

Robert Steuckers

I have always insisted on the fact that these both war stages were strategically linked. It would be silly to believe that the Syrian situation has nothing to do with the stalemate in East Ukraine. Historically both areas are so-called “gateway regions” on the rimlands around the Russian dominated heartland as the US geostrategist Saul B. Cohen could demonstrate in his works. As the globalist geopolitics of the United States aims at preventing any Pan-Eurasian synergies in the Old World (or on the World Island to take over MacKINDER’s vocabulary) or any long term cooperation between Central Europe and Russia, it’s quite natural to let organize by dubious proxies skirmishes or long term wars on territories that could have an important linking function between major regions on the Eurasian continent. The present-day Ukrainian territory East of Crimea linked Europe (represented by the Genoese and Venetian commercial bases) to Asia at the time of Marco Polo, the great Mongol Khans or even later. The Syrian coast was the entrance gate to the long land roads to India and China. The vital necessity to control it, lead to the eight crusades Western Europe waged during our Middle Ages (Spengler explained why the notion of Middle Ages is only valid for Europe).



Geographic realities are stable and permanent. They actually matter and all the idealistic disguises created to wage useless wars or delaying wars (Carl Schmitt) are only ponderous parasitic burdens to blind the naïve.

Geographic realities are stable and permanent. They actually matter and all the idealistic disguises created to wage useless wars or delaying wars (Carl Schmitt) are only ponderous parasitic burdens to blind the naïve. That’s what MacKINDER tried to explain in his too often forgotten book *Democratic Ideals and Realities* (several modified editions between 1919 and 1947). Today these two gateway regions, if they would be pacified, could secure the transit of goods and raw materials by roads, pipelines and railways between East Asia, Iran and Europe (in the case of Syria) and between China, Russia and Germany (in the case of Ukraine). What matters today are what I would call the post-Marxist and “Listist” projects China is coining thanks to its overflow of cash and in the framework of BRICS or Shanghai Group with the consent of Kazakhstan and Russia. I speak of a “Listist” perspective on continental organization as the main theorist of development in world history is indubitably Friedrich List. He helped to develop the railway communication system in 19th century Germany, accelerating the unification of the country and its industrialization. Without List, no one would have ever spoken of a German political or economic power. He also favoured the digging of

canals both in the United States (he was made an American citizen) to link the Great Lakes area to the East coast harbours and in Germany to link all the river basins between the Vistula and the Meuse in the Prussian dominated Northern European plain. Without List's genius, no one would have ever spoken of an early American global agricultural power as the wheat belt couldn't have been properly exploited without a bulk transportation link to the Atlantic coast.

According to List, who thought in multipolar continental terms and favoured soft unification projects under the lead of technological development, the role of the State was to sponsor communication to help developing and creative private industrial and technological forces to thrive (Schumpeter). In this sense, List was a "constructive liberal", a figurehead of a non conservative efficient praxis that could have annihilated the negative aspects of common liberal ideology.

The Chinese pioneers at the end of the moribund Chinese Empire in the late 1890s and at the beginning of the Republican challenge that lead to the nationalist Sun Ya Tsen revolution in 1911 were all mainly inspired by List who had quite a lot of Chinese disciples. After the paralysing troubles of civil war, of civil dissent caused by warlords, by the long Japanese occupation, communist rule and cultural revolution, China abandoned secretly all the Marxist humbug of the Maoist era (not too obviously in order not to stir too much worry among the masses and the party members). They indeed rediscover List and his ulterior followers and programmed plans akin to the ones he once drew for the United States and Germany.

These plans gave economical, industrial and agricultural powers to both countries. Present-day ideological divagations induce confusion and stir conflicts in order not to repeat positive plans to develop communication that were set up and achieved for the benefit of all the people on Earth. Therefore horrible and useless wars are waged in Syria and in the Donbass era and could be extended to the Caucasus (Chechnya, Dagestan, Ossetia), to East Turkey (Kurds against the Turkish government) blocking for long decades the possibility of expanding railways, pipelines and roads.

(Brussels and Forest-Flotzenberg, June 2016).