

## REVIVAL OF THE EVIL EMPIRE AS A THREAT TO HUMANITY

**Liudmyla Chekalenko**

Doctor of Political Science, Professor,  
Merited Worker of Science and Technology of Ukraine,  
Institute of International Relations of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv,  
State Institution "Institute of World History of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine";  
Visit-Professor at Jagiellonian University, Krakow and Adam Mickiewicz,  
Poznan University in Poland, Dyploamat  
e-mail: chekaliudmila@gmail.com, orcid.org/0000-0002-2819-9424

### Summary

Empires are an extraordinary phenomenon in the history of mankind. The study of empires requires scientific understanding, thoughtful comparison and deep analysis. Such way of studying the comparative approach of the problem has arisen that will help us understand the nature of the emergence and disappearance of imperial formations, find answers to difficult questions: how empires grew, for what reasons some of them were powerful and others weak, why some empires disappeared and others flourished (*John Hutchinson, 2017*). Is there a connection between the instability of power, coups and the death of empires? And finally, what are the consequences for world development of the disappearance of imperial formations.

Among the reasons for the demise of empires, researchers single out political and economic problems, social and cultural issues, and environmental challenges.

The author of the article tries to explain how the Moscow Empire was formed and how the Russian Empire manages to survive despite a number of dangerous challenges. In the submitted article prof. L.Chekalenko for the first time revealed the phenomenon of "saving" the empire in historical and political dimensions. The author discovered that Russia was saved by its vassals – conquered peoples.

So, the article examines the factors that support and revive imperial formations, and also makes cautious assumptions about the future scenarios of the development of events surrounding the current situation.

**Key words:** empire, decline, moscovyja, nationalism, phenomenon.

DOI <https://doi.org/10.23856/6219>

### 1. Introduction

The concept of empire comes from *Latin*. Imperium means command, supreme power, management of a certain territory by one person – the monarch. The empire is one of the historical forms of state-political formation. In nowadays this term was defined as individual sovereignty over numerous and dispersed political societies. The British historian, specialist in the history of Russia *Dominik Lieven* (2000) proposed to define the empire as a state with a clearly demarcated territory exercising sovereignty over its subjects, who are under its direct administrative supervision at various (*Mark R. Beissinger, 2015*).

The term "empire" has caused much controversy and has been applied to many different political entities. Oxford University professor *John Darwin* (2008) spoke of the existence of an unofficial empire as the highest form of imperialism. According to his definition, empires are

systems of influence or rule in which ethnic, cultural, or ecological boundaries overlapped or were ignored. It should be noted that the term "empire" refers primarily to the central state of such entities, which unites others and exercises political control over a large territory containing many diverse population groups.

Let's consider the version of the Russian empire, where Moscow was the central state. We usually talk about the empire as a whole. But since the empires are quite large, they are often divided into smaller, more manageable political units, which are called provinces, and in Soviet Russia – the union of republics.

Comparing different empires, it is possible to find commonalities and differences in their development. Analysts offer for consideration several vivid examples of former and existing empires, tracing their path from birth to collapse. Thus, the famous British academic *John Hutchinson* in his study "Warfare, Imperial Collapse, and the Mass Creation of Nation States Get access Arrow" (*Sarkees, M. R., Wayman, F. W., and Singer, J. D., 1998*) mentions the Persian Achaemenid Empire under the leadership of Cyrus the Great, the Maurya Empire in India, the Roman Republic, which was founded in the sixth century BC, and others. According to the scientist, empires appear for various reasons. Thus, the Persian Achaemenid Empire was built mainly through military conquests. The Mauryan Empire in India used a combination of political sabotage and religious conversion to expand its rule. The Roman invaders, creating an empire, differed in that they did not aim for the final conquest of the territory. And after victory, Rome usually offered some level of citizenship to foreigners in exchange for loyalty.

## 2. Analysis of previous research and publications

Nationalism is considered traditionally a source of the emergence of new states after the fall of empires. *M. Sarkees, F. Wayman, D. Singer* wrote about this (*Sarkees, M. R., Wayman, F. W., Singer, J. D., 1998*). In our opinion, this question can be controversial, since states appear not only as a result of the strengthening of national self-awareness of society. And the results of two World Wars prove it. So, secondly, the factor of nationalism is far from decisive in the process of nation-building and state-building.

In the 20th–21st centuries a number of new national formations appear relatively quickly as a result of clashes of interests of the world's leading powers. Thus, as a result of the Second World War, three dozen new states appeared on the world map, which, seeking international protection, quickly joined the ranks of the United Nations. The air of freedom in the post-war times covered almost all the peoples subject to the metropolises in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and the African continent.

The appearance of a number of new/old state entities characterizes a new era of the end of the confrontation in the Cold War, when with the collapse of the USSR, 15 countries appeared on its territory – the former Soviet republics of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Central Asia. Researcher *M. Sarkis* calculated that the number of participants in the interstate order increased from 23 to 181 countries in 1816–1995 (*Sarkis, M.*). So, the author examines the factors that support and revive imperial formations.

### 3. Presenting main material

The moscow empire continued to expand during the past centuries, as the overseas empires of national states – Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, as well as Japan against the background of a number of world cataclysms. Some empires collapsed in the 20th century, but others arose or were restored on new foundations. The moscow empire after 1917 was saved by the creation of the Soviet Union. So USSR was strengthened by the victory over Germany in 1945 and received a ring of puppet states in Eastern and Central Europe. The creation of Russia of post-war times can also be attributed to informal empires, which left signs of imperial rule in the territories included in its structure, hiding behind the artificially imposed ideology of building socialism/communism (Rieber, Alfred J., 2015).

**Methodology of writing an article.** The scientific method used to study the issue of empires is a *systematic approach*, namely the identification among them of the most characteristic groups that are similar in their characteristics. (Rieber, Alfred J., 2015). The Soviet empire strengthened in the years of cold war. This empire was named by US President Ronald Reagan “evil empire” (Martin, T., 2000).

The Soviet empire, which survived the revolution and civil war, was preserved by Bolshevik Russia on the former territory of the Romanov empire, although it lost Finland, the Baltic and Polish territories. Officially, it was a federation of equal national republics of the Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, and Transcaucasian peoples, but in fact it was a Russian fiefdom that openly and impunitously exploited the population of the renewed empire. All power structures and state institutions were dominated by Russians, and in the cultural and educational space – history, culture and language of Russians. After the Second World War, the power of this empire spread to Eastern and Central Europe, and the "socialist" camp was formed from the satellite states where the Soviet troops were stationed (Gallagher, John and Robinson, Ronald, 1953).

**The main explanations for imperialism** can be grouped into three general categories. *Metrocentric theories* focus on the dispositions or internal characteristics of imperial states. For example, John Hobson (Hobson, John A., 1902) justified the motivation of foreign expansion by the need for advanced capitalist countries to export their surplus capital. This topic was also the basis of the work of the Soviet leader "Imperialism: the highest stage of capitalism", published in 1917. Later, neo-Marxists argued that the military-industrial complex and other features of capitalist states actually create the need for capital. In order to build up capital, they introduce colonial and neo-colonial relations with developing regions (Harry Magdoff, 1998).

The development of home policy of colonial states is confirmed by *pericentric theories*. At the same time, metrocentric theories focused on explaining the reasons for imperialist countries' desire for expansion. John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson talk about this problem in his book "Imperialism of Free Trade" (Gallagher, John and Robinson, Ronald, 1953).

The state of relations within the colonial states is confirmed by *pericentric theories* and draw attention to the forces that involve the imperialists in a hierarchical relationship with the world. At the same time, *metrocentric theories* focus on explaining the reasons for imperialist countries' desire for expansion.

According to the theories the policy of the imperialist countries towards the colonies changed depending on the expected results and conditions on the periphery. Where peripheral states had stable regimes and effective collaborators, imperialists could rule indirectly through informal empires. Metropolises forced to create formal empires only when peripheral societies were politically unstable or lacked elites ready to protect their interests.

In the Russian Empire, which later became the Soviet Union, such republics as Tatarstan, Ingushetia, Bashkortostan, etc. had a stable regimes and effectively worked for the center – Muscovy. In contrast to backward Russian regions, the so-called gray zone, such as the Yamalo-Nenets district, Komi, Kalmykia, Yakutia, etc., the central government of Moscow created a special system of institutions, appointing its people from the central apparatus to managerial positions, and later through an officially appointed representative of the president.

Another group of theories, called *systemic theories* of imperialism, are mainly descendants and followers of realist theories of international relations, and they were focused on the study of the survival process of large competing states. The struggle for survival and influence created an ever-widening space of competition between great powers, prompting metropolises to seize territories to increase their resources (*Hobson, Gallagher and Robinson*).

The following studies of the development of empires are distinguished by a *synergistic approach*, which combined all the theoretical concepts listed above to explain the essence of imperialism. There is also a *neo-institutionalist theory* that explains imperialism as a manifestation of another form of organizational hierarchy. However, the first three considerations given above regarding the theoretical foundations of the study of empires are fundamental. These are *metrocentric theories* that pay the greatest attention to the influence of the internal interests of the metropolis on imperialist politics; *perocentric ones* explain the specific features of peripheral territories, which can increasingly dictate their conditions to the center, and *systemic ones* – reveal the division of power within the international system and competition.

The combination of military and nationalist aspirations of each of the empire was different, depending on the capabilities, personal characteristics, as well as on the time and place of their existence. However, all empires have the following in common. Imperial stability was based, and what we see today, based on a combination of conquest, ideological legitimation, coercion and co-optation of minority elites. The control schemes used were indirect rule through collaborationists based on a divide-and-conquer strategy. This policy is meanted differentiation in the army, in which certain ethnic groups of the central state were selected as military races, as well as a specific demographic policy.

So, today we are observing the differentiation in the russian army, the confrontation between ordinary soldiers of peripheral and non-ethnic origins and officers of the central headquarters. We are observing the colonization, assimilation and russification of the Ukrainian local population. It is possible to draw a number of coincidental parallels, comparing the events in Ukraine, which is fighting against the invader, and the theoretical positions and opinions of well-known analysts and scientists.

According to Randall Collins (*Collins. R., 2012*), war is a central event for the legitimacy of states, and geopolitical principles govern the ethnic absorption or fragmentation of a country. States, the analyst wrote, are mobile geographical entities that are in military competition with each other. The analitic R. Collins, having studied the Balkan crisis, identified three stages in its development and proposed a three-stage model of activation of national groups seeking-freedom. In this model, we may be interested in the third stage, which consists in the phase of mobilization of people, in which the sense of opportunities created as a result of the crisis gives rise to a surge of intense emotions, new symbols and concepts of identity.

Complementing Collins, *Andreas Wimmer (Wimmer, A., 2013)* argues that nationalist mobilization is the driving force in all cases of imperial collapse, and that nationalist movements have been central to the transformation of the international system over the past two hundred years. The researcher's argument rests in part on statistical data, which he combines with detailed historical analysis.

The strength of nationalist movements is directly related to the transition from empire to nation-state. Nationalist wars of liberation fought in other parts of the empire (the "diffusion of nationalism effect") increased the likelihood of nation-states, and the more territories that could be separated to form nation-states, the more likely that the remaining territories would follow suit.

The weak international position of the imperial center may be an other important factor. We can recall the two Chechen wars of Russia, or the war of Russia against Georgia, as well as the war of Russia against Ukraine. Internal wars, as *Giers and Wimmer* recognize, are a particularly influential factor in shaking empires (*Hiers and Wimmer, 2013*).

**Western researchers in the history of mankind** of the 20th century distinguish three phases of the fall of empires, although the first wave was caused primarily by military or civil coups, which led to the emergence of nation states. Among the new free states that emerged at the beginning of the last century, the Ukrainian People's Republic, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and the Central Asian republics were unable to defend their independence. At the same time, Poland, Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austria, and the Serbo-Croatian-Slovenian state appeared in Europe. The collapse of the empires of the 20th century led to the collapse of the colonial possessions of the leading wealthy countries of the world: the German Empire, as well as Japan, Italy, France and Great Britain.

The countries suffered great material losses in the war, and also lost their status as world powers. At the same time, the dominant places on the world stage were occupied by those of them who came out of the war militarily and politically strengthened. There are the USA, Great Britain, the USSR.

**Although in the Second World War, the USSR and the USA acted as allies** and jointly ensured the victory of the states of the anti-Hitler coalition. However, before the end of the war, misunderstandings and contradictions began to arise between them, which was caused by the desire to take over most of the world.

The Soviet leadership, inspired by the victory over fascism, under the guise of renewed theories about socialist construction led by totalitarian communist regimes, began actively promoting the unifying idea of creating a single integration space under Moscow leadership. Thus, Russia tried to implement the plan to return the imperialist foundations of the former Russian Empire to the Soviet Union.

Finally, the Cold War ended with the collapse of the USSR in 1991, and its consequences beyond the collapse of the USSR were the redistribution of spheres of influence in favor of NATO.

The consequences of the emergence of new states, often artificially separated from integral territories with an ethnically mixed population, are not a positive phenomenon both for individual stable communities and for the world as a whole. Often, the appearance of new objects / subjects of international relations causes devastating consequences of the large-scale entry of such states into the interstate system of a stable space. Thus, the third wave of the collapse of empires was connected with the liquidation of the Soviet Union and the system of "socialism".

Taking into account the above, as well as observing signs of the formation of new, in particular, totalitarian unions in the era of global interdependence, we don't exclude the possibility of the appearance of new/old empires in a new capacity.

In connection with this, the question arises: what was the role of the "outlying lands" of the imperial Russian space, in particular Ukraine?

#### 4. Conclusions

Turning to recent historical events, let us recall that the now independent nations, then new states – the former Soviet republics – played an almost decisive role in the former of the Russian Empire.

It was they who helped to preserve the Russian Empire from 1917, adopting the rules of the imperial game of "subjugate and rule", without causing the corresponding resistance of the invader. This was a time, when the Russian bandit troops of general Muravyov looted Kyiv and drowned other territories of Ukraine in blood.

The similar task to save Russia was implemented by the leadership of the Ukrainian republic in 1917 and after the Second World War in 1945. Happy with the gift that the blood-thirsty leader gave the Ukrainian SSR a seat in the United Nations (1945), Ukraine actively voted for all Moscow's decisions already from the "high" podium of the world international "peacekeeping" organization of the UN. At that time, until the end of the 1950s, "ideologically" nationalist Ukrainian soldiers in forest shelters gave their unique lives for the freedom and future of the independent Ukraine with the last words on their lips: Glory to Ukraine!

Wasn't a similar scenario played out already in our time – the time of existence of Ukraine, which is officially recognized by the world as a legal entity? Let's recall the years 1990–1991, during the collapse of the Soviet Union. All friends of Russia – "fraternal republics" scattered, frightened by the events of the Moscow coup of the GKChP.

Who saved Muscovy-Russia, trembling in agony, from final disintegration?

So, Ukrainian brother was a saviors. It was ukrainian government, ukrainian president elected by the Ukrainian people, who created a new union with Moscow – the Commonwealth of Independent States. Again, they realized the idears of the "elder brother". But the "elder brother" began the a war against Ukraine.

Ukraineans saved a new satrapy, a new empire from destruction. An empire that was well prepared for a war against us, against of Ukraine with main idea – our destruction.

*How Russia thanked its savior Ukraine – we see today...*Russia thanked hundreds of human victims, the destruction of cities and villages, the destruction of everything Ukrainian. RUSSIA'S GOAL IS TO LIQUID UKRAINE!

Russia – a russian and soviet empire – never abandoned the idea of seizing Ukrainian lands. When it was weak, it did not dare to take such a step, because Ukraine was strong. Russia tried to implement territorial encroachments in Crimea, Sevastopol, the island of Kosa Tuzla from 1991. The reasons for Russian interest in the absorption of Ukraine have already been described and researched in the many publications (*Chekalenko, L., 2016*).

Thus, the phenomenon of the "rescue" of the Russian Empire consists in the fact that the restoration and rescue of the metropolis – the central state – the conqueror and the destroyer, the exploiter and the assimilator etc., was carried out by its vassals – the conquered peoples. This phenomenon is reminiscent about the *Scandinavian syndrome*, when victims begin to protect and save their tormentor, who has committed irreparable evil against them.

The study of the system of construction and organization of the modern russian empire is designed to form an adequate policy of Ukraine in relation to the russian aggressor and identify the weaknesses of the aggressor, which will contribute to the creation of future scenarios of events and the implementation of appropriate steps around the current situation.

## References

1. Beissinger, Mark R. (2015). *Ethnic struggle, coexistence, and democratization in Eastern Europe*. Article. Jul 2015.
2. Chekalenko, L. (2016.) *Foreign Policy of Ukraine: monogr. Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine of MFA of Ukraine*. Kyiv. Ukraine. 2016. 320 p.
3. Collins, R. (1999) *Macrohistory Go to: Nationalism and war: European War-Making and the Rise of Nation States*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
4. Collins, R. (2012) 'Time-Bubbles of Nationalism: Dynamics of Solidarity Rituals in Lived Time', *Nations and Nationalism* 18, 3: 383-97
5. Darwin, J. (2008) *After Tamerlane: The Rise and Fall of Global Empires, 1400–2000*. London.
6. Doyle, Michael (1986). *Liberalism and World Politics*. *American Political Science Review* 80 (December): 51–69.
7. Gallagher, John and Robinson, Ronald (1953). *Free Trade Imperialism*, *The Economic History Review*, vol. VI, item 1, 1953.
8. Hiers and Wimmer (1902). *Warfare imperial collapse*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnas.org/publications/commentary/the-downside-of-imperial-collapse>.
9. Hobson, John A. (1902). *Imperialism: A study* (2003)
10. Hutchinson, John (2017) . *Warfare, Imperial Collapse, and the Mass Creation of Nation States Get access Arrow*. 2017. Pages 86–124. Published: February 2017. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198798453.003.0004>
11. Lieven, Д. *Empire* (2000) : *The Russian Empire and Its Rivals*, London : John Murray, 2000.
12. Magdoff, Harry (1979) *Imperialism: From the Colonial Age to the Present*. 2003. 279 p. Bookshop bookshop.org.
13. Martin, T. (1998). *An Affirmative Action Empire: The Soviet Union as the Highest Form of Imperialism*, in R. Suny and T. Martin (eds.), *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*. Oxford : Oxford University Press: 67-90.
14. Rieber, Alfred J. (2015). *The Struggle for the Eurasian Borderlands: From the Rise of Early Modern Empires to the End of the First World War*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press. {Peu. Seymour Becker}. Book.
15. Sarkees, M. R., Wayman, F. W., and Singer, J. D. (1998). *Inter-State, Intra-State, and Extra-State Wars : A Comprehensive look at their Distribution over Time, 1816–1997*, *International Studies Quarterly*, 47: 49–70.
16. Wimmer, Andreas (2023). *Is nationalism the cause or consequence of the end of empire?* Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/292883484\\_Is\\_nationalism\\_the\\_cause\\_or\\_consequence\\_of\\_the\\_end\\_of\\_empire](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/292883484_Is_nationalism_the_cause_or_consequence_of_the_end_of_empire).