

After the Ukraine Crisis: Towards a Post-hegemonic Multipolar World?

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Singapore

February 25-26, 2015

The Ukraine crisis, with its substantial implications to international politics, have had significant global ramifications that still beg for deeper comprehension and objective interpretation by scholars of international relations. Happening against the backdrop of the US rebalance in Asia-Pacific and the rise of the emerging powers such as China and Russia, the crisis and the way the other major powers respond to it are indicative of important changes in global geopolitics as well as strategic balance, the explanation and comprehension of which require systematic application, and probably revision, of the existing International Relations and Foreign Policy theories. What is the nature of the crisis? Why did the powers involved in the crisis have such inconsistent, if not entirely conflicting, interests? How could the sole superpower, the US, have failed to prevail in the crisis in which it has stake? Why did Moscow decide to act as it sees fit in Ukraine with no regard for the danger of curtailing relations with the West? Does the crisis indicate that no stable and reliable international mechanisms for crisis management, let alone solution, were ever built since the end of the Cold War?

Moreover, the crisis and the responses by various powers indicate that the post-Cold War unipolar world order is changing into multipolar world order. How have the crisis and its aftermath, in the context of Russia's high-profile "turn-to-east" strategy, China's rise with "new assertiveness" in territory disputes, the US rebalance and Japan's normalcy drive, changed the strategic landscape surrounding the major powers in Asia Pacific, namely the US, China, Japan, and India? Given the shift of strategic balance and the alignments of the major powers in the crisis, what are the logic and mechanisms of balancing under the conditions of declining unipolarity? Will, under these conditions, the efforts of balancing/rebalancing among major powers lead to the emergence a new cold war, this time between Russia-China and US-EU-Japan? What dilemmas and challenges have Asia-Pacific powers faced during and after the crisis? How should we capture these events and its implications with the established theoretical framework – Realism, Neo-liberal institutionalism, Constructivism, Geopolitics or other? The Centre on Asia and Globalisation (CAG) brings together leading scholars from China, Russia, the United States, Canada, India and Singapore to share their analyses and expertise on the abovementioned issues.