

ABSTRACT

The main goal of this dissertation is to map American perspectives on the position of Central Europe in American foreign policy after the Cold War. Its ambition is to systematize the particular area of American foreign policy thought that deals with Central Europe and, more precisely, with U.S. relations with the region. The goal is to contribute to a better understanding of how have the individual camps and traditions represented in the American foreign policy debate approached this particular issue.

To achieve these goals, this dissertation employs two existing typologies of American foreign policy thought and, subsequently, attempts to create a new, original typology that would better suit the aim of mapping the whole spectrum of relevant American perspectives on Central Europe.

This dissertation does not describe what has really happened in Central European-American relations, but rather aims at understanding better the U.S. foreign policy thought or, better said, one specific part of it: Opinions on U.S.-Central European relations and the position of Central Europe in international politics. Analysing the American post-Cold War discourse on Central Europe is the instrument to achieve this goal. This dissertation, however, does not presuppose a direct causal link between the discourse and the American foreign policy as it has actually been implemented. It nevertheless believes that the actual American policy toward Central Europe has been influenced by this discourse. To put it differently, the positions, opinions and proposals expressed in the discourse have served as one group of inputs to the actual policy-making process.

The main research question this dissertation aims at answering is: How has the spectrum of American approaches toward Central Europe and the regions' relations with the United States after the Cold War looked like, as expressed in the public foreign policy debate?

To systematize the American foreign policy thought dealing with Central Europe and to answer the research question, this dissertation uses, as its empirical base, the key American debate on NATO enlargement that roared for much of the 1990s.