



HERMAN VAN ROMPUY

THE EU IS MORE THAN  
AN ECONOMIC AND  
POLITICAL COMMUNITY.  
IT IS ABOVE  
ALL A UNION OF VALUES



ЄС – ЦЕ БІЛЬШЕ, НІЖ  
ЕКОНОМІЧНА ТА ПОЛІТИЧНА  
СПІЛЬНОТА. ЦЕ ПЕРЕДУСІМ  
СОЮЗ ЦІННОСТЕЙ

*За традицією навчальний рік у Національному університеті «Києво-Могилянська академія» починається відкритою лекцією Почесного професора Університету, відомого у світі вченого. Починаючи з 1992 року могилянці мали можливість почути:*

*мовознавця **Юрія Шевельова**, географа-кліматолога **Лоуренса Майсека**, філософа **Поля Рікера**, історика **Романа Шпорлюка**, філософа, релігієзнавця **Роланда Піча**, філологів **Івана Фізера**, **Ярослава Розумного**, політолога **Богдана Кравченка**, філософа **Сергія Аверінцева**, поетесу **Ліну Костенко**, літературознавця **Миколу Жулинського**, фахівця з питань стратегії та розвитку бізнесу **Адріана Сливозького**, поета й державного діяча **Дмитра Павличка**, фахівця з оптимізації бізнес-процесів та управління технологіями **Карла Цайнінгера**, фахівця з менеджменту в охороні здоров'я **Віма Гроота**, літературознавця, громадського та політичного діяча **Івана Дзюбу**, відомого польського політолога **Адама Міхніка**, відомого українського письменника, перекладача, історика літератури **Валерія Шевчука**, економіста та громадського діяча **Богдана Гаврилишина**, визначного кримськотатарського та українського політика **Рефата Чубарова**, українського науковця, історика та публіциста **Ярослава Грицака**, італійського славіста та українця **Джованну Броджі-Беркофф**, українського історика, джерелознавця, лауреата Національної премії ім. Т. Шевченка **Сергія Білоконя**, провідного українського науковця-компаративіста **Дмитра Наливайка**, історика, професора Варшавського університету **Яна Маліцького**, відомого українського філософа, академіка НАН України **Мирослава Поповича**, відомого українського астронома та організатора науки **Ярослава Яцківа**, видатного українського вченого в галузі біофізики, академіка НАН України **Олега Кришталя**, відомого німецького вченого, професора Гейдельберзького університету **Петера-Кристіана Мюллера-Граффа**, доктора хімічних наук, академіка НАН України **Миколу Картеля**, відомого українсько-американського філолога **Андрія Даниленка**, голови Європейської ради **Германа ван Ромпея***





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У лекції відомого бельгійського політика, голови Європейської ради (2010–2014), колишнього прем'єр-міністра Бельгії (з грудня 2008 до листопада 2009), професора Лувенського католицького університету, запрошеного професора Коледжу Європи у Брюгге, президента Міжнародного центру європейської освіти (з 2018 р.), Почесного професора НаУКМА Германа ван Ромпея розглянуто питання збереження людських цінностей, протистояння України ворожим намірам зовнішнього агресора – Росії, згуртування прогресивної світової спільноти для економічної, військової та гуманітарної підтримки українського народу.

Лекція розрахована на студентську аудиторію та широке коло читачів.

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Much has changed since I spoke to you online on 13 June. But the honour of becoming an honorary professor at this great university in this period of its history is no less. I remain grateful to you all for that. I am sure the day will come when I can tell you that in person.

Since that June 13, new hope has been born on the ground, on the battlefield, and Ukraine is now a candidate for membership of the European Union. However, the tragedy of the war remains. Many lose their lives. Many lose what they have worked for all their lives. Unfortunately, the war is far from over, but I will attempt to draw some lessons from the six months since that fateful day of 24 February 2022. I will do this from the perspective that I know best, from Western Europe.

The stake of the war is, of course, the right of the Ukrainian people to self-determination within the pre-2014 borders. But it is gradually dawning on us that the stakes are even higher. This war has become a 'clash of values', in fact a 'clash of civilisations'. We

have nothing to do with the way the Russian state is run. There is no freedom, no pluralism, no impartial justice, no dialogue. The civilisation - the set of values on which a society is built - that we have is the opposite. In today's Russia, there are no ethical boundaries. The end justifies all means. Lying, cheating, corrupting, murdering even any opponent, ignoring any contract or treaty, etc. are considered normal techniques. We have known since the war in Chechnya and Syria that the law of war, the humanitarian law is only a scrap of paper. We see that today in your country, so close to us. In fact, we should have been less naive. There were signs in the past that the current regime had gone off the rails.

It does not stop there. Despite the reopening of the transport of cereals and other agricultural products, the risk of famine in many countries has not disappeared. Russia did not hesitate to use food as a weapon of war. The line of the Holodomor was pursued. It was only under international pressure that exports became more possible again. We must not forget the essential: without the war, there is no problem with food today. The truth has its rights. The Zaporizhzhya nuclear site is almost considered a battlefield like any other. Here too, international institutions need to be mobilised to try to avoid the worst. At the beginning of the war, the use of nuclear weapons was not excluded. Human life has no importance, not even for Russian soldiers. The humanism whereby 'man is the measure of all things', which is at the heart of European civilisation, is completely alien to today's Russia. The European countries

have not always been faithful to that ideal in their history either, but we drew lessons from the Second World War. The Union today has different priorities and values than the European nation states did before 1945. Personally, I despise polarisation and black-and-white drawings, but today I am even intellectually obliged to speak in those terms. I hope that the day will come when things change in Russia too and we will have something in common again. I read that President Putin talks about the decadence of the West, but what is more decadent than war? I hear that he speaks of Russia as the guardian of 'conservative' values, but that apparently implies that discrimination among people is allowed and that minorities have no rights. We choose open societies, not closed ones.

This gap automatically implies that Ukraine itself belongs to the 'Union of values' on which we are still working. The Union is not just a market or a currency but a project of peace, democracy, prosperity and well-being for all. It is no coincidence that the clash with Russia in 2013 began around the Association Agreement with the EU rather than over NATO membership. The protesters on Maidan Square in Kyiv were waving the European flag. Russia did not and does not want your country to belong to that community of 450 million people that is the opposite of what it is itself. Together with Ukraine and the other two countries of the Eastern Partnership, we are half a billion people, three times the size of Russia, and economically many times more. Russia has the GDP of the Benelux countries with a population of only 30 million.

Candidate status is the beginning of a road that, especially after the war, will place a great responsibility on Ukraine and its people. It will be a path of transformation of the country and its economy, which already started after the solemn signing of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in 2014. That ceremony in the European Council in the presence of the 28 EU Heads of State or Government is a high point in my political career in the EU and, of course, much more importantly, the start of an irreversible process for your country. There is no way back. Russia has achieved the opposite of what it envisaged in 2013. It is not their last defeat. I hardly hear today those who urged us to be careful not to 'provoke' Russia. If I stand before you today as an honorary professor at this great university, it is because eight years ago we did not give in to those kinds of reservations. We were aware that the Association Agreement had geopolitical significance.

The Union and the West reacted quickly and decisively after 24 February. Many taboos were set aside. A number of past mistakes were quickly rectified. The Putin regime did not expect this. The full extent of the economic and financial sanctions will become even clearer in the coming months and years. Recent Russian studies are clear about that. In response, Russia is cutting off gas supplies to some countries but, in fact, almost to the entire Union. Our dependence on their gas will disappear even faster than planned because Russia has decided so itself! This makes the daily lives of many Europeans difficult, especially this winter. Gas

and electricity prices are a multiple of what they were six months ago and supplies may run out. Governments and the Union are taking numerous measures to protect their citizens, especially the weakest. The shock is affecting people and countries unequally. All this comes at a high social, economic and budgetary cost. The Union itself is not in a military war but in an economic war. Hardly anyone among the responsible political leaders is thinking of easing or dropping our sanctions against Russia. Ukrainians and EU citizens are neither in the same storm nor in the same boat, but in a way they are.

However, Europeans are more resilient than many think. The EU has experienced a kind of permanent crisis over the last 14 years. After the banking crisis of 2008 came the eurozone crisis, terrorism, climate disasters, the huge influx of refugees from the Middle East, the pandemic, high inflation and energy shortages. Each time, we have overcome these problems. Moreover, the EU has emerged stronger from each of these crises. This is also the case now. In any case, dependence on Russian energy will end much sooner than envisaged and expected. I would add that Russia is proving to be a much more unreliable trading partner than the Soviet Union. The advocates of the multilateral order, such as China, should be fully aware of this. Without respect for the principles of international law, multilateralism is meaningless. A treaty, borders and a contract are not a scrap of paper! I repeat that. In fact, for Russia, power always takes precedence over ethics and law. Some call this 'Realpolitik'. It did not

prevent the Soviet Union from disappearing. History is not always on the side of Machiavellianism. That is a consolation and a hope. Meanwhile, that cynicism creates a lot of human misery.

The Union does not want to become equally dependent on China in the future. China is our biggest trading partner in goods, but not at all in goods and services combined. That is why there is now a consensus in the Union that we must become more 'strategically autonomous', more sovereign. In areas that are crucial to Europe's future, we cannot be completely dependent on others, certainly not on a country like China that is today our 'enemy's friend'. That is why the Union wants to be more autonomous when it comes to telecommunications, batteries, rare earths, medicines and medical equipment, etc. That is why we also prevent takeovers of our own strategic companies and infrastructure. Of course, trade with non-equal countries remains necessary, but not in a way that exposes us to blackmail.

The Union itself was built on the idea that countries act on the basis of the social and economic interest of their citizens. Many thought that other global actors in the world acted with the same rationality. We were wrong about that. For some dictatorships, it is not the people who are important, but power. They deceive their own people by making them think back to a so-called glorious past that was hard for ordinary people at the time. It did not make the European Union cynical in the sense that we should also become like them. The war was a wake-up call.

Our world collapsed on 24 February. The energy crisis reminded Western Europeans how fragile our destiny is. The pandemic was also proof of that. In a few days, we can find ourselves in a different world. We who all dream of a normal life where the little things in life are important. The dreams of all normal people around the world are the same, by the way. How can anyone see any meaning in his own life by humiliating, insulting, torturing or killing others. How then can one call those actions and this system 'culturally superior'? It is pathological.

Later you will talk about the time before and after the war. Western Europeans will not do so to the same extent, but our world will not be the same either.

The war has dramatically improved the Union's relationship with the US after the difficult years before 2021 under a different president. The West exists again. NATO welcomes new members. The G7 is politically very relevant again at global level. I was in Japan in July and was pleased to hear from contacts with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister how strongly they support the sanctions and how they too face a Russian threat. It is unfortunate that a war was necessary to bring us closer together but the important thing is that it happened. Of course, there remain different sensitivities between our countries because each has a different past and a different political culture. But, again, today those differences are less important. Only our joint decisions count. Also within the EU there were power shifts, so that today the influence is more spread out. The EU evolved from a bipolar axis

around France and Germany to a more multipolar model, becoming a community of equals. Keeping all 27 countries on the same page remains a constant task. The EU is not a unitary state or a superstate but a club of sovereign and free nations. So the Union is something very specific. Ukraine will find that out when they become full members of our Union. That challenge for the EU to speak with one voice or give the same message is even greater in the difficult times of energy deficit we are experiencing. But we have succeeded in the past, even if it took time. Only the result counts. History does not remember the way to the outcome. The discussions among member states can be followed online. In authoritarian regimes, discussions and tensions are kept secret and those who speak out pay with their lives. I have already mentioned the fundamental difference between democracy and autocracy. Let us not forget that the Soviet Union, a monument of power, suddenly imploded partly because of internal contradictions that were hardly ever visible. What seemed strong was in fact weak. History often repeats itself, though not in the same way.

I would also like to add that the EU is not divided because one country with an economy that represents less than 2% of the European economy creates problems. One must always look at everything with a sense of proportion. In the coming days and weeks, we will also reach a consensus on how to get out of this severe economic and energy crisis.

Some speak of a Sino-Russian axis. But the Western sanctions and the war will make Russia a kind of eco-

conomic colony after it also failed to make Ukraine a political colony.

The battle you are waging on part of your territory has global consequences in the short and long term. As I have already said, the 450 million Europeans also feel this every day in their personal lives. The economic war in which we are engaged cannot be compared with the military war and human suffering. We must and will win both. Some peoples are meek but we are resilient. Some endure what is imposed on them; we want to take our fate into our own hands and keep it that way. However, the motto: 'where there is a will, there is a way' is only true if that will also has the means to carry it through. That is why weapons, money and sanctions are so important today. The EU has done a lot but needs to do more. In any case, many in the Union admire the heroism of the Ukrainian army, people and state.

A major national and international effort will also be needed to rebuild the country after the war. Where it can be done, it should be done now. But building a new Ukraine at the economic, social, institutional and human level is an enormous task. We must not repeat the mistakes of the past and return to «business as usual». One must remember the dead and honour them by working to build a sovereign, democratic and prosperous country. As President Lincoln said at Gettysburg during the American Civil War in November 1863: 'that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom- and that

government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth'. Universities can play a major role in this by educating young people, also by giving them the values needed for a democratic and prosperous country. The future takes place around values, ideas and people. Of course, a country cannot do this alone. After the World War, European countries could count on the help of the United States. Here too, it will be all hands on deck. Of course, the war and winning it is the priority, but we must also prepare for the time of peace. That too happened in my country before the Nazis were defeated. I have no lessons to give you, but 'history is the teacher of life', as Cicero said in Rome over two thousand years ago. The new Ukraine will also need security guarantees just as European countries needed them after 1945.

We live in a dangerous world. Too many countries have nuclear weapons, which Ukraine gave up after 1990. Russia, by the way, threatened to use nuclear weapons. Is Taiwan the next target for nostalgic nationalism? Some say we are back in the Cold War. They are wrong: we are now in a real war. What is striking is that countries that want to remain so-called neutral on the war in Ukraine are also the same ones that were non-aligned in the pre-1990 period. We must therefore make a greater effort to win the hearts and minds of the leaders of these countries, who are all suffering from the complete disruption of the energy and food situation. The strange thing is that these same countries are reluctant to place the responsibility for the current war where it should lie. So what is obvi-

ous to you and me is not to others. In that group of neutrals there are great democracies. In the fight that you and we are waging for democratic and human values, we therefore have less support in the world than many people think. That does not diminish our determination. On the contrary.

Many in Western public opinion are not aware that between 2014 and the 24th of February, 13,000 people were killed in the east of your country. It was a forgotten war. It was not a civil war because Russia was actively and actually directly involved in that conflict. A country at war cannot develop in a normal way. That is why a military successful end to the war is so important. Then your country can work hard at reconstruction and, with EU support, prepare for membership of the Union. It is permissible to dream and to hope. The life of each of us is based on these two virtues. The summer of 2023 must again be a great summer. It is that hope that should carry us through the hard winter of this 'annus horribilis'. We will not forget the dead. The best way to think of them is to build a better, normal future. "I have a dream," said M. L. King. I say it more quietly than then but with just as much conviction. We must be people of hope and together make our dreams come true.

Науково-популярне видання

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