



The Principles of Sustainability in Economics and the War in Europe

Giovanni Antonio COSSIGA

Ex Presidente Collegio sindaci Policlinico Umberto 1
Università Sapienza – ROMA

ABSTRACT

Can we talk about “community hegemony” when we talk about choosing or removing a government leadership as in the case of Russian dictatorship and of tragic and terrible war in Ukraine? The Russian people, literally bombarded with fake news and manipulations of reality about war (directly coming from the old Soviet “dezinformatzija” дезинформация), may seem completely bewitched by censorship. Nevertheless, we must believe that the responsibilities always entrusted to the community in terms of life and choice freedom can never be completely extinguished. As saying that the longing for the freedoms guaranteed by democracy has been part of the DNA of Earth peoples starting from birth. For this reason, the possibility of removing the dictatorship in Russia lies with the community, although the conditions are not yet favorable for a democratic power alternation in Russia. Therefore, this is the real final goal that the Western countries must set, by continuing to support the defense of brave Ukrainian people by providing money and weapons. All the more true if we believe that the final goal of humankind is to ban the war and above all to dismiss even just the simple eventuality of an atomic war; which would only bring the destruction of life on Earth. This is in contrast to the goal that all living beings have in concert with nature, that is, the preservation of life on Earth. In my opinion, it's therefore necessary that the great democracies take the common decision to remove the atomic arsenals from the control of leaders of those countries in possession of nuclear weapons and then entrust the whole nuclear arsenal to a global supranational authority, that would keep the atomic weapons in a “new Fort Knox” and later would dispose for their progressive reuse, but for peace purposes.

Keywords: conjuncture cycle, majority, new Fort Knox, monetary messages

INTRODUCTION

“There are also people - in politics, in the media - who genuinely admire Putin. They admire that he breaks the rules, does not respect democracy, the courts, the media. That he is an autocrat. Will they continue to admire him? It depends on the reaction of public opinion.” According to these words of Anne Applebaum, the famous Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist among the most informed on Soviet issues, the public opinion in Russia will decide whether the autocrat Putin has ended his long story at top of Russian power. Or instead - and this is my favorite eventuality - he will remain in power until the majority of Russian community will decide that his power must be ended. And this, regardless of what consequences may follow on the fate of the Great Mother Russia (or Holy Mother Russia, as many Russians still call their country with a touch of mysticism).

The problem that is here interesting for us is precisely that it should be up to the Russian public opinion to decree the possibility of putting an end to the power of the autocrat Vladimir Putin. Therefore, in this case we would operate according to the democratic principle that entrusts the community with the burden of giving or taking away the trust of the leadership. It has also been hypothesized that the Russian dictator could be sick and out of his mind, a hypothesis not only unverifiable but also useless and insignificant: in the face of millions of dead killed in the World War II, whether Hitler was mad or not what difference does it make? Certainly, doesn't change the terrible and evident facts. Rather, our perplexity arises from the observation that a community in its almost totality remained completely estranged: so the German society at the time was estranged to the point of not being able even to think about a mass opposition to the dictator's terrible wishes.

The issue isn't therefore whether we can find some mental excuses for a dictator's behavior, but rather how it was possible that after years of war and unnecessary deaths there wasn't any strong opposition among the people of the community at the time. Although attempts made by some of his generals to eliminate him were unsuccessful, this is a clear signal that a strong opposition was anyway growing in Nazi Germany during the World War II.

On the other hand, the thesis advanced by some historians about the starting point of the Russian aggression is that Putin would look at the Russian history of the past and to be more precise at the Empire of the Tsars in the nineteenth century, in particular the Tsar Alexander III. But this is quite inappropriate, not only because the attempt to revive the history of the past in the present makes no sense, but also because we know that History is a "life teacher" and actually it never repeats itself. Therefore, analyzing the absurd options of the Russian autocrat on the basis of a possible repetition of historical events of the past in the present times is a "logical absurdity" and it isn't our task to find reasons to justify the absurd.

With reference to the war in Europe, our aim is to investigate the issue of the leadership appointment, its maintenance at the highest degree of power and the position to be taken by the community on its burden of finding and choosing the man or institutions to be put at the top of public life management. There is no doubt that the transition from a (weak) democracy to the dictatorship can occur in relation to the community's loss of confidence in the methods used by the power. Well, if we admit that the dictatorship is or could be a form of government in a defensive position against the progressive mistrust of leadership, we should ask ourselves to what extent the abuse of authority and the information control can push the people to give up all their rights and to renounce to their functions of selection and choice of the leadership to put in power.

THE COMPACT MAJORITY OF A COMMUNITY AND THE HEGEMONY IN THE CHOICE OF DIRECTION AND LEADERSHIP

The CIA director, William Barns, declared in the presence of the US Congress: "Putin thought he was going to finish it in two days." In these same days that I am writing, 20 days after the start of the war in Ukraine, it has been declared that it's quite strange that Russia did not manage to acquire the superiority in airspace. On the other hand, the Ukrainian Army has captured hundreds of Russian soldiers, mostly poorly trained and disoriented recruits. Furthermore, the difficulties of the Russian logistics system are now well known and not only in terms of fuels, but also in terms of food and supply needed by the fighters.

How can we interpret, without venturing any conclusions, this information which is consistent with the hypothesis on the various difficulties facing the general staff of the Russian Army? Having discarded the thesis that it might be just a symptom of difficulties that compromise the efficiency of the war machine, the fact remains that each of these facts, taken separately, can be symptoms of a sort of disaffection. Symptoms of a relative mistrust that runs through the ranks of Russian soldiers about the objective of subduing an independent sibling nation, in order to annex it to the Russian empire. The singular thesis that the Russian people, the Russian community is somewhat turned to the past, to the ancient greatness of the Tsars and therefore looks with admiration at the attempt to recover areas and territories that in the nineteenth century were part of tsarist Russia, seems not only too trivial to me but also inconsistent.

This kind of vision of the past could perhaps be attributed to some nostalgic intellectuals or pressure groups. But it seems to be excluded that the people, that is, the majority of the Russian community would look to the past judging favorably the attempt, out of time and unacceptable in our age, to conquer with wars and deaths the territorial spaces that once were part of the empire of Tsars. Not only because it's unlikely that most of the Russian community has historical notions about the territorial expansions of a distant past, but also because in this case there might be even the memory of the long domination of Genghis Khan with his hordes of Mongols at the time of the cyclical plagues that hit the whole Europe.

"Those who went to Ukraine with weapons are victims of Putin's propaganda. For years, TV has continued to hammer that power in Kiev is in the hands of the Nazis, that the genocide of the Russian-speaking in Ukrainian population is underway, that America is waging a war against Russia at the hands of the Ukrainian fascists. They brainwashed the Russians into believing that it is time to defend their homeland like our grandparents during the Second World War and that the Ukrainians await us as liberators." ¹ The regime's propaganda in Russia continually hammers with fake news on the conflict state, on the reasons behind the decision of the armed intervention in Ukraine, every information and all contacts with the Western world have been blocked...

We must therefore come to the conclusion that the population and the community in its majority agree with the regime for the simple reason that they have only the information distributed by local media in support of the power group. Now, the simple reason that induces the regime to repress all forms of unauthorized information is actually the blatant assertion that otherwise the Russian society and community would react quite differently. But even under the relentless bombardment of the media with the only information authorized by the regime, it's possible that the 'soup' of controlled information is taken just as a *quid bonum* because there is still a memory of a recent past in the USSR days, when the whole information was subject to censorship. However, other and different information was filtered through the Russians traveling abroad and also through what was coming from Western information.

All this to say that even in the absence of a correct flow of news, there is always the doubt, perhaps recalling the past of fathers and grandfathers, that this uniformity of messages is

¹ From an interview to the Russian writer Shishkin that can be found on:
https://www.corriere.it/politica/22_marzo_08/shishkin-scrittore-russo-intervista-ucraina-guerra-d348c9b4-9e56-11ec-aa45-e6507f140451.shtml?refresh_ce

actually hiding a barrier to the normal circulation of real information, news, messages. However, it seems a bit difficult to ignore the thesis that each one of us within a community should also be able to perceive some messages, although cryptic, coming from a natural source that warn us about the real quality of the information in our possession. These messages and feelings, therefore, can insinuate a reasonable and healthy doubt about the quality of the uniform messages coming from the regime.

On the other hand, if we accept the thesis that the information barrier can completely block our capability to understand and our discernment, so making us a sort of tetragonal living being with thoughts and actions absolutely uniform, then we would be nothing different and nothing more than a robot people. And this would be an unbelievable conclusion, indeed, as well as unacceptable. So, we must necessarily accept the thesis that we all have the critical mental tools and the logical capability to partially or totally accept or instead to partially or totally reject the partisan view that is given to us. In the meanwhile, we can deduce that the attempt of a regime to block and close the information freedom should not be crowned by the success that the leaders believe they can achieve. It was also noted that in order to achieve the goal of thought uniformity in the whole Russian community, was admitted the old thought of Tsar Alexander III who relied on the Army and Fleet to continue his policy of territorial expansion. In the wake of the dissolved USSR, Putin's autocratic management also allocated massive public resources for armaments to the detriment of much needed interventions that were to be directed to the health sector, to the economic growth, to the improvement of schools and universities.

The great flow of wealth that comes from the huge oil and gas deposits in Russia has various destinations, including feeding and increasing the wealth of the Russian oligarchs, i.e. the economic magnates of the former Soviet Republics who quickly amassed great fortunes during the convulsed era of Russian privatizations following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the 1990s. Therefore, even leaving out many other things, this impressive rapid concentration of massive and astonishing wealth deriving mainly from the exploitation of Russian mineral resources, certainly doesn't play in favor of an image of Russian population fully satisfied with the *status quo*. *Ergo*, it's difficult to believe that the consensus towards the regime is actually as broad as the Russian official state media (now the only ones left) want us to believe.

We must instead believe that the barriers imposed to prevent the international press and media from circulating in the country, are a signal opposite to this purported image of a people satisfied with the management of their 'President'. The actual ground on which to evaluate the real appreciation of the Russian people and community must carefully consider the conditions of the community majority, given the strong, illogical and evident gap in wealth and income between the different social classes. It could be said that this imbalance between social classes is certainly not typical only of Russia, as this is a serious anomaly that affects also Western countries and Far Eastern countries, including China. It seems rather an ancient evil that over time tends to widen its disproportions rather than reduce them. However, the observation is not made in the name of a lack of homogeneity that actually doesn't exist in this regard. Instead, it should be seen as a symptom of inequality that is capable of triggering many social conflicts

and discords that are unsuitable for the supposed climate of a shared social peace that should exist inside the community.²

On the basis of these considerations, there is the possibility of a latent social conflict and of an unlikely acceptance of the unipolar version provided by the Russian authorities about the war in Ukraine; all that in a context of poor availability of social services due to the prevalent use of public budget to finance military spending, etc. It seems anyway unlikely to consider acceptable the thesis of a people and a community consenting to a war just imposed from above by the Russian authorities.

Now, there is no doubt, as we have seen from the statements of various intellectuals, that in the Russian society there is a minority group that is inclined to accept the decisions of the regime also about war matters. On the other hand, precisely because of the great benefits obtained - not only in terms of wealth but also as living standards, as well as activity and choice freedom - the oligarchs can actually have some influence on the *status quo*. However, to believe that some oligarchs, disturbed and also damaged by the constraints imposed on their wealth kept abroad, on the use of their luxury mega yachts (often comparable to cruise ships), on the free movement within the western area, etc., can influence the permanence in power appears somehow controversial. Because in this case we should actually admit that the dictator's power is so closely linked to the few but very rich privileged, that the rest of population doesn't count and is therefore fully silenced. And this hypothesis is unacceptable for us, because in this way there is a risk of undermining the foundations of democracy, which is based on the will of the sovereign people, who is the only one who has the burden of choosing the management and the leadership of the Nation.

SO MANY DIFFICULTIES FOR A COMMUNITY MAJORITY ON THE WAY TO ACHIEVING COHESION

Therefore, if we do not accept that assumption, we risk; if we neglect it, we lose any compass that may guide us on the path of understanding the phenomena with their potential evolution. That said, it seems clear that in order to appreciate, or to get an idea, or to outline a possibility, we must look at the community behavior or rather at its majority behavior. In other words, first of all it means understanding the difficulties encountered by a certain community, quite large considering the Russian population, to internally find a synthetic and schematic majority that can be fully and easily acceptable for almost everybody inside the group.

Understanding and accepting these difficulties basically means that there may be periods - even quite long - when we can ascertain a sort of deadlock, with the possible prevalence of a minority that can show some attention or consent for the *status quo* and, in the case in question, even for the unacceptable war in Ukraine. Obviously, it's difficult to understand how the wide net of a

² In countries such as China and Russia, the wealth inequality has increased dramatically over the span of just two decades, between 1995 and 2015, during the transition process from the state of planned economies to the condition of market economies. The share of wealth owned by the richest 1% of the population has doubled in both countries, from 15% to 30% in China and from 22% to 43% in Russia. The differences between the two countries are smaller when looking at the wealth owned by the richest 10% of the population, 67% in China and 71% in Russia, what suggests that the economic transition process in Russia has favoured the richest individuals more than in China. In 2015, Russia reached levels of wealth concentration similar to those of the United States.

new majority can be developed, also because we must admit that the lack of press and media freedom and in parallel the uniformity of press and television controlled by the regime in order to provide properly purged and false images and news about the terrible reality of the war battles in Ukraine, all together can be an obstacle to free development.³ An obstacle not only and not so much for the diffusion of the truth on the ongoing war, but I would say above all for the aggregation of a majority in a current of thought across the community, which otherwise could be broken into streams of different perceptions. And this last hypothesis would unfortunately give strength to the minority that follows with attention and agreement the actions of the power group.

In this closed situation and with the barrier against the press and information freedom, there wouldn't be the possibility of forging a majority uniformity of purposes and thought. Especially in the case of Russian community, affected by the strong limitation of all freedoms and the tightening in the specific issue of the war in Ukraine, that is, what the Kremlin calls "Special military operation" (the word "War" is strictly prohibited). This negative hypothesis should be discarded, anyway. It can be argued that all these limitations are an obstacle to the formation of a dominant thought in a relatively short time. However, it is to be excluded that the censorship and the restrictions on freedoms may totally preclude the formation of a majority and prevent this majority from carrying out its role as intermediary between humankind and nature. In fact, let us not forget that the relationship with power is governed above all by the expectation in each one of us of a "tomorrow no different from today"; that the relationship between the community and power is governed, though not completely, by the conjuncture sequence; and that, last but not least, the cycle worsening and above all the uncertain balance caused by the rising prices due to inflation, are key factors to create a primary reason for the cohesion of a community. These are negative feelings, typical of the relationship between community and nature, but they can be mitigated by the distribution of wage increases to the large workforce of State employees. Nevertheless, this cannot remove the sense of a widespread criticism, so deep precisely because it's arising from the comparison between the current situation and the natural hope imprinted in each one of us.

Let us reflect on the fact that the Western world has decided to help the brave Ukrainian resistant fighters with financial aid and supply of weapons. At the same time, several restrictions have been imposed on the Russian trade and economy through a partial blocking of imports and exports to and from Russia and a progressive cut of oil and gas imports in order to begin reducing dependence on Russia, who is one of the largest oil producers in the world. On the financial side, moreover, a blocking of the circulation of Russian public debt in the Western world has been imposed, as well as the partial blocking of the banking circuit on which

³ In the 21st century, information is the main weapon. And for this weapon, the Russian general staff is losing the war in Ukraine. Every evening in their reports they lie about the successes of the Russian Army, minimizing losses and claiming that only military targets are being bombed and in no case residential neighborhoods are a military target. To make it impossible for people to have any alternative sources of information, the military censorship has been established. The last independent media have been suppressed: the television channel "Dožd" and the radio "Echo Moskvu". They are blocking also YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. The majority of the Russian population is plagiarized by Putin's lies. - *Russian writer Shishkin: «A people hostage to Putin's propaganda. But reality will win», Corriere.it*

all payments for energy are regulated (i.e., the SWIFT system: Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication), etc.⁴

Now, what potential effects will these measures have on Russian public opinion? In principle it must be said that generally the communities recognize themselves in a smooth economic development, which tends to grow slightly so that “tomorrow is no different from today” (no troubles, no worries). The abrupt changes imposed by a drastic downturn in the economy, create a serious alarm, due to the concerns about a reduction in the purchasing power of personal monthly resources, a reduction also increasing in parallel with the poverty greater diffusion. And this reduced purchasing power is all the more serious in those countries, like Russia, where there is an absurd and abnormal disproportion between the wealth and luxury of the emerging leader class and the widespread poverty especially in the so-called ‘deep country’. It should be added that the economic difficulties caused by Western sanctions inflicted on Russia, create the conditions for an inflation increase in a country where the public resources devoted to assistance are already very few.

It is certainly a naivety to believe that in a situation of rising inflation and falling economic situation, together with wages that can buy less, an unconditional support for the regime could be revealed, on the mere assumption that the Russian people would agree with the attempt to forcibly aggregate the independent state of Ukraine to the Great Mother Russia. Rather, it seems that in this complex phase experienced by the Russian society, some minor and unilateral views of intellectual groups in agreement to maintain the *status quo* are emerging, but only because driven mainly by the advantages that the privileged classes and their fellows will receive.

Now, since there is a direct link between a good governance and an economy that develops smoothly and also between a bad government and an inflationary economy in crisis, we must transfer this kind of relations into the Russian economy, in the sense that the expected serious economic deterioration cannot certainly be hidden or disguised even with a mass of false information. Nor, on the other hand, can the growing difficulties faced by the people on their daily shopping, be alleviated by simply referring to a war that the regime has promoted and fueled through the false information typical of old Soviet “dezinformatzija”, so causing great damage to the general condition of the country.

Therefore, the worsening of economic conditions as a reflection of the sanctions imposed by the Western world, is leading us to think that the thesis that the Russian government can enjoy more than 60% of the community’s consensus clearly seems coming from false and

⁴ To argue that this package is too light would of course be unfair. 875 people had their assets seized in Europe. For the first time, the foreign exchange reserves of a large country (the largest, indeed) were blocked, and that country will no longer be able to use euros, dollars or pounds to defend its currency and finance activities in the world of national companies. Russia today is reduced to a complete autarchy. Half of the civilian fleet, leased by an American company, will be grounded to give spare parts to the other half still operational. Hundreds of global giants - from Maersk in logistics, to Chinese Lenovo in computers, to Korean Samsung - are fleeing to avoid being ‘tainted by a rogue state’. The elites and middle classes in Moscow or St. Petersburg had no political freedoms, but until two weeks ago at least out of political field they lived their lives like their fellows in Milan or Paris. Now they have suddenly returned to the Soviet Union atmosphere. https://www.corriere.it/editoriali/22_marzo_09/dilemma-sanzionie-prezzo-pagare-2d3973a6-9fe7-11ec-82d5-6f137f6a69fd.shtml?refresh_ce

manipulated data, because the reality could be very different, indeed. It should be added that in the 2000s, during the period after Boris Yeltsin, the Russian Gross Product improved, although today the Russian GDP is still lower than in Italy for example. It isn't difficult therefore to think, by focusing only on the economy and the purchasing power of citizens, that the rising of living standard after the collapse due to the implosion of Soviet Empire, has some weight in evaluating the regime imposed by Putin. That being said, it seems absurd that the tightening of all freedoms doesn't have a weight in the evaluation and judgment of individuals and community about the government in power. It seems absurd to say that the Russian history, from the Tsars to the dissolved Soviet Union, affected by all kind of limitations to individual and general freedoms for many centuries, could have a sort of unconscious permanent gag, tolerated by the community. It should also be added that, if we really want to compare the ideas with respect to the regime's propaganda, it is possible to have some uncensored information, especially for the communities living in large cities.

All this to say that, especially in large cities, the interposed general limitations are partially bypassable. In any case, we should always find valid the link connecting the community's judgment on leadership to the issue of life quality and in particular connecting that evaluation to the unconscious hope which is inside everyone, that is, the expectation of "a tomorrow practically equal to today". The imminent prospect of a deep degradation of the Russian economy due to the blows inflicted by the sanctions that Europe and the United States are imposing on Russian businesses and banks, is certainly the cause of a rethinking among the masses. Not only that, but there is also a renewed interest in knowing the truth on the state of the war in Ukraine, on the reasons that provoked the Russian invasion, on the large number of young conscript soldiers who died in a war inadmissible and absurd. I would say absurd especially in the current world that is looking for a global authority or government, while respecting the geopolitical and social pressures that over time have diversified and then multiplied states and communities. We should begin to ask ourselves what do the whole global community, the entire population of the globe, think about issues that are undoubtedly coming directly from an attitude now consigned to the past, such as the war in Ukraine. Not relying, therefore, only on the judgments of the state leaderships but listening instead to the opinions of a multitude that should coincide as much as possible with the whole population of the planet.

AN EMBRYO OF GLOBAL GOVERNMENT FOR A COMMUNITY COMPRISING ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE EARTH

It is true that the formation of the so-called G20 ⁵ is a great attempt to create a forum for discussions extended to an audience that counts more than 2/3 of the world population. It isn't a decision-making forum, although it could become so if the participants, i.e. the world leaders, committed themselves to enforcing the decisions made in the G20 meetings in their respective

⁵ The Group of 20 (or G20) is a forum of leaders, finance ministers and central bank governors, created in 1999, after a succession of financial crises, to foster economic internationality and concertation taking into account the new developing economies. It includes the European Union and 19 of the most industrialized countries in the world (Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, South Korea, India, Indonesia, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, Mexico, United Kingdom, Russia, United States, South Africa, Turkey) as well as a series of occasional guests (usually one or two states chosen by the country holding the current presidency) and permanent guests (Spain, the African Union, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and others). The G20 accounts for two thirds of the world trade and population, as well as the 80% of world GDP. There are also some of the major international organizations. (*source: Wikipedia*)

countries. And this would be possible by establishing at the same time a sort of Constitution which would qualify their group as the expression of the common will of the peoples of the Earth. Furthermore, it would always be of primary importance the need to listen to the will of the different populations and of the majority in the different areas of the Earth. It goes without saying that there would be an immediate opposition, in the sense that the citizens of different civilizations would not be ready to express their judgments on broad and global issues. And yet, we must admit that this specious objection might just be another attempt to put obstacles to the delegation power or at least to the possibility to listen to the popular opinion on major issues of general and global interest.

The theme of a possible new and global “world order” is taking a particular relevance, after the invasion of Ukraine made by the Russian Army. The German philosopher Immanuel Kant, one of the leading exponents of the Enlightenment period, spoke words of exceptional clarity on the need for a proper world order. *“A perfect civil union of the human species would have blossomed from a voluntary federation of republics committed to a non-hostility and transparent conduct both internally and internationally. The citizens would have cultivated peace because, unlike the despotic sovereigns, when they had considered the possible hostilities, then they would have resolved that these hostilities would make all the war calamities fall upon themselves. Over time, the attraction reasons of this pact would become evident, so creating the conditions for a gradual expansion of a peaceful world order”.* (Kissinger, 2015)

At the time of late Enlightenment, the geopolitical situation was apparently simplified, because the main colonial States of Europe actually seemed to represent almost the totality of the world population. However, the constitution of a peaceful world order proposed by Kant was based on some assumptions that actually should have somehow evolved compared to the situation of past times. The non-democratic States of those times should have allowed the formation of governments that would have been acceptable for the majority of communities. Assuming that the representatives of republics are an accepted expression of the communities, then we could consider valid the thesis that the official representatives of the States correspond to the wishes of citizens. Apart from the existing but aleatory relationship between prince (the power) and citizens (the people), anyway at the time the communities living in the colonial territories of the great European countries were without any kind of representation. Therefore, the Kantian hypothesis was based on a future evolution that still today is quite far from being realized! However, the conception that sees republics as an expression of the citizens of a large part of human family remains plausible, even if still today is quite complex to implement, though it appears evident that the decision on hostilities should be responsibility of the majority of citizens. Even in States with an established democratic vocation there is still a lack of listening to the opinions of community on the fundamental issues of political and social management. Furthermore, it must be said that unfortunately the democratic assumption is still absent in large areas of the planet. It should therefore be added that the Kantian thesis that the assessment of any damage caused by hostilities would represent a limitation to the decision to initiate those hostilities, doesn't appear to be conclusive. It should be fully integrated, in fact, into the assumption that all citizens or at least the community largest majority are the referent of nature and both, nature and humankind, are jointly interested in the life survival: this is in fact the only way to allow the human research that investigates the mysteries of the universe.

Remaining on the subject of the ongoing conflict, it should be finally considered that the UN is somehow weakened in its action regarding the current war in Europe: this is due to the veto right granted to Russia, which is actually the promoter of hostilities!⁶

We must in fact admit that a community is always ready to exercise the powers entrusted by democracy, without distinction of class or culture level, but mainly without the need to have more or less time to get used to democracy. The community *a priori* has the intrinsic ability to select a leader. A complex task, anyway, which requires not only the ability to evaluate the various competitors but also to select them on the basis of the programs or actions they intend to carry out for the governance of the community's general life. Obviously, this selection process requires that the community must find the right method for the formation of a majority, because this majority will be essentially entrusted with the choice to be made. Now, it is evident that all these qualities, starting from the evaluation of competitors and their programs until the creation of a coherent and compact majority, are certainly not the kind of properties that are learned in school but are rather an irrepressible and non-transferable heritage set inside every living being. Therefore, if we affirm that the community has these intrinsic qualities, we certainly cannot think that all this original common heritage can somewhat disappear or become completely blocked due to the persistence in a given territory of an interminably long absolute power. This is true for the case of Russia, where the Soviet regime for a long time imposed many individual and general freedom restrictions and where during the twenty years of President Putin's power, we witnessed the return to an ever more absolute and pervasive power also based on the old "dezinformatzija".

We can affirm that a people, a community, are certainly not a malleable material on which a dynasty, a monarch or a dictator can inscribe forever some stable behaviors, such as the subordination and the blind acceptance of authoritarian powers. As if they could lose or weaken over time their innate skills in the selection of leadership and therefore also the intrinsic ability to remove the power when it's derailing from the correct path. Indeed, we must note that a community has an innate vocation to democracy, which is something etched deep in the human DNA since birth and which makes people lean without prejudice towards freedom and free choice. And this is the key that will guide the leadership selection, which is and must be subject to the choice of the community majority.

⁶ The United Nations Organization, abbreviated into United Nations (acronym UN) is a global intergovernmental organization. Among its main objectives there are the maintenance of world peace and security, the development of friendly relations between nations, the pursuit of international cooperation and the harmonization of all various actions carried out for these purposes by its member nations. The UN is the largest, best known, most internationally represented and most powerful intergovernmental organization in the world. Its international headquarter is in New York, while other main offices are located in Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna. The United Nations is made up of six main bodies: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Trusteeship Board, the International Court of Justice and the United Nations Secretariat. The United Nations system also includes a multitude of Specialized Agencies, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Bank (WB), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Program (WFP), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), etc. There are also various Funds and Programmes, as the UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) etc. Moreover, there are particular entities, as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), etc. Finally, within the "UN Charter" there is a family of organizations comprising the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and others.

We certainly cannot forget that beside the figure of an autocrat there is always a group of ardent followers ready to approve any aggressive desires and tendencies of a strong leader. The trends we are talking about, are always concerning a minority, that is, a minor part of a community that doesn't conform to the principles expressed by the majority and rather deviates from those principles. Therefore, within that minority group the followers are supporting the dictatorship just by showing their absolute reverence, always with a view to personal gain.

Moreover, we should take into account that often the abandonment of the democracy and freedom principles is a symptom of progressive departure and detachment occurring between the true popular will and the different objectives pursued by the power. All this without forgetting that a sort of short-circuit could occur between the image present in the community collective imaginary and the reality of leaders fiercely competing to prevail in the office of governing the territory. In the sense that no one of the potential leaders is gifted with the necessary charisma nor with the skills needed to be a real statesman. Moreover, the proposed programs do not generally correspond to the concise but significant idea pursued by the community or anyway by its majority. It seems evident that often the alarming distance existing between the people's expectations and the activities of the government in office is exacerbated over time. A widespread criticism is thus created about the work and actions of the leader who in this case tries to react, but certainly not by making some attempts to follow the indications coming from the community: in fact, he stubbornly will try to eliminate the criticism by a reinforcement of the censorship grip. In this way the dictator is pursuing with (wrong) commitment his project, despite the contrary voices coming from the people. In other words, the leader's stubborn will to carry out a project that wouldn't be acceptable for his community, just as it's happening in Russia, leads to a reduction of all freedoms, finally going towards the creation of a police regime. Well, it's impossible to define how and when a regime, which operates against the direction wanted by its own community, can outlive itself. But it seems certain that the progressive detachment of the community from carrying out its daily activities, because affected by the lack of trust towards the increasingly isolated and exalted leader, can create a worsening of the whole situation not only in the economic side but also from the social and political point of view; and this worsening at the first mistake or unexpected accident could mean the end of the regime. This prospect is now effective in Russia, entangled in the attempt to subjugate the brave Ukrainian people, who don't want absolutely to give in to the aggressor.

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This assumption can only mean that the possibility to finally end the war in Ukraine isn't just in the hands of the people of that tormented country (Ukraine), but also and above all it depends on the orientation taken by the Russian people. Once abandoned the idea that the dictator could have a full widespread consensus, it remains to understand whether, on the contrary, the

⁷ Responsibility is the key. There was a lot of good in the country I grew up in, the one that stopped existing two weeks ago. But responsibility was what we lacked. Russia is a very individualistic society, in which people, to quote the cultural historian Andrei Zorin, live with a "Leave me alone" mind-set. We like to isolate ourselves from one another, from the state, from the world. This allowed many of us to build vibrant, hopeful, energetic lives against a grim backdrop of arrests and prison. But in the process, we became insular and lost sight of everyone else's interests.

We must now put aside our individual concerns and accept our common responsibility for the war. Such an act is, first and foremost, a moral necessity. But it could also be the first step toward a new Russian nation — a nation that could talk to the world in a language other than wars and threats, a nation that others will learn not to fear. It is toward creating this Russia that we, outcast and exiled and persecuted, should bend our efforts.

By

Ilia Krasilshchik, The NYT March 16, 2022

management of the country and the entry into war against the neighboring “sister” country are criticized by a growing number of Russian citizens. Especially inside the big cities, considering that the deep Russia is struggling with growing economic difficulties and therefore the consensus direction is certainly turning against the leadership in power. Only through a realistic and much needed bath inside the reality of the country it could be possible to finally put an end to a regime that the Russian people definitely do not deserve, also because the aspirations for greatness are not a prerogative of the peoples but are always and in any case aspirations, today out of time, of power groups with their selfish interests. No other way out is therefore conceivable, even if this would require some sacrifice on the part of the Ukrainian people and of the whole world, subject to the war speculation: that is, an adjustment other than the agreement made by the diplomacy of the contenders. The ‘narrative’ emerging in recent days is that there seems to be the will to make concessions to the aggressor, so that at the end of the unjust fight he (i.e. the autocratic leader Vladimir Putin) can still boast a successful result for his electorate. However, this kind of mediation outcome, if accepted, leaves anyway some potentially dangerous questions open. Not only because in this case we are faced with a just provisional result and then with a possible resumption of the conflict within a near although indefinite time. But also, and I would say above all, because once again the power continues to use lies and to hide truth from the Russian people, to whom instead we should resort so that finally the great Russian community can start its journey towards democracy and closeness to other peoples and nations of the world.

CONCLUSION

At this stage of the conflict, with its destructions, deaths and injuries on both sides, it seems rather strange that the aggressors can also play the role of the attacked part, though just in delimited areas of the occupied Ukrainian territory. However, such an evolution could perhaps also speed up the outcome of the talks for an agreement, but it would have the additional and not secondary consequence of undermining the false propaganda continuously imposed on the Russian citizens. The problem faced by the Western world is not only to end this calamity as soon as possible, but also to globally increase the mistrust of false propaganda (i.e. the dezinformatzija). This is the only way to really increase the possibility that the Russian community, especially in large cities, is motivated to seek, collect and listen to more extensive, detailed and objective information on the fate of the war, in order to finally tear off the gag of censorship. Obviously, the times needed for a rethinking of the Russian community majority on the subject of the dictator's policy in these recent years, cannot happen in the short time that separates us from a (hoped) ceasefire. Nevertheless, it is essential that every effort on the part of the whole democratic civilization moving around the Russian world, should be made to promote as far as possible and without useless deviations a path to allow the Russian people to regain their freedom of expression. In other words, the errors accumulated by the “Tsar” Putin with his attempt to annex Ukraine (in whole or in part) shouldn't be set aside by the world that is following with deep participation the disaster provoked by the Russian government but also in the end by the Russian population's attitude. A community that must be helped in every possible way to remove that sort of screen placed by the regime as a barrier of untruth in front of its own citizens. In other words, the unfortunately missed opportunities at the time of the collapsed USSR can still be resumed and reconnected if, instead of an inadmissible revenge, the United States and Europe would look at Russia as a great European piece and not as a large Asian fragment.

In fact, it's necessary to recover the potential possibilities to open the Russian community to the schemes and ways of expression freedom; possibilities that have been missed when the old Soviet Empire disappeared from the world scenario and then again with the fall of Boris Yeltsin. More concretely, it's necessary to recover that large minority (what sounds like an oxymoron, but it is not in a so large country) still uncertain or somehow pessimistic about the possibility that the popular power may be able to impose its hegemony when choosing and maintaining a leadership. The idea that any opposition to the regime must come from the privileged classes that are concentrated in the big cities of Russia, is probably optimistic and also unlikely. The big owners of large companies in the energy sector, in the heavy industry of minerals, etc. (i.e. the oligarchs), are probably unhappy with the *status quo* but they are rather looking for any escapes from the restrictions that the Western world has worldwide placed on their assets, goods and luxury properties (e.g. superyachts, large mansions...). On the other hand, in the big cities there is a middle class that enjoyed a quantity of money in the first decade of the 2000s coming from the exploitation of large oil and gas fields. Opposition to the regime, therefore, could come mainly from the small cities and from the "deep Russia" which has always struggled with all kinds of constraints and serious shortcomings mainly concerning health and care. In small towns and rural areas there are communities affected by the pressure of inflation on prices and by serious deficiencies throughout the service sector. On this large area of popular communities it's possible that the false information dropped from above arrives partially attenuated. On the other hand, the exchange of views on fundamental issues and in particular on the impossible war in Ukraine and its consequences on the everyday life in rural areas, could become a decisive factor. And I'm saying decisive because in this multiplicity the uncertain and also the 'agnostics' could become a structural component of a majority that finally opposes the out-of-time and out-of-place hopes of the dictatorship currently in power.

"Faced with the danger of a self-destruction, humanity must understand that the time has come to abolish the war, to erase it from human history before the erasure of humankind from history," as Pope Francis said at the Angelus of March 27. The problem of the atomic arsenal and the possibility that the atomic weapon can enter the world scenario in a self-destructive fight, requires a deep reflection. It's now clear that we cannot leave to our mutual fear the management of atomic balance: the kind of balance that so far allowed to leave the control of arsenals to each country in possession of atomic weapons. It now appears evident that the risk of a total destruction of life caused by the nuclear radiation requires a different strategy that should put the atomic arsenal control out of the reach of dictators, presidents and monarchs of the various countries with a nuclear arsenal. It's now mandatory, I would say, that the control of the atomic weapon is entrusted to an international Institution at a global level. In this way we'll let the whole humanity be the holder of the power of atomic mass destruction weapon and we therefore entrust to the communities globally unified the power to control and manage the arsenals, and also and foremost the power to arrange the progressive disposal and any reuse for peaceful purposes. We must absolutely forbid that any crazy dictator can just push a button that would start the destruction of every living being with the radioactive fallout. It is completely inadmissible that even just a simple mention could have been made of the possible use of tactical atomic weapons in a misguided attempt to contain a more active intervention by the Western countries in favor of the tormented Ukraine under the blows of Russian bombs and missiles. Now, it's clear that once the possibility of using the nuclear weapons is ruled out, the practice of war itself should become a historical fact, a museum object, and no longer a possible option. A supranational, independent and global authority should have the task of controlling

the progressive disposal and starting the actions for a peaceful use of nuclear materials. Any problem regarding this “new Fort Knox” and any decision on this global repository should be under the absolute and exclusive power of the communities of all continents, who will express their decision-making opinions through a general consultation. The life survival on our planet should be in the hands of the world global community which is the main referent of the relationship with nature for the life survival on the planet.

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OECD - OECD Stat Database, various years IMF - *International Financial Statistics* - Database, various years