

The Interrupted Constitution: Russia, Federalism, and the Moral Foundation of Peace

Introductory Preface

Songs as Ethical Guides

Two of my favorite artists, who I hold in great respect, have each contributed song lyrics that intertwine, showing me how I can create this article.

Melanie Safka. *Peace Will Come (According To Plan)* Publishers: Bienstock Publishing Company (ASCAP)/Quartet Music (ASCAP) From the album LEFTOVER WINE (1970)

For sometime when we have reached the end
With the velvet hill in the small of her
back And our hands are clutching the sand
Will our blood become a part of the river?
All of the rivers are givers to the ocean
According to plan, according to man

There's a chance peace will come
In your life, please buy one

Fred (till Melanie) is a song written by Mikael Wiehe, member of the Swedish prog band Hoola Bandoola Band, who recorded the track on the album *Garanterat individuell* released 1971.

Is it really peace we want at any cost?
With peace comes friendship, forged with strong
bonds. And these ties bind evil to good and false to true.

Melanie: Transactional peace binds Russia to the outside world without touching the internal cause of aggression. It is the structures created by Yeltsin in 1993, the vertical power.

Mikael: Transformational peace through resuming the interrupted constitutional work that breaks these structures and creates true relationships based on acknowledged truths.

What question I raise in this article is only part of it: Can a real and just peace be created between Ukraine and Russia if we do not address the structures that have created today's Russia and resume the democracy work interrupted in 1993?

The Paradox: What Was Interrupted — And What Was Already Flawed

The standard narrative of Russia's interrupted constitution is straightforward: democratic federalists worked from 1990 to 1993, Yeltsin destroyed their work, and Putin inherited the wreckage. This narrative is true but incomplete. It treats the interrupted constitution as a pure artifact — a democratic jewel smashed by an authoritarian hammer. The reality is more uncomfortable, and therefore more useful.

Timothy Snyder's analysis provides the critical lens: He argues that the Russian Federation's formal constitutional federalism is largely a *façade* that conceals a centrally directed imperial project, with power effectively concentrated in Moscow and used to justify territorial expansion and the projection of a civilizational narrative framing Russia as the defender of a distinct "Russian" civilization against Western liberalism. The constitutional provisions on regional autonomy are routinely ignored in practice, enabling the Kremlin to pursue an aggressive, empire-building agenda while presenting it as a lawful and culturally essential mission.

This insight transforms how we read 1993. The super-presidential constitution was not merely a political victory for Yeltsin — it created the *structural precondition* for civilizational rhetoric to flourish. Once presidential decrees could override constitutional guarantees, once the Duma's oversight was neutered, once regional governors became appointees rather than elected representatives — the architecture for empire was complete. The civilizational language was decoration, not cause.

Now consider Rumyantsev's position in 1994. In November, one year after his constitutional commission had been crushed by tanks, he stood at Harvard and argued that a new Russian constitution should create "*the framework and legal mechanisms for reintegration of this civilizational space.*" He invoked Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" paradigm (published in *Foreign Affairs*, 1993) and defined an "*Eastern-Christian civilization*" encompassing Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, northern Kazakhstan, Armenia, and Georgia — nations bound by "*a vast common culture and mentality.*"

The timing is crucial. Why did Rumyantsev, the architect of pluralistic federalism, turn to Huntington's civilizational categories exactly when Yeltsin's new constitution was being implemented?

A Contemporary Parallel: In 2024, the U.S. State Department issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity titled "*Developing Civilizational Bonds, Democratic Resilience, and Rule of Law in Europe,*" targeting Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova to strengthen democratic resilience, rule of law, and natural-rights values through culturally-rooted programs. This program explicitly frames engagement through "*civilizational*" categories — Western heritage and political philosophy — positioning certain nations within a shared civilizational sphere while distinguishing them from other civilizational blocks. The language mirrors Rumyantsev's 1994 formulation, though the civilizational center is Washington rather than Moscow. This contemporary example shows how civilizational rhetoric functions as geopolitical categorization: defining which nations belong to a normative sphere and which stand outside it. Huntington's paradigm operates on both sides — as opportunity for inclusion and trap for exclusion.

Three interpretations emerge for Rumyantsev's 1994 shift:

Interpretation A: Strategic Adaptation to Defeat

Rumyantsev's constitutional commission was politically destroyed. His drafts were abandoned, his faction marginalized, his vision replaced by Yeltsin's presidential model. In 1994, he may have been seeking intellectual salvage operations — positioning himself within the emerging ideological landscape. Huntington's framework offered something attractive: it treated Russia not as a defeated

democracy but as a distinctive civilization with legitimate claims to leadership. By adopting this language, Rumyantsev could maintain relevance while his federalist project lay in ruins.

This reading suggests the 1994 Harvard lecture was not a continuation of his 1990–1993 work, but an **adaptation to its failure**. The federalism remained internal; the civilizational claim was external compensation.

Interpretation B: Structural Continuity Across Defeat

More disturbingly, the 1994 civilizational rhetoric may reflect *unexamined assumptions* that persisted from 1990–1993 even as the constitutional structure changed. Rumyantsev may have genuinely believed both propositions simultaneously: that Russia needed authentic internal federalism AND that a reconstituted Russian federation could serve as the gravitational center of a shared civilizational space. He saw no contradiction because, in his framework, voluntary constitutional integration respected both principles.

But Timothy Snyder's analysis reveals why this dual position is unstable: **when federalism is a façade, civilizational rhetoric becomes imperial weaponry**. The structure determines the function. If regional autonomy exists only at presidential discretion, if constitutional guarantees can be suspended by decree, if the Duma cannot restrain the executive — then any claim about "voluntary civilizational integration" masks coercion. The neighbors' "choice" to belong exists only within parameters set by Moscow's power.

Interpretation C: The Constitution as Ideological Vehicle

Snyder argues that Putin has rooted his authoritarian project in the 1993 Russian Constitution, which gave the president sweeping powers, and has revived an imperialist ideology casting Russia as the historic core of a Eurasian civilization. By portraying Russia as the heir to a multi-ethnic empire that must resist Western liberalism and re-assert its "eternal" destiny (Snyder calls this the "politics of eternity"), Putin uses the constitutional framework and the myth of a renewed empire to legitimize both domestic repression and external expansion.

If this is true, then Rumyantsev's 1994 language was not merely his own intellectual choice — it was **anticipatory**. The structure Yeltsin built in 1993 would inevitably produce civilizational claims, regardless of who occupied the presidential chair. Rumyantsev recognized this trajectory and attempted to position himself within it, even as he had been the one to propose the limits on that chair.

The Paradox's Three Dimensions

This is the paradox. The same mind that built internal federalism — that insisted on regional rights, parliamentary power, and limits on central authority — simultaneously articulated an external claim: that surrounding sovereign states belong to a civilizational sphere that Russian constitutional integration should encompass. Internally, Rumyantsev treated peoples as subjects. Externally, he treated neighboring nations as objects of Russian reintegration.

Dimension One: Federalism as Internal, Empire as External

Rumyantsev's 1990–1993 work was genuinely pluralistic. The commission's 31 working members and 25 legal experts debated openly across three factions: a presidential group around Shakhrai, a parliamentary group around Rumyantsev and Zorkin, and a federalist wing with regional representatives. Three drafts were produced between 1990 and March 1992. The discussions were substantive: how much power should the president hold? How far should republican autonomy extend? How should federal and regional law interact?

But Snyder warns that this internal pluralism, when housed in a super-presidential structure, becomes decorative. The 1993 constitution that Yeltsin pushed through gave the president decree powers, budgetary control, and appointment authority that rendered regional autonomy conditional rather than guaranteed. The ethnic republics exist formally but have no real autonomy. Power flows from the Kremlin through appointments that bypass regional elections, budget control that gives Moscow total economic supremacy, and a legal framework that treats the federation as a "nation-state" rather than a federal state.

If Rumyantsev accepted this structure in 1993 (as he participated in the commission until its destruction), then his federalism was already compromised. If he rejected it in 1993 but articulated civilizational claims in 1994, then his external vision exceeded his internal discipline.

Dimension Two: Huntington's Paradigm as Opportunity and Trap

Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" (Foreign Affairs, Fall 1993) arrived precisely when post-Soviet intellectuals were searching for frameworks that positioned Russia as something other than a failed Westernizer. The thesis categorized civilizations — Western, Orthodox, Islamic, Sinic, etc. — each with a "core state" serving as gravitational center. For Russia, Huntington identified the Orthodox civilization with Russia as its core, potentially encompassing Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and parts of Central Asia.

For a defeated constitutional democrat like Rumyantsev in 1994, this offered intellectual salvage: Russia was not a broken democracy but a distinctive civilization with legitimate spheres of influence. But Snyder's analysis shows the trap: **civilizational categories become territorial claims when backed by coercive structures**. Huntington wrote about cultural affinity; Putin reads it as jurisdiction. The vocabulary is similar, but the power behind it transforms meaning.

The contemporary State Department program demonstrates the same dynamic: "civilizational bonds" language defines which nations belong to a normative sphere. Whether framed as "Western heritage" or "Eastern-Christian civilization," the effect is identical — categorizing some nations as insiders entitled to support and others as outsiders. Huntington's paradigm offers both opportunity (inclusion within a civilizational bloc) and trap (exclusion from its benefits).

Dimension Three: Beauvoir's Warning About Objects

From Simone de Beauvoir's *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, we learn that freedom requires subjects — beings capable of transcendence, of shaping their own futures. When one being treats another as an object — as something to be integrated, absorbed, reoriented — it denies that second being's transcendence.

Rumyantsev's 1994 language of "reintegration" and "civilizational space" treats Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova as **objects within a Russian-defined sphere**, not as subjects with independent transcendence. This is precisely what Snyder describes when he writes about how the Kremlin treats the republics as means, not ends. The same logic extends outward: neighboring states become components of Russia's civilizational project, not autonomous actors choosing their own paths.

Lucius D. Clay's Axiom: The First Unpleasant and Difficult Task

When Lieutenant General Lucius D. Clay stood before the judges of the Nuremberg trials in 1946 and stated that Germany could not demonstrate its ability for self-government if it evaded *"the first unpleasant and difficult task,"* he established a moral framework that remains relevant today. Clay demanded that the defeated nation prove its will for democracy through institutional transformation.

What Was Germany's Task?

In London during the summer of 1945, the four allied powers convened to create the legal framework for the International Military Tribunal. Two fundamental questions dominated:

1. Collective or individual responsibility? British Prime Minister Winston Churchill initially advocated execution of Nazi leaders without trial. Against this reasoned Soviet jurist Aron Trainin and American prosecutor Robert Jackson. They maintained that *"crimes against international law are committed by men, not by abstract entities."* If one judges whole nations, one creates revanchism. If one judges individuals, one creates responsibility.

2. Punishment or learning? The question was: Should Germans be punished for losing the war, or should they learn that there are limits to what a state may do? Jackson responded by formulating that the tribunal would create *"a record of the crimes that must never be forgotten."* The trials became not just punishment — they became historical documentation that future generations can refer to.

Aron Trainin's treatise *Defence of Peace* (1944) laid the theoretical cornerstone for the London Charter. He was **the first** to formulate the concept of "crime against peace" — that planning and waging an unprovoked war of conquest is a punishable criminal act. Trainin argued that state protection cannot be used as defense for crimes, that individuals must be held accountable regardless of their official position, and that collective blaming only creates new extremism.

The Paradox: Imposed Learning

But here lies the paradox: The Nuremberg process was *imposed* from outside. Germans were occupied, defeated, and had no political power. Perhaps that is why it took time before the learning became authentic.

As German philosopher Jürgen Habermas later described it: *"The first generation of Germans accepted the Nuremberg process as a necessary evil. The second generation began to ask what it meant. The third generation internalized it as their own moral compass."*

For Russia: What Is the First Unpleasant and Difficult Task?

Clay's axiom demands that Russia prove its ability for self-government. But what does this require?

The superficial answer: Russia must acknowledge that Yeltsin's 1993 super-presidential constitution enabled Putin's authoritarianism. This acknowledgment is necessary but insufficient.

The deeper task, revealed by Rummyantsev's paradox: **Russia must confront what its own democratic inheritance carried within it.** Not only the overt crime — the shelling of parliament, the presidential coup — but the structural ambiguity within one's own constitutional work. Did the 1990–1993 federalist project already contain assumptions about Russia's civilizational prerogatives over neighbors? Can the federalism be separated from the civilizational claim?

Germany had to acknowledge not only what was done to it, but what it carried within. Russia faces the same test: **can it resume Rummyantsev's federal work while rejecting Rummyantsev's civilizational geography?**

This is not rhetorical. It determines whether the interrupted constitution is a resource or a liability. If Russia cannot distinguish between the federalism that grants peoples subjecthood and the civilizational rhetoric that reduces neighbors to objects, then resumption is not reclamation — it is repetition under a different flag.

Three Generations of Accountability

Habermas's framework illuminates the temporal dimension:

- **First generation (1945–1960s):** Acceptance as necessary evil. For Russia today: acknowledging structural flaws under external pressure
- **Second generation (1960s–1990s):** Questioning meaning. For Russia: internal debate about constitutional foundations
- **Third generation (1990s onward):** Internalization as moral compass. For Russia: authentic transformation chosen from within

The EU's role cannot be to skip these stages. It can support conditions that make choice possible, but it cannot force internalization. Beauvoir's warning remains: *"Freedom is what we create — but we cannot create freedom for others."*

Simone de Beauvoir's Ethics: Freedom as Structure

Philosopher Simone de Beauvoir's insight complements Timothy Snyder's analysis but from a different direction. In *The Second Sex* and *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, she argues that freedom is not individual — it is structural.

Women could not be free within a structure designed to assimilate them. Similarly, minorities cannot be free within a structure designed to suppress them. Beauvoir uses the term **"transcendence"** — the ability to shape one's future. It requires not only individual choices but institutional conditions that recognize every person's right to transcendence.

Subjecthood versus Objecthood

When Beauvoir speaks of "**The Other**," she describes how the subject reduces the object to things without their own will. This is exactly what Snyder describes when he writes about how the Kremlin treats the republics as means, not ends.

The extension is crucial: this logic operates internationally as well. When Rumyantsev writes of "reintegration" of Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova into a Russian civilizational space, he treats these nations as **objects within a Russian-defined horizon** — not as subjects with their own transcendent capacity to choose their alliances, identities, and futures.

Freedom Requires Structures That Make Choice Possible

In *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, Beauvoir writes: "*We must recognize that we cannot force others' freedom, but we can create structures that make the choice of freedom possible.*"

This is the paradox's solution. Rumyantsev represents **the structure that makes the choice of freedom possible**. By pointing to Rumyantsev, we show: It is not the West demanding reform. It is a Russian jurist who has witnessed another path. We do not force freedom. We point to structures that already exist.

"You are not forced. You are reminded of what you already started."

But Beauvoir adds a condition: the structure must recognize the **other's subjecthood**. A constitutional framework that grants internal autonomy while claiming external integration rights over neighboring states violates this principle. The same structure that enables transcendence for Russian citizens must enable transcendence for Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Moldovan citizens — including the right to reject Russian integration.

Transcendence Across Borders

Beauvoir's ethics demands that every people have "**own transcendent opportunity within community**." This means:

- The right to define their own history
- The right to shape their own future
- The right to reject the Russian constitutional order without being deemed "hostile"

A Russian federalism that is authentically Beauvoirian must recognize that neighbor nations are **free to choose**, not objects for Russian integration. Their sovereignty is not a gift from Moscow — it is their own.

The Synthesis: Transformational Federalism

The combination of Snyder's empirical analysis and Beauvoir's ethical demands creates a new model: transformational federalism. It builds on three principles:

1. Institutional Self-Determination The republics need real powers that cannot be taken back via presidential decree: constitutional guarantees about language, education, and culture; economic autonomy with budget control; legal limits against federal interventions.

2. Existential Recognition Every ethnic group must be a subject, not an object in a Russian story. Repatriation of the narrative — no "Russian World," no Western cultural imperialism, but each people defining their own history within the federation.

3. Federal Principle as Imperial Replacement Federal guarantees instead of centralized power; proportional protection against militarization that hits certain peoples harder than others; the Duma's role as guardian of the entire federation.

Three Dimensions for a New Constitutional Foundation:

Snyder's Warning	Beauvoir's Question	Synthesis
Russian federalism is a facade	Freedom is structural	Authentic federalism requires structure that allows each people to shape their future
Ethnic republics are instruments for empire-building	"The Other" is defined through subject's gaze	Every ethnic group must be subject, not object in a Russian story
Nation-state is used to consolidate authoritarian control	Transcendence requires recognition of others' freedom	Federation must give each people own transcendent opportunity within community
Snyder's warning becomes Beauvoir's question: Snyder warns that federalism can be used as an instrument for authoritarian control. Beauvoir asks: <i>Under which structures is federalism authentic?</i> The answer is: When federalism is not a means for power — but a means for recognition.		

Three Tests for Authentic Federalism

For any constitutional proposal claiming to resume Russia's interrupted work, three tests determine authenticity:

Test	Question	Criterion
Clay-testet	Can Russia demonstrate self-government by confronting its imperial assumptions?	Yes, if the work <i>explicitly excludes</i> civilizational rhetoric that legitimizes external expansion
Snyder-testet	Is federalism a façade or reality?	Yes, if regional powers can <i>deny</i> Kremlin instructions without political cost
Beauvoir-testet	Does the structure recognize every people as subject?	Yes, if neighboring states are treated as free to choose, not as objects for Russian integration

Failure on any one test means the federalism is not authentic.

The implications are clear:

- A constitution that restores 1990–1993 federal drafts but maintains "civilizational space" language fails the Beauvoir test
- A constitution that declares federalism but keeps presidential decree powers fails the Snyder test

- A constitution that acknowledges structural flaws but refuses to address civilizational assumptions fails the Clay test

Only work passing all three tests represents genuine transformation.

The Four Figures: A Historical Continuity

Aron Trainin and Francine Hirsch's Revision

Aron Trainin's treatise *Defence of Peace* (1944) laid the theoretical cornerstone for the London Charter. Historically, however, his contribution received less recognition in Western sources compared to his American, British, and French colleagues.

Historian **Francine Hirsch** has in her groundbreaking study *"Soviet Judgment at Nuremberg"* (2020) revised this picture. Hirsch shows that:

- Trainin was **the first** to formulate the concept of "crime against peace" – that planning and waging an unprovoked war of conquest is a punishable criminal act
- This doctrine was adopted by the Soviet delegation and integrated into the Nuremberg Charter
- The law on "crime against peace" became the legal basis for the Allied prosecution strategy
- Trainin's theories were already cited in a U.S. War Department memo from January 1945

Hirsch writes: *"The Soviet Union was first to push for a public trial of leading Nazis. Soviet military courts began trying SS perpetrators and collaborators already during the war."*

Hirsch's revision of the Cold War narrative is important: *"Until Hirsch's book, the Nuremberg trials were viewed almost exclusively through Western eyes, with Brigadier General Telford Taylor's personal memoirs 'Anatomy of the Nuremberg Trials' as the foundation for understanding the event."*

Trainin's insight was revolutionary: *"Individuals, not abstract states, commit crimes against international law."*

Trainin argued that state protection cannot be used as defense for crimes, that individuals must be held accountable regardless of their official position, and that collective blaming only creates new extremism.

This principle became the core of London Charter Article 6: *"Leaders, organizers, instigators and accomplices participating in the formulation or execution of a common plan or conspiracy to commit any of the foregoing crimes are responsible for all acts performed by any persons in execution of such plan."*

Oleg Rummyantsev

Oleg Rummyantsev, born 1960, led the Russian constitutional commission 1990–1993. As Executive Secretary of the Constitutional Commission, he worked with:

- Pluralistic discussions about power balance

- Debates about federalism and regional rights
- Limitation of presidential power through parliament

In 1993, this process was broken by Yeltsin. Rumyantsev lost his political power, but kept the heritage of ideas. Today, as professor of constitutional law at RSUH and MGIMO, he stands as a living witness to the democratic path that was interrupted. He has authored ten volumes chronology *History of the Russian Constitution* (2023).

But Rumyantsev is not an uncritical idol. His 1994 Harvard lecture reveals that the interrupted work carried ambiguities requiring discrimination. He is **living proof** that another path existed — and can be resumed — but that path must be purified of imperial assumptions.

Valery Zorkin

Valery Zorkin was the leading legal voice in 1990–1993's constitutional work and later became first chairman of Russia's Constitutional Court. He called the constitution "*the greatest achievement of the entire post-Soviet development.*" Yet after 1993, he served on the Constitutional Court that validated Yeltsin's super-presidential system — a compromise revealing how quickly even democratic architects adapt to authoritarian reality.

Sergey Shakhrai

Sergey Shakhrai was co-author of the draft constitution and a reformist lawyer-politician who tried to institutionalize limitations on presidential power. He later served in various government positions, illustrating the tension between constitutional idealism and political pragmatism.

By reconnecting to Trainin, Rumyantsev, Zorkin, and Shakhrai, a historical continuity is created that shifts focus from Putin-the-person to the structure. It is not the Russian nation that faces moral judgment — it is the constitutional order that was interrupted in 1993 and must now be restored, with critical clarity about what must be excluded.

The Pedagogical Purpose

The Nuremberg process had a clear educational aim: to create a legal and moral foundation that future generations can refer to. A new Russian constitution must have the same ambition. It should not only be a technical legal text — it should be a textbook on what must not happen again. Every paragraph that limits presidential power, every article that strengthens the Duma's role, every guarantee for ethnic minorities — all of this is a way of saying to the future: *this is not how it's done.*

But pedagogy requires honesty. The constitution must teach not only what went wrong in 1993, but what ambiguities existed in the democratic alternative. It must acknowledge: federalism without structural protection becomes façade. Civilizational rhetoric without border recognition becomes imperialism. Freedom granted by structure must include freedom to reject that structure.

The Paradox of Imposed Learning: A Beauvoir Solution

The Nuremberg process was *imposed* from outside. Germans were occupied, defeated, and lacked political power. This creates a fundamental paradox: **How can learning become authentic if it comes from a relationship of coercion?**

From Simone de Beauvoir's *"The Ethics of Ambiguity"* (1947), we take the key:

"Freedom is what we create — but we cannot create freedom for others."

Beauvoir's insight is that *freedom requires a subject*. A parent figure cannot *make* the child free — the child must *choose* freedom themselves. Similarly, an occupying power cannot *force* a nation to moral change — it must be *chosen*.

But the paradox is not unsolvable. It is mitigated by shifting *focus from external demands to internal resources*. Here Oleg Rummyantsev comes in.

Rummyantsev gives us the concrete manifestation of this paradox. His life story is the paradox itself: 1990–1993 he worked freely as leader of the Constitutional Commission. After 1993, he lost power, but the ideas survive through his academic work.

Here lies the paradox's solution: **Even when power is removed, structures can survive.**

In *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, Beauvoir writes: *"We must recognize that we cannot force others' freedom, but we can create structures that make the choice of freedom possible."*

Rummyantsev is the structure that makes the choice of freedom possible. By pointing to Rummyantsev, we show: It is not the West demanding reform. It is a Russian jurist who has witnessed another path. We do not force freedom. We point to structures that already exist.

"You are not forced. You are reminded of what you already started."

The Condition: But the structure we point to must be purified. We cannot point to Rummyantsev's 1990–1993 federalism while ignoring his 1994 civilizational claims. Both must be acknowledged. Both must be evaluated. The federalism may be resumed; the civilizational claims must be rejected. That is the honest pedagogy.

Transition: From Philosophical Insight to Political Strategy

The paradox of imposed learning is not a philosophical abstraction. It is the political precondition that defines what the EU actually can and should do.

When we recognize Beauvoir's basic insight — that we cannot force others' freedom — the alternative of imposed reform is eliminated from the EU's action plan. But the paradox analysis also opens a way forward, if we understand what it means for Russia specifically.

Russia has not turned toward democracy from a vacuum. It has an interrupted history. Oleg Rummyantsev, Valery Zorkin, Sergey Shakhrai, and Aron Trainin do not represent a foreign model that must be imported. They represent an indigenous path that was interrupted by Yeltsin's power

grab in 1993. By pointing to these figures, the EU shows that transformation is not Western import. It is resumption. Russia's own legal tradition — from the London Charter 1945 to the glasnost constitution 1993 — already contains the principles required for peaceful integration.

This is the difference between two types of demands. An external dictate creates resistance — it is perceived as colonial, condescending, imposed. An internal heritage creates possibility — it is perceived as reclaiming, independent, authentic. By supporting structures that Rummyantsev represents, the EU gives Russia the opportunity to choose freedom, not be forced to it.

The Paradox Analysis's Concluding Word Then Becomes Political: We cannot create freedom for Russia. But we can offer structures that make the choice of freedom possible. We can point to paths that already exist in their own history.

In this light, we now see the EU's potential role. It is not to dictate or to force. It is to enable, to support, to point.

The Moral Dilemma

But here lies a paradox: Clay's analogy requires that Russia proves its will for self-government by taking responsibility. But who makes the demand? If it comes from the outside world, it risks being perceived as foreign dictation. If it comes from within, it lacks negotiating weight.

The solution may lie in combining both: international demand for constitutional reform as a condition for peace, combined with Russian internal initiative to resume the work that was interrupted in 1993. It is not submission — it is reclamation of one's own history.

Looking at recent peace agreements, they are transactional/bilateral agreements. Russia, however, must settle with the "Russian World" and create a new future goal built on the underlying value foundations in the making of Nuremberg trials as learning for the future.

The EU's Potential Role

Here opens space for the EU. While the USA has historically prioritized security guarantees and territorial integrity, the EU can take the lead in constitutional transformation. The EU's experience with institution building, regional integration, and minority protection provides an alternative framework that is not colonial yet still international.

Transactional Peace vs Transformational Peace -- With Paradox Analysis:

Based on paradox analysis, the EU's choice becomes more nuanced:

Alternative	Approved	Critical Assessment
1. Transactional peace	Approved	Suspends conflict but leaves structures intact
2. Imposed transformation	Rejected	Violates Beauvoir's ethics; creates resistance
3. Support for internal resources	Recommended	Enables choice without coercion
4. Ignore the question	Option	Rejected; abandons moral responsibility

Alternative 3 -- Enabled Change:

This is what the paradox analysis adds. The EU can:

Action	Mechanism	Resource
Technical support for constitutional work	Build capacity	Rumyantsev as reference
Finance academic research	Preserve intellectual heritage	RSUH/MGIMO cooperation
Legitimate Duma's role internationally	Strengthen parliament	Counter super-presidentialism
Sanctions against individuals, not people	Targeted accountability	According to Trainin's principle
Federation guarantee	Integrate state wholeness	Included with internal reform
Snyder's Final Word: " <i>Ideas matter.</i> " Putin has an idea of Russia as empire. A new constitution must have a different idea — Russia as federation of freedom.		

Beauvoir's Final Word: "*Freedom is what we create.*" The federation is what Duma, regions, and the outside world build together — not what the Kremlin dictates.

Conclusion: Generations-Bridging Value Foundations

Nuremberg's lesson is clear:

- Collective blame creates bitterness, individual accountability creates opportunity
- Trials are not just punishment — they are pedagogical foundations for the future
- Peace not based on truth is only an interruption of war

A new Russian constitution that restores federalism, gives ethnic groups transcendence, shifts responsibility from the Russian people to Putin's power structure, **and explicitly rejects civilizational rhetoric that treats neighbors as objects** — that is the path to long-term peace.

These four figures represent something deeper: a **generations-bridging value foundation** that runs from Nuremberg to Moscow's White House to today's peace negotiations. Trainin showed how crimes must be met with responsibility. Rumyantsev, Zorkin, and Shakhrai showed how Russia could build rights before the roads were closed.

Rumyantsev is not just a name in an article. He is **the living proof** that another path existed. And can be resumed — but only if we confront his paradox honestly.

The Paradox of Imposed Learning Gets Its Solution by not forcing change — we point to structures that already exist. Beauvoir said we cannot create freedom for others. But we can create structures that make the choice of freedom possible.

The EU's Choice then becomes clearer:

- **Transactional peace** — that saves the causes of war (Wiehe warns)
- **Imposed transformation** — that creates resistance (Beauvoir forbids)
- **Support for internal resources** — that enables choice (way forward)

"You are not forced. You are reminded of what you already started."

Generations-bridging means we do not leave the question to the next generation. We answer Melanie and Wiehe's questions *now*:

Question	Answer
Will peace come "according to plan"?	Yes — Russia's own constitutional plan from 1990–1993, purified of civilizational claims
What does it cost?	Distance from Putin structure, not from people's history
Does it bind "evil to the good"?	No — it breaks structures that enabled aggression AND distinguishes democratic from imperial elements in the same heritage
Which generation peace belongs to is defined by this choice. Nuremberg thought in generations. Minsk thought in days. This article — and the EU's next decision — can think in decades.	
Melanie hoped for peace that comes "according to plan." Wiehe asked what it costs. Answer exists: The plan is already written. The cost is daring to rediscover it — with full awareness of what must be excluded.	
