

A b s t r a c t s

Diorama **Theatres of Conflict in Europe's East**

Andrea Stricker, Anthony Ruggiero
Ending Global Reliance on Russia's Nuclear Energy Sector

Russia's nuclear industry is exempt from Western sanctions. The reason is the great importance of the state-owned company Rosatom for the global nuclear industry. The United States and west European countries have also been dependent on Rosatom for the extraction, conversion, and enrichment of uranium. All east-central and east European countries where VVER reactors are in operation obtain fuel rods from Rosatom's subsidiary TVEL. Rosatom is building nuclear power plants in several countries around the world, and there are also contracts with governments for reactors whose construction is to begin in the next few years. Nonetheless, sanctions against Rosatom are possible. A concerted effort by Western countries is needed to create investment incentives for alternative providers.

Vera Chelishcheva
In the Name of the People
Vladimir Kara-Murza: 25 Years in a Camp for 25 Years in Politics

Vladimir Kara-Murza has been indefatigably committed to his country since the age of 18. For him, freedom, democracy, and the rule of law in Russia are paramount. He fought against electoral fraud, political persecution, and impunity for murderers in uniform, was forced to witness the murder of his ally and friend Boris Nemtsov, and barely survived two poison attacks. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, he joined others in calling on the international community to declare Russia's political leadership war criminals for ordering the attack on Ukraine. Now, Kara-Murza has been sentenced to 25 years in prison. The regime wants his political and physical death. His struggle will continue - until he is rehabilitated in the name of the people in a democratic Russia.

“An Appeaser Is One Who Feeds a Crocodile” Armenia in a Fix. A Conversation with Narek Sukiasyan

Russia’s war against Ukraine has triggered geopolitical shifts throughout the post-Soviet space. No other country has been affected as much as Armenia. Azerbaijan is putting massive pressure on the Armenians who remain in Karabakh and on the Republic of Armenia. Russia, Armenia’s guarantor of security, has been weakened and is looking for strong allies such as Turkey and Azerbaijan. The European Union has sent an observation mission, but its powers are limited. The West alone cannot protect the people of Nagorno-Karabakh from expulsion and Armenia from attack. Brussels and Moscow must leave the issue of Armenia out of their confrontation. A conversation with political scientist Narek Sukiasyan.

Insights from the War in Ukraine

Ihor Pylypenko, Daria Malchykova The Kachovka Reservoir Economic Engine and Theatre of War

Created in the 1950s, the Kachovka Reservoir in south-eastern Ukraine is of considerable importance for the country’s energy and agricultural sectors. The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, which is cooled with water from the lake, along with a nearby coal-fired power plant produced almost 30 percent of the electricity generated in Ukraine before Russia’s attack on the country. Since the 1960s, the reservoir has also enabled the construction of an extensive canal system that supplies millions of people with water and irrigates vast agricultural areas. Immediately after its February 2022 invasion, Russia reopened the North Crimean Canal, which was closed by Ukraine after the 2014 annexation of Crimea. Now, however, the occupying forces are draining water from the Kachovka reservoir in huge quantities. It is to be feared that, if forced to retreat, Russian troops will blow up the dam at Nova Kachovka.

Angelina Davydova, Oleksii Vasyliuk Ecocide The War in Ukraine and Its Consequences for the Environment

Russia’s war against Ukraine brings death and destruction. It not only affects people and infrastructure, it’s also an attack on flora and fauna. Nature is suffering massive damage, whether intentionally or as a result of military operations. Valuable forests have been burned, unique natural landscapes, such as the chalk cliffs in the Sivers'kyi Donets' valley have been destroyed by shelling. Nature and biosphere reserves along the coasts of the Azov and Black seas

have become theatres of war. Reliable data on the extent of the damage does not yet exist. But there is cause for concern that some species will suffer irreversible losses.

Mykola Homaniuk Under Occupation A Chronicle from Cherson

From March 2022 to October 2022, the region and city of Kherson in south-eastern Ukraine were under complete Russian occupation. For almost two months, the area was exclusively under military occupation. Communal authorities, hospitals, schools, banks, and businesses operated in the Ukrainian system with unchanged managerial staff. The turning point came at the end of April. Leading officials were arrested and collaborators put in their posts. The occupiers imposed the ruble as a means of payment and forced businesses to re-register. At the end of July, the collaborators prepared the annexation with a declaration. In it, the Cherson region was proclaimed legal successor to the Tsarist empire's Governorate Taurida, and from this was derived a right of self-determination for the people of Cherson to be exercised exclusively within the framework of the Russian Federation. This was the path taken for incorporating the area into Moscow's state structures and the pseudo-referendums held at the end of September 2022. But already in October, the occupiers and the collaborators, under pressure from the Ukrainian army, gradually withdrew from that part of the Kherson region on the right bank of the Dnipro. Ukraine hopes to liberate the left-bank part of the region in summer 2023.

Poland and Germany

Kornelia Konczal Beyond One's Own Nose Third Parties in German-Polish Relations

The ongoing crisis in German-Polish relations since 2015 is usually interpreted from a bilateral point of view. Analysis of German misjudgments, lapses, and omissions on the one hand and Polish accusations, encroachments, and rejections on the other is supposed to explain the problems in communication between Germany and Poland. This perspective falls short in providing a full explanation. The German-Polish present can be better understood in the light of German-French and Polish-Ukrainian relations. Looking beyond one's own nose would enable a deeper diagnosis.

Peter Oliver Loew
In Praise of Imbalance
Remarks on Poland and Germany

Felix Ackermann considers German-Polish relations asymmetrical. But “asymmetry” is a problematic term for describing relations between two societies. Imbalances are inherent in every social relationship. If the establishment of symmetry is unattainable, the pursuit of symmetry can lead to a permanent state of grievance. Grievance is an important emotion of social polarisation and an instrument of inter-state confrontation.

Karolina Wigura, Jarosław Kuisz
A Political “Me-Too Moment”
Polish-German Misunderstandings

Historical traumas and political disputes weigh heavily on relations between Poland and Germany. The war in Ukraine acted as a catalyst. It brought to light the frustration of Poles and East-Central Europeans with Germany’s role in Europe and its policy towards Russia. The historical experience of East-Central Europeans with Russia makes them sceptical of any compromise with the aggressor. The feeling of being morally superior to a disoriented West and Germany reinforces this alienation. Better Polish-German relations are only possible within the framework of a pan-European understanding.

Marek Cichocki
Asymmetry without Centre and Periphery
The Unreconciled German-Polish Relationship

The relationship between Germany and Poland was long considered one of centre and periphery. Bilateral reconciliation, the transformation of the Polish economy and politics, as well as embedment in European integration were supposed to lead successively to overcoming developmental differences and enabling the convergence of both countries. This model is obsolete. In economic, European, and security policy, Poland is now pursuing its own interests, and these collide with those of Germany. German-Polish relations are characterized by “strategic asymmetries”. Russia’s war against Ukraine is reminding both “central European powers” what is at stake: the security of Europe.

Bastian Sendhardt
Forward into the Past!
Mateusz Morawiecki’s Ideas on Europe

Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki has responded to President Emmanuel Macron’s and Chancellor Olaf Scholz’s speeches on Europe. In his own

speech, delivered in Heidelberg, Morawiecki rejected a deepening of integration and an extension of the majority principle in the European Union's decision-making process. The linchpin of his European policy thinking remains the nation state. Morawiecki's vision for the European Union amounts to a return to a "Europe of fatherlands".

Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg
Structures and Perspectives
The German-Polish Community of Conflict

The German-Polish relationship is deeply burdened by at least two centuries of conflict between 1770 and 1970. As a result, a community of conflict has emerged. Correspondent patterns of communication burst forth again and again whenever occasion arises. Categorically, the German-Polish relationship can be described as a "post-colonial" one. Russia's war against Ukraine is an opportunity: Polish-German cooperation could be structurally changed and improved by the involvement of Ukraine.