



Ελληνική Εταιρεία Γεωγραφικών Μελετών  
«Ο Στράβων»

## WINDING DOWN THE PERSIAN WAR

STRAVON s acute feeling was from even before the actual opening of hostilities against Iran, that this was to be an excruciatingly adverse military engagement, as history had demonstrated time and again and harsh geographic realities command.

It is a pity that the Israeli - American onslaught occurred. The consequences are fateful; the intra Atlantic rift widens; The overall clout of what we call The West would be tarnished. The famous grand strategy of USA vis a vis China fiddles, no ground is being taken back. The theorem that after the succeeded ventures on Venezuela and Panama Kanal, President Trump is about to engineer energy suffocation of China by forcing theocratic Iran to capitulation, remains just a theorem. Concurrently, Europe risks to be paralyzed before China does, as it has severed since before 2022 energy cooperation with Russia, down the road dependent on expensive American hydrocarbons. This war does not bring China to its knees. Instead, demonstrates how Beijing behaves with extreme caution and maturity, as it does not try to gain advantage vis a vis Taipei, now that in the short term American military capabilities have moved from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean. The fact that Trump s policies with regard to Russia were guided by a sound geopolitical logic, though disputable by the Europeans, does not imply that siege of Iran is likewise foresighted. STRAVON keeps holding that truce in the Gulf Area must be maintained, Iran to relinquish their non peaceful nuclear aspirations, to transport enriched uranium stocks elsewhere, possibly to Russia, to bring under control their ballistic missiles arsenal and as a counter move, the sanctions against Teheran to be gradually, by sequential intensive phases, lifted. Last but not least, security guarantees to top a peace deal which to be a peace deal and not a truce, are necessary for both security of Iran and freedom of navigation in the Hormuz Straits.

As for China, any effort to sideline the Middle Kingdom will be costly and futile. Yet, the ascent of China far from being unstoppable, is liable to be circumscribed. But even this is an ungratifying undertaking before the unprecedented internal divisions of the Atlantic world are healed and war in the Gulf and the Straits of Hormuz is brought to a close.

### Israel

By the attack on Iran it achieved a new substantial tactical victory. Facilities and depots in Iran have been drastically trimmed. Yet, no strategic victory is won, as it was to be expected. Operations in Lebanon have not expanded the space of Israeli security. To the contrary, they provide ground to an unnerved Turkey, at the expense of Saudi Arabia, to pose again as the stout defender of the Moslem faithful.

Complications from the ongoing war will put in abeyance the project of the Economic Corridor from India to Europe, by crossing the Arabian Peninsula, nor facilitate the task of those who are toiling to see Saudi Arabia joining the Abraham Accords in the post bellum environment.

Egypt, herself not immune to serious domestic upheavals and maritime disruptions, is a linchpin for stability and security between Mediterranean and the Red Sea, in the isthmus between Africa and Asia. There cannot be viable Western policies in the Near and the Middle East without Egypt being engaged and on the board. Needless to say, this is also a canon for Greece.

### **Europe**

Orban is gone, Peter Mayar comes in but it will take several months till Budapest and Brussels look eye to eye. The change of guard in Hungary, in spite or perhaps because of strong support from the White House, affects the climate in the EU top echelons, in individual member states such as Slovakia, Poland, Romania, but also outside the Union, while the electoral results, are of importance to Ukraine, Russia, and last but not least to Serbia.

Orban left but part of his legacy will remain. The heritage of Sandor Petoefi, the Habsburgs, Admiral Horthy and Imre Nagy will stay alive with him or without him. Magyars are a traumatized nation, and this is not going to change overnight.

Elections in Bulgaria produced at last a viable outcome. The die was cast and the popular former President of the Republic Rumen Radev has panegyrically prevailed in the parliamentary elections last Sunday, breaking the vicious cycle of political morass in the country. He is a pragmatist. As a Bulgarian patriot, he harbors no anti russian sentiments. Greece will seize the new dynamics in Sofia to further cultivate bilateral partnership, respecting rules of sovereign equality and non interference in domestic affairs. STRAVON wishes him well in his new daunting task as Prime Minister.

***STRAVON of Amaseia,  
Athens, April 23, 2023***