

The Impact of the 2022 Ukraine Crisis on the Decline of American Hegemony

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Abstract

Although the United States of America was able, after the end of the Second World War until the first decade of the third millennium, to obtain all the necessary conditions for taking hegemony and the leadership of the free world, with the post-Cold War transformations, grounds were provided for the hegemony of America to undergo decline. The emergence of powers such as China, Russia, and the European Union, alongside certain regional crises such as the 2022 Ukraine crisis, are counted among those developments that provided the grounds for the further decline of American hegemony. This research, with documentary study and qualitative method of data and with theoretical content and explanatory (causal) method as well as descriptive–analytical method, and based on the theoretical framework of “long cycles,” while investigating the roots of the 2022 Ukraine crisis, is responsible for answering this question: What effect has the 2022 Ukraine crisis had on the decline of American hegemony? The analysis of data and the results obtained have shown that: the 2022 Ukraine crisis caused the hegemony of America to be challenged in creating balance in the domains under the influence of Russia, and consequently, America’s inability in solving the 2022 Ukraine crisis.

Keywords: Cycle of power, Hegemony, America, 2022 Ukraine war, Rise of Hegemony, Decline of Hegemony

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Introduction

The United States of America must be counted among those countries that after the Second World War, by means of creating, strengthening, and expanding international financial, monetary, commercial, political, and military regimes, was able to elevate its status as a hegemon and superior power and, with its stabilization, cause the establishment of international order. This situation—namely, the effort for stabilizing undisputed sovereignty—even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, continued, and America always pursued the existing global order based on its own interests and on the foundation of expanding liberal democracy and the free capitalist system, and strove for its consolidation. In reality, the official strategy of America since 1991 was directed at creating the condition of American hegemony in the world community. But the post-post-Cold War transformations, and in reality, in the second decade of the third millennium, caused American hegemony to undergo decline. In this regard, China, by means of its remarkable economic growth, and also Russia, in the light of Russian nationalism and the logic of realism and under the necessity of renewing the dreams of Tsarism under the leadership of Vladimir Putin, and finally the necessity of convergence in the European Union and the redefinition of complex mutual

interdependence, provided the grounds for the undisputed power of the United States of America to be moderated. In reality, the emergence of new economic, political, and military powers—China, Russia, the European Union, the Group of 7, and the Group of 20—caused the influence of Washington over the behavior of other powers to decrease in an obvious way, and confronted the hegemony of the United States with a serious challenge. Of course, alongside these external factors of the decline of the undisputed power of the United States of America, internal factors such as the inappropriate behaviors of that country in confronting the actors of the international system and the misuse of its hegemonic position also played a role in the weakening of the hegemony of the United States of America.

Alongside the external and internal factors that led to the decline of American hegemony, some crises also helped that the decline and reduction of American hegemonic power take on more speed. In this regard, the 2022 Ukraine crisis, which took place with the action and military attack of Russia with the goal of “denazification” in Moscow’s backyard, opened the door for America of the Trump era to this crisis for the realization of peace. Donald Trump, with regaining power again in the 2024 elections and entering the White House, had promised that in the first week

of his presence in the White House, and because he considered himself the innovator and architect of ending the endless wars, he would end the Ukraine war. But contrary to expectation, Trump's efforts—at first with cutting off military and financial aid to Ukraine and then by means of friendship, influence, and closeness to Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia—did not lead to a result, and the war took on an attritional status. Especially since the execution of the operation “Spider Web” by Ukraine, in the attack and fire on the hangars of Russian “Tupolev” warplanes, placed the war between Russia and Ukraine at the beginning of a new crisis and a full-scale and intense war. And despite good offices of mediating roles, it seems unlikely to result in sustainable peace. This situation means the inability and failure of the United States of America, which confirms further decline of hegemony and its inability in resolving and controlling regional crises.

With regard to what has been said, the concern and main goal of the present dissertation is that, by using the theoretical model of “cycle of power,” while investigating the roots of the 2022 Ukraine crisis, it evaluates the effect of the 2022 Ukraine crisis on the decline of American hegemony. In fact, the present research is a response to this research need, so that it may wish to fill the research gaps in this field. Considering the subject, the main question of the present research is this: What effect has the 2022 Ukraine crisis had on the

decline of American hegemony? The hypothesis that is measured and tested in answer to the main question is arranged based on independent and dependent variables. In this research, and considering the subject, the 2022 Ukraine crisis is counted as the independent and explanatory variable, and the decline of American hegemony as the dependent and explained variable. Based on the independent and dependent variables, the main hypothesis of the present dissertation can be explained in the following proposition, and that is: the 2022 Ukraine crisis caused the hegemony of America to be challenged in creating balance in the domains under the influence of Russia, and consequently America's inability in solving the 2022 Ukraine crisis.

1) Research Background

Concerning the subject of the article, numerous researches have been carried out. These researches are mostly in Persian and sometimes in English, which with their Persian translation by translators of international issues have been made available to those interested in the subject. Rouh al-Amin Saeedi (2021), in an article titled “Analysis of the Whatness, Whyness, and Howness of the Decline of America from the Perspective of the Theory of Long Cycles,” has reached this conclusion that: considering the four stages of the decline of great powers, the status of the United States of America has entered the fourth stage of power decline, and certainly the

United States of America, influenced by the new rise of powers and international and regional transformations, will lose its hegemonic position in competition with other rivals. Jahangiri and others (2020), in an article titled "Investigating the Manner of the Decline of American Hegemony in the Global Arena with Emphasis on COVID-19," reached the conclusion that the emergence of new rising powers such as China in domains such as economic, political, cultural, and military has weakened the power of America and accelerated and sped up its decline. Talaei Hoor and others (2018), in an article titled "Analysis of the Hegemony of the United States of America Based on the Neo-Gramscian Theory," reached the conclusion that the United States of America, by means of technological power, economic power, and military power, has attained hegemonic stability in the international system. From the perspective of the authors, the free-market economy and liberal democracy served to reinforce the hegemonic stability of the United States, thereby ensuring the consolidation of its power. Dehshiri (2018), in an article titled "The Decline of America's Soft Power: Reasons and Consequences," has reached the conclusion that the interventionist policy of the United States of America provided the grounds for the formation of the bipolar system, which situation led to the speed and acceleration of the decline of American hegemony. Adami and Ghoreyshi (2015), in an article titled "The Decline of America's Soft Power: Indicators and Components," have authored.

The results of this research showed that the expansion of the discourse of "Islamic Awakening" and the reconsideration of the discourse of "Liberal Democracy" have led to the decline of the soft power of the United States of America. Jancis and Bahrami Moghaddam (2015) have authored an article titled "America and the Global Rise of China." The results of this research showed that: the rising leap of China in the Asia-Pacific and East Asia region, and in domains such as economic, political, and security, has led to the decline of the hegemony of the United States of America. In reality, the increasing power of China has caused the creation of balance. In this regard, Zbigniew Brzezinski (2015), in a book titled "Domination or Leadership: Big Issues Ahead," has examined the hegemonic role of the United States of America in domains such as national security, global security, and globalization, and has reached the conclusion that, despite the superiority of America's power in security and global domains, the hegemony and power of America has undergone decline due to the great rise of emerging powers. Jahangir Karami (2006), in an article titled "Hegemony in International Politics and Its Future," while presenting a theoretical concept of hegemony, has addressed the grounds and conditions of the emergence of a hegemon power, and the governing logic and the manner of its compatibility with a superior power in the international system.

Although each of the researches carried out in the field of domestic and foreign researches contains useful and valuable information in its own way, yet the place of research that wishes to have examined the effect of the 2022 Ukraine crisis on the decline of American hegemony is indeed empty, and has been neglected by researchers in the field of international issues. Therefore, the present research, while making use of all these sources, strives, while distancing itself from reductionist approaches and with more comprehensiveness, to put an end to the research gaps in this field. Without doubt, this study will to some extent remove the gap in the existing literature and research background, and will become a reliable and valid basis and source for future researches. Certainly, its results and achievements can be used by study and research centers in the field of challenging issues such as the causes and reasons of the rise and decline of great powers in the international system.

2) Research Method

The type of research based on the objective: it is applied. In terms of conclusion: applied–developmental, from the perspective of the chosen approach: rational, and from the viewpoint of data analysis: qualitative, and in terms of the nature of the research, it is explanatory (causal), descriptive–analytical. The method of collecting data and information is documentary,

which has been conducted through referring to the library and article archives as well as searching in electronic networks and the Internet.

3) Theoretical Foundations of the Research

The theoretical framework of the present article can be explained on the basis of the theoretical model of “long cycles.” The theoretical model of the “power cycle” has been theorized by thinkers such as George Modelski and William Thompson. Therefore, in this project the effort is to employ the analytical and perceptual frameworks of these theorists in explaining as a theoretical and conceptual foundation for interpreting and explaining the data and clarifying the content of the research.

Hegemony should be regarded as the most fundamental concept in the theoretical model of “cycles.” Hegemony was first used by “Antonio Gramsci,” a Marxist Hegelian thinker. According to Gramsci’s view, hegemony means superiority and domination. (Gramsci, 1978, p. 18) Hegemony in the literature of international relations refers to a kind of international order that is pursued by states through their superiority-seeking behaviors and their military capabilities. (Cox, 1981, p. 142)

The main objective in pursuing the superiority-seeking behaviors of states is the creation of order and utilizing it for global management. (Cox, 1996, p. 25) According to the view of Modelski and

Thompson, the most important contribution and role of hegemonic power is the establishment of order and giving stability to it in turbulent and anarchic environments and centers. In reality, the establishment of order by the hegemon is based on the public interest. In fact, the attempt to create order based on public interests provides the ground for the legitimacy of hegemonic power and makes their behaviors and actions in this regard appear legitimate and acceptable. (Seifzadeh, 2002, p. 131)

According to the view of Modelski and Thompson, there are recurring cycles on a large scale in world leadership in which, within a period of 100 years, the position of great powers for leading the world is subjected to change and displacement. The main objective at the heart and foundation of this displacement is nothing but the creation of order in the global system. (Wallerstein, 2009, p. 125) Modelski and Thompson consider the essential condition and requirements for achieving global domination to be the ability and possession of the hegemony of a power in the fields of economy, technological power, technology, and political innovations. (Modelski and Thompson, 1996, p. 38)

According to the theory of long cycles, the rise and decline of powers occur within a four-stage 100-year period. In the first stage, a great power, by means of military power and capability through political support, possesses the ability of hegemonic stability and is placed in the position of world leadership and hegemony.

(Cox, 1983, p. 106) This situation essentially takes shape after the occurrence of a war. The second stage is the stage in which the power and capability of the hegemon actor undergoes decline, and its power is “delegitimized.” Because this great power, due to the rise of another power, no longer has the ability to bear the costs for creating order in the international system. The third stage is the stage in which the hegemon’s power undergoes “reconcentration,” and in reality, the authority of the hegemon power is weakened, and another power takes the place of the hegemon power for assuming roles in the international system, especially in the field of creating order. And in the fourth stage, a general war breaks out among the great powers, and in this conflict, which is based on the rule of the zero-sum game, a new emerging power is placed in the position of world leadership. The central point in the process of the rise and decline of powers is that hegemonic domination for assuming the position of global leadership is essentially peaceful and non-violent. (Mansbach and Rafferty, 2008, p. 8)

Considering the rise and decline of powers in a four-stage 100-year period, the most important subjects according to the theory of long cycles are the following: how an emerging hegemon power, in exchange for the decline of the hegemon power, can overcome the ongoing challenges in turbulent regions and crisis centers in order to create order, and be able to possess the balance of power, the power of initiative,

control, supervision, crisis management, tension reduction, restraint, coordination, accompaniment, persuasion, coalition-building in competition with the previous hegemon according to the “power cycle.” (Evans and Newnham, 2002, p. 338) For example, how an emerging hegemon power can pursue its strategic preferences, and the challenges of the declining power not disrupt the implementation of the decisions of the emerging power, and its hegemonic position not be subjected to instability and shakiness. (Cox, 1996, p. 25)

According to the perspective of Modelski and Thompson, the international system since the sixteenth century until now has witnessed the emergence of four hegemon powers, namely Portugal, the Netherlands, Britain, and the United States of America. According to Modelski and Thompson’s view, the three powers of Portugal, the Netherlands, and Britain, after going through their cycles, underwent decline in power, and among them the power and hegemonic status of the United States of America has not yet, according to the 100-year period, undergone decline, and the decline of a hegemon power begins when its energy capacity for leadership in the global position has diminished and come to an end. (Clark, 2009, p. 209) As can be seen from the predictions of Modelski and Thompson, the United States of America will lose its hegemon status after the end of the 100-year period and its power will undergo decline. Other predictions of Modelski and Thompson are that for the

transfer of leadership status to another power, there is no need for war, and any transfer of the position of leadership to another power will be peaceful, amicable, and away from tension and war, and the role of war for achieving hegemony will diminish. Nevertheless, Modelski and Thompson believe that the decline of power and hegemony should not be understood as the collapse and disintegration of a hegemon power, but rather the decline of a hegemon power merely means the loss of capacity and energy for providing order in the international system. (Modelski and Thompson, 1996, p. 54)

The application of the theory of long cycles in this article is due to the fact that from some indications it is apparent that the energy capacity of the United States of America for leadership in the global position in a 100-year period is coming to an end, and naturally, considering these conditions, another emerging power will acquire the ability and energy of world leadership according to the theory of long cycles. It seems that the power that possesses the ability and capacity of world leadership for providing order is Russia, which, under the shadow of realism and acquiring power by means of nationalism and the revival of Tsarism, is seeking to provide order in crisis centers and environments, especially Ukraine. The reality is that with the beginning of the 2022 Ukraine war, the U.S. could not succeed in the struggle with Russia regarding the retention of pro-Western leaders in Ukraine, preventing the

annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to Ukraine, preventing Russia's attack and the initiation of Russia's special operation with the aim of denazification in Moscow's backyard, financial and logistical assistance to Ukraine in victory over Russia, ending the Russia-Ukraine war in line with Trump's pacifist inclinations, creating rifts in the NATO bloc due to military and financial aid to Ukraine, forming a NATO army under the leadership of England and France contrary to Trump's wishes, preventing Russia from continuing the war against Ukraine, and also persuading Putin to attend the peace summit in Turkey in May 2025. This situation means the inability of the United States to resolve the 2022 Ukraine crisis and shows that America's hegemony in creating balance in the domains under Russia's influence has undergone challenges.

4) Tracing the Roots of the 2022 Ukraine Crisis

The February 2022 Ukraine crisis was the product and outcome of Ukraine and its leader "Volodymyr Zelensky" disregarding Russia's security concerns in peripheral environments and the issue of NATO's eastward expansion. According to the Kremlin officials' view, "Volodymyr Zelensky" was the agent and executor of the West's and NATO bloc's proxy war against Russia and the implementer of the West's intentions in NATO's eastward expansion. For this reason, the war began on

February 14 with the aim of denazification and in the form of a "special military operation" according to the view of Kremlin officials, and the bells of war rang. In reality, the 2022 Ukraine war should be considered as part of the continuation of the war in Donbas (from 2014 until now), which in turn is considered as part of the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. With the beginning of the war, a part of Ukraine's regions and about 20 percent of Ukraine's territory are in Russia's hands, and in eastern Ukraine, namely the two provinces of "Donetsk" and "Luhansk," have come under Russia's occupation, and the war in some regions of Ukraine such as Donbas, Kherson, Kharkiv, Dnipro, and Zaporizhzhia is increasing and expanding. And considering "Vladimir Putin's" inclinations in continuing the war and also the absence of mediating roles for reaching a lasting peace, it does not seem that the flames of war will subside. (Shir Mohammedi, 2023, p. 92)

5) Analysis of the Research Data

The decline of U.S. hegemony in exchange for the surge and leap of Russia's power in the 2020 Ukraine crisis has manifested through instances such as: the inability to maintain pro-Western leaders in Ukraine, the inability to prevent the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to Russia, the inability of the United States to prevent Russia's attack and the beginning of Russia's special operation with the aim

of denazification in Moscow's backyard, the inability to make Ukraine victorious over Russia despite financial and logistical assistance, the inability to end the Russia-Ukraine war in line with Trump's peace-seeking inclinations, the inability to create a split among NATO countries in their military and financial aid to Ukraine, the formation of a NATO army led by the United Kingdom and France against Trump's wishes, the inability to prevent Russia from continuing the war against Ukraine, as well as the inability of the United States to persuade Putin to attend the peace summit in Turkey in May 2025. This situation has emerged and become evident. This situation signifies Russia's ability in power-balancing, initiative power, control, supervision, crisis management, tension reduction, restraint, coordination, alignment, persuasion, and coalition-building in exchange for the inability and decline of U.S. power in these domains in the light of the 2022 Ukraine crisis, which will be analyzed further below.

5-1) The Inability of the United States to Maintain Pro-Western Leaders in Ukraine

Power balancing and crisis management, as part of the subjects of the "long cycles" theory, have found their greatest manifestation in the inability of the United States to maintain pro-Western leaders in Ukraine in the period between 2005 and 2025. Despite the fact that the United States of America tried to stabilize the premiership and the overall position of all

pro-Western leaders such as "Viktor Yushchenko," "Petro Poroshenko," and "Volodymyr Zelensky" in Ukraine, nevertheless, due to Russia's confrontational strategies, America's efforts were not successful, and the prospects present are not to the benefit of pro-Western leaders in Ukraine. Russia considers the presence of pro-Western leaders in Ukraine as a stimulant for NATO's expansion eastward, and this expansion is an issue that Vladimir Putin does not agree with and considers contrary to Russia's national interests. (Adami, 2024, p. 25)

5-2) The Inability to Prevent the Annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to Russia

The annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to Russia signifies the power of balance as well as the power of control and coordination by Vladimir Putin and Kremlin officials regarding a contentious issue such as Ukraine. In fact, Russia's power of control and coordination, that too in the capacity of a hegemonic power, provided the grounds for holding a referendum on March 16, 2014. At present, and by virtue of the document signed for the annexation of Crimea to Russia by Putin on March 18, 2014, Crimea is considered an inseparable part of Russia. (Yari, 2017, p. 478) From a semiotics perspective and based on a set of evidence, it is apparent that part of the roots of Russia's 2022 war against Ukraine lie in the continuation and in the path of the annexation of Crimea to Russian territory through the March 2014

referendum, which was stimulated by nationalism and the surging power of Russia, while America's persistence and pressure, despite employing pro-Western leaders, could not prevent the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to Russia. This meant the decline of U.S. hegemony in the face of Russia's power.

5-3) The Inability of the United States to Prevent Russia's Attack and the Beginning of Russia's Special Operation with the Aim of Denazification in Moscow's Backyard

Russia's military invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 meant the inability of the West, especially Biden-era America, in establishing power balance, control, supervision, crisis management, and tension reduction. Despite the fact that Joe Biden, the President of the United States, along with the leaders of three Western countries, namely Britain, France, and Germany, tried to prevent Russia from attacking Ukraine, and also despite all the views and interpretations being such that the United States would prevent the start of war in Ukraine, in the end Russia attacked Ukraine. This war showed, firstly, that Ukraine's potential accession to NATO, and in general NATO's eastward expansion into Moscow's backyard, threatens Russia's national security. Secondly, this war demonstrated that the surging leap of Russia in the realm of power could make the U.S. hegemony for achieving strategic results in the Ukraine conflict decline. (Nouri, 2023, p. 12)

5-4) The Inability to Make Ukraine Victorious over Russia Despite Financial and Logistical Aid

Despite the fact that the West's and Biden-era America's efforts were aimed at preventing Ukraine from an early defeat against Russia's military invasion by providing financial and logistical aid, nevertheless, these aids did not lead to Ukraine's victory over Russia, and only helped Ukraine not to lose this war. In this regard, the website of the Institute of World Economy has reported that the total aid of the West was worth about 267 billion euros. For example, Germany and Britain allocated less than 1.1 percent annually, and France, Italy, and Spain about 1 percent of their gross domestic product to these aids. In addition to the financial support of these European countries, the amount of financial aid from the United States of America amounted to 131 billion dollars until February 2024. (Website of the Institute of World Economy, 2024, p. 1)

This situation is a reflection and manifestation of the decline and inability of U.S. power in confronting Russia with regard to factors such as coordination, alignment, and coalition-building in long cycles. This situation means that the West's effort to defeat Russia did not lead to results, and it is Russia that holds the upper hand in the Ukraine war.

5-5) The Inability to End the Russia–Ukraine War in Line with Trump’s Peace-Seeking Inclinations

Crisis management and tension reduction are considered two key elements in the long cycles. Therefore, the inability to end the Russia–Ukraine war in line with Trump’s peace-seeking inclinations, with regard to these two key elements, is worthy of evaluation and analysis. Regarding ending the Russia–Ukraine war in line with Trump’s peace-seeking inclinations, the key point is Trump’s tendencies and peace-seeking inclinations, which, since the very beginning of entering the U.S. 2024 election campaign, had abundant reflection and resonance in his speeches and statements during his election campaigns. During the election season, Donald Trump repeatedly and regularly promised that if he entered the White House with victory over Kamala Harris in the 2024 election, he would end the war between Ukraine and Russia within one day.

Of course, he believed that if he had been President of the United States instead of Joe Biden, he would not have allowed such a war of this scale to begin. Because he considered himself the originator and architect of ending the endless wars. He also believed that if he were president, neither would China dare to attempt to seize and invade Taiwan, nor would the war in Gaza between Israel drag on. Trump always said that we always measure our success in ending wars and not entering new wars. We not only do not start wars but

also put an end to ongoing wars in the world. But this vision of Trump was nothing more than a dream, and despite 125 days of his presence, the war in Ukraine has not only not decreased but Ukraine is subjected to Russian army attacks day by day. Ukraine, with the help of the 2-billion-euro aid from the armies of France and Germany, is always retaliating and resisting. (Harsini, 2024, p. 48)

The meaning and concept of the current situation in Ukraine is that Trump’s optimism did not lead to the end of the war in Ukraine, and perhaps the Kremlin officials will not comply with Trump’s demands in ending the war in Ukraine. This situation carries a message other than the decline of America’s power in the face of Russia imposing itself as a new and emerging hegemon in the current structure of the international system in line with the long cycles. The disappointing situation of achieving peace in Ukraine is such that Trump, due to Putin’s non-compliance with peace, has despaired, and Trump has called Putin an adventurous and insane man.

5-6) The Inability to Create a Split among NATO Countries in Military and Financial Aid to Ukraine

Part of the decline of U.S. hegemony has manifested in its inability to create a split in the bloc of NATO countries in their military and financial aid to Ukraine. This inability means the failure of the project of coalition and alignment of the West with

the U.S. with regard to the 2022 Ukraine war. The reality is that, with the tolling of the war bells in Ukraine, many NATO member countries and European countries sought to provide financial, logistical, and equipment support to Ukraine. Lithuania and Poland were among the countries that, alongside France, Britain, and Germany, showed their unconditional support for Ukraine. Germany sent its Leopard tanks as its equipment aid. France and Germany put on their agenda the provision of 1 billion dollars of aid in support of Ukraine. Of course, Biden-era America never reduced its support packages. With Trump's resurgence to power, it was decided that America would cut its financial aid to Ukraine.

Trump tried to reconstruct NATO's defensive order in the absence of Europe's role and separate his path from Europe. Because he had come to believe that Europe is stuck in its old tradition. Trump concluded that Ukraine's resistance against Russia's special operation, which was initiated for denazification, was not necessarily Ukraine's war with Russia but Europe's and NATO's war against Russia. He believed Europe had started this war. In fact, Trump considered Volodymyr Zelensky, the President of Ukraine, as the agent and executor of Europe's proxy war with Russia, standing against Russia with NATO's financial and military costs, while in most cases NATO's budgets and costs were provided by the U.S. Trump concluded why such money, for which the

American people have paid taxes, should be spent on Europe's security. Trump has no inclination toward Europe's security challenge and seeks, by means of his isolationist strategy, to distance himself from the role of "big brother" for Europe and pursue the policy of the "reluctant sheriff" in cooperation with Europe.

Trump concluded that up until now, since most of NATO's costs had been borne by America, they had been spent on Europe's security, and Europe had in fact received a free ride. Therefore, he said, this much spending is enough, and Europe must assume more responsibility in providing security costs, and they should spend five percent of their gross domestic product on defense, which they have not done. In addition, Trump seeks to reduce America's foreign costs and debt. It is said that America annually pays 25 million dollars in interest on its overdue debt for NATO's defensive functions. Despite the fact that Trump, based on the above reasoning, sought to create a split in NATO by withdrawing from NATO, nevertheless, his efforts led to the formation of an independent front in NATO with the role of France and Britain, and in fact, these countries are the financial-logistical supporters of Ukraine in the face of Russia and are not going to reduce their support. (Harsini, 2024, p. 54)

5-7) Formation of the NATO Army under the leadership of England and France contrary to Trump's wishes

The formation of the NATO Army under the leadership of England and France, contrary to Trump's wishes, is also evaluable in line with the project of coalition and alignment of the West with America. Considering the theory of long cycles, the key issue is how a hegemonic power can have the ability and capacity of alignment and coalition.

The current realities after Trump's rise to power indicate this point that, contrary to the wish and inclination of Trump, who tried that England and France would not be able to assume the leadership of this defensive pact in the absence of America from NATO, both France and England did in fact take over the leadership of NATO after America's withdrawal from NATO. In this regard, Germany, due to having the largest economy and population in Europe, may appear as a potential candidate for NATO leadership. Britain, the other nuclear power of Europe, possesses many positive features for the leadership role. In this respect, Keir Starmer, the new government of Britain, may remain in power for the next five years and make this country politically more stable than other countries in Europe. London, as a consistent supporter of Ukraine, is aligned with the frontline countries of Europe. Britain also has long-standing defense relations with the military group consisting of ten Baltic,

Scandinavian, and other Northern European countries. (P. O'Brien, 2024, p. 12)

This situation means the success of Europe in the formation of the NATO Army under the leadership of Germany and Britain. In reality, and under circumstances contrary to Trump's inclinations that Germany and Britain could assume the role of forming the NATO Army in the absence of America's role, it indicates that America's power and capacity in aligning allies, considering the 2022 Ukraine war, has undergone decline.

5-8) Inability to prevent Russia in the continuation of the war against Ukraine

The lack of balancing, as the most crucial issue in the theory of long cycles, has shown its greatest manifestation in America's inability to prevent Russia in the continuation of the war against Ukraine. This situation means the decline of the power of a hegemonic actor. Under such conditions, it is natural that the actor who does not have the capacity of balancing, another emerging hegemonic actor, assumes the role of balancing. The evidence of this claim can be traced in Donald Trump's efforts to prevent Russia in the continuation of the war against Ukraine.

In this regard, and under the condition that Ukraine rejected Washington's proposed plan for ending the war with Russia, Donald Trump, President of the United States, on April 26, 2025, announced that in the continuation of efforts to end the Russia-Ukraine war, "agreement has been reached

on many fundamental issues,” and emphasized that now the time has come for the Russian and Ukrainian officials at the highest levels to meet and finish the matter. Steve Witkoff, the special envoy of the President of the United States, on April 25, 2025, traveled to Moscow and met with Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia. This was considered the fourth meeting of Witkoff with Putin since Trump’s return to the White House. Despite the fact that both Moscow and Washington evaluated the results of this meeting positively, developments are underway that show that tensions between Russia and Ukraine are not only not decreasing, but if the current trend continues, the peace negotiations process can be postponed to an indefinite future. The Ukrainians believe that Russia’s attacks, which are still ongoing, show that the Kremlin is not serious in negotiating to end the war. This position of Zelensky caused Trump to attack him and present Ukraine as responsible for the continuation of the war. (Ghaffari, 2024, p. 1)

5-9) America’s inability regarding persuading Putin to attend the Peace Summit in Turkey in June 2025

The power of initiative of a hegemonic power is a key issue in the theory of long cycles. Under the power of initiative, a hegemonic power can be the originator of new plans for crisis resolution in critical centers. The efforts and endeavors for creating peace by some mediating countries to end the Russia–Ukraine war show that attaining and achieving peace to end the

Russia–Ukraine war is a key issue. The reality is that efforts to end the war, by mediating roles and even by a hegemonic power such as America to reach peace in the war between Russia and Ukraine, have been undertaken, but they have been devoid of result. In a situation where the efforts of a hegemonic power in the peace endeavor are devoid of result, this situation means that the ability and power of a hegemon have undergone decline and have lacked the necessary effectiveness in creating peace. The efforts of Turkey and America’s efforts to persuade Russia for negotiation are two examples of efforts that in the peace between Russia and Ukraine have been devoid of result.

In this regard, and under the condition where it was expected that Turkey could, by initiative, help to peace between Ukraine and Russia, Putin did not attend the Ankara summit and instead sent Mikhail Galuzin (Deputy Foreign Minister), Igor Kostyukov (Head of Military Intelligence), and Alexander Fomin (Deputy Minister of Defense) to Istanbul. Volodymyr Zelensky, President of Ukraine, in reaction to Putin’s absence, considered this decision a sign of the absence of real will for peace on the part of Russia. In his remarks he said: “I will wait to see who will attend these negotiations on behalf of Russia, and then we will decide about Ukraine’s next steps.” These negotiations are being held while tensions between Russia and Ukraine are still continuing, and the international community is closely

following the developments of these talks. Putin's absence in this summit has diminished expectations for attaining peace, and it does not seem that the Kremlin officials, since they consider themselves on the verge of victory, would consent to such summits. (Ghahremanpour, 2024, p. 1)

This situation showed that Trump's plan regarding peace in Ukraine has remained unfulfilled, and his efforts have lacked the necessary initiative, and considering the upcoming processes, it does not seem to be directed toward result. This situation shows the decline of the capacity and hegemony of a power such as America in accomplishing peace initiatives in highly tense centers such as the Russian periphery.

Conclusion

In this article, by studying documents and using the qualitative method of data, and with an applied content and explanatory (causal) as well as descriptive-analytical method, and based on the theoretical framework of "long cycles," alongside the root-cause analysis of the 2022 Ukraine crisis, the impact of the 2022 Ukraine crisis on the decline of American hegemony was examined. Regarding the root-cause analysis of the 2022 Ukraine crisis, emphasis was placed on the point that Ukraine's disregard for Russia's security concerns and the idea of NATO's eastward expansion played a role in the emergence of the Ukraine war. Concerning the

decline of American hegemony in light of the 2022 Ukraine crisis, manifestations and indicators such as: inability to keep pro-Western leaders in Ukraine, inability to prevent the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to Ukraine, America's inability to prevent Russia's attack and the start of Russia's special operation with the goal of denazification in Moscow's backyard, inability to make Ukraine victorious over Russia despite financial and logistical support, inability to end the Russia-Ukraine war in line with Trump's peace-seeking inclinations, inability to split NATO countries in regard to military and financial aid to Ukraine, the formation of a NATO army led by England and France contrary to Trump's wishes, inability to prevent Russia from continuing the war against Ukraine, as well as America's inability regarding persuading Putin to attend the Turkey peace summit, were identified and analyzed in light of the key issues of the long-cycle theory, namely balance of power, initiative power, control, supervision, crisis management, tension reduction, restraint, coordination, alignment, persuasion, and coalition-building.

In the final viewpoint, it is noteworthy that the decline of the power of the United States of America does not mean collapse. This decline was attributed to reasons such as: the emergence of new rivals as well as the extraordinary complexity of the multi-level equations of the world. Also, this decline is the result of the actions and behavioral patterns of decision-makers, in the

sense of agents, as well as its political system as a structure. This means that America has not been able to act successfully in the position of hegemon, whose most important duty is to establish peace and stability in the international system, and on the contrary, with its self-centered and domineering political behaviors, it has caused opposition from some powers to that country's approach in the international system. Pursuing such behaviors has gradually challenged the consent and legitimacy of the established system led

by America, and this matter has progressed to the extent that even some of America's allies have objected to this trend. Especially since the empowerment of Trump has accelerated and hastened this decline. Naturally, in conditions of the absence and lack of American hegemony, some hegemon powers, in light of long cycles, will gain the capacity and power of hegemony. The great leap of Russia in the conditions of reduction of power and decline of America's strength is indicative of this situation.



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