



Hypnosis

The battle of Bakhmut-Artemovsk laid the groundwork for Russia to expand its incursion deeper into southern Donetsk, since Surovikin’s decision to canalize Ukrainian troops into the village succeeded as a way to buy time for the construction of the Surovikin lines, against which Ukraine’s 2023 ‘Spring’ counteroffensive defaulted; the defeat at Bakhmut-Artemovsk and Ukraine’s

default against the Surovikin lines shifted the strategic initiative in Russia's favor, allowing Russia to advance deeper into southern Donetsk and making its advances less a matter of "chance, probability or uncertainty" than a matter of time, manpower or matériel, whose supply, transport or logistics the Russians secured in the construction of a railway from Rostov-On-Don to the very banks of the Crimea, the necessary prerequisite for which became Ukraine's defeat at Bakhmut-Artemovsk; furthermore, the deeper Russia expanded into southern Donetsk, the more accessible Ukraine's *Rohstoffversorgung*, *Rohstoffe*, *Rohstoffreichtum* became, the more valuable its railway system from Rostov-On-Don became for transporting, supplying, or taking care of the logistics for *Rohstoffversorgung*, *Rohstoffe*, or *Rohstoffreichtum*.¹ This provided, provides, and will provide Russia the means to offset financial losses resulting from sanctions, rising recruitment bonuses, or exponentially rising military expenditures.² Since the acquisition of southern Donetsk territory secured Russian access to raw materials and the railway

¹ Detractors, rebuttal specialists, or a devil's advocates could argue that Russia's control over more than 12.4 trillion dollars worth of raw materials in the first six months of the Ukraine war *ipso facto* nullifies any basis for a claim of decisiveness after Bakhmut-Artemovsk. The construction of the railways, however, complicates efforts to evaluate one's understanding of the annexed territory on the value of the raw materials alone. [10/11/24, 10/12/24]

² *Nota bene* that one of the most salient arguments to arise in the social media blogging sphere, newspapers, or magazines from the period immediately following the collapse of Ukraine's 2023 'Spring' counteroffensive to the day Vuhledar became Ugledar became the idea that 1) the depletion of Russia's arsenal of Soviet era equipment, weaponry, armor, mechanized air defense or mobilized anti-air defense systems, or projectiles, 2) its inability to produce replacement units for those lost on the battlefield, as well as 3) the strain sanctions, rising recruitment bonuses, or exponentially rising military expenditures on its economy would lead to its collapse during the Ukrainian war. During the battle of Novomikhailovka, for instance, the 79th Airborne Assault Brigade, which became a separate part of Ukraine's armed forces like the Army or the Air Force, recorded more than 300 confirmed Russian losses in units of armor over the course of a more than six month battle; a counter argument to irreplaceability became Russia's ability to produce three tanks a day. While these concerns are certainly a factor in Russia's ability to lose a war of attrition against Ukraine, the bottom line for Russia's economy is raw materials. Russia's ability to continue, despite sanctions, to sell oil, gas, or coal, at times with profits even exceeding losses from the withdrawal of Western businesses in compliance with sanctions, fluctuated, causing controllable inflation but never subsided to a point at which revenues fell below Russia's interest payments on foreign debt. The predictions of Russia's collapse due to this argument reveal the persistent depth of shortsightedness inherent in the complete lack of planning for the ultimate end of Julia Nuland's 2014 *coup d'état* in Maidan. Stratfor, one of America's research centers, predicted the course of Russia's advances as early as 2015, leaving no excuse for the proponents of Nuland's foreign policy to feign ignorance.

for its management for decades, if not millennia, a direct consequence of the battle of Bakhmut-Artemovsk, the battle decided, by and large and for the most part, the raw materials of the Donbas, and consequently the war itself, at least in terms of Ukraine's struggle over Russia's invasion. In the calculus of warfare, which is heavily dependent on revenues, Russia's ability to successfully secure control over, access to, or exploitation of Ukraine's Donbas of raw materials, is a profound historic event, not just for the history of Russia or the Ukraine but the world.

Russia Reroutes the *Bagdadbahn*

In his essay *Украина как Объект Международной Контр-Революции*, М. Павлович (Волонтер) argues that the great pan-German *Bagdadbahn* as one of the aims of German imperialism at the turn of the 19th century led to the outbreak of World War I. Павлович argues that the *Bagdadbahn* sought to accomplish two things. He writes: “С одной стороны, Багдадская железная дорога должна была утвердить господство Германии, во-первых, в Константинополе, т.е. На Босфоре и Дарданеллах, иначе говоря—на великой военно-торговой дороге из черноморских портов Украины и Казака к Средиземному морю и Суэцу; во-вторых, на великом историческом пути от Балкан через древние царства: Лидию, Гераклию, Цезарею, Вавилонию, Сирию, т.е., той дорогой, которой шел Александр Македонский к Персидскому заливу и Индийскому океану, открывавшим ворота в 300-миллионную Индию, эту жемчужину в короне Британской империи.” (Павлович, 1920: pg. 2) These two goals may be summarized as securing trade routes 1) to the Crimea, which encompasses the Black Sea, as well as 2) to India, which is the ultimate end of the *Bagdadbahn*. In terms of these two goals, Павлович explains how “Багдадская дорога должна была приковать стальной цепью к победной колеснице Германской империи разлагавшуюся Оттоманку империю и отдать в распоряжение германского капитализма и предприимчивых немецких промышленников все источники сырья и топлива.” In its redivision of the collapsed Ottoman Empire, Germany's ambition with its *Bagdadbahn* focused on its exploitation for raw materials. With control over the *Bagdadbahn* Germany provided for “утверждение немецкого господства, германской гегемонии на великих военно-торговых путях из Украины.” (Павлович, 1920: pg. 3)

In the sub-Surovikin railway from Rostov-on-Don to the banks of the Crimea Russia reroutes the *Bagdadbahn* away from Berlin through Russia, linking its Black Sea ports to its new North-South Transport Corridor. It would only take a week after the battle of Bakhmut-Artemovsk for Russia to found a company dedicated to building a railway on the landbridge. Bakhmut-Artemovsk fell on May 20th, 2023. On May 29th, 2023 the Russian Federation issued an order № 1404-p. In the order Russia consolidated «Донецкая железная дорога», «Луганская железная дорога», «Херсонская железная дорога», «Милитопольская железная дорога», and «Железные дороги Донбасса», drawing together the territories annexed on September 30th, 2022 under a single railway called ФГУП «Железные дороги Новороссии». Remarking that “Russian officials and occupation authorities continue to use infrastructure projects to integrate occupied territories into Russia,” the *Institute for the Study of War* stated that “Railways of Novorossiia will connect logistics in occupied territories, update existing fleets of trains, and create a unified transportation process management system.”³

On March 15th, 2024 Russia reported that the freight route between from Rostov-On-Don to Crimea started operating.⁴ The establishment of a railway empowers Russia to transport eight times more freight than a standard Russian KAMAZ-43255-69 per wagon. a standard Russian KAMAZ-43255-69 carries no more than 7.5 tons. A Russian wagon on rail carries more 60 tons. The aim of the railway suits its ability to handle tonnage. While many have claimed that the aim of the railway is to support logistics for Russia’s war with Ukraine, no study has examined the nature of munition transports on Russian freight rail lines; it is certainly feasible for Russia to exploit the added advantage in tonnage to transfer munitions from the three primary sources of its production inside of Russia. According to a study by *RUSI* intended to provide Ukraine with “thinking around disrupting the defense industrial base,” Russia transports its artillery munitions from Russian factories in Volgograd, Mozdok in North Ossetia, and Krasnodar.⁵ The one in Volgograd is called the Kotluban depot with an area of 2.17 km² with 67 sheds and 28 open air sites for the storage of ammunition; the one in Mozdok in North Ossetia is called the 68th Arsenal of the Main Missile and Artillery

³ “Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment,” *Institute for the Study of War*, May 31st, 2023

⁴ “Russia starts rail freight service through occupied Ukrainian land,” *RailFreight*, March 22nd, 2024.

⁵ “Ore to Ordnance: Disrupting Russia’s Artillery Supply Chains,” *RUSI*, October 10th, 2024, pp. 62, 64

Directorate of the General Staff of the Russian Army with an area of 2.12 km² with 61 sheds and 35 bunker facilities; the one in the Krasnodar region is called the 719th Artillery Ammunition Storage Base with an area of 1 km² with 13 sheds, four bunkers and 12 open air sites.

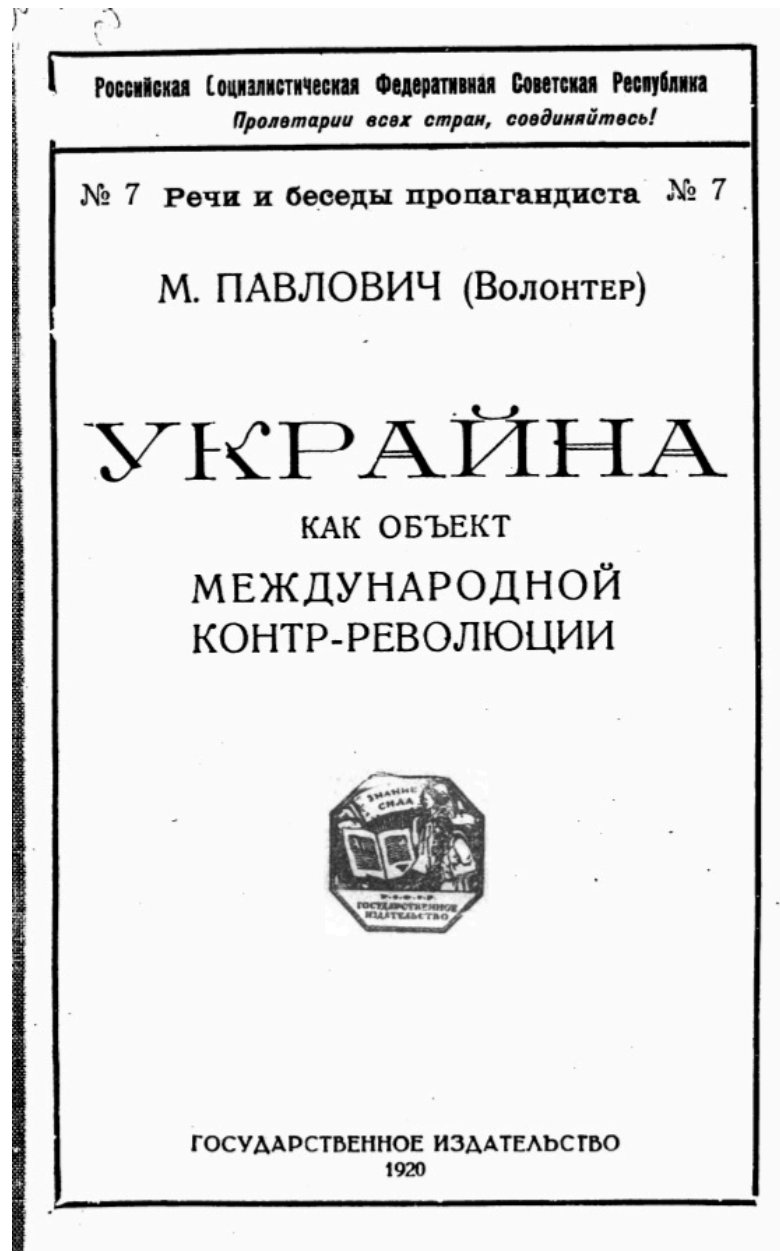
The study does not really consider in tonnage whether loading a line of wagons with 60 tons of munitions a wagon would present Ukraine's armed forces with a target too easy to be feasible. *RUSI's* study, for instance, contains no information indicating that Russia has transported ammunition or munitions from one or more of these three aforementioned sites by rail to any of "the temporary storage locations inside occupied Ukraine" or to any one of the regions in the Russian occupied Donbas, further complicating a fully reductionist claim for the railways's purpose. Even though the study *RUSI* cites discusses sabotage, there is no single reference, citation, or example of Ukrainian armed forces striking a Russian wagon with ammunition or of any specific mention of Russia's transport of munitions via rail from Russia to the annexed territories.⁶ It must be that the railway is for more than merely logistics.

These accounts from pro-Ukrainian British or American open source intelligence agencies stand in contrast with many Russian accounts about the railway's purpose. On the whole the Russian press celebrated the establishment of the consolidated railways in the four newly annexed territories for a couple of reasons almost completely unrelated to the logistics, supply chains, or transport of munitions; about these things little can be discerned in the major Russian dailies. The Russian dailies, for instance, claimed the railway would be a better source of transport for Russia's extraction of raw materials from the Donbas; in line with this reasoning is the fact that Russia has levied taxes on the transport. In addition, Russian dailies welcomed the railway as a unified transport network for its citizens in Novorossiia to travel from one region to the next, to Russia or from Russia to one or more region. In much the same way that the Kerch bridge served to establish a ground line of communication with Russia's mainland, the "Railways of Novorossiia" connects the annexed territories in accordance with Russia's primary means of transport throughout the federation, confirming that the railway is, of course, a symbol of "[Russia's determination to consolidate control over Crimea and southern Ukraine."⁷ Certainly, Russia's ability "to conquer and further utilize

⁶ Maria Engqvist, "A Railhead Too Far: The Strategic Role of Railroads during Russia's Invasion of Ukraine," *FOI Russia and Eurasia Studies Program*, November, 2022, pp. 3-5.

⁷ "Russia's new Crimea Railway Fuels Tensions as Ukraine Targets Rail Officials," *National Security News*, April 19th, 2024.

the Ukrainian railroad infrastructure for its own purposes and according to their logistical prerequisites has been a determining factor for the development of the war,” enabling “Russia’s ability to set up functioning logistic supply lines between the front lines and the rear, especially in the north, but to some extent also in the east and south Ukraine.”⁸



⁸ Maria Engqvist, “A Railhead Too Far: The Strategic Role of Railroads during Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine,” *FOI Russia and Eurasia Studies Program*, November, 2022, pg. 5

But it is much more. Given these complexities and nuances, the Russian railway's sole purpose cannot be reduced exclusively to logistics for Russia's war with Ukraine. The railway's purpose is much broader. Within a perspective for its overall usage for Russia trade routes, the connection of Sevastopol (an end point not yet connected to Russia's "Railways of Novorossiya")⁹ with the Rostov-on-Don connects Crimea with Russia's network of railways beyond the terminal stations in the Russian Federation.

Most of the studies on Russia's "Railways of Novorossiya," however, have missed "the big picture." The "the big picture" is that during Russia's destruction of NATO trained brigades deployed to fight in the 2023 'Spring' counteroffensive against Surovikin's lines, Russia strengthened its more than 122,000 of railroads and railways to Eurasia. In the middle of 2023, and against the backdrop of the Ukraine war,¹⁰ for instance, Russia began to conclude agreement with Iran to create a land route on rails from India through Iran's Chahabar port to Russia.¹¹ Aimed at reducing the carriage cost between India and Russia by 30 percent, Russia's Eurasian *Bagdadbahn* decreases the the transit time from 40 days to less than half in comparison to current routes. Announced on July 4th, 2023, multimode service between Russia and India began nearly a month after the beginning of Ukraine's 2023 'Spring' counteroffensive defaulted on the Surovikin line. Alongside these multimode services, Russia actively began to ship cargo to India on a land route on July 13th, 2022. "The first Russian India-bound cargo train reached the territory of Iran via the North South transit railway with 39 freight containers through the Sarkhas railway station on the border with Turkmenistan."¹² On August 27th, 2023, a Russian freight train heading through the territory of Iran on the North-South Transit Corridor delivered 36 freight containers to Saudi Arabia, a first for the North-South Transit Corridor.¹³

⁹ "Rusia ultima una línea de tren que conectará los territorios ucranios ocupados en el mar de Azov y Crimea," *El País*, June 21st, 2024.

¹⁰ ארצ"ב: שיתוף הפעולה הצבאי של איראן עם פוטיין חסר תקדים ומאיים על שכונתיה, *ידיעות אחרונות*, 15.05.2023

¹¹ מתחרות בתעלת סואץ: רוסיה ואיראן במיזם רכבת חדש, *ידיעות אחרונות*, 17.05.2023

¹² "First Russian train with India-bound cargo arrives in Iran-minister," TASS, July 13th, 2022.

¹³ أول قطر حاويات روسي في طريقة إلى السعودية عبر إيران، ٢٧ اغسطس آب ٢٠٢٣، *CNN*

Although Russia has not yet completed a trip from Crimea through Rostov-on-Don to one or more of the countries along the North South Transit Corridor, the perspective is suggestive. Seen within the perspective of Russia's strengthened railways to Eurasia, Russia's "Railways of Novorossiya" project not only symbolizes "Russia's assertive posture in the region and its determination to consolidate control over Crimea and southern Ukraine," but also Russia's ambitions within the wider scheme of its foreign policy objectives for Eurasia, namely, connecting both its annexed territories as well as the Crimea to the North South Transport Corridor.

The Great Power Struggle over the *Bagdadbahn*

The significance of Russia's "Railways of Novorossiya" is its reroute for the *Bagdadbahn* away from American occupied Berlin, the epicenter of European capitalism, towards Moscow, one, if not the only, reigning great power in Eurasia, thereby establishing Russia's assertion of power over its trade routes from one end of its annex to the extremities outlining its trade partners throughout the Eurasian land mass. Originally conceived to fulfill the ambitions of German Imperialism before the outbreak of World War I, the *Bagdadbahn* sought to fix Germany's Berlin at the center of a massive network of trade for the extraction of raw materials from Europe to one end of Asia Minor to the next.

The sub-Surovikin railway from Rostov-on-Don to the banks of Crimea is Russia's way of rerouting the *Bagdadbahn* away from Berlin through Russia, linking the Black Sea ports to its new North South Transport Corridor.s Whereas the Russians are rerouting the *Bagdadbahn* from eastern Europe's Ukraine, the United States of America is seeking to reroute the *Bagdadbahn* through Israel. Israel's current wars against Gaza's Hamas or Hizbollah's Lebanon are neither religious, about terrorism, or *Lebensraum* for the Jewish state to stretch from "the river to the sea" but are about geopolitics. Israel and the United States have proposed an alternative to the North South Transit Corridor, connecting Europe to India through the port in Haifa, Israel. Designed to travel from Mumbai, Dubai, Riyadh, through Haifa on its way to Paris, the plan immediately met opposition from Saudi Arabia, with whom America's plan for normalization with Israel

collapsed after Israel's war with the Gaza Strip began on October 7th, 2023.¹⁴ Well before the start of the war, Israeli media had already started to forecast a scheme without S.A.E.¹⁵ The route, which links India to Europe without Eurasia through the Middle East, is an alternative to the North South Transit Corridor.¹⁶

The central problem the world's powers face now is how to link Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, how to build a *Bagdadbahn*. The struggle to contain control or dominate the *Bagdadbahn*, its routes such as the North-South Transit Corridor, Israel's Haifa Transit Corridor or China's Belt and Road Initiative, and Indian trade present a unified theory accounting for the three world wars, World War I, World War II, and World War III (which is already begun, beginning with the Ukraine war and the Middle Eastern wars on seven fronts (i.e., “מלחמה של ישראל הרב-זירתית של ישראל”) and the beginning of which ending with the beginning of China acting openly and without restraint against any one of its neighbors, South Korea, Vietnam, Philippines or Taiwan.

¹⁴ Saudi Arabia's position shifted, despite reports that MbS could care less about the Palestinians. According to an article entitled “In the War that Would Not End,” published in *The Atlantic* on September 25, 2024, MbS is quoted as saying: “Seventy percent of my population is younger than me,” the 38-year old ruler explained. “For most of them, they never really knew much about the Palestinian issue. And so they're being introduced to it for the first time through this conflict. It's a huge problem. Do I care personally about the Palestinian issue? I don't, but my people do, so I need to make sure this is meaningful.” MbS's pivot to Eurasia is based less on his country's domestic politics than its own calculus for power in the region. Whereas leading up to Iran's retaliatory strike on Israel on April 14th, 2024, Saudi Arabia yielded to U.S. efforts to a forge “Fragile Middle Eastern Alliance to Repel Iran's Israel Attack” (*WSJ*, April 15th, 2024), months later Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the U.A.E., Bahrain and Kuwait “declared their neutrality to Iran in its conflict with Israel and [would not] allow the U.S. to use their airbases against Iran,” indicating a major shift in policy away from Israel, the U.S., and Saudi normalization towards Eurasian partnership, as according to *Reuters* in an article published on October 3rd, 2024 with the title, “Exclusive: Gulf States sought to reassure Iran of their neutrality in Iran-Israel conflict, sources say.”

¹⁵ גם בלי סעודיה, ישראל תקטוף את פירות הרכבת להודו, כלכליסט, 10.09.2023

¹⁶ “U.S.-Backed Transit Corridor Looks to Connect Europe, Middle East, and Asia,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 9th, 2023

Hypnosis

Control over Ukraine's railways is traditionally associated with an extraction of its raw materials. Integrated into comprehensive plans for the improvement of Ukraine's overall infrastructure, foreign investments in the Donbas' metallurgic mines, factories or coal quarries. Павлович writes: "Иностранные капиталисты вложили громадные суммы не только в **металлургические рудники, заводы, и угольные копи Донбаса**, но и в городские трамваи, электрические станции и железные дорожки и другие предприятия всей Украины." (Павлович, 1920: pg. 12) When the Germans left, Павлович writes, "Петлюра, продавший раньше Украину Вильгельму II, поехал в Одессу к французскому генеральному консулу д'Ансельму заключать новый договор о продаже Украины. По этому договору все железные дороги Украины должны были перейти к Франции в руки французской биржи." (*Ibid.*)

In regards to the struggle for raw materials, Павлович remarks how "империалистическая Франция поставила своей целью отторжение у Германии железо-промышленного бассейна Эльзас-Лотарингии с ее железными рудниками и сталелитейными заводами и всего угольного бассейна Сары." Acquired immediately following the German Empire's defeat of the French on the heels of its suppression of the Paris Commune in 1871, Павлович calls Germany's loss of the Alsace-Lorraine "сущность Версальского мира." (Павлович, 1920: pg. 5) In a sense similar to that of the Versailles Treaty, Russia's acquisition of the Donbas in its entirety is equivalent to Germany's loss of the Alsace-Lorraine.¹⁷ With its rich sources of minerals, its location with respect to France's eastern borders, its history with Helmuth von Moltke's recommendation for an expansion of Germany's western border for strategic military reasons, the ethnography (of German Alemannic speakers), the *Kulturkampf*, much of Germany's lost Alsace-Lorraine mirrors, bears similarity to, or strikes a resemblance to Ukraine's lost Donbas.

At the center of so many different trade routes, the Alsace-Lorraine is but a pale comparison. In terms of its location, Павлович writes: "Украина с ее безграничными, естественным богатствами, с ее замечательным

¹⁷ Even Karl Marx warned his fellow Germans: "If Alsace and Lorraine are taken, then France will later make war on Germany in conjunction with Russia. It is unnecessary to going the unholy consequences." (Fernbach, David (ed.) *Marx: The First International and After*, p. 178, Letter to the Brunswick committee of the Social-Democratic Workers' Party," from *Marx-Engels-Werke*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1974)

географическим положением, расположенная на перепутье из Западной Европы к Черному, Азовскому и Каспийскому морям, к Казану с его минеральными богатствами и громадными залежами нефти, с каждым днем приобретающей все больше значение в хозяйственной жизни народов, далее к Туркестану с его хлопковыми плантациями, к Персии и всей Средней Азии, не могла не сделаться объектом вожделений со стороны всех империалистических держав.” (Павлович, 1920: pg. 6) The trade routes encompass the nexus of the three great European seas, the Caucasus, if not the inlays to Asia Minor, demonstrating how its locality supersedes any comparison with Germany’s lost Alsace-Lorraine.

In terms of raw materials, mines, or factories, Ukraine’s lost Donbas is far exceeds Germany’s lost Alsace-Lorraine. In his account of the awe Ukraine’s almost unimaginable wealth of *Rohstoffversorgung, Rohstoffe, Rohstoffreichtum* stirs, Павлович describes the feeling as nothing short of *hypnosis*. Summarizing the history of attacks on Russia through Ukraine, Павлович mentions how Charles XII of Sweden, the Germans, Anton Denikin (December 16th, 1872 to August 7th, 1947), a commander-in-chief of the armed forces of South Russia during the Russian Civil War of 1917 to 1923, and the “Szlachta Poles” (Павлович’s term for the Poles who fought in the Polish-Ukrainian war from November 1st, 1918 to July 18th, 1919, rather than attack Moscow directly through Smolensk, fell victim to Ukrainian *hypnosis*. Павлович writes: “Такова сила тяготения к Украине или, как выражается тов. Эн-Эн, «украинскую гипнозу», действовавшего на всех противников Советской власти.” Павлович adds that Ukrainian *hypnosis* fogs the brain. (Павлович, 1920: pg. 7)

What makes Ukraine an object of such impassioned invasions? Павлович attributes Ukrainian *hypnosis* not only to the country’s rich sources of *Rohstoffversorgung, Rohstoffe, Rohstoffreichtum* but the fact that “Украина обладает основными элементами производства,—углем и железом, без которых нельзя пустить в ход ни одной фабрики, и основными элементами питания человеческого организма — хлебом, мясом, сахаром, жирами и солью.” On top of its rich stores of raw materials, the combination of Ukraine’s fundamental elements of production (i.e., coal and steel) together with its fundamental elements of human nutrition is responsible for inducing in its invaders a sense of Ukrainian *hypnosis*. Certainly nothing of the sort existed in Germany’s lost Alsace-Lorraine.

Alongside Charles XII of Sweden, the Germans, Anton Denikin, and the “Szlachta Poles,” the Russians, of which Павлович was a member, it appears, have

fallen victim to the Ukrainian *hypnosis* the Soviet historian so venerated in his famous essay. In his essay, Павлович writes of the Donbas: “Донецкий бассейн, занимающий первое место среди других промышленных районов Восточной Европы по богатству углем и железом, является опорным пунктом для нашей отечественной и между-народной контр-революции в борьбе с Светской Россией и Украиной.” (Павлович, 1920: pg. 10) Isn't it ironic? Wheres in the past Russia sought to prevent invaders from tearing the Donbas away from Ukraine, in its war with Ukraine Russia is the one tearing the Donbas away from Ukraine. Apart from the irony, the depth of Russia's Ukrainian *hypnosis* recommends comparing Ukraine's lost Donbas (i.e., Germany's lost Alsace-Lorraine) with the rest of Ukraine, the largest country in Europe.¹⁸ How much has Ukraine lost to Russia's new Alsace-Lorraine?

Coal, Coke, & Steel

In the immediate aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 its entire landmass underwent a profound transformation. Russia alone witnessed the loss of more than 23. 8% of its territory, 48.5% of its people, 41% of its Gross Domestic Product, 39.4% of its industry, and 44.6% of its military potential.¹⁹ In Ukraine alone, the Soviet Union's closest former member responsible for more than 16.3% of the union's economy,²⁰ the collapse of the Soviet Union had a profoundly negative effect on all aspects of its economy, especially in terms of its coal industry. The collapse of the Soviet Union initiated a degeneration of Ukraine's coal industry that continued from 1991 to 2014 when Russia seized the Crimea. “Раніше вугільна залузь була вагомим фактором функціонуванн і розвитку економіки, а зараз є її найбільш проблемною сферою. Зокрема, якщо у 1991 році в Україні працювали 276 шахт, видбуваючи 193 мільйони тонн вугілля,

¹⁸ “Однако, по сравнению с западно-европейскими государствами, Украина по занимаемой ею площади — 45 миллионов десятины — является крупным государством, мало чем уступая Германии, Франции, Испании, имеющих площадь от 46 до 50 миллионов десятин.” (Павлович, 1920: pg. 16)

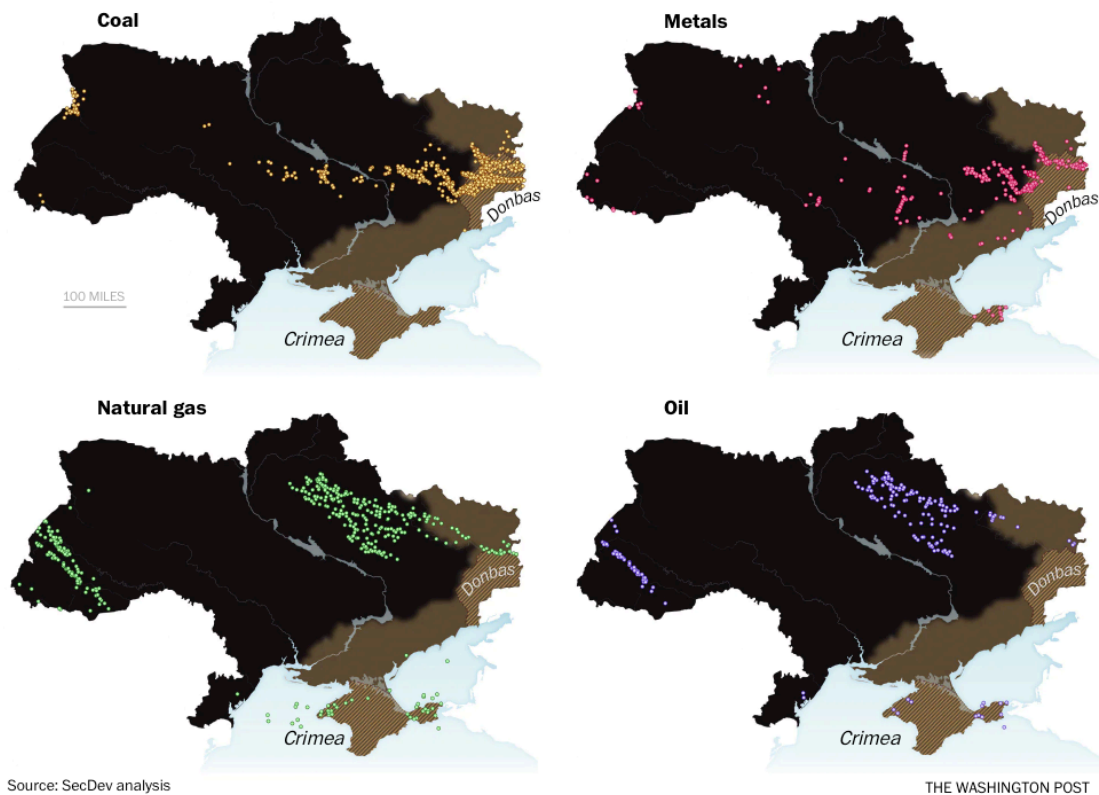
¹⁹ Der russische Präsident Wladimir Putin bezeichnete im Jahr 2005 den Zusammenbruch (collapse) der Sowjetunion als die “größte geopolitische Katastrophe des 20. Jahrhunderts,” und er führte aus: Deren Implosion bedeutete für Moskau den Verlust (the loss of) von 23, 8% des Territoriums, 48, 5% der Bevölkerung, 41% der Wirtschaftsleistung, 39, 4% der Industrie und 44, 6% des militärischen Potenzials. “Analyse: Die Rohstoffe der Ukraine und ihre strategische Bedeutung,” *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, 15.03.2024

²⁰ *Seven Days That Shook The World: The Collapse of Soviet Communism*, CNN, pg. 47.

то у 2014 році — 33 державі шахти — 10,9 мільйона тонн. В 2021 році, видобуток скоротився до 2,9 мільйона тонн.²¹ Reduced to a fraction of its former activity, Ukraine’s extraction of coal after its disintegration from the Soviet Union amounted to no more than 5 percent. The number of active mines dropped by nearly 90%. By 2014, the consequence of Ukraine’s disintegration from the Soviet Union in 1991 rendered its bustling coal industry to a shadow of its former self.

Ukraine’s major resources

■ Russian-controlled areas since Feb. 24 ■ Russia-annexed (Crimea) or separatist-controlled (Donbas) areas since 2014



²¹ Задля гарантування енергетичної безпеки держава має докласти чималих зусиль для реструктуризації вугільної галузі, *Рахункова Палата*, 06.02.2024

The vast majority of these coal mines constitute the largesse of the unimaginably rich basin of the Don, the-called Donbas, or Donetsk basin.²² The Germans describe the situation in the following way: “Deutlich wird der *Schwerpunkt* der Kohle im Donbas.”²³ Assessments of the damage Russia’s invasion caused is measured primarily in coal, if not in terms of other, geopolitically significant, raw materials scattered throughout eastern Ukraine. In at least one study, whose exaggerated statistics appear without citation, “die Folgen der russischen Aggression: Vor 2014 hatte die Ukraine jährlich über 80 Millionen Tonnen abgebaut. Das zerschneidet Moskau die ostukrainische Region und halbierte diese Menge.”²⁴ Prior to the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Russia controlled approximately 7 percent of Ukrainian territory.¹⁹ Within a month of the invasion, Russia controlled nearly 30 percent of Ukrainian territory, including large swaths of eastern Ukraine stretching from the southern Kherson Oblast to the northern Kharkiv Oblast, as well as a sizable chunk of territory reaching from Ukraine’s northern border to outside the capital of Kyiv. “Seit der Invasion von 2022 liegen sogar 80 Prozent der nationalen Kohlevorräte auf besetztem Gebiet.” While the tonnage Ukraine extracted in 2014 may be in doubt, the vast majority of Ukraine’s coal deposits fell into Russian hands following the ignition of the full-scale invasion on February 24th, 2022.

The static worth of these deposits—without extraction—is many more than millions or billions of dollars. Just in terms of coal alone, preliminary estimates project an amount of hard coal deposits in Russian hands at no less than 30 billion tons. The dollar value of these deposits exceeds \$11.9 trillion.²⁵

After the fall of Asowstal in Mariupol on May 20th, 2022, Awdijiwka on February 17th, 2024, and Vuhledar on October 1st, 2024, all of which are important for Ukraine’s steel industry, the reality of Ukraine’s tremendous loss in

²² “The lion’s share of those coal deposits, which for decades have powered Ukraine’s critical steel industry, are concentrated in the east, where Moscow has made the most inroads.” ; “In the Ukraine war, a battle for the nation’s mineral and energy wealth,” *Washington Post*, August 10th, 2022.

²³ “Analyse: Die Rohstoffe der Ukraine und ihre strategische Bedeutung,” *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, 15.03.2024

²⁴ “Ukraine-Krieg: Im Donbass stehen die Bergleute an zwei Fronten,” *Neue Züricher Zeitung*, November 1st, 2023

²⁵ “In the Ukraine war, a battle for the nation’s mineral and energy wealth,” *Washington Post*, August 10th, 2022.

the Donbas finally began to take hold. With Russia less than eight kilometers from Ukraine's Pokrovsk in southern Donetsk in the middle of October, many of the West's primary supporters from within Ukraine's remaining oligarchy, such as Ukraine's Metinvest,²⁶ began to sound the alarm bells for what the city's loss might signify in real numbers. *Foreign Policy*, for instance, published an article detailing how the "city is the source of most of the coal used for the country's steel and iron industry," the backbone of the Ukrainian economy as the second largest sector. Metinvest, which owns operations not only in the Ukraine but also in Italy, Bulgaria, the U.K., and the U.S., is not a wholly owned subsidiary of Ukraine's state owned enterprises²⁷ but a concern through which foreign investors, many of whom have a stake in the outcome of the Ukraine war, control the extraction of Ukraine's raw materials. Without access to the Pokrovsk coal mine, Ukraine's mostly centuries old blast furnaces won't fire. Ukraine, which relied upon access to its own stores of coal before Russian backed separatists declared control over more than 80% of Ukraine's coal deposits in the Donbas, would be forced to import coal, which would cost much more than its own coal. The loss of Pokrovsk and its coke factory for Ukraine's coal meant the Ukraine would be transformed from an exporter to an importer of coal.

Well before the south eastern Donetsk cities fell, Russia began to benefit from its control over the resources in the Donbas. It began to extract coal from the Donbas for sale on the world market right after the full-scale invasion. According to statistics published on Russia's exports of Donbas coal to Turkey in 2023, Russia earned 14.3 million dollars in coal exports. The statistics state that from February, 2023 through the end of the year, Russia exported to Turkey around 160, 400 tonnes from the Donetsk and Luhansk's People's Republics. The statistics indicated that Turkey²⁸ purchased more than 95% of Russia's exported Donbas

²⁶ "Динаміка позитивна. CEO Метінвесту Риженков — про інвестиції у газову генерацію будівництво заводу в Італії ризику втрати Покровська і кризу на світовому металургійному ринку яка насувається вилке інтерв'ю" *Forbes*, September 11th, 2024

²⁷ Even in 1914, Павлович remarked: "Накануне войны в 1914 г. из 3, 600 коксовых печей в каменноугольных копиях Донбаса с производством в 175 миллионов пудов, 3,150 печей с производством в 153 миллиона пудов кокса принадлежали акционерным компаниям с исключительно иностранным капиталом." (Павлович, 1920: pg. 10)

²⁸ "Turkey, a major coal consumer and importer, is bucking the global trend by increasing coal's share in electricity generation. It produced 31.5 million megawatt hours (kWh) of electricity from imported coal in the first half of this year, up by a quarter from the same period of 2022," according to the following article: "Coal from Russian annexed Ukraine sold in NATO member Turkey," *Reuters*, September 19th, 2023

coal. What is significant is the way Russia transported the coal. One portion passed through Rostov-on-Don, another through Novorossiysk, both of which are connected to the Donbas by rail.²⁹ It is unclear how much Russia has exported from Ukraine in 2024 but as early as January, the head of the Luhansk's customs announced the extraction of Luhansk's coal for export to Turkey,³⁰ continuing the trend from last year.

Alongside exports to Turkey, Russia intends to export Donbas coal to more than one of its neighbors on the Eurasian continent. Announcements at the end of September, 2023, note that Russia intends to export Donbas coal to Iran, India, and China.³¹ Although there is no indication as to the actual means of transport for exports to these countries, one can only guess that the most likely mode of transport will be on rail according to the North-South Transit Corridor. According to an article published in Russia, the company announced that most likely routes for export would be Rostov-on-Don or on rail through Azerbaijan and Iran.³² Within half a year the company, Донский Уголь, expects to extract to 3.5 million tonnes; within a year, the company expects to extract 5 million tonnes. With these amounts of extracted coal, the only economically viable model is export by rail.

Given the tonnage, the existing export sales, and the customers Russia's extracted Donbas coal services, Russia's interest in the sub-Surovikin railway is far more than for logistics in the Ukraine war. The sub-Surovikin railway is intended to facilitate the generation of revenues from the sale of Donbas coal along the North-South Transport Corridor. Ukraine, on the other hand, lost more than 11.9 trillion worth of coal deposits; and, in the meantime, began to buy rather than sell coal.

²⁹ “Турция импортирует из России уголь, добытый на временно оккупированных украинских территориях, *Экономическая Правда*, 19.09.2023

³⁰ “Глава Луганской таможни: Уголь из ЛНР идет на экспорт в Турцию,” Южная Службы Новостей, 01.24.2024

³¹ “Россия приготовилась экспортировать уголь из оккупированного Донбасса в Китай, Индию, и Иран,” *The Moscow Times*, 30.09.2024:

³² “Арендатор шахт ЛНР начнет экспорт угля через Мариуполь,” *РБК*, 30.10.2024

Deposits of Minerals

Using a tally from Ukrainian industry, the *Washington Post* reported that Russia has seized 41 coal fields, 27 natural gas sites, 14 propane sites, nine oil fields, six iron ore deposits, as well as several sites for titanium, zirconium, strontium, lithium, uranium, and gold, where titanium is one of the most important of these metals for the defense industry. According to the same report's review of more than 2,209 deposits in Ukraine, Moscow controls 63% of Ukraine's coal, 11% of its oil, 20% of its natural gas, 42% of its metals, and 33% of its rare earths, including key minerals like lithium.

In terms of lithium, whose significance for the global transition from hydrocarbons such as coal to clean burning, fuel efficient, energy saving electric vehicles, the outcome on the battlefield clearly indicates that to the victor go the spoils. According to a map in a German analysis called "Karte 2: Ukrainische Vorkommen an kritischen Rohstoffen," Russia controls three out of nine of the Lithiumvorkommen in Ukraine, two of the most well known are in the Donetsk region. Controlled by Russian separatists as early as 2017,³³ "zwei der bekannten Lithiumvorkommen (Kruta Balla in der Oblast Saporischschja und Schewtschenko in der Oblast Donezk) in von Russland besetzten Gebieten in der Ostukraine."³⁴

These *Lithiumvorkommen* represent a lost opportunity for the U.S-led NATO alliance's partners, whose donations from the margins of their respective defense budgets, funded the country's 'defense.' In the United States, for instance, the country's strategy for supplies of critical minerals isolates lithium as one of its key targets. Pursuant to Executive Order 13817 of December 20, 2017, "A Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals," the Secretary of the Interior on February 16, 2018, presented a draft list of 35 mineral commodities deemed critical under the definition provided in the Executive Order, of which lithium is one of the most coveted.

³³ "У селі Крута Балка через обстріл постраждали цивільні," *BBC News Україна*. 18.05.2017

³⁴ "Analyse: Die Rohstoffe der Ukraine und ihre strategische Bedeutung," *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, 15.03.2024

Breadbasket

Considered to be Europe's breadbasket, "Ukraine supplied 12 percent of global wheat, 16 percent of all corn, 18 percent of all barley, and almost half of the world's supply of sunflower seed and safflower oil—with all agricultural exports totally almost \$28 billion in 2021."³⁵

Prior to the beginning of Russia's full-scale in Ukraine, Ukraine ranked among the world's top five grain exporters; it regularly dispatched more than two-thirds of its crops, the majority of which Ukraine shipped on the Black Sea. The full-scale invasion all but halted shipments from ports such as those in Odesa. While Ukraine managed to hammer away at Russia's Black Sea Fleet, destroying more than 22 ships with naval kamikaze drones³⁶ over the course of the war, Ukraine's naval victories did not completely ameliorate its situation on the Black Sea. "To further reduce the Russian threat," which continued to dominate, "[Ukraine's] ships [had to] hug the coast to stick to the waters of Romania, Bulgaria, and Turkey, all members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization."³⁷ With the closure of all or most of the Black Sea, Ukraine's exports began to dwindle.

One of the consequences of the struggle for the Black Sea after the battle of Bakhmut-Artemovsk became RUS' substitution its own grain for Ukraine's. In at least one of the statistics following the imposition of a blockade after Russia's suspension of the grain deal, Russia increased its share of exports in grain to

³⁵ "Russia's Resource Grab in Ukraine," *Foreign Policy*, April 28th, 2022

³⁶ "Ukraine's naval drones are taking over the Black Sea," *Kyiv Independent*, June 13th, 2024

³⁷ "Naval Victories Reopen Ukraine Export Route," *WSJ*, March 17th, 2024 ; Ukraine's battle to regain control over the Black Sea after Russia's full-scale invasion is the most complicated aspect of the Ukraine war to analyze. In contrast to localized Russian ground or air superiority, the battle over the Black Sea, fraught with an intriguing myriad of variables and factors, is far harder to evaluate than the fall of a village or the destruction of Shahed 131/136 drones by Ukraine's anti-air defense systems, glide bombs, or otherwise. It requires a separate analysis.

Egypt, one of its key trading partners³⁸ in the Maghreb,³⁹ to more than 80% of all of its market share, all but eliminating Ukraine as a competitor. Russia's relationship with Egypt, which compelled As-Sisi to refuse the sale of its Russian weapons to America for Ukraine,⁴⁰ is one of the closest in the Maghreb. Against the backdrop of the grain war and in the shadow of the fall of Bakhmut-Artemovsk, for instance, Egypt became one of the first countries to declare openly the end of trade in the dollar, indicating its step away from the West towards Eurasia.

With Russia able to successfully perform input substitution against one of Ukraine's primary customers for grain, the partially reopened grain corridor as it related to Egypt offered only a diminished significance for Ukraine. Ukraine's own newspaper, *The Kyiv Independent*, for instance, published an article, detailing how "Ukraine's wheat exports in the marketing year 2024-2025 are expected to amount to 13 million metric tons, the lowest figure in the past decade, the U.S. Agriculture Department said in its June report."⁴¹

Oil & Gas

Home to the "second-largest natural gas deposits in Europe after Russia—1.1 trillion cubic meters of proven reserves" with up to 5.4 trillion cubic meters, if probable deposits are included, the loss of Ukraine's strategic gas deposits, the majority of which are in or around Crimea's Black Sea region,⁴² deepens the similarity Ukraine's losses bear to Germany's Alsace-Lorraine.

38 ٢٥.٠٧.٢٠٢٣، الميادين، ٣٠٪، مع مصر قفزت بنحو

39 "Африка резко снизила использование рубля в расчетах за экспорт из России: для оплаты поставок в июле стали чаще использоваться юани и рупии," *РБК*, 20 Сентября, 2023. ; "Россия стала поставлять больше товаров в Африку, чем в обе Америки: Каковы перспективы расширения экспорта на Африканский континент," *РБК*, 19 Апреля, 2024

40 Egypt Resists U.S. Calls to Arm Ukraine, *Wall Street Journal*, August 12-13th, 2023

41 "Ukraine's wheat exports to drop to 10-year low, US Agriculture Department says," *Kyiv Independent*, June 13th, 2024

42 "Deutlich wird der Schwerpunkt der Kohle im Donbas; für Erdgas sind die Krim und das angrenzende Schwarze Meer wichtige Regionen." ; "Analyse: Die Rohstoffe der Ukraine und ihre strategische Bedeutung," *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, 15.03.2024

Based on a report by the *Washington Post* reviewing more than 2,209 deposits in Ukraine, Moscow controls 63% of Ukraine's coal, 11% of its oil, 20% of its natural gas. In an expansion of Russia's control over the Black Sea following Surovikin's maneuver to draw Ukrainians from the south in Kherson to the north in Bakhmut-Artemovsk, Russia managed to assert control over an estimated "80 percent of Ukraine's massive offshore hydrocarbon deposits, including 37 billion cubic meters of natural gas."⁴³

The Donbas : The End of the Ukraine War

The military maps pro-NATO OSINT bloggers, members of the Ukrainian GUR, pseudonyms with security clearances, or freelance military analysts, who are obsessed with the reclamation of Ukrainian territory, charting its losses through Russia's expansion of control over over the Donbas, have proceeded empirically to equate one lost unit of territory to another without paying any attention to the differences inherent in the unit's actual geography or geology.

Russia's assessed control over Ukraine's raw materials—at 80% or higher for certain minerals even well before its full-scale invasion on February 24th, 2022—undermines any claim of victory for Ukraine in a war of attrition, especially with Ukraine's inability to restore maneuver. In nearly 20 to 40 different assessments based on the depletion of Russia's arsenal of Soviet era arsenal,⁴⁴ the product of

⁴³ "Russia's Resource Grab in Ukraine," *Foreign Policy*, April 28th, 2022

⁴⁴ "Vladimir Putin is running Russia's economy dangerously hot," *The Economist*, December 10th, 2023 ; "Russia's vast stocks of Soviet era weaponry are running out," *The Economist*, July 16th, 2024 ; "To Keep Down Losses And Prolong the War, Russia Is Holding Back Its Tanks—And Sending Infantry To Attack Alone," *Forbes*, December 20th, 2023 ; "Killing Russians By The Truckload Around Avdiivka, Ukraine's M-2 Fighting Vehicles Are Showing How Russia Loses—And Ukraine Wins," *Forbes*, December 30th, 2023 ; "Russia Might Be Running Out of Tanks," *Forbes*, January 10th, 2024 ; "Making Attrition Work: A Viable Theory of Victory for Ukraine," *IJSS*, February 9th, 2024 ; "Russia 'struggling with supply of weapons and ammunition' for Ukraine war —Western officials," *BBC*, February 21st, 2024 ; "The Clock Is Ticking: Russia Has A One-Year Reserve Of Weapons," *Forbes*, April 15th, 2024 ; "Military Briefing: Russia's narrowing advantage in Ukraine," *Financial Times*, April 25, 2024 ; "Russia runs out of Soviet-era tanks and artillery," *Ukrainska Pravda*, July 17th, 2024 ; "Looming Soviet Stock Shortage Could Hamper Russia's Offensive: Report," *Newsweek*, July 18th, 2024 ;

“the largest weapons industry in the world,”⁴⁵ in equipment, armor, or tanks, rising recruitment bonuses, or the unprecedented rise in Russia’s defense budget, few, if any at all, ever figure into the equation the power Russia’s control over the Donbas wields for its future. Without mentioning steel, gas, or oil, no more than one tenth of Russia’s control over Ukraine’s coal deposits alone are sufficient to cover its losses from the war. One tenth of Russia’s assessed control over Ukraine’s coal deposits is equivalent to no less than \$1.2 trillion dollars.⁴⁶ These figures confirm what leading military experts, analysts, or commentators have stated without any reference to the real numbers. A Hebrew commentator, for instance, noted long ago how the Russian economy has not suffered as a result of the Ukraine war: המלחמה הרוסית באוקראינה לא פגעה משמעותי בכלכלה הרוסית.”⁴⁷

While many have claimed that in a negotiated settlement for peace Ukrainian territorial concessions would deny Russia strategic victory, the net worth of these territories is so high that one cannot but claim their loss as an undeniable basis for Ukraine’s defeat. Russia’s acquisition of Ukraine’s lost Donbas therefore signifies the end of the Ukraine war but the great power struggle over the Bagdadbahn continues. Whilst Russia’s position on the *Grand Chessboard* improved, while U.S.-led NATO’s position, at least with respect to Ukraine, worsened, hegemony over a *Bagdadbahn* remains as contested as its actual route.

⁴⁵ “*The Soviet Weapons Industry*,” CIA, September 1986 ; It is important to remember that the Russian Federation inherited this industry in its entirety. In resource allocation, weapons development, production, its industrial base, and in its administration, the majority of whose sectors the Russian Federation revived at the turn of the millennia with reviews published in *Военно-Промышленный Курьер*, the Russian Federation preserved, more or less, throughout its transition to a market economy during the 1990s. In some cases, sectors of Russia’s defense industrial base have a nearly 300 year old history (i.e., Воткинский завод).

⁴⁶ “In the Ukraine war, a battle for the nation’s mineral and energy wealth,” *Washington Post*, August 10th, 2022

⁴⁷ 12.31.2023 משקר: הסבירות למלחמה עולמית הולכת, מקור הראשון,