



## Solidarité pour l'Ukraine – numéro 24 – Intranquillity

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The Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering (iriv) is associated to the international solidarity for Ukraine attacked by Russia on 24th February 2022. After a pandemic that has weakened democratic countries with the disturbing rise of conspiracy theories and hate speech on social networks, we do hope this war in Europe will be an opportunity to reflect on a new solidarity, among European and international allies. This issue is the second one for 2024 and the 24th since the beginning of the war in Ukraine.... Two years ago Russia attacked Ukraine. This war in Europe has provoked an existential crisis within Europeans, a feeling of un-tranquillity that is a disposition of the soul, a permanent feeling of uncertainty and insecurity that can create intense and deep anxiety and fuel a latent then open anger. It can come from

insidious facts when one is constantly questioned, or very concretely when a war is openly declared to you as Ukraine against Russia. In a first point, we will evoke a «forgotten» conflict within the European Union with Northern Ireland (in the United Kingdom) with different interpretations. In the following points, we will talk about the unquiet Russia and a shaken tranquillity in Ukraine with explosive geopolitics at the global level. In early 2024, the European Union could no longer bury its head in the sand with a war on its doorstep. Its enemies have exposed themselves; their message is clear. It can no longer dither. The UE has reacted, but it must not fail. It must also be clear about its own forgotten conflicts, and it shouldn't hesitate to support its true allies.

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\* the logo was designed by Caritas Canada in February 2022

## The Quiet Man

In John Ford's film «The Quiet Man» (1952), John Wayne plays the role of an Irish American boxer who after killing one of his opponents in a match organized in New York no longer wants to fight (1). He decides to “go green”, in every sense of the word, in Ireland, the country of his ancestors. He wants to find a home to start a new life and sets his sights on the flamboyant Maureen O'Hara. He buys a cottage coveted by the brother of his fiancée and quickly attracts his animosity. For revenge, the brother-in-law, Will «Red» Danaher, refuses to pay her dowry to his sister. She turns her husband against her brother to get her due. John Wayne must fight despite his fear of killing again. The love story between two passionate beings has often been emphasized in a highly fictionalized Ireland, still crowned with a reputation of a rebellious land with impulsive and courageous citizens, driven only by the altruistic will to defend the fate of the oppressed. Another reading may insist on the will of the Irish brother-in-law to cheat his sister who has no voice in a traditional patriarchal society. He also cheats a new member of his family, from America, a «stranger» against whom he can easily mount the whole village by instrumentalizing a conflict of loyalty in his favour, a dishonest and unfair manoeuvre. He also knows the drama his brother-in-law experienced in America, the trauma it caused, and his willingness to stop fighting. The «manipulation» is even more pathetic- the Irish brother-in-law plays on all sides.

In 2024, a century after the independence of Ireland (acquired on December 6, 1922), the fate of Northern Ireland (which depends on the United Kingdom) is still unsettled. The Brexit resurfaced the opposition between Republicans and Nationalists (mainly Catholics, willing to join Eire) on the one hand, loyalists, and unionists (mainly Protestants, in favour to remain among the United Kingdom) on the other hand. The Irish group U2 was the standard bearer of the Irish republicans with its hit «Bloody Sunday» (2). It recalls the operation launched on 21 November 1920 by Michael Collins (4), ordering the assassination of British agents including the Cairo gang, eighteen English secret service officers sent to Ireland to infiltrate the republican organizations. The death toll was of 14 Irish victims shot by British soldiers. The Bloody Sunday not only created a wave of emotion across Northern Ireland but paved the way for three decades of civil war (5). The abuses of the IRA (Irish Republican Army) denounced by mothers and sisters of Irish Catholic victims gave a more nuanced version of things. Since the 1990s, French journalist Sorj Chalandon (6) has analysed the shadow story of the IRA - members turned into expedient militias, mafia and villainous excesses (drug traffickers, robber of old people, etc.). Republican nationalists improvised prosecutors, judges, jurors, and executors of sentences.

Unquietness can come from a partisan and dishonest presentation of reality. The character played by John Wayne must have fallen from high on discovering another but more realistic Ireland.

## Perpetual unquiet Russian

Russian politics are characterized by perpetual unquietness. This is an understatement if we remember the definition given by Robert Bréchon (7) who quotes the heteronym closest to the Portuguese writer Fernando Pessoa, Bernardo Soares: *«incapacity for one's fluctuating, volatile consciousness, to tie oneself to reality, to oneself, to the world, to be something or someone»*. A *«non-existence experience»* of *«nullity»*. Contrary to Fernando Pessoa who went from *«the anguish of the inverted cogito («I think, so I am not»)* to a *peaceful resignation* (“things are nothing and even gods pass») (8), Vladimir Putin never resigned himself to the disappearance of the Soviet Union (USSR) in 1991.

The first explanations, often psychological oriented, given for the Russian intervention in February 2022, which took the Western world by surprise, advanced a forward flight initiated by Vladimir Putin since his accession to power in late 1999. The existential anguish he felt at the fall of the Soviet Union turned into anger and a feeling of humiliation when American President Barack Obama and his Foreign Minister Hillary Clinton treated Russia as a «regional power». The resentment and hatred President Putin felt logically turned against the European Union, which for him was the armed arm of American power in Europe. This conspiracy topic has been popular among far-right nationalist parties (financially supported by Russia) in the European Union according to which the CIA was at the manoeuvre to create the European Union during the Cold War to serve the interests of the USA. The most fervent opponents to the war in Ukraine in Europe are found among the pro-Russian countries- Hungary of Victor Orban or Slovakia of Robert Fico in the EU, and in the rest of Europe Serbia and the Serb minority in Kosovo increasingly threatening with war weapons.

Anti-Americanism is also a fertile ground and an excuse used by terrorist movements to attack democracy and democratic countries. These deadly ideologies shamelessly denounce American imperialism, to justify the worst abuses committed directly on American soil - the Twin towers in New York on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2001 attacked by Al Qaeda supported by Osama bin Laden; or in allied countries of the United States such as terrorist attacks against Charlie Hebdo, Hyper Cacher and the Bataclan in France in 2015; or Hamas attacks against Israel in October 2023. This same anti-Americanism, and anti-West dialectic, was the reason invoked by many countries of the Global South for not supporting Ukraine attacked by Russia. The Russian regime, on the other hand, has received the unconditional support of great "democrats" - the Mullah regime in Iran (which persecutes its population especially young people and women), the regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria (who used chemical weapons against his population in 2013), Kim Jong-Un's regime in North Korea (which starves and terrorizes its population), and Xi Jinping's benevolent China neutrality (persecutors of minorities like Uighurs) smiling with Putin at the end of 2023 (9).

Russian unquietness is a source of major turbulence not only in Europe but Worldwide in February 2024, which celebrates the Year of the «Wood Dragon».

## Shaken tranquillity in Ukraine

In an article published in November 2023, Jean-Yves Heurtebise, French philosopher and orientalist, director of the department of French studies at the Fu-Jen Catholic University (Taiwan), writes «*In an effective scenography, Xi Jinping realizes what decades of postcolonial thinkers have called for: to provincialize Europe, to de-westernize the world, to destroy the universal*» (10). He titled his article «*The world is sick of its multipolarity*» explaining that “*Strong geopolitical warming is leading to the thaw of old bipolar glacies: the Taliban return to Afghanistan and repeated coups in Africa, the return of tensions in Kosovo and the war in Europe with the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, return from the Israel-Palestine conflict with an intensity never seen since 1973, renewed aggression against the Armenians, reinforced nuclearization of North Korea, and naval clashes in the South China Sea between China and the Philippines.*” It evokes a «*new humoral disease: multipolar disorder*». It echoes the «bipolar disorder» characterized in 1980 by the American Association of Psychoanalysis as «a mood disorder» which translates into «an alternation of manic and regressive episodes». Jean-Yves Heurtebise writes with pessimism that «*the man of resentment holds, offered to his vindictiveness, the pen of the world*». He could have added that with the help of social networks, it escalates by weaponizing international public opinion with its hints of hate speech and the return of old incendiary moons.

Volodymyr Zelenski may be troubled, and even frankly destabilized, by increasingly uncertain and unpredictable international geopolitics in early 2024. American support was postponed by a House of Representatives dominated by isolationist Republicans and a divided American opinion, increasingly hostile to any external intervention, even to support allied, democratic, threatened countries. The European support for Ukraine openly displayed by the European Commission in November 2023 (accession procedure) should not be lacking but the doubt has settled. In an article published in November 2023, French journalist Sylvie Kauffmann writes «*If the West cannot win the war in Ukraine, then what war can it win?* » (11). She quotes the head of Ukrainian diplomacy Dmytro Kuleba. This question implicitly implies the hypothesis of a Ukrainian defeat considered as possible and even plausible after the failure of the Ukrainian counter-offensive launched in the summer of 2023.

On Friday, October 6, 2023, French journalist Alain Frachon with premonition evoked the disappearance of the post-1945 world: “*The West (.../...) has lost many of its monopolies. It must share wealth, military power, history, the ability to dictate what must be the “norm” in the most diverse fields of government, human rights, the environment, etc.*” (12) The journalist adds that autocrats always need an enemy. The law of the jungle becomes established as the Western World is no longer hegemonic: demography, economy, technology, nuclear weapons... The more powers there are, the more they break free with existing norms. The journalist suggests a disturbing picture of the international scene: «*More wild beasts, less bars*».

## Unquiet being

In «The Book of Intranquillity» (7), Fernando Pessoa wrote in a letter to his modernist poet friend Mario de Sa-Carneiro, «*I write to you today, driven by a sentimental need- a sharp and painful desire to speak to you. As can be easily deduced, I have nothing to tell you.*» The Portuguese writer titled this confusing and destabilizing book «*Autobiography without events*». In a French introduction, Richard Zenith, speaks of a «*multiple book, which covers almost entirely the personal universe of its author*». It describes a «*total disorder*», «*disjointed, prolix, uncontrollable, constantly moving from one plane to another of the inner reality of its author*». He adds that this book is «*the most honest book of our century. Honest, that is to say lucid. This lucidity is the virtue par excellence of great authors, for whom the most personal facts, thanks to the alchemy of truth, become universal.*» Richard Zenith specifies what he means by universal by evoking an author who has multiplied heteronyms (Alvaro de Campos, Alberto Caeiro, Ricardo Reis, Bernardo Soares, the closest to Pessoa), in a work found in a trunk where he piled up all his writings: «*He who was so anxious to be himself, and who wanted to be Portuguese to the highest degree, managed to be the most foreign and universal of writers.*» Fernando Pessoa is desperate, without seeking any remission or salvation, nor self-pity. In the preface of the same book, French critic Robert Bréchon compares the heteronymic experience of Pessoa to that of Henri Michaux by quoting this sentence of the Portuguese author «*I do not change, I travel*».

The war in Ukraine, by its surprise effect and its brutality, caused an existential shock to the European Union. It questioned its present but especially its future. The EU discovered that its struggle, which it believed to be universal and shared, for the values of democracy, solidarity, and humanity that the EU had defended since its beginning, was questioned. The rest of the world, especially the Global South (13), doubted its sincerity. It was attacked on what was more personal, intimate, and original, its identity. European integration has surely been chaotic with repeated questioning of the United Kingdom with Margareth Thatcher (1979-1990) that led another Prime Minister from the same political party, David Cameron, to suggest a referendum that led to the major chaos that constituted Brexit (in 2016). The European Union has surely made errors of judgment, thinking that authoritarian regimes would end up hearing reason as in Hungary (which was oily in Slovakia). It has also shown cowardice by accepting compromises with Putin's Russia (cheap gas) or Erdogan's Turkey (which receives migrants from Syria for cash), in both cases Germany among other countries was convinced by the economic and financial impact. The EU has not either should be clear with "forgotten" conflicts like Northern Ireland or Cyprus....

The future is scary because it is uncertain, but the European Union is not alone. It has shown since its support for Ukraine in 2022 and for other allied countries similarly attacked, that it would defend its values with them, and that it did not intend to be destabilized by enemies, internal and external, who do not wish for peace but for its questioning or even its disappearance. An insecure but lucid Europe to prepare a common future in 2024 with European elections in June (14).

- (1) John Ford « Quiet man », USA, 1952, 7 nominations and 2 Oscars : best director and best photography (Hollywood, 1952 )
- (2) U2, «Sunday Bloody Sunday », 1983, Island records ltd
- (3) Organized by the Government of Ireland Act 1920, Irish independence became effective on 3 May 1921. On 6 December 1922, Ireland separated from the United Kingdom by the creation of the Free State of Ireland; the following day, Northern Ireland (mostly Protestant) left and remained within the United Kingdom
- (4) Minister of Finances of Eire and leader of the Irish Republican Brotherhood
- (5) James Bluemel « Il était une fois en Irlande du Nord », documentary in 3 parts, Germany, broadcasted on Arte , November 2023 - <https://www.arte.tv/fr/videos/112480-001-A/il-etait-une-fois-en-irlande-du-nord-1-3/>
- (6) Sorj CHALANDON, « Les «punitions» de l'IRA contestées de l'intérieur », Libération, 20 janvier 1996 - [https://www.liberation.fr/planete/1996/01/20/les-punitions-de-l-ira-contestees-de-l-interieurmalgre-la-treuve-les-chatiments-contre-les-delinquant\\_159671/](https://www.liberation.fr/planete/1996/01/20/les-punitions-de-l-ira-contestees-de-l-interieurmalgre-la-treuve-les-chatiments-contre-les-delinquant_159671/)
- (7) Fernando Pessoa « Le livre de l'intranquillité” édition intégrale, traduction française, présenté par Robert Bréchon et Eduardo Lourenço, avec une introduction de Richard Zenith, Paris : Christian Bourgeois, , 1999.
- (8) Fernando Pessoa, « Le voyage inaccompli” in “F. Pessoa “Le livre de l'intranquillité”, op cit.
- (9) Frédéric Lemaître “Poutine et Xi Jinping affichent leur roximité à Pékin », Le Monde, 19 octobre 2023
- (10) Jean-Yves Heurtebise “Le monde est malade de sa multipolarité « Le monde idées, 19/20 novembre 2023
- (11) Sylvie Kaufmann « Ukraine : le spectre de la tempête parfaite », Le Monde 16 novembre 2023
- (12) Alain Frachon « Le monde post-1945 s'efface », Le Monde 6 octobre 2023
- (13) Catch-all notion with very diverse and heterogeneous countries, brandished by Vladimir Putin against the West inducing unequal relations (which would be inherited from a colonial past)
- (14) A European Union with 27 + 2 (Ukraine and Moldova with an accession procedure started) + 2 (Georgia and Kosovo, official status of applications)

*Newsletter written in November 2023 and updated in January 2024*

## Useful contacts

We mean to share the following contacts

- 1- National Union of Journalists of Ukraine- [HTTPS://NUJU.ORG.UA/](https://nuju.org.ua/)
- 2- Ukrainian Parish of Saint Volodymyr –Paris – [paroisse.st.volodymyr@gmail.com](mailto:paroisse.st.volodymyr@gmail.com)
- 3- Catholic Mission of the Polish Church in France also suggests the following link:<https://mission-catholique-polonaise.pl/polska-we-francji/pere-brzys-la-mcp-lance-une-initiative-nationale-pour-aider-lukraine/>

A list of associations & ONG - **Source** : <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/actualites/A15542>

**Support Ukraine** -- <https://www.supportukraine.co/>

**Croix-Rouge Française** - **Croix-Rouge française** Redcross - <https://www.croix-rouge.fr/Nos-actions/Action-internationale/Rechercher-un-programme/LA-CROIX-ROUGE-FRANCAISE-EN-UKRAINE>

**Médecins sans frontières** - emergency funds in countries bordering Ukraine and seeking to bring in medical equipment and personnel. - <https://soutenir.msf.fr/faire-un-don/~mon-don>

**Secours populaire** – a call for support .- <https://don.secourspopulaire.fr/ukraine/~mon-don>

**Protection civile** - un appel aux dons pour financer d'autres besoins (défibrillateurs, respirateurs, groupes électrogènes, etc.) : <https://don.protection-civile.org/soutenir>

**Fondation de France** - lance un [appel à la générosité](#) pour soutenir les centaines de milliers de personnes affectées par le conflit en Pologne et en Roumanie - <https://dons.fondationdefrance.org/solidarite-avec-les-ukrainiens/~mon-don?>

**Agence des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés** - situation d'urgence de niveau 3 pour la crise en Ukraine, le plus élevé.: [https://donner.unhcr.org/fr/fr-fr/urgence-ukraine?\\_cv=1](https://donner.unhcr.org/fr/fr-fr/urgence-ukraine?_cv=1)

**Unicef** - un besoin urgent de financement pour répondre aux besoins essentiels des enfants Pour faire un [don sur le site Unicef.fr](#) - [https://don.unicef.fr/b/mon-don?cid=322&\\_cv=1](https://don.unicef.fr/b/mon-don?cid=322&_cv=1)

**ONG Care International** - un [formulaire en ligne de dons d'urgence à l'Ukraine](#) pour apporter une aide d'urgence aux populations et aux réfugiés - <https://soutenir.carefrance.org/>

**L'ONG française ACTED** organise des convois humanitaires pour l'Ukraine

**association Solidarités International** –pour envoyer des convois de vivres et biens de première nécessité, distribuer de l'eau et des repas aux réfugiés - [https://dons.solidarites.org/b/mon-don?cid=880&\\_cv=1](https://dons.solidarites.org/b/mon-don?cid=880&_cv=1)

**Plan International**, pour apporter aide matérielle et psychosociale aux jeunes ukrainiens et à leur famille, et [sollicite des dons](https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don) pour ce faire.- <https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don>

**L'Aide médicale et caritative France-Ukraine** - envoi de convois d'aide humanitaire, des soins aux blessés, des échanges de savoir-faire médical, une aide psychologique et organise des colonies de vacances pour les enfants orphelins - HelloAsso - <https://www.helloasso.com/associations/aide%20medicale%20caritative%20france%20ukraine/collectes/aider-ukraine-amurgence-help-ukraine/don>

**Le Comité d'aide médicale Ukraine** - réfugiés en transit dans l'ouest du pays, et collecte fonds, médicaments et équipements pour l'hébergement et les soins via ses partenaires français, l'association SAFE et l'organisation FONDEMOS. - <http://www.cam-z.org/en/news/121/>

**JeVeuxAider.gouv.fr** est la plateforme publique du bénévolat, - une page dédiée Mobilisons-nous pour l'Ukraine .- <https://www.jeveuxaider.gouv.fr/engagement/benevolat-ukraine/>

**Les Banques alimentaires** - une aide d'urgence à apporter aux frontières de l'Ukraine, dans les pays frontaliers accueillant des réfugiés - <https://www.banquealimentaire.org/urgence-ukraine>

**La Protection Civile et l'Association des maires de France** ont établi une [liste](#) (lits de camps, sacs de couchage, lingettes, conserves, pansements hémostatiques, solutions antiseptiques ...).

**L'Association des maires de France** a dressé les [lieux de collecte](#) à travers toute la France. Les Maires de France appellent à la [solidarité avec l'Ukraine](#) . De nombreuses villes de France organisent des collectes de produits de première nécessité - <https://www.amf.asso.fr/documents-les-maires-france-appellent-la-solidarite-avec-lukraine/41122>

**La plateforme officielle** « [Je m'engage pour l'Ukraine](#) » lancée le 8 mars 2022 par le gouvernement pour accompagner les Français souhaitant héberger chez eux des Ukrainiens réfugiés et accueillis en France.- <https://parrainage.refugies.info/>

Les associations, fondations, entreprises et collectivités territoriales peuvent utiliser ce [formulaire en ligne](#) pour renseigner leur capacité d'hébergement.- <https://www.demarches-simplifiees.fr/commencer/hebergement-personne-morale-ukraine>

**Bibliothèque sans frontière (BSF)** - elle mobilise et déploie, partout en Europe, des solutions d'urgence pour l'accueil et l'intégration des populations réfugiées. - <https://www.bibliosansfrontieres.org/2022/10/14/bsf-lance-bonjour-france-une-application-innovante-dapprentissage-du-francais-pour-les-refugies-ukrainiens/>