

Throughout the book, Summa demonstrates a healthy contrarian streak. She tries to make a less ‘statist’ and territorialized analysis. Comprehensively, the strength of the book is the depth of its historical excavation and the synchronization of relevant literature on everyday boundaries, which are usually ignored or under-theorized by the literature. It is an

interesting scholarly piece that attempts to explore new approaches and offers a clarifying lens for understanding this critical and multi-faceted concept. Therefore, the book is an important contribution to the study of ongoing debates on everyday borders and boundaries in post-conflict societies and is of interest to academic scholars and policymakers alike.

## Russia’s 2022 War against Ukraine and the Foreign Policy Reaction of the EU:

### Context, Diplomacy, and Law

By Luigi Lonardo

Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, xiii + 87 pages, \$50, ISBN: 9783031186936

Reviewed by Hacı Mehmet Boyraz, SETA

Luigi Lonardo’s, *Russia’s 2022 War Against Ukraine and the Foreign Policy Reaction of the EU: Context, Diplomacy, and Law*, is one of the earliest publications that offers an evaluation of the way the EU has strategically reacted to Russia’s war against Ukraine



The book consists of three main chapters, each of which is written in an article format. In other words, each chapter contains an abstract, keywords, introduction, analysis section and conclusion. In this respect, it is possible to say that the book consists of three compiled articles. As a matter of fact, the last two chapters of the book are the expanded and updated versions of two different articles published by the author in the past.

Looking at the content, it should be firstly highlighted that the book focuses on the previous EU-Ukraine relations, the effects of Russia’s 2022 war against Ukraine on the

EU, and the EU’s reactions to the war. It should be noted right away that the author focuses not on the long-running Russia-Ukraine war, but specifically on Russia’s so-called ‘special military operation,’ which started in February 2022. Moreover, as Lonardo clearly defines, he has two interrelated arguments in this

research. That the initial and weak reactions of the EU were shaped by military dependence on the U.S. and NATO, and high-level energy dependence on Russia is the first argument. That reactions of the EU to the war were not revolutionary in terms of its political and legal structure despite the revolutionary rhetoric and inflated tones of EU institutions (e.g. “Putin has crossed the red line”) is the second argument. Lonardo also criticizes that the EU lacked a strategic vision to overcome these aforementioned constraints until the war.

In the Introduction, Lonardo first provides an evaluation of the war Russia launched against

Ukraine, and then touches on the book's topic, research questions, arguments, and chapters. Later, Lonardo mainly examines why and how the war broke out in the first chapter. According to him, the main reason for Russia's aggressive foreign policy towards Ukraine is mostly based on historical and ideological foundations. He argues that those who advocate that Ukraine was always a historical part of Russia did not welcome Ukraine's close relations with NATO and the EU in the post-Cold War era. For this reason, Russia built its grand strategy on not losing Ukraine as it lost the Eastern European countries to the West. Indeed, by annexing Crimea first, Russia showed that it would no longer remain silent about Ukraine's engagement with the West. Therefore, that the war started in February 2022 was not a surprise for the author. In the remaining half of this chapter, the author summarizes the history of the EU's relationship with Ukraine within the scope of the European Neighborhood Policy. In short, this chapter is a kind of groundwork for the next chapters.

Chapter 2 is the most analytical part of the book. The author firstly focuses on the core principles guiding the EU diplomacy in the war period. According to him, since the beginning of the war the EU and member states have been following a foreign policy option in which they are witnessing the ruthless butchery of Ukraine instead of intervening and risking escalating the conflict with Russia. He cites the increasing evidence of atrocities in the war as the reason for this argument. In this regard, he defends the idea that Ukraine has become a victim of the interests of not only Russia but also some EU member states.

Lonardo shares some comments on the future of EU-Russia relations in the rest of chapter 2. For him, as a part of long-term vision, the EU should avoid humiliating Russia and avoid

Moscow becoming a satellite of China. It is noteworthy that the author here implies that the real threat to the EU, in the long run, is China, not Russia. Related to this, he states that the future holds closer ties between the EU and Russia even going as far as a geopolitical bloc. As a justification for this, he shares the following view: "It seems inevitable that a re-alignment between the EU and Russia will need to happen, as no security order in Europe can be meaningful without Moscow's support or at least full consent" (p. 82). Therefore, he argues that it is necessary to integrate Russia into the European geopolitical block (against China in this respect) and a new order of security in Europe is only possible with the cooperation to be built with Moscow. However, as a reader for me (and probably for many others) it is an extremely idealistic or even utopian approach to expect the EU and Russia to practice strategic cooperation and act in a way together against China. Although the author considers this as a possible scenario to be implemented in the post-Putin era, he is not able to offer an adequate and reasonable explanation. Therefore, it can be said that the author has difficulty in supporting some of his arguments.

Lonardo focuses on three main issues in the last chapter of the book. Firstly, he examines the EU's packages of sanctions on Russia. According to him, the main purpose of the sanctions initiated by the EU is to restrict Russia politically and militarily and to isolate it commercially. The sanctions, which gradually became more severe, also aim to reduce the energy dependence of the EU and member states on Russia. According to him, the EU and its member states have achieved tangible success in this regard so far. Secondly, Lonardo deals with the EU's humanitarian assistance to the Ukrainian refugees. In this regard, he provides a technical analysis on the

Temporary Protection Mechanism launched by the EU in March to help the Ukrainian refugees fleeing the war. Thirdly, Lonardo analyzes the EU's financial assistance for the transfer of weapons to Ukraine. Regarding this issue, he underlines that for the first time in its history, the EU has decided to finance the provision of military equipment designed to deliver lethal force. As a conclusion to this chapter, Lonardo is of the opinion that the EU's response shows political cohesion, but it is not revolutionary in practice. These arguments of the author support the widespread view that the EU is an economic giant, political dwarf, and military worm.

The most interesting aspect of the book is that it was published a short time after the start of the war in February 2022. This is a normal

case considering that the last two chapters of the book, almost half of it, consist of two articles previously published by the author. It is also noteworthy that the author made use of English, French, Italian, and Russian sources for his book. On the other hand, although the European Council granted Ukraine the status of a candidate for accession to the EU in June, the lack of a wide-ranging analysis on Ukraine's EU membership process is the most obvious shortcoming of the book. Despite this shortcoming, the book provides a good contribution to the literature on the EU's reactions to the war. In any case, I recommend this short book as a good starting piece primarily for analysts, post-graduate students, and journalists who would like to understand the past of EU-Ukraine relations and the EU's reactions to the war.

## The Rise of Blockchains: Disrupting Economies and Transforming Societies

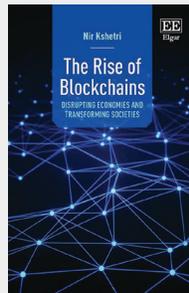
By Nir Kshetri

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Reviewed by Bilal Bağış, Bingöl University

Blockchain is a newly emerging technology that has already drastically changed many aspects of our life and the way businesses and national economies function. It could be used in smart contracts in the shipping industry, in digitalizing the supply chains, payments, and in financing trade amongst others.

Blockchain most basically helps deal with the trust issue and decreases the cost of verification procedures. It increases efficiency in business processes and supply chains, helps with the digitalization processes and smart con-



tracts, and also helps overcome reputational or trust-wise issues. This new mechanism of proving trustworthiness is particularly important for SMEs and individuals that don't yet have a built-up reputation.

Blockchain helps create new networks, organizations, and models; functions as an intermediary instrument or authority of verification and replaces the conventional trust instrument in any formal business relationship. Blockchain could even be an alternative tool or mean of governance,