

THE STRATEGIC RECONFIGURATION OF THE POWER POLES

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Abstract: *Starting from approaching the aspects of globalism, technological, economical and cultural progress of the contemporary world, the paper focuses on the reconfiguration of the strategic interests of the power hot spots (or power poles), the latest breaking brand new emergent power poles, the dogfight for supremacy in the political initiative issue, on the strategic dominance from both economic and technologic angles.*

The geopolitical approaches and the security and defense mainstay concepts are introduced from the specific standpoint of each school of strategy in both European and Asian space.

The asymmetric menaces on security and the development of the states, the clash for resources as seen in the context of the world wide raging crisis today, the budding of new power spots in the making, gauged against the global framework, lead to extra boosting the head-on confrontation and competition among the mighty powers of the world, to reshaping accordingly their strategic stands but also to a post-globalization updated world order.

Keywords: *globalism; strategic reconfiguration; multi-polar world; strategic partnership; Rimland; strategies; resources; power hotspots; new world order.*

The world at large, with its huge progress in technology, civilization, culture, information and economics, is ground and torn apart by mighty contradictions, strong challenges, much too obvious discrepancies, where the various hues in progress and of protest against the very side effects of this very progressive trend are vectors which, as they move away, do tighten the string raising the stress level, the crisis spots and the overall conflict status.

In these conditions, a complicated brawl is currently under way on redraw the power poles, to gain and maintain both political and strategic

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“upper hand” , on these grounds and also on the top notch nanotechnology, of the strategic dominant load. Today are widely used the so called strategic partnerships, which develop themselves in a new formula of blending the interests and prevent the major conflicts between the leading players, between the nuclei around which coagulate or re-coagulate the major power poles: the United States of America, Germany, The European Union, Russia, China, Japan, India, the Arab World. The strategies these nuclei use are highly similar, since their policies are alike – at least where the wish, the will power and the ability are concerned and put to work joining the best efforts to a proper, strategic reconfiguration of the entire world as we know it – a thing which leads, in some way to the creation and maintaining of a safe environment where mass destruction weapons are tightly checked and high intensity conflicts and wars are forestalled.

The American School of Strategy¹ – which basically is, global as scope, thorough, experiment-based and pragmatic – highlights the staggering complexity of war as phenomenon, studies the low, medium and high intensity wars and, in the wake of the dramatic event experienced on September 11, 2001, is introducing a brand new political and strategic concept – the war against terrorism – which is, both in its underlying philosophy, and in its theoretical and pragmatic setup – a new type of confrontation and root of the fundamental concept of the XXIst century – the perpetual war.

The German School of Strategy² sticks to its European tradition and, of course, its German vintage. After Mid Europe recasting in a new mold, Germany still maintains a classic stand on defence and security, based on nation’s own responsibility and a proper readiness status. This concept “perpetual war”, not to be found explicitly in the German doctrine, is spectacularly manifested in Germany’s own policy and strategy (and even mostly so, in Germany’s economy). At the same time, albeit it is not quite aligned to the globalization process, Germany proactively is promoting a pan-European policy, coaching, as the Europe Union’s main engine (but as a leading economic and military power as well) a strategic partnership with

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¹ Gl. Br. (r) Gheorghe Văduva, *The Principles of War and Armed Combat*, The Centre of Strategic Studies of Defense and Security, București, 2003. Section 3, p. 37.

² *Ibidem*, p. 38.

Russia, which so re-fuels the Mackinder's fears way back in 1904-1943, about a huge Eurasian power pole in the making, having as its nuclei Germany and Russia.

The EU strategy emerging from both the joint European security policy and joint European security and defense policy (PECSA), rather is not focused entirely on the perpetual war, but just on some of its features only, especially those generating actions and missions type Petersberg, addressing counterstrikes against terrorism issues, fighting against drug lines and organized criminality, doing humanitarian deeds, actions such as those triggered by natural calamities and catastrophes or in some civil and military emergencies. The priority with the EU strategists is represented, in a first stage, by the completion of all the necessary prerequisites aimed to establish the *de facto* continental unity, solving the economical, political, social, ethnical problems, managing the crises and conflicts the type of those which already occurred and still are developing within the ex-Yugoslavian space and in other hot spots also.

On the other hand the Russian Strategy School did not relinquish and shall never relinquish its major force field lines, resulting from the very Russia's own character of grand Eurasian power and from the specific data and resources of its territory. Russia is the largest country in the world, it is the repository of huge amounts of ores and natural reserves and has at its command a tremendously powerful, material, human, cultural and military potential. Russia has its own special projection where the war strategy is concerned, emerging straight from the sheer immensity of its space, from long time experience, from its own geostrategic location and, obviously, from the role it assumes and plays in building and shaping of the new world order, in re-configuration of the power poles.

The Chinese Strategy School, emerging from antiquity, from Sun Tzu, surfaced with a unique dynamics not known before, especially where the potential strategies are concerned. China wishes for itself to be perceived as a regional power, with a decisive role in the configuration of a stable secure environment in the East and the Pacific, a vantage position allowing to prevent the acts of war, the proper management of its own proprietary space, the settling the Taiwan based issues and in the economic development. China is a highly stable country and, at the same time, a

mighty power on both the heartland³, and rimland⁴, a focal point of civilization, an ancient culture, playing an important role in the shaping out the global security strategic environment (but different in nature from the US, the European Union and the Russian roles).

The Japanese School of Strategy, albeit emerging from about the same area and the same civilization as the Chinese is not based on the same principles however. Since they are lacking natural resources the Japanese developed a strategy with efficiency and perseverance, ambush and wait and at its core. After the World War II, Japan did not let itself deterred and overwhelmed by the effect of the two nuclear strikes over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but moved on to building up of some strategies which, basically, do not differ much from those applied in times of war. Only they were transferred/translated in the field of electronics and the nanotechnology, that is the potential strategies. The development and implementation of these potential strategies seem contradictory against the actual resources, however the Japanese solved this paradox by another paradox: *from what you don't have build a power factor and from what you do have build a generation and sustaining factor for that power.*

The Indian School of Strategy⁵ actually is paying tribute to the great Indian culture, influenced by the diversity of this ancient civilization, and also internally driven by the urge and will power of India to make itself a power pole on the rimland, mostly in South East Asia. In this regard the Indian School of Strategy is promoting a series of principles heavily influenced by the Indian culture's own ways, habits and values and , equally so, by the modern military trends, theories and practices, mostly British and American.

The Arabic School of Strategy is not unitary neither, flexible nor compromise prone. It is based on a contradictory concept, sometimes odd enough, other times a keeper of great values.

The onset of the third millennium anticipates massive changes in the historical development of the great powers of the world. The geopolitical events during the last decade stand proof that the directions and development

³ Mackinder is speaking about the *heartland* which according to his opinion would be the zone between the East Europe (in the Ural Mountains or from the Caspian and the Volga) and the Pacific Ocean.

⁴ Nicolas Spykman is the one who created the rim theory (rimland), in obvious opposition with what had in mind Mackinder. Rimland is nothing else but the main gate to the heartland.

⁵Gl. Br. (r) Gheorghe Văduva, "The Principles of War and Armed Combat", The Centre of Strategic Studies of Defense and Security, București, 2003. Section . 3, p. 40.

trends of the new world order were henceforth set and trumpeted. Out of a split country, Germany re-united, turning itself as the economic "engine" of the Europe. The ex-Russian empire shred to pieces, and its inheritor, the Russian Federation, was "degraded" from the superpower rank to 'big power' only. Out of a buttress of the hard and pure communism, China emerged like a socialist – capitalist breed of a country, while the main European players, such as the Great Britain, France and Germany struggle to find a new shape for the European New Order, as a counterpart to the Eurasian space. After an economic recess Japan comes back in full force, struggling based on the capacities it has developed to date to impose itself as a large military power also. As of the United States of America, reaping the vantage points scored under a both functional and pragmatic democrat system, driven by a high performing and efficient economy, bolstered by quite impressive financial and military funds, with no matching competition looming ahead, took the pole position as the only actual superpower – or megapower – term coined by some outstanding analysts and politologs.

The current trends apparent in the surfacing and acknowledgment of the new power poles just make the direct consequences of the events (or 'situations') occurred within the secured environment.

The sequence of events in the aftermath of the '90 highlighted that no other power in the world, be it even a nuclear power, could take no large scale political- economic or military initiatives without the prior agreement and sometimes US assistance. Today, the US detain a prominent position in the world, and the economic and security crisis trigger extra boost in the defense policy and re-configure the US strategic interests world wide. The Gulf War and the military actions in ex Yugoslavia and Afghanistan statistically proved that US payload in these operations exceeds 80% while the employed technology, weapons and logistics represented military capacities so sophisticated and expensive that the other allies simply cannot afford just yet. Beyond the rivalries prone to menace its safety and the world's Washington D.C. does not aim to enforce its vision on this topic. The United States of America are the one and only power "*capable to intervene anytime anywhere it so wishes to, at all times when its interests are affected*". The joint internationalism doctrine, issued during the US president George Bush ticket, acknowledges the right of the US to intervene in any state which violates the democracy, the human rights and the principles of civil rights.

In order to fulfil its strategic aims, the USA proactively seek to further reinforce the bridge foot as set in a united Europe, by an authentic transatlantic partnership, so that this Europe, in due course of expansion, to be able to become a better and more viable jumping board to project throughout the Eurasia the new world order. The relatively recent "robust" extension of the NATO, from the Baltic Sea through the Black Sea flags the US concern to control the edge area or the Eurasia's "maritime border", starting with Finland and the Scandinavian countries, goes down to Poland, Romania, Turkey and Georgia, embracing the Near East and India zones and closing up with the Mongolia, China and Japan territories. The Eurasia's maritime border, or as the theoreticians called it "*Rimland*", represents today the very essence of the global power. The one who rules the Rimland rules the Eurasia, and the one who rules Eurasia holds in his hands the destiny of the entire world.

Although it is obvious that no other country on the globe could not claim yet any responsibility for division of power and responsibilities with the US, the contest for control and the management bearing highly significant geopolitical and geostrategic connotations, and mostly the Euroasiatic space, is getting momentum and currently gets more fierce and acute.

Across the globe coalitions are being drawn up with the purpose of forestalling the US from ruling supreme. Highly relevant in this line are the alliance of China and Russia, and the increasingly obvious wish for independence of the Europe which, mostly France and Germany, turn less and less an ally configured now more like a competitor against the general backdrop of the spectacular congestion of the anti-globalization movement.

Against this background of USA dominant and prominent might, during the next decade the European Union looming now shall emerge with enhanced resolution, as a political, economic, cultural and even military main driver, as a stability and progress factor able to promote its own options and interests.

Even if among its initial targets set out at the time of EU creation was listed the point of turning the continent into a military superpower able to talk from peer to peer with the US, to be able to manage both its own crisis and the hotspots in the neighbourhood, to involve itself and have a say in the world politics, however, not even one of the member countries was eager, at least just yet, to bolster the amounts due to the military budget, which would be

required to hit that target. This thing incurs as a consequence enlarging the gap between the proprietary military capacities against the US military assets and a due delay on hitting that particular mark as proposed, for a while.

The drift to a multipolar world would last for a long time, and the international community shall experience, probably, a deep set reconfiguration, where the global and regional integration shall coexist next to the contradictory trend of the world fragmentation and hierarchy-based constructs. While the globalism makes almost improbable a war among the major powers, the amplification of the asymmetric risks such as the terrorism, organized crime and the proliferation of the mass destruction weapons increasingly often generate conflict prone issues. However it is still not ruled out a possible linear East-West confrontation focused on the restructuring the globalism and the creation of a post globalization world scheme, entirely based on other new structures and values tuned and updated to the shifts, to the third millennium requirements respectively. Due to the condition of rapidly depletion of the natural resources, simultaneously with the aggressive demographic boom, the battle for the strategic resources was left the most mainstay reason for sparking conflicts. The fight for these shall grow fierce, and the countries regrouping, sub-tiered depending on their own interests around the newly emerged power poles shall develop more clearly so. Probably we'll be eye witnesses to the rise and building the pressure in these centres with the purpose of capturing in their sphere of influence of as many countries as possible in order to jostle for a best vantage position in the new world order scale. This configuration shall be tailored by interests, by the capacity of knowledge, by the amount and quality of the data, by the technological power and the access to the resources. It is also possible to witness the structural modifications in some states, due to multiple causes such as economic, demographic, religious, but also due to the general trend of keying down the national leading role of the states, to the asymmetric menaces against their security and development.

Among the prominent power vectors already emerged and clearly configured, the USA and the EU on one side, China and Japan on the other side, to which increasingly obvious Russia shall join, competition and confrontation relationships shall develop, while the crystallization of the possible new power poles is under way: the United States of the Europe and the Far Asia.



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