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**European Security at the Beginning of the Twenty
First Century: At the Crossroads of the US and
Russian Foreign Policies**

MA Dissertation

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Annotation

The aim of this paper is to provide a clear view of the current conflict of the United States' and Russia's geopolitical and geostrategic interests in Europe. Furthermore, the author will try – by addressing the most relevant problems – to identify alternative scenarios that may result from this conflict in the near future. At the same time the author is advocating the point that tensions in relations between the US and Russia will not improve any time soon because of fundamentally confronted interests as well as because of the influence of realist logic that dominates the political spectrum on both sides. The author argues that the basis of the new security arrangement in Europe can emerge from the tightening of Russia-Germany relations (especially in the sphere of energy security) and more independent EU policies in the sphere of military affairs. This paper does not aim to address so called “new” and “asymmetrical” threats to national and international security (e.g. terrorism, immigration, organised crime, etc.), but rather more classical threats such as military conflicts among states, challenges to the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty as well as energy security which is a *sine qua non* for economic development of each country.

Keywords

foreign policy, national interest, national security, energy security, realism, multipolarity, Russia, the United States, EU, NATO, ...

Statement:

1. This statement is to confirm that this paper is a product of my own work and also to confirm that I used the listed sources in producing it.
2. I agree that the paper can be checked for research and studying purposes.

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Introduction

US-Russia relations have been a cornerstone of the international order for more than sixty years. Europe, as the geopolitical heartland of the contemporary world, is always in the focus of the US and Russian foreign policies. The logic of *realpolitik* tells us that these foreign policies are just an external manifestation and “tool” for realization of real economic, political and military interests. Some of those interests have been seriously conflicted for a long time, and their interaction has been decisive in shaping Europe’s political, security and economic reality. At the present time, there are many disputes between the two countries including the Iranian nuclear program, NATO enlargement, energy security, opposing political interests in post-Soviet area, the final status the Serbian province of Kosovo, status of breakaway Georgian provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as well as the deployment of components of the US Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) shield in Poland and the Czech Republic. All these disputes are influencing European security by decreasing the level of trust and limiting the space for cooperation inside the America-EU-Russia triangle. For the first time after the Cold War, the “security dilemma” is emerging in Europe as a potentially serious obstacle to economic development and regional security in general. Europe has found itself in a very uncomfortable situation for at least two main reasons. First, the EU does not have sufficient domestic energy resources to support its economic growth; and second, it does not have the military means to preserve its interests abroad. Consequently, most European countries are highly dependent on Russia in terms of energy security and on the US in terms of military security. Moreover, most of these countries feel less and less secure as the struggle between Moscow and Washington for the influence in European affairs blazes up.

The aim of this study is to provide a clear view of the current conflict of the United States' and Russia's geopolitical and geostrategic interests in Europe. Furthermore, the author will try – by

addressing the most relevant problems – to identify alternative scenarios that may result from this conflict in the near future. The author is proposing the thesis that tensions in relations between the US and Russia will not substantially improve in the near term because of fundamentally confronted interests as well as because of the influence of realist logic that dominates the political spectrum on both sides. The ongoing global financial and economic crisis will certainly influence the current economic performance and geopolitical agendas of the United States and Russia but the author argues that the impact of the crisis will only be visible at the level of political tactics and not at the level of political strategies of the two sides. Bearing in mind that the focus of the study is on European security in a context of its current condition, ongoing processes, the near-term prospects and the two powers' foreign policy and security agendas, political tactics as an element of short and medium-term political planning is important to consider. However, the author's pessimism is based on the fact that great powers never fully abandon their long term objectives for short-term gains.

The study treats the EU as an emerging power and potentially major security actor, however still highly dependent on specific national interests of its major member states. In this context, the UK, French, Italian and especially German political, economic and security interests will be discussed. The author argues that the basis of a new security arrangement in Europe can emerge from the tightening of Russo-German relations, especially in the sphere of energy security, and more independent EU policies in the sphere of military affairs.

This paper does not aim to address so called “new” and “asymmetrical” threats to national and international security (e.g. terrorism, immigration, organised crime, etc.), but rather more classical threats such as military conflicts among states, challenges to the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty as well as energy security which is a *sine qua non* for economic development of each country.

This paper is primarily a study of current US-Russia relations and the ways in which their foreign policies influence European security. According to Brian White, 'a conventional definition of foreign policy [...] refers to actions (broadly defined) taken by governments which are directed

at the environment external to their state with the objective of sustaining or changing that environment in some way.¹ For the purposes of this study, foreign policy will be understood as a complex of measures, instruments, and ways which sovereign states use in their interactions with other sovereign countries and international organizations in order to achieve their national interests. Foreign policy includes the use of diplomacy, military, economic, and cultural potentials, and even sport if we consider prestige in the international community as a legitimate national interest.

The materials used in producing and shaping the arguments from this study include over fifty books as well as few hundred articles and analysis written by variety of influential authors and institutes from the United States, Europe and Russia and collected and selected by the author between January 2007 and May 2009. In addition, numerous courses, seminars and talks from the field of international relations, global and national security, European relations, Russian and US foreign policy attended by the author during his studies at the University of Belgrade, Yale University, University College London - School of Slavonic and East European Studies and Charles University (Prague) have significantly influenced his thinking and ideas expressed in this paper.

The study is structured into seven chapters excluding an introduction and conclusion. Each of these chapters is addressing a particular aspect or problem which influences the US-Russian relations in general and their relations concerning European security in particular. The only exception of this rule is Chapter 7, which represents an attempt to project possible, near to medium-term prospects, scenarios and outcomes regarding the security of the Old Continent. Chapter 1 is an overview of the mainstream theories of international relations and international security which are underpinning the foreign policies of Russia and the United States. Chapter 2 aims to explain the ongoing changes affecting the structure of the international system. Chapter 3 is a brief assessment of the legacy of the Cold War, focusing mostly on the Cold War way of thinking and the US containment policies toward Russia. In Chapter 4, the author focuses on the motives of the main EU countries in their approach to the major security problems in Europe. In Chapter 5, the author

¹ Brian White, 'Foreign Policy Analysis and the New Europe' in Walter Carlsnaes, Helene Sjurson and Brian White, *Contemporary European Foreign Policy*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2004, pp. 11-31, p. 11.

analyses the United States' geopolitical and geostrategic interests in Europe, including the NATO enlargement process. Chapter 6 focuses on Russian interests in Europe and its “near abroad”. This chapter also deals with energy security, which is currently one of the most controversial political and security issues in the US-EU-Russia triangle. As it was already mentioned above, Chapter 7 is a near to medium term projection of possible non-asymmetrical challenges, risks and threats to European security, as well as an assessment of opportunities for the establishment of new political and security arrangements in the wider European region. Final remarks briefly underline the main arguments from this study, warning that the ongoing political and security dynamics inside the US-EU-Russia triangle can equally lead the EU toward a position of a dominant world power or draw it back to the times of divisions making its position in the international arena relatively irrelevant.

Chapter 1

Theories Underpinning the Foreign Policies of Russia and the US – Realism as the Prevalent Logic of Contemporary International Relations

In the theory of international relations there are several, more or less different approaches, but we can say that the following three are the most common: realism, liberalism and constructivism. The theoretical background is important for our discussion because policy makers in any particular country are guided by some apparent or latent theoretical framework when thinking about or taking action in the sphere of international politics. In which way are realism, liberalism and constructivism influencing present US-Russian relations?

The influence of realism can be easily recognised. Namely, realism is a theory which defines international politics as a “struggle for power”.² First, according to this theory, the most important goal of every single country is to realize its national interests. There are many views on what “national interest” means to different nations or how they interpret it. However, most powerful states commonly interpret their national interest in a very broad way and certainly in a much broader way than other nations. Consequently, when it comes to great power politics, even when

² See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace*, Boston and London: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2006.

defined in a very idealistic way, the concept of national interest could be easily interpreted by politicians in a way to fit to almost any situation or objective. For example, Professor Samuel Huntington defines national interest as 'a public good of concern to all Americans; [...] one which they are willing to expend blood and treasure to defend.'³ Furthermore, he argues that 'national interests usually combine security and material concerns, on the one hand, and moral and ethical concerns, on the other.'⁴ However, especially when it comes to the great power politics, one can argue that security and material concerns usually prevail over moral and ethical concerns.

Another realist's point is that cooperation among states is limited because of mutual distrust between them, as well as because of possibility of "relative gains".⁵ A clear example of this situation would be Russia's position on the issue of NATO enlargement. Not surprisingly, in realist's way of thinking, survival and national security comprise the essence of national interests of each state.⁶ As John Mearsheimer writes: 'States can and do pursue other goals, of course, but security is their most important objective.'⁷ For instance, the behaviour of the US government regarding the BMD issue was on this line of thinking from very beginning. US policy makers did not consult the Russian side or the United States' European and NATO allies about their plans to deploy some components of the system on European soil (Poland and Czech Republic). They gave priority to national security, rather than to international cooperation, which is a clear example of practising realist theory. On the other hand, the Russian side has found itself endangered in that situation and its response is mostly focused on developing new strategic nuclear weapons. That is a point when we can easily conclude that these two countries are actually operating within the context of the

³ Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Erosion of American National Interests' in Eugene R. Wittkopf and James M. McCormick, The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 4th ed., 2004, pp. 55-65, p. 60.

⁴ Ibid., p. 60.

⁵ According to the realist logic, the quantity of power in international relations is limited, and because of this fact it is very important how much of that power each country gains. If one country always gains more, then at one point it will endanger the survival of other countries.

⁶ There are different definitions of national security but, in general, it could be said that national security means security of a political nation. This term includes security of national territory (with air space and sea line), protection of human lives and their private property, protection of the national sovereignty and the basic functions of society (socio-economic, social-political, cultural, ecological, and business).

⁷ John J. Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 2001, p. 31.

“security dilemma”.⁸ The “security dilemma” is one of the key terms in realist theory of international relations, and scholars from this school of thinking noticed long time ago that 'many of the means by which a state tries to increase its security decrease the security of others.'⁹ Another manifestation of this situation was Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's March 2009 statement that 'Moscow will begin a comprehensive military rearmament from 2011' because of its 'concerns over NATO expansion near Russia's borders and regional conflicts.'¹⁰

But Russian and American politicians face quite different problems in applying the realist way of thinking in their actions on the world stage. US politicians, in particular, have one major problem with openly practising realism. This has been well explained by John Mearsheimer, who said that 'because Americans dislike realpolitik, public discourse about foreign politics in the United States is usually couched in the language of liberalism.'¹¹ However, the same author argues that 'behind closed doors the elites who make national security policy speak mostly the language of power, not that of principle, and the United States acts in the international system according to the dictates of realist logic.'¹² On the other hand, Russian politicians have never had a problem of that kind, and they usually perform their passion for realism in a more open manner. For example, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr Sergei Lavrov, did not shy away from saying the following: 'I think it would be right to say that we view our role in global energy supply as a means for ensuring our foreign-policy independence.'¹³ It would be hard to imagine the President of America saying that US troops went to Iraq to ensure America's energy interests in the Middle East. However, there are still many people who doubt that US troops invaded the country to destroy non-existent weapons of mass destruction and bring freedom and democracy to the Iraqi

⁸ A security dilemma is a situation in which one state is trying to improve its own security – usually by increasing the level of armament or by developing new military technologies – but, at the same time, by doing so, increases the fear among other states of an aggressive military action.

⁹ Robert Jarvis, 'Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma', *World Politics*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Vol. 30, No. 2, January 1978, pp. 167-214, p. 169.

¹⁰ 'Russia Announces Rearmament Plan', *BBC News*, 17 March 2009, <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7947824.stm>>. [accessed 6 April 2009]

¹¹ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 25.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹³ Sergei Lavrov, 'Containing Russia: Back to the Future?', *Russia in Global Affairs*, No.4, October-December 2007. <<http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/numbers/21/1147.html>>. [accessed 6 March 2009]

people.

An interesting development, noticeable in the context of several international disputes such as Kosovo, Iraq, the US proposed deployment of BMD components, etc., is that Russian officials have started to combine standard realist discourse with some premises of the liberal-institutionalist approach to international relations. The most likely reason for adopting this “mixed” approach is not the Russian leadership’s devotion to key principles of liberal theory, but rather the consequence of a lack of resources for responding to US challenges in a purely realist manner. We frequently hear Russian politicians calling for international cooperation in resolving problems of nuclear proliferation and other unresolved security problems in the world, multilateralism in international relations and respect of international law and international institutions, claiming that the US is violating these principles. And according to the liberal theory of international relations, international institutions – including international law – are one of the most important tools of preventing or alleviating the state of “international anarchy”.¹⁴

However, public discourse only partially reflects policies of a country, and when it comes to energy related issues, it seems that Russia is not as keen to negotiate the establishment of general rules in this sphere as in some other spheres of international cooperation.¹⁵ Also, as Steven McGuire and Michael Smith argue, 'Americans see international cooperation as a matter of choice rather than of necessity: where US interests are served, the cooperation is acceptable, but where international cooperation threatens what are seen as US vital interests, the country retains the right to opt out, to oppose and to undermine such efforts.'¹⁶ Certainly one of the best examples in support of this argument would be Washington's resistance to join the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.¹⁷ Having all this in mind, one can conclude that, no matter how important the International law and multilateral institutions are from the perspective of the great majority of the world's

¹⁴ The state of “anarchy” is characterised by the lack of one central authority in the international system.

¹⁵ See Vladimir Milov, 'Russia-EU Energy Dialog: Filling a Vacuum', *Russia in Global Affairs*, No. 4, October-December 2007, <<http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/region-economics/numbers/21/1157.html>>. [accessed 6 April 2009]

¹⁶ Steven McGuire and Michael Smith, *The European Union and the United States: Competition and Governance in the Global Arena*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p. 253.

¹⁷ See David J. Scheffer, Richard H. Cooper and Juliette Voinov Kohler, 'The End of Exceptionalism in War Crimes', *Harvard International Review*, 12 August 2007, <<http://www.harvardir.org/index.php?page=article&id=1647&p=>>. [accessed 16 May 2009]

nations, they cannot bind and effectively control the power of the major states in the international arena.

Finally, when discussing relations between Russia and the West, constructivism must be taken into account. Constructivism is an analytical perspective which stresses the importance of values, beliefs and ideas in world politics and, in such a way, represents a theoretical alternative to realism and liberalism.¹⁸ Moreover, constructivism is a theory which argues that relations among nations are caused by their socially constructed ideas and perceptions of reality and other countries' intentions. However, one can doubt if an analytical perspective which, in its approach to international relations, tends to overlook the importance of material factors could be considered as stand-alone theory. Nevertheless, it is hard to deny the fact that some social phenomena – such as anti-Americanism and Russophobia – significantly influence contemporary international relations. For example, Professor Stephen Kotkin argues that 'the only true friend Russia has is US foreign policy, which is enormously effective at increasing anti-Americanism.'¹⁹ He develops his argument further when he says that anti-Americanism 'is the basis of much of Russian diplomacy' because 'everywhere that anti-Americanism is increasing, Russia sees an opportunity for itself to push into the conversation and be involved in adjudicating global issues.'²⁰ A clear example of such a situation is Russia's growing influence among the Serbian population and, in a connection with this, privileged position of Russian energy giant Gazprom in the process of privatization of the Serbian energy sector. Things are not much different in terms of the way Russophobia affects US foreign policy, particularly toward Eastern European and post-Soviet countries.

But, also, there are certain ideas and ideologies which influence the US and Russian foreign policies more directly. For example, many would agree that democratic messianism, or the "ideology of universal liberalism", in words of Stanley Hoffmann, significantly influences

¹⁸ For more on the existing analytical perspectives and the major theoretical debates in international relations and security studies, see Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996., also see Dragan R. Simic, Nauka o Bezbednosti: Savremeni Pristupi Bezbednosti, Beograd: Sluzbeni list SRJ, 2002.

¹⁹ Stephen Kotkin, 'Russia under Putin: Toward Democracy or Dictatorship?', Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI) E-Notes, March 2007, <<http://www.fpri.org/enotes/200703.kotkin.russiademocracvdictatorship.html>> [accessed 6 April 2009]

²⁰ Ibid.

Washington's policies towards the outside world.²¹ Moreover some authors even argue that 'as long as the consensus of an American supremacy of values goes unchallenged, the United States will march into new battles against new enemies.'²² However, one may still question whether ideology is the leading principle of foreign policy or only used to attract and mobilise public support for policies aimed at fulfilling national interests. In this sense, it seems that Parag Khanna made a good point when he said that 'the world's most compelling ideology is neither democracy nor capitalism nor any other ism, but success.'²³

When discussing different theoretical approaches to post-Cold War international security structure, one can hardly avoid to say something about Professor Barry Buzan's arguments and his classification of the principal theoretical perspectives on this issue. He classifies principal theoretical perspectives on post-Cold War international security into three groups: neorealist, globalist and regionalist.²⁴

The neorealist perspective 'is state centric, and rests on an argument about power polarity.'²⁵ In accordance with this logic – depending on the number of major powers which dominate the international arena – the world has been usually described as unipolar, bipolar or multipolar. As Professor Buzan argues, 'this debate is about distribution of material power in the international system, which in neorealism determines the global political (and thereby also security) structure, and the interplay of this with balance-of-power logic.'²⁶ Although, during the late 1990's and first few years of the new millennium, the neorealist way of thinking was almost regarded as a relic of past times, it seems that since 2007, when the President of Russia Vladimir Putin gave his famous speech at the Munich Security Conference, the world has witnessed a revival of neorealism in

²¹ See Stanley Hoffmann, 'Why Don't They Like Us?' in Eugene R. Wittkopf and James M. McCormick (ed.), The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 4th ed., 2004, pp. 33-41, p. 36.

²² Scott Lucas, Freedom's War: The American Crusade Against the Soviet Union, New York: New York University Press, 1999, p. 283.

²³ Parag Khanna, The Second World: Empires and Influence in the New Global Order, London: Allen Lane, 2008, p. xxiv.

²⁴ See Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 6.

²⁵ Buzan and Wæver, Regions and Powers, p. 6.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

international relations.²⁷ The revival of neorealist logic has not only seized the public discourse but it has also made the political and security dynamics in Russia's "near abroad" and EU's "close neighbourhood" much more tense.

'The globalist perspective is generally the antithesis of realism's (and neorealism's) statist, power-political understanding of international system structure' and 'its clearest guiding theme is deterritorialisation of world politics.'²⁸ This means that those who advocate this perspective put the emphasis on the role played by so-called "non-state actors" (e.g. corporations, international terrorist networks, NGOs and intergovernmental organisations) in shaping the present and future of increasingly globalizing world. They base their argument on the premise that 'territorial sovereignty as the ordering principle for human activity has been redefined, and in some was transcended, by networks of interaction that involve actors of many different kinds and at many different levels.'²⁹ This point could be taken as correct in many ways, considering the influence on policy making and public opinion which, for example, major multinational companies and influential NGOs are able to project by mass media campaigning, lobbying and high level personal contacts in national administrations and intergovernmental bodies. It might be that neorealist logic does not pay enough attention on the importance of these transnational and personal networks in creating the new globalised world. Moreover, it is also true that these networks interfere in traditional functions of a state – undermining its sovereignty to some extent – but there is still no evidence that these networks can substitute the prime role of the nation-state in the structure of the international system.

For example, this becomes visible in the light of the global financial crisis and Russo-Georgian war. Both situations proved that the nation-state is still the only more or less reliable guarantor to the society that the system will not collapse when a population faces difficult times and major challenges. What happened in 2008 after only few months of financial crisis was correctly described by George Friedman when he said that 'the balance of power between business and the

²⁷ See Vladimir V. Putin, 'Speech at the 43rd Munich Security Conference on Security Policy', Munich Security Conference, 10 February 2007, <<http://www.securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?sprache=en&id=179>>. [accessed 7 April 2009]

²⁸ Buzan and Wæver, Regions and Powers, p. 7.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

state, always dynamic, underwent a profound change, with the power of the state surging and the power of business contracting.³⁰ And the new reality is that we can see top managers of the biggest world companies requesting help from governmental offices throughout the world. Another example, in politico-military terms was the Russo-Georgian war. Because of the specific and divergent national interests of the main world powers, international and intergovernmental political and security organisations were unable to take a firm and common stand and to deal effectively with the issue. This list of organisations which failed to react cohesively includes the EU, NATO, UN, OSCE and SCO. In other words, while recognizing the role of transnational and personal networks and organisations, one cannot deny the decisive role which the nation-state still has in shaping the modern world.

The regionalist approach is a post-Cold War theoretical perspective on international security structure which is founded on two basic premises. The first premise is that 'the decline of superpower rivalry reduces the penetrative quality of global power interest in the rest of the world', and the second is that 'most of the great powers in the post-Cold War international system are now "lite powers"', meaning that their domestic dynamics pull them away from the military engagement and strategic competition in the trouble spots of the world leaving local states and societies to sort out their military-political relationships with less interference from great powers than before.³¹ As time passes, this approach does not seem valid for at least two reasons. First, in addition to the unprecedented power of the US, China is already not "lite" and its power is growing, Russia is also not as "lite" as it was during the 1990's and the EU's potential should also not be disregarded. Second, it is hard to describe, for example, US interventionism in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan, but also Russian intervention in Georgia or the Chinese position in relation to the Sudan crisis, as a lack of will and ability of great powers to engage in or interfere with local military-political relationships. In fact, there is no major local conflict where some of the main

³⁰ George Friedman, '2008 and the Return of the Nation-State', *Stratfor*, 17 October 2008, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20081027_2008_and_return_nation_state>. [accessed 7 April 2009]

³¹ Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, pp. 10-11.

world powers are not more or less directly involved.

On the other hand, it is true that some regional powers are emerging as potentially serious actors in the international arena – actors capable of using quite independent policies in the matters of their primary concern. Countries from different parts of the world, such as India, Brazil, Iran and Turkey, act at the international scene with much more self-confidence than a decade ago, and this dynamic could be related to the unprecedented global growth which caused what Fareed Zakaria termed “the rise of the rest”.³² Although, the “rest” includes, as Zakaria acknowledges, many non-state actors, it is difficult to argue that the rise of any non-state actor, with the exception of the EU, is equally relevant for the current transformation of the structure of international system as the rise of India and Brazil, for example.

Today, therefore, we find the neorealist logic – despite all its weaknesses correctly pointed by supporters of globalist and regionalist theories – to be the most appropriate framework for the further analysis of US-Russian relations concerning European security.

Chapter 2

The Multipolar Structure of the International System as a New Reality

The world is rapidly changing. One of the possible ways to portray this change is in terms of power polarity. This might not be a perfect solution but it works well if we accept the argument that geopolitics still matters in the contemporary world. According to this logic, one can say that the world is transforming from the unipolarity of the 1990's, when 'the United States walked the world like a colossus, unrivalled and unchecked', to a more balanced multipolar world of the twenty first century.³³ However, a more balanced world does not have to necessarily correspond with a more stable one, and that is why this process is not always evaluated as a positive dynamic. The main argument in favour of this hypothesis is that 'the greater diversity and growing power of more

³² See Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, New York: W.W Norton & Company, 2008, pp. 1-5.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

countries portends less cohesiveness and effectiveness for the international system.³⁴ On the other hand, the main counter argument could be that the multipolar system will bring about more independence to the nations throughout the world. This is not irrelevant by any means, because many nations in the world perceive the level of their political, economic and military independence as a determinant of the degree of their freedom. The cohesiveness and effectiveness of the international system dominated by a hegemon does not seem to be a sufficient reason for most people and nations of the world to “swallow their pride”. Of course, the logical reaction to this in many cases is resistance.

This, more or less open resistance to the domination of a single power has been expressed through a phenomenon which Zbigniew Brzezinski termed a “global political awakening”. The global political awakening, described by Professor Brzezinski as 'socially massive, politically radicalizing, and geographically universal', has its roots in the 'worldwide yearning for human dignity.'³⁵ The concept of human dignity includes, according to Brzezinski, not only freedom and democracy, but also the respect for its 'culturally diverse political, social and religious emanations.'³⁶ This is certainly one of the points where the US, as far most powerful country in the world, failed to perform in its best long-term interest imposing its cultural, political, social and economic model without seriously taking into consideration specific, culturally and historically rooted, identities and characteristics of its partners and other states in the international community. As a consequence, the global political awakening is 'historically anti-imperial, politically anti-Western, and emotionally increasingly anti-American.'³⁷ Nevertheless, it is hard to say if such global political and social dynamics could have been avoided, because, due to the unprecedented global growth, power has migrated from the West to the global arena or, as Parag Khanna said,

³⁴ 'Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World', Washington D.C.: National Intelligence Council, November 2008, <http://www.dni.gov/nic/NIC_2025_project.html>. [accessed 8 April 2009] (p. 29)

³⁵ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower*. New York: Basic Books, 2007, p. 202.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

'from monopoly to marketplace.'³⁸ And the marketplace has always been a competitive environment where interest is a primary guiding principle. This is the point which requires us to try to identify the main competitors in the emerging multipolar world of the twenty first century. But before we definitely switch to this discussion, it is important to explain why the main players in international arena are perceived, for the purposes of this study, primarily as competitors in international arena rather than as partners.

Despite the fact that cooperation on many political, security and especially economic issues is not only desirable but also necessary in the increasingly globalizing world, the logic of realism and geopolitics prevent major players from establishing an honest partnership in managing world affairs. For example, it is clearly in Russia's interest to cooperate with the US in overcoming the global economic crisis, for it has been severely affected by what has happened at the major financial markets, but Russia is, at the same time, strongly resistant to any effort by the US to strengthen its political or military positions in an areas close to the Russia's borders. In this situation, not the economic cooperation but geopolitical competition will determine the real status of US-Russian relations. As Fareed Zakaria correctly points out: 'Economics is not a zero-sum game – the rise of other players expands the pie, which is good for all – but geopolitics is a struggle for influence and control.'³⁹ And as already mentioned in the previous chapter, when the main postulates of the realist logic were discussed, the quantity of power in international relations is limited and a possibility of “relative gains” is a nightmare for most politicians and policy-makers from all sides of the world. This is particularly case when it comes to great power politics.

In this context, words by Joseph Stroup might sounds prophetic. He argues that 'because the US will insist on, and actively strive for, a reconsolidation of its shaky dominant global position, and because the East must insist on having greater voice and leverage for itself at the direct expense of the US position, and because neither side is willing or able to sufficiently soften its stance, then the agendas of East and West are mutually exclusive of each other, and thus no strategic

³⁸ Khanna, The Second World, p. xvi.

³⁹ Zakaria, The Post-American World, p. 44.

accommodation between them is possible.⁴⁰ However, his argument could be only partially accepted as true because it has one weakness. It seems that the author failed to notice that, in today's extremely complex world, neither the East nor the West are homogeneous entities, which makes the assessment of contemporary international relations much more difficult. The East as a serious concept has not existed in any meaningful form after the end of the Cold War, and even the concept of the West has mutated because, as Parag Khanna argues, 'the Cold War configuration of one West and two Europes is being replaced by one Europe but two Wests.'⁴¹ This remark should not be taken as a reason for optimism, but rather as a general criticism of any overly simplistic attempt to explain the modern international system and relations governing it.

The emerging multipolar system is most likely to be structured around three major centres of power (i.e. the US, the EU and China) and considerably influenced by policies of one *sui generis* great power (i.e. Russia) and few more regional powers. This hypothesis recognises, to a large extent, Parag Khanna's argument that 'China, Europe and the United States are the world's three natural empires: each geographically unified and militarily, economically, and demographically strong enough to expand.'⁴² But, at the same time, it highlights the importance of Russia's role in the system and also does not take the EU position, as one of the three empires, for granted.

2.1. The Russian factor

Russia's role in global and European affairs matters for few reasons. First, Russia's position in the international system cannot be reduced to the level of that of a regional power simply because Russia's territory borders the Arctic, Scandinavia, the Baltic, Central and Eastern Europe, the Black Sea region, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Far East and America – in other words, more than a half of the world. Eventually, Russia could be regarded as a regional power, if we consider Eurasia to be a single region. But, at the moment, Eurasia is only a geographical reference and it is far from being a single region in geopolitical terms. Second, Russia possesses a vast arsenal of nuclear weapons

⁴⁰ Joseph W. Stroupe, 'Little Prospect of East-West Accommodation', *Asia Times Online*, 6 February 2009, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Front_Page/KB06Aa01.html>. [accessed 9 April 2009]

⁴¹ Khanna, *The Second World*, p. 8.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

which makes its military might incomparable to that of any regional power. Third, Russia is probably the only self-sufficient country in the world in terms of available natural resources. And last but not least, Russia is a permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations Organisation, which secures the country's privileged status in international relations.

On the other hand, it is true that Russia cannot compete to any of the three major prospective “empires” in terms of demographical potential and economic power. Moreover, in this sense, its relative power, in relation to the US, EU and China, is likely to decline during the next decade. This is what prevents Russia from becoming one of the major centres of power. Nevertheless, Russia remains the great power *sui generis* which could be best defined as a status of less than empire but certainly much more than an ordinary regional power.

Russia's peculiar status in the international arena and its unpredictable power provide the country with considerable leverage in its relation to the United States, EU and China. George Friedman quite correctly explained the importance of Russian power when he said that: 'As soon as Russia dominates the centre of the Eurasian land mass, its force intrudes on Europe. Russia united with the rest of Europe is an overwhelming global force. Europe resisting Russia defines the global system. Russia fragmented opens the door for other geopolitical issues. But Russia united and powerful usurps the global stage.'⁴³ One can even go further by saying that a dominant empire in the emerging multipolar system will be the one which gains Russia as a partner. There are few reasons for this claim.

A potential US-Russia strategic partnership would mean effective control by these two states over most of the world's energy resources outside their territories. This includes energy deposits which are placed in the Caspian region, Central Asia and the Middle East. In such a way all other pretenders for the position of global leaders would become dependent on the US and Russia's good will for their basic requirement for reliable and sufficient energy supply. Not to mention that the military might of such a coalition would remain unchallenged for a long time, if not indefinitely.

⁴³ Friedman, '2008 and the Return of the Nation-State'

Furthermore, in the long run, the partnership with Russia is the only way for the United States to try to contain rising Chinese power from spreading throughout Asia and beyond. At the moment, America controls sea lines on which China is dependent for most of its exports, but without Russia, and its influence in Central Asia, containment of China is impossible. This coalition would also most probably bring Eastern Europe and the Balkans under the complete influence of the United States and Russia making the position of the rest of the EU as an independent actor in global affairs almost irrelevant.

Nevertheless, there is little prospect for this scenario to materialise due to the level of mistrust which characterizes relations between the two countries as well as incompatibility of their actual strategic agendas. In other words, as the Commission on US Policy toward Russia concluded in its March 2009 report: 'Breaking out of existing patterns of psychology and behaviour to change the US-Russian relationship will be difficult in both the United States and Russia and cannot succeed without serious commitments in Washington and Moscow.'⁴⁴

A Sino-Russian strategic partnership is a bit more likely for several reasons. First, both countries are interested in having good and stable mutual relations as a precondition for further economic development. Second, they have already proved to be able to cooperate at least in containing the US influence in their common neighbourhood, solving the border disputes and, to some extent, in the military and energy spheres.⁴⁵ Third, the institutional basis for deepening the cooperation and partnership between the two states already exists (i.e. the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, or SCO).⁴⁶ Fourth, both countries perceive the United States as the main geopolitical competitor and the only power which can seriously challenge their principal interests. This last point is mostly based on the logic that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" and it is not something constant that states can rely on and take for granted.

On the other hand, it is not very likely that, in the long run, Russia would feel comfortable as

⁴⁴ 'The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia', The Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, Washington, D.C., March 2009, <<http://www.nixoncenter.org/>>. [accessed 11 April 2009] (p. *iii*)

⁴⁵ See 'Russian and China Sign \$25bn Deal', BBC News, 17 February 2009, <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7895350.stm>>. [accessed 10 April 2009]

⁴⁶ See SCO Website, <<http://www.sectsco.org/EN/index.asp>>. [accessed 10 April 2009]

a junior partner to the far more powerful country with whom it shares the common border, and especially bearing in mind the demographic imbalance between the two countries along their border in the Far East. This is closely related to another problem which can appear in the process of deepening the cooperation and integration between Russia and China. The problem is that, for example, Russia will not be able to open its borders for the free flow of goods, labour and capital from China in a foreseeable future because its economy is not competitive compared to China's and its demographic perspective is not promising.

Therefore, while generally good and improving, Sino-Russian relations are unlikely to lead to the establishment of an institutionalised strategic block aimed at dominating global political, economic and military scenes without being encouraged by a major common threat.

Finally, the EU-Russia strategic partnership, and possible integration, is a promising option for both sides. There are many reasons in favour of this scenario. First, in the case of such a strategic partnership – followed by a gradual integration of the Russian Federation into EU structures – the EU would be able to solve some of the key problems which currently make its strategic positioning at the global stage vulnerable to the influence of the outer powers (i.e. Russia and the US). Some of these problems are security of energy supply, tensions and the “security dilemma” on its eastern borders with Russia, militarily inferior position in relation to the United States and lack of capability to effectively project its power across the regions of strategic importance. Moreover, this scenario would create the self-sufficient entity stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean and dominating the heartland of the contemporary world not only by its economic and military might but also by its “soft power”.⁴⁷ In today's world, which is characterized by asymmetrical resistance and the “global political awakening”, “soft power” is of critical importance for those who want to project its influence to the outside world because it provides them with a legitimacy. And, as Fareed Zakaria argues: 'Legitimacy allows one to set the

⁴⁷ “Soft power” lies in the ability to attract and persuade. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. For further reference, see Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Soft Power: the Means to Success in World Politics, New York: Public Affairs, 2004.

agenda, define a crisis, and mobilize support for policies.⁴⁸

From Russia's point of view, tightening its relations with the EU could also make sense. It would likely lead to the redefinition of Russia's relations with the US, NATO and less friendly EU countries, but also to the redefinition of relations between the EU and United States inside NATO. In this way, Russia would lessen US and NATO pressure on its borders and, at the same time, its concept of the "near abroad" would become complementary with the EU concept of the "close neighbourhood", opening up a perspective for mutually beneficial cooperation in a variety of fields. Of course, there will be always those who argue that 'Russia's sheer size, its power ambitions and its remaining structural problems prevent real integration into Europe.'⁴⁹ But it is also true that all Eastern European countries had – and some of them, as Bulgaria for example, still have – serious structural problems when they stepped up on the path which eventually led them toward EU integration. Furthermore, they had far less to offer to the EU at that time, in terms of potential economic opportunities, security, geopolitics, cultural heritage and multiculturalism, than Russia can offer today. As Vladimir Baranovsky correctly points out: 'Russia is the most European-oriented part of Europe's "near abroad".'⁵⁰ One can also accept an argument that 'Putin's strategic aim and fundamental belief still appear to be that Russia was, is and will be a great power, special and different from the other, largely regional, great powers in Europe', as well as that 'imperial thinking dies hard and may influence Russian foreign policy for many years to come', but it is not clear for how long Russia will be able to preserve its specific independent position and interests, remaining locked between increasingly powerful EU and China and at the same time strategically pressured by the US.⁵¹

2.2. Prospects for the EU to emerge as one of the three "empires"

There is no doubt that the EU has the necessary demographic, territorial, economic,

⁴⁸ Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, p. 247.

⁴⁹ Ingmar Oldberg, 'Foreign Policy Priorities under Putin: A tour d'horizon' in Jakob Hedenskog, Vilhelm Konnander, Bertil Nygren, Ingmar Oldberg and Christer Pursiainen, *Russia as a Great Power: Dimensions of Security under Putin*, New York: Routledge, 2005, pp. 29-56, (p. 39).

⁵⁰ Vladimir Baranovsky, 'Russia: A Part of Europe or Apart from Europe' in Archie Brown, *Contemporary Russian Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 429-42, (p. 431).

⁵¹ Oldberg, 'Foreign Policy Priorities under Putin', p. 51.

technological and, to some extent, military potential to become a major player in the international arena. However, what makes the EU's prospects unclear, is the fact that this potential, without being realised and constantly improved, might in ten to twenty years become insufficient to prevent a failure of one great geopolitical project. This geopolitical project – the positioning of the EU as a major actor in the multipolar international system of the twenty first century – could be, and most probably would be, challenged from two directions. Internally, because of its own inability to find internal consensus on the most important institutional, as well as fundamental issues of the common foreign and security policy. And externally, because of confronted geopolitical interests of US and Russia in Eurasia.

When discussing the challenge coming from inside the EU, there is an argument that, at the moment, 'the EU is truly in a sorry state of affairs.'⁵² But this argument holds water only if we draw our conclusion according to idealistic expectations regarding the EU's integration process. It is true that the process of constitutional reform is stuck at the moment. It is true that in some spheres (e.g. energy security) specific national interests still prevail over common EU approaches. It is also true that to some EU countries, when it comes to their security concerns, Washington seems closer than Brussels. But, the project of European integration has always been intended and expected to be gradual. And if we look at this process, we will see a positive evolution and constant improvement in terms of integration between member states and institutional build up. Sometimes the process goes faster, sometimes it goes slower, but progress continues to be made. Of course, in today's extremely complex world, it is important to clearly define one's strategy and desired end state. However, this is not a problem that applies only to the EU – it also seems that the US and Russia lack clear direction in their efforts to prove dominant status at the global stage.

Nevertheless, it makes sense to say that 'continued failure to convince sceptical publics of the benefits of deeper economic, political, and social integration and to grasp the nettle of a shrinking and ageing population by enacting painful reforms could leave the EU a hobbled giant

⁵² John Gillingham, *Design for a New Europe*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 6.

distracted by internal bickering and competing national agendas, and less able to translate its economic clout into global influence.⁵³ But the internal dynamics of the EU, as generally positive, will not be the major factor to challenge the EU intention to join China and the US at the pedestal of the emerging international system. The external factor is more likely to be the determining one.

Today, at the beginning of the twenty first century, some academics argue that 'the EU occupies a central and unique role in the governance of European security.'⁵⁴ However, one can say that its role is much more unique than it is central for at least two reasons. First, the EU, and Europe in general, is heavily and increasingly dependent on Russia for its energy supply. This means that, at the moment, in the context of European energy security, Moscow, and paradoxically, even Kiev are able to exert substantial power over Brussels. And second, but not less important, the EU is dependent on the US in terms of military security.

Barry Buzan correctly pointed out that 'the Balkan wars have seemingly shown that EU-Europe is still a partly penetrated region', and as he said: 'The United States is still a key actor and certain types of action – tough diplomacy and military action – materialise only when it so decides.'⁵⁵ In other words, the fact that the EU is becoming more confident when it comes to the issues of European and international security, does not make its role central. If it really wants to emerge as a central and full spectrum security actor, the EU must, as Emil Kirchner and James Sperling argue, 'acquire a military capability commensurate with Europe's economic wherewithal and consistent with its geopolitical interests.'⁵⁶ However, as Andrew Moravcsik says: 'A common European force with the capacity to wage high-intensity, low-casualty war around the globe remains a pipe dream.'⁵⁷ This is even truer in the light of the ongoing financial crisis. Such military reorganization and build-up would require substantial increases in military expenditure, which European countries have been highly resistant to in the post-Cold War era.

⁵³ 'Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World', p. 32.

⁵⁴ Emil Kirchner and James Sperling, EU Security Governance. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007, p. 244.

⁵⁵ Buzan and Wæver, Regions and Powers, p. 373.

⁵⁶ Kirchner and Sperling, EU Security Governance, p. 228.

⁵⁷ Andrew Moravcsik, 'Striking a New Transatlantic Bargain' in James F. Hoge Jr. and Gideon Rose, American Foreign Policy: Cases and Choices. New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2003, pp. 306-21, p. 315.

On the other hand, one cannot deny that 'the EU has become a projection-oriented actor, with increasing foreign policy responsibilities and an expanding involvement in international crises.'⁵⁸ At the moment, this trend is most visible in the Western Balkans, Black Sea region and the Caucasus, but it is still not clear if the EU's capacity for full-scale crisis management will follow its recent geopolitical ambitions. For example, if current disputes between the states of the Black Sea region (i.e. Russia, Ukraine and Georgia) escalate at some point into a major security crisis and military conflict, the "soft hand" of EU diplomacy will almost certainly be an insufficient tool for restoring order. The main problem is that once an international actor fails to provide security to those who expect protection from it, they will look to other actors for protection. The "others" in this case would be the US and Russia, whose confronted geostrategic and geopolitical interests are the main force which threatens the EU's ambitions. It is the force which the EU cannot control, balance or contain only by its "soft power" and economic might.

Drawing on the discussion about the ongoing changes in the structure of the international system, the following can be concluded. First, the emerging international system is a multipolar structure with three dominant centres of power and influence (i.e. the US, EU and China). Apart from these three "empires", Russia, as a *sui generis* great power, will have a decisive role in shaping the new reality of the world politics. There will be also a few more important regional powers (e.g. India, Brazil, Iran, Turkey), and their influence in international relations is likely to grow. Also, a dominant empire in the system will be the one which gains Russia as a partner. Finally, the position of the EU as one of the three empires is not granted due to the internal and external challenges that it will have to face in the near future. The internal challenges to its leading global position could emerge from its inability to find internal consensus on the fundamental issues of the common foreign and security policy, and external challenges are likely to emerge as a direct consequence of the confronted geopolitical and geostrategic interests of the US and Russia.

⁵⁸ Frédéric Charillon, 'Sovereignty and Intervention: EU's Interventionism in its 'Near Abroad' in Walter Carlsnaes, Helene Sjursen and Brian White, Contemporary European Foreign Policy. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2004, pp. 252-64, p. 252.

Chapter 3

The Legacy of the Cold War

'Great grand strategies are bounded by time and space, but they also transcend time and space. They all arise, as containment did, within particular periods, places, and sets of circumstances. They cannot be divorced, in this sense, from the historical contexts in which they originated. And yet, the adjective "great" implies relevance beyond context. It suggests that the strategy in question can serve as a guide in periods, places, and circumstances yet to come.'

*John Lewis Gaddis*⁵⁹

When speaking about the legacy of the Cold War people usually focus on the continued existence – both in Russia and the United States – of the Cold War perceptions of “the other side's” intentions regarding spheres of influence, military encirclement, political influence in European affairs, etc. One cannot deny that such focus is quite correct because it seems that the Cold War way of thinking still has a significant impact on US and Russian foreign policies. However, there is another element of this legacy which is rarely discussed but it could have been regarded as something positive. This positive element of the Cold War legacy is actually the idea of nuclear arms control and reduction, which was introduced as a part of the *détente* policies in the early 1970's.⁶⁰ However, this one positive element is certainly not enough to change generally negative impression about the impact of the Cold War legacy on the current state of the US-Russian relations.

New times always bring new rules, as well as new circumstances, but it is a matter of fact that memories die hard. In this sense, collective memories of a nation, in particular, are not an exception. Different value systems which were confronted during the Cold War era have left serious consequences on the way politicians from the West and Russia think about the intentions of the other side. Prejudices and stereotypes are widespread and the mass-media makes them even more pronounced. In this way, generations of young people are accepting the discourse and the way of thinking from past times, and the distrust remains present as a continuous characteristic of the

⁵⁹ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 380.

⁶⁰ *Détente* is a French term, meaning to relax or to ease. Used in the language of the international politics, it refers to the reduction in tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States during the 1970's.

relations between Russia and the US.

Of course, a new Cold War is not a desirable outcome for either country. As Professor Kissinger says: 'Given the extent to which their national interests have become interconnected, neither side can want, or indeed, afford a new Cold War.'⁶¹ This echoed the words by Sergei Lavrov, the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, who openly stated that 'one Cold War was enough.'⁶² However, one thing is clear in international relations – beyond rhetoric there is always something much more important which can be defined as a real political, military and economic interest.

This is the reason why some form of containment policy towards Russia has never been abandoned by the United States.⁶³ As Vladimir Baranovsky argues: 'By and large the Cold War logic of “keeping Russians out” [...] mutated into a double-track task: how to prevent Russians from becoming disengaged, without however actually letting them in.'⁶⁴ This was particularly visible during the Balkan Wars when Russia always had the main seats at the negotiating table, but its arguments and interests were mostly, or sometimes even completely ignored.

On the other side, as mentioned above, there is a positive aspect of the Cold War legacy. During the period from the late 1960's and early 1970's until the end of the Cold War, several agreements on the nuclear arms control and limitation, between the Soviet Union and the United States, were concluded. Some of these were Strategic Arms Limitation Treaties (SALT I and II), Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) and Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), and they were later followed by, the post-Cold War era, Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START I and II) and Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT). Today in the early 2009, the cooperation on the

⁶¹ Henry A. Kissinger, 'The Icon and the Eagle', *International Herald Tribune*, 20 March 2007, <<http://www.henryakissinger.com/articles/ih032007.html>>. [accessed 13 April 2009]

⁶² Sergei Lavrov, 'One Cold War Was Enough', *The Washington Post*, 25 February 2007, <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/23/AR2007022301702.html?referrer=emailarticle>>. [accessed 13 April 2009]

⁶³ The Cold War strategy of containment was aimed to prevent the spread of the Soviet Union's influence and communist ideologies. It included the use of diplomatic, military and economic means at the global scale. George F. Kennan, the prominent US diplomat and academic, is usually regarded as a “father” of this strategy because, throughout the Cold War, his, February 1946, “Long Telegram” to the US Secretary of State constituted the basis of all US policies associated with the containment strategy.

⁶⁴ Baranovsky, 'Russia', p. 431.

issue of the nuclear arms reduction seems to be the most promising, if not the only promising, aspect of the US-Russian relations.⁶⁵ Moreover, the nuclear arms reduction talks are one of the rare occasions on which representatives of the both sides are not only willing to listen but also to hear the arguments and concerns of the other side.

One can say that the Cold War legacy remains a serious obstacle for improving US-Russia relations. The widespread and deeply rooted Cold War way of thinking, but even more policies derived from it, are not likely to be fully abandoned any time soon due to the current level of mistrust between the two sides and their essentially confronted geopolitical interests in Europe.

Chapter 4

European Security from the Perspective of the main EU Countries and their Relations with Russia and the US

Looking back to the history of the “Old Continent”, one can say that the European security has always been a direct consequence of power-sharing arrangements between the major states operating in Europe. As long as the basic consensus on power-sharing existed, Europe could hope for a times of a relative peace, stability and prosperity. Otherwise, it was always drawn into bloody wars and geopolitical struggles with unpredictable and potentially dangerous outcomes. Today, at the beginning of the twenty first century, not much has fundamentally changed. The list of actors involved has slightly changed, but the fact that the issues of war, peace and prosperity in Europe are decided among not more than five or six major powers remains the reality. Probably the only important change which has happened recently is the emergence of the EU as a potentially unified and independent political and security actor. However, as Professor Barry Buzan correctly points out: 'The EU is a recent great power with even some superpower potential, but at the same time the “old” powers remain regional powers in many contexts.'⁶⁶ In other words, very often, these “old” powers (i.e. the UK, France, Germany and Italy) have divergent security and geopolitical priorities

⁶⁵ See 'Remarks by President Barack Obama', Hradcany Square, Prague, Czech Republic, The White House, 5 April 2009, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-President-Barack-Obama-In-Prague-As-Delivered/>. [accessed 14 April 2009]

⁶⁶ Buzan and Wæver, Regions and Powers, p. 375.

which makes the assessment of the EU as an independent security actor impossible.

4.1. British position and interests

In May 1953, in his speech to the House of Commons, Winston Churchill said that 'the British are *with* but not *of* Europe.'⁶⁷ Today, more than fifty years later, these words, by certainly one of the greatest statesmen of the twentieth century, still ring true. Despite the fact that the UK is one of the most powerful and influential EU member states, its foreign and security policies very often coincide more with those of Washington than with those of the main European powers (i.e. France and Germany). Furthermore, London remains highly resistant to join the EU monetary union and the Schengen zone which both present some of the greatest achievements in the process of EU integration not only in practical terms but also at the symbolic level. However, this does not mean that Britain lacks interest in influencing the EU policies and particularly those dealing with security issues. As Emil Kirchner and James Sperling argue, 'Britain considers the EU as channel for wielding global influence, for preventing regional mischief, and providing a potential security partner for the United States within the NATO framework.'⁶⁸ There are at least two main reasons which influence such a position.

First, the imperial past still influences the British consideration of the outside world and its own position in it. Despite the fact that, the same as France, the UK does not possess the capacity to play a role of one of the major independent centres of power and influence in the international arena, the country is still not ready to accept nothing less than the status of a great power. In this context, it perfectly makes sense for the UK to rely on the alliance with the US in terms of "hard power" and on its EU membership in terms of the "soft power" and legitimacy. For this reason, as long as US military might and EU global political and economic influence can work in support of the United Kingdom's great power status, the country is likely to act in favour of Anglo-American dominated Euro-Atlantic community.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Brian White, 'British Foreign Policy: Continuity and Transformation' in Ryan K. Beasley, Juliet Kaarbo, Jeffrey S. Lantis, and Michael T. Snarr (ed.), Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective: Domestic and International Influences on State Behavior, Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2002., pp. 24-48, p. 31.

⁶⁸ Kirchner and Sperling, EU Security Governance, p. 228.

Second, the preservation of NATO as a united US-EU military force is of crucial importance to the UK in terms of balancing the ambitions and power of other European powers (i.e. Russia, Germany and France). In this sense, not much has changed since the time when Lord Ismay, the first Secretary General of NATO, said that NATO's purpose is actually 'to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down.'⁶⁹ Also, US interests in this matter are almost identical to those of the Great Britain, which makes the UK its most reliable European partner. This is particularly the case when it comes to Russia-related issues, where the two countries do not appear to have any problems finding a common ground due to their traditional resistance to any sign of growing Russian influence in Europe. This anti-Russian attitude remains very strong even twenty years after the end of the Cold War, and one can say that the only thing that the British like about today's Russia is the Russian capital in UK banks and businesses. This animosity reflects on the current state of the UK-Russian relations which are constantly strained. Moreover, according to the recent reports, 'backed by Great Britain and Sweden, many Central European states are currently calling for the European Union to take a hard line against a "neo-imperialist" Russia.'⁷⁰ However, it is clear that, without coordination with the United States, support to new EU members in their policies toward Russia would have been not more than empty rhetoric. In other words, without US led NATO on the ground, the UK would not be able to exert its influence effectively even in Central and Eastern Europe.

Lacking its own resources to keep Russians out, Germans down and French ambitions under control, the UK naturally has to rely on the US and NATO. It could be concluded that Britain's engagement in European affairs is aimed more at preserving the Anglo-American interests than serving EU interests. This make even more sense if we accept the argument that 'only a minority of the British feel strong symbolic attachment to European integration as defined by the EU, while

⁶⁹ Quoted in Paul Hockenos, 'Rethinking US-Europe Relations: Is the EU Better for Obama than NATO?', SPIEGEL ONLINE, 9 March 2009, <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,612105,00.html>>. [accessed 19 April 2009]

⁷⁰ Alexander Rahr, 'Bridging the Divide: How Should the EU Reach Out to Russia?', SPIEGEL ONLINE, 4 March 2009, <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,611328,00.html>>. [accessed 19 April 2009]

NATO attracts positive symbolic resonance, as does Atlanticism.⁷¹ However, as the central stage of the modern world politics is moving from Europe eastwards, the UK will have to rethink its position on deeper integration into the EU, if it wants to avoid remaining an isolated island at the periphery of the emerging world.

4.2. French position and interests

Besides the UK, France is another European state which has successfully managed to maintain the status of a great power until the present day. Also, the same as the UK, France has still had a problem to accept the loss of its imperial power status. This makes, at the moment, French political, economic and military ambitions in the global arena incomparable to those of any other EU country apart from the UK. But no less than its northern neighbour, France today faces a problem that its global ambitions are not in accordance with its political, military and economic potentials. In the words of Philip Kramer, 'France continues to play a role in the world disproportionate to its size.'⁷² However, in its efforts to preserve a privileged position in international relations, France has developed a significantly different approach to issues concerning EU integrations and Euro-Atlantic partnership to that of the United Kingdom. While London primarily relies on the Anglo-American "special relationship" and NATO for preservation of its interests and privileged position in European affairs and international relations, one can say that 'at the core of contemporary French policy is the steadfast determination to strive for a multipolar world in which a French-led Europe will assert itself as a major power.'⁷³ In other words, Paris considers a strong EU under French leadership – rather than NATO – as the most reliable basis for the accomplishment of its geopolitical and economic interests.

However, French global ambitions and its vision of the EU as a major power have been seriously challenged not only internally, by its own lack of capacity to project power abroad, but also externally, because of US and Russian interests in Europe. This is why some authors, quite

⁷¹ White, 'British Foreign Policy', p. 41.

⁷² Philip Kramer, 'French Foreign Policy: The Wager on Europe' in Ryan K. Beasley, Juliet Kaarbo, Jeffrey S. Lantis, and Michael T. Snarr, Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective: Domestic and International Influences on State Behavior. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2002, pp. 49-69, p. 65.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

correctly, argue that 'France views the EU as the basis for a European and French-led challenge to American capriciousness and Russian instability.'⁷⁴ The country is aware of the fact that it would be very difficult to pursue the status of a major power in the international arena if the EU is dependent for its energy supply on a potentially hostile Russia. On the other hand, France is also well aware of the fact that 'Europe's security dependence on the United States not only weakens its freedom of action but reduces its bargaining position in other aspects of the relationship.'⁷⁵

In this context, speaking about Russia, it seems that France prefers to engage Moscow in some sort of partnership, which is still not clearly defined, rather than trying to contain it. The main reason for this position is certainly not French emotional attachment to Russia, but rather its economic interests and a need to have a reliable partner in order to balance American influence in Europe. Moreover, what Paris is particularly interested in is to gain access for its energy companies to Russia's vast energy resources.⁷⁶ This is in accordance with most of Russia's geopolitical preferences and its long-term needs for foreign investments but, at the same time, it is not in accordance with Washington's intentions to contain Russian influence in Europe and undermine Moscow's major energy projects, such as Nord Stream and South Stream. Also, the current French position on the issue of NATO enlargement to Ukraine and Georgia, is closer to that of Russia than that of the United States. In general, Franco-Russian relations are not perfect but one cannot deny that there is a potential for further improvement due to both sides' economic interests and resentment towards Washington's recent unilateral and hegemonic tendencies.

On the other hand, Franco-American relations could be described as an ambivalent partnership. There is no doubt that France and the United States are the key NATO members and therefore close allies. However, it seems that this partnership is also characterised by increasingly divergent geopolitical interests of the two sides, as well as by their different visions of the future and their respective roles in it.

⁷⁴ Kirchner and Sperling, *EU Security Governance*, p. 244.

⁷⁵ Kramer, 'French Foreign Policy', p. 67.

⁷⁶ See, for example, 'Nord Stream Partners Start Talks on Gaz de France Invitation', *RIA Novosti*, 10 April 2009, <<http://en.rian.ru/business/20090410/121051349.html>>. [accessed 21 April 2009]

From the US perspective, the main concern remains that 'some in the EU, especially France, want to build the EU into a genuine counterweight to the United States.'⁷⁷ But, although one can agree that France is not happy about the current level of the American influence in Europe, it is still more likely that Paris wants the French-led EU to become an equal partner, rather than a “genuine counterweight” to the United States. To what extent this US suspicion of France is strong and real could be portrayed by quoting some comments on the recent French decision to rejoin the NATO military command. For example, Sally McNamara, a Senior Analyst with the Heritage Foundation's Margaret Thatcher Center for Freedom, argues that 'France's reintegration into the command of NATO's most senior positions will give Paris an extraordinary degree of power and influence in the alliance' and, as she says: 'Providing France with such influence would weaken the Anglo-American Special Relationship, shifting power from Washington and London toward Continental Europe, while paving the way for the development of duplicate security arrangements within the European Union – all of which will undermine NATO.'⁷⁸ Of course, it is hard to generalise because there were also some opposite reactions stressing the importance of full-scale French participation in NATO military structures for the preservation and further improvement of transatlantic relations.

However, it is not only the US which has a problem to control increasing French geopolitical appetites – Germany has also occasionally had the same problem. The most recent example was French President Nicolas Sarkozy's proposal for establishing a Mediterranean Union.⁷⁹ The initiative was immediately marked by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel as potentially threatening to the “core” of the EU, and it seems that Mr. Sarkozy gave up his initial idea only after the German side expressed its concerns and made serious objections regarding this project. This is actually a good example in support of Mario Telò's argument that, 'in fact, it is Germany first and foremost that can transform and blend the French national independence tradition and the legitimate

⁷⁷ Trevor C. Salmon and Alistair J. K. Shepherd, *Toward a European Army: A Military Power in Making*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2003, p. 157.

⁷⁸ Sally McNamara, 'NATO 60th Anniversary Summit: An Agenda for American Leadership', *The Heritage Foundation*, 25 March 2009, <<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Europe/bg2254.cfm>>. [accessed 21 April 2009]

⁷⁹ See Honor Mahony, 'Merkel criticises Sarkozy's Mediterranean Union plans', *EUobserver*, 6 December 2007, <<http://euobserver.com/9/25284>>. [accessed 22 April 2009]

aspirations of other European countries into a common new effective multilateral power.⁸⁰ But the fact that other countries have occasional problems in dealing with France's "ego", does not make Washington less worried about France's long term intentions. Moreover, it is becoming clear that the major EU countries, at first France and Germany, are increasingly unwilling to play the junior partner role in their relations with the US.

4.3. Italian position and interests

Before discussing the German question, which is the crucial one at the moment, it is also important to briefly assess the Italian perspective on the future of the EU as well as on the American and Russian involvement in European affairs.

Italy is one of the most powerful and key EU countries. However, its role beyond the EU framework is quite limited. Apart from being the European Union member state, the country is also a member of the NATO and the Group of Eight (G8) industrialised nations. Nevertheless, it seems that the first reference when speaking about Italy is that the country is the EU member with most of its interests abroad focusing on the Balkans and Mediterranean region.

Italy has an interest in a stable Balkans for at least two reasons. The first reason is the security of energy supply, because all major energy routes are proposed to pass through this region. And second, Italy views the region as a desirable target in terms of its potential economic expansion. For the performance of its political and economic agenda – apart from its influence in the EU – Italy relies on the partnership with both the United States and Russia. The country cooperates with the US through the NATO (e.g. KFOR in Kosovo), and at the same time its energy company (ENI) is the main partner to the Russian energy giant Gazprom for realisation of some major energy projects in the Southeastern Europe (e.g. Blue Stream and South Stream).⁸¹ Generally, Rome does not perceive its simultaneous partnership with the US and Russia as a threat to the EU prosperity, and at the same time it remains devoted to the process of further EU expansion and integration.

⁸⁰ Mario Telò, *Europe: A Civilian Power?*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, p. 239.

⁸¹ For more on the Blue Stream and South Stream projects, see [Gazprom.com](http://www.gazprom.com), <<http://www.gazprom.com/eng/articles/article20001.shtml>>. [accessed 22 April 2009]

4.4. German position and interests

Like Italy, Germany seems to be equally eager to maintain good relations with both the United States and Russia. However, as a centrally placed and economically most powerful EU country, Germany has to take into consideration many more elements than Italy or any other EU state when dealing with Moscow and Washington. Memories from the Cold War era are still fresh and Berlin is constantly trying to avoid getting “stuck” again between confronted geopolitical interests of the two powers. On the other hand, its increasing power and authority inside the EU are imposing new responsibilities to Germany and requiring it to take on a leadership role. As Donald Bandler and Wess Mitchell argue: 'For the first time in more than a generation, seismic geopolitical shifts – a restive Russia, a stalling EU and an over-stretched America – have begun to change, perhaps fundamentally, the way Germany looks at itself and its role on the wider transatlantic stage.'⁸² It is not clear whether Berlin will manage to play a greater role successfully, not only because Germany 'does not yet have the economic, political or military resources necessary to achieve this', but also because its political and economic interests do not fit well with the US geopolitical agenda.⁸³ The most important issues in this context are certainly Russo-German relations, Germany's perspective on the future of NATO and its role in the international arena, as well as Berlin's plans for more self-confident and politically independent European Union.

When discussing Russo-German relations, two things particularly matter – geography and energy. As George Friedman points out: 'France has Poland and Germany between itself and Russia. Britain has that plus the English Channel, and the United States has all that plus the Atlantic Ocean. The farther away from Russia one is, the more comfortable one can be challenging Moscow. But Germany has only Poland as a buffer.'⁸⁴ In other words, any conflict between Russia and an EU country which borders Russia would necessarily have direct and immediate security consequences

⁸² Donald K. Bandler and A. Wess Mitchell, 'Ich Bin Ein Berliner?', *National Interest*, 22 January 2009, <<http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=20664>>. [accessed 25 April 2009]

⁸³ Simon Green, Dan Hough, Alister Miskimmon and Graham Timmins, *The Politics of the New Germany*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008, p. 163.

⁸⁴ George Friedman, 'The German Question', *Stratfor*, 6 October 2008, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20081006_german_question>. [accessed 25 April 2009]

on Germany. Such instability would place Berlin in an extremely difficult economic and geopolitical situation having in mind its obligations based on its status of one of the major NATO and EU members as well as its exposure to the potential flow of refugees, cut off in energy supply and potential loss of East European and Russian markets. This is why the German Foreign Minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, argues that despite the fact that 'Russia is and will remain a difficult partner', it is only possible to 'achieve pan-European security by working with, and not against, Russia.'⁸⁵

However, it would be wrong to conclude that the fear of potential Russian aggressiveness is the main and guiding motive for Germany in its relation to Russia. For example, Berlin is very interested in cooperating with Russia in the sphere of energy security for at least two reasons. First, it desperately needs natural gas to maintain its economic development. In this context, Germany is one of the few EU countries – together with Italy – which perceive Russia as a reliable supplier. And second, the energy business is generally highly lucrative and gaining the access to the vast Russian energy resources or being the main partner to the Russian energy companies in developing new strategic energy projects (e.g. the Nord Stream) brings about promising business opportunities for German energy companies. Apart from this, a large Russian market is one of the primary targets for Germany's export-oriented economy.⁸⁶ Moreover, the political component of the Russo-German partnership is very important and it is mostly aimed at balancing the US influence in Eastern Europe and beyond.

However, this tightening of economic and political relations between Berlin and Moscow has a considerable impact on Central and Eastern European states' perception of their own security because 'closer Russo-German relations are often interpreted as ignoring the interests of smaller countries.'⁸⁷ This is particularly visible in the Baltic states, Poland and Ukraine, which represent the strategic and geographic buffer zone between Germany and Russia. This territory, stretching from

⁸⁵ Frank-Walter Steinmeier, 'We Face New Threats and Challenges', SPIEGEL ONLINE, 2 April 2009, <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,616969,00.html>>. [accessed 25 April 2009]

⁸⁶ For more on German exports, see 'BDI Foreign Economic Report', BDI – Federation of German Industries, Issue 01, 22 January 2008, <<http://www.bdi-online.de/en/download/forecorepl08.pdf>>. [accessed 25 April 2009]

⁸⁷ Green, Hough, Miskimmon and Timmins, The Politics of the New Germany, p. 170.

the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, is the main geopolitical battlefield in today's Europe and most likely the area where the future of the EU and its status in the emerging international system will be decided not later than until 2017 when the status of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol will become clear.

Because the states of this region are constantly afraid of Russia and increasingly suspicious of Germany's willingness to protect them in case of a major security threat from the East, a new window of opportunities is opening up for the US to project its political and military influence in this area. As George Friedman correctly points out, 'as Russia gets bolder, and as Germany remains too unwilling to stand Moscow's way due to its energy dependence on Russia, countries on the EU periphery will be shopping for the new relationships, particularly with the United States.'⁸⁸ At the same time, Germany will find itself in an increasingly difficult position due to its opposition to the American perspective on NATO enlargement to Ukraine and Georgia as well as its geopolitical imperative to preserve the unity of the EU and good relations with Russia.

From the German perspective, the main problem with the proposed NATO enlargement to Ukraine and Georgia is that, as Friedman argues, 'Germany does not want NATO drawing it into adventures that are not in Germany's primary interest, much less into a confrontation with Russia.'⁸⁹ In Fareed Zakaria's interpretation, the logic of classical realism implies that 'the best solution to the perennial problem of the uncertainty of international life is for a state to increase its control over that environment through the persistent expansion of its political interests abroad – but only when the benefits exceed the costs.'⁹⁰ It could be said that the negative German cost-benefit estimation in the case of Ukraine's and Georgia's accession to NATO has challenged American primacy inside the transatlantic community for the first time since the end of the Second World War. This situation as well as disagreements over the respective contributions to the NATO mission in Afghanistan, its

⁸⁸ George Friedman, 'The United States, Germany and Beyond', *Stratfor*, 30 March 2009, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20090330_united_states_germany_and_beyond>. [accessed 25 April 2009]

⁸⁹ George Friedman, 'Munich and the Continuity Between the Bush and Obama Foreign Policies', *Stratfor*, 9 February 2009, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20090209_munich_continuity_between_bush_and_obama_foreign_policies>. [accessed 25 April 2009]

⁹⁰ Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, p. 20.

length and its proposed goals even led some authors to conclude that 'the gap between US and European interests is starting to look as wide as the Atlantic itself.'⁹¹ Although there are also some more optimistic estimations of the current state of the Euro-American relations, it is very likely that Germany will not give up any time soon its position that, as the German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said, 'more members, but less security [...] would be in no one's interest, neither of the Alliance nor in the interest of candidate countries.'⁹²

On the other hand, it is also true that 'Germany alone cannot shape Russian behaviour and must seek to institutionalise relations in a wider European and transatlantic context to prevent tensions becoming ingrained.'⁹³ However, it is becoming more likely that, in the forthcoming years, Berlin will increasingly rely on Franco-German EU structures than on NATO in its efforts to engage Russia in the new and constructive partnership with the European Union.

Finally, when discussing Berlin's geopolitical agenda, one cannot avoid mentioning the central position of a strong EU as the most promising basis for establishing a greater German role on the global stage. Because of similar reasons as Britain and France – the lack of sufficient economic, political and military might – Germany has to look for the wider institutional framework in order to position itself as one of the leading world powers. Despite the fact that the country remains open for cooperation with both the US and Russia, it seems that Berlin identifies itself first and foremost with the European Union, which is supposed to play the pivotal role in the new multipolar world of the twenty first century.

In short, it could be argued that because 'it still has not defined its position in many relevant areas of global risk policy', the EU remains vulnerable to specific geopolitical and security interests of the major actors involved in European affairs.⁹⁴ Apart from the UK, France and Germany, these major actors include, the United States and Russia.

⁹¹ Reva Bhalla, 'Obama's Diplomatic Offensive and the Reality of Geopolitics', *Stratfor*, 10 March 2009, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20090309_obamas_diplomatic_offensive_and_reality_geopolitics>. [accessed 25 April 2009]

⁹² Steinmeier, 'We Face New Threats and Challenges'

⁹³ Green, Hough, Miskimmon and Timmins, *The Politics of the New Germany*, p. 170.

⁹⁴ Eberhard Sandschneider, 'The Importance of Being Europe: Why Obamamania Isn't the Answer', *SPIEGEL ONLINE*, 23 February 2009, <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,609411,00.html>>. [accessed 26 April 2009]

Chapter 5

The US Interests in Europe

Many books assessing American interests and its involvement in European affairs have been written since the end of the Cold War. Moreover, some of the most influential academics of our time have dealt with this issue in an effort to set the agenda for the future of transatlantic relations. It has been a general impression that most of them would agree that the US presence and influence in Europe are of crucial importance in preserving the dominant position for the United States at the global level. According to Henry Kissinger, 'the United States separated from Europe would become, geopolitically, an island off the shores of Eurasia.'⁹⁵ Zbigniew Brzezinski goes even further by arguing that 'Europe is America's essential geopolitical bridgehead on the Eurasian continent' and that 'America's geostrategic stake in Europe is enormous' because 'the Atlantic alliance entrenches American political influence and military power directly on the Eurasian mainland.'⁹⁶ However, one can say that since the time when these two prominent political pundits wrote these lines, the relations and balance of power among the main world powers has changed and therefore American interests in Europe have changed too. It seems that, since recently, fundamental US geopolitical and military interests in Europe has moved eastwards to the Eastern and Southeastern Europe, the Black Sea region and the Caucasus, while its interests in the western part of the continent remain more economic in their nature or related to the problem of decreasing American legitimacy in the international arena.

From its foundation to the present day, NATO has been the most important channel for projecting US military power and influence in Europe. Until the end of the Cold War, the primary function of NATO was collective defence in the case of an attack, launched by a non-member state, on any NATO member state.⁹⁷ After the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, as well as the end of the Cold War, the US has taken a significant effort to maintain the organization

⁹⁵ Henry A. Kissinger, *Does America need a Foreign Policy*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001, p. 52.

⁹⁶ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*. New York: Basic Book, 1997, p. 59.

⁹⁷ For further reference, see 'The North Atlantic Treaty', Washington D.C., 4 April 1949, <<http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/treaty.htm>>. [accessed 28 April 2009]

and to find a new role for it.⁹⁸ As a result, NATO has been transformed from military alliance into a political and security organization.

The US retained the biggest influence in the organization due to its military potential and ability to react promptly to security challenges. Those capabilities are incomparable to any other state's military capacities, which became obvious in 1999 during the Kosovo campaign.⁹⁹ The United States' predominant position inside NATO provides the country with enormous political and military influence in European affairs. This is probably the main reason for the US to be unwilling to encourage any project on the improving of the independent EU's military capabilities, although it strongly supports European political and economic unity – as long as this unity works for American interests. In other words, the US does not want a European defence capability that 'comes into being first *within* NATO but then grows *out* of NATO and finally grows *away* from NATO.'¹⁰⁰ Washington's logical interest is to preserve the current situation – which makes European countries dependent on US military capacities – and even to improve and expand it through the NATO enlargement process.

The NATO enlargement process increases US influence in the region by ensuring that new member states of NATO, and those which are involved in the process of joining NATO, are highly dependent on America's assistance in the process of reforming their armies and security structures. This is an obvious source of influence which can be used in the future as a base for securing favourable bilateral agreements. The most recent examples for this are negotiations on the deployment of BMD components with the Czech Republic (radar) and Poland (interceptors), as well as the US-Bulgarian agreement from April 2006.¹⁰¹ At the moment, further NATO enlargement

⁹⁸ For further reference, see 'The Rome Declaration', Rome, 8 November 1991, <<http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b911108b.htm>>. [accessed 28 April 2009]

⁹⁹ See Phillip S. Meilinger, 'Force Divider', *Foreign Policy*, No. 128, January-February 2002, pp. 76-7.

¹⁰⁰ Strobe Talbott, 'America's Stake in a Strong Europe', remarks at a conference on the future of NATO, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 7 October 1999.

¹⁰¹ 'On 28th April, 2006, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Ivaylo Kalfin and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice signed the Defence Cooperation Agreement, a ten-year agreement that allows for up to 2,500 US troops to be stationed in Bulgaria. During rotation, troop number may increase to 5,000 for a period of 30 days. The American troops will be stationed in three Bulgarian bases: the Novo Selo Training Area, the Bezmer Air Base, and the Graf Ignatievo Air Base'. Quoted from Alejandro W. Sanchez, 'Bulgaria, US Bases and Black Sea Geopolitics', *Power and Interest News Report (PINR)*, 29 August 2007,

is one of the most problematic issues in European security because Russia perceives it as a serious threat to its own security, the EU is unable to find consensus on this issue and the US seems to be very eager to include Ukraine and Georgia into the alliance.

Moreover, America is the biggest supplier of all NATO countries in the field of conventional weapons and military technologies. This is very important not just because of the substantial income which the US companies derive from that business, but also because in such a way importer countries are becoming highly dependent on exporter's technologies in the long term. Considering this fact, one of the most important goals of the US military diplomacy in Europe is to counter the approach of the Russian military-industrial complex to this very competitive market.¹⁰² However, this issue is not controversial only from the Russian point of view because in some major EU countries there are 'continuing fears about the danger of US money and technology dictating European military requirements and the danger of the United States becoming the monopoly supplier of certain types of equipment, especially in the high-tech area.'¹⁰³

Furthermore, even twenty years after the end of the Cold War, from the American policymakers' perspective, 'NATO still remains as an insurance policy against a new Russian imperialism.'¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, Moscow is more likely to perceive NATO as an insurance policy to preserve the US hegemony in the international arena. One can say that both sides' argumentation equally makes sense. At the same time, it is hard to deny that, 'as much as it has struggled to reinvent itself since the days of the East-West conflict, NATO remains a US-dominated military alliance with a Cold War mindset.'¹⁰⁵ However, from the American perspective, one serious problem arises on the horizon – some of the main EU states, France and Germany at first, are unwilling to see the worsening of the EU-Russia relations due to US pressures. The reason is not only increasingly different perception of the security threats between the United States and these two

http://www.pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=678&language_id=1. [accessed 28 April 2009]

¹⁰² See Viktor Litovkin, 'An Umbrella for Europe', *Russia Profile*, 1 November 2007,

<http://www.russiaprofile.org/page.php?pageid=International&articleid=a1193917983>. [accessed 28 April 2009]

¹⁰³ Salmon and Shepherd, *Toward a European Army*, p. 196.

¹⁰⁴ Kissinger, *Does America need a Foreign Policy*, p. 52.

¹⁰⁵ Hockenos, 'Rethinking US-Europe Relations'

countries but also the energy security as one of the most controversial issues in the world politics today.

From the Russian perspective, the control over energy resources is one of the key factors underpinning the ongoing transformation of the international system from unipolar to multipolar. As Sergei Lavrov points out, 'the establishment of new global centres of influence and growth, a more balanced distribution of resources for development, and control over natural wealth, represent the foundation for a multipolar world order.'¹⁰⁶ The problem is that the order has not been established yet, and the main actors in the international arena are more likely to "negotiate" a new set of rules directly on the ground than around the tables of international organisations. The main competitors – sometimes unofficially perceived by each other as enemies – in the energy field are certainly Russia and the US. They fight their "battles" all over the world, but Europe, the Caspian region and Central Asia are in the focus of their strategies.

In Europe, disputes among Russia and the US are more about the possible future influence of each actor on EU states than about energy itself. From the US point of view, energy is tool which Russia will possibly try to use in order to exert its influence and to promote anti-American policies. This is unacceptable for America because of the strategic importance which its dominant role in Europe has for exerting its influence and power abroad. Therefore, as stated in the document by the Commission on US Policy toward Russia, 'the United States has a strategic interest in preventing Russia, or any other power, from dominating the region bridging Europe, Asia and the Middle East and in strongly supporting the independence and sovereignty of countries there.'¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, it is not clear if the best way to support independence and sovereignty of one country is to make it completely dependent on your own military protection.

It could be even argued that smaller nations, living in areas of strategic importance to great powers, have never been independent from foreign political, economic and military influences and there is a little prospect that this reality of international relations will ever change. For this reason,

¹⁰⁶ Sergei Lavrov, 'The Present and the Future of Global Politics', *Russia in Global Affairs*, No.2, April-June 2007, <<http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/numbers/19/1102.html>>. [accessed 28 April 2009]

¹⁰⁷ 'The Right Direction for US Policy toward Russia', p. 13.

despite all idealistic rhetoric, one can say that what is currently going on between the US and Russia in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Black Sea region and the Caucasus is a struggle for zones of influence.

Mr. M. K. Bhadrakumar, former ambassador of India in Uzbekistan and Turkey, correctly listed some consistent geopolitical objectives of the US in East Europe – 'pressing ahead with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's expansion into the region; making the region a bridge for further NATO expansion into the Caucasus; systematically rolling back Russian influence; setting up US military bases; promoting regional alliances against Russia; and creating strategic space between Germany and its Russian partner.'¹⁰⁸ In addition, one of the primary goals of the US is to establish alternative routes for supplying Europe with energy from Central Asian states by avoiding Russian and Iranian territories.

At the moment, America strongly opposes all major Russian energy projects in Europe and especially the South Stream pipeline project. Moreover, 'Washington has robustly worked for advancing its proposals for the construction of oil and gas pipelines linking Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to Europe across the Caspian Sea; new pipelines that would connect the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline with the Baku-Erzurum gas pipeline (making Turkey an energy hub for Europe).'¹⁰⁹ Of course, America is aware of the fact that for Russia energy is not just a tool for exerting power, but also the main source of income. Considering this, one can say that the very essence of Russian wellbeing is endangered by the abovementioned US approach.

However, it is not only Russian interests which are threatened by the US geopolitical and security strategies. Washington also strongly opposes any cooperation between the EU and Iran on energy issues in order to economically and politically isolate this country. This makes Europe's position very difficult because Iran is emerging as probably the only alternative supplier of natural gas to the EU if the South Stream pipeline comes into existence.

¹⁰⁸ M. K. Bhadrakumar, 'A Pipeline into the Heart of Europe', *Asia Times Online*, 30 June 2007, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/central_asia/if30ag01.html>. [accessed 28 April 2009]

¹⁰⁹ M. K. Bhadrakumar, 'Russia, Iran Tighten the Energy Noose', *Asia Times Online*, 22 December 2007, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/IL22Ag02.html>. [accessed 28 April 2009]

Aside from this, America has strong economic interests in Europe. This is very important because economic power is the source and base of the military and political power of each country. As stated by the US Commercial Service: 'Most large US corporations have operations in Europe, and Europe is the largest source of foreign direct investments in the United States. Also, Europe is the main trading partner for US.'¹¹⁰ This is not a one-way street and the major EU economies (e.g. German) have an enormous interest in the US market. Due to this fact, it seems that – more than shared geopolitical and military goals – economic interests will present a reliable basis for maintaining the transatlantic cooperation in years to come.

Another argument to support the US devotion to the transatlantic unity, even when it does not function as expected, is the fact that 'the United States continue to depend on the support of a broad coalition of states within NATO to pursue its foreign policy priorities.'¹¹¹ This dependence is certainly not based on American need for the military or any other material assistance because, as Sten Rynning correctly noticed, 'the US is the strategic actor par excellence with a specific vision of itself and considerable resources, including military force, to back policy in all phases of conflict management and war.'¹¹² What America actually needs from its NATO allies is to provide legitimacy for the use of its power because, as recent example of the Iraq War proves, 'winning a peace is much harder than winning a war.'¹¹³

On the other hand, Washington and Moscow will have a serious problem to find a common ground on which they could build better relations. One can even say that there is a little prospect that the US-Russian relations will fundamentally improve any time soon due to confronted interests and mistrust which have been the main characteristics of the relations between the two countries for a very long time. Some believe that the improvement is possible because in the both countries the new leaders have recently been elected and they seem to be more flexible or moderate than their

¹¹⁰ United States of America Department of Commerce - US Commercial Service, <<http://www.buyusa.gov/europe/opportunities.html>>. [accessed 28 April 2009]

¹¹¹ Christian Schweiger, *Britain, Germany, and the Future of the European Union*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 38.

¹¹² Sten Rynning, 'A Fragmented External Role: The EU, defence policy, and New Atlanticism' in Michèle Knodt and Sebastian Princen, *Understanding the European Union's External Relations*, London and New York: Routledge, 2003, pp. 19-34, p. 28.

¹¹³ Moravcsik, 'Striking a New Transatlantic Bargain', p. 306.

predecessors used to be. Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that, as stated in the report by the Commission on US Policy toward Russia, 'despite the good relations previously enjoyed by US and Russian leaders, their personal chemistry never produced a successful joint plan of action or sufficient practical guidance to Washington's or Moscow's bureaucracies.'¹¹⁴ At the moment, it seems that France and Germany are more willing to moderate the interests and behaviour of the United States and Russia than their respective leaders. And even if they were more willing, the fear of relative gains would have prevented them from making significant breakthroughs.

Generally, US interests in Europe can be summarised as follows. First, America wants to establish a predominant, long-term influence on new EU member states, directly in the sphere of military affairs and indirectly in political affairs. Ultimate goals of this policy are the establishment of a pool of client states which will secure the vital interests of the US through the EU institutions and the containment of Russia's influence in Europe. The second important goal of US foreign policy is to make relations between main European states – especially Germany – and Russia more complicated. Major European states are now in a position where they have to decide whether to support Russian arguments or arguments of the US and their EU partners on issues such as NATO enlargement or Ballistic Missile Defence. From the point of view of those countries (e.g. France, Italy and Germany) which intend to maintain good relations with Russia and develop more independent European foreign and security policies, neither of these two options is beneficial. The third US objective is to focus Moscow's attention, and its resources, on efforts to resolve problems close to Russian borders, and in that way to prevent Russia from spreading its influence into other regions of world. The fourth strategic goal of the US foreign policy in Europe is to establish alternative routes for supplying Europe with energy from Central Asian states by avoiding Russian and Iranian territories because Washington understands that economic influence can be transformed into political power. In this context, undermining the South Stream pipeline project is priority. Finally, the US wants to minimise Russia's influence in the Black Sea and Caucasus in order to

¹¹⁴ 'The Right Direction for US Policy toward Russia', p. 7.

establish control over this strategic area bridging Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia.

Chapter 6

Russian Interests in Europe

When discussing Russian interests abroad, one should notice at least three very important things. First, Moscow's primary objective is to establish the zone of privileged political, economic and military interests in its "near abroad". Second, as Lauren Goodrich and Peter Zeihan correctly point out: 'Unlike its main geopolitical rival, the United States, Russia borders most of the regions it wishes to project power into, and few geographic barriers separate it from its targets.'¹¹⁵ And third, Russia's strategy for achieving its fundamental interests abroad is very often much more controversial than the interests themselves.

There are two crucial reasons for Russia to focus its attention on its closest neighbourhood or the so-called "near abroad". First of them is Russia's intention to establish buffers and in such way to separate itself from the potential adversaries. This is mainly because, as George Friedman says: 'Russia's defining characteristic is its indefensibility. It counts no rivers, oceans, swamps or mountains marking its borders – it relies solely on the relatively inhospitable climate and its forests for defence.'¹¹⁶ Therefore, buffer zones around its borders are still perceived by Moscow as a policy of insurance against a potential invasion by hostile powers. The second reason is that, as Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver argue: 'At present, Russian policy is much driven by the aspiration to remain in the global rank, i.e., to avoid falling to regional power status. Thus, questions in the near abroad are defined as a problem in relation to global position.'¹¹⁷ In other words, as long as Moscow controls energy routes for energy supply of Europe, and as long as it has a strong influence in the regions of strategic importance to all major actors in the international arena, Russia's great power status is preserved.

¹¹⁵ Lauren Goodrich and Peter Zeihan, 'The Financial Crisis and the Six Pillars of Russian Strength', *Stratfor*, 3 March 2009, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20090302_financial_crisis_and_six_pillars_russian_strength>. [accessed 3 May 2009]

¹¹⁶ George Friedman, 'The Geopolitics of Russia: Permanent Struggle', *Stratfor*, 15 October 2008, <http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/20081014_geopolitics_russia_permanent_struggle>. [accessed 3 May 2009]

¹¹⁷ Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, p. 435.

In 2007, in an analysis by the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), four key elements of Russia's strategy towards the EU were stressed. These four are: 'Bilateralising relations with most EU member states, strengthening Russian influence in the post-Soviet space, revising the political, legal and economic basis of relations with the Union, and promoting asymmetric interdependence with a divided EU.'¹¹⁸ Not much could be added to this list but it is important to say something about the interests which are underpinning Moscow's strategy.

Politically, Russia attempts to establish good bilateral relations with EU countries and especially with some of the main EU's member states (Germany, France, Italy). From the Russian point of view, the most important partner among EU's members is certainly Germany. There are several reasons for this. First of all, Germany is the most powerful and influential member of the EU, and the biggest single market for exports of Russian natural gas in Europe. Second, friendly relations with Germany strengthen Russia's position towards less friendly EU countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania). Third, a close relationship between Russia and Germany always disturbs the US, which is perceived from the Russian side as the main obstacle to its interests in Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet area. As Professor Kissinger pointed out: 'Without the United States, Germany would lack an anchor to restrain national impulses (even as a member of the European Union); both Germany and Russia would be tempted to view each other as their best foreign policy option.'¹¹⁹ Also, France has been seen from the Russian point of view as a relatively reliable partner in balancing American influence in Europe. Russia is fully aware of the fact that 'without Franco-German cooperation, Europe cannot find agreement', and that is why good bilateral relations with these two countries are of crucial importance to Moscow.¹²⁰ Finally, Russia has successfully engaged Italy as a major partner in a realisation of its strategic energy projects in the Southeastern Europe (i.e. the South Stream and Blue stream), despite the fact that most EU countries, as well as the US, are advocating alternative energy projects (e.g. Nabucco).

¹¹⁸ Mark Leonard and Nicu Popescu, 'A Power Audit of EU-Russia Relations', European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), 7 November 2007, p. 13., <http://ecfr.eu/content/entry/eu_russia_relations/>. [accessed 1 May 2009]

¹¹⁹ Kissinger, Does America need a Foreign Policy, p. 52.

¹²⁰ Kramer, 'French Foreign Policy', p. 65.

In the military sphere, Russia's most important goal is to stop the enlargement of NATO. At the moment, Russia is not worried because of the military potential of states which have already joined NATO, or of those which attempt to join it, but rather because of an increased American military presence near Russian borders. This is a reasonable assessment. Many people would certainly argue that no one intends to invade Russia and that such a scenario is hard to imagine considering the country's nuclear deterrence potential. However, as George Friedman pointed out: 'From the Russian point of view, history is filled with dramatic changes of intention, particularly in the West, and the unthinkable occurs to Russia once or twice a century.'¹²¹ Also, if we take a historical perspective, we will remember in which way America reacted on the Russian military presence in Cuba in 1962.¹²² Compare to that reaction, one can say that, albeit within a very different global context, the Russian stance regarding the proposed US deployment of Ballistic Missile Defence components in the Czech Republic and Poland is still quite moderate and unsurprising.

Secondly, Russia wants to enlarge its stake in the European arms market. Russia is especially interested in creating – in the cooperation with other European countries – a system of non-strategic or tactical missile defence, for protection of European territory from intermediate and short-range missiles. Russian President Vladimir Putin suggested this type of cooperation with Europe when he visited Italy in 2000. Since that time, military missile defence specialists have already met several times both in Brussels and in Moscow. According to statements made by few Russian generals further joint work has been limited by the non-constructive attitude of their US colleagues. They said that the United States is trying to pressure Europe to use its surface-to-air systems, Patriot PAC-2 and Patriot PAC-3, as the main missile defence system, even though they are significantly inferior to Russian missile defence systems in their performance characteristics.¹²³ Of course, arms sale is not only military but also political and economic issue and cooperation in

¹²¹ Friedman, 'The Geopolitics of Russia'

¹²² See Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Noguee, The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interests, 3rd edition, New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc., 2005, p. 87-8.

¹²³ See Litovkin, 'An Umbrella for Europe'

this field can considerably improve the level of trust between the involved sides. As Robert Jervis says: 'Both the fear of dependence and the concern about relative gains are lessened when states expect to remain at peace with each other.'¹²⁴ However, it seems that Russia and the EU still do not know what to expect from each other.

Furthermore, in the current phase, the Russian economy does not produce many products which can be successfully offered to the European market. However Russia is a major producer of at least two products which Europe desperately needs – natural gas and oil. The lack of energy resources can be the source of dependence in the same way as possession of energy resources can be the tool of influence in international relations. European and Russian politicians know this very well, and mistrust between these two sides is often present. However, some European countries are more open for cooperation with Russia than others, and those are usually the key EU states (Germany, France, and Italy).¹²⁵ The absence of a common European energy policy significantly strengthens Russia's position in negotiation with any particular EU member state. In the sphere of European energy security, Russia counts on EU's disunity in a similar way as the US does in the field of military affairs. As stated by the ECFR: 'Although the EU is a far bigger power than Russia in conventional terms – its population is three and a half times the size of Russia's, its military spending ten times bigger, its economy 15 times the size of Russia's – Europeans are squandering their most powerful source of leverage: their unity.'¹²⁶ This is the point where the strategy applied by Russia in its relation to the EU should be assessed.

As stated in the introduction, foreign policy could be defined as a complex of measures, instruments, and ways which sovereign states use in their interactions with other sovereign countries and international organizations in order to achieve their national interests. Foreign policy includes the use of diplomacy, military, economic, and cultural potentials, and even sport if we

¹²⁴ Robert Jervis, 'A Usable Past for the Future' in Michael J. Hogan (ed.), The End of the Cold War: Its Meaning and Implications, Cambridge, New York and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 257-68, p. 259.

¹²⁵ Western Europe is the key export market for Russian gas. Gazprom supplies around 1/3 of Western Europe's gas imports. The largest importers of Russian gas are Germany, Italy, Turkey and France., see <<http://www.gazprom.com/eng/articles/article20160.shtml>>. [accessed 1 May 2009]

¹²⁶ Leonard and Popescu, 'A Power Audit of EU-Russia relations', p. 2.

consider prestige in the international community as a legitimate national interest. Why does this matter? Simply because accusing Russia of using its energy potential as a political tool is becoming common place in Western media and political circles. The problem is that the same media and politicians do not seem to acknowledge that other countries, or their own countries, are behaving in the same way when their national interests are at stake. The economic embargo imposed by the US against Cuba is a clear example. There is no doubt that 'Russia's emphasis on maintaining and if possible enhancing its great-power status has led it to exert considerable pressure on the EU for recognition of that status, and to try to exert influence through not only diplomatic but also other means, including the "energy weapon".'¹²⁷ However, if one wishes to be objective, one can say that Russia just relies on its comparative advantages in its relationship with other international subjects.

Today, more than anytime in the past, Russia's energy potential is its comparative advantage in the international arena. As Fadel Gheit, a senior oil analyst with Oppenheimer & Co in New York, told *New Europe*: 'Energy now is the weapon of the day. It is no longer missiles; it is energy. Those who have energy resources are in the driver's seat. Energy is scarce; energy is precious; energy is the backbone of the global economy; and obviously the countries that have more control of energy resources enjoy an envious type of position. It goes hand in hand with policies and politics, and so Russia is playing the energy part.'¹²⁸ In other words energy is a very efficient and powerful tool for Russia to use in support of its foreign policy.

Europe is the primary market for Russian natural gas. Russia supplies almost half the EU's gas imports and demand is rising from year to year. In that sense Europe is becoming highly dependent on Russia. According to Mr. Bhadrakumar, 'in Europe's energy mix, the dependence on oil imports by 2030 will be as high as 94 percent of its needs, and on natural gas as high as 84 percent.'¹²⁹ This leads us to conclude that, in the long term, Russia can rely on energy as a strong point of leverage in its relation with the EU.

¹²⁷ McGuire and Smith, *The European Union and the United States*, p. 220.

¹²⁸ 'It's Putin's pipeline now - South Stream threatens EU, US projects', *New Europe*, 21 January 2008, issue 765, <<http://www.neurope.eu/articles/82114.php>>. [accessed 1 May 2009]

¹²⁹ Bhadrakumar, 'Russia, Iran tighten the energy noose', also see 'Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World', p. 33.

Although Russian officials argue that the dependency is mutual and that 'none of the countries that export energy resources finds it reasonable to "sit on the pipe" or on its energy resources like the tale of the dog in the manger', the fact is that in the medium term Russia has the Chinese market as an alternative and Europe has no alternative for Russian natural gas.¹³⁰ What Russia is trying to do is to make all "less friendly" European countries – Ukraine, Georgia, the Baltic states, Poland, Czech Republic and Moldova – irrelevant for supplying the rest of the continent with its natural gas; to maintain a dominant role in the EU's energy market and close economic ties with all major European countries; and to maintain control over all transit routes for natural gas towards Europe. According to Russia's strategy, the result should be the weakening of the US positions in Europe, or at least a decrease in American pressure on Russia's Western borders.

In order to achieve this plan, Russia has launched the Nord Stream and South Stream projects. Both pipelines aim to by-pass as many transit countries as much as possible. At the same time, these two projects have created strong economic ties between Russia and Germany (Nord Stream), as well as between Russia and Italy (South Stream). Russia is also very close to gaining complete control over energy markets in Southeastern Europe. The realization of the South Stream project would make the Nabucco pipeline uneconomic.¹³¹ The Nabucco project, designed to carry 30 billion cubic meters a year, is unlikely to succeed because there will be only 12-15 billion cubic meters of gas for it.¹³² At the moment it seems that only two scenarios can thwart the realisation of the South Stream project – a new military conflict in the Balkans (northern Kosovo and southern Serbia, close to the proposed route of the South Stream), or political and security crisis in the Black

¹³⁰ Lavrov, 'Containing Russia: Back to the Future?', also see John Helmer, 'China Loan Turns Russian Oil East', *Asia Times Online*, 24 February 2009, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/KB24Ag01.html>. [accessed 3 May 2009]

¹³¹ The Nabucco project is supported by the US and the EU. Members of the Nabucco consortium are Austria, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey. The idea behind Nabucco is that Europe would reduce its own dependence on Russian natural gas by building a 3,300-kilometer pipeline that would carry natural gas from Iran and Azerbaijan via Turkey, up through Bulgaria to Southern and Western Europe.

¹³² See Igor Tomberg, 'Russia, Bulgaria propel South Stream', *RIA Novosti*, 22 January 2008, <<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20080122/97544429.htm>>. [accessed 1 May 2009], also see Vladimir Socor, 'Nabucco Conference in Budapest, Part One: Moderate Expectations, Moderate Promise', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 6, Issue 19, 29 January 2009, <[http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=34428&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=27&cHash=d157259c02](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=34428&tx_ttnews[backPid]=27&cHash=d157259c02)>. [accessed 3 May 2009]

Sea and Caspian region.

The monopoly over the European energy market is important to Russia because of commercial, but probably even more because of political and national security reasons. Russia understands that economic influence can be transformed into political power. This is exactly what Russia needs in order to prevent initiatives as NATO enlargement and BMD shield deployment in Poland and Czech Republic. Moscow knows that 'Western Europe cannot be seen to abandon its Eastern neighbours – especially new members of NATO and the EU – but that Western European citizens will not tolerate being sacrificed to a moral standard of defending Eastern Europe if it means paying more for gas, or going without.'¹³³ This has become even clearer in the light of the recent Russo-Georgian military conflict and the failure of the US initiative aimed at the further NATO enlargement to Ukraine and Georgia.

Although there is an argument saying that 'power, not threats, drives states toward an expansive interpretation of their interests abroad', one can say that the Russian foreign policy strategy better applies to the logic of defensive realism.¹³⁴ What defensive realists argue is that 'nations expand their political interests when they become increasingly insecure.'¹³⁵ This is exactly the situation in which Russia found itself in the late 1990's and early 2000's when the US hegemony in the international arena reached its maximum. Therefore, one can conclude that, in its nature, Russian commercial motives in Europe are aggressive, but political are in fact defensive and mostly caused by sense of potential physical, military encirclement. This does not mean that, for example, Paul D'Anieri, who argues that 'the symbolic politics of regaining Russia's acknowledged greatness will continue to influence Russian foreign policy in the foreseeable future', is not right in his argumentation.¹³⁶ However, one should notice that, in today's world, the acknowledged greatness is probably the only reliable policy of insurance. In this sense, Russia is – apart from China – only the

¹³³ Melissa Hahn, 'Moscow Achieves Success with Kazakh Oil Deal', *Power and Interest News Report (PINR)*, 29 May 2007, <http://www.pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=655&language_id=1>. [accessed 1 May 2009]

¹³⁴ Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power*, p. 191.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹³⁶ Paul D'Anieri, 'Russian Foreign Policy: Continuity, Revolution, and the Search for Status' in Ryan K. Beasley, Juliet Kaarbo, Jeffrey S. Lantis, and Michael T. Snarr (ed.), *Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective: Domestic and International Influences on State Behavior*, Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2002, pp. 95-120, p. 117.

most powerful among the nations which clearly recognised this fact.

Chapter 7

Hot Spots, Possible Scenarios and Likely Outcomes

As Peter Katzenstein says, 'prediction is a notoriously risky business in the study of world politics.'¹³⁷ However, the fact that some very influential institutions and academics tend to create projections for the world in which we may find ourselves in a couple of years or longer, tells us that the business of looking beyond the present day is worthwhile even in the study of world politics.¹³⁸ The argument is that, apart from highly unpredictable social dynamic caused by the human nature, there are still some more constant elements in the world of international politics which make such projections possible. These most reliable elements for predicting developments in international relations are certainly national interests – defined on the basis of the realist way of thinking – and associated practices of behaviour of the main powers in the international arena. Moreover, national interests and common ways of behaviour of the main actors in the international system make producing scenarios of potential developments in world politics more akin to piecing together a jigsaw puzzle than to simply guessing about the future.

However, there is at least one stage which necessarily precedes the work on producing a concrete scenario in the study of world politics – the concrete analysis has to be clearly framed in terms of the observed time and space. For the purposes of this study, in terms of the observed time, the period 2009-2017 will be considered as the relevant framework. The year 2017 is taken as a limit because it is promising to be a year of a high security risk. This is due to the fact that in 2017 the status of the Russian Black Sea Fleet at the Sevastopol military base is to be reconsidered by Ukrainian authorities. Bearing in mind the strategic importance which this military base has for Russia, the proximity of EU territory, as well as persistent US efforts to militarily penetrate the

¹³⁷ Peter J. Katzenstein, *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2005, p. 247.

¹³⁸ See, for example, Sergei Karaganov, 'The World around Russia: 2017 – An Outlook for the Midterm Future', *The Council on Foreign and Defense Policy*, Moscow, 25 June 2007, <<http://eng.karaganov.ru/news/186.html>>. [accessed 6 May 2009], also see an analysis by the US National Intelligence Council, 'Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World'.

Black Sea region, this year is promising to be the key moment for creating new security arrangements in Europe. Of course, the crisis based on this problem is likely to emerge some time before 2017 but this year is seen as a time of its possible culmination. Another important year is likely to be the year 2012, when the European Football Championship will take place in Poland and Ukraine. This is because such a big and important sport event could provide potentially confronted sides with plenty of opportunities for manipulating global public opinion in order to gain support for their geopolitical agendas. In this context, the tournament in Poland and Ukraine seems to be a perfect moment for raising tensions, especially from the US perspective. Furthermore, in terms of space, as potentially most problematic, the Balkans, Black Sea region and Caucasus will be observed. This particularly refers to Serbia (north Kosovo and south Serbia), Ukraine (Crimea and east Ukraine) and Georgia. Moreover, in the forthcoming period, potential destabilisation of Ukraine is considered the most serious challenge to European security and to the emergence of the EU as a major player in the global arena.

Bearing in mind all fundamental American and Russian geopolitical interests in Europe, which were discussed in the previous two chapters, the moment of escalation in already strained US-Russian relations is just a matter of time. One can expect that the ongoing financial crisis will postpone the major conflict at least until the middle of 2010 because the both countries have to deal with the current consequences of the economic downturn, but this should not be taken for granted.

Joseph Nye correctly pointed out that 'international financial stability is vital to the prosperity of Americans.'¹³⁹ But one should notice that this statement does not have only economic connotation. Today, more than ever before, it also has its geopolitical aspect. For example, in the wider European region, most of the post-Communist countries are more-less in a position of being US client states which make them reliable partners in rolling back Russian influence and, at the same time, in preserving American military and political interests. However, as the crisis had a devastating impact on economic performance of these states, the change of political regimes

¹³⁹ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., 'Beyond September 11' in Eugene R. Wittkopf and James M. McCormick, The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 4th ed., 2004, pp. 25-31, p. 28.

perceived to be loyal to Washington is threatening to undermine the US position in this strategically important area. This is particularly visible in Ukraine and Georgia. For this reason, from the US point of view, 'the primary near-term security concern is the global economic crisis and its geopolitical implications.'¹⁴⁰

On the other hand, as Gilfford Gaddy's says: 'Russia is far from being in a state of fundamental economic health, and this crisis is likely to further impede its progress in that direction. But economic health has not been a prerequisite for Russia to act in ways typically described as "assertive" or even "aggressive". All that was needed was political sovereignty.'¹⁴¹ Considering that today's Russia does not lack political sovereignty, one can expect that it will not hesitate to use all available means in order to preserve its fundamental geopolitical interests especially in the Black Sea and Caspian regions. At this point it is important to stress that 'Russia stands in a different geopolitical and geoeconomic relationship to the EU from that which it enjoys with the US.'¹⁴² This is important because the Franco-German-led EU seems to be the only actor which can stand between the United States and Russia as a mediator and, at the same time, it is the only actor which can alleviate internal social and political divisions in the Balkans, Ukraine and Georgia by offering accession prospects.

Nevertheless, ethnic, social and political divisions as well as structural and economic weaknesses combined with the high exposure to US and Russian influences make it difficult to avoid potential destabilisation or violence in these trouble spots of the EU neighbourhood. Moreover, the current degree of the EU unity on issues concerning foreign policy and security do not provide much hope that peaceful outcomes are likely, especially in Ukraine and Georgia. It could also be argued that Georgia, due to its size, geographic position and willingness of NATO countries on one side and Russia on the other to risk major conflict over it, cannot hope for more

¹⁴⁰ Dennis C. Blair, 'Annual Threat Assessment of the Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence', 12 February 2009, <http://www.dni.gov/testimonies/20090212_testimony.pdf>. [accessed 7 May 2009] (p. 2), also see Bruce Crumley and Tony Karon, 'Is the Economic Crisis a Security Threat Too?', *TIME*, 25 February 2009, <<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1881492,00.html>>. [accessed 7 May 2009]

¹⁴¹ Gilfford G. Gaddy, 'Putin's Third Way', *National Interest*, 21 January 2009, <<http://www.nationalinterest.org/PrinterFriendly.aspx?id=20496>>. [accessed 7 May 2009]

¹⁴² McGuire and Smith, *The European Union and the United States*, p. 218.

than to become “sacrificed” if its leadership does not take more moderate position towards Moscow.

On the other hand, Ukraine is much bigger in terms of territory and population. Moreover, its geographic position, bordering other NATO and EU countries in which anti-Russian sentiments prevail, makes it the perfect stage for a conflict in which other countries will have an interest to interfere. Obviously, the US would be most interested in this scenario because, whatever the potential reaction of the major EU countries would be in such a situation, Washington has little to risk and much more to gain. If the major EU states (i.e. France, Italy and Germany) take an anti-Russian position, then the Cold War NATO, dominated by the United States, would stand a strong chance for revival. On the other hand, if they would opt for more moderate stance toward Russia, then Washington would certainly position itself as the only guarantor and provider of security for all so-called “new Europe” countries that fear Russia. Not to mention that, under this scenario, all Russian energy projects in the Southeastern Europe would be cancelled and the EU would remain profoundly and permanently broken.

This is where the interests of the main EU countries and Russia increasingly coincide. France and Germany want the EU to become a major global centre of power and influence and Russia does not want the strengthening of the American influence in its “near abroad” under any circumstances. Moreover, the both sides have enormous interest in cooperating with each other in the sphere of energy security. This is why it could be argued that a tightening of EU-Russia relations, combined with more moderate Ukrainian and Georgian policies toward Russia and further development of the independent EU military capability, might actually result in a relatively stable security regime in Europe and beyond. In other words, as Sergei Karaganov correctly points out: 'Russia and the European Union must strive not for a strategic partnership in their relations, but for a strategic alliance.'¹⁴³ However, there are still some serious obstacles on this path towards such a “strategic alliance”.

As McGuire and Smith argue: 'The EU's strategies towards Russia have been shaped by a

¹⁴³ Sergei Karaganov, 'The World Crisis – A Time for Creation', *Russia in Global Affairs*, No. 4, October-December 2008, <<http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/numbers/25/1235.html>>. [accessed 13 April 2009]

combination of broad interests (for example, in Russia's adoption of democratic institutions and peaceful means for the resolution of disputes) and more immediate or tangible pressures created by the economic needs of member states, the consequences of the enlargement process, or the handling of conflicts in Europe and beyond.¹⁴⁴ Although each of abovementioned issues has occasionally appeared as an obstacle for deepening the EU-Russia relations, it seems that the most persistent has been Russia's perception of democratic institutions and practices. One can say that, from the Moscow's point of view, 'pure democracy is like haute couture: One can admire it, but it is not practical for everyday use.'¹⁴⁵ On the other hand, the EU perceives democracy as an absolute imperative and the cornerstone of the idea of European integration and the progress of human society. However, it should be remembered that the cornerstone of the European integrations was not only a shared ideology, but also shared economic and security interests of European countries. Undoubtedly, today, such interests in relation between the EU and Russia are present. This is most visible in the energy sphere and therefore one can assume that integration of energy sectors of the two could form a solid basis for integration in other fields. Moreover, having in mind the pragmatism of the current Russian leadership, in case of a clearly defined perspective for a future partnership, considerable improvement on the issue of democratic deficiency could be expected.

Finally, new security problems might appear in the north Kosovo in Serbian dominated areas, as well as in the south Serbia in the three municipalities with significant percentage of Albanian population (i.e. Presevo, Bujanovac, Medvedja). Although major military conflict is not likely to happen, some low to medium level arm conflicts are still possible. In particular, potential US attempts to forestall possible realisation of the South Stream project – which is proposed to enter Serbian territory relatively close to the three Albanian populated municipalities in the south – could result in a controlled destabilisation of this area. At the moment, it is clear that only the US security services have effective influence on the Albanian leadership in Kosovo and beyond as well as on their paramilitary forces. This makes initiating armed conflict – in an already unstable area

¹⁴⁴ McGuire and Smith, *The European Union and the United States*, pp. 218-219.

¹⁴⁵ Khanna, *The Second World*, p. xxiv.

with a mixed Serbian and Albanian population – an easy task, should such a decision be made. The point is that any state or company would be highly unlikely to invest vast amounts of capital in building a pipeline through a potential battlefield or even close to it. Potentially, this can be, more than anything else, a cause of a new military conflict in the Balkans.

For all abovementioned reasons, it could be argued that, during the next few years, southern Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine will remain areas with a high conflict potential. In this context, particularly Ukraine seems to be the main stage for the US-Russian geopolitical confrontation. Moreover, due to the ethnic, political and economic predispositions of the present day Ukrainian society, this confrontation, which is likely to happen sometime between 2012 and 2017, would probably result in a civil war with many foreign countries more or less directly involved. This crisis, if it happens, would bring about new geopolitical reality and security order in Europe. Finally, the balance of power in the US-EU-Russia strategic triangle would certainly change and, at the same time, the power position of the EU at the global stage would be decided.

Conclusion

During the last twenty years, the international system has passed through multiple transformations. These shifts in the structure of the international system, from the Cold War bipolar world to the unipolar world of the 1990's and finally to the emerging multipolar world of the twenty first century, have been significantly influenced by the changes occurring in the US-Russia relations. Moreover, this tendency is likely to continue during the next decade. The problem, which could have serious security implications, is that the geopolitical agendas of the two powers are incompatible and permanently confronted.

Apart from the fundamentally confronted geopolitical objectives – derived from the perception of national interests founded on the basis of realist logic which stresses the danger of potential relative gains in international relations – US-Russian relations are further complicated by the fact that the Cold War way of thinking between the two powers is still alive. Russia's fear of military encirclement and the US efforts to roll back Moscow's influence from Europe and beyond,

as well as the constant intention of the both powers to gain the upper hand in European affairs remain a reality even twenty years after the end of the Cold War.

In the forthcoming decade, this negative dynamic in US-Russian relations will most probably first affect the stability of the wider Black Sea region and consequently the stability of the rest of the "Old Continent". The main stake in this geopolitical battle between Washington and Moscow is the control over routes for energy supply to Europe. This is because energy security is the prerequisite for economic development and, therefore, control over energy supply of Europe provides those who have effective control over it with enormous economic and thus potentially political influence. Bearing in mind that all main pipelines are proposed to pass through the Black Sea region, the area should be considered the primary hot spot on European territory. Moreover, because of its size, geographical position, internal political, economic and social instability as well as exposure to the US and Russian influence, Ukraine seems to be the place where the decisive "geopolitical battle" is likely to be fought in the period 2012-2017.

Furthermore, the EU's capacity to handle the potential crisis in its own backyard, as well as its success or failure in mediating between the American and Russian interests in the Balkans, Black Sea region and Caucasus will likely decide the future role which Brussels will play in the global arena. However, the current situation is not promising because the EU does not have sufficient domestic energy resources to support its economic growth and it does not have the military means to preserve its interests abroad. This makes it dependent on Russia in terms of energy supply as well as on the US in terms of military support. In addition to this, the prospects are not any brighter in the light of divergent perspectives of the main EU countries on the EU-Russia relations and the future of NATO. Therefore, the EU capability to successfully deal with the major security challenge, in which Moscow and Washington are more or less directly confronted sides, remains questionable.

However, there is still a window of opportunity for the more rational developments in the region. The basis for this cautious optimism could be founded in an assumption that the Franco-

German leadership will gain support from the majority of EU countries for a more constructive collective approach to Russia. A more moderate political course towards Moscow by Ukrainian and Georgian leadership would likely reduce the chances of a major conflict in the region and lead towards a more rapid integration of these countries with the EU. Also, some sort of gradual association between the EU and Russia should be taken into consideration because the strategic interests of the two sides increasingly and essentially overlap. In this sense, the integration of the energy sectors of the two sides could serve as a constructive first step.

Finally, it could be argued that, apart from being set up into the current context by the US and Russian foreign policies and confronted geopolitical interests, European security will be determined in the forthcoming years by the degree to which the EU will be capable of formulating and realising its essential interests toward Russia independently from the strategic interests of the United States.

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