

Europe: A Bitter Parting

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

First, about the good things. For more than two years, working together with a rapidly growing group of associates—scientists, businessmen, journalists, and cultural figures—I have been closely involved in the project “Eastern Turn 2.0, or Siberization of Russia.” Siberians are its main driving force, but its center is in Moscow, partly to avoid the accusations of parochialism and separatism that are often thrown at the Trans Urals development initiatives. But such suspicions are sometimes disingenuous. Some of the elites in our old capitals refuse to admit the obvious: Russia’s more-than-300-year European journey is over. It should have been completed more than a century ago; in this case we

might have avoided the huge losses our country and people suffered in the 20th century. This journey has given us quite a lot in terms of technical development and military affairs. The European injection into the stem of traditional Russian culture produced amazing results: great music, theater, and cinema, and the world's greatest literature. And, of course, we must and will preserve and cherish the legacy of Aristotle, Dante, Raphael, Bach, Vivaldi, Shakespeare, Chopin, Fellini, Schopenhauer, and even Marx, etc.

The first round of Russia's eastward turn was conceived in the late 1990s and especially 2000s, and launched in the early 2010s. It was motivated mainly by economic considerations, such as Russia's competitive advantages in the Asian markets. There were also concerns about the danger of continuing Russia's lopsided alignment with Europe, which was becoming economically stagnant and politically hostile. Most of our elites were still captivated by Westernism and Europhilia, and we were accused not only of Euroscepticism, Asiaticism, and even emulation of the Golden Horde.

This attempt's success was limited by bureaucratic inertia and an unwillingness to sharply turn from the West. Initially, the turn encompassed only the Far East, with the Northern Sea Route added later. Most people living in the Far East were not involved. For many, the turn (rightly) seemed to be a project of Moscow. Most importantly, it did not involve the Siberian regions with the strongest economic, scientific, human, resource, and industrial potential: Eastern and Western Siberia, and the Urals. In economic, political, human, and historical terms, Russian Siberia begins in the Perm region and the Urals.

Yet the first turn's limited results were still positive: the economic development of the Russian Pacific intensified, and trade with Asia increased markedly, which later softened the impact of economic severance from Europe. Over the last year or two, demographic outflow from the region has stopped.

We are working with our colleagues from Siberian and Urals intellectual centers to draft a comprehensive roadmap for the country's second turn to the East, its "Siberization." In many ways, this is a

“return home,”¹ to the origins of Russia’s greatness: its unique cultural openness, vastness, spirit, fortitude, discipline, and collectivism (*sobornost’*).

Without the development of Siberia, Old Russia would likely not have survived on the Central Russian Plain, under constant attack from the south and west, and would not have become a great empire (even before it was formally proclaimed one by Peter the Great). It would not have cultivated the best and strongest features of the Russian national character, the “Siberian brew”:² daring, perseverance, *sobornost’*, cultural and religious openness, and a striving beyond the horizon “to meet the Sun.”

Siberization—shifting the country’s center of gravity to the Urals and Siberia—is not just extremely beneficial, but also unavoidable, as the western, European vector has been blocked for the foreseeable future by Western policy that provoked the war in Ukraine. Now that Europe is sinking into moral and political degradation, we must commence Siberization as soon as possible.

PROBLEMS IN THE EUROPEAN DIRECTION

In order to fully set the new course of the country’s development, “Siberize” it, turn to the East, focus on our own spiritual, human, technological, and economic development, and ensure that we do not get stuck on the unpromising and now harmful European trajectory, we must win the war in the near future, ideally without the use of extreme measures. Defeat Europe, as in 1812-1814 and 1941-1945, but this time politically solve the “European problem” of Russia and the world once and for all. It is obvious, but often denied, that Europe is the concentration of all the main evils of humanity, two world wars, countless genocides, colonialism, racism, and many other detestable “isms,” including recently the liberal totalitarianism that is based on transhumanism, LGBTism, denial of history, and essentially anti-humanism.

¹ We owe this formula to Khabarovsk professor, philosopher, and writer Leonid Blyakher (see Karaganov and Bordachev, 2018).

² Coined by outstanding Tyumen writer Anatoly Omelchuk (see Karaganov and Omelchuk, 2023).

First, about the prospects for our relations with Europe (the EU and NATO), then about what is to be done.

Our relations with Europe are the worst they have been in history. The level of Russophobia and anti-Russian sentiment is unprecedented not only among European elites but also among a growing share of the masses, stupefied by all-encompassing wartime propaganda. Europe has not yet openly declared war, but participates indirectly by arming enthralled and Nazism-indoctrinated Ukrainians to fight against Russia. They are its mercenaries, like many others gathered from around the world, especially the poor countries of Southern and Eastern Europe.

The Americans have achieved some of the goals that they pursued when unleashing this war together with their European servants: to undermine the competitiveness of their rival-allies, who had grown rich under U.S. protection, by breaking their gas ties with Russia. But the United States has realized the danger of nuclear escalation and begun to crawl out of the war with Russia. However, if there was any expectation that they would pull Europe out, too, it did not come to pass. Europe is openly preparing for a large-scale war in five to seven years.

European elites are increasingly unhinged and hostile. This is driven by centuries-old Russophobia and by hope of *revanche* for defeats by Russia: the Battle of Poltava; Napoleon's almost pan-European invasion; the Great Patriotic War, when the vast majority of Europeans marched under Hitler's banner or worked for his army. For too long have we shown short-sighted magnanimity, emphasizing small anti-fascist partisan groups (mostly communists), while turning a blind eye to the much greater number of Europeans who followed Hitler.

European rage also stems from resentment for lost profits. Having sucked Eastern Europe dry and having lost hope of continuing to live at Russia's expense, the Western Europeans (especially Germans) counted on exploiting Ukraine's rich lands, resources, and hardworking people. Those hopes are now vanishing (though several million new migrant workers—refugees—have been cast into Europe's declining economy).

And yet the unprecedented hostility's main reason lies deeper: the multi-spectral failure of the European elites and the impasse of the

European project. Its problems began as early as the 1970s-1980s, but were temporarily obscured by the unexpected, internally triggered collapse of the USSR and socialist camp, which freed up several hundred million cheap workers and hungry consumers. China's markets opened at the same time. But Europe's external injection of economic and moral adrenaline began to wear off in the late 2000s. And now the bill has come due for the greedy European bourgeoisie's admission of millions of migrants, since the 1960s, in order to lower the cost of labor and weaken trade unions. The result is a mounting and so far irresolvable migration crisis.

The European middle class has been shrinking for almost two decades, inequality is growing, and political systems are increasingly ineffective. The blow to higher education from the student revolution of 1968, the dominance of new political correctness in the humanities, and especially the anti-meritocratic consequences of democracy have accelerated the decline in the quality of political elites.

As pleasant as it is (given Europe's hostility) to list the numerous signs of the comprehensive crisis faced by Europe and the European project, I will leave their enumeration at that.

There is nothing to rejoice at. Crumbling within, the European elites, as much as 15 years ago, began creating the image of Russia as a deadly enemy. Then they eagerly sought to strategically defeat it using Ukraine. And now they are openly preparing for war and whipping up militaristic hysteria. The situation is aggravated by European elites' and populations' strategic parasitism, eroding their self-preservation instinct and fear of (even nuclear) war.

Three quarters of a century under U.S. (and Soviet) protection, which stabilized Europe and suppressed Europeans' eternal mutual hostility, have destroyed Europeans' capacity for strategic thought and intellectually crippled their elites. The few Europeans who understand what is happening are mostly silenced by the danger of speaking out. Moreover, many Europeans subconsciously sense that Soviet/Russian elimination of their military superiority—the foundation of their 500-year-long domination—means that they can no longer grow fat through the (neo)colonial exploitation of the rest of the world. This

rent was the most important source of their economic, scientific, and cultural success, and its loss is a key reason for their rabid hatred of Russia. America, by focusing on itself and its surroundings, can prosper, but Europeans cannot. They would need to work hard again, and they are not used to that.

We ourselves facilitated Europe's degradation into malicious aggression by appeasing, pacifying, and hoping that things would work out themselves. Many Russians' Europhilia, which long ago began degenerating, also had negative consequences. I myself fell for it until, more than three decades ago, I began professionally studying European politics and life.

This, of course, does not mean that all Europeans are moral degenerates and Russophobes; there are many decent people there as well. I personally know many, and lament the forced break of relations with them. But reasonable people, committed to traditional European culture and values, are being marginalized and politically neutralized by comprehensive propaganda.

Few European countries dare to pursue a more or less independent policy towards Russia, but they are under pressure. Their number may grow slightly in the future, and we should make use of this. But the prevailing policy of hostility is only intensifying.

Europe has embarked on remilitarization. While there is currently no cause to fear Europe's militaries, they may be much stronger and bolder in five to ten years, in which case we will again be in a risky position. This cannot be allowed to happen.

The U.S. will be happy to help still-wealthy Europe to rearm itself by maintaining tension on the subcontinent and restoring the U.S. military-industrial complex, which has stagnated over the past 35 years. This is beneficial to the U.S., so long as the conflict does not escalate to the nuclear level and threaten to spread to U.S. territory.

The Americans have realized that their military superiority—and thus ability to impose their will and interests by force—is waning, and thus their hegemony is becoming unsustainable, unprofitable, and liable to drag the U.S. into a world war. They have accordingly begun to partially withdraw. This was visible even before Trump's second

term, especially after the failure to quickly destroy Russia through the war in Ukraine (thereby eliminating it as China's main *de facto* ally, and the rising World Majority's strategic core). And after Washington began receiving Russian signals about possible nuclear escalation. The Americans may vacillate, perhaps quite dangerously, but their course is quite clear: reducing direct military involvement, but destabilizing the withdrawn-from regions so that their competitors gain nothing. Again, the Americans have somewhere to which they can retreat: a strong and dynamic economy, which can be modernized through the attraction of financial and industrial capital, with large markets nearby.

European elites have no such opportunity. Besides, they have intellectually castrated themselves.

The EU has become a major tool for suppressing internal dissent. This, rather than confrontation with the USSR, was NATO's main function in the late 1940s. In the mid-1950s, NATO turned from a political alliance (with a defense component) into a military one, which demanded continued confrontation. Now the EU is following in its footsteps (but with a weak military component so far), and thus needs escalation at least as much as NATO does.

For the foreseeable future, Europe's elite will use escalation and war-preparation to justify the continuation of its rule. Once again, as is almost always the case throughout history, Europe is the main threat to peace. The only solution is to defeat Europe and replace its elites. But ideally without extreme measures.

UKRAINE CRISIS

Since I have no complete or reliable information about our military or financial capabilities, or the situation on the front lines, or negotiations, I will not try to advise our brave soldiers and highly professional diplomats, but will confine myself to general political remarks. The Europeans are interested in continuing the war, and the Americans are not interested in this only insofar as the war threatens to 'go nuclear,' spread to U.S. territory, or repeat the Afghan debacle.

We will not be able to ensure our borders' security or a lasting peace (one that excludes the possibility of war restarting) through slow

advances or even a narrow demilitarized zone. Security and peace can be attained only by establishing a demilitarized zone throughout the entire territory of Ukraine, overthrowing the current compradorial-Nazi regime in Kiev, and (most importantly) breaking the European elite's will to continue the confrontation and hope of winning it.

Our army should continue its offensive. A truce, as everyone understands perfectly well, is no salvation, but only a respite for the enemy to regain its strength and further brainwash and militarize its population.

The main adversary is, of course, not Kiev (it is time to admit this) but a united Europe. With wavering U.S. support, it wants to continue this war indefinitely. Behind the smokescreen of rhetoric about ceasefires and peace, the U.S. and Europe are redistributing their roles. The U.S. is playing the good cop, offering the carrot of agreements, while London and company are escalating and dragging things out. When the Ukrainian cannon fodder finally ends, and that is still a distant perspective, the ranks of mercenaries will be replenished with *landsknechts* from the poor countries of Eastern and Southern Europe. They are already being recruited and trained at scale. Our indecisiveness, our unwillingness to strongly respond to attacks on our cities and strategic forces, are unambiguously interpreted as weakness, strengthening the adversary's aggression and sense of impunity. Our caution plays into the hands of an enemy that wishes to drag us into a lengthy war and eventually exhaust us, divide our elites, and undermine popular support for the government.

We are winning tactically, albeit at a considerable cost, but strategically we could start losing. The enemy crosses one red line after another. Mirror responses are a purely defensive tactic, and even they demand that the series of attacks on our cities, strategic assets, and now strategic (i.e., nuclear) forces, be answered with strikes against the strategic forces of Britain or even France. After announcing, of course, that any 'response' will prompt nuclear retaliation. And if, in response to that, even one nuclear warhead flies in our direction, let alone reaches our territory, we will strike their cities. We should also start

striking targets in the countries that are most actively participating in NATO's aggression: Poland, Germany, Romania, and so on. Although it seems that Warsaw is beginning to understand the consequences of continued war. This emerging instinct of self-preservation should be nourished and respected.

A world war—albeit not yet a total thermonuclear one—has already been unleashed. The attack on Iran leaves no doubt. But we are the main target. By hesitating to respond strongly, we appear weak, indulging the enemy and giving him a feeling of impunity. The brutal attack by the U.S. and Israel on Iran removes all political, legal, and moral restrictions on potential preemptive/retaliatory strikes. Moreover, by leaving unpunished this blatant aggression we demonstrate unforgivable weakness and pave the way for global thermonuclear war.

We must correct our strategic goals in this war, which was imposed on us and in which we involved ourselves only belatedly. The complete demilitarization and denazification of the Kiev regime, and the liberation of natively Russian lands, can be achieved only by defeating—hopefully just politically, without using extreme measures—Europe in its present form. And that form is worse than it was in 1941-1945. At that time Britain, the most vicious of our enemies today, was forced to be an ally of the USSR.

Naturally, we should again warn London and Paris that any troops sent to Ukraine will be viewed as direct participants in the conflict, and Russia will be forced to begin striking their assets and bases (at first, with conventional weapons and outside of British/French territory). Berlin must know that if it tries to obtain nuclear weapons and continues the *de facto* war against Russia, there will be no mercy, and Germany will finally answer for its historical guilt before humanity, which it is trying to forget: for two world wars, the Holocaust (the worst of the many genocides committed by Europeans), and the genocide of the Soviet peoples. The magnanimity of the Soviet leadership, which opposed the demolition of Germany, proved counterproductive. We must not allow Germany to once again become a threat to the world and our country.

Again, if anyone had any doubts about the threat with which we are dealing, the June attack on Iran, carried out by the entire West (which used Israel just like it uses Ukraine), should sober us up. Before that, they destroyed Libya, Iraq (which blocked the way to hegemony in the Middle East), and Yugoslavia. The aggression must be stopped before it is too late.

Our military doctrine should be amended to state that war with a demographically and economically more powerful aggressor will necessitate Russia's use of nuclear weapons. We must finally abandon, at least at the expert level, the Gorbachev-Reaganite delusion that "a nuclear war cannot have winners and must not be started." Needless to say, all measures should be taken to prevent a large-scale war. But this delusion contradicts logic and Russia's nuclear weapon doctrine and, moreover, enables the conventional aggression that indeed we now face. Any provocations on the borders with NATO in the Baltic must be met with a disproportionate response. After the attacks on our cities and strategic forces, our policy must be altered.

We must urgently start analyzing the lessons of the Special Military Operation (SMO). In Soviet times, it was assumed that a war in Europe could involve both large armies and tactical nuclear weapons, so the arms race in both areas overstrained our country. Then the new Russia decided that it needed compact mobile general-purpose forces, supported by a reliable ability to use nuclear weapons. Now we have moved on to technologically advanced trench warfare. The courage and perseverance of our soldiers is admirable, but is this how we intend to keep fighting in Europe and possibly elsewhere? We are not making use of nuclear deterrence to avoid wars or conventional arms races (the threat of nuclear retaliation makes such races senseless) (Trenin, Avakyants, and Karaganov, 2024).

At present, we risk exhausting ourselves in an endless war in Europe, whose elites desire precisely that. We must quickly stop the approach of a global thermonuclear war. And for that, we must first of all stop Europe—the main force that is objectively and subjectively pushing it.

We must take a series of steps, as soon as possible, to dramatically increase the credibility of our nuclear deterrence. Having finally

changed our nuclear doctrine, we have convinced the Americans of the reality of escalation—but not yet the Europeans. Moreover, by starting negotiations with the U.S., we have eased the nuclear pressure. Some in Europe are again saying that Russia would never use nuclear weapons. A perception of Russia as weak, and unwilling to take decisive action, is spreading. Our restraint and caution play into the hands of the European forces of aggression and militarism; we are beginning to repeat past mistakes, appeasing the aggressors. We must move on to direct threats of (initially conventional) preemptive strikes if absolutely necessary.

There is a deadly threat to Russia and the world. Under these circumstances, indecision and hopes of agreement are dangerous. We should state that the U.S.'s imposition of 500% tariffs on customers of Russian oil would be treated as an act of war, prompting nuclear escalation and (*inter alia*, military) attacks on overseas U.S. assets, which outnumber Russia's more than one thousand to one.

Now for the most unpleasant but substantively necessary part. After all warnings have been given—nuclear warheads are deployed in the European theater on medium and shorter-range carriers, including airplanes; the strategic forces conduct exercises that practice disarming and decapitating the UK, France, and Germany; etc.—if nothing helps, then we will probably have to move to the next level and begin striking logistics centers and military bases in countries that support the aggression against Russia. We cannot wait long. We should also warn them that any response will trigger nuclear retaliation against these and other targets. Naturally, we must forewarn the U.S. not only about our firm intentions, but also about our desire to avoid intercontinental escalation. If it ever does become necessary, God forbid, to disarm and decapitate the UK and even France, we will have to activate the missile and civil defense systems and warn that if even one warhead reaches our country or Belarus, the attacker will be wiped off the face of the earth. For that purpose, Poseidon systems might be readied in the English Channel. Decapitating strikes should target not only decision-making centers, but also the places where the European elite gathers and lives, so that it has no hope of sitting things out in its bunkers.

I am well aware that the use (even limited) of nuclear weapons is not just dangerous, but (more importantly) is an immense sin. Innocent people, including children, will die en masse. I can only guess as to the excruciating thoughts of our Supreme Commander-in-Chief.

I know that the described scenario makes one's blood curdle, and once again I will draw fire to myself. But this seems the only possible alternative to being drawn into an endless if intermittent war with the loss of tens or hundreds of thousands of our best men—and then sliding all the same towards nuclear Armageddon and/or the country's collapse. We must shake the Europeans from their madness, break their will to continue confrontation, and stop the slide towards the Third World War (towards which the Europeans are dragging the world, having apparently forgotten about their past sins, for which they were never properly punished). We should also give the Americans a good shake. Trump probably wants peace, but on his own terms: keeping most of Ukraine as a beachhead with which to pressure Russia. But even if we take his love of peace at face value, his position is extremely unstable. Nuclear pressure should not be reduced. By doing so during the ceasefire talks, we weakened our position and dragged out the war.

OTHER AREAS OF WORK IN THE EUROPEAN DIRECTION

I still hope to avoid, by tough but relatively peaceful means, a large-scale war in Europe. I am counting on our decisiveness and victory without resorting to nuclear strikes. But what should our policy be under these relatively “peaceful” circumstances?

Enmity will long endure, as it, again, has deep roots. For the near future it will not be worth focusing on the European direction: harsh deterrence and maximal disengagement are what is called for. Naturally, we should not reject the European injection into our culture. Nor should we mimic the adversary by breaking contacts; they should be maintained and even restored in the future, but without illusions. We are finally beginning to perceive ourselves as an original and self-sufficient, Russian, North Eurasian, and therefore Siberian civilization.

But then several difficult questions arise—ideological, geopolitical, and practical—related to our economy, education, ideological self-determination, and personal and national goal-setting. The latter we call the Dream-Idea of Russia, the Code of the Russian Citizen.³

We should recognize at last not only our identity but also the fact that the most important external influences and sources of our civilization came from the South and the East. From the South—including Palestine, Judea, and Greece—we received not only Eastern Christianity—Orthodoxy—but also Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism. From the South and the East, from brilliant Byzantium and the powerful Mongol Empire, we acquired vertical governance, without which we would not have become a colossus or even survived in a vast territory that is unprotected by mountains or seas. We must constantly remind ourselves that Russia's path to becoming a great power lay through constant confrontation with Europe and movement towards Asia. Russian Prince Alexander Nevsky's appeal to the Mongols to help against the Teutons, Yermak's journey beyond "the Rock" to lay the foundation of the Russian Empire, the idea of the "Third Rome," the victory of our people led by Minin and Pozharsky over the Poles, the victory of Peter the Great over the Swedes, the victory of Kutuzov, Barclay, and Alexander I over Napoleon's pan-European army, and the victory of Zhukov, Rokossovsky, Stalin, and the entire Soviet people over Hitler's pan-European army. These are our main historical and spiritual milestones.

In information and educational policy, it is important to reasonably reduce the amount of information, in textbooks and broadcasting hours, describing and analyzing European history and events, while increasing the share of Asia and the World Majority. Eastern studies need a powerful boost. But most importantly, we must return the development of Siberia to the center of Russia's worldview. We also need to start training a new generation of Europe experts. The old generation of dreamers is passing away, and most of the middle-aged generation were, unfortunately, trained with EU and other European

³ There is an urgent need for a national strategy, which must be proposed and even imposed. I call it 'The Dream-Idea of Russia, the Code of the Russians' (see Karaganov, 2025).

grants and is simply unable to understand and assess the state into which the Old World has driven itself.

Finally, we should recognize that much of our intellectual baggage, our socio-economic and even foreign policy theories, are outdated or outright false and subservient to foreign interests. They should not be jettisoned entirely but taken with a grain of salt. (As dean, I insisted that all theories, Western and Russian, be studied critically). We should know and use the European intellectual heritage, but with the understanding that it is not for us.

The most important way of parting with present-day Europe is shifting the center of Russia's spiritual, economic, and political development to the Urals and Siberia—the Siberization of Russia, as described at the beginning of the article. We should attract people from the liberated territories and war-affected regions to move across the Urals. Several major projects are needed. Plans are being fleshed out. It is time to overcome the myth of cold and uncomfortable Siberia. It is not a hard-labor camp. With sound public policy, life there can be comfortable, and global warming is moderating its climate. We need a narrative of Siberia as a promised land of new, unlimited opportunities.

To do this, we need to start building low-rise wooden houses in Siberia's labor-deficient small and medium-sized cities. Life in Siberia should become more comfortable than in the European part of Russia. This is one of the best ways to overcome the country's shortage of children. People are reluctant to have children and raise large families in human anthills. Siberization should become part of Russia's new national dream-idea.

Siberians, who are less influenced by the West, and SMO veterans should be recruited into national governance. The capital's functions should be partly transferred to Siberian cities. Many residents of the old capitals have succumbed to the most corrupt and now harmful influence of Europe and the West in general. We will have to partly rebuild the liberated territories' cities, but under no circumstances should this be done at the expense of core Russia and Siberia (as was the case after the Great Patriotic War).

Our head of state and opinion leaders should constantly speak of the need to end our more than 300-year-long European journey, which has brought us many benefits but also a lot of harm—constant wars, including two world wars, and various “isms.” We have taken everything we needed from Europe, and more. Now we must focus on the development of our own civilization-state and not look to external players, be they in the South, West, or East. It is important to use the confrontation that has been imposed on us for the radical reorientation of foreign and domestic policy, of our internal human and technological development, to promising markets in the South and East. If and when Brussels suddenly decides to “normalize” relations with us, we should not immediately agree. But we should develop relations with individual countries in Southern and Central Europe, for economic reasons and to pull apart the EU, which is undesirable for us in its present form. In the long run, such countries are likely to join the Greater Eurasian Partnership. While reorienting ourselves to domestic markets, to the South and East, we should also preserve the best of Europe’s heritage. But present-day Europe is useless and even harmful.

Most of our neighbors in Eurasia’s western subcontinent are morally and politically declining, again embarking on a path of hostility and war. But history does not end unless we ourselves end it with a global thermonuclear war. After its Greco-Roman flowering, Europe fell into the gloom of the Middle Ages for seven to eight centuries. So, let’s wait. Perhaps it will be reborn, and become a beneficial and desirable partner. With the right policy, we can not only protect our own interests and stop the slide towards the Third World War, but also facilitate the revival of what is best in our neighbors on the subcontinent.

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