, former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, stated that the leaders of the Orange Revolution have not succeeded to fulfill their promise due to the rooted standards of the maïdan parliament of 2004 and the absence of cooperative efforts. According to him, the causes of the Ukrainian society erosion live within it and put Ukraine at a risky path, Miller put forward, this complex situation requires the unity of the Ukraine's leaders (Klump).

Most Ukrainians see the Orange Revolution as a "nightmare and disappointment" of those who have promised and failed to meet their promise, a regret for unfulfilled hopes, while Western media have described it as "the sad death of the Orange Revolution." Yet, getting rid of the enemies of a healthy Ukraine and the events of the 2004 are the starting point of a process to build the future of a democratic Ukraine and overcome its challenges.

The crisis in Ukraine represented the biggest and most serious challenge facing US President Barack Obama in terms of US foreign policy. The crisis comes amidst deep concern and mounting criticism from America's allies in the world and by the Republican Party internally for the Obama administration's approach to foreign policy in general; This crisis dated back to 2010 when power returned to the pro-Russian Party of Regions after the latter was able to overthrow the Orange Revolution project that broke out in 2004 but the symbols and elites of the Orange Revolution did not stop completely from trying to annex Ukraine to Europe.

That the fall of the key figures of the Orange Revolution was a resounding fall, as evidenced by the fact that the Ukrainian people re-elected the pro-Russian faction, known for its blatant corruption, understood by the elites led by former President Viktor Yushchenko, as a popular punishment for the revolution that did not fulfill the great promises launched in 2004 , but the indicators of corruption that was in the country before the year 2004 remained the same in 2010, that is, after six years of the revolution, which did not last long, but the era

of pro-revolutionary Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko contributed to the return of communist bureaucracy, as a result, discontent with the new government and instability in the country grew (Woehrel 1).

Ukrainians were thirsty for change and thanks to the Orange Revolution, Ukraine has politically become a conscious nation, the Ukrainian people feel that they live in an independent state with independent authority and there was more freedom of expression. The world also understood that Ukraine is not part of Russia and it is not Russia. The multiple elections have clearly demonstrated that the country's democratic practice is entrenched and freedom of expression has become standard and not exceptional (Kurth 149-150).

Because of the agreement of 1994, the United States is obliged to support Ukraine in the situations that its territorial integrity and sovereignty is at stake. William Miller argued "in exchange for giving up the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world, Ukraine received a solemn commitment from the U.S. that it would support Ukraine against the outside threat of or actual use of political, military, or economic force." (qtd. in Klump). The U.S.- Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership signed in Washington on December 19, 2008 once again confirms that commitment. Obama's administration pledged to follow and promote the aforementioned agreement in order to strengthen the formal relationship between governments and confirm guarantees of Ukraine's security (Klump).

Ukraine was of vital importance to the United States, which seeks to besiege Russia's sphere of influence. The ports of Ukraine are also important to the NATO and its navies as they enter the Black Sea. US influence in Ukraine is also a continuous drain on Russia's leverage and a means of pressure to block US projects in the region, particularly the Middle East. As a result of America's concern that Ukraine would be a member of NATO, Europe's interest in Ukraine being a member of the Union, the West stood behind its Orange Revolution in 2004 and the 2005 elections. Russia did not intervene in the Orange Revolution

and left it, as it is said, eating itself from within, especially as it lacked popular support and raised unrealistic slogans on the ground, such as freedom, belonging to Europe, seeking EU membership and NATO membership. Stay away from Russia.

2.2. The Outset of Violence

By 2002, the structure of the Ukrainian government was characterized by homogeneity, the president power controlled the decision making process and the political situation maintained a new environment of stability. Ukraine has not lost hope of joining the European Union after opening the path of negotiations to sign agreements of economic and political partnership with Europe.

The roots of the Ukraine crisis lie in April 2008 summit in Bucharest³ when the NATO's members agreed on Georgia's and Ukraine's ambition to join NATO and issued a statement announcing "these countries will become members of NATO." The latter was not welcomed by Moscow and refused to accept it as a compromise where Alexander Grushko, Russia's deputy foreign minister, stated "Georgia's and Ukraine's membership in the alliance is a huge strategic mistake which would have most serious consequences for pan-European security." (qtd.in Mearsheimer 2-3). However, the Russian President Putin considered Ukraine's acceptance into NATO would create a direct threat.

The war in Georgia aborted the possibility of NATO enlargement for these two countries, Russia and the EU began to think wisely how to benefit from this war and the crisis. The EU tried to establish a "zone of comfort" to the east through the Eastern Partnership program, an initiative to promote prosperity in Ukraine and integrate it with other EU members (Trenin 4). For its part, Russia viewed the initiative as threat to its interests and responded immediately through attracting Ukraine and the other former Soviet republics to its sphere of influence and to keep them away from the EU because it saw the EU enlargement facilitates NATO enlargement (Mearsheimer 3).

Over many years, the majority of Ukrainians thought that their lives would change and improve faster if Ukraine was a member in EU. According to the prevailing dream in this country, hopes for prosperity can be achieved almost entirely if Ukraine fulfilled its European integration dream and signed the Association Agreement with the EU, this step would promote the supremacy of law and raise living standards but Victor Yanukovich's decision not to sign hijacked Ukrainians' European dream (Pylynskyi 34).

The West used EU expansion, NATO expansion and promoting democracy as tools to ignite a fire and the flame of crisis sparked in November 2013, when the pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovich refused to give a green light to sign an agreement with the EU from happening in the last moment and preferred to take a \$15 billion in forms of loans and grants from Russia instead. (Mearsheimer 4). He was the president who tried to hold the stick from the center when, after winning the presidency, he accepted the process of accession negotiations for the so-called Eastern Partnership (Trenin 5).

Before the signing of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union at the Vilnius Summit, Russia strongly lobbied the Ukrainian government and used every means to prevent it from signing it, which was achieved before November 28, 2013, when Ukrainian President announced one week before the Summit, freezing the preparations to sign the Association Agreement with the EU and instead encouraging close ties with Russia, the latter tried to convince people that this was in the interest of the Ukrainian economy (Savin 5).

The Russians thought that the announcement of this amount is sufficient to calm the situation and avoid disturbances due to the abolition announced by the pro-Russian Kiev and Ukraine's need for money because its economy suffered from the specter of collapse and bankruptcy, but Moscow did not believe it would face Ukraine's stubborn refusal manifested

in the steady protests in Independence Square, which became known as the “Euromaidan” (Trenin 5). The three opposition parties in Ukraine embraced a resolution which proclaimed:

In the case of the President’s refusal to carry out his constitutional duties and his failure to sign the agreement, we shall make every effort to have the President impeached for high treason, and we shall call on all democratic countries of the world to impose immediate sanctions on Yanukovych and members of his corrupt regime. (qtd. in Black and Johns 17)

According to Kornely Kakachia, Professor of Political Science at Tbilisi State University and Director of the Georgian Institute of Politics, many Georgians believed that the scenario in Ukraine resemble the Russia’s actions in Georgia in August 2008 which viewed as an infringement of the domestic affairs of an independent and a sovereign state, especially when the Western reaction did not strongly condemn this illegitimate invasion of Georgia, that pushed Russia to be more greedy and planned to annex other parts in Ukraine. He added that the Georgian economy depended on the Russian market as well as the Ukrainian market (Kakachia).

It is also worth pointing out that Ukraine began a new chapter that no one expected, which brought dramatic social-political changes after the failure to sign EU-Association Agreement; as a result, peaceful protests took place in Euromaidan which expressed their lack of trust in the government and demanded new elections for both the parliament and the president. The protests developed and the number of protesters began to rise steadily and rapidly, although the atmosphere was very cold, which is indicative of an unprecedented Ukrainian insistence on challenging Russia. The situation escalated until the police used bullets and the protest turned violent (Kratochvil and Scheide 52-54).

But a serious development took place in Ukraine, Where President Yanukovich fled to the east of the country and from there towards Russia, and demanded Russia protection from the

extremists, the step that Russia was behind, and was intended to spread chaos and create a constitutional vacuum, a prelude to Russian scenarios that Putin waited for years to re-control the peninsula of Crimea and he justified that by saying:

Like a mirror, the situation in Ukraine reflects what is going on and what has been happening in the world over the last several decades. After the dissolution of bipolarity on the planet, we no longer have stability. Key international institutions are not getting any stronger; on the contrary, in many cases, they are sadly degrading. Our Western partners, led by the United States of America, prefer not to be guided by international law in their practical policies, but by the rule of the gun. (qtd. in Rasmussen et al. 12)

Putin wanted to fulfill his dream of restoring the glory of the Russian Tsars and their prestige.

Obviously, the revolutionary events of late 2013 retold the story of the Orange Revolution in 2004 and showed how the two conflicts could be linked together and how causes of the latter are related to the first events when protesters have twice forced Viktor Yanukovich from power the first was in 2004 and the second in 2014 (Onuch 44). According to David Marples, both events emphasized on the degree of corruption that reached unprecedented levels during the administration of President Yanukovich in addition to a sort of differences and similarities indicating the end of regeneration of old hostility (Marples).

A comparison between the Orange maidan and Euromaidan was singled out by David Marples. In 2004 Orange Revolution was an uprising which changed the president but not the government, some elites supported Kuchma and others like Viktor Yushchenko and Yulia Tymoshenko were with opposition and the events lasted five weeks. Whereas, in 2013-2014 the revolutionary protests drove to military actions, protests outside Kyiv exceeded those in the center and the hottest topic in media was the events in Ukraine particularly their continuation after the fleeing of Yanukovich. Both protests received Western support (Marples).

If we look at the course of these two revolutions, we can notice many similarities such as: social and economic instability, distrust in government, the political actors and external influence in which all of these causes played a major role in 2004 and 2013-14. So, Ukraine did not learn from the historical experience and mistakes “Orange Revolution” how to avoid the recurrence of the Euromaidan protest and predict the necessity for radical change.

The 2008-9 recession exposed Ukraine’s dependency on Russian energy supplies. Considering this weakness, unequal agreement was imposed on Ukraine by the Kremlin to prolong the presence of Russia’s naval until 2042. For Ukraine, the alternatives by the EU and the United States were no more its priorities. The shale gas exploration and reverse gas deals achieved in 2014 as financial guarantees by the United States and the EU. Western energy was necessary for Ukraine to resist Russian pressure, but if personal interests and me-qualifications accompanied that energy, it has no fruitful outcomes (Haran and Burkovskyi).

George W. Bush was inspired by the 2004 Orange Revolution and pledged to foster democracy while the President Obama has approached the 2014 uprising with separation aimed at spreading chaos and insecurity, which was a different president in a different decade. William Gaddis portrayed the way Obama’s handling of Ukraine mirrored the “policy of restraint” that kept the United States out of troubles because it was based on methods of achieving democracy rather than objectives (Baker). Others stated Obama’s stance on Ukraine was wary and it might be justified as Steven Pifer said: “Given how fluid things are in Kiev, I’m not sure it would be wise to jump in there with advice, and I’m not sure the advice would be welcome. This may be a time where a little restraint on our part is a good thing.” (qtd. in Baker).

We cannot deny that there is an international dispute over Ukraine, that the position of the European Union and the United States has been influential, as well as the Russian position, which has entered the Ukrainian arena with its soft and coarse influence through Russian

culture and its extension in Ukraine. The second obvious fact is that both forces would not have resolved things for the Ukrainians, who are the first actor and the basis for resolving the situation. In all probabilities, the turbulent period in Ukraine is sorely to change relations between the West and Russia as well the world order, the open competition between Russia and the EU and the United States was fierce and prejudicial in the Eastern Europe. Each competitor will have to pay for their apparent decisions to defend its interests.

Endnotes

¹ Orange Revolution was a series of protests, strikes and other actions of civil disobedience during November and December 2004 presidential election. The movement was organized by supporters of Viktor Yushenko and assailants of Viktor Yanukovich, main candidates and opponents in Ukrainian presidential elections. "Ukraine Orange Revolution," *Welcome to Ukraine* <<http://ukrainetrek.com/about-ukraine-history/orange-revolution>>.

² American unilateralism did not start with the Bush administration. Its moralistic root traces to Christian Right influence on US foreign policy after WWII, especially over US policy on China. It was the ideological basis for the Cold War with a self-righteous Superpower leading subservient allies who did not have the wherewithal to resist it. It has continued after the end of the Cold War even as allies attempt to assert increasing independence with the disappearance of perceived Soviet threat. Henry C.K. Liu, "US Unilateralism: Nonproliferation and Unilateral Proliferation," *Global Research*, 1 July 2006 <<http://www.globalresearch.ca/us-unilateralism/3089>>.

³ The NATO Summit held in Bucharest on 2-4 April 2008 was the major foreign policy event organized by Romania, and the largest summit in NATO's history. The Summit was attended by 26 Member States, 23 Partner countries, senior representatives from international organizations and the states contributing to NATO operations in Afghanistan, at the level of President (23 States), Prime Minister (22 countries), Foreign Minister (7 states), Defence Minister (Kazakhstan) and political director (Ireland). *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, <<https://www.mae.ro/en/node/2079>>.

Chapter Three

The U.S. Foreign Policy toward the Ukraine Crisis during Obama's Administration

Ukraine is of special interest to Russia in achieving its goal of restoring the status of the former Soviet Union, in addition to its economic interests in Ukraine. On the other hand, Ukraine is of great importance to the European Union, the United States and, in other words, to the Western alliance. On the third hand, the Ukrainian crisis poses a threat of a new Cold War and bilateral polarization.

The current crisis in Ukraine represents the biggest and most serious challenge facing U.S. President Barack Obama in terms of US foreign policy. The crisis comes amidst deep concern and mounting criticism from America's allies in the world and by the Republican Party internally for the Obama administration's approach to foreign policy in general. The Obama administration is on a tightrope, and its dilemma is that if Russian intervention in eastern Ukraine and the Crimea is left without a response, it would undermine confidence in the credibility of the United States to its allies who rely on its military umbrella.

The process of stabilizing Ukraine will take time and efforts. It seems that after the missed opportunity of the Orange Revolution 2004, many Ukrainians recognize that time has come to take advantage of the second chance they have now to turn their country around. Furthermore, the United States and the Western policy should raise hope that Ukraine will succeed and Europe will be secure and stable.

3.1. Russia's Annexation of Crimea and the American Reactions

The Ukrainian Revolution has broken the Russian guardianship over this country, the Ukrainians finally achieved the true independence they had long dreamed of, and it was an important step towards building a just state based on equitable distribution of wealth, and social justice. But nothing is free, Ukraine paid a high price when Putin took the chance and annexed Crimea.

The annexation of the Crimea to Russian sovereignty was the smoothest invasion of modern history when it ended before the outside world realized it had begun. Henrik Larsen, consultant on Defence and Security Studies, saw the invasion as a great geopolitical rupture which infringed the promises regarding the territorial integrity of Ukraine that were addressed in the Budapest Memorandum¹ in 1994 under which Ukraine made promises to the other signatories as part of denuclearization. The latest action enabled Russia to control Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova that hope to join NATO or the EU and made this process impossible unless these countries are willing to relinquish their separatist entities (Larsen 10-11).

Yanukovych's departure with those who hold key positions in the government drove the country to a situation in which the parliament was solely responsible in the government and these circumstances were suitable for the invasion of Crimea by Russia and the ensuing martial operations in Donetsk and Luhansk. Russia intended to create a state of instability and chaos in Ukraine to keep it between a rock and a hard place threatened with sanctions and war, away from the West and to turn Ukraine into a "buffer state" between hybrid threats that deepened the crisis (Stepanenko and Pylynskyi 70). In early May, a regional referendum was held in Donetsk and Luhansk demanding not to stay dependent to Kiev. Furthermore, Moscow showed its moral support but refused to provide any kind of military help (Trenin 7).

For Ukraine, it is difficult to separate the "buffer state" status, to a certain extent the country has a strategic position in East Central Europe, and its history of being ruptured between East and West will be hard to overcome. In order to preserve its independence, Ukraine needs to pursue its national interests and demands moving further away this old-fashioned and false dichotomy.

As part of a series of talks aimed at showing sympathy and solidarity with Ukraine, the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry and the Russian foreign minister, Sergey Lavrov met in London on 14 March 2014 to discuss the situation in Ukraine and tried to halt the referendum

in Crimea before it takes place. Both the EU and the United States warned Russia that if the referendum goes ahead, they will impose sanction on Moscow. Western diplomats were not highly optimistic of the talks and they believed that there is no peace plan to normalize the atmosphere in Crimea between the two negotiators. Kerry's proposal was to reaffirm U.S. support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and rejection of Russian annexation of Crimea but the meeting proved fruitless ("Ukraine crisis: John Kerry and Sergey Lavrov meet for talks on Crimea vote"). The truth is that many European leaders have tried to pressure the Russian president, but the result was that the crisis, rather than opening a diplomatic solution, has become more complex.

On 16 March, an unconstitutional referendum on independence² was organized in Crimea, two days after people in the Black Sea peninsula voted overwhelmingly to secede from Ukraine for Russia and the results of the referendum paved the way for Russia to annex Crimea after a military intervention. Despite the great loss and Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, Ukraine decided to maintain its naval and military troops in Sevastopol to turn away from bloodshed (Hedenskog 21-22). Moreover, the White House declared that Obama "emphasised that Russia's actions were in violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and that, in co-ordination with our European partners, we are prepared to impose additional costs on Russia for its actions." (qtd. in Harding and Walker).

Unlike Moscow, the United States did not hide its political support to Kiev and gave a well media coverage particularly the visits there by Joe Biden (Vice President), John Kerry (Secretary of State) and John Brennan (Central Intelligence Director) and a group of U.S. officials. Accordingly, Russian media considered that a tool to orient the Ukrainian authorities' behaviors. As an attempt to manage the crisis in Ukraine a telephone conversation between Putin and Obama reached zero-sum solutions. On 25 May, 2014, Petro Poroshenko³, a leading sponsor of the Maidan, won the presidential election which pushed

Putin to accept the new circumstances (Trenin 8). Both the United States and its European allies were surprised by Russia's occupation and annexation of Crimea and in general by the chain of events that developed into a crisis in Ukraine (Larrabee, Wilson, and Gordon IV 6).

In a reflection after the annexation of Crimea, diplomatic reactions from the West and the United States continue to follow the Russian move in the region. The great powers started to assess the military lessons that can be derived from the Russian intervention in Ukraine, explaining that the most prominent lesson is the rapid deployment of Russian special operations forces to achieve a specific goal because Putin's annexation of Crimea represented a historical turning point in the bilateral relations of the East-West since the breakup of the Soviet Union.

The Russian intervention and the crisis in Ukraine have created a situation in which it is needful for Germany to make decision and take steps for action. Dropping its traditional approach of leading from behind, Germany imposed gradual political and economic sanctions on Russia. Accordingly, Germany's diplomatic offensive is aimed at preventing NATO deployment and facilitating dialogues and talks. From the start, Angela Merkel, the German Chancellor, declared that Germany would accept to take the same path as the United States and the EU members in imposing radical economic and political sanctions. On the other hand, Germany feared disastrous consequences of deterioration in Russian-German relations (Larson 15-17).

It is also worth emphasizing that the western territories of Ukraine were part of Poland before the Second World War which used to be part of the Russian empire and saw itself as a model for such countries. Russian aggression against its neighbor Ukraine has made Poland to think deeply about its national security and expressed its strong refusal of transforming Ukraine into a confederation of independent districts. Poland has played an impressive role in reacting to the Ukraine crisis; it advocated the reassurance of military protection and called

for NATO meeting. The Foreign Minister Sikorski declared that it is no need to fear military threat it is just an alarm to raise NATO's situational awareness, adding that the EU trusts Poland's decisions relating to Ukraine (Larson 18-21). Despite the strong involvement by Poland and Germany, an acute contrast between their reactions was highlighted.

The Ukraine crisis witnessed less direct involvement by France, the United Kingdom and the United States. At the tongue of its Foreign Minister Fabius, France admitted that Putin's invasion of Ukraine was the worst action and in turn it intended to reach peaceful resolution through communication. Unlike Poland and Germany, Paris' reactions were cooler and mirrored more general interests about the EU membership in which France rejected definitely Ukrainian EU membership and supported only the core countries that ensures a European balance of power and world order (Larson 26-27). Whereas, London has been cautious not to run risk sanctions that would harm its interests (28).

Yet, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army General Martin Dempsey summarized the mood that sounded to take control over the western leadership "Russia's actions remind us that the world today remains unpredictable, complex and quite dangerous.....The world will continue to surprise us, often in unpleasant ways." (qtd. in Pellerin). The conflicts in Ukraine shattered the U.S.-Russian relations particularly when the Russian security interests were challenged by the American forces in Ukraine. The confrontation between the two great powers may affect other relations and the call for building a new trust and repairing relations with Moscow were far reaching (Trenin 24-26).

French President François Holland and German Chancellor Angela Merkel have taken the lead to mediate the conflict in Europe. The first meeting brings together the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany and called a halt of fighting in eastern Ukraine, withdrawal of Russian arms, and decentralization of political power in Ukraine. Josh Earnest, White House Press Secretary, declared that the White House affirmed that the commitments in this deal

must be met and fulfilled by all parties in reality. He added that the great deal of the agreement is to settle disputes in Ukraine and to restore normalcy and control over its borders (“Minsk Peace Agreement: Still to Be Consolidated on the Ground” 2-3).

After the failure of Minsk I, the German Chancellor Merkel and French President Holland met with Ukrainian President Poroshenko and Russian President Putin in Minsk on 11 and 12 February, they sought to re-establish the ceasefire. Minsk II called for withdrawal of all heavy weapons, an immediate cease of fire by both sides, fostering a return to normalcy, constitutional reform for Ukraine, and immediate dialogues on local elections such as the occupied part of the Donbas (Pifer). Hopefully, the agreement can be fulfilled to bring and stick peace and normalcy in Ukraine.

The United States involvement in the Ukraine crisis was primarily due to security and strategic motives, after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States worked on the interest of States that were part of the Soviet Union so as to ensure that these countries abandoned communism and the Soviet legacy, especially Ukraine, and with the occurrence of protests and unrest in Ukraine and Russia's intervention in the Ukraine crisis, it is doing so to raise the concern of the United States because in its beliefs that the return of Russian hegemony is possible. Accordingly, the increase of Russian influence in Ukraine has an impact on the process of "balance of power".

President Obama followed a clever U.S. strategy to deal with the Ukraine crisis to avoid any direct confrontation with Russia. The United States relied indirectly on Russian interests through its allies and made economic and security offers to countries neighboring Russia. These offers were in fact to prevent these countries from supporting the Russian situation and interfering in Ukraine, as well as some other means followed by the United States to deal with the Ukrainian crisis, the most important of which was to work to impose sanctions on Russia, but also followed the US direction of negotiation for peaceful solutions to the crisis

with Russia. Thus, the United States wanted to control all the cards in the Ukraine crisis, where it allied itself with most of Russia's neighbors. It also wanted to exhaust Russia's forces but indirectly through sanctions until it exits Ukraine and abandons its expansionist policy not only in Ukraine; but in Eastern Europe in general (Woehrel 10-11).

First and foremost, Obama succeeded to affirm the effectiveness of means in the U.S. dominion among them the political and economic sanctions on Russia and isolate it by immobilizing its membership in the Group of Eight (G8); yet, Obama did not mention that this action was unsuccessful to restrain the annexation of Crimea to Russia. In fact, he mentioned the imposition of tough sanctions on Iran about its nuclear program that the use of this arsenal to support Syrian regime, also Obama pointed to the rising power of China that threatened U.S. allies in the Asia Pacific that is the reason behind why the United States was not relaxed about the China's rise to further support his claims (Abu Arshid 11).

In March 2014, Obama has prolonged U.S. sanctions on Russia due to its military intervention in Crimea, awakening the worst crisis between the two camps since the end of the Cold War in 1991, as stated by the White House statement. Furthermore, he sought to ban cooperation with Russian firms as long as the Russia's actions in the region pose a threat to U.S. national security. Also, the war in eastern Ukraine by Moscow has pushed the EU to impose its own sanctions on Moscow over the crisis in Ukraine in order to destabilize the Kremlin leadership as well as damage Russian firms. The sanctions, altogether, have negatively affected the Russian economy especially oil prices and have inhibited the foreign investments (Reevell). So, Russia's decisions are not only bad for Ukraine but on the sidelines will be bad for Russia.

The new millennium has witnessed the resurgence of the U.S. diplomacy since the 2008 when the President Obama came to office, he promised to rebalance the three pillars of the national security by reinforcing diplomacy and development and decreasing the role of

defense. In the course of 2014 U.S. Military Academy onset ceremony in West Point, the President Obama admitted: “to say that we have an interest in pursuing peace and freedom beyond our borders is not to say that every problem has a military solution.” (qtd. in Deni 3). Throughout the Ukraine crisis, Obama’s administration has intended to turn aside from a military confrontation with Russia over the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and preferred to provide energy security, nonlethal assistance and diplomatic backing and to impose sanctions along with the EU (9).

In a meeting in Berlin on 18th November 2016, the President Obama agreed with several European leaders to sanctions against Russia over its annexation of Crimea and the invasion of Donbas, fearing that the new elected Donald J. Trump would approach soft policy with Russia. The meeting drew the conclusion that Obama and the European leaders agreed that Moscow should uphold its pledge to withdraw military forces and to cease fire in eastern Ukraine. Moreover, the chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany mentioned that the settlement of peace in Europe had been at hand over the past years because the frontiers after the Cold War were respected by all nations (Eddy and Harris).

It is significant to mention that the crisis in Ukraine is testing the Obama’s “reset” policy toward the Russian federation, this policy based on the belief of resolutions of disputes caused by the reactions of George W. Bush administration to the Russia’s intervention in Georgia. Then, the President Vladimir Putin concluded that the Obama administration would ultimately look the other way around round if he did the same in Ukraine. In this respect, to Obama, the soft power⁴ still matters very much; he asserted that the rivalry between great powers was a thing of the past and the world should not be confused by his military actions in Syria and Libya and also against terrorists because they were restricted operations (Holmes 2).

In order to spread stability in Ukraine and continue to growth, the new provisional government in Ukraine began to deal with the United States to obtain financial aids. U.S. administration official declared that the United States would support Ukraine in conducting impartial and free elections, fighting corruption and emphasized that the International Monetary Fund will grant Ukraine \$ 15 million. On 12th March, the Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk visited the White House and discussed with Obama the situation in Ukraine and the latter promised that the U.S. will provide assistance and support to help Ukraine in its democratic transformation. With the election of President Petro Poroshenko, Obama declared that the Ukrainians elected the right man who can pull them to safety (Woźniak 92).

After the Crimea referendum on 16th March, the North Atlantic Council issued a statement considering the referendum to be both illegitimate and illegal because it infringed the international law in general and the Ukrainian Constitution in particular. The United States has sent US troops and warplanes to support NATO forces that worried about Russia's future intentions. It also rejected the results of the referendum that voted for the Crimea to join Russia. The United States threatened the military response by arming the Ukrainian army and not only by imposing economic sanctions on Russia (Woźniak 93-94).

Furthermore, Ukraine is the most essential partner for Russia and the EU but not for the United States. As the world's most dominant military and economic power, the United States should keep its credibility throughout the world. Actually, the United States may not take risk and enter in conflict with Russia due to the asymmetry of interests in Ukraine. But if we consider the changes in Europe 2014 and the important role of NATO, the new circumstances obliged NATO to act in deeds and words. To preserve and strengthen the new world order, the United States has to stand behind the smallest and weakest allies because they are the targets of the other powers, usually considered them as agents to the United States. Despite the fact that these powers are weaker than the United States and its allies, they

are competing and provoking the United States to act in many regions in the world that can shift the U.S. foreign policy (Woźniak 94-100).

In June 2014, Senator Corker, chairman of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, offered three reasons why U.S. should be interested in Ukraine. Firstly, Ukraine has been a good partner for the United States on issues that concerned critically for U.S. security and foreign policy. After its independence in 1991, Ukraine gave up its nuclear arsenal. Also, in 1998, Ukraine decided to withdraw from the project of Bushehr nuclear power plant in Iran but Kyiv immediately answered the U.S. call for contributions to the coalition forces in Iraq (Pifer).

Secondly, as part of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum agreement under which Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons, and the presidents of Russia, Ukraine and the United States along with the Prime Minister of Britain committed to respect the independence and the territorial integrity of Ukraine without using force. But Russia violated the commitments and annexed Crimea in 2014. The United States and Britain should support Ukraine and press Russia to stop action that infringed the commitments in the agreement (Pifer).

Thirdly, Russia's illegal seizure and annexation of Crimea shapes an essential challenge to the post-war European order and raises fears about the next step that Russia might take to threaten stability and security in Europe. That is of interest to the Europe and the United States, afforded that the trans-Atlantic relationship binds them to the closest partners, and they are committed to their defense. The United States and its allies have to support Ukraine and to impose sanctions on Russia for its misbehaviors (Pifer, "Minsk II at Two Years"). Russia should be considered by the west that if it is not part of the solution in the Ukraine crisis, it is part of the problem.

Since the United States stands at the peak of the international financial system and the world cannot tackle the most pressing problems without America, the Obama administration

used what has been called the “smart power”⁵ as a smart step taken by the United States to avoid the ineffectiveness of the hard power and the criticism for using the soft power. The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) are the new cutting edge of American power that damage Russia in short term. However, the crisis in Ukraine has displayed how ineffective American soft power is and the Russia’s exercises will be reduplicated by other countries. As a result, the future of Ukraine is uncertain and the situation about the future borders matters much, accordingly the American influence will be at stake (Wilson 264).

It was clear the level of arrogance and opportunism that characterizes the American policy, which has emerged since the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis and also Washington's willingness to permanently trade and sacrifice the benefit of the so-called Washington friends without leaving much impact on the common denominators between the Americans and Europeans to put an end to the dream of Russian President Putin to revive the Soviet Union since the loss of Ukraine, in short, is not only a geopolitical loss, but a loss of part of the history, memory and components of Russian identity.

3.2. The U.S. Media Coverage of the Ukraine Crisis

After years of worsening Ukrainian crisis and Russia's annexation of Crimea on 18 March, 2014, the media war between Russia and the West has not subsided as the two sides continue to exchange accusations and expose each other's actions; the international agenda has gone beyond the internal agendas. Furthermore, U.S. media coverage of the Ukraine crisis has condemned Russia’s acts in 2014.

Gilbert Doctorow declared that U.S. professional journals are not serious in reporting what might be the point view of the other side of the current confrontation with Russia. He added that the only exception is the June-August issue in foreign affairs magazine, which provide a space to two essays one is by Alexander Lukin, authoritative Russian Professor, that support

this stream. Lukin succeeded to depict the true image and explains the expansion by NATO and EU in the states like Ukraine in infringement of the perceptions attained at the end of the cold is rupturing states bordering Russia and threatening to use military interference between Russia and the West. Finally, Lukin suggested the West's neutrality stance toward these states (Doctorow).

The second essay is entitled "Managing the New Cold War" by Robert Legvold, Professor at Columbia University; he adopts a neutral position. Legvold urges both the United States and Russia to attempt as much as possible to find out the real motives of the other side in this dispute, thus to resolve this turbulence in this political situation. He does not declare these political resolutions, and he sees that Washington is unwilling in returning to normal intercourse (Doctorow).

Since the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis the American role has strongly been present in resolving the crisis peacefully. At a press conference in Mexico on 19th February 2014, the President Obama cautioned Yanakovich not to use violence against the protesters and let the Ukrainians decide their future by themselves. In particular to this regard, the White House and the EU convinced the President Yanukovich to sign a compromise with opposition leadership but the protesters refused to negotiate with him, the protesters have continued to control presidential office building and Yanukovich fled. The U.S. did not express anger and hoped that it could facilitate the de-escalation of tensions and stabilize the country (Woźniak 91).

The New York Times newspaper published an article talking about another kind of media that played a significant role in discovering the Russian propaganda in escalating the situation in Ukraine through supporting the rebel uprising. Ukrainian hackers have hacked Vladislav Y. Surkov's office e-mail account, the top official overseeing Russia's Ukraine policy; they released thousands of emails to and from Surkov showing Kremlin interfering in Ukraine.

Whilst the people who e-mailed Surkov proved the authenticity of these e-mails. In addition, the Obama administration has pointed the finger of accusation to the Kremlin, accusing it of hacking into their computers in an attempt to disrepute the political system of U.S. and the White House vowed to impose sanction on Russia (Kramer).

The American media acted its allocated role as propaganda mouthpieces. There are many critical voices within the mainstream media and it is hard to rely on them for accurate reporting because the television news and newspapers are misleading and incomplete. *The New York Times* has been regarded as “newspaper of record” that adjusts the general mode of media. It splurges of having 12 reporters in Ukraine, however it does not seriously report what is going on there particularly the conflict between Russia and the United States which could change into war between two nuclear powers. The State Department and U.S-backed Ukrainian government sent photographs to the newspaper to fabricate events and report that the Russian forces are supporting the protest in eastern Ukraine. Accordingly, *The New York Times* has been captured in a chain of falsification (Lantier).

Media plays another role is that it uses information as a weapon and sets news into narratives using recognizable reference tips to facilitate and explain information to the audience. The option of terminology, images and information represented or dropped in international media reports is one reason that what happened in Crimea is still a debatable issue. Communicative studies present that the most important function of the media is telling people what to think about but not telling them what to think because words have power and stay in audiences' minds. Thus, each person interprets these messages through his/her own principles as historian Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky reported the people of Ukraine a method of turning matters on their minds and switching the balance of power that can influence the course of history (Dyczok).

Arguably, no one is better than New York Times columnist Friedman who succeeded to access to millions of readers on the New York Times. He played a critical role in lining up most Americans behind the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and is trying to do the same in a hot war on Russian-Ukrainian border. Although Friedman was writing without knowing what is happening in Ukraine, he wrote as if he were on the battlefield:

Ukraine matters — more than the war in Iraq against the Islamic State, a.k.a., ISIS. It is still not clear that most of our allies in the war against ISIS share our values. That conflict has a big tribal and sectarian element. It is unmistakably clear, though, that Ukraine's reformers in its newly elected government and Parliament — who are struggling to get free of Russia's orbit and become part of the European Union's market and democratic community — do share our values. If Putin the Thug gets away with crushing Ukraine's new democratic experiment and unilaterally redrawing the borders of Europe, every pro-Western country around Russia will be in danger. (qtd. in Parry)

3.3. The Future Perspectives on Ukraine Crisis and the Road Ahead

The ongoing transformation in Ukraine has turned the tables of the post-Cold War relationships between the EU and Russia, on the one hand, and the United States and Russia, on the other. The scenarios in Central and Eastern Europe recall NATO to boost its defense while the United States and its allies employ a new policy to contain Russia in seizing Crimea and cocking a snook at the West.

U.S.-Russian relationship was already moving off the rails before the Ukraine crisis and the eruption of the Arab spring widening the geopolitical tensions between them. The United States found the pretext toward the Middle East's democratization, whilst Russia feared the spread of militant Islamism. The Final break of the relationship occurred with the crisis in Ukraine. For the medium term, the prospects of these relations are dim in which Russia feel no need to cooperate with the United States and by turn the latter excluded the Russia from

its sphere of cooperation. Once the immediate crisis ends though, it is possible Moscow and Washington will have a desire in finding a stable interest that enables Russia to tackle its economic challenges and provide an opportunity for the United States to ensure Russian support for its security interests in the Middle East and Asia-Pacific (Mankoff and Kuchins 5-6). Repairing and improving the U.S.-Russian relationship is not a quick or an easy process.

In their article “Obama and E.U. Leaders Agree to Keep Sanctions on Russia”, published in the *New York Times* on November 18, 2016, Eddy and Harris shed light on the fact the winds of political change may blow on Ukraine with the new elected President Donald J. Trump and the sense of support and solidarity that the American show to Ukraine has been unknown and unsteady by the doubt concerning the foreign policy he will follow (Eddy and Harris). However, it is worthy to stress that Trump questioned Washington’s longstanding commitment to NATO allies, praised the Russian President Vladimir Putin, and called for cutting foreign aid. He focused on “America first” while the process of taking care of the world is the full responsibility of the world itself (Baker, “Donald Trump’s Victory ...”). For Ukraine, these promises pose a dilemma and the balance between these objectives is not always easy to strike.

Both Ukraine and Russia have refused to implement the commitments of the Minsk agreement and the mission of Washington is to de-escalate the military tensions. The present pack of EU and U.S. sanctions represents a significant source of pressure over Moscow, thus it should not be decreased in the absence of a desirable change in Russian act in Ukraine. Also the United States and its allies have to keep Ukraine on a democratic and reformist road to combat corruption and meet the needs of its people. For the new American administration, Trump should be aware and wise about the prospects of encouraging and fostering transformational change in the Russian federation (Rumer et al.). The world is competing and

racing to improve its capability to grow industries and generate new technologies of tomorrow.

Finally, no matter what direction it takes, it is clear that the Ukrainian crisis, suddenly, swiftly and unexpectedly, will not end before it has a profound impact on Russia and its regional and European neighbors. Moscow was wrong when it was estimated since the end of the 1990s that its biggest problem was in the immediate future, and not in any other issue in the world. As a result of the conflict of interest and the geopolitical influence on the chessboard Eurasian in general and Ukrainian in particular, where the Ukrainian crisis is a hot fuse and inflamed in a war that brings back to the atmosphere a kind of Cold War between the poles of the global whether political, military or otherwise.

Endnotes

¹ Budapest Memorandum signed on December 5, 1994, Ukraine, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America Welcoming the accession of Ukraine to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon State. Taking into account the commitment of Ukraine to eliminate all nuclear weapons from its territory within a specified period of time. “Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine’s Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons” *General Assembly Security Council*.

² Crimea referendum when Crimea voted to secede from Ukraine in a referendum that most of the world has condemned as illegal. Early results – when 50% of the votes were counted – showed that 95.5% of ballots were in favour of joining Russia. Luke Harding and Shaun Walker, “Crimea votes to secede from Ukraine in 'illegal' poll,” *The Guardian*, 16 Mar. 2014. <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/16/ukraine-russia-truce-crimea-referendum>>.

³ Petro Poroshenko, in full Petro Oleksiyovych Poroshenko was born on September 26, 1965, Bolhrad, Ukraine, Ukrainian businessman and politician who served as president of Ukraine (2014–). Ukraine held snap presidential elections on May 25, 2014, Poroshenko coasted to a landslide victory, easily topping his closest challenger, former prime minister and onetime Orange coalition ally Yuliya Tymoshenko. Michael Ray, “Petro Poroshenko: President of Ukraine,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Petro-Poroshenko>>.

⁴ Soft power is coined by Nye in the late 1980s, the term "soft power" -- the ability of a country to persuade others to do what it wants without force or coercion -- is now widely invoked in foreign policy debates. Joseph Nye, “Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics,” *Foreign Affairs*, Web. May/ June 2004 <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/capsule-review/2004-05-01/soft-power-means-success-world-politics>>.

⁵ Smart power is the ability to combine hard and soft power into a successful strategy. By and large, the United States managed such a combination during the Cold War, but more recently U.S. foreign policy has tended to over-rely on hard power because it is the most direct and visible source of American strength. Joseph Nye, “Smart Power,” *Huffpost*, 25 May 2011. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joseph-nye/smart-power_b_74725.html>.

Conclusion

The Black Sea region, in which Ukraine is one of the central powers, has become so important for European security since the demise of the Soviet Union. First, the states of the region control the major energy passageways. Second, they witnessed many frozen disputes which are the root causes of wars and humanitarian dilemmas. Third, Russia's geopolitical position has political, economic, and territorial objectives. Forth, numerous military organizations have troops ready for ground and sea acts. Thus, Russia, the European Union and the United States have specific levels of involvement in the regional processes and dialogue.

The aforementioned factors had made the military conflict in Ukraine extremely possible. Taking into account the historical perspective, Ukraine has been torn between East and West since its independence in 1991. Ukraine's national identity has been tested due to its Citizens' fragmented stance towards Ukraine's cohesion in the future. The ongoing conflict has influenced and affected Europe's foreign policy as well as the rest of the world. The lack of democracy and the corruption were the key motives of the uprising in 2004, dubbed as the Orange Revolution. It was a political clash between the pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovich and the pro-Western Victor Yushchenko about who should rule the country and how it should be governed.

Ukraine's most deadly and prolonged crisis that shows no signs of ending, ignited by President Yanukovich's decision to refrain from signing of a new Association Agreement with the European Union in November 2013. Furthermore, this agreement would have enhanced trade and political ties with EU. The suspension of the agreement led to the wave of protests and civil unrests that is recorded in history under the name "EuroMaidan" and opened a new East-West battleground. Over the subsequent months and after the ouster of President Viktor Yanukovich in February 2014, the Russia Federation seized and annexed

the Crimean peninsula where conflict erupted between the new Ukrainian authorities in Kiev and pro-Russian separatists.

However, the opposition has received political support as well as financial aids from the EU states and the United States while Russia backed the pro-Russian citizens and Putin's request to use force to protect them in Ukraine was approved by the Russian parliament. The U.S. President Barack Obama asked the Russian President Putin to withdraw his forces in order to decrease tensions in the country whereas Putin showed no positive response and invaded Crimea. Although the Ukrainian crisis is an internal crisis blown up by external factors, it has widened and spilled over into U.S., Russian and EU relations and they are not symmetrical players in the field.

Russia's annexation of Crimea was broadly criticized in the West as a violation of international law. As a result, the United States and the EU broadened economic sanctions against Russian companies and individual. The war of sanctions, which is of international concern, has intensified between the intensification of the conflict and its repercussions on the international scene. The two countries, Russia and the United States, have declared their resolution to resolve the political and diplomatic crisis, reviving the international political climate and expressing the desire of various parties to reach lasting solutions to the crisis.

Russia's attempts to secure its former Soviet neighbor was driven by strong Western strategic progress, often carried a wave of democratic transformation and dreams of integration into the European welfare society. The Ukrainian crisis indicates that the escalation of the Russian national spirit will become the basis for the policy of resisting this Western progress, and the basis of Russian limited military responses. But the world is not in another Cold War; Russia is much weaker than the burden of such a prolonged confrontation with the Western bloc, and the steps it has taken in northern Georgia and Crimea are no more than limited responses to major shifts in the neighborhood.

Hence, the Ukraine crisis is considered as the newest chapter in a long-term rivalry between the United States and Russia. The latter accused the U.S. of seeking to create a sphere of influence in Ukraine by pressing Ukraine to become a NATO member and to choose closer ties with the European Union at the expense of relation with Russia.

Additionally, Ukraine has a geostrategic significance in the Black Sea Region; it is seen as a bridge between Asia and Europe and is also a gateway of the European gas. Accordingly, if Ukraine joins NATO it will enable the United States to control Russia's involvement in the Black Sea Region as well as its military forces will be near the Russian frontiers.

From an American perspective, the underlying reasons for its actions in Ukraine have thus been to secure the American energy resources and to preserve its influence in Europe and prevent possible external threat. The Obama administration's priority has become to tackle its foreign policy matters and control it from behind by utilizing the EU and NATO instruments to keep its security control over the energy. Therefore, the U.S. involvement in Ukraine has been to ensure the region for security reasons rather than challenging Russia.

In addition, the situation in Ukraine during the Obama administration clearly posed challenges for U.S. foreign policy and its future prospects as the first power in the world. This apparently irresolvable crisis with millions of casualties on the stage of military confrontations also reveals noticeable contradictions and credibility gap in U.S. foreign policy not just in the present time, but it has been obvious since the early years of the Cold War. In the absence of reaching a resolution, the Ukraine crisis was a sign of failure for the Obama administration and it has shown the ugly face of the U.S. administration and the falsification of its claim to human rights.

It is difficult to predict what will happen. But the arrival of leaders who are primarily committed to linking their future with Europe rather than Russia is a serious problem for President Vladimir Putin, who dreams of keeping Ukraine in Russia's orbit. To influence

Ukraine's policy, Russia has several means by virtue of the very strong ties between the economies of both countries. The new data in Ukraine, "the brotherly country of Russia," as Vladimir Putin put it, ends the Russian president's dream of forming an economic union of former Soviet Union countries to compete not only with the European Union but with the United States and the rising power, China.

The US was not in a position to go to war over the crisis in Ukraine, nor should it. The best steps forward were to diffuse the situation because the historical examples from Obama's predecessors offer guidance on what the US can do to respond to specific events to proactively shape trends and expand possibilities. The crisis will not lead to another Cold War, it has just widened and spilled over into US, Russian and EU relations and they are not symmetrical players in the field. The Obama administration failed for returning normalcy in Ukraine and the latter remained on the edge of Europe paralyzed by a battle between East and West, a revolution which has been a long time coming. But this will be the moment of truth for the leaders and peoples, the moment of final choice between existence or non-being.

The scene repeats itself, between the European inability to adopt the war plan in accordance with its deadly consequences and the American disregard for these repercussions, Ukraine remains an open battlefield with European money and Ukrainian blood. The United States continues to hold the most important carrots for Ukraine in order to fence the Russian bear. The signs are that the crisis is going to be more complex, and the solutions seem more complicated, especially since the whole world is now on the Ukrainian playground, and no one can claim the possession of the ball.

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