

Building the Diverse Community

Beyond Regionalism in East Asia

edited by
Dominik Mierzejewski
and Grzegorz Bywałec



Contemporary Asian Studies Series



WYDAWNICTWO
UNIWERSYTETU
ŁÓDZKIEGO

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New Dynamics of Power Transfers – the Ukrainian Crisis 2013–2014¹

The contemporary international environment is a complex hub of inter-crossed connections between various entities located on various levels in different parts of world. This network is a backbone for the international environment, and serves as a framework for transmitting power, information and commodities, as well as “midst, turmoil and tribulation.”

One of the recent examples of international focal points is the Ukrainian crisis, sparked by events in Kiev in late 2013. It was located within the jurisdiction of this particular nation-state, however, due to a network of transnational connections, the events in Kiev, Crimea and subsequently Donbas have gravely influenced the architecture of global power flows on three major fields. First is the drastic acceleration of power transfers, which occurred around the particular crises. Second is connected with the architecture of power flows, not only within the direct vicinity of area of conflict, but also in distant parts of world like Asia and the Pacific. Third, within the framework of major crises the opportunity arose to re-configure the global institutional network.

The main aim of the following chapter is to present and analyze the ripples caused in global power flows by the Ukrainian Crisis. In this case major global national and non-national actors perceived this event as a challenge and possibility to achieve particular objectives, sometimes motivated by geopolitical principles, moral judgment or even personal grievances. Thus power, contrary to the neorealist approach, tends to be-

¹ This article is part of a research project entitled *Dynamics of Power in late-Westphalian international environment* funded by the National Science Center allocated on the basis of decision number DEC-2013/09/N/HS5/04391.

come a subjective and flexible international phenomenon, dynamically shaped by context and the actors in which it is used. The main thesis of this chapter is that the Ukrainian Crisis is a multidimensional event responsible for altering contemporary power transfers, thus is furthermore pushing forward the evolution of the contemporary international environment towards a post-Westphalian shape.

His chapter will be composed of four parts. First will be dedicated to the brief presentation of reasons, timeline and analysis of the contemporary situation in Ukraine. It will be incomplete due to the fluent nature of those events, still unfolding to the full extent of their scope. Second will be dedicated to defining the nature of those events when it comes to the power of various actors in two dimensions: within the sphere of relative capabilities and the capability of binding the international political dialogue towards a particular point of view. The third part will consist of projected reactions and repercussions of Ukrainian crisis on participants, as well as other actors, such as BRIC states, excluding Russia. The final part will consist of possible scenarios of the effects on the international system as a whole, particularly on Asia and the Pacific area.

The Ukrainian Crisis – causes, timeframe and consequences

The Ukrainian Crisis, as it should be labeled currently, is the event connected with the dramatic loss of authority and legitimacy connected with the refusal of signing the association agreement between the European Union (EU) and Republic of Ukraine by President Victor Yanukovych. However, the real reason for the revolt, and the current aftershocks in Crimea and Donbass, is the attempt displayed by the majority of the Ukrainian population to sway the Eastern European balance of power, especially among Ukrainians in favor of a loose connection with the West, rather than cooperation with Russia, preferred by the Yanukovych administration since his electoral victory in 2010. This desire was the effect of the transitions of power within Ukraine as well as its international surroundings.

There could be pinpointed two major internal reasons for triggering this crisis. First is the development of a Ukrainian society heavily affected by influence of *normative power* deployed by the EU and its daughter

institutions, programs and agendas. This notion, present within the nation (Manners, 2002), was expressed by surveys regarding the political activities of the society: according to them, between 2009 and 2014, the supporters of Ukraine EU membership grew from 20–34% (Retman 2009) to nearly 63.6% (*Nearly 40% of Ukrainians ready to demonstrate if authorities do not fulfil promises*, 2014), and it was expressed by a growing discontent with the functions of authority (Motyl, 2014b: 52–58). The second tendency is strongly connected with the national environment marked by the growing disappointment with the Yanukovych government. It was really remarkable to analyze the path of the former president which evolved from a person charged with the duty of sorting national affairs after the period of collapse and conflict among the Orange coalition. But instead of development and progress, his administration preserved only partially reformed corrupted state structures and oligarchical managed economy. However, the gravest of his errors was not the preservation of an ineffective structure, but as is usual in similar cases, lack of discretion in the consumption of wealth by government officials coupled with attempts to block constitutionally built-in safety switches, like liberty of the press and demonstrations, especially in the early days of Euromaidan revolution (*Ukraina: parlament ogranicza wolności obywateli. “Wprowadza dyktaturę”*, 2014). Summing up, what started as an ambitious attempt of reconciliation of major factions of Ukrainian society ended up as force opposing the ambitions of nearly the whole society. Both factors created the situation in which the rejection of an EU Association Agreement on November 21, 2013, worked as a detonator and resulted in an outburst in Kiev, and the preemptive escape of Yanukovych from Ukraine with Russian assistance (Motyl, 2014a: 46–51).

The international surroundings created an environment vulnerable to distortions, especially in Eastern Europe, which is clearly visible from the October 2014 perspective. The main reason of such a coincidence was the transfer of power between two power centers: the West in general and Russia. What should be pointed out is that this stream is one among many others affecting the global landscape, however, the case of the Ukrainian Crisis is the most important. The power flow constantly promotes the Western side, however, due to the heavily developed addiction of exporting energy resources, the Russian Federation managed not only to stop, but to some extent reverse the degeneration of the recent incarnation of the former empire. The La Grange balance point was located in Ukraine, which was considered a neutral buffer zone between Russia and the West. A shift

in popular support, embodied with the Accession Agreement, sparked a violent reaction as it was perceived as a threat to Russian security and to some extent its ambitions. The main problem is that Russian activity is connected with the so called *rising powers*, gathered in the semi-formal organization by the name of the BRIC states. This perspective indicates, that due to its outcome the Ukrainian Crisis will be considered as a prototype of new strategies which will be adapted by other contestants of Western supremacy. Summing up, the general power flows within the international environment promotes non-Western entities, which ascend to the role of challengers of Western hegemony and which seek new ways to conduct more assertive foreign policy; and non-state entities, which due to technical progress gained the opportunity to act independently from host governments. Within the state, power flows are more unstable, primarily due to the exhaustion of major powers by the financial crisis of 2008 as well as their entanglements in *new wars* (Kaldor, 2007) which nation-states were ill-prepared for waging, like Afghanistan, Iraq or Caucasus. However, the outcome of the power transfer in the Ukraine Crisis is still to be determined.

During the recent year, the Crisis passed through four major stages. In each of them, the dynamics of power transformed the capabilities of engaged parties and the construction of those coalitions, composed of different actors present within Ukraine, such as political parties, components of military and paramilitary forces, espionage networks, foreign agents, as well as radical and criminal group. The first stage lasted from November 21, 2013, to February 21, 2014, and could be labeled as the Euromaidan Revolution. Power flows within this stage of crisis were limited only to the Ukrainian interior. Their direction promoted, in general, the scattering of government potential, especially when it comes to *soft power* in the case of government legitimization. The external environment became aware of the situation, and was capable only in undertaking limited actions, like declarative and financial support for protesters by Western powers and an alleged special assistance unit for the Berkut. The power flows pointed in favor of the opposition, however, the government kept control over enforcements and managed to nearly crush the protesters, which eventually preserved enough capabilities to redeploy and survive the assault. At the end of this stage, President Yanukovich was ousted from power by a coalition of protesters and defectors from his own camp, and ran to the Russian city of Rostov with the assistance of Russian intelligence (*Putin zdradza kulisy uciezki Janukowycza*. "Zrobiliśmy to, o co

prosil'", 2014). This stage of conflict ended with weakening the government's power in both spheres, further undermined by Yanukovych's legal claims to presidency. The second stage can be called the Crimean Crisis. It took place between February 23 to March 19, 2014, when elements of the 76th Guard Air Assault Division of Pskov, with the support of Garrisons of the Black Sea Fleet station in Sevastopol coupled with defectors from the Ukrainian Berkut, gradually took control of the Crimean Peninsula. Within this stage two directions of power transfers can be identified. The first is the attempt to reclaim legitimization and capabilities distributed on sub-national actors, such as former protestors of Maidan and the Russian minority as a whole. The process was complicated by the actual fractures between the three major poles of Ukrainian society: pro-Western protesters of the North and Western edges of the state, pro-Russians societies of the Southern and Eastern edges and center-fold provinces centered around Kiev. The situation was complicated by neutrality towards the new government of oligarch members, and the question of allegiance of many high ranking state officers, such as the former commander of the Ukrainian Navy, Denis Berezovsky, on March 2, 2014, with most of the staff and other units (*Crimea forms its own fleet as Ukraine Navy chief sides with region*, 2014). Those defections proved, that legitimacy had to be quickly restored. The second factor was the involvement of the Russian power element, primarily on the basis of *soft power* on the foundation of minority members, legal reservation towards the new government and information warfare conducted, aimed at undermining public support within and outside Ukraine. What is more worrying, is the gradual ascension of the military factor within the crisis, with at that time a concealed military presence, referred to as the *Little Green Men*. This stage ended with the secession of Crimea on basis of a vaguely conducted referendum. As it will be essential for the next stages, it appears that the referendum concept was the breaking point after which Russian *soft power* capabilities started to erode not only in relation to Ukraine, but also in relation to other actors within the former Soviet space. The third stage is located between March 19 and May 11. Within this period of time, the power-base and legitimacy freshly reclaimed by the new government was challenged on three major fields. Firstly, due to allegations of former President Yanukovych conducting unconstitutional acts and thus lost his office. Secondly, the fading *soft power* mechanisms ignited counter-Maidan revolts in many major cities, especially in regions with a significant presence of Russian speaking populations in the South and South East, such as Odessa,

Mariupol, Donetsk and Luhansk. Thirdly, the supplementation of those influences was the deployment of *hard power* by the Russian Federation in two dimensions. One, the deployment of special forces and regular troops with the task of supporting separatist tendencies. The other, by economic leverage, especially with export of energy resources such as gas and oil. Fortunately for the Ukraine, due to the dynamics of power present in the framework of the late-Westphalian international environment, Russian activities applied in parallel proved to be counterproductive. Instead of affecting the state as a whole, Russian power was met with stiff resistance. This kind of *war without fighting* fiddled with bizarre scuffling between police forces and rioters, tricks, subversion as well as a limited bloodshed, with the gravest incident occurring in Odessa. Summing up, the power of the new government was successfully recollected with growing transfers coupled with the power dispersal of Russian institutions, and reluctant, declarative and moral support of Western institutions. Within this period, the Ukrainian Crisis was becoming recognized by other international actors, especially those aspiring to change the traditional flows of power in the contemporary international landscape. Fourthly, and as far final stage of the conflict, is the civil war in the East with a gradually more proactive foreign intervention. This stage was commenced by the independence referendum conducted in Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts on May 11. The conduct of this stage is similar to the mechanisms of *new wars* described by Mary Kaldor. This stage could be subdivided into phases, dependent on the tide of battle. When it comes to power flows within this stage, the three power circuits should be underlined. First is the growing ineffectiveness of Russian influence, measured paradoxically by growing military involvement that was especially visible in late August 2014 when the Russian army officially engaged Ukrainian forces, and inevitably pushed them away from the border and major cities in the region (Dahl, 2014). Second is the growing involvement of third parties, mainly on two fields. Firstly is the declarative and normative support of Ukrainian government. Secondly is the condemnation of Russian activities coupled with economic sanctions aimed at Russia and its government officials. The third, and the most important is the perception of this Crisis by third parties, especially by Russia's counterparts in BRIC. On this field, the challenge for Western institutions posed by Russia and its strategic ambitions is seen as a prototype of new mechanism for countering Western power capabilities on the field of *hard* and *soft power*. Thus the success of Russia will accelerate the evolution of the international environment, by providing the global contestants of new means of power projection.

This Crisis is still ongoing. However, there can be underlined four major paths of consequences for international environment, especially altering the power transfers. The first path is connected to relations between Russia and Ukraine. Just after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia took control over three quarters of former Soviet capabilities, while Ukraine was the biggest shard of former Soviet power, with crucial plants constructing also advanced weapons systems, such as radar, and components for missiles, especially ballistic missiles. Thus, relations with Ukraine, cordial at least, were considered to be a cornerstone for the reconstruction of Russian power. The turning point was 2006 and the Orange Revolution – the first and failed – attempt to fundamentally change Ukrainian politic course. The electoral victory of Yanukovych supported the thesis of abandoning this process, but the events of 2013 and 2014 restored this course. Forceful and more desperate Russian reaction is severing those ties even more. Thus power circuits are becoming reoriented: instead of mutual connections, both nations are developing connections with different entities: Russia is reorienting itself towards the East – the Muslim world and China, while Ukraine wants to join Western institutions. The second path is the erosion acceleration of the so-called post-Soviet space. This region was composed of actors created after the collapse of Soviet Union, with the central management hub located in Russia. However, in times of crisis the biggest and most capable actors, such as Belarus and Kazakhstan have articulated opinions not supportive for Russia's position (Eckel, 2014). However, opinions of its collapse seem to be exaggerated – those processes are at the moment overwhelming Russian-imposed integration. The third path was generated purely within the framework of the Crisis and is connected with the entanglement of Russian power in a protracted conflict with the most powerful post-Soviet actor. This circuit will consume and disperse the majority of only recently acquired capabilities of global power. Thus, Russia will be unable to achieve a more assertive stance in its foreign policy outside the declarative layer. Furthermore, the conflict in Ukraine – hot or cold – will remain an open circuit for third parties, such as the United States or EU to amplify their capabilities in relation to Russia for fairly little dispersion of resources. The final alteration of power affecting the global circuit is connected with the legal layer of power. The Ukrainian Crisis legal framework is about undermining the two basic pillars of the international environment: the notion of sovereignty and the notion of territorial integrity. Those principles were questioned before, for instance in Kosovo, but as in international law

foundations, those events were sanctioned by Western institutions. This time those principles were questioned against the judgment of those institutions, by the Russian government which managed to collect a decent amount of international support. This is the first instance that non-Western power challenged those institutions with a decent chance for success. That is why other actors, such as India, China and Brazil, seem to wait for an outcome. If Russia will manage to score a success and acquire at least moderate success, it will lead to sanction mechanisms of the Ukrainian Crisis as a new, effective power deployment.

Summing up, the Ukrainian Crisis have amplified the uncertainty and altered the transfers of power on three basic levels: bilateral Russian-Ukrainian relations, regional relations in the post-Soviet space and the global framework of the international environment.

Ukrainian Crisis – international reactions and consequences

The spiraling development of the Ukrainian Crisis is affecting a wide spectrum of international actors, not those only directly or indirectly involved in it, but also those entities that perceive it as a forge in which a new mechanism of power display is being made and tried out. Thus most of those actors, represented primarily by the BRIC states, excluding Russia, tend to adapt Fabian tactics, delaying siding with a particularly engaged coalition. However, there some distinctions could be spotted, primarily on two levels. The first is the inevitable evolution of the international legal landscape, especially within the notion of sovereignty and international integrity, or rather their limits and sanctioning mechanisms. During the two recent decades, Western-based institutions such as the United Nations (UN) have managed those questions, such as in the recognition case of Slovenia and Croatia in 1992. However, recent developments within them, mainly internal reconfigurations of the UN, connected with the reformation of this entity, proved fading the Western perspective, and the growing assertiveness of others, with China in the lead. The second is stemming from a more classical balance of power, modified by constant flows of power between major players. This framework is unstable, suffering violent changes primarily due to discharges of power in international relations, which is connected primarily with taking actions in international environment.

Summarizing, those fields ignited nuanced responses of so-called emerging global powers, especially China, India and Brazil. This part will be subdivided into two sections. The first will be composed of a brief analysis of the attitudes towards the Ukrainian Crisis of the abovementioned actors. The second will be devoted to investigating the power flows and their effect on the global landscape.

Case study: the People's Republic of China

First of all, every single member of the BRIC group adapted Fabian tactics, and waited for the eventual victory of one of involved parties. However, each of them have a different rationale. China for instance, as a world global economy (Druś, 2014) is interested in developing a balance within the framework of international law dominated by Western perception. Thus, China with its media supported Ukraine's territorial integrity and encouraged a "consultation and dialogue" within the international community to resolve this conflict.

When it comes to power transfers, the People's Republic of China aims at affecting two major circuits. The first is located in the *soft power* legal layer and embraces the mechanisms of conflict solution. Thus media and official declarations underline the need to solve this problem with the mutual respect for interests and values of both parties. What those declarations stressed is the need to withdraw the involvement of third parties, especially Western powers, but in general those voices appreciated efforts to contain the conflict (*Rising powers respond to Crimea Crisis*, 2014). What is not said, is that the solution and successful reintegration of Ukraine may be a role model for the solution of the Taiwan question, accordingly to reinterpreted international law, which is among the top priorities of China's foreign policy (Fish, 2014). The second is located in the geostrategic sphere of the *hard power* network. China reluctantly suggested a challenge which arose in the context of binding resources of major powers, especially of Russia and the US, in a localized conflict will create a power vacuum in other regions of the world, such as in China's vicinity. Thus, China is adapting a more proactive stance especially on three fields. The first is closing the gap between the People's Liberation Army and US military, especially by moving the power balance into the open ocean. The second is undertaking actions aimed at securing the sea lines in the South China Sea, even if it requires antagonizing its neighbors (Rajagopalan, Torode, 2014). The third

is securing the sources of energy for growing economy. This objective is achieved by a threefold action. Firstly, the gas contract signed with Russia, which is seen by part of the academic community as a sign of alliance between those two powers. Secondly, in the growing activity of Chinese entrepreneurs in Central Asia and Africa (Yun Sun, 2014). Thirdly, by acquiring undersea deposits located on the continental shelf of East Asia.

Summarizing, despite the neutral stance and abstention in voting of the UN General Assembly Resolution 68/262 of March 27th 2014 (GA/11493, 2014), China is actively involved in redesigning the architecture of power transfers within the late-Westphalian international framework. Despite disputes around the gas deal, it is not a sign of commitment, but strategic necessity, exploiting the strategic vulnerability of the Russian Federation, desperately looking for international support other than her client states. In fact, the main point of interest is supplementing the existence of the classical notion of international law as territorial integrity, which would help in regards to the Taiwan question. What is more important is the mutual entanglement of Russia and the West is perceived of China as a opportunity to improve its position in international institutions.

Case study: India

India adapts a similar posture, but emphasizes different dimensions of conflict solution. While China aims at creating new circuits of balanced power transfer, India seeks the preservation of the existing landscape, thus avoiding international shocks capable of damaging the fragile balance of South Asia. Contrary to their Chinese counterparts, India seems to be unable and unwilling to expand their sphere of influence. This opinion stems from three factors. The first is the Hindu philosophy giving importance to the notion of balance and harmony (Zajączkowski, 2008: 59). The second is the tremendous demand on internal development of the Indian society, from critical infrastructure to the societal development (Szumowski 2013: 257). Third is the mutual entanglement with surrounding powers: mainly Pakistan but with growing challenge posed by China.

The Indian perspective, stemming from its complex situation is composed on a paradox. On one hand, Indian media and decision-makers are valiantly condemning Russian aggression since the annexation of Crimea and warning global powers about the approaching danger of reigniting the Cold War. On the other, India is distancing itself from Western attempts to

contain or even repulse those actions. The most visible notion in India's attitude towards the Ukrainian Crisis is moral critique of both belligerent coalitions. The conflict is seen as an effect of ambitions aimed at restoring former empires or mistakes made in the past. Therefore it should be solved by a joint effort of the international community with the tools already in its possession. The preferred outcome is creating a so-called "road map" for Ukraine's future (*Rising powers respond to Crimea Crisis*, 2014). The greatest fear is called "unilateralism" on both sides. Therefore India desires to curb those attempts and promote cooperation, but without constructing an alternative route for power transfer in international landscape. The main rationale behind it is the rarely mentioned fear of Chin'sa operations, which are increasingly visible in the situation of other powers involved in distant focal points, like Ukraine and Syria. Those tensions, amplified by the difficult relations with Pakistan, are making the Indian government uneasy in its closest neighborhood.

The main objective pursued by India is to maintain stability of the international system, which requires halting the advancement of transforming the international environment. Paradoxically, India desires seizing the Cold War stability and tools, but derived of Cold War tensions and divisions. This particular attitude may indicate, that India will seek means to limit and neutralize the spread of the conflict. Contrary to China, it seeks its position within the actual international framework.

Case study: Brazil

The Brazilian attitude towards the Ukrainian Crisis is a derivative of two major tendencies. First is the lack of strategic interest in the events in Eastern Europe, primarily due to its limited global perspective. Second, is the devotion to the so-called Latin American School of International Relations (Ayoob 2004: 109), which draws a path between sovereignty and national interest and demands on a foreign superpower, in this case – the US.

Therefore the Brazilian attitude is similar to the stance of India, with the exception of the strategic vulnerability of a competitive power such as India. Thus, Brazil is less interested with the preservation of the contemporary shape of the power transfer network. The most concerning factor of the Crisis is rather the possible renewal of old tensions and struggles similar to "very old and unhappy precedents" (*Rising powers respond to Crimea Crisis*, 2014). The events in Donbas can be seen

not as a perspective mechanism of power management but rather as a classical means of Westphalia, strongly connected with military power projection. The main challenge is the possibility of conflict escalation, while the Russian Federation will look for a way to overcome the effects of Western sanctions.

All researched case studies are considered to be the future major actors in the late-Westphalian international environment

The Ukrainian Crisis – new dynamics of power flows and prospects for future

The notion of power is among the most significant notions of the science of international relations. However, due to the dynamics of the late-Westphalian international environment, the proper evaluation is becoming difficult, if at all possible. This evolution is synchronized with the evolution of the international environment on three levels: subjective structure, objective scope of power and internal logic. This process is affected by random events such as the Ukrainian Crisis. In this case power transfers suffer shifts on three basic levels.

The first issue is the redeployment of *hard power* capabilities within the geopolitical network. The direction of this flow is heading primarily in the direction of dispersal of remaining capabilities, from classical centers of this system towards its peripheries. It affects actors directly involved in the Crisis, such as the EU, US and Russian Federation, but has also indirect impacts on secondary areas like Asia, the Pacific Region or the Middle East – particularly Syria. For instance, the US were caught in the middle of a major redeployment of their resources in the process called the Asian pivot (Garamore, 2012). Thus President Obama seeks to supplement his capabilities by proxies located in Europe, such as the United Kingdom, Poland and the Baltic States in order to counter Russian advantages. However, due to time demands this process is doomed to fail at least at the beginning, and the US will face a dilemma, whether to continue the pivot and make a compromise with Russia, or risk a reversal of the whole process. Either way, some portion of the US' power will be lost and dispersed between actors doomed to replace the US in their former roles of regional stabilizers, whether in Europe or the Asia-Pacific. When it comes to the EU, this actor is considered to be a *soft power* or even a *normative power* (Manners, 2002), therefore

it heavily relies on the international recognition of its status. The main reason for the Ukrainian Crisis, the rejection of Association Treaty by Yanukovych, and the subsequent outrage within Ukrainian society is undeniable proof of the EU's *normative* influence. However, a lack of capabilities to deploy assistance for Ukraine, mainly in economic and military terms, creates a dilemma: attempts to carry on with only a *normative* attitude will lead to loss of international recognition, but the EU does not have the capabilities to mount a significant relief for the belligerents. Either way its power will suffer a serious drawback. A possible solution may be acquiring allies with desirable capabilities, but it is a time consuming process. The last direct participant of the Ukraine Crisis is Russia. It is the least capable actor involved, but simultaneously the most aggressive. From the perspective of November 2014, it seems that Russia suffered the heaviest blow to her capabilities. What started as a surprising reaction to seemingly neutral to Russia association attempt, is about to turn into the biggest Russian failure since the collapse of the Soviet Union. There are three major power transfer which are responsible for this process. First is the consumption of *hard power* capabilities to support a failing rebellion. It seems that without a more direct approach, forces of the Anti-Terrorist Operation would have eventually wiped out the rebel forces. What turned the tide was a direct military intervention of the Russian army, however, the full scope and effectiveness is yet to be determined. The future prospects would require further investment of the resources required on other regions and for the global game. Second is the growing isolation of Russia in the international community, mainly due to Western sanctions and lack of support from its major BRIC counterparts. But the most damaging issue may be the deliberate disruption of energy resources market, on which the Russian economy heavily depends. Third is the disruption of established mechanisms of managing the post-Soviet space, established after dissolution of the Soviet Union. However, it is too early to say that the post-Soviet space is gone, the application of those mechanisms has become much more costly. Summing up, the major actors involved in the Ukrainian Crisis scored a major power dispersion.

Second, the most interested power transfer is located within the *soft power* sphere, especially in the normative discourse. It seems that it is the transfer that sparked the biggest interest of other international actors, such as China. The general direction of this flow is based on the dynamic balance between the Western center of the international environment towards

rising non-Western alternatives. It may be seen that the centerpiece is not the change of international values and legal mechanisms, but those interpretations, according to their respective point of view. In the context of the Ukrainian Crisis, the three major focal points are identified by Marc Weller (*Analysis: Why Russia's Crimea move fails legal test*, 2014), Stefan Talmont and Otto Luchtenhandt (Ignatzi, 2014). First, is the interpretation of treaties and international agreements, which were effectively broken. Both sides underline that the other is to blame, Ukraine because of the fascist regime being installed which harasses Russian minorities, Russia for its illegal involvement in internal affairs and violation of territorial integrity. Second is the innovative interpretation of the principle of protecting citizens, traditionally connected with their evacuation from a conflict zone. Today this responsibility is connected with the dilution of Ukrainian control over a large swath of its territory. Third is the balance between the notion of national sovereignty and the self-determination of minorities. This principle was weakened primarily through the unilateral actions of Western powers, primarily in former Yugoslavia, the most recent case being Kosovo. But this is the first case in which the constraints of the UN were openly defied. In previous cases, this organization served as a tool for acquiring a declaration of support even afterward. In this case, the UN was excluded from the solution. Summarizing, in this transfer the general tendency is ascension of non-Western alternatives. However, in case of the Ukrainian Crisis those transfers have only a secondary impact, because of recent Russian activities which may indicate an acceptance of failure.

The third important power transfer is considered to be less dependent on the conduct of the Crisis. In this case, the capabilities, with particular emphasis given to the new quality of actor wielding the capabilities for violence. This war for the most part was fought by non-state entities such as, for the pro-Russian part: local militias, the Night Wolves biker gang, Neo-Cossack militias from Southern Governorates of Russia, and even some of the Chechens associated with the Kadyrow clan; and for the pro-Ukraine part there could be identified many volunteer battalions of the National Guard, such as the (in)famous Aidar regiment. Those entities are supplementing the Ukrainian forces participating in the NATO not only with additional manpower, but also are considered to be determined units for hazardous tasks, and suffered many casualties in the August offensive. They were also used for activities which may have a negative impact on the governments soft power, like tortures and ethnic cleansing, similarly to their Russian counterparts. However,

they also present a challenge for both states. Their independence and mutual enmity may ignite a spiral of unending violence, thus recent developments may indicate that this threat is creating serious challenges for the belligerents – Ukrainian, as per the recent declaration by Kiev's Attorney General underlining capabilities of Aidar for staging a coup d'état (Kijów boi się własnych bojówek. „Ajdar może zrobić przewrót wojskowy”, 2014), as well as Russian, where some hints may indicate that the government wants to increase the level of control by injecting loyal government elements and eliminating troublesome ones as Igor Biezler dubbed “Bies” (Sharkov, 2014). Summing up, the power transfer in this field indicates a growing relevance of those entities despite attempts to curb them by host states and other nations. The critical events such as the Ukrainian Crisis only accelerate this flow.

Instead of a conclusion, perspectives for solution of this Crisis will be drawn. As for a departing point one should be mentioned. Repeating rumors and declarations on both sides, separatists of creating three Ukrainian assault groups in order to secure the state border, as was said by Igor Strikov in his internet speech, and Ukrainian declarations of the growing presence of Russian troops, may indicate that both belligerents are decided to solve this dispute militarily. However, recent elections held in Ukraine (presidential and parliamentary) as well as in separatist territories or rather reaction on them – especially Russian “respect” rather than “recognition” (Rosja odmówiła uznania wyborów w ukraińskim Donbasie, 2014) – may hint that with the failure to create an effective political organization capable of operating on its own, Russia is attempting to cool this conflict, but not below the level of solving it. The path of checks and balances between the Ukrainian government and rebel-held territory is the optimal solution is delaying the solution, but because a military solution seems to be outside the reach of both states. What is most intriguing, is the effect that this Crisis is having on the international environment as a whole. It seems that the most interested parties, the BRIC states, particularly India and China, will utilize the open avenue within the network of international connections. However, the probable failure of Russia's attempt, primarily into forcing its own interpretation of existing international legal norms and mechanisms indicate that China, the most probable challenger of Western hegemony will adapt a different, less aggressive power composition.

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The book is also available
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ISBN 978-83-8088-153-2



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