

Geopolitics

From a Classical to a Postmodern Approach

Constantin HLIHOR

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Translated by
Nicolae MELINESCU

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INTRODUCTION

We no longer witness nowadays an over usage of the word *geopolitics* as it would happen a decade ago. The fact of the matter is that a newly coined term has replaced it in the media and in the public discourse, and that is globalization. This very fact does not necessarily mean that we do not need theoretical and methodological reflections on geopolitics any more even if geopolitical studies have known lately a great theoretical and practical development. This, in turn, has led to an accumulation of concepts and paradigms. While geopolitics was regarded more often than not, at its peak period as a scientific branch that studies the impact of the physical and geographical environment on the states' politics in the seventh and the eighth decades, today, a simple and mechanical approach is not possible. The 80s and the 90s of the last century were periods of self-understanding of these subjects and geopolitics headed towards neoclassicism (*Critical geopolitics*). Through its new paradigms, it has grown into one of the scientific branches that studies and analyzes the contemporary international relations.

On the other hand, even a brief review of the studies and works on geopolitics theory developed lately, during the recent years, proved that the classical approach did not vanish altogether. Determinist geographical explanations of political evolutions that surfaced in the international environment or in the politics of the great powers at the end of the Cold War were not abandoned and they became popular. Writings of Zbigniew Brzezinski and Alexandr Dugin, to mention just these two researchers, make the point quite convincingly.

From the first pages of the current book, readers will come to a number of answers to questions related to the context where geopolitics comes into the academic field, questions about the way it found its place into the diplomacy of states, in their security and defense politics, which made possible the use of geopolitics in political propaganda. From these reasons, stems the need to clearly distinguish between the geopolitical *reality* as part of the phenomena and processes inside international politics, a product of a certain type of states' and actors' behavior in the international environment and the geopolitical *theory/analysis* as a product of critical reflection of the geopolitical reality.

Those deeply interested in a thorough understanding of the way the *geopolitics* concept is used today will find the necessary explanations, which prove that it is, primarily, a *reality*, a special type of behavior of the stakeholders from the international environment. Henceforth, those challenged by this type of reality, perceived through study, research and analysis can build a particular vision of reality as they see it. "Products" that unite observation, research and the geopolitical analysis cover a wide range of theory studies, documentation, strategies etc. The geopolitical theory and paradigms can become analysis methods and tools for understanding the international relations through operational shifts. An analysis of classical studies of geopolitics may yield a possible explanation to the way in which the confusion between geopolitical *reality* and *its product* appeared. It may also lead to answers given by experts and analysts of contemporary political phenomena. It is our view that certain determinist-mechanicist patterns were used to explain the relations of power and interest among states, such as the „Heartland" and „Rimland" theories, to name but a few of the best known theories – or the „World Island". They had their own day of glory at the time of their promotion and politicians did not hesitate to highly credit them. The way that the great powers and not only they for that matter, practiced diplomacy turned determinist-geographical theories of classic geopolitics into a carrier of propaganda employed to justify

their foreign policy. After the Second World War, this fact generated an unjustified trend of an all-out rejection of geopolitics and an unfair labeling of all geopolitical research and analysis as propaganda and manipulation through cartographic representations. It is also in this chapter that readers will learn that geopolitical studies have evolved in spite of all these aspects and today we already have a neoclassical approach where determinist-mechanicist patterns used to explain the states' politics in certain international contexts have been abandoned.

The fundamental purpose of the present research is to demonstrate that geopolitics, although not a science in itself has its own paradigms that can provide the valid tools needed to know the power and interest evolutions in the contemporary world. I believe that, regardless of the appealing "patterns" used by the supporters of classical geopolitics, they cannot help to decipher the possible evolutions in a geopolitical field; the most they can achieve is to explain the way several players behave in this environment to the public opinion. The fundamental error made by all these geopoliticians who embraced geographical determinism in their attempt to explain the evolutions within international relations, from Mackinder to Dugin and from Spykman to Brzezinski was the fact that they did not take into account that the *target-space* in their research hypothesis and analysis was populated with people who did not mechanically respond to the requirements forwarded by the heads of state and government! History has proven, at least during modern and contemporary era that those who wanted to control/dominate a certain space disregarding the local populations' needs and interests ended up in bankruptcy eventually. That was exactly the case of the military and political interventions of the USSR in the Cold War era, but also, of important failures in some liberal democratic countries such as France, Great Britain and even the USA recently.

This research has been designed to distinguish between geostrategy and geopolitics because a great part of present

representatives of the French school, such as the much-regretted Herve Begarie-Coutaux, equal these two terms. Geopolitics, through its analysis methods, can answer the question *why* a player enters relations of rivalry in a geographical/virtual space and why it is not interested in a different type of relations. Geostrategy will always answer the question *by which* means (strategies) a particular player can fulfill its interests in this space. Today, the interests rivalries between the classical stakeholders (the states) do not generally translate into armed violence, as it happened in the second half of the last century. Military strategies are more and more replaced by diplomatic, financial, political, imagological and PR strategies. Henceforth, a certain player can develop a wide geopolitical strategy employing a reduced or even absent military dimension, in its pursuit of imposing its own interests. While geopolitics has an *inter-disciplinary* character, geostrategy has an *integrated* one.

The present volume seeks to achieve two more objectives: first, to offer support to a general introduction in theoretical debates within the clash of ideas about problems of contemporary geopolitics; secondly, it attempts to focus on the fact that theoretical and methodological studies are more than necessary at a time when most subjects on international relations update both their concepts and the categories, as well as the analysis techniques in order to face the challenges of the international environment. Most researchers of geopolitics are attracted by operational analysis in the geopolitical domain. That is both challenging and spectacular as an intellectual exercise with a particular, strong impact on the public opinion at a time when people search for more concrete and real explanations of what happens in the international environment. We must not overlook the fact that not all data and events speak for themselves. We need concepts, categories and perception patterns designed to give a meaning to the world we live in. In irreversible flow of data and events, theories provide selective patterns in order to distinguish between the essence and the irrelevant, between the particular from the general and thus helps us all to represent adequately the geopoly-

tical realities at the beginning of the XXIst century. As Stefano Guzzini noted, we can see the way in which theories shape the empirical perceptions and thus, understand the explanations through their inner logic.

Another objective of the present book is to underline the fact that geopolitics must highlight its own analysis instruments and techniques in the system of the scientific branches that study international relations. Theories have an instrumental value. By operationalization, they offer the analysis tools that help to explain the rivalries and disputes over geopolitical interests in a certain space. From this point of view, our current research challenges those interested in finding out more about the international environment through geopolitics, a specific method of analysis and an alternate way to construe geopolitical scenarios and strategies. Finally, this study is also an invitation to dialogue for the modernization and development of a scientific branch that can lead to a better understanding of the contemporary international relations.

Bucharest, JUNE 2013
Constantin HLIHOR

Chapter I

EVOLUTION OF GEOPOLITICAL STUDIES

More than one hundred years have passed since the German geography expert Rudolf Kjellen initiated and circulated the term of geopolitics in the university and academic world. Yet, the debates regarding the status of the discipline, its significance and its role within human knowledge, social and political practices have not generated a much-needed definition of the term. Geopolitics, as a branch of the social sciences, started to develop during the last century in an atmosphere dominated by the rivalry among the great powers and by colonial imperialism. From this starting point, it focused on the analysis of the relation between geography and political power within the international relations and its course was hindered by countless paradoxical developments. This very fact may explain to a certain extent why the concept in itself is characterized by a disturbing lack of clarity; being also one of the most contested such concepts. It rests on several meanings and on a rather loose general consent over its definition. Some scholars argue that *"a concept moves into an area of essential contestability when any use of it involves taking up a partisan non-neutral standpoint with respect to rival forms of life and their associated patterns of thought"*¹.

The term kept swinging between the status of an academic, respectable scientific branch and that of a derisive propaganda vector

¹ John Gray, *On Liberty, Liberalism and Essential Contestability*, in "British Journal of Political Science", no. 8, 1978, p. 394.

for the manipulation of the domestic and the foreign policy marketing. Geopolitics was forbidden in the former USSR and the satellite countries during the Cold War, being considered a pseudo-science². The final decades of the last century witnessed a rapid return of the concept at a time when the theory of international relations and politology could not explain several spectacular developments of the international politics at the end of the Cold War. Yet, shortly afterwards, two well-known scientists wondered if geopolitics was dead in a book first published in 1998³.

It is not at all easy to find an answer to this question. On one hand, it requires an accurate evaluation of the meanings that geopolitics has had in time. It also needs to understand the way geopolitics theories and studies were adopted by governments and heads of states and by all those who used the knowledge and the information provided by geopolitics to justify their own policy of imperial expansion and genocide. On the other hand, geopolitics implies a correct distinction between the *geopolitics – objective reality* resulted from the players' behavior in an international context from different regions of the planet and geopolitics – the *socially-constructed reality* employing a language of the more or less competent observers of the stakeholders' behaviors at international level at a certain point. This confusion between the two visions led to stormy debates concerning the role of geopolitics held in the academic research and in the political practice. At the end of the XXth century, Gearóid Ó Tuathail and Simon Dalby concluded that “*geopolitics is not a singularity but a plurality. It refers to a plural ensemble of representational practices that are diffused throughout societies. While not denying the conventional notion of geopolitics as the practice of statecraft by leaders and their advisors, critical*

² Constantin Hlihor, *Geopolitics and geostrategy in the analysis of contemporary international relations*, National Defence University Printing House, Bucharest, 2005, pp. 59-112.

³ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, Simon Dalby, *Rethinking geopolitics*, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002, p. 1.

geopolitics complements this with an understanding of geopolitics as a broad social and cultural phenomenon"⁴.

For a better understanding and evaluation of its role for the academic research and the political practice, geopolitics must be approached and analyzed from three viewpoints at least. The first is the *geopolitical action/geopolitics reality*, a result of the decisions made by heads of states and governments in their foreign policy that operates as interactions between the international and regional or global players. That is a palpable reality of a historic nature, non-recurring in the evolution of international relations; it determines the physiognomy of the international order at a certain time and it influences the security structure of the international environment, of the international affairs and the links among different areas of culture and civilization. A second perspective of analyzing geopolitics is the academic and university research, the political and diplomatic discourse but also the analyzes, scenario and strategies that constitute, at a given moment, the useful expertise and documentation that politicians need in order to make decisions at international level. This is a *socially constructed reality* that includes theories and analyzes stemming from observation, interpretation of power relations and interests that states and other actors have at a given moment in a certain geographical area. Basically, this type of geopolitics can be found in academic and university treaties and studies, in media analyzes etc. The third perspective concerns *the doctrine and the roadmap of the political propaganda*. They are the products of the geopolitical discourse. In most of the cases, these ideas are hard to find in the geopolitical reality, but they merely suggest to the reader a "reality" in order to promote a type of beliefs and social behavior envisaged by a certain player in the international environment. This is a form of propaganda crafted onto a geopolitical support, which justifies and legalizes the states' behavior in different interest areas; it is a way of manipulation with the help of

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 4.

words, images, symbols and landmark representations. It is the product most frequently “delivered” by the media for the consumption of the domestic and the international public opinion especially in times of crisis and conflict. That is what some Romanian researchers of the interwar period called a geopolitical myth, and has become nowadays the *popular geopolitics* found within the artifacts of translational popular culture, be they international magazines, novels or film productions”⁵.

Denied, classified or accepted, the language of geopolitics is everywhere. In news magazines, weblogs, radio commentaries, military and security agencies reports, and in debates among professional geographers, geopolitical diagnoses and descriptions recur quite often. All the more so, since the “war on terrorism” has begun at the turn of the twenty-first century to challenge flat-earth globalization ideologies, and governmental, academic and popular attempts purposefully designed to steer and comprehend conflict, strategy and socio-spatial struggle invariably resort to the “geopolitical” descriptor in order to make sense, whether we like it or not.

1.1. The evolution of geopolitical theory and studies from classical to postmodern

Geopolitics, as a phenomenon and process of international relations appeared long before people became aware of it, studied and defined the term as it is today. The study of history, the connections among states and the way in which they pursued their interests in different areas rich in food and precious metals provide lots of examples which can be included in the generic framework of what is currently called the geopolitics phenomenon. Sheldon Wolin highlights the fact that a direct relationship between space and politics existed since the apparition of the state civilization, since

⁵ *Ibidem.*

the time when organised human groups became aware of their own identity and made the difference between „Us” and „the Others”⁶.

There is an impressive amount of scientific writings, which followed the road taken by geopolitics theory and analysis from the time of the first studies in this domain at the end of the XIXth century till today. The analysis and evaluation criteria have been extremely varied but the one most frequently used was that of the national specific customs (the national geopolitics school). We believe that an analysis based on the meanings generated by the term geopolitics used by one researcher or another is more appropriate if we want to know how both the theory and the studies in this domain have evolved. The first meaning of the notion of geopolitics stemmed from the deterministic vision, en vogue at the end of the XIXth century and the beginning of the XXth century, regardless if we speak about the geographical, historical, biological and cultural determinism. Viewed from this perspective, geopolitics was considered an equation of a deterministic type where geographical positioning influenced states' policies in their international connections. All studies and analysis that hinge on this starting point fall in the pattern of what may be called generically *classical geopolitics* even if there are slight meanings and specific reasons that differentiate one author from another.

The second meaning of the concept originates in the theory of international relations. From this point of view it is not space that conditioned the states' and the players' politics but their interests and the capacity of promoting these interests in a certain area. In what today's researchers call critical geopolitics a key element of critical geopolitical thought is a set of discourses, representations and practices employed by classical and neo-classical players in the international policy. The Critical Geopolitics approach concluded that world leaders find themselves in a constant battle to represent

⁶ Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought*, Boston, Toronto, Little Brown and Company, 1960, pp. 16-17.

the world, via their discourse, in a particular way so as to convince their constituents and the entire world of the legitimacy of their course of action”.

1.1.1. *The geopolitical thinking and practice from a classical perspective*

The Swedish analyst Rudolf Kjellen was the first to coin the term geopolitics for a public conference in April 1890. Later on, he developed the concept in his work *Introduction to Sweden's Geography and the Great Powers*. The development of the term geopolitics in the analysis of international political relations came with a study that R. Kjellen wrote in order to decipher the causes and forces that clashed during the First World War⁷. In the German scientific literature, the term appeared in 1903, but only after 1917 a real debate started regarding the use of the new term (geopolitics) initiated when Rudolf Kjellen's work, *State as a form of Life*, was translated into German by J. Sandmeier⁸. The event in itself happened after the armistice and the peace treaty were signed in Germany at the end of the First World War. The most sensitive matter from Germany's standpoint concerned mainly the national territory and the state borders. From this perspective it can be assumed that the German space proved to be not only favorable to the emergence and development of geopolitical ideas, but also an environment that encouraged geopolitical disputes about some facts belonging to the system of the international relations at the end of the war. R. Kjellen adopted Fr. Ratzel's ideas about the state as a living being, and concluded, “*The State is not a random or artificial gathering of different aspects of the human life supported in the same stem only by legislation, it is rooted in historic realities and concrete aspects.*”

⁷ Constantin Hlihor, cit. work, p. 40, Ilie Bădescu, *Geopolitics Treaty*, Mica Valahie Printing House, Bucharest, 2004, pp. 26-29 etc.

⁸ Yves Lacoste, *Preamble*, in “Dictionnaire géopolitique”, Flammarion, 1993, p. 11.

*It is specific for a state to have organic growth; it is the expression of the same fundamental type as man is. In a word, it is a biologic form or a living organism. States, just like the living beings, engage in a "fight for survival" where only the strongest and most powerful win. "The states that dispose of vitality but with restricted space – noted Kjellen – are subordinate to the political imperative in order to extend their territory within colonialism, unification with other states or different conquests. In this situation there was once England and now Germany and Japan"*⁹. Mention should be made of the fact that R. Kjellen's theory about the state was not influenced by discoveries in biology only. He developed his system under the influence of thinkers Leopold von Ranke, G. W. Friederich Hegel and Carl Ritter¹⁰, and complemented them with his own observations derived from the first world conflagration. Two years after the end of the First World War R. Kjellen published his second work *Political Problems of the World War*. The author tried to go beyond the boundaries of the political geography in analyzing the conflicting states because geography could not answer all the questions related to the rise and fall of the great powers and could not explain the foreign policy determinations¹¹, especially those connected to its subjective side.

As a result, in Kjellen's opinion, geopolitics had to offer people "*the power to judge the events and use the beneficent occasion*"¹² according to personal interests. Rudolf Kjellen did not consider geopolitics a new discipline or science that had to be allied to geography, history, or diplomacy but only an aspect of „*the*

⁹ Apud Günter Hayden, *Critic of German Geopolitics*, Politic Printing House, Bucharest, 1960, p. 108.

¹⁰ Constantin Hlihor, cit. work, p. 41.

¹¹ See Constantin Hlihor, *Rise and fall of the Empires in Dimitrie Cantemir and Paul Kennedy's opinion*, in "Romanian-American Review", no. 1, 2011, pp. 34-57.

¹² Apud Ion Conea, *Geopolitics – a new science*, in vol. E. I. Emandi, Gh. Buzatu, V. S. Cucu, "Geopolitics", Iași, 1994, p. 37.

science that studies the state"¹³. Henceforth, it was a mixture of: geopolitics, ecopolitics, demopolitics, sociopolitics and cratopolitics. Geopolitics studies the state as a territory (place, shape), ecopolitics analyzes it in terms of households, demopolitics reviews it as far as people are concerned, sociopolitics looks upon society as a whole, and from a governmental perspective it was analyzed by crato-politics. From a geopolitical point of view related to the region surrounding a state, Kjellen did not mean only the positioning on the map, influenced by geographical coordinates, by a neighboring sea, or landlocked. He referred mainly, to its place in the international relations architecture. The study of geopolitics, the author remarked, *observes and reflects over all fundamental problems for placing a country in the world context. These problems derive from: simple or complex variety of borderland with greater or smaller states, smaller or longer distances from the cultural and force centres, from the delicate problems of great politics, from the central, middle and marginal position and many other aspects of the kind*¹⁴. It is quite obvious that the Swedish scholar employed the term in a very narrow meaning, although some successive researchers concluded later that "*He developed an analytical framework capable of both objectively studying the evolution of a State's power and examining how this process affects interstate relations*"¹⁵.

At a time when geopolitics was searching its place within the socio-humanistic field, we cannot quote a theoretical debate in Great Britain and even across the Atlantic too, but rather analyzes and studies, which were geopolitical even if their authors did not call them as such. That was the case of Halford J. Mackinder¹⁶ and Alfred

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 29.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 31.

¹⁵ Sven Holdar, *The Ideal State and the Power of Geography. The Life-Work of Rudolf Kjellen*, in "Political Geography", vol. 11, no. 3, May 1992, p. 307.

¹⁶ Halford John Mackinder, *The Geographical Pivot of History*, Ed. The Royal Geographical Society, London, 1969.

T. Mahan's¹⁷ works, interested in finding the theoretical grounds to justify the preservation and the consolidation of their countries' position as a great power. The time when Halford J. Mackinder became a central figure of the geopolitical thinking was January 1904, when he presented his research called *The Geographical Pivot of History* at the Geographical Society. Soon afterwards, the idea was expanded in two other public conferences.¹⁸ Convinced that human history crossed three stages in its flow, Halford J. Mackinder analyzed in his remarks the fundamental differences between the great maritime powers and the continental powers. He concluded that the role of a pivot regime in politics and the world history was the key aspect. A state must have the assets to take a central stage role in order to dominate the power equation. That was a deterministic and geographical pattern¹⁹ and he largely explained it in a highly successful work both for specialists and non-specialists published in 1919. His conclusions belonged to a linear equation of determinism: „*Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland: Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island: Who rules the World-Island commands the World*”²⁰.

This pivot role was not fulfilled by Europe as one might understand from the power equation, but it was the vast area of Eurasia²¹, in his opinion. Who dominates this space can rightfully consider himself the master of the entire world. “*Taking a quick look*

¹⁷ Alfred Tayer Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power upon French Revolution and Empire, 1793-1812*, Boston, 1895; *Ibidem*, *The Interest of America in “Sea Power, present and future”*, Boston, 1897.

¹⁸ Chris Seiple, *Revisiting the Geo-Political Thinking Of Sir Halford John Mackinder: United States – Uzbekistan Relations 1991-2005*, on line, http://www.globalengage.org/attachments/771_seiple_dissertation.pdf, accessed at 12 of August 2010, 21.00.

¹⁹ Halford John Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1996), passim.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 106.

²¹ Halford J. Mackinder, *Influence of Sea Power*, p. 31.

over the broad sense of history – Halford J. Mackinder wrote – we cannot cast away the thought over a certain pressure of geographic realities over it. Do Eurasia's vast spaces, inaccessible to marine ships, but open to nomad travelers in old times, covered today by a network of railway, represent today the pivot region of world history? Here there have existed and still exist the conditions to create a military and economic mobile power... Russia has replaced the Mongol Empire. The steppe riders' centrifugal raids were substituted by its pressures over Finland, Scandinavia, Poland, Turkey, Persia and China. At a global scale, it occupies a strategic central position, compatible with Germany's position in Europe. It can strike in any position."²²

Beyond this axial area, there are two circular arcs: Germany, Austro-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, India and China, on one side and Great Britain, Japan, the United States of America, South Africa, and Australia, on the other side²³. Mackinder thought that any great continental power, which would obtain a domineering position in the „geographical pivot” area, can outflank the maritime world from the sides. With this in mind he warned against a Russian-German approach or even a Chinese-Japanese approach to replace Russia and the pivot area because „*there could be produced a breach of power equilibrium not in favor of the pivot state.*”²⁴ In order to counter-balance this possibility, it was necessary – in Halford J. Mackinder's opinion – to sign an alliance between England, France and the USA. He considered that a criss-crossing of the maritime and terrestrial spaces was the key-factor in the history of peoples and states. The very course of history itself was influenced by the confrontation between the *centre-periphery*. Many researchers in geopolitics still think that Mackinder's vision about the heartland has not changed much down to our time. It always included central Russia; western China, the northern parts of Pakistan, and Iran; and

²² *Ibidem*, pp. 43-44.

²³ Chris Seiple, *cit. work*, in *cit city*.

²⁴ Halford J. Mackinder, *Influence of Sea Power*, p. 42.

the Heartland hinge itself, Central Asia – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tadjikistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Central Asia’s centre and Uzbekistan. The centre of the Heartland put a permanent pressure over the periphery or on what he called the *inland belt*. Subsequently, the pivot theory experienced new developments and aspects²⁵. The World Island is a compact continental mass, surrounded by the planetary Ocean – Europe – Asia and Africa. Surrounded by the planetary Ocean, this island must become inevitably the main place for the deployment of humankind on our planet, due to its geographical and strategic position.

Very important, in Halford J. Mackinder’s opinion, was the state that controlled the World Island Heartland. Only that state had a sufficiently solid foundation to focus its forces onto what could threaten the world freedom from inside the continental citadel of Eurasia. The conclusion of this approach was synthetically stated in the following formula: “*Who controls Eastern Europe dominates the Heartland. Who controls Heartland dominates the World Island. Who controls the world Island, controls the whole world*”²⁶.

Europe’s evolution in the XXth century proves clearly that Mackinder’s formula did not succeed in theory but it definitely enjoyed a practical success. The way the international relations evolved for the first half of the XXth century proved the fact that statesmen who traced new borders through international treaties after the two world wars were strongly influenced by his beliefs. The Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939, the beginning of the Second World War and Germany’s subsequent invasion of the Soviet Union revived the interest for Mackinder’s works in the United States. In 1941 and 1942, Newsweek, Reader’s Digest, and Life published articles, which prominently mentioned Mackinder and his writings²⁷. His book, “*Democratic Ideals and Reality*” was reprinted in 1942. In the

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 43.

²⁶ Halford John Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, p. 106.

²⁷ Francis P. Sempa, *Geopolitics. From the Cold War to the 21st Century*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 2002, p. 18.

same year, Hamilton Fish Armstrong, the editor of Foreign Affairs, asked Mackinder to write an article and update his Heartland theory. That article, entitled “*The Round World and the Winning of the Peace*,” was published in July 1943, and was Mackinder’s last significant statement of his global views. “[My] concept of the Heartland,” Mackinder wrote, “is more valid and useful today than it was either twenty or forty years ago.” He described the Heartland in geographical terms as “the northern part and the interior of Euro-Asia,” extending “from the Arctic coast down to the central deserts,” flowing westward to “the broad isthmus between the Baltic and Black Seas.”²⁸ While the Soviet Union emerged as the next great threat after the Second World War, the warnings of Mackinder’s cherub remained on the minds of many American strategists²⁹. Therefore, Collin Gray was right when he pointed out that “Mackinder’s interpretations of historically shifting power relationships in their geographical setting have passed the test of time much better than have the slings and arrows of his legion of critics.”³⁰

Another representative of classical geopolitics, Admiral Alfred T. Mahan built his model of geopolitical analysis based on several postulates, which cannot be tested, either. In the last ten years of the XIXth century, he published three books acknowledged today as belonging to geopolitics *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, 1890; *The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire*, 1892 and *The Interest of America in Sea Power*, 1898 – which revolutionized the strategic thinking for naval operations. For A. T. Mahan the tool of politics is trade. In his last great work *Problem*

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 19.

²⁹ See Christopher J. Fettweis, Revisiting Mackinder and Angell: The Obsolescence of Great Power Geopolitics, in “Comparative Strategy”, Vol. 22, no. 2 (April-June 2003), pp. 109-129; Colin S. Gray, *In Defence of the Heartland: Sir Halford Mackinder and His Critics a Hundred Years On*, in “Comparative Strategy”, Vol. 23, no. 1, (January-March 2004), pp. 9-25.

³⁰ Colin S. Gray, *The Geopolitics of Super Power*, Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1988, p. 4., after, Francis P. Sempa, *cit. work*, p. 20.

of Asia, 1900, Mahan analyzed the Far East area. He identified the perspective of a confrontation between maritime powers (Great Britain, U.S.A.) and continental powers (most probably Russia) in the strategic belt situated at 30-40 degrees north latitude. His solution was to establish a system of balance and counterbalance using the fleet and trade, controlled by the powers from outside Eurasia³¹, according to the interests of the maritime powers. Regarding the strategic thinking in maritime operations Alfred Mahan adopted and developed the French general Jominy's explanations of military theories. Besides these specific themes, Mahan studied the importance of oceans and the power and the value mustered by those who controlled them. Mahan presented the advantages of the maritime powers in comparison to the continental powers to prevent aggression³² through their control of the transport routes and through the conditions offered by nature. Mahan traced the strategic guidelines of the American defensive stating that the U.S.A. cannot rely only on the protection offered by distance. He recommended an extension of the defensive frontiers to the opposite shores of the oceans that surrounded the American waterline and the construction of strategic bases on the islands of the Atlantic and the Pacific. The role of the American military and commercial fleets became vital for the preservation of the American power. Furthermore, the U.S.A. had to control the Caribbean Basin, especially the Panama isthmus to avoid an imminent danger.

In order to ensure the supremacy of the maritime powers, Mahan conceived a geopolitical scenario known as "*the Anaconda politics*". This scenario hinged on a policy of surrounding the Eurasian continental mass with a chain of naval bases. As a result, a fleet capable of offensive actions, he said, could provide the United States undeniable advantages in the Caribbean basin and the Pacific

³¹ Liviu Țirău, *Geopolitis talks*, on line, <http://idd.euro.ubbcluj.ro/interactiv/cursuri/LiviuTirau/4.htm>, accesed at 11 of July 2010, 19.00.

³² Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 44.

Ocean. In his work *America's Interest for the Maritime Force*, Mahan pointed out that the U.S.A. could become a world power if: they actively worked together with the British maritime power; they opposed Germany's maritime power; followed closely Japan's expansion in the Pacific and fought against it; they coordinated Europe's actions of defense against the actions developed by the Asian states³³. As in the case of Halford J. Mackinder, the admiral's geopolitical ideas and scenarios was duplicated by the political action. However, A.T. Mahan's concept was never officially recognized as the geopolitical strategy of the United States, and he often pointed out that many American "academics" did not understand it but rather embraced the "outdated" view that the U.S.A's geographical position was extremely favorable only for defense. If we review the U.S. military policies after World War II it becomes only obvious that the U.S. foreign policy doctrine was largely built along the lines of Mahan's thinking. At this stage it is relevant to notice the U.S. state secretary H.L. Stimson's statement: "*Neptun is god, Mahan is his prophet and the USA navy the only real church...*"³⁴, as well as F. D. Roosevelt's request addressed to Americans to look at the whole world map, not only at the American territory.

The USA had to intensify the geopolitical studies according to the threats that appeared during the Second World War. Geopolitics became a subject of the university curricula at the West Point Academy, and the universities of Georgetown and Washington. The basic geopolitical texts and scenarios during the two world wars were those scripted by Edmond Walsh, Nicolas Spykman and Robert Strausz-Hupé. The American geopolitician Strausz-Hupé is a forgotten figure in the political geography circles; the recent *Dictionary of Geopolitics*, for example, contains no entry on his

³³ *Ibidem*.

³⁴ Apud, Sergiu Tamas, *Geopolitics*, Alternative Printing House, Bucharest, p. 113.

name³⁵. His most important work, that still stands was also his PhD thesis in geopolitics, *The Balance of Tomorrow. A reappraise of basic trends in world politics*³⁶, written during the Second World War but published during the period of the great conferences among the allies at Yalta and Potsdam. According to Andrew Crampton „The *Balance of Tomorrow* was written at a politically sensitive time when the USA was uncertain of its role and identity in the post-war world. The book was published right after the conferences in the immediate aftermath of Yalta and Dumbarton Oaks conferences, which witnessed a revival of the balance of power approach and that of dividing the world into three ‘spheres’³⁷.

Starting with Robert Strausz-Hupé, the American geopolitical studies moved their research from space analysis in the fight for world supremacy to the place and the role that states had in the power equation. The concept “*of the balance of power*“ was the key of the geopolitical analysis in the works of R. Strausz-Hupé. In his opinion, it meant: an equilibrium between the great naval and continental powers; an equilibrium between different regional power poles in Europe and Asia and between the two continents in general; an equilibrium between the politics of military intervention force and the politics of diplomatic compromise, a global equilibrium between the two superpowers: the USA and the Soviet Union³⁸. Like some of his predecessors, Robert Strausz-Hupé was charmed by the idea of constructing a personal geopolitical scenario, founded on a

³⁵ Apud, Andrew Crampton, *Intellectuals, institutions and ideology: the case of Robert Strausz-Hupk and ‘American geopolitics’*, in “Political Geography”, Vol. 15, no. 617, pp. 533-555, 1996, on line, <http://www.nvc.vt.edu/toalg/Website/Publish/Papers/CramptonToal1996.pdf>, accessed at 10 of March 2010, 15.00.

³⁶ Robert Strausz-Hupé, *The balance of tomorrow. A reappraisal of basic trends in world politics*, cited in Claude Raffertin, *Geopolitique et Histoire*, Payot Lausanne, 1995, p. 279.

³⁷ Andrew Crampton, *cit. work*, in *cit. place*.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

federation at a regional or global level led by the USA. He thought that “*it is the whole world interest to have a sole centre, which controls, equilibrates and stabilizes the whole world. It is a referee force, and this equilibrium and stabilization control must be held by the United States.*”³⁹

According to certain experts, Nicholas Spykman continued Strausz-Hupé’s research and developed the geopolitical scenarios of H. J. Mackinder and Admiral A. T. Mahan. Spykman had written an elaborate geopolitical critique of American isolationism in *America’s Strategy in World Politics* during the war (1942). According to Francis P. Sempa, the book’s two central themes were that the United States: (1) must adopt a policy of Realpolitik that accepted “power” as the real governing force in international relations, and (2) it must acknowledge that the Eurasian balance of power had a direct impact over the American security⁴⁰. Even if he did not deny the role of geographical positioning in the dispute for supremacy in international politics, Nicholas Spykman brought something new with his work. “*The struggle for power,*” wrote Spykman, “*is identified with the struggle for survival, and the improvement of the relative power position becomes the primary objective of the internal and external policy of states. Everything else is secondary, because in the last instance only power can achieve the objectives of foreign policy.*”⁴¹ These ideas are found in the works of the father of international relations theory as academic curricula: Hans Morgenthau. In his books, he outlined the idea that the Eurasian continental mass and northern coasts of Africa and Australia completed three ecocentric areas called the *Heartland* of the Northern Asian continent, the *buffer zone* surrounding it and the marginal seas as well as the *African* and *Australian* continents. Around this continental mass, from England to Japan, between the northern continent and the two

³⁹ *Ibidem.*

⁴⁰ Francis P. Sempa, *cit. work*, in *cit city*.

⁴¹ Nicholas Spykman, *America’s Strategy in World Politics* (New York: Harcourt, Brace&Co., 1942), p. 18, apud, Francis P. Sempa, *cit. work*, in *cit city*.

southern continents stretched the world's Great Maritime Way⁴². This strip that extended from the western to the eastern limits of the Eurasian continent was called the „rimland” a newly coined term introduced by N. Spykman to the geopolitical theory. Consequently, he divided the world into two: the Heartland and the Rimland and suggested a new geopolitical pattern: “*Who controls Rimland, dominates Eurasia; who controls Eurasia, controls the world destiny*”⁴³. From this geopolitical approach, we can notice that N. Spykman did not bring anything new in fact; he did not alter the interpretation grid of world politics suggested by Mackinder. Instead, he highlighted it by replacing *Heartland* with *Rimland*. In N. Spykman's opinion, the United States held a central and favorable position, both in its relations with the Heartland and to the Rimland. The Atlantic and the Pacific coasts faced the two sides of the Eurasian Rimland while the North Pole faced the Heartland. The American expert concluded that the United States must maintain the transatlantic and transpacific bases at the most appropriate distance from Eurasia, in order to control the balance of power along the whole Rimland. “*The United States' main objective during peace and war – N. Spykman wrote – had to focus on preventing the unifying of the power centres of the Old World in a coalition hostile to them*”⁴⁴.

The evolution of world politics seems to have endorsed part of the geopolitical projections launched by the American scholar. Another interesting idea resulted from the review of the place and the role the Mediterranean Sea in uniting energies for the growth and the development of the Roman Empire and its universal claim. The basic paradigm in this analysis focused on the concept of *Midland Ocean*. He thus concluded that after the Second World War the Atlantic Ocean did not separate but united the West⁴⁵.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 12.

⁴³ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴ *Idem*, *The Geography of the Peace*, Harcourt Brace, New York, 1945, p. 45.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 46.

Another important representative of classical geopolitics from the Anglo-Saxon school of thought was Saul Cohen studied the geopolitics of the global spaces. According to him, the world was displayed in a geopolitical hierarchy whose elements, in a downward order were: *global geographical realms, regions, state-nations, and sub-national units*⁴⁶. Two such global realms existed: the maritime realm and the continental realm, according to the same American author. The former was more open to trade exchanges and generally to the idea of cooperation while the latter was self-centred. Each global realm contained in its turn a few distinct regions. The maritime realm included several regions such: North America and the Carribean area, the maritime Europe and Maghreb, the coast of Asia and the Sub-Saharan Africa. It is important to notice that South America, Africa and South Asia extended beyond these global regions composing what Cohen called „the fourth marginal sphere”⁴⁷. Professor Paul Dobrescu remarked that the importance of Saul Cohen’s geopolitical theory was based on the fact that it also introduced other concepts that helped researchers to position themselves better in the geopolitics of today. For example, what the author called shatter belts areas politically fragmented, were spaces situated at the conjunction of vast continental and maritime spaces. These areas were equally influenced by the two spaces; consequently, they could be attracted by one of them or they could remain divided because of conflicting interests in the area. South-Eastern Asia, the author concluded, recently was such a realm but it was attached politically and economically to Coastal Asia, a region with maritime features, in the last decades. The last area under geopolitical pressure was the Middle East, which seemed to evolve also towards the maritime space, especially after the fall of the USSR.

Another important concept is that of *gateway*. These positions have a few distinctive features: they are historically and culturally

⁴⁶ Saul Cohen, *Global Geopolitical Change in the Post-Cold War Era*, apud, Paul Dobrescu, *Geopolitics*, Comunicare.ro, Bucharest, 2003, p. 68.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 69.

distinct areas; they are economically more developed than the neighboring areas. States positioned this way are either small or medium-sized in terms of population and territory. From a geographical point of view, these positions connect two important trade routes, most often maritime ones. That is why they play a *role of integration between the regions*. In fact, this brings into focus an older theory of the military strategy on the compulsory control of the crossing points in realm rivalries of power.

Rivalries between the two superpowers during the Cold War brought to the centre stage a new integrating-type of geopolitical theory: the Containment. Containing the Soviet power was the subject of George F. Kennan's famous 1947 article in *Foreign Affairs*, "*The Sources of Soviet Conduct*."⁴⁸ Kennan argued that the Soviet Union would seek to expand its political control beyond the immediate post-war geographical boundaries for historical and ideological reasons. He urged the United States to respond with a policy of "long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment." He also called for "*the adroit and vigilant application of counter-force at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and manoeuvres of the Soviet policy*." This policy was not a magnanimous offer to protect the nations of Europe and Asia from the Soviet tyranny: it was based on the central assumption, heightened by two wars that the security of the United States was ultimately at stake in the balance of power on the Eurasian landmass⁴⁹.

According to Francis P. Sempa one of the most convincing implementations of the geopolitical thinking in the nuclear age was produced by the strategic US analyst Colin Gray, in his book, *The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era*,⁵⁰. His geopolitical model relied

⁴⁸ Constantin Hlihor, *History of the XXth Century*, Comunicare.ro, Bucharest, 2002, p. 106.

⁴⁹ Francis P.Sempa, *cit. work*, in *cit city*.

⁵⁰ Colin S. Gray, *The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era*, New York: Crane, Russak & Company, Inc., 1977.

heavily on the concepts of Mackinder and Spykman, which is obvious when comparing the terms he used. His means of research belonged to the classical geopolitics: the Soviet Union was the “Heartland superpower,” Western Europe and non-Soviet Asia was the Eurasian “Rimlands,” and the United States was the “insular maritime superpower.” Moreover, he abandoned the standard clichés applied to the the East-West relationship, such as “mistrust,” “misunderstanding,” “managing relationships,” “causing tensions,” and so on. In Gray’s opinion, power was the governing force in the international relations. The United States and the Soviet Union were engaged in a permanent struggle, whose immediate objectives were the Rimlands of Eurasia. The Soviet Union’s control over all or most of the Rimlands would have given the Kremlin overwhelming political dominance on the Eurasian-African “World Island.” Therefore, the supreme geopolitical goal of the American foreign policy since 1945 was to prevent that contingency. Nuclear weapons, Gray explained, must be viewed within that geopolitical framework. They were a part of and consequently depended on the balance-of-power considerations. He warned that from a geopolitical perspective “*the American defense community has yet to come to terms with the likely consequences of parity, let alone inferiority. Strategic parity means that the United States has no margin of strategic nuclear strength which could be invoked on behalf of endangered friends and allies in Eurasia*”⁵¹

Successive knowledge revolutions, mainly those in communication forced a search for new solutions⁵² and downgraded severely the geographically oriented geopolitical models such as “the space contraction”, achieved by developing new means of transportation and the apparition of the nuclear vectors capable to go beyond any

⁵¹ Apud, Francis P.Sempa, *cit.work*, in *cit city*.

⁵² Cristopher J. Fettweis, Sir Halford Mackinder, *Geopolitic and Policymaking in the 21st Century*, in „Parameters”, US Army War College Quaterly, Summer 2000, no. 2, Volume XXX, p. 71.

geographical obstacle. It is interesting to note that the US Congress asked John Collins “to prepare ‘a frame of reference in June 1987 that could help the Congress to evaluate future, as well as present, military space policies, programmes and budgets’”⁵³. In his resulting study *Military Space Forces; The Next 50 Years*, he showed that “*air force and land force have considered as obsolete the geopolitical theories from the beginning of the century*”⁵⁴, including Mackinder’s theory “*The circum terrestrial space – J. Collins wrote – encapsulates the Earth to an altitude of 50 000 miles*“, and this shall be the key to military domination from the half of the Exit century.

The geopolitical model J. Collins devised is also deterministic. Nonetheless, he did not refer to the terrestrial or the maritime realms control, but to the control of the outer space, according to a classical pattern initiated by Mackinder and Spykman⁵⁵:

- Who controls the circum terrestrial realm, controls the Earth;
- Who controls the Moon, controls the circum terrestrial realm;
- Who controls L4 and L5 controls the system Terra – Moon.

L4 and L5 are the points of moon gravity – places in space where the gravity of the the Moon and the Earth is equal.

In J. Collins’s vision, military bases placed there could keep their position for a long time without refueling. They could equal the “*high lands*“ for “*tomorrow’s space warriors*“. This model had a great impact both on the political world, leading to militarizing the outer space, and on the experts who supported this theory. According to the former astronaut Michael Collins, who had been there and back twice „*the space is an ideal place to attack aircraft carriers and other major ground combatants.*”⁵⁶

⁵³ Apud, Karl Grossman, 1989: *Military Space Forces – The Next 50 Years: The Democratic Party’s Vision of Space Warfare*, on line, http://coat.ncf.ca/our_magazine/links/55/Articles/55_12-13.pdf, accessed at 23 of June 2010, 21.00.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁵ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 97.

⁵⁶ Karl Grossman, *cit.work*, in *cit.city*.

The collapse of the bipolar world after the implosion of the Soviet Empire did not lead, as firstly believed, to a fall into oblivion of the classical geopolitical model based on the rivalry between the great powers to control a geographical region. The U.S.A. became the only superpower to control the whole world and had no rival to dispute its dominance over one area or the other. Still, under these circumstances, Zbigniew Brzezinski reaffirmed the importance of the Euro-Asian area in similar terms to previous approaches⁵⁷. In his opinion, Eurasia represented the „home” for the most determined and dynamic states in history. From Genghis Khan to the Asian contemporary economic miracle all this evolution has proven that the world’s most important states started from here. The most powerful and the most densely populated candidates to become regional powers, China and India, are situated in this space. Political challenges for America come from this Eurasian area. The next most powerful six economic powers after the USA operate on this continent. Eurasia holds 75% of the world population, 60% of GDP and 75% of the globe’s energy resources.

In the spirit of the classical geopolitics analyzes so far, Brzezinski concluded: „*who dominates Eurasia dominates almost automatically the Middle East and Africa*”⁵⁸. From this geopolitical perspective, Brzezinski reached two conclusions with strategic value for present America. First he considered that „*it is no longer enough to model a politics for Europe and another politics for Asia*”, but we must have in view *a politics for Eurasia*. Considering that the US’s geopolitical perspective was typical for a sea power, interpreting its relationship with other nations or geopolitical entities from its situation as an “island”, he identified the Mediterranean basin and the Central Asian area as two regions characterized by strong instability. They are located in the so-called arch of instability as defined by Zbigniew Brzezinski. The arch of instability or of crisis

⁵⁷ Paul Dobrescu, *cit. work*, p. 70.

⁵⁸ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*, p. 31.

identified an evolution and an expansion of the geostrategic concept of rimland (maritime or coastal side) developed by Nicholas J. Spykman, as noted previously. The control of the rimland would have warranted the control of the Eurasian landmass and the containment of the main superpower, the Soviet Union, for the exclusive benefit of the “North American island”⁵⁹ in the context of the bipolar system.

In the first decades after the First World War ended, geopolitics generated a particular interest in Germany. The domestic situation and especially the assertion of the German state as a great power in international relations prompted certain experts to look at geopolitics as a domain able to offer politicians “*practical political directions starting from theories of geography and history.*”⁶⁰

Classical geopolitics reached the days of glory in the interwars Germany not necessarily due to the number of specialists and works related to it but especially due to their impact on the political leadership. In a very short period of time, a German school of thought based on geopolitics developed around the “*Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*” publication, where a remarkable personality world: General Karl Haushofer.

The German experts developed and gave a special interpretation to the concept of geopolitics. In their view, “*geopolitics is the theory of territory events dependence. It is grounded in geography, especially political geography, which is the theory of political beings on the globe and their structures. Geopolitics aims to provide the directions for political action and be guidance in the political life. As a result, it becomes a technology capable of leading practical politics to lead practical politics to the point to produce the starting*

⁵⁹ Tiberio Graziani, *Geopolitical Tensions and the Multipolar System: The US versus Eurasia*, on line, <http://theglobalrealm.com/2011/05/13/geopolitical-tensions-and-the-multipolar-system-the-us-versus-eurasia/>, accessed at 11 of November 2011, 19.00.

⁶⁰ Henning-Körholz, *Einführung in die Geopolitik*, Teubner Berlin – Leipzig, 1937, p. 7; Apud Ion Conea, *cit.work*, in *cit.city*, p. 33.

point for the innovation animus of the action. Only with its help has this animus a starting point for the achievement in science and not ignorance. Geopolitics wants and has to become the state's geographic consciousness."⁶¹

General Karl Haushofer's conclusions on the role and the importance of geopolitics in the analysis of the international political phenomenon preserved their novelty even today although he did not get involved in theoretical disputes on the definition and the scope of the geopolitical science. First, he considered geopolitics to be a combination of „*geography, history, political science, political economics and sociology*“⁶², which can become a science along its development. He was convinced that geopolitics must study the problem of state relationing and its dynamics from ethnical, political, social, and economic points of view. In this respect, Haushofer defined it as “*the science about the political life forms in natural life areas that is trying to understand their interdependence on Earth and their conditioning along historic development*”⁶³.

It is interesting to note that General Karl Haushofer regarded geopolitics as an essential instrument “*to put the world in order*“⁶⁴, because he was convinced that this science could decipher this order and relay to people “*the real image of the world*“⁶⁵. In spite of a permanent shift between geopolitical explanation and the need to justify the entire German foreign politics, Karl Haushofer comprehended correctly the role geopolitics had to play in a state's political action and international relations. “*Politics – in his opinion – has to start to learn how to handle all susceptible scientific means*

⁶¹ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 47.

⁶² Henning Heske, *Karl Haushofer: his rule in german geopolitics and nazi politics*, in “Political Quarterly”, avril, 1987, p. 136.

⁶³ Karl Haushofer, Erich Obst, Herman Lautensach, Otto Haul, *Bausteine zur Geopolitik*, Berlin, Grünwald, 1928, pp. 52-53; apud, Ionel Nicu Sava, *Geopolitica. Teorii și paradigme clasice. Școala geopolitică germană*. București, 1997, p. 111.

⁶⁴ Apud, Claude Raffestin, *cit. work.*, p. 128.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*.

at hand in taught fight for existence“⁶⁶. As a result, geopolitics had to “*provide arguments for political actions and to be guidance in the political life*“⁶⁷. In this way, it became “*an effective lesson capable of practical politics... Only in this way can we leap from science to ability.*“⁶⁸

Through geopolitics, Karl Haushofer hoped to eliminate the arbitrary from human actions in international relations. Following the analysis and observation of the states relations, this came as a utopic conception because a series of factors had been left out, such as accidents, which transcended the political will. The general-turned-analyst strongly believed that geopolitics could lead to the knowledge and acknowledgement of the means of powers distribution in space and can spot the causes, which influence the system of international relations⁶⁹.

Like several other scientific branches that forecast and set the trends in the evolution of a social phenomenon or process, geopolitics cannot offer accurate solutions to questions it means to answer at a certain point. From this perspective, Karl Haushofer deemed geopolitics to have the merit of succeeding to go beyond human arbitrary by analyzing human relations, but “*it cannot make concise declarations about more than 25 percent of the cases.*“⁷⁰ The main guidelines of geopolitical research were established by General Karl Haushofer in the work *Bausteine für Geopolitik* and certain studies published in the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* review. Taking into consideration that there is a direct correlation between space (Raum) that a people or a nation occupies and its best development, Haushofer believed that he discovered “*the states' indefinite growth*

⁶⁶ Apud Ionel Nicu Sava, cit. work., p. 112.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁶⁸ *Ibidem.*, p. 113.

⁶⁹ John Bellamy Foster, *The New Geopolitics of Empire*, on line, <http://monthlyreview.org/2006/01/01/the-new-geopolitics-of-empire>, accesat la 12 mai 2009, ora 20.00.

⁷⁰ Constantin Hlihor, cit. work., p. 47.

law“⁷¹. According to this law, the population of an active nation expands until it reaches the largest possible territories in order to satisfy its needs. Haushofer offered a quantitative support for this thesis and considered that a people can normally develop if it has a density of one hundred inhabitants per square kilometer. He also promoted ideas under the baneful influence of racist, segregationist, theories, which constituted the theoretical foundation of the Nazi ideology⁷². The evolution of the European society after the Second World War contradicted the hypothetical and the mathematical support of the states' indefinite growth law in international relations. General Karl Haushofer's geopolitical vision was also influenced by Anglo-Saxon geopolitical concepts and theories, especially Mackinder's "Heartland" thesis. In Mackinder's model, he detected the possibility for Germany to regain its place in the power equation from the European continent lost after the end of the First World War. Haushofer considered, from this point of view, that Germany did not have to be Russia's enemy, but an ally to build the continental block linking Central Europe to Eurasia⁷³.

In a first stage of the Second World War, his prophecy seemed to have been covered in the world politics of that time. In August 1939, the Nazi Germany and the USSR signed the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact and divided their spheres of influence⁷⁴. He regarded

⁷¹ M. Müller, *Text, discourse and..., Working Paper, forthcoming* in Klaus Dodds, Merje Kuus and Jo Sharp, *The Ashgate Research Companion to Critical Geopolitics*, eds., 2011, on line, http://www.alexandria.unisg.ch/export/DL/Martin_Mueller/205403.pdf, accessed at 12 may 2009.

⁷² В.А. Бурлаков, *Развитие геополитики в России: проблемы и перспективы формирования новой методологии изучения межгосударственных отношений*, http://www.ojkum.ru/arc/2007_01/2007_01_01.pdf, accessed at 15 may 2009, 20.00.

⁷³ Karl Haushofer, *De la géopolitique...*, apud Ionel Nicu Sava, *cit., work* pp. 128-129.

⁷⁴ See Florin Constantiniu, *Between Hitler and Stalin. Romania and the Ribbentrop-Molotov Agreement*, Danubius Printing House, Bucharest, 1999; Ioan Scurtu, Constantin Hlihor, *Year 1940. Drama of the Romanians between Prut and Nistru*, AISM Printing House, Bucharest, 1992.

Germany's alliance to Russia as the core of a transcontinental block that might include Japan and China. In his works of the 1930s, Haushofer attempted to draw the attention of Japanese politicians to Japan's approach to China and the Soviet Union from this particular perspective. The general saw the construction of the Eurasian block as an answer to the scenario "Anaconda". That allowed the maritime powers – England and the USA – to surround the Heartland. In fact, such a scenario could help Germany to become hegemony within the new world order that the third Reich supporters envisaged. It is remarkable that in devising this geopolitical scenario, Haushofer started from the Heartland theory produced by Mackinder but his conclusions were totally different⁷⁵. In this context, he revived Mackinder's call to the maritime powers, urging them to find the best solutions to prevent a possible Russia-Germany alliance which was the key to accomplish the vital space (Lebensraum) for the third Reich. The practical implementation of Karl Haushofer's geopolitical scenario at the international relations level would have made impossible any attempt of the maritime powers⁷⁶ to unite in a constituted block. Not only did the historic evolution amend these assertions, but it also proved that mechanical logic concepts and schemes could not apply to the geopolitical analysis. A stakeholder's interest, be it a state or a non-state, can lead to alliances that do not fit into these logic thinking systems.

Henceforth, it is quite easy to understand why the Nazi leadership of the German state did not welcome the geopolitical ideas and scenario worked out by General Haushofer and his assistants. The Führer did not trust the geopolitical general and doubted his judgment. Rudolf Hess's attempts to connect Hitler and Haushofer ended in disaster⁷⁷. Their last meeting, of 10 November 1938, concluded in a stormy exchange of ideas. Hitler had other projects and the idea of the Eurasian block in Haushofer's

⁷⁵ Sergiu Tămaș, *cit. work*, p. 83.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 79.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 53.

geopolitical projection was thrown away when the Soviet Union was attacked in June 1941. Hitler wanted to control Eurasia, by conquest and not by cooperation!

The French geopolitical school was dominated by the need to face rivalry on two fronts – on the continent against Germany and outside of the European space against Great Britain. This school was basically a reaction to Ratzel's determinism. The first important representative of the French school of geopolitics was Elisée Réclus (1830 – 1905). He had taken part in the French Revolution, known as the Commune of Paris, and was convicted to ten years of exile. While he was in Switzerland, he traveled around the world and published "*La Nouvelle Géographie universelle*", in nineteen volumes, between 1872 and 1895 (17 873 pages, 4 290 maps). His second work, "*L'Homme et la Terre*" was published after his death⁷⁸. Yves Lacoste considered Réclus the intellectual father of the French geopolitics⁷⁹. Starting from the conclusion that "geography is nothing else but history in space, just as history is geography", Réclus's vision can be epitomized as: a vision on Terra, as a complex assembly in a permanent change; man's act over the environment, seen as a source of progress or downfall. As a witness of the glorious era of imperialism, hinged on colonial scrambling, Réclus highlighted the main features of his time: capitalism's fastness to find new markets; the industrial decline of Great Britain; the United States and Russia's emergence.

The founder of the French School of Geography, Vidal de la Blache's work could mark the beginning of the academic geopolitics study in France. Vidal de la Blanche surveyed man's role in using the possibilities offered by the geographical environment in one of his first books, *The Geographical picture of France* (1903). In an early article, "*La géographie politique à propos des écrits de M. Frédéric Ratzel*" published in "*Annales de Géographie*", in 1898,

⁷⁸ EVA, Fabrizio. *Reclus versus Ratzel: from State Geopolitics to Human Geopolitics*, on line <http://raforum.info/reclus/spip.php?article205>.

⁷⁹ Dragos Frăsineanu, *Geopolitics*, 2nd edition, Bucharest 2007, p. 71.

Vidal de la Blanche made his own point of view under the pretext that he was introducing Ratzel's concept to the French public, fighting, in fact, the determinism of his former professor⁸⁰. With this study he laid the foundation of human geography that put man on a hierarchy different from the one conferred by the German geopolitics. In 1917, Vidal de la Blanche published the work "*Eastern France*", whose purpose was to prove the need to attach Alsace and Loren to France. The study approached the relations between the social and economic environment/life, explaining the different strategies of industrialization and political and military problems. From this point of view, we think that the French geopolitician resembled the German geopolitics.

The geopolitical problems promoted by Vidal de la Blanche were largely taken over by Jacques Ancel in his "*Manuel géographique de Politique Européenne*" (1936). He considered that geopolitics was one and the same with political geography or that it had to be based on rigorous analysis and syntheses, continually making reference to history and the accurate study of the environment⁸¹. The same lack of discrimination between political geography and geopolitics is found with Albert Demangeon (1872 – 1940), who considered that it had to be defined as "an action theory in the political space". With the work "*Géographie des frontières*" (1938), J. Ancel contradicted K. Haushofer's work, "*Grenzen*", published in 1927, which suggested a so-called cultural border which included not only the German territory in itself but also the Germanic areas (all regions where the German language was spoken).

Camille Vallaux was the first French researcher who wrote a full account in the domain of Political Geography (*Le Sol et l'État*, 1911). He reviewed Ratzel's concepts of *Raum* (space) and *Lage*

⁸⁰ Klaus Dodds and David Atkinson, *A century of geopolitical thought*, in Tracey Skelton, Gill Valentine, (eds.), *Critical Geographies*, on line, http://frenndw.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/geopolitical-traditions-a-century-of-geopolitical-thought-edited-by-klaus-dodds-and-david-atkinson_copy.pdf.

⁸¹ Dragoş Frăşineanu, *cit. work*, p. 78.

(position) and proved their importance in explaining the nature of the state. He criticized many aspects of Ratzel's thinking, especially his determinism, which lacked in objectivity and pointed towards abstract ideas because he considered that the relation between a state and the environment was more active than passive and this agreed to the possibility-oriented philosophy of Vidal's geographic school⁸². According to Vallaux, a state's development is a process subordinating parts of the whole and controlling centrifugal tendencies. This statement originated in the analysis of the rise and fall process of imperial states and it focused on the causes leading to their collapse. As a staunch opponent of expansionism widely practiced by the world powers of the day in the international politics, Vallaux worked against such approaches employed mainly by France in Africa and by Russia in Asia. It is interesting that Vallaux, who criticized Ratzel's theory, was soon to be accused of "too much closeness to pan germanism" by his countryman Lucien Febvre in a book published in 1921, in collaboration with Jean Brunhes (1869 – 1930), *Géographie de l'histoire – Géographie de la paix et de la guerre (History Geography – Geography of peace and war)*⁸³.

After the Second World War, geopolitics both as an academic branch and as a public discourse fell into oblivion not only in France but also in the whole Europe. Quite a significant number of people thought that geopolitics, which had produced several writings and a significant public discourse in Germany motivated the Nazi expansion. Things started to change between 1959 and 1968 following General Charles de Gaulle's government policy of distancing itself from the military Atlantic structures (but not from the political body, as a whole). To implement such a policy the French president

⁸² See also, Michiel Baud, Willem van Schendel, *Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands*, in "Journal of World History", Volume 8, no. 2, Fall 1997, pp. 211-242.

⁸³ See also, Silviu Negut, Geopolitics. Definitions and precursors, on line, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/38168042/Curs-1-Geopolitica-Definitii-Si-Precursori>, accessed at 12 Sept 2010, 20.00.

needed his own geopolitical strategy. The initial move did not yield the expected results and France developed its intra-European collaboration with Western Germany and the USSR that finally became known as the de Gaulle doctrine, *Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals*. The idea initiated a new geopolitical trend based on “continentalism”⁸⁴.

Starting with the 1970s, when the Anglo-Saxon geopolitics began to be promoted once more, the French geopoliticians, like many of their counterparts from countries with a strong geopolitical tradition, started to refer to geopolitical studies and reviews both in their capacity of international organizations experts (NATO, the UN) or in that of writers of books and publications. A representative of this trend was Jacques Attali, former advisor to the French president François Mitterrand, director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, afterwards. The author of the book “*Lignes d’horizon*” (1990), Attali, concluded that humankind had entered an era of market economy and the political dualism between telucracy (The Land) and thalassocracy (The Sea) vanished and geo-economics spawned by mondialism⁸⁵ was substituting them. In his vision, spaces highlight their importance by concentrating capital, stock markets and commercial goods. From this point of view, Attali concluded that the American space, the political, and the business-financial elite would dominate the world. Although Attali’s projections seemed to be endorsed for some time by the events of the international politics of the Post-Cold War era, geopolitical developments in emerging areas such as Asia and Latin America at the beginning of the XXIst century generated a radical overhaul of the concept launched in the first years of the 1990s. The equation could turn even more complicated if we consider the fact that the

⁸⁴ Adrian Pop, in “Preface” to vol. *Powers and Influences: Geopolitics and geostrategy annuary 2000-2001*, Corint Printing House, Bucharest, 2001.

⁸⁵ Apud, Ilie Bădescu, *Geopolitics treaty*, Mica Valahie Printing House, Bucharest, 2004, p. 50.

Euro-Atlantic space has been far from a unitary one for a long time, with an inside competition growing stronger once the EU came onto the continental stage.

From an opposite position to the “*Hérodote*” group – considered left oriented – the **International Institute of Geopolitics** from Paris was founded in 1982. With the help of the “*Géopolitique*” publication, the institute set to revive the geopolitical doctrine designed by General Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970), who envisaged France as a continental and maritime power. The ways the Institute’s scholars defined and interpreted geopolitics fell into the category of geographical and geostrategic classical studies. Hervé Couteau-Bégarie defined geopolitics as the study of relationships among all components that define politics and the space configuration where they develop⁸⁶.

In a similar way, Pierre Cellérier defined geopolitics in his turn. In his opinion, this scientific branch must research the relation between a political situation and its geographical area. In his endeavor to decipher the meaning and the essence of geopolitics, Cristian Daudel analyzed geopolitics in its relation to geography, geostrategy and other neighboring disciplines. In fact, he accepted that the geopolitical writings gathered “*a little history, a little geography, a little news and intellectual news, varies but almost always the same*”⁸⁷. Convinced of the fact that the complex phenomena that govern the international relations can be studied if there is an interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinary thinking, Daudel based his analysis on the definition given by Pierre Gallois. According to Gallois, geopolitics was a branch of science that “*makes a new syntheses of history space, moral and physical resources of a community that is situated in the power hierarchy in*

⁸⁶ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 117.

⁸⁷ Christian Daudel, *Geography, geopolitics and geostrategy: changing terms*, in I. E. Emami, Gh. Buzatu, V. S. Cucu, *Geopolitics*, Glasul Bucovinei Printing House, Iași, 1994, p. 303.

*the place they ensure it for its realizations*⁸⁸. In its relation to geography and geostrategy, geopolitics focused on everything that was organized in a hierarchy of powers, especially the political and the military ones but also on the economic and the cultural powers, as well. It also studied the states and their alliances – destinies and purposes – in all aspects of power and evolution, law and its implementation. In conclusion, Daudel considered that geopolitics had its own finality in analyzing “*the situation at world level*”, while geography attempted to “*preserve and arrange the territory and geostrategy wants to elaborate scenarios for security and defense*”⁸⁹.

Geopolitical thinking in Russia was based on the concept of Eurasianism. This concept meant that Russia had to follow its own social and geopolitical path distinct from the West⁹⁰, as a Eurasian state uniting different nationalities. The first Russian geopoliticians were N. Danilevsky and L. Mechnikov, who lived in the XIXth century and founded the Russian geopolitical school. Later on, the Trubetskoy brothers, George and Evgheny, initiated a new trend under the name of *The Eurasian School* in the beginning of the XXth century. The fundamental idea of that school was that Russia, Europe and Asia belonged to a single geopolitical system – Eurasia. This was augmented by a deep trust that Russia, which was neither fully European nor completely Asian, made a unique geopolitical Eurasian system.

Eurasianism made its debut in 1921, when great representatives of the Russian emigration – N. Trubețkoi (economist), P. Savițki (geographer), P. Surcinski (music critic), G. Florovski (theologist) published their study, *Exode to the East*⁹¹. The basic idea

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 291.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 307.

⁹⁰ David Kerr, *The New Eurasianism: The Rise of Geopolitics in Russia's Foreign Policy*, in “Europe-Asia Studies”, vol. 47, no. 6, (1995), pp. 977-988.

⁹¹ For example, G. Gloveli, *Geopoliticheskaia ekonomia v Rossii* [Geopolitical Economy in Russia], *Voprosy ekonomiki* [Economic Affairs], no. 11 (2000), pp. 46-63; Igor' Panarin, *Informatsionnaia voyna*, pp. 34-64.

of Eurasianism was that Russia covered an area anchored between the two continents with a precise, unmistakable identity. This particular geographical position should dictate a distinct politics to preserve Russia's identity, according to these authors. Eurasia, wrote Savițki in 1925, „*is a separate, distinct world [...]. Russia occupies the greatest part of this territory, which is not divided in the two continents and forms another distinct continent, independent with no geographic sense*⁹²”. He conferred special attention to the study of an integrated world market, which has gradually become a factor in organizing and uniting maritime civilizations during the contemporary age. In his view, a the impersonal character and the availability of maritime communications allowed countries by the sea to benefit from the world market with minimal shipping expenditures in a very short time. Savitskii also emphasized that Russia (despite a potential great-power imperial expansion) had no chance to gain access to the coast of the “open” sea, in the strict geographical meaning of the word, except on the coast of faraway Kamchatka. Even the Arctic Ocean was excluded from the common ocean circulation⁹³ due to a span of shallow water (less than 600 meters) stretching from Greenland past Iceland to Scotland (the so-called [Wyville-] Thomson Ridge). All the seas washing the coasts of Russia and Eurasia are land locked, continental, “mediterranean” seas, which are frozen for at least six months a year in most cases. In the south, as the extreme limits of conceivable Russian expansion, the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf, both as continental basins, should be considered. How could the unfavorable consequences of the continental geographical location be alleviated? In Savitskii's opinion, one solution was to thwart (within the continental world) the dominance of the principle of an oceanic world economy; to create economic interaction among individual, spatially adjacent areas

⁹² Apud, Paul Dobrescu, *cit. work*, p. 295.

⁹³ Dimitrii Sokolov, *Russia in the World Economy Geopolitical Prospects*, in “Russian Social Science Review”, vol. 50, no. 4, July–August 2009, p. 29.

of the continental world; and to promote their development based on mutual ties⁹⁴.

Geopolitics was officially considered a reactionary science and the studies in this domain were propagandistic during the Soviet regime. It is worth mentioning the fact that after the USSR collapse, geopolitical studies re-emerged under different trends, which derived from the traditional thinking of the Russian classical geopoliticians. Contemporary Russian geopolitical approach developed three prominent geopolitical schools of thought: the New Right, the Eurasian Communists, and the Democratic Statists described by Graham Smith.⁹⁵ Alexander Dugin, Dimitri Trenin, Ghenadi Ziuganov, Kamaludin Gagiev, Vladimir Kolosov, Nikolai Mironenko and Nikolai Nartov have been outstanding representatives of these trends. The last four members are academicians followed by a more select and restricted number of disciples. However, Dugin, Trenin and Ziuganov are better known by the radical opinions they promote⁹⁶. Alexander Dugin caught the Russian public's attention in the beginning of the 1990s. He is considered the most representative leader of the conservative thinking trend in Russia called "expansionism". He runs the conservative movement "Eurasia". He was an adviser of the communist leader Ghenadi Seleznev. Dimitri Trenin is a co-director for the foreign politics programmes at "Carnegie Centre" in Moscow. The centre is part of "Carnegie Endowment for International Peace", a prominent liberal American organisation. He has published several interesting studies and articles about the geopolitical role of central Asia and the Eurasian area. In one of his rather popular books, his vision came quite close to the Western

⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 30.

⁹⁵ Graham Smith, *The masks of Proteus: Russia, geopolitical shift and the new Eurasianism*, in "Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers", New Series, vol. 24. no. 4, 1999, pp. 483, 481-494.

⁹⁶ Vladimir Alexe, *Post Soviet Russian Geopolitics*, on line, <http://evrazia.info/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4062>.

thinking⁹⁷. Definitely opposed to Trenin's geopolitical vision on geopolitics is Ghenadi Ziuganov – very well known in the Russian Federation as the leader of the „Communist Party”, the most important opposition group in the Duma. Alexander Dugin's work – “*The Essentials of Geopolitics*” – has more than nine hundred pages and is considered the „Bible” of modern Russian expansionism⁹⁸. In exchange, Ghenadi Ziuganov's book – “*The Geography of Victory*”⁹⁹ – as well as Nikolai Nartov's “*Geopolitiks*”¹⁰⁰ are parts of the so-called “civilizing” school of thought, convinced that Russia must rebuild its empire within the borders of their former USSR. Dimitri Trenin's book – “*The End of Eurasia*” – is mostly a reply given to conservative and expansionist Russian geopolitical projects¹⁰¹.

Each of the three authors is widely concerned with Eurasia's geopolitical future and Russia's role in this area of “close vicinity”. Each of them has a different type of analysis and suggests different solutions. The three authors take into account the four types of above-mentioned post-Soviet conflicts – “the ethnic conflict” (Caucas, Moldova, Tadjikistan, Chechnya), “the energy conflict” (the area of the Caspian Sea), “the conflict with the Soviet dictators and terrorist threats” (Central Asia), “border conflicts” (Afghanistan, Tadjikistan etc.) – being fundamental for Russia's strategy and Moscow's Eurasian politics.¹⁰²

It is important to note that a purely Russian understanding of Eurasianism is slightly different from the way that analysts from the

⁹⁸ Aleksandr Dugin, *Osnovy Geopolitiki: Geopoliticheskoe Budushee Rossii*, Moscow: Arktogeya Press, 1997.

⁹⁹ G.A. Ziuganov, *Geografiia pobedy: Osnovy rossiiskoi geopolitiki*, [The *Geography of Victory: Fundamental Principles of Russian Geopolitics*], Moscow, 1997.

¹⁰⁰ Vladimir N Nartov. *Geopolitika*, 4th ed., Edinstvo, Moskva 2007.

¹⁰¹ Dimitri Trenin, *The End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border Between Geopolitics and Globalization*, Washington D.C., and Moscow: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2002.

¹⁰² See, Vladimir Alexe, *cit.work*; Ezzatollah Ezzati, *Geopolitics in the XXIst Century*, Bucharest, 2009, pp. 96-98.

Turkish Muslim space view it. Moreover, even the Turkish Muslim ethnics from Russia have a different perception of Eurasianism when they approach the problems of Kazakhstan¹⁰³. The Turkish-Muslim population of Russia believe they are the only ones who truly embody Eurasia, while Russia can become a genuine Eurasian nation only by recognizing and duly endorse the Muslim world as a fundamental part of the Eurasian civilization. It is their belief that Russia should accept, at least partially, a Muslim Turkish state in the area. In Kazakhstan, for example, Eurasianism is the state ideology promoted by President Nursultan Nazarbaev himself.¹⁰⁴ The current situation leads to a sharp contrast with Russia where the dedicated supporters of Eurasianism are not in power¹⁰⁵. Some experts think that Nursultan Nazarbaev's approach to Eurasianism is pragmatic. In contrast to Eurasianism in Russia, he highlighted the country's European connection, caring rather lightly of the fate of Islam in the East. Although the competition for Central Asia seems to have dwindled when the energy resources in the area were not exactly what had been expected at the end of the Cold War, and the geopolitical evolution of the area did not follow any classical scenario devised by the Russian or Western analysts. The Chinese factor must also be considered in the long run.

Even if geopolitics was not as developed in Romania as in Germany and in the Anglo-Saxon world, classical geopolitics was a point of interest for Romanian geographers, historians and sociologists after the first World War. The pioneers of the local geopolitics tried to present the evolution of the Romanian people tightly related to its fundamental geographical elements – the Carpathian Mountains, the Danube, the Dniester and the Black Sea.

¹⁰³ Eldar Ismailov and Vladimer Papava, *Eurasianism and the Concept of Central Caucaso-Asia*, on line
<http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/publications/1006Rethinking-3.pdf>
accessed at 11 May 2009, 23.00.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibidem*.

When referring to this aspect, Simion Mehedinți argued that every Romanian politician had to be *three times concerned* about the mountains, the Danube and the Black Sea. Whoever did lose sight of one of the three central elements of concerns exposed the country to great dangers¹⁰⁶.

In his review of the geopolitical value of the mountains in the Romanian history, professor Ion Conea underlined the fact that the Carpathian mountains are not a chain but “*a high land, an area or a compound of natural regions*” (“*The Carpathians, a natural border?*”). All along history, the mountains represented a defense citadel, which offered a favorable retreat for human life. The Romanians’ life in history developed simultaneously on both sides of the Carpathians. More than in other countries, our mountains did not separate but united people. It is not by mere chance that the Romanians’ birthplace is situated close to the mountains, at Sarmisegetuza, in Transylvania. Even more, this region corresponds, in I. Conea’s opinion, to the “*kernland*” that Kjellen mentioned “*any state has its core land, from which it cannot be separated but by paying the price of its own existence*”. Thus, Transylvania represents “*a starting point, a geopolitical core destined to bear fruit and to receive a real state in its vicinity*”.¹⁰⁷ Another important representative of the Romanian school of geography, Vintilă Mihăilescu, said, when referring to the Carpathians’ geopolitical value, that they represent not only “the Romanian people’s backbone” but they also fulfilled two vital functions in the existence and the evolution of the Romanian state:

1. a defense “*function and a pivot of defense* in cases of hostile invasions during the time of European crises;
2. “*a positive harmonizing function of divergent interests and tendencies in the area* during times of peace and non belligerence.

¹⁰⁶ Dragos Frăsineanu, *cit. work*, p. 56.

¹⁰⁷ I. Conea, *Transylvania, heart of the Romanian land and state*, p. 28, apud, Silviu Neguț, *cit. work*, p. 34.

Similar to other important relief formations in Romania, the mountains proved their importance both for Romanians and **for Europe** as a whole. The Romanian geographer's conclusion is clear. *"In this part of the European continent the times of tranquility resulted in short periods when the eastern, western and southern empires had a Carpathian state among them, a state, supported by the Transylvanian citadel that commanded large territories beyond the Dniester river, down to the Danube valley and its Carpathian clough, to the shores of the Black Sea and the marshes of Tisa, if not even farther away"*¹⁰⁸.

In an era where water transportation was becoming more and more important for the states' economy, there was no way to overlook the fact the Danube had always been a special geopolitical landmark. For Romanians in particular the river has meant a lot more than for other riparian states because it is the Romanian territory where it flows into the Black Sea. For this reason the Danube Delta represented a very important strategic disposition for the control of the Black Sea, which only comes second in importance after the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. From this point of view, it is more than significant that crucial fights between the powers that clashed on this territory were fought to conquer the Danube's inflows all along history. Alexandru Rădulescu identified the three roles held by the Danube in the Romanian geopolitics: a political polarization (noticed also by Vintilă Mihăilescu), a natural border and a maritime route. Free sailing on the Danube was also a reason for the European states to support Romania in its struggle to free its territories from the Turkish occupation. They needed a free and secure waterway in the area and Romania kept the balance among the great powers, preserving a role of „*the European guardian*". This is also the reason for the emergence of the state of Bessarabia, which provided a gateway to the Black sea free from the Russian control, and for the

¹⁰⁸ V. Mihăilescu, cited in I. Bădescu, *Sociology and geopolitics of the frontier*, pp. 124-125.

endorsement of the union between Moldavia and Muntenia ¹⁰⁹ (the great powers needed a powerful state in this area). Simion Mehedinți highlighted this historic role played by the Danube in the territorial reintegration of the Romanian state in the XIXth century and the early XXth century. In his attempt to answer the question “when did the Reunion start?” the author established the following stages ¹¹⁰:

a) In 1829, with the Treaty of Adrianopole, the colonies controlled by the Turks on the left side of the Danube were reunited with Muntenia. The great powers’ „generosity” that of Great Britain in particular, was actually stimulated by the need to free the navigation on the Danube River.

b) In 1865 Bessarabia returned to the motherland because England and France were more and more concerned about the “Oriental issue” and the Russians’ advance towards the Bosphorus.

c) In order to control the Danube the union of Moldavia and Muntenia was deemed necessary. The great European powers needed a large and strong country led by a local prince profoundly grateful to France for such a political achievement.

The geopolitical importance of the pontic space was a subject of geopolitical analysis for historians and geographers in its turn. We shall highlight this aspect using the works of the historian Gheorghe I. Brătianu who published an impressive and well received monograph dedicated to the Black Sea ¹¹¹. When referring to the geopolitical importance of this area, he paraphrased Mackinder: „*Who controls Crimeea, can control the Black Sea*” ¹¹². Geopolitical studies and analyzes during the communist regime were not present although a geopolitics book signed by Nicolae Anghel ¹¹³ was

¹⁰⁹ Known as *Wallachia* in the Middle Age.

¹¹⁰ I. Bădescu, *cit. work*, p. 126.

¹¹¹ Gh. I. Brătianu, *The Black Sea Issue*, Meridiane Printing House, Bucharest, 1988.

¹¹² *Ibidem*, p. 12.

¹¹³ Nicolae Anghel, *Geopolitics from ideology to political strategy*, Bucharest, 1985.

published in the final years of the communist regime in the late 1980s.

In the central and South European countries geopolitical studies on political, geopolitical and geo-historical analyzes, began to be printed during the first years after the fall of the communist regime. Most of them followed the classical approach pattern. In Romania, *The European Centre of History and Civilisation* of Iași and the University of Bucharest printed the works of great historians and geographers such as Gh. Buzatu, I. E. Emandi, V.S. Cucu, in collaboration with Ioan Saizu in an excellent volume frequently quoted in this present study. Mention should be made of the *Strategies XXI* periodical for the Romanian area, a supplement of the Scientific Bulletin of the National Defense University “Carol I” and the “*Euxin*” review. “Euxin” is a publication dedicated to sociology, geopolitics and geo history produced by the Institute of Socio-behaviorism and Geopolitics Studies, in Bucharest. In this publication, large spaces were devoted to analyzes of contemporary geopolitics phenomena from the Euro – Atlantic and former Soviet Union areas. A large number of researchers contributed to the development of geopolitics: Professor Silviu Negruț’s studies and activities which helped to lay the grounds for geopolitics education at the Academy of Economic Studies. In addition, Professor Ilie Bădescu brought sociological geopolitics back to the University of Bucharest. Adrian Pop and Paul Dobrescu from the School of Political and Administrative Studies of Bucharest have published excellent works on geopolitics and geo strategy.

1.1.2. *From classical to postmodern geopolitical studies*

Classical geopolitics created an articulated theoretical background for geopolitical analysis of state foreign policies during its evolution. Some authors used classical geopolitics frameworks as analytical tools employed to explain and predict international events or a state’s foreign policy. The core element of this review is

a key to geographical positions, named by some geopoliticians as the heartland, the rimland and so on. That is how they concluded that the classical geopolitical theories at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century were objective scientific analysis of global dynamics¹¹⁴. Other scholars accused classical geopolitics of a wrong interpretation of political international relations and foreign affairs of state describing it as pseudo-science. Their argued that the classical geopolitics was obsolete in the contemporary world since geography and space were no longer key factors that drove the world politics.

This must not worry the academics. It is a natural process of innovating the cyclic paradigm scientists have imagined in order to discover the secrets in different real domains. The same happened to geopolitics. As an academic curriculum, geopolitics offered the necessary tools for understanding the states' politics in different geographical areas, accepted and promoted by people ever since it was first studied. In time, the interpretation framework offered by classical geopolitics was not enough to understand the international evolution. Abnormalities in the explicative geopolitical model regarding geographical determinism pushed geopolitics into a period of crisis. According to Ratzel and Kjellen, the social and political phenomena were conditioned by geography. Ratzel adopted the Darwinian Theory and Herbert Spencer's social views and acknowledged that the state may be compared to a living organism, which pursues economic, demographic and territorial developments. Territorial growth is a natural outcome of the development in other areas of existence. This vision, which had witnessed a large number of views and adaptations that did not twist its essence, was taken as

¹¹⁴ Flint, Colin, Adduci, Michael, Chen, Michael and Chi, Sang-Hyun (2009) *Mapping the Dynamism of the United States' Geopolitical Code: The Geography of the State of the Union Speeches, 1988-2008*, in "Geopolitics", pp. 14: 4, 604-629, on line, http://www.geog.illinois.edu/people/flint/documents/GeopoliticalCodes_Geopolitics.pdf.

a distortion rejected by several scientists. It finally translated into a *crisis of the classical geopolitics*. The explanations of classical geopolitical theories claim that the state faces constant competition with other states¹¹⁵. This connects Geopolitics to a political process of States' territorial expansion. Such an approach of the causes, which prompted certain states towards expansion policies, was seen as an *abnormal characteristic* in scientific explanations and was not accepted.

Philosopher Thomas Kuhn provided a scientific explanation during the 1970s in order to understand how this crisis of the geopolitic theory could be overcome. He developed quite a revolutionary theory by explaining the way new paradigms emerged within different scientific domains, geopolitics included. Philosopher Thomas Kuhn gave the paradigm his own modern definition related to a set of principles and practices that explained a scientific branch at a particular period of time. In his seminal book, "*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*"¹¹⁶, Kuhn introduced the notion that the most significant scientific developments were achieved by quantum jumps which he called paradigm shifts. Kuhn reached this conclusion starting from a dialectical evolution of knowledge. What he meant was that evolution entered a cycle of several stages *of normal science -> crisis -> revolution -> new normal science ->*¹¹⁷. Therefore, paradigm shifts challenged former paradigms in the evolution of a scientific discipline, and they became vectors of scientific revolutions. The last major example of scientific paradigm shift was Albert Einstein's introduction of the groundbreaking notion of Relativity, which radically challenged the very fundamental rules laid down by Newton's physics. The same could be said about the

¹¹⁵ See V. D. Mamadouh, *Geopolitics in the nineties: one flag many meanings*, in "GeoJournal", vol. 46, no. 4, 1998, pp. 237-253.

¹¹⁶ We used a Romanian translated version, Thomas Kuhn, *Structure of scientific evolutions*, Bucharest, Științifică și Enciclopedică Printing House, 1976.

¹¹⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 78-80.

communication revolution of the information super-highways, which happened two decades ago. Paradigm shifts of such magnitude followed the colossal process of “thinking outside the box”. They were a huge jump forward into a new reality. The critics of abnormalities announced by the propaganda and the manipulation legitimized by the explanatory models offered by classical geopolitics studies generated the need for a new paradigm in the geopolitical theory¹¹⁸.

Expert Mattei Dogan rendered a pertinent explanation of the need to pass from classical, to postmodern/critical geopolitics, although it did not refer especially to geopolitics, He built a theory of continuous *fragmentation* of social sciences into narrow branches and their transversal *amalgamation* within what was called «*hybrid*» fields... “*By migrating from the centre to the periphery of a science, by transgressing its frontiers and by penetrating the field of a different specialisation, a scientist has the greatest chance to become creative*”¹¹⁹.

As the transgression from the classical to the postmodern paradigm is a process that starts in a certain period of *time* and in a certain *place*, we must explain how this need appeared in Romania, starting with the studies of professor Ion Conea and not in the Anglo-Saxon area where these studies reached their summit. Robert Pahre and Mattei Dogan worked out a solution. They resorted theoretically to the “paradox of density” in the process of innovation in social sciences¹²⁰. It means that a density of sub-domains existed with a

¹¹⁸ See, John Agnew, *Geopolitics – re-visioning world politics*, London, Routledge, 1998; Gearoid O’ Tuathail, *Post cold war Geopolitics: contrasting superpowers in a world of global dangers*, in R. J. Johnston et al., *Geographies of Global Change – remapping the world*, Oxford (UK), Blackwell Publishers, 2nd edition, 2002, pp. 174-189; Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, pp. 126-135.

¹¹⁹ Mattei Dogan, *The Hybridization of Social Science Knowledge* LIBRARY TRENDS/FALL 1996, on line, https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/8090/librarytrendsv45i2l_opt.pdf?sequence=1 accessed at 11 March 2010, 21.00.

¹²⁰ M. Dogan, R. Pahre, *L’innovation dans les sciences sociales*, PUF, 1991.

high density of researchers that may have yielded limited innovations in spite of their growing efforts. Density of researchers at the core of a certain domain of research *opens the way of innovation at the periphery*. Scientific research in an area perceived as periphery can be more important than the one carried out by researchers amassed in what is thought to be the core of a certain domain. Following this line of thought in the geopolitical studies published on the European continent in the first half of the last century, it became obvious that most of the geopoliticians worked in Great Britain, the USA, Germany, France. There were fewer of them in Central and South-eastern Europe. In Romania there were not so many studies at that time to match the production in the countries mentioned above, but the premises for a passage from the geographical determinism in geopolitics to its status of a scientific branch in the theory of international relations existed, as we prove along this study.

Some Western experts and analysts in geopolitics considered that the emergence of the neoclassical geopolitics dated back at the time when the public revival of the word itself happened.

In Bruno Ferrari's opinion, the major change in the geopolitical studies occurred in the early 1970s, when the scholars' concerns restored the contents and the study guidelines of the discipline, which experienced a process of resurgence after more than three decades of hibernation¹²¹. Moreover, this exclusion proved to be counterbalanced by a catharsis in the political world, charging Geopolitics with a new research agenda, namely the geopolitical representations and images that had nothing in common with the classical and practical geopolitical study of the past, used in chancelleries, military institutions and think tanks. The new banner

¹²¹ Bruno Ferrari, *Geopolitics – a critical assessment of the new “Great Game” in and around the Caspian Sea*, on line, http://www.ciari.org/investigacao/geopolitics_greatgame_caspiansea.pdf, accessed at 12 March 2010, 23.00.

hoisted in the late 1980s promoted the name of *Critical Geopolitics*, pointing directly at foreign policy discourses and languages of decision makers, political elites and military strategists¹²². This trend drew its origins from the critical theory. It presented visions and perspectives on the civil society and culture devoid of a commitment to any official discourse or to dogmas of well-established paradigms.

Other geopoliticians thought that the geopolitical renaissance could relate to two recent trends: one linked to the real-world changes, which had already happened, the other to the theoretical paradigms constructed as part of the postmodern critiques. In the real world, the changes on the world map, including the collapse of the Soviet Union and the resulting political and territorial changes in Europe, found most geographers and analysts unprepared. In the best of cases, they could only focus on the hard territorial changes taking place within and between states, on the problems of ethno-territorial empowerment and the construction of new borders and on the associated territorial reconfigurations of power¹²³. Yet it took a few more years for geographers to produce significant views about the nature of interstate relations, about the ‘geo’ dimension of global power relations. The impact has been marginal judging from the limited amount of geography-focused literature, which appeared in the pages of IR journals. The second trend with an impact on the geopolitical rehabilitation among geographers has been the use of theoretical and conceptual frameworks, some of them rooted in the postmodern ‘shift’ of the past fifteen years.

In fact, a detachment from the geographical determinism and a move towards a new analysis paradigm of the international political phenomena took place in Romania’s academic life between the two World Wars. A professor of historic geography, Ion Conea considered geopolitics “*a really new field with a precise subject of*

¹²² *Ibidem.*

¹²³ Alexander B. Murphy, Mark Bassin, David Newman, Paul Reuber and John Agnew, *Is there a politics to geopolitics?* in “Prog Hum Geogr”, 2004, pp. 28; 619, on line <http://phg.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/28/5/619>.

research”¹²⁴, with a distinct research area in international relations connected to other topics, such as geography, politics, sociology or history. Geopolitics was born in Ion Conea’s opinion, from the modern man’s need to answer the problems he faced. The political and economic status of the Planet was changing from one day to another. “*The Earth is becoming smaller and smaller every day and there is no frozen place or Lilliput island unoccupied. The times when the states afforded to have natural borders between them are long gone*”¹²⁵, I. Conea, concluded. As a result, in man’s fight with nature, under the continuous shrinking of the planet’s dimensions, conflicts of interests occurred. Henceforth, there was a growing need to produce studies that represented “*the growing conflict areas on Terra*”. This quotation proved the way in which Ion Conea passed from the geographical determination of the states’ politics to the relations in a certain area. Geopolitics surpassed the field of geographical sciences to move in the field of international relations. From this point of view, Ion Conea considered that geopolitics had as its object of study “*the planetary political environment*”, or “*the political game among states*”¹²⁶.

In the Romanian scientist’s opinion, the new geopolitical field of research differed from the political geography faithful to its classical paradigms: the geographical determinism of the dwelling (the ground), biological naturalism and organic evolutionism (history). By developing this idea, he said: “*Today, in the international politics, statesmen as well as diplomats, kings, and generally all heads of states will work with a new notion which we shall call Planetargedanke... state leaders have to watch carefully from today on all planetary scylls and charybdis that only politically well-established vessels can navigate not without some great difficulties.*” The products of geopolitical research are destined, in Ion Conea’s

¹²⁴ Ion Conea, *Geopolitics – a new science*, in E. I. Emandi, Gh. Buzatu, V. S. Cucu, *cit. work*, p. 47.

¹²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 48.

¹²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 50.

opinion, to the comprehension of the “*planetary political environment*“, but are also “*landmarks*“ for the states’ “*pilots*“, who had to continually scrutinize “*the planet’s distance in order to adapt and lead the state’s direction according to it*”¹²⁷. Most interesting is the fact that Ion Conea, unlike other geopolitics theoreticians, tried to explain the existence of the “*planetary Zustand*“, in terms of maximum points and regions and minimum points/regions, in other words “*areas of friction or convergence or of interests and discussions*”¹²⁸. The main reason would be the interest that smaller or larger states had to control strategic regions or regions rich in mineral or energy resources. As an example he quoted that “*especially the Mediterranean, attracts to itself a real network of ways and world interests from all the cardinal points of the compass. They all come to its shores with different energies from the outside*“¹²⁹. The regions rich in gold or oil, such as Alaska or Australia, instantly would attract “*tentacles in that direction, real muted wars breaking between the great states under such circumstances.*“¹³⁰ In the presentation of the clashes of interests in different spaces among the great powers of his time – the United States, the Soviet Union, England, Germany etc. – Ion Conea reached the conclusion that geopolitics could be a science of pressures among states.

Inspired by Kjellen and Supar’s theories, the Romanian professor considered that a state had to know the effects of another state’s “neighborhood” by studying the pressure coefficient. This coefficient could be detected in relation to the “measurable” landmarks of a state, such as the number of population, the economic potential, and also by the quality factors such as the morale, the political and historic traditions¹³¹. Ion Conea saw the extent of this

¹²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 57.

¹²⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 159.

¹³⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹³¹ *Ibidem*.

inter-state pressure coefficient as actually the dimension of a state's potential, which was important to know the subject's place in the power equation. From this point of view, the Romanian researcher believed that geopolitics was the characteristic of the great powers, although he did not state it as such.

Unlike Ion Conea, Anton Golopenția intended the geopolitical research to focus on every state, regardless of its size,¹³² in his study "*Notes regarding the definition of preoccupation called geopolitics*", included in the volume *Geopolitics*, published in Craiova in 1940. Anton Golopenția insisted on the practical side of the geopolitical research. The results of this type of research had to provide useful information to the decision makers called to come up with effective political actions in the frame of the international relations. "*It is the situation that China or Turkey faces today, – argued Golopenția – that have to be known, and not the theory about the Turkish or the Chinese state or any other state for that matter.*"¹³³ In Anton Golopenția's opinion, geopolitical reflection relied on the inter-state dynamics at regional, continental or planetary levels and it originated from each state's potential. The potential was given by the size of the territory, the population and the economy, by its social structure, by the nature of the political regime and culture. He thus introduced an element of analysis – *power* – that would become a term of reference in the theory of international relations in the USA two decades after its initiation by the Romanian scientist!

In A. Golopenția's opinion, geopolitical research had to implement an interdisciplinary and, whenever possible, simultaneous approach, using terms and facts from geography, economics, sociology, culture, and politics¹³⁴. The objectives of geopolitical research cannot be the same for all states because the potential, action and the support capacity for several interests differ from one

¹³² Anton Golopenția, *Notes regarding the definition of geopolitics*, in E. I. Emandi, Gh. Buzatu, V. S. Cucu, op. cit., p. 69.

¹³³ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁴ *Ibidem*.

state to another. The geopolitical “product” could be a global vision of the power relations or can only limit itself to a certain part of the Planet (maritime or continental geopolitics, for example). The geopolitical research “product” was fragile for A. Golopenția “*being continually surpassed by reality*”¹³⁵. For this reason, the research and analyzes must be continuous; they can never cease but start all over again the same way the weather reports come every hour of the day. Geopolitical research aims to obtain an equivalent of these reports in the political field¹³⁶.

Geopolitics, in all its three forms of manifestation, along its way from the classical to the postmodern approach went through a lot of profound transformations which led to a new paradigm in the end. A first important transformation regarded the very meaning of the *concept* itself. The heritage of every discipline concepts play a very important role; the development and the evolution of social sciences witness a continuous *redefinition* of concepts, a process of concepts *borrowing* from one science to another, a change in the concepts’ meanings according to the changes in the socio-political practice. When referring to this aspect, Gearóid Ó Tuathail stressed that „*The term ‘geopolitics’ dates from the late nineteenth century but has become in the late twentieth century a widely used signifier for the spatiality of world politics. John Agnew, on his own and together with Stuart Corbridge, has sought to give the concept some rigor and specificity, offering what is perhaps the most comprehensive historical and materialist theory of modern geopolitics in recent years*”¹³⁷.

Another transformation concerned the method and the changes produced at the level of research techniques and tools. The methods developed by one scientific branch can be used in another; there are

¹³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 70.

¹³⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁷ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Postmodern geopolitics? The modern geopolitical imagination and beyond*, in Gearóid Ó Tuathail, Simon Dalby, eds., *Rethinking geopolitics*, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002, p. 18.

cases where progress was made due to innovation in technology coming from outside sources. For most social sciences, the *new interpretations* are the most noticeable form of their progress. It is also the case of geopolitical theory and analysis. Such interpretations create new fields to enrich the existing specialisations. Perception and identity – two concepts which are analysis concepts for two well-known fields in socio-humanistic area – psychology and sociology – were adopted as analysis tools for geopolitics¹³⁸.

Maybe the most spectacular transformation regarded the purpose itself for which geopolitical studies are produced. Traditionally, geopolitics had to explain how the state could take advantage or bear the consequences of a geographical human settlement or of the existence of a state. However, since the end of the Cold War, geopolitics has experienced a rebirth through the exploration of comprehensive models that integrate both economic and strategic interests and the comparative investigation of their interactions in a complementary manner, focusing on the degree to which each State can maintain and/or improve its position within the international system. Because of this new reality, States develop industrial and commercial policies in order to create a decisive comparative advantage in domains deemed to be strategic. At the international level these policies are in their turn defended with much determination, not only by means of diplomacy but also by means of what Edward Luttwak called “geo-economic weapons¹³⁹” while others looked upon them as propaganda wars. According to Karen Culcasi, *„Maps are powerful geopolitical tools, which are widely used to represent conflicts over territory, boundaries, citizens, and resources. But maps do more than represent. They are also discursive*

¹³⁸ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 126.

¹³⁹ Edward Luttwak, *The Endangered American Dream*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993, p. 307- 326, apud, Jean-François Gagné, *Geopolitics in a Post-Cold War Context: From Geo-Strategic to Geo-Economic Considerations?* on line http://www.dandurand.uqam.ca/uploads/files/publications/etudes_raoul_danduran/d/etude_rd_15_jfgagne_intcouv_240807.pdf, accessed at 12 March 2010, 15.00.

tools, which reflect, express, and help create geographic knowledge, political agendas, and social stereotypes”¹⁴⁰. On the other hand, Nerijus Maliukevičius from Vilnius University underlined that „*The information revolution, globalization, and internationalization have transformed modern international relations. They are now developing within a global information environment, where new principles of political cooperation, competition, or conflicts between the subjects of an international system are set out. In this environment, political processes occur in real time, geographic barriers lose their former significance, and the very concept of geopolitics is changing*”¹⁴¹. The most profound changes occurred right within the concept of geopolitics. The understanding of the transformations that happen at the level of conceptualization in the evolution of the scientific branch is vital for the acceptance of the paradigm change. As Jonathan Grix stressed „*Concepts are the bricks from which we build theories, hypotheses, explanations and forecasts. The concept can be seen as an idea or notion expressed and focused on one or several words and represents the stage less complex of abstraction continuum. Still this does not mean that a concept cannot be extremely complex*”¹⁴².

It is a well known fact that concepts used today in geopolitical theory, analysis and practice have different meanings for the significant and the signified¹⁴³. There is a multitude of views and

¹⁴⁰ Karen Culcasi, *Cartographically constructing Kurdistan within geopolitical and orientalist discourses*, on line, <http://islamicgroupatasu.wikispaces.com/file/view/Culcasi.pdf> accessed at 14 March 2010, 17.00.

¹⁴¹ Nerijus Maliukevičius, *Geopolitics and Information Warfare: Russia's Approach*, on line kms1.isn.ethz.ch/.../Files/.../Chapt.7.pdf accessed at 17 March 2010, 16.00.

¹⁴² Jonathan Grix, *Demystifying postgraduate research*, Birmingham, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2001, p. 32.

¹⁴³ Adam Garfinkle, *Geopolitics: Middle Eastern Notes and Anticipations*, in “Orbis”, Spring, 2003, on line, <http://www.fpri.org/orbis/4702/garfinkle.geopoliticsmiddleeast.html>, accessed at 17 March 2010, 15.00.

approaches for this discipline according to different thinking trends and the intellectual authority of certain authors and experts who study the contemporary geopolitical phenomena. Geopolitics is an essentially contested concept associated with a variety of traditions of thought. Recent works in academia and beyond have led to even more such tendencies. For some geopolitics is a tradition of comprehending the relationship between geographical settlements, technology and patterns of government, a tradition that dates back to the classical times. Daniel Deudney recovered this meaning for theorists of International Relations¹⁴⁴. For others, geopolitics is a late nineteenth century imperial discourse that projected social Darwinism onto the global map and outlined a struggle for living space and resources among competing nations. Gerry Kearns' 2009 biography of Halford Mackinder *Geopolitics and Empire* provided a compelling portrait of this understanding of geopolitics. According to him, geopolitics is a way of describing the conflicts between states constrained by both physical and economic space. Consequently, it makes such conflicts seem inevitable.¹⁴⁵ There are interesting definitions for geopolitics given by some of the best-known geopolitical specialists from the Russian Federation. One of these definitions belonged to Pavel Tsygankov. According to him, „*geopolitics is a set of physical and social, material and moral resources of the States that can be used to fulfill their aims on the international arena*”¹⁴⁶. Even more specific in this matter was RF Turovsky, who concluded that: „*Geopolitics is a scientific discipline, a member of the political geography*”.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Deudney, Daniel, *Bounding power: republican security theory from the polis to the global village*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.

¹⁴⁵ Gerry Kearns, *Geopolitics and Empire: The Legacy of Halford Mackinder*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

¹⁴⁶ Аруд, Цыганков П. А., *Геополитика: последнее прибежище разума?* // Вопросы философии. 1994, № 7/8. С. 63.

¹⁴⁷ Туровский Р. Ф., *Политическая география*, Москва – Смоленск, 1999 С. 31.

Even such a brief review of the way the geographical concept is perceived today is a vivid proof that there is no clear-cut definition of the concept for the time being. This is characteristic of all emerging scientific branches. Disputes about the object and the subject of geopolitics have been more than a hundred years old. The concept has enjoyed a wide variety of interpretations. As a result, the science lost its individual features, its boundaries became extremely blurred and interfered more and more with the economic, political, and military-strategic natural resource, environmental and other sciences, international relations, foreign policy, etc. Several researchers placed geopolitics among the sciences focused on complex geographical, historical, political and other factors that interacted with each other and had a profound influence on the strategic capacity of the state. Geopolitics is studying political phenomena in their spatial relationships, their impact on the Earth, and on cultural factors. Reaching out more towards politics, it focuses on political events. It aims to give meanings and a geographical analysis to the geographical features of such phenomena. The political scientist E.A. Pozdnyakov argued that geopolitics focused on predicting future events and on projecting opportunities for the active use of policy factors, of the physical environment with impact over the interests of the military-political, economic and environmental security¹⁴⁸. Another Russian scholar, N. Nartov, believed that geopolitics followed practical aims because it explored everything connected to the territorial issues of a state, to its borders, ending with resources management, the human ones included. Thus, Nartov formulated a concise definition for Geopolitics as a science, which was a system of knowledge of the way space could be controlled. Geopolitics examined space in terms of politics (the state). *It is more dynamic compared to the political geography*¹⁴⁹.

¹⁴⁸ Н Нартов, *Геополитика: Учебник для вузов*, http://www.gumer.info/bibliotek_Buks/Polit/nart/01.php, accessed at 17 March 2010, 15.00.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

As a result, geopolitics, as a branch, was assigned a plethora of fields and segments of reality, which became subjects of study. Some people considered this very function less beneficial. Colin S. Gray noted, “*geopolitics*” is a word – as well as a basket of associated ideas – that all but begs to be abused by the unscrupulous”.¹⁵⁰ Those who studied the classical geopolitics from the geographical deterministic point of view, from Mackinder to Z. Brzezinski, considered that the subject of study belonged to space – land, water, and outer space – as vital elements in the conquest of world supremacy¹⁵¹. Others suggested it as an area of research for the elements that constituted in fact the reason of debate between the great powers. This is how “particular” geopolitics came into being: the oil geopolitics¹⁵², the religion geopolitics¹⁵³, the water resources geopolitics¹⁵⁴, the propaganda geopolitics¹⁵⁵, the internet geopolitics¹⁵⁶ etc.

The object of geopolitics can be identified also by comparing it to the studies of other sciences and disciplines that research international relations, state relations or social complex phenomena

¹⁵⁰ Colin S. Gray, *The continued primacy of geography - A Debate on Geopolitics*
http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0365/is_n2_v40/ai_18338849/?tag=content;coll accessed at 17 March 2010, 16.00.

¹⁵¹ Saul B. Cohen, *Geography and Politics in a Divided World*, London: Methuen, 1964, p. 24.

¹⁵² Michael T. Klare, *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy*, 2009; Svante E. Cornell and N. Nilsson Eds., *Europe's Energy Security*, Johns Hopkins University Central Asia – Caucasus Institute 2008. www.silkroadstudies.org;

¹⁵³ Dijkink, Gertjan, *When Geopolitics and Religion Fuse: A Historical Perspective*, in “Geopolitics”, Volume 11, Number 2, Summer 2006, pp. 192-208(17); Graham E. Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2004.

¹⁵⁴ Jan Selby, *The Geopolitics of Water in the Middle East: fantasies and realities*, in “Third World Quarterly”, Vol. 26, no. 2, 2005, pp. 329-349; A. Giddens, *The politics of climate change*, Cambridge, Polity, 2009.

¹⁵⁵ Constantin Hlihor, cit. work, p. 127.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibidem*.

such as crises and wars. Most often, a topic of discussion was the relation between the study of *political geography* and *geopolitics*. This led to a heated dispute¹⁵⁷ and was debated from all possible points of view. In analyzing the research field of political geography and its study object as defined by experts and then by comparing them to geopolitics, specific features and common points, too, can connect the two scientific branches. For a long period of time, the French geography school considered geopolitics identical to political geography. Jacques Ancel regarded geopolitics as “*geography at the service of politics which stood up to its role held by history in Bismarck’s era*”¹⁵⁸ and Albert Demaugeau considered geopolitics “*an ill political geography but in the end still political geography*”.¹⁵⁹ Whereas traditional geopolitics treated geography as a non-discursive branch that pre-existed geopolitical essays, critical geopolitics approached geographical knowledge as an essential part of the modern discourses of power. Thus, the 1990s produced numerous analyzes on the complicity of geography and geographers in colonialism, imperialism, nationalism, and in the Cold War superpower adversity¹⁶⁰.

The progress made by the geographical science especially once it improved its tools of investigation, data quantification, theory, concepts and models a differentiation became possible of its object of study from that of geopolitics. Today, political geography is defined as the subject that “*studies the differences between political phenomena according to the place where people live*”¹⁶¹.

¹⁵⁷ See Claude Raffestin and colab., *cit. work*, pp. 9-28; Gerard Dusouy, *cit. work*, pp. 17-28; Ion Conea, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*, pp. 36-47; Christian Daudel, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*, pp. 290-292; 297-302.

¹⁵⁸ Ion Conea, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*, p. 41.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 145.

¹⁶⁰ Merje Kuus, *Critical geopolitics*, on line, http://www.isacomps.com/info/samples/criticalgeopolitics_sample.pdf, accessed at 18 March 2010, 17.00.

¹⁶¹ Paul Claval, *La nouvelle géographie*, Paris, P.U.F., Coll. Que-sais-je? 1982; apud Christian Daudel, *cit. work* in *cit. city*, p. 298, note 30.

Christian Daudel considered political geography as a “*science of territories, organization and differentiation of places*”¹⁶². The American geographer Derwent Whittlesey considered that “*the core of political geography is the political space*”¹⁶³ and Otto Mauhl believed that geopolitics studied “*geographic nature and geographic phenomena of a state or, in other words, the study of the state as a unique land depending on its natural and cultural view*”¹⁶⁴.

The analysis of definitions given to political geography and geopolitics highlighted the fact that space was common to both. Political geography and geopolitics, as well, studied the positioning of certain stakeholders, generally the state, from a different perspective and with different specific results. According to John O’Loughlin and Herman van der Wusten geopolitics and political geography had always been uneasy relatives. Geopolitics was regarded as applied political geography; less objective and less scientific than the mother discipline but nonetheless connected to it¹⁶⁵.

Political geography focused on the aspect and the political division of states at a given time. It recorded snapshots of a country at a certain moment. Unlike the political geography, geopolitics did not view the state (or any stakeholder, for that matter) as a natural phenomenon – especially from its position, dimensions, shape and borders. It focused on the dynamics of relations among states *from the perspective of that space*, which concerned them directly. Geopolitics studied the power relations among states. Some authors remarked that the study object of political geography tended to alter

¹⁶² *Ibidem.*

¹⁶³ Derwent Whittlesey, *Haushofer: The Geopoliticians* in Edward Mead Earle (ed.) *Makers of Modern Strategy* Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1939; idem, *Environmental Foundations of European History*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1949.

¹⁶⁴ Apud, Saskia Sassen, *Nouvelle géographie politique*, on line, http://multitudes.samizdat.net/article.php3?id_article=181.

¹⁶⁵ John O’Loughlin and Herman van der Wusten, *Political Geography of Panregions*, in *Geographical Review*, vol., 80, no.1, 1990, p. 1.

and it was neighboring geopolitics under the impact of economic globalization and multiplication of non-state players. From this point of view, Gerard Dussouy noticed that there were fewer of those who made the difference between geopolitics and the political geography¹⁶⁶. In his review of the differences and common elements of geopolitics and political geography, the American researcher of Romanian origin Ladis K.D. Kristof made a clear distinction: “*Political geography is geography. It is an altered geography based on the interest in political phenomena on earth while geopolitics is not the study object of geography but of politics altered and influenced by geographic factors.*”¹⁶⁷

History, in general and political history in particular, has as subject of study the system of international relations as well. From this point of view, it interferes with geopolitics conferring it specific features, at the same time. This scientific branch included also international relations and the relations among traditional stakeholders (states) in its study object, but such a connection is only valid for past events. Ion Conea was perfectly right when he wrote, “*it will always be a science of the day, which is a science of the phenomena like those taking place today. Contemporary geopolitics shall be tomorrow’s history just as the history of any other era was geopolitics for the times and during the times when the facts that we call today history were happening*”¹⁶⁸. Geopolitics, or *the history of the present*, has the possibility to decipher the evolution tendencies and future stage of the system of international relations. A geopolitician, as compared to a historian, expresses his “*will to anticipate the world’s functioning in a logical world*”¹⁶⁹. We can conclude, therefore, that the relations of complementarity in the

¹⁶⁶ See, Gerard Dussouy, *Quelle géopolitique au 21^e siècle?, on line*, www.classiques.ucaq.ca; idem, *Les théories de la mondialité. Traité de Relations internationales, tome 3*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2009, p. 33.

¹⁶⁷ Ladis K.D. Kristof, *cit.work*, in *cit.city*, p. 318.

¹⁶⁸ Ion Conea, *cit work.*, in *cit.city*, p. 64.

¹⁶⁹ Christian Daudel, *cit.work*, in *cit.city*, p. 303.

study objects can find their place in the historic research and analysis. They, in their turn, can become part of the foundation of geopolitical research and analysis.

Connections and particularities regarding geopolitics' object of study can be established within other studies too such as economics, demographics, politology, sociology, etc. This fact underlined the *interdisciplinary* nature of the geopolitics' object of study, or, as Christian Daudel concluded: "*A little history, a little geography, a little of different new aspects of intellectual varied news, but almost always the same, these are the ingredients of geopolitics writing*"¹⁷⁰.

I consider that the geopolitical object of study is *that segment of relations that are made at a certain moment among the stakeholders of the international environment particularized by the rivalry of power and by the interests debates over interests*. Geopolitics is a subject at the crossroads of history, economics, demographics, politology, geostrategy and political geography. It has to take into account "*everything that is organised in a hierarchy of powers especially political and military, and also economic and cultural, the states and their alliances – destinies and purposes- in all aspects of force and evolution, law and its practice.*"¹⁷¹ The problems approached by geopolitics can be more or less comprehensive and are related to the states' policy and other stakeholders of the international arena. In order to decipher their interest they possess or show either globally or within a limited area, some models and tools of geographical analyzes may be employed.¹⁷² A geopolitical analyst will usually record and study changes at a global level or in a certain studied space. He/she evaluates the interest/cooperation argument between the stakeholders and can forecast the direction of certain political, economic and strategic evolutions. And last but not least, he/she must have the capacity to distinguish between a product of geopolitical propaganda and a geopolitical analysis¹⁷³.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷¹ *Ibidem*, p. 302.

¹⁷² Paul Dobrescu, Alina Bârgăoanu, *cit.work*, p. 14.

The balance of power or the lack of it, the dispute or the cooperation for the implementation of interests stakeholders have at a certain time are those that ultimately define the system of the international relations, which finally encompasses the geopolitical environment. Equilibrium has always been associated to peace and security. The intensity and degree of disequilibrium at a certain time in the power equation led to periods of crisis, conflicts of all kinds – diplomatic, economic, ideological etc. – and finally to war. A stakeholder's place in the power equation and especially the position in its relations with the others define its *geopolitical position* that must not be mistaken for its geographical position. The former is defined within the framework of the stakeholder's relations that are usually neglected by geography and the latter is determined by the position of a state on the surface of the globe. If the geographical position is static, the geopolitical position is characterized by a high degree of dynamism which in its turn can be influenced by a large number of objective and subjective factors, such as the political interest, that have a decisive role as we shall point out accordingly.

The geopolitical position of a state – the recurrent stakeholder in geopolitical analysis – seems to be a favorable or unfavorable position at certain moments of its history. When a country is in a network of favorable and mutually beneficial links with other states and international organisations or institutions, it enjoys a favorable geopolitical position. Otherwise, its geopolitical position is extremely vulnerable; the country may lose important territories. This was the case of the Romanian state in the winter of 1940, when it lost areas of the motherland¹⁷⁴ because of an unsteady relationship

¹⁷³ Thomas M. Edwards. *Information Geopolitics: Blurring the Lines of Sovereignty*, in <http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/Collection/E2-332-2000E.pdf>.

¹⁷⁴ See Ioan Scurtu, Constantin Hlihor, *Year 1940. The drama of Romanians between Prut and Nistru*, AISM Publishing House, 1992; Vitalie Văratie, *Six days in Bucovina's History*, Bucovina Institute – Basarabia, 2001; Valeriu Florin Dobrinescu, *Diplomatic battle for Basarabia. 1918-1940*, European Institute, Iași, 1991; Anatol Petrencu, *Basarabia in the Second World War (1940-1941)*, Chișinău, 1997; Ion Șișcanu, Vitalie Văratie, *The Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact and its consequences for Basarabia*, Chișinău, 1991 etc.

with the neighboring countries and a complete isolation at international level. The low power potential, the diplomatic incapacity to retrieve its power through alliances with the stakeholders interested in the Romanian space, caused the poor geopolitical position Romania had in the middle of the XXth century.

1.2. *Geopolitical cartography and propaganda*

Quite a few of the multiple causes which had led geopolitics in the area of “forbidden knowledge” for about fifty years was its perception as a tool pave the way and justify the expansionist politics promoted by totalitarian states, especially Germany and Japan, before and during the Second World War¹⁷⁵. This very fact led to the inhibition of any geopolitical approach of experts and theorists who were studying and analyzing geopolitics especially at the academic level immediately after the end of the Second World War. Officially, geopolitics was defined both in the East and in the West as a pseudoscience, an obnoxious offspring of current thinking, with disastrous consequences in the realm of international relations. As a result, the geopolitical research and studies did not fit into the experts’ research area on international relations anymore.

Paradoxically, such an attitude did not lead to an absence of geopolitical strategies from the diplomatic chancelleries of the great powers engaged in the East-West confrontation during the Cold War. One example can support such a statement. The USA strategy in confronting the USSR developed around the “Rimland” theory, worked out by N. Spykman¹⁷⁶. Geopolitics, as a grand strategy, was

¹⁷⁵ See Claude Raffestin, Dario Lopreno et Yvan Pasteur, *Géopolitique et histoire*, Editions Payot Lausanne, 1995, pp. 304-308; Yves Lacoste, *Préambule in Dictionnaire Géopolitique*, Flammarion, 1993, pp. 6-7; E. I. Emandi, Gh. Buzatu, V. S. Cucu, *cit. work*, pp. 10-12; Sergiu Tămaș, *cit. work*, pp. 7-8.

¹⁷⁶ Christopher J. Fettweis, *Sir Halford Mackinder; Geopolitics, and Policymaking in the 21st Century*, in “Parameters”, Summer 2000, pp. 58-71, on line <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/Articles/00summer/fettweis.htm>, accessed at 23 March 2011.

one of the important intellectual foundations for the West's Cold War containment policy. The Canadian geographer Simon Dalby identified it as one of the "four security discourses (the others being Sovietology, strategy, and the realist approach to international relations) which American 'security intellectuals' outlined in construing the Soviet threat."¹⁷⁷ According to one of the most remarkable historians of the Cold War, John Lewis Gaddis, in the late 1940s "*there developed a line of reasoning reminiscent of Sir Halford Mackinder's geopolitics, with its assumption that none of the world's 'rimlands' could be secure if the Eurasian 'heartland' was under the domination of a single hostile power.*"¹⁷⁸ Gaddis described how the evolution of the policy of containment evolved from countering the Soviet expansion towards every point in the rimlands to the concentration of defense on a few key points, especially on Western Europe and Japan.

Thus, the "containment" policy of "banking" the Soviet Union with a series of military bases and tension cores was the foundation of the geopolitical scenario stated in the act N.S.C. 20/4 of March 1947, top secret at the date of issue¹⁷⁹. It outlined the American posture to the Soviet Union expansion. With this geopolitical scenario, the U.S. counterbalanced at first, and cancelled later on, all the Soviet Union's geopolitical advantages after the end of the Second World War.

The embargo on geopolitics rested on several political concerns. The public opinion was not supposed to realize that the division of Europe into spheres of influence between Germany and the USSR in August 1939 and then among the allied powers in the fall of 1944 was the outcome of geopolitical evolutions on the European continent. The geopolitical scenarios were strictly "guarded" both in the West and in the East during the Cold War. The West's victory over the East and the break of geopolitical and geostrategical balance

¹⁷⁷ *Ibidem.*

¹⁷⁸ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, Oxford, Eng.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982, p. 57.

between the USSR and the USA led to the collapse of security arrangements produced in the international relations after the end of the Second World War. In this “fracture of history”, geopolitics returned to the public space in a sustained manner.

Unfortunately, the confusion between *geopolitics as a doctrine* and *geopolitics as an instrument of justification for a state's foreign policy* at a certain moment and the geopolitical theory designed to explain and not to justify the evolution of state/groups of states in international politics did not vanish by itself. The danger to engage geopolitical ideas in the political dispute or propaganda was identified by the French school of political geography. In the preface to the book *French critique of the German geopolitics system*, Jacques Ancel noted that “*the new German school*” explained its spatial theories with ideas taken over by “*racist politicians and hitlerite – oriented intellectuals*”¹⁸⁰. Convinced that geopolitical theories were only a disguise for the great powers' expansion policy, Jacques Ancel considered that “*pan German Hitlerism borrowed its ideas and vocabulary from this Geopolitik coined by the German professors*”¹⁸¹. The French geographer Albert Demangeon held a similar opinion in the pages of the “*Annales de géographie*.” He was convinced that the “*German geopolitics gives up its scientific spirit and places itself in the avant-garde of the German-nationalist propaganda. It is nothing else but a mingling of education, which prepares the German people to attack the European order. It is a tool of war*”¹⁸².

¹⁷⁹ See Wilfried Loth, *The World Division History of the Cold War. 1 941-1955*, translation from German by Ana-Maria Iosup, Bucharest, 1997, pp. 105-116; Constantin Hlihor, *At the beginning of the Cold War. Romanian perception on the East-West confrontation*, in “History files”, year II, no. 1 (6), 1997, pp. 20-24.

¹⁸⁰ Apud, Herve Coutau-Begarie, *Critique de la geopolitique*, in “Strategic Impact”, no.2, 2006, p. 17.

¹⁸¹ Apud Ion Conea, *cit.work*, in *cit.city*, p. 42.

¹⁸² Apud Anton Golopenția, *Notice regarding geopolitics*, in “Geopolitics”, Ramuri Printing House, 1940, Craiova, pp. 98-107.

The French experts' conclusion was basically right. To characterise the whole German geopolitical theory as a tool of the Nazi politics was completely wrong. This error was noticed by the well-known Romanian professors Ion Conea and Anton Golopenția. Jacques Ancel, Albert Demageon and other representatives of the French school of geography equalled the geopolitical theory to the Nazi ideology, propaganda and doctrine of the vital space, which had also rested on geopolitics.

The German totalitarian state similar to the Soviet or Italian ones, for that matter, "mobilized" some domains of the social research to justify their political action¹⁸³. "*No other subject through its object or methods is not so proper for this mobilization as geopolitics*, wrote Ion Conea."¹⁸⁴ Such a "mobilization" transferred the geopolitical theory into the domain of ideology, which General Haushofer considered very feeble. Faced with harsh criticism, Jacques Ancel discovered that the "*geopolitical ideology could be compared to a crystal object caught under enemy fire*"¹⁸⁵. It is one of the reasons for which inter-war countries like Germany, Italy, Spain, did not mark a clear distinction between geopolitics theory and the "geopolitical myth", as figuratively Anton Golopenția and M. Popa-Vereș called *geopolitical ideology*. The Romanian scientist Anton Golopenția remarked that "*many of the confusions around geopolitics are due to the fact that these distinctions were not made and one of these geopolitics brands were considered the truthful one as opposed to the others*"¹⁸⁶. In his turn, M. Popa-Vereș made a very

¹⁸³ A se vedea, Gérard Dussouy, *Les théories géopolitiques. Traité de Relations internationales (I), Pouvoirs comparés*, Collection dirigée par Michel Bergès, p. 166, on line, http://classiques.uqac.ca/contemporains/dussouy_gerard/theories_rel_inter_tome_1/theories_rel_inter_t1_original.pdf, accessed at 10 August 2010, 21.00; Constantin Hlihor, *cit.work*, p. 60-61; Herve Coutau-Begarie, *cit.work* p. 17.

¹⁸⁴ Ion Conea, *cit. work*, in *cit.city*, p. 43.

¹⁸⁵ Apud Claude Raffestin and others, *cit.work*, p. 151.

¹⁸⁶ Anton Golopenția, *cit.work*, in "Geopolitics", Ed. E. I. Emandi, Gh. Buzatu, V. S. Cucu, p. 70.

clear distinction between geopolitical research and analysis in theory where the “*political phenomenon in itself largely understood was going to be objectively explained and not justified*”¹⁸⁷ and “*military geopolitics derived from the state’s political orientation, the end of the state’s politics, in the light of a people’s interests both internally and externally*”¹⁸⁸. The moment the principle of causality in geopolitical research was replaced by the theological principle, a phenomenon or process produced within the area of international relations could not be explained but only justified geographically.

That was the main error made by the inter-war German geopolitical school. General Karl Haushofer and his assistant took over *Lebensraum* theory from Ratzel and turned it into a guideline to persuade people that Germany needed more vital space¹⁸⁹. Haushofer was convinced that the “*power space and the power allow the nation’s optimal development*”¹⁹⁰. In this way, General Haushofer, even if not detailing a Nazi discourse, as stated by several experts, vouched for Germany’s right to obtain *Echte Grenzen*. He also conferred legitimacy and gave a “scientific” foundation to the policy of territorial annexations pursued by the German state¹⁹¹ during the Second World War. K. Haushofer believed that the German state’s foreign policy was meant to find the ways to expand the “vital space”. The justification of such a concept was reached with the discovery of a “law” that related directly the size of population to the territory it inhabited. In Haushofer’s opinion, the geopolitical picture of the world population per standard territorial unit presented serious

¹⁸⁷ M. Popa-Vereş, Scheme on geopolitic research from national interests point of view, in “Geopolitics”, Ed. E. I. Emandi, Gh. Buzatu, V. S. Cucu, p. 72.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸⁹ Gérard Dussouy, *cit. work*, in *cit.*

¹⁹⁰ Apud Ionel Nicu Sava, *cit. work*, p. 117.

¹⁹¹ See Gérard Dussouy, *cit. work*, in *cit city*; Jean Klein, preface to Karl Haushofer, *De la géopolitique*, Fayard, Paris, 1986; Henning Heske, *Karl Haushofer – his role in german geopolitic and Nazi politics*, in “Political Quaterly”, year 1987; Claude Raffestin and others, *cit. work*, pp. 151-153; Sergiu Tămaş, *cit. work*, pp. 78-79.

assymetries. The European and Eurasian areas were overpopulated while almost all the other regions were under populated. In the case of the colonial powers that dominated vast areas far from their national territories but also in the case of Germany, which had lost its colonies at the end of the First World War, Haushofer discovered that “133 people have to crowd in a square kilometer of a northern Alpine region unable to feed them“, while “in all colonial empires in the same area and with much fertile soil live only 7, 9, 15, 23 and 25 people”¹⁹². The German geopolitician believed that geopolitics could be a tool that might convince the main heads of states that a new division of living spaces of the Earth was more than required. He even found a basic criteria for it, which did not necessarily belong to geopolitics because this separation was not only geopolitical but had to be done considering the “peoples’ labor capacity and cultural performances”¹⁹³.

In Italy geopolitics, viewed as “a geographical consciousness of political and economic extinction”¹⁹⁴, did not pass the level of a sub carrier of the fascist government propaganda. The ambitions and the attempts of the Italian researcher Giuseppe Botai and of his assistants from the “*Geopolitics*” publication to theorize the geopolitical studies failed. The fascination of the Roman Empire and the politics of “risorgimento” pursued by the fascist regime undermined the intentions stated in the editorial of “*Geopolitics*“. The contributors to the publication set out to study the “multiple forms of expansion and colonization, alliances and wars between the states”¹⁹⁵ in order to find the development and evolution trends of international life. Soon afterwards, geopolitics jumped from the theory of interdisciplinary analysis to propaganda, and became officially part of Mussolini’s own geopolitics. Once it ceased to be

¹⁹² Karl Haushofer, *De la Géopolitique*, Paris, 1986, apud Ionel Nicu Sava, *cit. work*, p. 123, nota 28.

¹⁹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹⁴ *Geopolitics*, no. 3, March, 1942, p. 159.

¹⁹⁵ Apud Claude Raffestin and colab., *cit. work*, p. 176.

a forum for geopolitical scientific debates, the “*Geopolitics*“ review became an instrument of political manipulation and justification. It turned out to be a lot more than what the regime expected political geography to be in order to fit into Duke Musolini’s demands. Large editorial spaces were assigned to “debates” on the definition of the “vital space” for fascist Italy. In the issue number 4 of April 1941 of the publication, the vital space was defined as “*the optimal territory where a people can develop according to historic traditions, present and future needs and also the spiritual and geopolitic possibilities to value it*“¹⁹⁶. One year later, in its March issue, the same publication considered that the “*vital space*“ for Italy was “*the whole Mediterranean basin and the surrounding areas*”¹⁹⁷.

The dictatorship regime from Spain was attracted by the “geopolitics myth fascination”. In their writings, Martin Echeverria, Gonzalo de Reparaz and Emilia Huguet Del Vittard¹⁹⁸ supported the needs for territorial expansion and colonial conquests in Africa. In his paraphrase of Karl Haushofer, who had said that Holland was nothing but a boulder estranged from the “German Rock”, Martin Echeverria considered that Portugal obliterated Spain’s access to the Atlantic Ocean¹⁹⁹. As a result, a peninsular unification was quite appropriate by including Portugal into Spain. In his presentation of the Spanish territorial claims as a historic destiny, Gonzalo de Reparaz considered that Spain had been wrong when it expanded its conquests far out to Latin America because Africa was a natural extension for this country²⁰⁰. The idea was developed and argued by Gonzalo de Reparaz in a great work named *La Politica de Espana en Africa*, published in Madrid in 1924.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 209.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibidem* p. 192.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 189.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 212.

²⁰⁰ Apud A.T. Raguera, *Origenes del pensamiento geopolitico en Espana. Una primera aproximacion*, in “Documents d’analisi Geografica”, no. 17, 1990, pp. 100-102.

Research institutes and “scientific” publications smoke-screened the geopolitical propaganda in Spain, and the same happened in Germany and Italy. In 1939, Franco founded the Espano Institute as a branch of the section for the Scientific Research High Council led by Jose Maria Albareda. He also initiated the Political Studies Institute coordinated by Alfonso Garcia Valdicasas. One of the best known interwars Spanish geopoliticians was the historian Jaime Vicens Vives, who published the book *España, Geopolitica del Estado y del Imperio*, in 1940 and the study *Teoria del Espacio Vital*, in the “Destino”²⁰¹ publication of July 1939. Under the influence of the German geopolitics myth, J. V. Vives defined the vital space as “*the geographical place where soil mingles with soil*”. Inside this space, he identified a pattern to articulate a new world order. At that stage, the Spanish geopolitician met the German Karl Haushofer who had the ambition to make a „*land register of the Planet’s vital phenomena*.”²⁰² J. V. Vives justified Franco’s policy of reconquering its “vital space”, and stated that “*history’s avatars made this space economically and politically dominated by other states*”²⁰³ with the emergence of totalitarian spaces.

The geopolitical doctrines largely used geopolitical maps to persuade the public opinion of the righteousness of the conveyed messages. Maps were designed in such a way to “*speak for themselves as reality itself*.”²⁰⁴ Hitler’s schoolroom map of “Deutschland” in 1935, showed all the German-speaking areas surrounding Germany without borders as part of the Reich. A strong discontent coming from Mussolini forced Hitler to commission a less imperialistic version and to endorse a new map, quite acceptable for his partners but not for his adversaries. Another good example was Europe’s map designed by the two super-powers during the Cold War. Each vision made the other side the true threat. From this

²⁰¹ *Ibidem*, p 194.

²⁰² Claude Raffestin, *cit. work*, pp. 232-233.

²⁰³ J. Vicens Vives, *Teoria del espacio vital*, in “Destino”, no. 104, 1939, p. 5.

²⁰⁴ John O’Loughlin, *Geopolitical Visions of Central Europe*, on line http://www.mcrit.com/scenarios/visionsofeurope/documents/OLoughlin_John.pdf, accessed at 21 March 2010.

perspective, as Barber remarked, “*When you deal with projections*” – and this map was based on a projection inspired by a very partisan view of geopolitics – “*you can do what the hell you like*”²⁰⁵.

Yet, an obvious remark comes out in terms of geopolitical graphical designs. A map is a tool to visualize geopolitical ideas and scenarios, and has no connection to the “iconographic arsenal” used in propaganda. The geopolitical myth needs an iconographic support to induce certain beliefs, which may lead to pre-established political actions in their turn. According to professor Yoram Bar-Gal from the University of Haifa, Israel, “*Cartographic representations must be treated as language, to which both youth and adults are exposed. The way in which these representations are presented demonstrates Thompson’s ideas (1987) about the relationship between language and ideology. He claims that these relationships contain clear-cut subjective and ideological distortions; in other words, they contain something hidden*”²⁰⁶. In the opinion of experts from the University of Gent, Belgium, “*Maps are a common used means to spread propaganda. People see maps as accurate and unprejudiced, and often don’t recognize propaganda mechanisms. Map propaganda transforms the maps image by leaving out or repressing data, by stressing certain elements and by using stimulating and dramatic symbols*”²⁰⁷. In one of the pages of the “*Zeiterschrift für Geopolitik*” publication which appeared in 1925 a map was printed with the title: “*Germany’s surrounding by the Great and the Little Entente*”²⁰⁸.

²⁰⁵ Michael Church, *The truth about maps: How cartographers distort reality*, in “The Independent”, 20 march, 2010, on line, <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/features/the-truth-about-maps-how-cartographers-distort-reality-1922806.html>.

²⁰⁶ Yoram Bar-Gal, *Ideological Propaganda in Maps and Geographical Education*, on line, <http://geo.haifa.ac.il/~bargal/ideo-map.html>, accessed at 22 March 2010, 22.00.

²⁰⁷ Nele De Wolf, Wannes Van der Gucht, Liesbeth Vansteenvoort, Marijke Brondeel and Philippe De Maeyer, *The Quality of Newspaper Cartography in Wartime: The United States of America Against Iraq*, on line, <http://www.cartesia.org/geodoc/icc2005/pdf/oral/TEMA17/Session%202/NELE%20DE%20WOLF.pdf>, accessed at 25 march 2010, 22.00.

²⁰⁸ Gérard Dussouy, *cit.work*, in *cit city*; p. 160; Claude Raffestin, *cit.work*, p. 245.

Its purpose was to make the Germans feel isolated and besieged. The idea was taken over and developed two years later in a graphical representation of the so-called hostile centres threatening Germany.

Far from any attempt to reach globalising outcomes we have to agree with the three scientists who concluded that “*Zeiterschrift für Geopolitik*“ review published a number of maps whose purpose was to prove the injustice of peace treaties from Paris²⁰⁹ all along of its existence. Many of these images were building gradually, piece by piece the picture of the isolated and the besieged Germans. Powerful images contrived solidarities and adversities, which finally proved to be just empty counterfeits. The friend-foe dialectic, imagined in the cartographic design was a simple scheme. Clamped in a double hostile circle, Germany could find a way out only by befriending Soviet Russia which was on enemy terms with Poland, and Romania both viewed as adversaries of Germany, too. As in the case of geopolitics theories, cartographic or image geopolitics had to operate carefully and cautiously. The maps that built the arsenal for the geopolitics myth propaganda were not inaccurate in their design, in their graphics, and in their geographical description. They conveyed a distorted message²¹⁰. Not all maps published in “*Zeiterschrift für Geopolitik*“ were altered in their spirit or in their message. The map of 1929 that identified the potential conflict areas in Europe expressed a reality resulted from the analysis of power relations and interests that states manifested intensely under certain circumstances. The nationalist discourse in Germany was abundantly followed by cartographic representations mapping the territorial „loss” of Czechoslovakia and Poland after the peace from Paris-Versailles. These maps were only meant to convince and prepare the German public opinion for the forceful actions that the Nazi Reich was undertaking²¹¹.

Henceforth, there was no surprise that the propaganda mapping proliferated during the Cold War, as well. The representation itself

²⁰⁹ Claude Raffestin, *cit. work*, p. 246.

²¹⁰ Yoram Bar-Gal, *cit.work*, in *cit.city*.

²¹¹ Gérard Dussouy, *cit. work*, in *cit city*; p. 161.

of the „Iron Curtain” on the maps edited in the West and in the East belonged to the pattern of ideological interpretation. The Iron Curtain was just a division between the „evil” and the „good”. It was up to the one watching the map to detect who was “the evil” and who was “the good”. Maps of “us” and “them” were often drawn to emphasize the threat represented by the USSR and its allies during the Cold War. The Mercator projection was the perfect choice for anti-communist cartographers: as the USSR covered such vast latitudes, Mercator stretched it out of proportion from its true size. In the map below, the *Warsaw Pact* nations become a wide-spread red threat:



A cautious approach of the expert when reviewing visual geopolitics is more than needed, all the more so as we experience the end of a century overcrowded with images. Under these circumstances, the human individual and collective action is strongly influenced by what can be proved by mass-media technique, which does not always correspond to reality. From this perspective, a recent study carried out by John O’Loughlin from the Institute of Behaviorism Studies of Colorado was very important. It focused on the role assigned to geopolitics in the Russian Federation in order to remake the identity matrix of the Russian society after the collapse of the communist regime²¹². The author concluded that attitudes and behaviors could result at the level of public opinion according to certain power circles’ interests by manipulating a certain geopolitic culture, and by using

²¹² John O’Loughlin, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

preconceptions. The Canadian professor Simon Dalby referred to this particular aspect and noted, „*More specifically we need to understand the maps and many of the boundaries used for administrative purposes by contemporary states as an artefact and legacy of European empires. Many of the geographical entities on the world map today, which appear as permanent arrangements are very recent, the territorial structures of many states continue to evolve. Even as citizenship is now codified in passport regimes, in Europe national boundaries are dissolving as a passport from one state is recognized by all European states. Dual citizenships are now frequent too further complicating any attempt to tie people neatly to territory. Globalization is all about economic phenomena crossing boundaries, a process which challenges the mental maps of policy makers and citizens alike as it enmeshes us all in commodity chains that span the globe*”²¹³.

The Internet proliferation and its expansion to a global scale will provide those interested to promote the geopolitics „myth” or the politically supported propaganda with more sophisticated and more trust full means. The battle to control the web space and the images, which shape the public opinion, has already started²¹⁴ and it does not follow the classical rules of military strategies but the new strategies of the „Info War”.

²¹³ Simon Dalby, Critique and Contemporary Geopolitics, A lecture presented at Tarbiat Modaress University, Tehran, 11 May, 2005 on line http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:rTV1sUVQrygJ:www3.carleton.ca/cove/papers/DalbyTehranGeopol.doc+Simon+Dalby,+Critique+and+Contemporary+Geopolitics,+A+lecture+presented+at+Tarbiat+Modaress+University,+Tehran,+11+May,+2005&hl=ro&gl=ro&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESH01yalXk0gw-SNOoS09_TIHdcousj_b-yS1BSbp-NrJCaptrrNqFftAQzUjz3VIRmlP6VsXxS4bwE1jKefCeCAJOJVkk_JOLB-XqOJ_vgd1XE2VyI2m1v1ZwyDV6Hkfr_S_Jsl&sig=AHIEtbT5HXzhXVZc2U7C8zNSGXAhhJJd2xg.

²¹⁴ See subchapter *Cartography and propaganda*, in Claude Raffestin and colab, *cit.*, pp. 261-267; Frank Debié, *Is geopolitics a science? An aspect of political geography by Peter Taylor*, in E. I. Emandi, Gh. Buzatu, V. S. Cucu, *cit.*, pp. 314-316.

Chapter II

GEOPOLITICS AS AN ELEMENT OF POLITICAL PRACTICE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

As an objective reality, geopolitics is a much older phenomenon of international relations than the notion/ concept that helped people comprehend, define and ultimately study/analyze the behaviors of those states that had interacted at a certain time in a geographical area. It exists even if people do not perceive it as such and may have given it different meanings in time. The study of history, of the relationships among states and the way they solved their interests in different regions rich in food and precious metals offer enough examples that can make what we call today the geopolitics phenomenon. Sheldon Wolin highlighted the fact that a direct link between space and politics existed ever since the apparition of the state's civilisation or since organised human groups became aware of their own identity and made the distinction between „us” and „the others”²¹⁵. Several researchers noted that this form of interaction dated back in a period preceding the apparition of the state²¹⁶, the stakeholder that dominated the international arena for thousands of years, currently challenged by non state players.

From this point of view, those scientists who place geopolitics in the domain of the international relations are right. Even from the dawn of mankind, human communities became competitive while

²¹⁵ Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought*, Boston, Toronto, Little Brown and Company, 1960, pp. 16-17.

²¹⁶ Barry Buzan, Richard Little, *International systems in world history*, Polirom, Iași, 2009, pp. 133-134.

looking for food and water because such vital resources were not evenly distributed on the planet. Consequently, people were following the pattern of what we call geopolitics today²¹⁷. At this point, too, note should be made that we refer to the international relations as an ontological reality resulted from the way stakeholders behave and interact at a certain time²¹⁸. Even if international politics *as ontic reality* is described under different terms, some even with a strong metaphorical meaning²¹⁹ – the international scene, the global village, etc. – it must not be mistaken for the human products of reflection/perception of this type of reality. J.R. Searle concluded that crude facts do not need any human institutions to exist and that objects exist independently from the way we represent them²²⁰. As a natural reality, international relations are made of crises-crossed networks of human agents and institutions that interact directly or indirectly, continuously or intermittently in a geographical area or at a global scale according to certain regulations and norms.

Stakeholders that make the concrete and perceivable part of this reality interact naturally. These stakeholders, such as states, have always exchanged products and services. The result of interactions in this field led to what experts call *the international economic environment*²²¹. With or without reason, the same stakeholders, most frequently the states, have used violence and fought wars but they also cooperated to overcome obstacles and general difficulties generated by humans or nature. The outcome of the inter-actions in

²¹⁷ Constantin Hlihor, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-39.

²¹⁸ Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *Communication in international conflicts*, Comunicare.ro Printing House, București, 2010, p. 23-25

²¹⁹ Dimitris Acrivoulis, *The Quantum Politics MetaPhor in International politics: Towards a Hermeneutics a Political Metaphoricity*, PSA, 2007, pp. 1-2.

²²⁰ Apud, Virgil Iordache, *Creation and evolution Essays*, online, http://www.cesec.ro/pdf/Creatie_si_evolutie.pdf.

²²¹ See among others, Robert Gilpin, *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order*, Princeton University Press, 2001.

this domain led to what scientists call *the international political space/the political international environment/the-international political arena*²²². This aspect of interactions was the most studied and researched in the domain of international relations. That was the reason why works on the international political system, on the political and judicial order, on war causes and on the way peace may be reached have been numerous and left the impression that we have only this type of reality, described in different terms, from the international political system, to the world political scene, and to the international society. The stakeholders of the international environment interacted at cultural, spiritual and even ideological level. This type of relations made a special constellation that some analysts regarded as an *area of culture and civilisation* in continuous interdependency while others, such as S. Huntington perceived it as “a clash” and “violence.”²²³. Stakeholders have negotiated their interests for domination of certain regions on the globe, for access to resources and routes control that linked producers to consumers. These spaces became the *geopolitical fields*.

Not every geographical area can be a geopolitical field even if it is termed as such at a certain point. Sometimes the geopolitical and the strategic spaces (at least when two states fight militarily and politically to control a region of interest) are confounded. I think that certain specialists²²⁴ are right when they believe that states argued over important territories in order to control commercial

²²² See among others Robert Gilpin, *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order*, Princeton University Press, 2001.

²²³ Samuel Huntington, *Ciocnirea civilizațiilor și refacerea ordinii mondiale*, București, Editura Antet, 1998.

²²⁴ Colin S. Gray, *In Defence of the Heartland, Sir Halford Mackinder and his Critics a Hundred Years on*, in B.W. Blouet, *Global Geostrategy, Mackinder and the Defence of the West*, London, Routledge, 2005, pp. 28-29; Z. Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York, Basic Books, 1997, pp. XIII-XIV.

routes, the access to natural resources (food, water, energy) in different periods, but this does not mean that whoever held that space controlled the whole world as well. Even if such assumptions are numerous in classical geopolitics studies from Mackinder to Z. Brzezinski, historic analysis does not confirm them even partially. The Tsarist Empire and the Soviet Empire that followed controlled what geopoliticians called the heartland but it did not control the whole world. They conquered only what their military and economic strength allowed them²²⁵. Henceforth, an area must fill the following requirements to assume the status of a geopolitical area:

- *At least two stakeholders (state or non-state) must show their interest or their presence in that specific area that is not a sovereign region for any of them;*
- *Stakeholders must show a vital interest for that particular area;*
- *Stakeholders should muster enough power (military, economic, symbolic etc.) to reach their political, economic and cultural-spiritual goals for that area.*

The connection between a certain space and a stakeholder's policy is given by the latter's interests and strength and not by its geographical position. No actor will show its presence if it does not gain economic, financial, political or strategic advantages. According to the key asset that developed a society and generated its prosperity, the great powers' interest has changed during history. The most eloquent example is oil. The moment states became aware of the fact that prosperity and modernity were no longer possible without this resource, the oil fields of the planet overcrowded and a major battle started for the control, the access and transportation routes. According to the richness of the resources and the quality of oil, some stakeholders regarded them as of strategic interest, while others conferred them a regional or even national significance. That

²²⁵ Constantin Hlihor, România. *Fall of communism and birth of democracy, 1989-2000*, University of Bucharest Printing House, 2006, p. 31.

was a fact noticed by S. Cohen as early as the 1970s when he suggested an analysis and understanding of the international system by using three key concepts: geostrategic regions with a global extension, their subdivisions, geopolitical regions, directly derived from geographical regions, which only have regional limits, and shatter belts, ‘a large, strategically located region[s] [...] occupied by a number of conflicting states, caught between the conflicting interests of adjoining great powers. The initial concept of geostrategic regions was transformed into that of geopolitical realms. New concepts developed, such as the gateway regions that may include one or several states and smaller states with a nominal sovereignty²²⁶. When he referred to this aspect, professor Bruno Ferrari from the University of Uppsala (Sweden) noted: *„Since the first half of the 1990s, nowhere else has there been a major competition for the domination of natural, energy resources than in the Caspian Sea basin and its surrounding areas, especially Central Asia, because of their vital meaning for the preservation of the complex economic networks; these vertebrates of the contemporary world. The major (and medium) powers aspire for the control of raw energy products, oil and natural gas, found abundantly in the Caspian Sea basin. Of course, this zone is by far not the only one that is of major concern. The Middle East and the Persian Gulf area and its countries still provide the majority of energy reserves available on the planet, most of them net exporters and suppliers for the US market”*²²⁷.

The understanding of the complex geopolitical debates that today dominate the geopolitical scene is given by comprehending the stakeholders who fight to control a particular area, and most of

²²⁶ Apud, Pascal Venier, *Main Theoretical Currents in Geopolitical Thought in the Twentieth Century*, in “L’Espace Politique”, 2011, vol. 12, n° 3, p. 2.

²²⁷ Bruno Ferrari, *Geopolitics – a critical assessment of the new “Great Game” in and around the Caspian Sea*, on line, http://www.ciari.org/investigacao/geopolitics_greatgame_caspiansea.pdf, accessed at 26 June 2010, 15.00.

all, the characteristics of an area where different interests meet. The French researcher Gérard Dussouy²²⁸ made an excellent connection between the type of space and certain stakeholders' attraction to a specific region of the globe. He started from the understanding of this fact to present quite recently a fascinating model, based on the analysis of the geopolitical systemic configuration, where complexity was approached from the perspective of five successive spaces²²⁹. Three central levels, the demographic space, the diplomatic-strategic space, and the economic space built the geopolitical infrastructure. It was articulated with the physical space, while the symbolic space crowned the edifice. The concept of power was represented by a central vertical axis, which connected the five spaces. Vertically, inter-dimensional relations explained the relations of incertitude, dominant or not. They revealed the variability of each stakeholder's position from one dimension to the other. The linking line of the different points symbolised each stakeholder's strength. This model also involved analyzing the variables of the configuration to account for changing parameters both for each domain but also for the global structure of power. Three double axis of analysis served the purpose: local/global; war/peace; heterogeneity/ homogeneity. As for the first one, Dussouy thought that a straightforward dialectical approach would not be enough to explain completely such complexity. Dussouy employed dialectical logic, involving three separate dynamics: assimilating homogeneity, the antagonistic balance of heterogeneity as well as the adaptive homogeneity. A part of Gérard Dussouy's ideas were a good starting point for the analysis model that I suggest in the present research.

²²⁸ Gérard Dussouy, *Traité de Relations internationales. Les théories de l'interétatique*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2007; *idem*, *Traité de Relations internationales. Les théories géopolitiques*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2006; *idem*, *Quelle géopolitique au 21^e siècle?*, Bruxelles, Complexe, 2001.

²²⁹ Pascal Venier, *cit. work*, p. 4.

2.1. *The stakeholder – a key element of geopolitical evolution in international politics*

It is nonsensical to review geopolitics and interest games in international politics without identifying the stakeholder – a key element irrespective of a specific era or a geographical space. Classical geopolitics made the *state* a key stakeholder in analyzing the interest disputes in the power equation at regional or global level. Today this player is strongly challenged by non-states players, which are extremely different in structure and behavior in the world politics. When he referred to this aspect, Merje Kuus from the University of British Columbia underlined that „*These processes of geopolitical subject-making are not limited to nation-states. On the supranational level, region-building processes, such as the processes of European integration, are deeply geopolitical exercises in the same way. European integration, for example, may well overcome nationalist narratives of territory and identity, but it entails powerful claims about Europe as a territorial and cultural unit. This process is a particularly fascinating geopolitical project because it explicitly moves beyond the state-centered understandings of space*”²³⁰.

Michael Mann defined stakeholders according to the type of socio-spatial network of human interaction. From this perspective, he identified five such networks: local, national, international, transnational and global. Each of them brought a different type of stakeholder to the international environment²³¹. Timothy Luke, Volker Ritterger and others believed that the attribute of sovereignty was more helpful in identifying the stakeholders' essential features in the new international environment²³². Stakeholders could be subjects empowered with state sovereignty. Their actions were limited by

²³⁰ Merje Kuus, *Critical Geopolitics*, on line, http://www.isacomps.com/info/samples/criticalgeopolitics_sample.pdf, accessed at 29 July 2010, 20.00.

²³¹ Apud Martin Griffiths, *cit. work*, p. 386.

²³² See Constantin Hlihor, *Geopolitics and geostrategy*, p. 131.

sovereignty constraints. Stakeholders without sovereignty demands behaved freely in the international relations system. The main stakeholders of the late XIXth century fought or allied their interests in one area or another through their geopolitical action.

The interdependencies created in the post-industrial era, a reduced capacity to adapt to the challenges of the XXth century, made some analysts consider that, in what states were concerned, they had fewer possibilities to act as *main stakeholders* of the international relations system and of the geopolitical game at the same time. The core changes that took place in the post-industrial society made the state fall from the privileged capacity of the only stakeholder that could provide security, well-being, and other services of the XXIst²³³ century to its citizens.

The position and the role played by different stakeholders in the structure of international relations, or in a *debate/cooperation of geopolitical type* selected several sorts of players. In a „geopolitics game”, some stakeholders can claim their interests in a certain space, others can only bear the consequences of the interest games and finally some act by proxy on behalf of other stakeholders. In the analysis of the way stakeholders placed themselves in Central Asian during the tenth decade of the last century, Zbigniew Brzezinski identified two kinds of states: *active geostrategic players* and *geopolitical pivots*. Active geostrategic players were termed as “*the states that have the capacity and the national will to exercise power or influence beyond their borders in order to alter the existing geopolitical state of affairs*”²³⁴. Geopolitical pivots were states “*whose importance is derived not from their power and motivation but rather from their sensitive location and from the consequences of their potential vulnerable condition for the behavior of strategic players. Most often, geopolitical pivots are determined by their geography, which in some cases gives them a special role either in*

²³³ Andreas Wenger, *The Internet and The Changing Face of International Relations and Security*, in „Information and Security”, Volume 7, 2001, p. 5.

²³⁴ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *cit. work*, p. 41.

*defining access to important areas or in denying resources to a significant player. In some cases, a geopolitical pivot may act as a defensive shield for a vital state or even a region”*²³⁵.

There was little novelty in Brzezinski’s idea because Henry Kissinger had worked out a similar geopolitical discourse. He paralleled frequently the international relations to a game, to a chess match, with major players moving around local pawns on a global board. Local players had no chance to show internal diversity, autonomous actions or parochial interests in this type of discourse. They were rather frequently referred to as “puppets” or “tools”²³⁶.

Last century’s predominant stakeholder was undoubtedly the state itself, irrespective of its nature, from national to totalitarian, as was the case of Nazism, fascism, communism etc. The great powers of last century generated the toughest debates in their pursuit to control key spaces of the international politics. Unfortunately, whenever such confrontations occurred, they ended in a major war either hot (the two world wars) or cold as the bipolar confrontation (USA-USSR) in the second half in the XXth century. Professor Bertrand Badie from the Institute of Political Studies of Paris believed that the processes induced by globalization were corroding the state’s position of a major stakeholder in the international relations. „*The growth of transnational currents with which a state’s citizens communicate and which are not controlled by the estate – says the French teacher – will lead to new types of relations that will alter the reports between the citizen and the state*”²³⁷. The attribute around which the most profound and

²³⁵ *Ibidem.*

²³⁶ Apud, Gearoid O’ Tuathail, Localizing geopolitics: Disaggregating violence and return in conflict regions, in “Political Geography”, no. 29, 2010, pp. 256–265, on line, <http://gerardtoal.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/localizinggeopolitics2010.pdf> accessed at 29 July 2010, 20.00.

²³⁷ Bertrand Badie, *L’Etat-nation, un acteur parmi d’autres?*, in http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/france_829/label-france_5343/les-themes_5497/sciences-humaines_13695/histoire-science-politique-relations-internationales_14467/etat-nation-un-acteur-parmi-autres-entretien-avec-bertrand-badie-no-38-1999_37389.html

complex debates centered was that of states' sovereignty over a given territory. Political events prompted certain theorists to conclude that the state's role was in decline²³⁸ in some African, in Central or South Asia, and even produced the so-called *failed-states* such as Somalia, Angola, Iraq, Afghanistan, Georgia etc., countries that did not have the required power to control their own sovereign space. The same happened to Europe where some states accepted limited sovereignty in order to let a new stakeholder, the European Union come onto the world map. Consequently, some researchers concluded that the state's role was diminishing²³⁹.

These analysts' opinions entered a crisis period with the attempt to apply them to super/powers or even to states with a certain regional significance. On the other hand, we cannot explain the dispute for space if we admit that the times of large invasions has definitely ended, because territorial control was expensive and hard to justify in front of the world public opinion, if we accept that a cybernetic and technocratic revolution has reduced dramatically the role of overseas strategic military bases, which once controlled the supply of raw materials and the routes to retrieve them. Analyst and theorist Marcel Merle concluded that „*Saddam Hussein wanted to annex Kuwait and the Western powers could not allow 40 per cent of the world oil production to fall in the hands of an unpredictable dictator. The United States and France were not willing to abandon their military bases which enabled them to maintain their influence abroad. We could say that here are the remains of a revolutionary era. Maybe we could. What is left is that the quarrels at the borders and the territorial claims are not over. The list of recent and present conflicts is long: India/Pakistan, China/Russia, Israel/P.L.O., Cameroon/Nigeria, Tchad/Libya, Iran/Iraq, Morocco/ Polisario, Peru/Equador etc.*”²⁴⁰

²³⁸ Masatsugu Matsuo, *Some Reflections on the Assumptions of the Mainstream International relational Theory*, in “Hiroshima Peace Science”, vol. 24, 2002, pp. 47-69.

²³⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁴⁰ Marcel Merle, *Un système international sans territoire?*, in “Cultures&Conflits”, n° 21-22, 1996, pp. 289-309.

A whole range of events that happened in the former Yugoslavia and in the former USSR led to deep crises because ethnic and religious groups claimed a territory of their own to organise politically and economically. We believe that M. Merle was right when he concluded “*We forget that in the case of Bosnia, it’s the interethnic groups presence in the field that is the main obstacle for peace and the ethnics (or pseudo-ethnics) are fighting at present to control a territory in order to lay the grounds of a democratic independent state as Slovenia and Croatia did. It is not the effect of hazard if negotiations fail, since we draw a map to have the new borders. Regarding Grozny, it has become a martyr city, symbol of territorial independence requested by Chechnya. In Liberia and Somalia, the state authority is defensive, but the factions kill each other to impose their authority in a dead but intact territory*”²⁴¹. These few examples prove that sovereignty over a territory has not become an obsolete political concept in the international order or a Westphalia-type relic. A territory remains the organization matrix of human communities. The problem that arises is the way these communities can accept each other, the criteria and foundations employed to built and justify them. The territory “*remains a means and a precious advantage in a competition that animates the control power, whoever it is*”²⁴² for a long time to come. Under unpredictable global evolutions, the nation-state still remains the basic unit of political organization in the world politics, although its sovereignty is crumbling under the geopolitical trends. There is no universal global society and there is no single world policy. On one hand, the contemporary world is neither a complete international anarchy nor just an international system of sovereign nation-states. It is a polyarchy, multipolar, multilayered, mixed-actor system where the anarchy of sovereign states is downsized and controlled by a number of non-state players: the international governmental organizations around the United Nations system, the players from a world civil society (non governmental organizations, collective movements, trans-

²⁴¹ *Ibidem.*

²⁴² *Ibidem.*

national communities, ethnic diasporas) and supranational organisations such as the European Union. Let us add the growing presence of the transnational civil society and the expansion of the public space²⁴³. On the other hand, we have to remark that the state's role tends to grow exponentially and, consequently, most analysts do not see the lesser extent of the role played by the state in this field²⁴⁴ in order to solve the great problems related to individuals and the society.

In spite of all these, we cannot overlook the fact that non-state players that have emerged command fundamental changes in the international environment. They tend to undermine more and more a basic feature of the state – sovereignty over its territory. The newcomers are deeply involved in geopolitical games related especially to the control over oil, gas, water and food supplies. The oil and natural gas geopolitics cannot be understood if non-state players²⁴⁵ are ruled out. As for the dispute over spaces for trade, transnational companies such as Sony, Toyota and Tomitomo control extended areas of the commercial and family life in the USA. The financial Japanese companies controlled Hawaii in 1980 with levers of supervision that the militants of the mid 1950s could not even dream of²⁴⁶. Robert D. Kaplan pointed out that the number of nonclassical players who imposed their own rules in the so-called private spaces has grown significantly. While at the end of the seventh decade of the last century the number of “residential communities with guarded compounds and secluded corporations” equalled one thousand, their number reached eighty thousand²⁴⁷ in

²⁴³ See Alberto Martinelli, *From World System to World Society? On line* <http://www.sociologistswithoutborders.org/essays/FROMWORLDSYSTEMTOWORLDSOCIETY.pdf>, accessed at 28 July 2010, 21.00.

²⁴⁴ Stephen G. Brooks, *Producing Security: Multinational Corporations, Globalization, and the Changing Calculus of Conflict*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 2005, p. 5.

²⁴⁵ See, Constantin Hlihor, *Security politics in the contemporary international environment. The energetic field*, Institutul European Printing House, Iași, 2008, p. 76 and next.

²⁴⁶ Timothy W Luke *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

²⁴⁷ Robert D. Kaplan, *cit. work*, p. 57.

the mid-1980s. They have pedestrian alleyways, clubs and commercial areas, compounds separated from regular streets, and they are all protected by private security units, different from the state-run system of public order. Such communities develop their own communication network and enter a dialogue with the classical players on an equal basis. These favorable circumstances have been augmented by the unprecedented development of *cyber-space*. Comprehensive Internet networks have provided the political control over vast areas from northern Africa, or even from Europe and Asia.

There are states that have simply become fictitious on the political world map because of their incapacity to manage the power and to control their entire sovereign territory. Some of them, such as Somalia or the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have basically ceased to exist as consistent stakeholders even if they are present on the contemporary world political map.²⁴⁸ Their sovereignty space has become a source of threats to international stability. The internal anarchy and the incapacity of any domestic stakeholder to control the situation prevent a regular communication with the other states. Private groupings have “privatised” the levers of power management. In the case of the Congo, for example, policemen have turned into plunderers while military units protect their commanders’ businesses.²⁴⁹ Basically, these states do not belong to the process of the international communication environment of our times any more, because they have no legitimate representatives, unanimously acknowledged by the community of the other stakeholders.

The resources of many Third World countries are not enough to support a modern state mechanism. The greatest part of the population is too poor to pay taxes essential to provide resources for the system of political and economic management. The rich evade the tax collection through corruption, which has become a state policy.²⁵⁰ These states

²⁴⁸ Paul Hirst, *cit. work*, p. 69.

²⁴⁹ Daniel Thurer, *The „Failed State” and International Law*, in <http://www.globalpolicy.org/nations/sovereign/failed/2003/0725law.htm>, accessed at 28 July 2010, 21.00.

²⁵⁰ Paul Claval, *cit. work*, pp. 196-197.

fall in the category termed as “*criminal states*”, “*failed states*”, or “*rogue states*”. Any category of legitimate stakeholders do not accept the representatives of such states as real partners in the international environment. If we take into account the evolutions on the European continent, on one hand, and those at world level, on the other hand, we notice the emergence of another type of players strongly involved in the geopolitical evolutions at local, regional, or global level.

This phenomenon brings into focus another non-state player, the *regional governance*. Once more, the presence of such non-state players can possibly challenge the predominance and even the very existence of the sovereign state, as well as the way they are represented in codes of states, and, henceforth the existence of such common codes would offer a hint about the persistence of the state and of the Westphalia-era order in a world where regional forces seem to expand, even in an odd way, nonetheless. Two major non-state actors are, therefore, considered in this thesis in terms of their effects on the state and on its specific way to manage a human community. First, the international terrorist organisations are a player who reflects a particular trend of globalization. Second, the regional and layered governance, a closer-related player to the state, which undoubtedly has the capacity of downsizing or even substituting the state itself²⁵¹.

The problem arising today is who rules the international system geopolitically. The answers are neither simple nor easy to articulate. An important group of analysts considered that the state might continue to be the most important stakeholder of the contemporary international system²⁵². Paul Hirst concluded that that the role

²⁵¹ See Norman Gregor David Rae, *Reinventing Geopolitical Codes in the Post-Cold War World With Special Reference to International Terrorism*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Department of Geographical and Earth Sciences Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences, University of Glasgow, May 2007, p. 18, on line <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/34636869/Postgraduate-Theses-Department-of-Geographical-and-Earth>.

²⁵² See Paul Hirst, *cit. work*, pp. 111-123; Martin Show, *The State of International Relations*, in vol. Sarah Owen-Vandersluis, *The State and Identity Construction in International Relations*, Macmillan, London, 2000, pp. 7-30; Michael Zurn, *The State in The Post-National Constellation-Societal Denationalization and Multi-Level Governance*, in “Arena Working Papers”, no. 35, 1999.

of the state would grow in importance even if non state actors multiplied. In its relations with the other stakeholders, the state preserves a few fundamental features. It is exclusively territorial and it defines citizenship; it is a fundamental resource of responsibility for a certain territory; states have the monopoly over the violence means only inside their own borders.²⁵³

Another researcher, Michael Zurn proved that the state persisted to be the predominant player in the field of international relations. In the entire world economic exchanges, states own 83 per cent while the rest belongs to the other players²⁵⁴. Undoubtedly, the state remains the main security provider at local and regional level although the contribution of non-state stakeholders, like NATO for instance, has augmented their own participation and importance. It was the state that has assumed the responsibility for the protection of the environment and the reduction of environmental threats, in recent years²⁵⁵. The catastrophes produced by the tsunami in South-East Asia, in December 2004, by hurricane Katrina, in August 2005, and the earthquake followed by a tsunami that destroyed the nuclear power plant from Fukushima in March 2011 proved that a lack of a rapid reaction of the state led to dramatic consequences. Non state actors lacked the necessary means and the proper equipment to intervene. Quite obviously, the capability of a productive communication did not lack completely but it only proved insufficient under such strenuous circumstances. Although a growing number of states have agreed to work jointly for the protection of the natural environment some researchers think that too little has been done along this line. „*The applied ambient studies, replete with technical language*” noted Robert D. „*lay abandoned on the foreign affairs experts’ desks. It is time we understood the environment as what it really is: the security issue of the XXIst century. The politic and strategic impact of the unleashed population, the disease propagation, deforestation and soil erosion, water dryness, air pollution*

²⁵³ Paul Hirst, cit. work, p. 112.

²⁵⁴ Michael Zurn cit. work, in cit. city.

²⁵⁵ *Ibidem*.

*and probably the growth of water level in critical areas and overpopulation as in Nile Delta and Bangladesh are consequences that result in massive immigration and later to group conflicts”.*²⁵⁶

If we analyze the stakeholders according to the power they have to turn their interests in geopolitical conflicts, we notice a huge diversity of opinions. Susan Strange, for example, pointed out that the state lost its monopoly over power in a modern international environment affected by globalization²⁵⁷. Large corporations, non-governmental organizations and other non-state subjects were gaining an ever-increasing influence. Other authors emphasized the ongoing fragmentation of sovereignty. Patrick Tyrrell predicted that linguistic, religious, or cultural forms of sovereignty could develop alongside national sovereignty within the global information environment, which would not necessarily coincide with state territorial borders²⁵⁸. A question thus arises: who will be the sovereigns of the newly formed sovereign environments? Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye conclude that states would preserve their sovereign status if they succeeded in adapting to the realities of the Information Age, and if they were able to control the soft power²⁵⁹. Keohane and Nye considered viewed the soft power means as “*the ability to get the desired outcomes because others want what you want*”²⁶⁰. This type of power differs fundamentally from the traditional military power, predominant during the Cold War.

Henceforth, states continue to remain the main place of identification and solidarity for most of their citizens. The NGOs and

²⁵⁶ Robert D. Kaplan, *cit. work*, p. 18.

²⁵⁷ Susan Strange, *The Retreat of State: the Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, cited from the Romanian translation of the work.

²⁵⁸ Nerijus Maliukevičius, *Geopolitics and Information Warfare. Russia's Approach*, on line, kms1.isn.ethz.ch/.../Files/.../Chapt.7.pdf.

²⁵⁹ R.O Keohane, J.S Nye, *Power and Interdependence in the Information Age*, in “Foreign Affairs”, no. 5 (77) 1998, on line <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/prg/nye/power.pdf>, accessed at 02 11 2010.

²⁶⁰ *Ibidem*.

other non-state actors can criticise the supranational organisms and be strong-opinionated against certain subjects but with reduced legitimacy.²⁶¹ They only represent themselves and their own members. Thus, IMF can act not only because governments desperately seek to get a loan, but also because they will get the support of those states that provide the greatest part of Fund's resources. States interfere more and more to shape economies, investments, consumption and financing of certain industries or to revive other sectors according to the foreign or domestic situations in order to face the internationalization of the banking and market systems²⁶². Quite a few arguments support the fact that the state will continue to play an important role in the international communication network for a long time to come.

On the other hand, it is the state that takes the responsibility in the international environment to observe certain regulations and law principles regarding their tenure. The state can be controlled in its relations to its citizens and it is equally empowered to represent their interests when non-state players breach their rights. The logic of rapid and immediate gain guides the behavior of other commercial, financial and other players²⁶³. Whatever the leaders' preferences are and no matter how interested they seem to look in their attempt to offer decent working conditions to their employees they are constrained to measures that impede the employees' interests by their competitors. Who will defend their interests if the stakeholder disappears as a major player from the international environment? Similar reasoning may prompt trading companies to sell technology and IT equipment to failed or rogue states providing them with the capacity to build weapons of mass destruction and threaten the regional and even the global security²⁶⁴. Who would control the legal nature of trade activities and the moral standards of such non-state

²⁶¹ Robert D. Kaplan, *cit. work*, p. 18.

²⁶² Roger Dusouy, *cit. work*, p. 112.

²⁶³ Paul Claval, *cit. work*, pp. 226-227.

²⁶⁴ Sidney Weintraub, *Disrupting the Financing of Terrorism*, *The Washington Quarterly* 35, 1 (Winter 2002), pp. 53-60.

players if the state exhausted its reasons of being as a pattern of political organisation for a human community?

A significant number of researchers have concluded already that the role of the state might shrink considerably. One of the best-known Singaporean scholars and politicians, George Yeo believed that the “*nation-states will continue to exist under the impact of informatization and urbanization, but a greater number of political issues has to be solved at municipal level. New models of competition and cooperation resembling the European one before the era of nation-states. The national authorities will not disappear, they will weaken*”²⁶⁵. Other scholars underlined the fact that “*Virtually all nation-states become part of a larger pattern of global transformations and global flows. Goods, capital, people, knowledge, communications and weapons, as well as crime, pollutants, fashions and beliefs, rapidly move across territorial boundaries. It has become a fully interconnected global order...*”²⁶⁶

The Japanese analyst Keniche Ohmae has reached a similar conclusion. After a series of studies, he identified three forces capable of reorganizing the world: the globalization of consumers and corporations, the formation of region-states as a reaction to nation-states and the emergence of economic blocks such as the EU or NAFTA²⁶⁷. Because of these evolutions, the nation-state could be replaced by the *region-state*. This was one way to remap the world’s political representation in the perspective of a new middle ages. Keniche Ohmae remembered that the „*region-states are not a novelty. Just think of Venice – this great city was originally a region state that grew in the later medieval period into an empire. Italy was studded with such centres. They were the cradles of the Renaissance and offered other contributions to our world, including double-entry*

²⁶⁵ George Yeo, *Secolul urban asiatic*, in Nathan Gardels, *cit. work*, p. 168.

²⁶⁶ David Held, A. McGrew, *The End of the Old Order?* in “Review of International Studies”, vol. 24, issue 05, 1998, p. 230.

²⁶⁷ Apud Nathan Gardels, *cit. work*, p. 196.

bookkeeping”²⁶⁸. In geopolitical analysis, these visions generated a growing concern for the border study in a more and more global world²⁶⁹. States have rights over a given territory that comes sometimes under the violent siege of non-state players. From this point of view, the question of the developments between the classical and non-classical actors remains unanswered.

The transformations in the world economy, the globalization of information, of security issues, have turned non-state powers into major stakeholders of the geopolitical contemporary phenomena, where transnational, international or supranational organizations will play a special role. From this point of view, the structure of the communication field will go through significant transformations.

In the world after the Cold War, where the problems emerged inside some classical international stakeholders – the states – generated profound political and military crises. The intervention of the USA and that of certain non-state actors such as NATO, OSCE, and EU was decisive for breaking the deadlock. Peacekeeping operations have become a characteristic of the international relations and basically there is no problem where the UN has not been involved directly, but it should be added that the organisation could not have solved any of the tensions recorded during the Cold War without the engagement of the great stakeholders, mainly the US.

In the last half of the century, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have proved to be first class stakeholders in

²⁶⁸ Keniche Ohmae, *Beyond the Nation State*, in “The Globalist”, june 13, 2005, on line, <http://www.theglobalist.com/storyid.aspx?StoryId=4615>, accessed at 23 August 2010, 21.00.

²⁶⁹ See, Henk van Houtum, *The Geopolitics of Borders and Boundaries*, in “Geopolitics”, 10:672–679, 2005, on line <http://ncbr.ruhosting.nl/html/files/geopoliticsborders.pdf>, Henk van Houtum and James Scott, *Boundaries and the Europeanisation of Space: The EU, Integration and Evolving Theoretical Perspectives on Borders*, on line, http://www.exlinea.comparative-research.net/fileadmin/user_upload/reports_and_publications/State_of%20the_art_exlinea.pdf, accessed at 23 August 2010, 22.00.

the geopolitical domain. The International mass media made them more visible and more important for the process of communication in the international environment. The information relayed by these organisations into the international environment about certain states' economic situation, about their financial reliability, about the risks that interfere with the interested investors to place their capital in a certain country are "signals" that nobody can ignore. That is why the third world states and even more so, the ex-Soviet space and the former communist countries, depend internally and externally to a large extent on the policies of the two international bodies in their decision-making and in the messages for the international world.

As an example of the growing number of players in the contemporary geopolitical phenomenon, James Rosenau introduced in debate the way two crises from the end of 1979 were illustrated in a region where the two superpowers were confronting their interests: the besiege of the US embassy in Tehran and the invasion of Afghanistan by the USSR. No less than 29 transnational stakeholders, starting with UN and ending with the Olympic Committee and the Helsinki Watch Group, were deeply involved in either or both crises²⁷⁰. Communication through public and specialized channels contributed largely to the solving of conflicting situations where the classical actors were involved.

On the other hand, mention should be made of the fact that the partnership between states and the non-state financial or commercial players has developed in the fight against terrorism and transborder crime. This fact prompted the opening of new communication channels, specific of more effective joint actions in the international environment. The American Bankers Association and other private financial organizations, for instance, helped the USA government to stop money laundering and financing terrorism after 11 September 2001²⁷¹ by communicating data about certain criminal organizations.

²⁷⁰ James N. Rosenau, *cit.work*, p. 110.

²⁷¹ George E. Shambaugh, *Statecraft and Non-State Actors in Age of Globalization*, in <http://jpr.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/39/3/289>, accessed at 28 July 2010, 21.00.

Some analysts of the contemporary international relations consider that new actors of “sub national level”²⁷² or “violent non-state players”²⁷³ may emerge. In their turn, these players differ according to the historic background of the region where they act and to their purpose. Analyst Ulrich Schneckener concluded that „armed non-state actors are 1) willing and able to use violence in the pursuit of their objectives; and 2) are not integrated into formal state institutions such as regular armies, presidential guards, police or Special Forces”. His typology attempted to identify the most important and most frequently encountered armed non-state players and it also identified their specific characteristics²⁷⁴:

- *Rebels* or *guerrilla fighters*, sometimes also called *partisans* or *snipers*, seek the ‘liberation’ of a social class or a ‘nation’. They fight to overthrow a government, to separate a region or to put an end to an occupation or colonial regime;

- *Militias* or *paramilitaries* are irregular combat units that usually act on behalf of, or are at least tolerated by, a given regime. Their task is to fight rebels, to threaten specific groups or to kill opposition leaders;

- *Clan chieftains* or *big men* are traditional, local authorities who head a particular tribe, clan, ethnic or religious community;

- *Warlords* are local potentates who control a particular territory during or after the end of a violent conflict. They secure their power through private armies and benefit from war or post-war economies by exploiting resources (such as precious metals, tropical timber, commodities or drug production) and/or the local population (for instance, through looting or levying ‘taxes’);

²⁷² Shaun Riordan, *cit. work*, pp. 74-75.

²⁷³ Phil Williams, *Violent non-state actors*, on line, www.humansecuritygateway.com/.../ISN_V...; Ulrich Schneckener, *Fragile Statehood, Armed Non-State Actors and Security Governance*, on line se2.dcaf.ch/.../Files/.../chapter2.pdf, accessed at 28 July 2010, 21.00.

²⁷⁴ Ulrich Schneckener, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

- *Terrorists* aim to spread panic and fear in societies in order to achieve political goals, be they based on left- or right-wing, on social-revolutionary, nationalistic or religious ideologies. They are organised in a clandestine way, most often in small groups and cells, sometimes also in larger transnational networks (in particular Al-Qaida or Jemaah Islamyya);

- *Criminals* are members of Mafia-type structures, syndicates or gangs, as well as counterfeiterers, smugglers or pirates. Their core activities may include robbery, fraud, blackmail, contract killing or illegal (mostly transborder) trade (e.g. in weapons, drugs, commodities, children and women);

- *Mercenaries and private security companies* are volunteers usually recruited from third states who are paid to fight in combat units or for to conduct special tasks on their own. They can serve different masters, ranging from the army of a state to warlords who promise them rewards;

- *Marauders* by contrast are demobilised or scattered former combatants who engage in looting, pillaging, and terrorising defenseless civilians during or after the end of a violent conflict.

The relations these actors have with the state generally based on force do not rule out completely the dialogue because it may provide a feeble balance in certain given times. This sort of dialogue forced the Serbian state, under international pressure, to address military organizations of the Kosovo Albanians during the Kosovo crisis (1995-1999). Under similar circumstances, the Russian Federation dialogued with the political organizations of the Tchetchen separatists. It is clear that challenges to the dominance of the Westphalian state have become more prevalent as the state itself has become increasingly deficient. The implication of both the relative and absolute decline of the state is that those involved in national and international security in the 21st century will need to understand the threats from violent non-state actors.

There are other interesting ideas of those who believe that the *world public opinion* can fit into a new type of a stakeholder for the system of international relations. This hypothesis starts from the

study and the research of the attitude the public opinion had in many European and Arab countries to the war of Iraq in the spring of 2003²⁷⁵. The existence of this reality beyond the political or media discourse is doubtful. As an actor in the world political arena, the public opinion is an illusive media construct, without a material correspondence in the actual reality. To invoke such an international “player” that nobody can see but can only hear helps those who wish to manipulate the information consumers from the media environment. It is a smoke screen that hides the real stakeholders who avoid to come forward when they challenge or disagree with a certain type of politics or action in the international relations.

The public opinion as an international “player” in the international relations is not a singular example. *The international community* has become a household pattern lately and it has been used when either no mention is made of the states joining a military intervention that has no UN endorsement, or their legitimacy is rather doubtful. It is most interesting to review the status of this type of player especially when the communication process in international politics comes under scrutiny²⁷⁶. Understanding the role and the place these “players” have is very important in the analysis of the communication process in interest conflicts from a certain geopolitical region. On the way to a truthful communication process and not to an exercise of manipulation, misinforming and intoxicating process, amongst other conditions that must be fulfilled, the media message has to be clearly assumed by a stakeholder who is at least “visible” if not legitimate. In fact, we are dealing with the construction and reconstruction of the public opinion via the media. The media must act as the watchdog of democracy but things do not happen that very often. In the geopolitical debate and mainly in conflicting situations the unbiased media principles are overruled by the journalist’s embedding with the “good” or the “bad” side. Bella Mody identified the watchdog role at the gates of democracy,

²⁷⁵ Noam Chomsky, *cit. work*, pp. 188-204.

²⁷⁶ Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *cit. work*, *passim*.

which “*is conventionally understood in the context of domestic news coverage, in which reporters bring institutional corruption to light of public scrutiny*”²⁷⁷. He contrasted the watchdog role with that of journalism in mobilizing consciences, defined as “*establish[ing] identification with victims in another part of the world, in cultures that are often mysterious to the media consumers*”²⁷⁸. Although the watchdog guards adverse positions, winning hearts and minds imply the cooperation with government elites.

Analyst Steven Livingston pointed out that the media influenced deeply the foreign policy process, even in the early 1910²⁷⁹. Former US Defense Secretary James Schlesinger, for example, argued that in the post-Cold War era the United States decided to shape its foreign policy in response to the “impulse and image”. “*In this age image means television, and policies seem increasingly subject, especially in democracies, to the images flickering across the television screen.*”²⁸⁰ In a recent study, he added, “*important geopolitical realignments have occurred since the end of the Cold War. The US is now challenged with new economic and cultural powerhouses and the rise of networked non-state actors. It is not simply a matter of realignment among nation-states, as the original CNN effects research noted, but also realignment between the type, scope and scale of actors involved in global governance. Rather than confining the argument to a consideration of media*

²⁷⁷ Bella Mody, *Geopolitics of Representation in Foreign News: Explaining Darfur*, Lanham, MD:Lexington Books, Rowman and Littlefield, 2010, p. 47.

²⁷⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁷⁹ Steven Livingston, *Clarying the CNN Effect: An Examination of Media Effects According to Type of Military Intervention*; in “Research Paper” R-18 June 1997, Harvard College on line, <http://tamilnation.co/media/CNNeffect.pdf>, accessed on 24 August 2010, 21.00.

²⁸⁰ Steven Livingston, *Clarying the CNN Effect: An Examination of Media Effects According to Type of Military Intervention*; in “Research Paper” R-18 June 1997, Harvard College on line, <http://tamilnation.co/media/CNNeffect.pdf>, accessed at 24 August 2010, 21.00.

effects on state policy processes, this article argues that important technological and political developments call for a new research path, one that centres on the relationship between governance and the nature of a given information environment"²⁸¹. No matter what perspective we take to look at things it is obvious that the researcher or the scholar of the international relations definitely cannot afford to overlook the media role in the neoclassical geopolitics.

2.2. The space dimension and the actors' geopolitical behavior in international politics

People are more and more interested to know and particularly to understand what happens in different areas of the globe. Walter A. McDougall, a professor of international relations at the University of Pennsylvania underlined the fact that today's world reached such a dynamic stage that it became more and more difficult for us to understand the evolution trajectory from different regions with their specific *inner mechanisms* only by employing classical geography or history²⁸². We must have the capacity to "read" the constant-changing maps in order to understand the web of relations among different stakeholders in different regions. Trudy J. Kuehner, agreed with Professor McDougall, but he showed that the persistent usage of the classical methods of geography and geopolitics in order to understand what is happening today was totally wrong²⁸³. The space

²⁸¹ Idem, *The CNN effect reconsidered (again): problematizing ICT and global governance in the CNN effect research agenda*, in "Media, War & Conflict", on line, <http://mwc.sagepub.com/content/4/1/20.abstract>, accessed at 20 November 2011, 21.00.

²⁸² Walter A. McDougall, *You Can't Argue with Geography*, in "The Newsletter of FPRI's Wachman Center", on line. <http://www.fpri.org/footnotes/065.200009.mcdougall.cantarguegeography.html>, accessed at 20 November 2011, 21.00.

²⁸³ Andrew Matsuk, *Perceptual and real spaces in geopolitics*, in "Almanac Geopolitics", no 4., 30.04.200, Epoch September, p. 11.

image designed by geographical tools and methods differ fundamentally from the geopolitical method. For example, in the Black Sea extended area, earthquakes and other climate phenomena happened. They altered the physiognomy of the Romanian space to a certain extent but these alterations did not affect Romania's geographical position in the least. The political earthquake produced by the collapse of the USSR and other communist regimes of the area definitely altered the geopolitical positioning of the states from this area, including Romania. The border conventionally termed as the Iron Curtain disappeared from the geopolitical map of Europe and the term "eastern Europe", used during the Cold War lost its meaning with it. There are various ways to relate places/space to human communities. Geopolitics, as a scientific branch, that helps us to remember the political dimension of state, is a useful tool for analyzing foreign policy. Territories, states and geographical locations are linked together, because "*all states are territorial and all foreign policy strategizing and practice is, at least to some extent, conditioned by territoriality, shaped by a geographical location, and informed by a certain geographical understanding of the world*", as Gearoid Ó Tuathail stated²⁸⁴.

Henceforth, a stakeholder's role in the geopolitical space equation is extremely important. To actually know the international world means to understand the stakeholders' behavior, their attitude towards space and the space relations according to their position in the geopolitical field – centre/periphery²⁸⁵. According to P.F. Sheldrake, "*The concept of place refers not simply to a geographical location but to a two dimensional relationship between environment*

²⁸⁴ Gearoid Ó Tuathail, Understanding Critical Geopolitics. Geopolitics and Risk Society, in Colin S. Gary and Geoffrey Loan (eds) Geopolitics – Geography and Strategy, London and Portland: Frank Cass, p. 109.

²⁸⁵ See the works of the seminar *Geography of the Information Society*, in Italy, February 2005 in <http://www.ssc.msu.edu/~igu/InfoSocItaly.doc>, Nina Czegledy, *Spatial Perceptions-Spatial Politics*, in <http://rixc.lv/reader/txt/txtphp>.

and human narrative”²⁸⁶. *We create places by giving them meanings*”. Therefore, we can say that politics creates *places* and *places* create politics. This is a circle of political development²⁸⁷. Central and Southeastern Europe, the west Balkans are as many linguistic al constructions that have their own geopolitical value only in a certain context and at several stages in time. The “East” as a geopolitical region disappeared at the end of the Cold War, but it has been replaced by “Central Europe”. There is a multitude of explanations for these changes. From the perspective of the geopolitical interests, the real answers are quite obvious. Certain political stakeholders from the political scene want to be “separated” from others who differ from them. In the interest debate, each player involved has a certain type of perception/representation of the respective space and wants to impose it on the others²⁸⁸. As a result, it is very important to know both the mechanisms that structure these spaces, the forms they take and the ways they are perceived by analysts and politicians. This perception closely connects to the „reading grid” used to understand a map. The map was, and still is, a relatively „*accurate report of what is [out] there, [because] representations and the world are understood as one*”²⁸⁹. However, maps are also inherently rhetorical and belong to the art of persuasion just like rhetoric is understood as persuasive communication. ‘*Maps are a graphic language to be decoded*’²⁹⁰.

Analyst Stuart Elden, concluded that we need to grasp/comprehend the concrete and the abstract together in the endeavour to

²⁸⁶ P.F. Sheldrake, *Spaces for the sacred place, memory and identity*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press; 2001, p. 1.

²⁸⁷ Minna Rasku, *On the Border of East and West. Greek Geopolitical Narratives*, Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy/philosophy, University of Jyväskylä, Publishing Unit, University Library of Jyväskylä, 2007, p. 31.

²⁸⁸ Nina Czegledy, *cit work.*, in *cit. city*.

²⁸⁹ John Agnew, *Geopolitics. Re-visioning world politics*, London and New York: Routledge, 1998, p. 15.

²⁹⁰ *Ibidem*.

understand space because the human space and the human time are dualistic. Half of them incorporate elements from nature (concrete, palpable, perceivable) while the other half is abstract (produced by the human mind). Therefore, space must be viewed in geopolitics from three perspectives: *the perceived, conquered and inhabited space*²⁹¹. This pattern of interpretation leads to a unity of the physical, mental and the social space²⁹²:

- ***Spatial practice***, a physical geographical reality of the material concrete where concrete human action is possible and so is the behavior of states that interact to attain/impose their interests in a certain region.

- ***Spaces of representation***, a geographical reality represented by maps, sketches, Croquis, accepted as logic instruments in planning the human activity;

- ***Representations of space***, the imagined/ perceived space with the social, political or religious philosophical concepts that have no support in the physical reality.

It is very important to avoid mistaking these stages when we operate with spaces of interests and sovereignty in the geopolitical analysis. Man is a being organically related to the physical and geographical environment and as a result, the geopolitical action develops in a concrete space and this space will always lead to the virtual space, which is a social construct. According to the young researcher Minna Rasku „*a modern state has produced a place for itself in two discursive ways: with the ideas of national sovereignty for the outside and national law for the inside. Physical places are made ‘real’ in political debates and the purpose of this is to make them ‘natural’ for the audience. Reality also can be presented with maps, symbols, statues, speeches, and different kinds of festivals.*

²⁹¹ Stuart Elden, Henri Lefebvre and the Production of Space, on line, <http://www.gradnet.de/papers/pomo98.papers/stelden98.htm>, accessed at 11 December 2010.

²⁹² *Ibidem.*

*Symbols like these are part of territorial iconography and daily social practise*²⁹³.

A non-state state/stakeholder will turn to a geographical space to secure its access to resources of any kind and it will compete with others. This competition may confront it with architecture of ideas supporting a political regime that is opposed or incompatible with its values. Symbols like these are part of the territorial iconography and the daily social practice. It is difficult to assume that the US will cooperate with a totalitarian state to ensure stability in South-east Asia. Analysts/ statesmen will monitor and research the stakeholders' dispute/ cooperation in the geographical or virtual space and will represent it graphically, iconographically or even under the format of video pictures. These representations will contain the knowledge and information of political, historic, social, economic, spiritual nature with a certain symbolism²⁹⁴. From this point of view, it is very difficult to identify instances when we follow a geopolitical analysis or a manipulation and disinformation using the geopolitical propaganda as its sub carrier.

The geopolitical value conferred by the physical-geographical characteristics of space (natural resources, strategic points to control transportation networks etc.) or those acquired through man's economic intervention or even assumed to characterize geographical/virtual *space* has a very important role in the guidance, the hierarchization, and the intensification employed by stakeholders to claim their interests at a certain point, as well as the type of adopted behavior either conflicting or cooperating in its relation to other players in that space.

The classical geopolitics studies researched only the physical and geographical space, that territorial perimetre where the natural environment supported human life and activity and where the state could function. The disputes among states concerned mainly the

²⁹³ Minna Rasku, *cit. work*, p. 20.

²⁹⁴ Stuart Elden, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

conquest or the control of new territories. The European continent's history of the last two centuries has been marked by such confrontations and the space representations were their outcome²⁹⁵. The information technologies, the expansion of the Internet and the mass-media globalization allow a stakeholder to control a space of great interest without being "physically" present. It will occupy the mental space of representations belonging to human communities from the region/area of interest. The internet expansion and the generalization of the information systems will affect the very nature of relations among the international environment actors. We are already using terms like *e-government*, *e-diplomacy*, *e-commerce* etc. These phenomena will leave their mark on geopolitics too.

The players of the classical geopolitical phenomena were differently attracted by one region or another in the world, according to the priority of the interests they promoted. Fifty years ago Ion Conea noted the fact that the world's political map had "*points and regions of maximum and minimum political interest*". He defined the former as "*regions of intense political life*", and the latter areas those where "*the political rhythm of the planet is rather slow*"²⁹⁶. The well known Romanian analyst and theorist of the 1940s mentioned a few such regions of "*friction or convergence of interests and disputes*": the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea and the Pacific Ocean²⁹⁷. If we take Ion Conea's method as the starting point, these areas of friction or convergence of interests can be easily identified today around the great deposits of energy resources and strategic hubs that ensure their transport towards the big consumers. The deep crisis from the Gulf area and the dispute over the control of oil routes from the Caspian

²⁹⁵ See, Ernest Weibel, *Histoire et geopolitique des Balkans de 1800 a nos jours*, Ellipses, Paris, 2002; Klaus Dodds and David Atkinson, *Geopolitical traditions. A century of geopolitical thought*, Routledge, 2000; Constantin Hlihor, *Geopolitics and geostrategy*.

²⁹⁶ Ion Conea, *cit. work*, in *cit.city*, p. 59.

²⁹⁷ *Ibidem*.

Sea are two of the multiple interest areas for the stakeholders of the international environment actors after 9/11 2001²⁹⁸.

The conflict or convergence of the players' interests in a space of resource supply does not stem from these needs only; we must consider all the interests starting from the security arrangements and ending with the spiritual values and symbols. Henceforth space has to be approached in geopolitics from different and multiple points of view that correspond to the main categories of interests and the type of relations among the actors from the system of international relations.

In this way, classical actors are sovereign and control the *political space* from this point of view and they compete or cooperate in an *economic space* to impose their own system of political, moral, cultural values in a *spiritual space*. When the art of compromise fails and interests can no longer be achieved by *soft power*, the actors use *hard power* in a *geostrategic space* as a last option. These space configurations are a reality of the international system if „*two or more actors have enough contact and impact over others so that they behave as part of that space*”²⁹⁹. These configurations of space are the result of the actors' interaction and not part of a geographical continuum. The political geography of Central Asia, for example, contains five states in the area. In the geopolitical configuration of this space, other strategic players may come from other geographical regions, such as the USA, the EU, Japan or China. This fact proves that the representation that we have

²⁹⁸ See, Gore Vidal, *Blood for Oil*, *The Nation* 275, no. 14 (28 October 2002); Michael T. Klare, *Oiling the Wheels of War*, *The Nation* 275, no. 11 (7 October 2002); Michael T. Klare, *For Oil and Empire? Rethinking War with Iraq*, *Current History* 102, no. 662 (March 2003), pp. 129-35; Greg Palast, *OPEC on the March: Why Iraq Still Sells its Oil à la Cartel*, *Harper's Magazine* 310, no. 1859 (April 2005); Howard Zinn, *A Chorus Against War*, *The Progressive* 67, no. 3 (March 2003), apud, Darel E. Paul, *The Siren Song of Geopolitics: Towards a Gramscian Account of the Iraq War*, in *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 2007; 36; 51, on line <http://mil.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/36/1/51>.

today of the international system has to be updated. We represent our international politics as a world³⁰⁰ or global³⁰¹ system, which gives us the image of a continuum and of homogeneity. If we could accept the fact that several geopolitical networks emerge, connect, intersperse or revive according to the interests stakeholders have in different geographical areas of the planet then the most proper representation is the one launched by John Burton as a „network of networks”³⁰² in the 1980s.

According to the types of strategies that stakeholders adopt in order to impose their interests in the geopolitical space, this net of „networks” which is the international world, can assume a specific configuration perceived from at least three points of view:

- The political-diplomatic cooperation space;
- The symbolic/media space;
- The space of conflict.

Some stakeholders consider that in modern geopolitical studies attention must focus on the geographical evolution as well as on the

³⁰⁰ See Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. New York: Academic Press, 1976; Chase-Dunn, Christopher and Peter Grimes, *World-Systems Analysis*, in “Annual Review of Sociology”, vol. 21, 1995, pp. 387-417; Walter L. Goldfrank, *Paradigm Regained? The Rules of Wallerstein's World- System Method*, in “Journal of World-Systems Research”, Vol. 6, no. 2, 2000, pp. 150-195.

³⁰¹ See, Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, Newbury Park, 1992; Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Minneapolis, 1996; Tony Spiby, *Globalization and World Society*, Cambridge, 1996; William Greider, *One World, Ready or Not: The Manic Logic of Global Capitalism*, New York, 1997; Malcolm Waters, *Globalization*, London, 1995; Ulrich Beck, *What is Globalization?* Cambridge, 2000; John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture* Chicago, 1999; James Mittelman, ed. *Globalization: Critical Reflections* London, 1996.

³⁰² Apud, David J. Dunn, *John Burton and the Study of International Relations: An Assessment*, in “The International Journal of Peace Studies”, on line, http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol6_1/Dunn.htm, accessed at 23 April, 2010, 19.00.

impact they have on the environment changes, the population transformations and even the climate³⁰³. Very important for future geopolitical evolutions is the positioning of water and food resources³⁰⁴. From this perspective, geopolitical analysts operate with a *demo-political space*³⁰⁵.

According to the transformations resulted from the globalization process in the contemporary society, we consider that we can understand better the geopolitical phenomena if we study space as a contradictory process of homogenization and fragmentation. Homogenization leads to the apparition of *integrative spaces* such as the Schengen Space. Fragmentation results in a multitude of *sovereignty spaces*³⁰⁶. Understanding the role these spaces or space elements play in the interest disputes or rivalries that involve stakeholders in the contemporary geopolitical space, allows analysts to correctly review the political and military crises and shape the possible solution for crisis management.

In geopolitics, space is a place of competition for stakeholders but it does not automatically involve an aggressive/conflicting behavior. The classical military use of force is more often dismissed and considered as a last resort to promoting one's own interests. John Burton came to this conclusion when he stated that „*On the grounds of communication needs, power is important. When a system is completely integrated, by perceiving and classifying information, by reacting and supporting the control with feed-back, and when through this process it can change its purposes and is able to adapt*

³⁰³ Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, p. 399; John A. Pickles, *History of Spaces. Cartographic reason, mapping and a geo-coded world*, London: Routledge, 2004; *Géographies anglo-saxonnes: tendances contemporaines*, Paris, 2001.

³⁰⁴ Jim Heron, “*Population Politics and the Shambles of Africa*” in <http://catholiceducation.org/articles/population/pc0005.html>; Henry Kissinger, “*The Over-population cabal*”, in “*Mindszenty Report*”, Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation, April 1999, www.mindszenty.org.report/1999/April1999.html.

³⁰⁵ Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, pp. 399-405.

³⁰⁶ *Ibidem*.

to change, power is allotted little importance regardless how important it is in a certain time in history"³⁰⁷.

The opinions about the postmodern space structure are extremely diverse. They are influenced by theoretical paradigms that support the research tools as well as the thinking trend of the international relations theory that are present in the academic world at a certain point in time. Daniel J. Elazar noted, "*There seem to be two principal ways in which people approach the study of the organisation of space, either by examining cores and their peripheries or by examining boundaries and what is included within them*"³⁰⁸. The opinions of the well-known American politologist are the bases not only for international relations but also for other socio-humanistic scientific branches, including geopolitics.

The political space was the subject of different and intricate analyzes of geopolitics in the XXth century. The political space contains areas that belong to, or are under the jurisdiction of a specific political authority³⁰⁹. Sovereignty characterised basically the political space, and the recognition of this characteristic by stakeholders led to the political borders between the states³¹⁰. Each state is unique in its territorial configuration. From Robert Gilpin's point of view, the world history starting with the Westfalia Treaty (1648) was a period of state domination in the international environment. The stability or instability of the system of international relations depended on the

³⁰⁷ Apud Martin Griffiths, *cit. work*, p. 185.

³⁰⁸ Apud Martin Hall, *On the Morphology of International System: Political Space as Structure and Process in Early Medieval Europe*, Center for European Studies at Lund University, in <http://www.cfe.lu.se/upload/LUPDF/CentrumforEuropaforskning/cfewp27.pdf>, accessed at 10 September 2010, 19.00.

³⁰⁹ Timothy W. Luke, *Fixing Identity, Fabricating Space: Sovereignty and Territoriality After the Cold War*, on line <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/tim/tims/Tim382.PDF>, accessed at 10 September 2010, 19.00.

³¹⁰ Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, pp. 30-31.

existence of a state that exercised its political and economic hegemony³¹¹. The power accumulated by a state to become a hegemony during the preindustrial era was related to the extent of its sovereignty space and especially its natural wealth³¹².

In the industrial era, the control over space was important for the sale of goods and for capital investments. A direct connection did not exist but it could not be ignored. The nation-state reached its climax in the XXth century and sovereignty over a given territory became its utmost feature³¹³. The absolutization of relations established in a real manner between individuals/communities and space was an error for the XXth century geopolitician. Influenced by the naturalist Ch. Darwin, F. Ratzel fell in the same intellectual trap and so did his followers who said that the individual/state was a living organism tied to land, fighting for a space of its own³¹⁴. This idea was the foundation for the politics that promoted Nazism, which in turn used the propagandistic cartography of geopolitics.

The idea according to which people feel better “at home”, for instance, does not fit to those who act for the non-state players (transnational corporations, international political movements, international terrorist groups etc.). It cannot be applied either to migrating people who establish on the territory of other states.

From the point of view of the basic interests promoted and defended by a stakeholder, the *political space* unites the *sovereignty space*, marked by borders and represented by the state as the clas-

³¹¹ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 15; apud Martin Griffiths, *cit. work*, p. 35.

³¹² Martin Hall, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

³¹³ John Agnew, *The New Global Economy: Time-Space Compression, Geopolitics and Global Uneven Development*, Center for Globalization and Policy Research, School of Public Policy and Social Research, UCLA, Working Paper no. 3, 2001, p. 6.

³¹⁴ See Claude Raffestin and colab., *cit work.*, pp. 29-75; Simion Mehedinți, *Antropogeography and its father, Friedrich Ratzel*, Bucharest, 1904; Ilie Bădescu, Dan Dungaci, *cit.work*, vol. I, pp. 48-52.

sical stakeholder. The *control space* is a sovereign space belonging to one or several actors where the predominant stakeholder in the international power equation thrusts its political view. Typical examples in this case were the ancient Rome and its client states or the spheres of influence that resulted after the Second World War. While political geography focused its analysis mainly on the political territorialism, expressed primarily by the state, the classical geopolitical theory space in itself matters as much as the space relationships among states and the control they exercise through their institutions over the economic, social and spiritual space. The state has the legitimacy to manage “*a part of the globe surface belonging to a human group in order to ensure its own reproduction and satisfaction of personal needs*”³¹⁵. Borders mark this space. This is one of the reasons why borders have been an item as old as the questions of the relationships among different human communities³¹⁶. It occurred in the Old Testament, in the ancient epics of Greece or Italy and accompanied the medieval, modern and contemporary history of states. Today, the borders issue is discussed frequently under the impact of globalization, especially in Europe, which is experiencing an important process of “*structuralization and remodeling of political spaces in forms that either transcend the nation-state’s sovereignty matrix or break it into smaller entities*”³¹⁷. According to Stuart Elden „*While borders are less important in some places, such as within much of Europe, in others they continue to be crucial. The US-Mexico border, the external border policing of Europe, and the Israeli wall in the West Bank are only the most striking examples of the continual importance of borders*”³¹⁸.

³¹⁵ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 160.

³¹⁶ Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, pp. 32-37; John Williams, *A new Politics? Borders, Diversity, and Justice in the English School*, in <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/polis/englishschool/papers.htm>; Noralv Veggeland, *Neoregionalism: Planing for Devolutio, Democracy and Development*, in <http://www.hil.no/biblioteket/forskning/forsk52/52ut.htm>.

³¹⁷ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 161.

The definition, the role, the classification and the functions of the border have known a wide variety of interpretations. They have been approached from a political geographical, sociological, geopolitical point of view etc. Henk van Houtum from Nijmegen Centre for Border Research, Radboud University, The Netherlands noted that „*a boundary generally means the socio-spatially constructed differences between cultures/ categories and a border generally stands for a line demarcated in space*”³¹⁹. In addition, A. Pozdneakov believed that “*the border is a fact, a geopolitical reality and will exist as long as the states exist*”³²⁰. Ilie Bădescu, professor of sociology at the Bucharest University and his assistants reached the conclusion that the border became a phenomenon that “*expresses all processes of historic expansion of a people, civilization, religion, ideology or empire*”³²¹ in the contemporary world. For Cohen too, the community was a mental construct, which was subjective and symbolic, but the consciousness/knowledge of a community rested in the perception of its boundaries. These boundaries can also be conceived to exist in the minds of the owners, and, according to Cohen, “*the boundary may be perceived in rather different terms, not only by people on opposite sides of it, but also by people on the same side*”³²²

Nowadays, we can speak not only about the states borders, but also about the civilizations, religions, ideologies frontiers that characterized the XXth century. For the five decades of the Cold War, Europe lived with the “Iron Curtain” as a border that separated

³¹⁸ Stuart Elden, *Territory without Borders*, in “Harvard International Review”, on line, <http://hir.harvard.edu/territory-without-borders>, accessed at 12 February 2010, 20.00.

³¹⁹ Henk van Houtum, *The Geopolitics of Borders and Boundaries*, in “Geopolitics”, 10:672–679, 2005, on line, <http://ncbr.ruhosting.nl/html/files/geopoliticsborders.pdf>, accessed at 14 February 2010, 20.00.

³²⁰ E.A Pozdneakov, *cit. work*, p. 51.

³²¹ Ilie Bădescu, Dan Dungaciu, *cit. work*, vol. I, p. 1.

³²² Apud, Carmen Llamas, *Convergence and divergence across a national border*, on line <http://www.york.ac.uk/res/aiseb/Llamaschapter.pdf>, accessed at 15 February 2010, 21.00.

a group of states belonging to the communist ideology from a different democratic group, both positioned on the same continent, a fact that prompted Samuel Huntington to invoke a border between civilizations³²³.

From a geopolitical point of view, the border is a relation between at least two states/stakeholders. Everything referring to borders can be included in a state's vital interests because it concerns directly its own security³²⁴. The geopolitical space, and consequently the frontier, must bear a process of huge pressure stemming from the globalization phenomena and from the revival of older or newer theories on the diminishing role of the state in the political organisation of a community. Some researchers consider that this type of political construction has a definite future by modernizing and transforming itself, in spite of the fundamental changes the postmodern society is experiencing. For example, Richard Lee Hough stated, "*the nation-state is the core unit of order in an interconnected world. There is nothing to replace it. Its disintegration invites lawlessness.*"³²⁵ Paul Gottfried concluded that the violent denial of the nation-state is a severe political error of our times. Even more, he added that the threats that challenged the citizens' freedom and democracy at the beginning of the XXIst century did not come from the jingoistic attitudes. The fight against this ideology is a false problem conceived by globalist supporters. In a speech delivered at the University „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” of Iași, in June 2010, he identified one of the threats against human communities: „*The homogenous universal state levels nations, sexes and communities till disappearance.*” In his opinion, this type of

³²³ Pascal Bruckner, Samuel Huntington ou le retour de la fatalité en histoire, in “Esprit”, November 1997.

³²⁴ E. A. Pozdneakov, *cit. work*, p. 55.

³²⁵ Apud Paul Gottfried, *Analysis of Richard Lee Hough's work, The Nation-States: Concert or Chaos*, in “The Independent Review”, Volume 9, Number 3, Winter 2005, online <http://www.independent.org/publications/tir/article.asp?a=514>, accessed at 1 February 2009, 21.00.

state, promoted alarmingly by all mediums from politicians to academics „*now is the danger that replaced Hitler, Stalin, Ceausescu and other recent tyrants. If the older tyrant marched against national enemies or mobilised masses against the so-called «enemy classes», the new enemy covers the whole human kind in order to re-educate it. I do not know what is more dangerous: the tyrant that deprives us of our lives or the one that deprives ourselves of identity and tradition. I'd rather do not deal with any of them.*”³²⁶ In this type of state „*the Europeans should see themselves not as members of ethnic or historic nations but as citizens of a generic democracy. This democracy resists or elapses with the universal human rights even if in this type of system, immigrants are sometimes considered «more equals» than the inhabitants. From this point of view, the association with a country is relevant only for a linguistic match.*”³²⁷

Arie M. Kakowitz, professor of international relations at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem noted the fact that a new fashion, almost a ritual generated attacks against the Westphalian state and the international system after the end of the Cold War. The question that Arie M. Kakowitz asked himself was „*has the state become obsolete and has finished its historic mission?*”³²⁸ Starting from this question, he analyzed the impact on the national state made by factors acting beyond the national borders that are not discouraged by the decisions of national governments. He identified four factors: the global environmental crisis, the development of a world international civil society, the growing economic and financial interdependencies and the intensification of transnational connections.

³²⁶ Constantin Hlihor, *End of the nation state and national identity or a solution crisis?* On line
http://istorie.ucdc.ro/7.%20Revista%20PDF%20files/AUCDCI%202%20Website/9_Hlihor.pdf, accessed at 15 February 2011, 22.00.

³²⁷ *Ibidem.*

³²⁸ Arie M. Kakowicz, *Regionalization, Globalization, And Nationalism: Convergent, Divergent, or Overlapping?* Online, http://www.nuso.org/upload/articulos/3513_2.pdf, accessed at 12.05.2010, 19.00.

He concluded, “*All pose a current challenge to the state system and obviously erode state sovereignty, changing the nature of the state and its functionality. But do erosion and challenge mean necessarily obsolescence? Do the forces of globalization and regionalization lead to the neutralization of nationalism and the irrelevance of the nation-state?*”³²⁹ The complex phenomena and processes that affect a plethora of opinions and theories quoted to support these ideas made Arie M. Kakowitz conclude, “*The answer is not clear. It is evident that regimes and governments (as representing states) are under stress, civil societies are contesting state roles, and citizens everywhere are turning away from their active support for their states in the direction of alternative foci of loyalties and identities. Yet, alternative forms of governance domestically, internationally, and transnational coexist with the state system; they have not replaced it.*”³³⁰

A great international relations analyst and political expert, Stanley Hoffmann, referred to the role of the nation state and he noted, “*As a result, nation-states – often inchoate, economically absurd, administratively ramshackle, and impotent yet dangerous in international politics – remain the basic units in spite of all remonstrations and exhortations. They go on ‘faute de mieux’ despite their alleged obsolescence.*”³³¹ The Greek diplomat Georgios D. Poukamis, ambassador of the Hellenian Republic to Romania believed that „*Globalization did not abolish the nation-state and this will not happen. On the contrary, we are crossing a period in a world of multiple poles where the USA are the peak of the pyramid without a domineering role being surrounded by the European Union, China,*

³²⁹ *Ibidem.*

³³⁰ *Ibidem.*

³³¹ Stanley Hoffmann, *Obstinate or Obsolete? The Fate of the Nation-State and the Case of Western Europe*, in Brent F. Nelsen et Alexander C. G. Stubb (dir.), *The European Union: Readings on the Theory and Practice of European Integration*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998, p. 159.

Russia, etc. The result is not the end of history, although conflicts exist, especially within civilizations."³³²

On the other hand, we must underscore the fact that the globalization process from economic to cultural and the integration of the European nations has influenced deeply the political thinking and has modified the state construction theory. From this point of view, I believe that it is quite natural for historians and political experts to consider that the nation-state has „exhausted” its resources and must look for its replacement. Great historians have reached the conclusion that „*the national idea, as we know, has contributed to the formation of the modern states of the XIXth century but has become harmful in the XXth century, which is the stage of excess of these ideas.*”³³³ *These analysts question the nation state’s ability to adapt to evolutions in the international or cultural public space. In the new century it is possible to see the apparition of new identity matrix and essential transformations in what we call national consciousness*³³⁴.

It is not the state’s disappearance, but its upgrading that will give a new meaning to sovereignty and to the conditions under which it will evolve. The state will continue to exercise its attributions and competences according to the transformations imposed by questioning processes accepted by the population through the democratic exercise. Those that will be implemented more efficiently in the citizen’s interest will pass to transnational or regional bodies³³⁵. This is the main trend, most visible in Western

³³² Interview published by the „Ziarul Financiar” newspaper, online <http://www.zf.ro/ziarul-de-duminica/interviu-georgios-d-poukamisasambasadorul-republicii-elene-mondializarea-nu-a-desfiintat-statul-natiune-si-nici-nu-se-va-intampla-acest-lucru-4993176>, accessed at 12 October 2010, 19.00.

³³³ Alexandru Zub, *cit. work, cit. city*.

³³⁴ See A. Smith, *National Identity*, in „Penguin Books”, 1991; Michael Zurn, *cit., work in cit. city*; Timothy V. Luke, *cit. work, in cit. city*.

³³⁵ Christian Philip, Payanotis Soldatos, *Au-dela et en deça de l’Etat-nation*, Bruxelles, Bruylant, 1996, p. 288.

Europe because Eastern Europe experienced contradictory developments – the emergence of new national states on the ruins of the former federations (Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia) and the former Soviet empire.

Frontier drawing that marked the identity of new political spaces of sovereignty on the political map of Europe after the Cold War influenced the identity of new sovereign political spaces of the new Europe and generated crises and military conflicts of such proportions that endangered both Europe's security and the whole world stability³³⁶. If in Western Europe the problem of classical borders is fluid, even transparent or nonexistent – such as the *Schengen Space* – in the east and southeast the border between the new states has been a never-ending source of debates, crises and wars, with only few exceptions.

Under the circumstances where the optimal frontier can be the one widely open to the circulation of individuals, goods and values sovereignty, prosperity and stability are predominant in several spaces³³⁷. Nevertheless, the fluidization phenomena and the disappearance of borders in Europe will continue to be a regional reality unless an economic balance is reached among different sovereign spaces and stability becomes the foundation of the new security architecture. One proof of that is the fact that the border of the Schengen Space is less open to free circulation of people, goods and

³³⁶ Constantin Hlihor, *End of the Nation State and national identity or a solution crisis?* On line

http://istorie.ucdc.ro/7.%20Revista%20PDF%20files/AUCDCI%202%20Website/9_Hlihor.pdf; Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1995; Bruce Kapferer, *Legends of People/Myths of State: Violence, Intolerance, and Political Culture in Sri Lanka and Australia*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988; James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, *Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity*, in "International Organization", no. 54, vol. 4, Autumn 2000, pp. 845-877.

³³⁷ Strausz-Hupé, *cit. work*, p. 121.

values, for the states of East and South-East Europe as well as for other less developed areas.

The geopolitical control spaces have taken the shape of the spheres of influence in the modern and contemporary era. They represent a way relations develop among major and minor stakeholders in the system of the international relations. The term *control spaces* is not used anymore in diplomacy, mass-media and we cannot overlook the fact that we are witnessing a process of “deterritorialization-reterritorialization”³³⁸ in vast regions of the world, directly influenced by the dispute over the interests of strategic stakeholders, states and non-state players. In this process, the power rivalry and the interest disputes are not as intense as in the period of the Cold War and are not displayed with the same means used in the second half of the XXth century. For this reason, their “presence” in the mass media is not so large or clear.

From a geopolitical point of view, all stakeholders are basically engaged in the power rivalry. In the context of the international financial crisis, both classical and new stakeholders strongly defend their national, political, economic, financial interests, but, as Marcel Merle noted, not all states have the capacity to be real players³³⁹. In this rivalry, some of them become a field of confrontation/ understanding among the great powers while others turn out to be items of dispute even for non-state players. Great trading companies use all types of pressure over weak governments to gain fiscal and commercial advantages that do not fall into the pattern of the free market laws³⁴⁰. The deterritorialization process made the rivalry among the great powers and the fight for a geopolitical control to move away from the political and strategic control of some geographical areas

³³⁸ Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, p. 49.

³³⁹ Marcel Merle, *Les acteurs dans les relations internationales*, Paris, Economica, 1986, p. 105.

³⁴⁰ John Prados, *President's Secret Wars CIA & Pentagon Covert Operations Since World War II Through Iranscam*, William Morrow & Co, 1988, *passim*.

considered as essential for the financial spaces. The historic evolutions in Europe and the whole world seem to confirm this hypothesis.

In the history of Europe, the XXth century witnessed tough disputes among the great stakeholders over the spheres of influence. In the wake of the second World War, the European predominant states in the power equation – Germany and USSR – divided the influence spaces according to their own interests in the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact (23 August 1939)³⁴¹. The winners usually establish their spheres of influence according to their major interests at the end of the conflict when the power equation has changed significantly. The former British secretary for foreign affairs Anthony Eden, stated clearly as early as 1943: *“There are two possible ways to try to level Europe after the war. On the continent, we have our influence pole, the Russians in the East and us, the British, in the West and the Americans in the West”*.³⁴² In October 1944, after a *“genuine carpet-like negotiation”*³⁴³, Churchill and Stalin divided the spheres of influence according to the well-known percentage agreement. Thus, in April 1945, Stalin had all the reasons to declare during a conversation with the Yugoslavian delegation led by I. B. Tito, *“This war does not resemble the past war. Anyone who occupies a territory imposes his own social system on the others. Each one imposes his own social system to the point his army stops”*.³⁴⁴

The end of the Cold War and the fall of the “Iron Curtain” put an end to the spheres of influence designed after the Second World

³⁴¹ See Florin Constantiniu, *Between Hitler and Stalin – Romania and the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact*, Bucharest, 1991; Valeriu Florin Dobrinescu, *Diplomatic Battle for Basarabia, 1918-1940*, Iași, 1991; Constantin Hlihor, Ioan Scurtu, *The Red Army in Romania*, Iasi, Oxford, Portland, 2000.

³⁴² Apud D. F. Hatchet, G. G. Springfield, *Ialta. Agreements for 50 years*, București, 1991, p. 5.

³⁴³ See, Ioan Chiper, Florin Constantiniu, Adrian Pop, *cit. work*, p. 14; Ioan Scurtu, Constantin Hlihor, *Complot against Romania (1939-1947)*, Iași, 2011, pp. 171-172.

³⁴⁴ Ioan Chiper, Florin Constantiniu, Adrian Pop, *cit. work*, p. 8.

War. The disappearance of bipolarism led to a new balance of power in different regions of the planet including Europe. The shift came with the US new role assumed to manage the global security issues. The emergence of the European Union introduced a strong element of novelty in the European and global geopolitical balance. The American influence in several areas of the globe seemed to be decisive for the time being. A well-known specialist in international matters, John Ikenberry, pointed out that the American Administration established a strategy in order to “*maintain a unipolar world where the United States has no equal rival*”³⁴⁵. Quite a number of researchers think that the American power has taken a downturn and it may even become a “*factor of international disorder, maintaining a state of uncertainty and conflict where they can*”³⁴⁶. The experience of the international life has proven that the USA, the EU and China are currently the stakeholders who can definitely influence the trajectory of political and economic events regionally and globally where other emerging states from Latin America and Eurasia such as the Russian Federation and Turkey, or non-classical players like NATO cannot be left out.

The selective expansion followed by NATO and the European Union eastwards seems to confirm the renewal of the much-debated inter-war buffer zone between the Soviet Union and the Western democracies. This geographical space belonged to certain states located between the two hegemony, powers/stakeholders. None of them exerted their political control and influence openly and directly. The diplomatic parlance and the political analysts’ contemporary studies define this area as a *grey space*. Today this is neither a conflict nor a cooperation space. It is a changing space, and it is hard

³⁴⁵ G. John Ikenberry, *America’s Imperial Ambition*, in “Foreign Affairs”, September-October, 2002, in

<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20020901faessay9732/gjohn-ikenberry/america-s-imperial-ambition.html>. accessed at 12 October 2010, 19.00.

³⁴⁶ Constantin Hlihor, *Geopolitics...*, p. 174.

to say who and how will control such territories where great strategic interests meet rich energy resources.

After the Cold War, the fight for the *control space* moved into the financial domain. As Benjamin J. Cohen from the Department of Political Science University of California at Santa Barbara remarked: „*Monetary relations, too, have become conflictual and hierarchical*”³⁴⁷. When some states can no longer control the trajectory and quantity of the currency that circulates in their sovereign spaces for a number of reasons, they become dependent on some major centres of power such as the IMF and the World Bank and on great private financial corporations, as well. As a result, the monetary universe becomes ever more stratified, assuming the appearance of a vast Currency Pyramid – narrow at the top, where the most competitive currency dominates and increasingly broad down to its base, reflecting countless degrees of competitive inferiority. When asked about the consequences that these layers may have for the geopolitical debate, Benjamin J. Cohen answered, „*At present, one currency stands head and shoulders above the rest – the U.S. dollar, familiarly known as the greenback. The dollar is the only truly global currency, used for all the familiar purposes of money – medium of exchange, unit of account, store of value – in virtually every corner of the world. From its dominant market share, the United States gains significant economic and political advantages. The question is: Can the dominance of the dollar be challenged*”³⁴⁸? That was not an easy reply. Today, the dollar is by far the only currency with a real global circulation, used for the regular functions of any money- an exchange device, a value unity, a store of value – basically in every corner of the world. The euro comes second after a huge gap. The question is what will happen in ten to twenty years time? Quite a

³⁴⁷ Benjamin J. Cohen, *The geopolitics of currencies and the future of the international system*, Paper prepared for a conference on The Geopolitics of Currencies and Oil, Real Instituto Elcano, Madrid, 7 November 2003, on line, http://www.polsci.ucsb.edu/faculty/cohen/recent/pdfs/Madrid_paper.pdf, accessed at 28 September 2010, 15.00.

³⁴⁸ *Ibidem.*

few people predict the fall of the dollar and the rise of the Chinese Yuan³⁴⁹. According to some Chinese geopolitical specialists, the financial rivalry could follow three scenarios at least³⁵⁰: the US dollar stays the ruling global currency; the emergence of a multi-global currency system; the circulation of a supranational currency in the international environment. These scenarios are not merely hypothetical theories for the geopolitical evolution of the contemporary world. In the summer of 2009 China's central bank governor Zhou Xiaochuan proposed the creation of 'a super-sovereign reserve currency' patented after the IMF's Special Drawing Rights (SDR) as a way to diversify the monetary world against the US dollar. Zhou's proposal to reform the reserve currency was received positively by Russia, the developing world, the United Nations, and some IMF officials³⁵¹.

On the other hand, Jürgen Stark, a member of the Executive Board of the European Central Bank, underlined that „*the international monetary system after Bretton Woods was characterised by flexible exchange rates between the most important currency blocks. The system only moved into disequilibrium as a result of the growing economic weight of emerging economies that have kept their exchange rates at artificially low levels via massive accumulation of reserves. At the same time, expansionary economic policies in some advanced economies, on account of the massive capital inflows from emerging*

³⁴⁹ See, Barry Eichengreen, *Exorbitant Privilege: The Rise and Fall of the Dollar and the Future of the International Monetary System*, Oxford University Press, 2011; Yiping Huang, *The future of the international currency system and China's RMB*, in East Asia Forum, on line, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2010/02/28/the-future-of-the-international-currency-system-and-chinas-rmb/>, accessed at 10 December 2011, 08.30; M. Mastanduno, *System taker and privilege taker: U.S power and the international political economy*, *World Politics*, vol. 61, 2009, pp. 121–154.

³⁵⁰ Yiping Huang, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

³⁵¹ Daniel W. Drezner, *Will currency follow the flag*, in “International Relations of the Asia-Pacific”, Volume 10 (2010) pp. 389–414, on line, <http://danieldrezner.com/research/IRAP.pdf>, accessed at 10 December 2011, 09.30, doi:10.1093/irap/lcq008, on line.

economies, were the flip-side to the build-up of imbalances”³⁵². He concluded that the challenge posed by financial globalization before the traditional Westphalian model of monetary sovereignty, “*leads to the conclusion that the financial globalization will generate new forms of geopolitical rivalry among contemporary governments*”³⁵³.

The French geopolitician launched the theory of the *demopolitics space* starting from the assumption that the major challenge for regional/global security will not be political but demographic³⁵⁴ in the future. A comprehensive demographic change happened in the last 50 years and in the next 25 years; this will generate important global, regional and local challenges to the leaders of the XXIst century. The consequent new threats and conflicts will produce a new approach to the relation between Strategy and Demographics. According to Hervé Le Brás, “*The Demographic demon will change the Atomic demon*“.³⁵⁵ The analysis of the demo political space is part of the *critical geopolitics*. Classical geopolitics did not operate with the demographic space. It only reviewed the number and the quality of the troops that a state could call under arms. What mattered most was the control/conquest of the geographical space – the „Hearthland”; the “*Rimland*”; the „*Chess board*” etc. – without taking into account whether the population wanted it or not³⁵⁶. Central Asia is a space of great interest for the world’s major stakeholders because of its rich energy resources.

³⁵² Jürgen Stark, The future of the international monetary system – Lessons from 1971 for Europe and the world in light of past and present experience, on line, <http://www.bis.org/review/r110512c.pdf>, accessed at 10 December 2011, 09.20.

³⁵³ Apud, Jürgen Stark, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

³⁵⁴ Gerard Dessouy, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

³⁵⁵ Apud, João Vieira Borges, *A Demografia e a Estratégia: uma prospectiva para o século XXI*, in “*Revista Militar*”, n°2-3/99, Lisboa, 1999, on line, <http://isanet.ccit.arizona.edu/archive/borges.html>, accessed at 10 December 2011, 10.00.

³⁵⁶ M.E. Ahrari, James Beal, *The New Great Game in Muslim Central Asia*, in “*McNair Paper*”, no. 47, January 1996, on line, <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA421825>.

The greatest concerns for one stakeholder or another in this area are the ways they are perceived by the population of this geopolitical region of great interest for the strategic players.

The local population's attitude towards the presence of one strategic stakeholder or another in the interest areas is important and relevant for *critical geopolitics*. At a time of a real obsession with population movement, migrants and vast metropolitan areas erase the former borders and unseat the nation-state from its position of a central political entity of the international contemporary environment. In 2050, Asia's population will add one more billion people and they will inhabit 50 post urban spaces with 20 million inhabitants each³⁵⁷. Experts did not hesitate to announce the city or even the street geopolitics³⁵⁸. The American military analyst Geoffrey Demarest from the Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, KS, projected that there would be non-classical players from financial to organized crime, who would oppose the state's legitimate power³⁵⁹ in the near future.

The great urban settlements of Latin America face a social-political behavior of certain human groups that may be associated to the geopolitical style action. The dramatic events produced by *hurricane Katrina* proved that things could get out of control even in the case of the most sophisticated and developed superpower. Criminal gangs started a real guerilla war against the New Orleans

³⁵⁷ Nathan Gardels, *Global Order Change*, Antet Printing House, Bucharest, (f.a.), p. 135.

³⁵⁸ See, Robert A Beauregard, *Voices of Decline: The Postwar Fate of U.S. Cities*, 2nd edition, Routledge, New York 2003; Jennifer S Light, Urban security: From warfare to welfare, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol. 26, no. 3, September 2002, pp. 584-561; Timothy W. Luke, Everyday techniques as extraordinary threats: Urban technic structures and non-places in terrorist actions», in Graham, Stephen (ed.), *Cities, War and Terrorism: Towards an Urban Geopolitic*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2004.

³⁵⁹ Geoffrey Demarest, *Geopolitics and Urban Armed Conflict in Latin America*, in "Small Wars and Insurgencies", vol. 6, no.1 (Spring 1995).

police. Only the intervention of the federal army could bring the situation back under control³⁶⁰. The disappearance of the geopolitical confrontation of the bipolar equation during the Cold War, unfortunately, did not mean the end of the geopolitical rivalry. It only meant its sophistication or its passage into a different type of challenges. Demographic disparities are just one of the elements that highlight these assertions. Population does not have the same growing ratio all over the surface of the Earth. Almost 95 per cent of the expected population growth will happen in the poorest areas of the globe – India, China, Central America and Africa³⁶¹. Developed societies, recorded only a slight rise or fall of the population number, as in the case of France, Italy and Japan. The planet's wealth, and what is most important, its intellectual capital – scientists, universities, research and development institutes – are all situated in demographically stable societies. The young societies (60 per cent of Kenya's population is under 15 years old) lack resources. They are underdeveloped, undereducated with high violence rate³⁶². The collapse of Rwanda and Somalia offer a „sample” of what may happen in the regions where population exceeds resources of food and the infrastructure is worse than in the beginning of the XXth century. According to Paul Kennedy, this gap can mean lines that separate the south of Europe from the north of Africa, the Slavonic populations from the non-Slavonic populations of Asia, and Australia from Indonesia³⁶³.

As specialists estimate, millions of people live in some poor areas and their lives depend on the emergency humanitarian aid provided by the *World Food Programme*. In the mid-1990s about 40

³⁶⁰ Curt Weldon, *The Geopolitics of Katrina*, www.freerepublic.com/focus/ft/t-foreign/br; Stephen Zunes, *Hurricane Katrina and the War in Irak*, in *The Progressive Response* 6 September 2005, vol. 9, no. 19.

³⁶¹ João Vieira Borges, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

³⁶² *Ibidem*.

³⁶³ Paul Kennedy, *Overpopulation disequilibrium the planet*, in Nathan Gardels, *cit. work*, p. 149.

million people were in the UN care UNO³⁶⁴, and their number exceeded 60 million in 2002. Statistics show that for these areas, the operations cost for emergency food assistance have continually grown without any improvement of the problems resulting from poverty and underdevelopment³⁶⁵. If these gaps are not covered, and if some false perceptions about “north’s guilt for the impoverishment of the “south”, are not overcome then we might witness the apparition of a “geopolitical precipice” that may end into a permanent war. Apologists of terrorism bring such arguments to their supporters and they succeed to convince them in most cases that the population of the famine-affected areas make a recruitment base for the Al-Qaeda terrorists³⁶⁶. Aboubacrim Ag Hindi, professor at the Bamako University Mali, noted that “*it’s famine and not religious beliefs or ideology that determine these people to enrol in terrorist organizations*”³⁶⁷.

Even in the early 1960s, Gaston Bouthoul warned, that an accelerated population growth, accompanied by a development crisis could lead to the apparition of aggressive tendencies and war stirrings for some communities³⁶⁸. The review the events for the recent years highlighted the fact that it was not violence that

³⁶⁴ Mark W. Charlton, *Famine and the Food Weapon: Implications for the Global Food Aid Regime*, in “The Journal of Conflict Studies”, Volume XVII, no. 1, Spring 1997, on line, <http://journals.hil.unb.ca/index.php/jcs/article/view/11736/12493>, accessed at 19 June 2010, 15.00.

³⁶⁵ Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, *Food Security and Political Stability in The Asia-Pacific Region*, September, 1998, on line http://www.apess.org/Publications/Report_Food_Security_98.html accessed at 19 June 2010, 15.00.

³⁶⁶ See *Al-Qaeda capitalizing the Somalia famine as fertile territory to gain more support using cash*, on line <http://www.latestcnnnews.com/al-qaeda-capitalizing-the-somalia-famine-as-fertile-territory-to-gain-more-support-using-cash.html>, accessed at 19 June 2010, 15.00.

³⁶⁷ *Famine not fanaticism poses greatest terror threat in Sahel*, on line, <http://www.africafiles.org/printableversion.asp?id=6826>, accessed at 19 June 2010, 16.00.

³⁶⁸ Gaston Bouthoul, *La Surpopulation*, Payot, Paris, 1964, p. 48.

characterized the massive population settlements, but their tendency to leave their living area. The problem of legal and illegal migration will be the focus of geopolitical and geostrategic analyzes³⁶⁹. There is nothing new about it and the factors that generate it are similar to those of the last century migration. Contemporary migration is characterized by high dynamics and reduced time of travel from one place to the next. The UNO statistics show that about 175 million people migrate and 145 million people became immigrants after leaving their country of origin and 30 million have become “foreigners in their own country” after the collapse or disintegration of certain states such as the USSR or FSR Yugoslavia. Out of the total number of immigrants, 86 million have no constant job; they live under poor conditions and cannot afford health insurances³⁷⁰.

On the other hand, the economic globalization that challenges the political borders, the role of the national state in the management of social or environmental matters and the universal debate over the human rights will produce changes in the classical relationship between natives and aliens. Which is going to be the degree of tolerance / intolerance on both sides? The association to the migration process of some very complex phenomena, such as terrorism, may unleash crises of viable solutions for the European governments under extreme situations. Shall we witness a new proximity space geopolitics? Traditionally, the states borders were political-territorial delimitations; today, the economic or cultural border may hardly overlap the political-territorial borders.

³⁶⁹ See, Gorgi Pkhakadze, *Geopolitics of migration*, in *Geopolitica*, no. 1(5), year IV, 2005, pp. 63-78; Sabina Zaccaro, *Libya Poses Immigration Challenges to Italy*, on line, <http://globalgeopolitics.net/wordpress/2011/04/04/libya-poses-immigration-challenge-to-italy/>, accessed at 23 March 2011, 20.00; Demetrios G. Papademetriou, Doris Meissner, *New Migration Thinking for a New Century*, Migration Policy Institute, on line, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/14/38295367.pdf>, accessed at 19 June 2010, 16.00.

³⁷⁰ Gorgi Pkhakadze, *cit. work*, p. 66.

Another important element of the space demographic dimension in geopolitics is the quality of the work force, its price, people's education, and last but not least, mentalities and stereotypes that characterize the population of a certain geographical area, which may interest greatly a classical or non-state stakeholder. As a result, geopolitical disputes and rivalries for supremacy on a cheap labour market among non-classical players must be considered. The analyzes focused on the population quality operate with Human Development Index (HDI)³⁷¹. The HDI is a composite index aggregating three basic dimensions into a loose standard based on information provided by each country. A report is published once a year. The 2010 HDI used data and methodologies about the income amount, education and health that were not available in most countries. The Gross National Income per capita replaced Gross Domestic Product per capita, to include income from expeditents and international development assistance, for example. The analysis of these figures showed that there was a higher degree of attractivity for investors in countries where the education level of the labour force was very high and salaries quite low.

We must not overlook the mentalities and the stereotypes that outline *the Other's image*. The attitude towards the *Foreigner* was important to asses the tolerance degree of the local community for players that come to that area. This analysis element was left out completely by classical geopolitics studies³⁷². Neither Mackinder nor Mahon or Spykman mentioned the relations between the stakeholders who intended to control the Heartland and the population of this space. The crisis of the Central Asia, the Middle East and Latin America prove that a very thorough knowledge of the local history, mentalities, and traditions characteristic of the populations of a geopolitical field is required.

³⁷¹ UNDP Releases 2010 Human Development Index, on line <http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/PR3-HDR10-HD1-E-rev4.pdf>, accessed at 23 March 2010.

³⁷² See, Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *The Frustrations of Geopolitics and the Pleasures of War: Behind Enemy Lines and American Geopolitical Culture*.

The economic space is a vital element in the analysis of the stakeholders' behavior in the geopolitical field to understand the changes produced by the world globalization and regionalization. Some scholars concluded that the ideological rivalry was substituted by the economic rivalry³⁷³, after the end of the Cold War, and so the centre of gravity moved from the military strategy to the economic interests. No modern economy can be constrained within the state border. Henceforth, classical players – states in most of the cases – no longer clash among themselves through financial or commercial non-state actors. Transnational corporations exercise an important influence on the economic, national, regional, sub regional and international economic exchanges. As a result, the political borders have lost their self-sufficient character of the last century.

More and more often the question arises whether a line can be drowning between the domestic and the foreign affairs, between micro and macro economy in the current economic space when the economic interdependence is reviewed. The economic space is perceived today as a “world without frontiers”³⁷⁴.

The economic rivalries grew during the 1990s and the beginning of the following century but some experts considers that the world is crossing a global transition. Edward N. Luttwak thinks that we are witnessing a transition from “*the political world characterized by interstate international reports to a world of business that ignores the present borders.*”³⁷⁵

³⁷³ Deborah Cohen, Neil Smith, After Geopolitics? From the Geopolitical Social to Geoeconomics, in “Antipode”, Vol. 41 No. 1 2009 ISSN 0066-4812, pp 22-48, on line, <http://neil-smith.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/aftergeopolitics.pdf>, accessed at 12 May 2010, 20.00.

³⁷⁴ Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, p. 175.

³⁷⁵ Edward Luttwak, *From Geopolitics to Geo-Economics: Logic of Conflict, Grammar of Commerce*, National Interest, Summer 1990, apud, Hans Kundnani, *Germany as a Geo-economic Power*, in “The Washington Quarterly”, 34:3, pp. 31-45, on line, http://www.twq.com/11summer/docs/11summer_Kundnani.pdf, accessed at 16 May 2010, 20.00.

The world of tomorrow will be differently shaped than the world of yesterday, which was not conditioned by transfrontalier economic interactions and centred on the sovereign political space. In the scramble for resources, military strategies will replace commercial strategies, financial power will substitute the armed power and the financial stock exchanges will equal the military bases. In the words of the renowned American analyst Edward N. Luttwac, the “logic of conflict” will replace the “grammar of commerce”³⁷⁶. What actually happens is a shift from a geopolitical to a geo-economics centre of gravity. Today geo-economics is a worldwide phenomenon representing a new competition space. It is also a method of analysis of the international actions of the most important powers. In a world where they seek new spaces of manoeuvre, the geo-economics approach offers a reading grid indispensable for the international relations.

In a globalized economy, geo-economics leads geopolitics, and the economic diplomacy is the main tool for geoeconomics. As a result, people watch the main economic geostrategic determinants, the movement of the power centres at world level, the main financial and trade flows, the acrimonious battle for resources hidden behind diplomatic games, the great opportunities, the perspectives and risks in the world economy. It is a feasible task through a smart upgrading of the present and future geoeconomic assets, of the geo-economy, of the description of the strategies used in this domain as well as the necessary steps required by the business development and internationalization. The characteristics of present international relations highlight the importance of geo-economics for the development of world economy and the role of strategies and tactics developed with them and used for space expansion and business globalization.

From this perspective, the economic space seems to become a priority in the interests debate and certain analysts concluded that we actually witness a transition from geopolitics to geoeconomics

³⁷⁶ *Ibidem.*

in the international relations³⁷⁷. From the classical geopolitics point of view, the economic space is perceived as a dispute over the control of the supply/outlet “markets“ and of the transportation routes. The vital interests for the prevailing stakeholder of the XXth century – the state – linked to the control of *economic spaces*. When the freedom of movement and the access to raw strategic materials was debated, they led to the worst conflicts and crises. When the oil shock of the 1970s proved how dependent the West had been on the oil production from the Middle East and the Persian Gulf area the US adopted the Gulf into its space of a military and political interest from its foreign policy³⁷⁸. The Iraq invasion of Kuwait panicked the West in August 1990. The White House administration reacted and forced Iraq to withdraw its army from the occupied territory. Thus, for the first time since the Gulf had been considered a distinct interest area for the American politics, the impact factor on security was no longer the Soviet danger, but the events likely to threaten the West’s oil supply from the Gulf. Security interests and energy safety determined the USA and Great Britain to lead the overthrow of Saddam Hussein’s regime in the spring of 2003.

The economic space in contemporary geopolitics and geostrategy has developed a more integrating feature. It joins the supply “market”, raw materials and energy, with a very intricate network of consumption goods production and their distribution and a highly dynamic financial system³⁷⁹. The nature of the debated / convergent interests is the one that identifies the contemporary economic space at a certain point. The major stakeholders have always confronted one another about the control of the raw materials natural deposits because of their asymmetrical distribution over the globe. The essential contribution of diminishing resources, essential for the economic prosperity of a large number of states/other players and the danger of the emergence of new hurdles in the trading flows of

³⁷⁷ Ibidem.

³⁷⁸ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, pp. 173-174.

³⁷⁹ Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, p. 174.

these resources, turned the safe access to such resources into a major objective. According to Thucydides, 2 500 years ago, the causes of conflict between the inhabitants of the Thasos islands and the Athenians were the misunderstandings regarding the exploitation of a certain mine³⁸⁰.

In the modern and contemporary world, the problem of raw materials and food resources is even more important. The access to these resources and their control has seriously upset the balance in the international relations system. Strategists and politicians view resources as a strategic asset, a target in conflicts or an instrument of war³⁸¹. In recent years, a series of vital raw materials – non-ferrous (platinum, molybdenum, titanium etc.), energy sources (especially fossil fuels) and a part of cereals (such as wheat) – have become levers of pressure and constraint available for some stakeholders of the international life³⁸². On the 4th of January 1980, President J. Carter decided to impose an embargo on the wheat exported to the USSR to sanction the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Later on, the embargo was also used against a series of countries during the crisis of the Persian Gulf and the former Yugoslavia.

The geoeconomic space is also influenced by the control over drinking water and the food resources³⁸³. A special situation emerged in some area from the Gulf region. The dams Turkey built on the Euphrates river (the Ataturk Dam) stirred concern in the entire region. Even if some analysts believe that the geopolitics of water in the Middle East is mere fiction³⁸⁴, pertinent information and facts certify that water has become a “weapon” for those who use it as a means of political pressure. According to Paul Michael Wihbey and

³⁸⁰ Apud Peter H. Gleick, cit. work, in cit. city, p. 190.

³⁸¹ Thomas C. Schelling, *Strategy of conflict*. Translation by Elena Burlacu and Ruxandra Toma, Integral Printing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 24.

³⁸² Marenches, *Atlas Géopolitique*. Paris, Editions Stock, 1988, p. 115

³⁸³ Constantin Hlihor, cit. work, pp. 175-176.

³⁸⁴ Jan Selby, *The Geopolitics of Water in the Middle East: fantasies and realities*, in “Third World Quarterly”, vol. 26, no. 2, 2005, pp 329-349.

Ilan Berman „*In the year 2000 the Israeli-Syrian negotiations conducted under U.S. auspices in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, as well as the subsequent ad hoc summi between Syrian President Assad and U.S. President Clinton in Geneva in March, failed primarily because of conflict over water. Despite initial indications of rapprochement, Assad’s insistence on gaining control over water sources in the Golan Heights, on access to the eastern headwaters of the Jordan River and on legal rights to the waters of Lake Kinneret (Sea of Galilee, Lake Tiberias), doomed the negotiations. Why? Because throughout the Middle East climate change, population growth and escalating rates of consumption are making water a critical determinant of foreign policy and national security. Water has become a key element in the balance of power between Syria, Israel, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey at a time when other geopolitical issues between them have gained greater force than ever*”³⁸⁵.

In the geoeconomic space, the unfair use of natural resources crippled the interests of some players leading to possible tension. Energy may offer the best example. In the industrialized countries, the energy consumption per capita is seven times higher than in the developing countries. In the cases of rich countries versus poor countries, the gap is enormous. The great routes for oil and coal transportation of today are relevant and clearly show that a stakeholder’s sovereign space becomes an economic space for another³⁸⁶ in some cases. Older and more recent events that happened in the Caspian Caucasian area that made the headlines of the main international dailies – the Russian-Ukrainian energy dispute – may confirm the fact that the geopolitical rivalries of today are more and

³⁸⁵ Michael Wihbey, Ilan Berman, *Geopolitics of Water*, Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies, on line, p. 76.
<http://www.iasps.org/strat10/strat10.htm>.

³⁸⁶ Constantin Hlihor, *Security Policy in the Contemporary International Environment*.

more related to the control and the transport of energy resources towards the great consumers. It is also proven that rivalries can no longer be solved by the old paradigm described by Clausewitz. *The strategic advantages and gains will not necessarily be as in the last century the result of military confrontations as neither the loss of strategic positions in vital spaces for different powers will not determine them to come to war in order to win them over*³⁸⁷.

One of the features of the current stage is the fact that states are today's main stakeholders that populate the *entire world political space*, but actually just a *fraction of the entire economic space*³⁸⁸. That is the result of a huge technological gap dividing the classical stakeholders, the states, and basically of the unprecedented growth of non-state players' economic role, especially of the transnational corporations. In 2007, 167 of the largest 500 companies in the world were based in North America, 184 were based in the European Union, and 64 in Japan. Non-state players have become the main competitor against the state in the world system because of the rise of interdependencies and of the capital volume, according to public statistics of the year 2007. From 1970 to 2000 the number of transnational corporations (TNCs) grew from some 7,000 to 55,000. The revenues of the largest first 200 TNCs amounted to more than that of 182 of the world's countries, or 80 percent of the world's population³⁸⁹ income. The aggregation of capital seems to be a characteristic of the contemporary world. Some of these companies

³⁸⁷ *Idem*, *Geopolitics of energetic resources and the God Ares's Trophy*, in "Observatorul Militar", no.1, Jan., 2005, on line, <http://www.presamil.ro/OM/2006/01/10.pdf>, accessed at 18 May 2010, 20.00.

³⁸⁸ Raymond Lotta, *World Economy and Great Power Rivalry: The Challenge to U.S. Global Dominance*, in Global Research, August 2005, on line, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=9747>, accessed at 19 May 2010, 21.00

³⁸⁹ Richard D. Smith, *The Role of Economic Power in Influencing the Development of Global Health Governance in "GLOBAL HEALTH GOVERNANCE", VOLUME III, No. 2 (SPRING 2010), ON LINE* <http://www.ghgj.org>

have a transnational index of over 90 per cent. Such is the case of Seagram Company based in Canada or the oil company Petroleum of Venezuela³⁹⁰. Some of these companies exceed the size of several national economies. For example, Mitsubishi is larger than the economy of Indonesia and General Motors surpassed the Danish economy³⁹¹. This trend became more obvious in the commercial and financial space that started to globalize even before the end of the Cold War³⁹². In 2001, for instance, 70 per cent of the economic space represented finance and trade³⁹³. Quite a few researchers considered that this was not a positive thing for the world economy. Emmanuel Todd believed that an economy may turn unproductive by “sterile” activities for the goods consumption when the financial branch surpassed the commercial one³⁹⁴. Gerard Dussouy explained that this fact might allow great financial actors create new instruments to poison the real/productive economy³⁹⁵.

The economic space is governed by the coexistence of classical and non-state stakeholders. In some cases, this coexistence can be positive and can lead to mutually beneficial cooperation. In other cases, it may end up in competition or even conflict, a situation where specific weapons of the economic or the trade war – import restrictions, taxes, embargoes – and financial levers come into force³⁹⁶. The stakeholders’ interest for the access or the control of

³⁹⁰ Company Histories & Profiles: The Seagram Company Ltd., on line, <http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/The-Seagram-Company-Ltd-Company-History.html>.

³⁹¹ Constantin Hlihor, *Geopolitics and geostrategy*, p.176.

³⁹² Charles- Albert Michalet, *L'economie mondiale en 1980: vers l'eclatement du systeme centre-peripherie*, revue tiers monde, tome XXI, no. 81, janvier-mars 1980, pp.77-85; A. T. Kearney, *State of the Space Industry: 1998 Outlook* (Bethesda, Md.: Space Publications, 1998), p. 9.

³⁹³ A. T. Kearney, *cit. work*, p. 11.

³⁹⁴ Emmanuel Todd, *Apres l'Empire: Essai sur las decomposition du systeme americain*, Paris: Editions Gallimard, 2002, pp. 118-127.

³⁹⁵ Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, p. 181.

³⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 128.

an economic space is not given only by an area's natural potential but also by the *capacity* of this space to absorb foreign investments, by the training level of the labour and goods market, by the communication network and by the relation between the domestic and the international markets³⁹⁷. The method of the country risk probes into the economic climate and the interest or the lack of it for a certain region. A scale from 1 to 100 covers five risk classes: A, B, C, D, E. The risk degree is proportional to the number of points³⁹⁸. Countries such as Japan, the USA, and Germany are credited to have a very low risk and countries with a high number of points place in the class with a risk rate of 100 per cent. Interest drops in areas with a high country risk because the so-called expenses for the commercial economy expansion cannot be recovered in such spaces. Through the process of expansion, the prevailing economy belongs to powerful stakeholders that control the economic spaces of secondary actors. A marginalization process comes out of it where *redistributive sub economies* develop³⁹⁹. In T.K. Hopkins's opinion, powerful states develop metropolitan spaces while the weak states start and develop peripheral processes for the former⁴⁰⁰. This way, the economically less developed spaces depend on developed countries without any gain. The same T. K. Hopkins noticed that the actors from the domineering economies usually created types of companies and subsystems in great economic and commercial blocks – ALENA, EU, and ASIA – in their fight for supremacy⁴⁰¹. These economic regions gravitate around a “hegemonic” stakeholder, such as the USA, Germany, France and Japan.

³⁹⁷ See part VII, *The Economic Frontier*, by Ilie Bădescu, Dan Dungaciu, *cit. work*, pp. 59-104.

³⁹⁸ *Politic economy*, Economic Printing House, Bucharest, 1995, p. 27; Charles Goldfinger, *La geofinance*, Paris, 1986, pp. 103-145.

³⁹⁹ Ilie Bădescu, Dan Dungaciu, *cit. work*, pp. 70-71.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 70.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibidem*, p. 77.

Inside these regions/blocks, universe-economy develops with a centre and a periphery⁴⁰², which means ambivalent and cooperative relations but also, conflicts of interests. Under certain circumstances, this will lead to the emergence of geopolitical rivalry while the capacity to adapt to globalization challenges will be smaller at the periphery. This fact does not mean that the dominant relation is cooperative and not conflictual; the EU is one of the most relevant examples. This prompted certain analysts to conclude that we already witness a certain type of economic modelling based on the theory of “self centration”⁴⁰³.

Geopolitical rivalry may become more obvious in the relationships among the centres of these economic blocks. The public opinion has become familiar with notions that belong to military strategy and not to the marketing logic: the textile war, the steel war, the car war etc. At level of the global economy, the “triad” is the *Centre*, and the rest is the *Periphery*. In the world economy, the differences between the centre and the periphery are striking. The EU and the USA exports value in the world commerce total about 45 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively, while Africa equals only 2 per cent⁴⁰⁴. From this perspective, possible geopolitical tensions and rivalries from the centre towards the periphery may lead to crises. Obviously, Marxist economists will not fit them into the logic pattern of the Cold War era but they cannot be completely discarded with the rejection of the Marxist model. Energy resources are located at the periphery of the world economy and the *Triad* bears a harder and harder pressure from newcomers that seek the status of great powers – China, the Russian Federation, and also other states such as India or the *Islamic world*, difficult to define in classical terms but more and more analyzed, nonetheless. Certain actors may not be left out altogether in the dispute to control the energy and food providing regions,

⁴⁰² *A History Lesson with Fernand Braudel*, translated by Maria Pavel, Corint Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002, pp. 147-148.

⁴⁰³ Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, p. 198.

⁴⁰⁴ Gyula Csurgai, *cit. work*, p. 5.

as well as the water resources. Neither can be the reactions / strategies that these actors have in the disputes of interests. Their technological, imagological, financial inability may push those to solutions that do not match the logic and expectations of the Western military.

The spiritual space in the contemporary geopolitical phenomena bears the marks of a particular culture. Scholars often refer to the European, the Asian, or the Oriental civilization without mentioning the precise border that separates them. If borders mean *political isobars* that separate two populations in the case of the political space, the cultural borders are totally different⁴⁰⁵ and cannot be traced accurately because the demarcation lines from different cultural and civilization spaces are changing constantly. Interconnection is a natural process for all times, cultures and civilization matrixes. Mircea Eliade noted, “*These borders do not involve any depreciation of the realities that start beyond them. They just show us that beyond them there is a different world, a world that is not anymore ours.*”⁴⁰⁶ Inside a civilization, history marked numerous power lines and sometimes only, a few privileged areas because the world organized in human collectives did developed unevenly from one region to another⁴⁰⁷. There have always existed spaces characterized by protochronism, with forces that anticipated the new lines of historic development for hundreds or thousands of years. This was the case of the Greek and the subsequent Roman civilizations, and later on the Islamic civilization in the Middle Ages, and the Western civilization for the modern age and the Euro Atlantic civilization for our times.

These forces have the forms of fundamental *psihomental* units, able to take over the world leadership and to imprint the direction, the rhythm and the organization frameworks of individual and

⁴⁰⁵ Mircea Eliade, *Against despair*, volume by Mircea Handoca, Humanitas Printing House, Bucharest, 1993, p. 154.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁰⁷ See Ilie Bădescu, *Time and culture*, Bucharest, 1988, pp. 164-265; Joseph K.Zecbo, *Les Identités culturelles africaines*, Genève-Afrique, 1985, pp. 7-23.

collective life. Such psihomental processes were the Renaissance, humanism, pre renaissance nationalism, individualism, illuminism, materialism, historicism, utilitarianism, intellectualism, liberalism and socialism (Marxism). These conglomerates shaped an era because their core was made of social forces (classes, categories, groups etc.), capable of imposing their own interests, feelings and mental structures – that is the whole range of sentiments, concerns, wishes, ideas and representations – on their historic time⁴⁰⁸. The political space of a certain people/group of peoples at the border or inside these religious or ideological spiritual spaces molded along its own power lines. Rome, for example, placed its “sealed” territories beyond its political borders, outside its sovereignty space. A great example was the Romanization of the Geto-Dacians. The vast geographical areas in Burebista’s kingdom, such as the historic regions of Maramureș, Bessarabia, and a part of Muntenia, did not belong to the Roman Dacia but the Romanization process was consistent as the usage of the unitary Romanian language proved.

In this example the prestige and the force of the Roman civilization and the vitality of Christianity, the new religion born within the Roman Empire acted forcefully. Undoubtedly, Christianity as well as other great religions of the Middle Ages influenced profoundly the European political space. In those times, local Romanian princes defined their entire political and organisational legitimacy by the titles they assumed; the rulers’ self entitlement formula symbolised the whole political and organization structure of the state. “*I, Stephen, prince of the entire Country of Moldavia by God’s mercy...*” substituted free and democratic elections of the modern times. The Catholic crisis made way to great ideologies, to those “*psihomental units*“ as Professor Ilie Bădescu calls them⁴⁰⁹ or

⁴⁰⁸ Ilie Bădescu, Geopolitics and religion – Religious Insurrections in the XXth century Euxinian Insurrection in “Euxin Review of sociology, geopolitics and geohistory”, no. 1-2/1997, pp. 19-21.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 19.

“*historic blocks*” according to G. Sorel⁴¹⁰, which totally altered the structure of the European medieval political space.

In modern Europe, “*a new order that operated as a limited constraint in the world*”⁴¹¹ emerged, which was in fact a world global structure, a great congregation with a certain unity in its great diversity from Vladivostok to California. Professor I. Bădescu noted, “*Beyond these aspects, there is a type of pragmatism in America, of utilitarianism in England, of hedonism combined with Cartesians (intellectualism) in France, of individualistic rationalism combined with bismarkist practicisim in Germany etc. This great positivist conglomerate awaits an unconditioned acceptance, a religious-like belief in its postulates from a billion people out of which six hundred millions live between the Elba and California*”⁴¹². Geopoliticians have correctly noticed the influence *panideas* have in conjunction with other forces, in molding the political space of one or several stakeholders⁴¹³. R. Kjellen and later K. Haushofer developed the *panideas* research producing a decisive break in geopolitics classical approaches. K. Haushofer believed that “*the new methods of nature science are capable of explaining the character and laws of external world which can be successfully used to understand society*”⁴¹⁴. From such statement, the well-known geopolitician’s false belief resulted that the object of geopolitics was “*to induce the masses with the real image of the world with the help of the elite*”⁴¹⁵.

The *panideas* review, as well as the movement of civilization and landmarks of culture in the human history (with its well-known ebb and flow) is important in geopolitical theory because the

⁴¹⁰ G. Sorel, *Reflexion sur la violence*, Cf. Ilie Bădescu, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*, p. 38, note 9.

⁴¹¹ Ilie Bădescu, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*, p. 22.

⁴¹² *Ibidem*.

⁴¹³ See Ilie Bădescu, Dan Dungaciu, *cit. work*, vol. II, pp. 129-151; 240-333; Claude Raffestin, Dario Lopreno et Ivan Pasteur, *cit. work*, pp. 77-128.

⁴¹⁴ Issiah Berlin, *A contre-courant*, Albia Michel, Paris, 1988, p. 347.

⁴¹⁵ Apud Claude Raffestin, Dario Lopreno et Ivan Pasteur, *cit. work*, p. 128.

objective of the great cultures and civilizations has always been a yearning for expansion⁴¹⁶. The state/states or other actors of the contemporary geopolitical developments tend to use, among other tools, the cultural matrix as a subcarrier to impose their own political structures or economic rule in a space. Among the first thirty-two geopolitical characteristics considered by analyst Geoffrey Parker⁴¹⁷ as typical of the dominated state in the cultural-spiritual field was the control of the “*sacred places*” of culture and a thrust of economic, political and cultural levelling. Henceforth, the geopolitical model of domination conceived by the American analyst at the end of his study of the political, economic and spiritual behavior of the Ottoman empire, Spain, Austria, France and Germany in the XIth-XIXth centuries, reviewed the possible interaction between two cultures where one of them was predominant (central) and the other was dominated (peripheral).

Without promoting autarchy in the Romanian spiritual life, Mihai Eminescu criticized tendencies of transforming the Romanian spiritual and cultural space into a periphery of the Western civilisation. In a brief history of the way the Western civilization was introduced in Romania, after the second half of the XIXth century, the national poet concluded that “*a custom has spread to think nothing out of a personal initiative and to walk like the blind following the fence, sticking to foreign books that mostly in the moving realm, always differ from the nation’s economy and have only a relative value of stemming from the reflections over some states of facts, completely different from ours*”⁴¹⁸. In an article published in June 22nd 1882, Mihai Eminescu was amazed by the

⁴¹⁶ Gérard Dussouy, *Les théories géopolitiques. Traité de Relations internationales (I)*, on line, http://classiques.uqac.ca/contemporains/dussouy_gerard/theories_rel_inter_tome_1/theories_rel_inter_t1.html, accessed at 23 September 2011, 19.00.

⁴¹⁷ G. Parker, *The Geopolitics of Domination*, London, 1988; apud Ilie Bădescu, Dan Dungaciu, *cit. work*, vol. II, pp. 159-169.

⁴¹⁸ A se vedea, pe larg, I. Saizu, *Eminescu – eternity*, Iași, 1997, pp. 104-125.

“waste of living powers experienced in this country”⁴¹⁹, to create empty and useless culture forms. By fighting “each boy wet behind his ears who studied two or three books in Germany or France, [and]each man with a foreign culture who thinks himself rightfully entitled or even indebted to teach our people a lesson and who knows everything better than the people itself”⁴²⁰, the columnist Eminescu warned the Romanian political elite about the fact that the barbaric stage might have threatened a people when it imitated another people “in the external manifestation of a lifetime without getting to the core of the foreign culture”⁴²¹.

Eminescu’s ideas matched perfectly the type of civilization and the system of the political organization of the state generated by the XIXth century – the national panideas. Nowadays, things are totally different at least for Europe. Multiculturalism, subsidiary and economic integration are values accepted by the large majority of Europeans and not only. The same can be said about the political ideas of a brilliant mind of the XXth century, Nicolae Iorga. In his approach to the role of peoples’ vitality in history, Nicolae Iorga reached the conclusion that a powerful actor A might impose his domination over the space of actor B on the political and economic level but never on the cultural and spiritual ones. Greece for example, overwhelmed the Romans spiritually while it had been conquered militarily and politically. This is what N. Iorga defined as “a conquerors’ conquest by the conquered”⁴²². By the force of spirit and the great ideas, the Romanian historian said, “we all conquer

⁴¹⁹ Mihai Eminescu, *Works*, vol. 3, I. Crețu Printing House, Bucharest, 1939, p. 142.

⁴²⁰ *Ibidem*, *Works*, vol. XII, ed. Vatamaniuc, P. Creția, Oxana Busuioceanu, Simona Cioculescu, Anca Costa-Foru, Aurelia Creția, Claudio Dimiu, Eugenia Oprescu, Al. Oprescu (coordonator), Bucharest, 1985, p. 145.

⁴²¹ Apud I. Saizu, *cit. work*, p. 116.

⁴²² Apud, Dan Dungaciu, *The Interbelic Elite: Romanian Sociology in Europe*, Mica Valahie Printing House, 2003, Bucharest, pp. 246-247.

*unwillingly and we are all conquered unaware; and this happens all the time”*⁴²³.

Unlike the model suggested by the American analyst, G. Parker, the spiritual expansion in the space model proposed by Nicolae Iorga, did not accompany automatically the political expansion. Germany dominated the world in the XIXth century although its population lived in parochial centres, disunited, without a military capability. “*We are all Hegel’s subjects*, concluded Nicolae Iorga while referring to the German philosopher’s concept about the state „*even those who have not heard of him*“⁴²⁴. Nicolae Iorga not only demolished the “scientific arguments” of the Ratzelien School, which placed the foundation of political organization, race, and culture in the past and descending irrevocably from it⁴²⁵ but also proved that those *pan ideas* were not forcefully imposed and had the chance to survive in the political organisation of other communities, in perfect harmony with the political organization of a nation. Relevant examples were provided, on one hand, by nationalism and democracy – the foundation of the political organization of the European states for almost half a millennium – and by communism, fascism and Nazism on the other hand, which meant dramatic experiments in the political organization of a number of nations. Ever since the construction of the first socialist state on the ruins of former Tsarist Empire the leaders of the IIIrd Communist International (Komintern, the Russian abbreviation) set out to produce a world revolution in order to create a world wide Soviet Socialist republic⁴²⁶. The organisation even tried to expand the Komintern border, not the geographical one by conquering the European

⁴²³ *Ibidem.*

⁴²⁴ *Ibidem.*

⁴²⁵ See Mark Bassin, *Race contra space: the conflict between German geopolitik and national socialism*, in “Political Geography Quarterly”, Volume 6, Issue 2, April 1987, pp 115-134.

⁴²⁶ Pierre Broué, *Histoire de l’Internationale Communiste, 1919-1943*, Librairie Arthème Fayard, Paris, 1997, pp. 76-97.

spiritual space through the Marxist panidea, by attacking the *national border* in a space already conquered by national and democratic panideas where a number of peoples were gradually reaching their political unity. The Romanian army rejected and reacted to the advance of the Kominternist frontier in 1918-1919 when it intervened against the Magyar Bolshevik revolt⁴²⁷.

The profound lack of balance in the power equation of Europe, after the end of the Second World War, allowed the expansion of the communist ideological border into the heart of Europe. In his analysis of the impact of this border over the conquered space Mihai Ungheanu noted, “*at all levels of a people’s existence the Komintern frontier brought disaster, crime, cultural interdictions, a change in the ethno-psychological background of the communities conquered and suppressed*”⁴²⁸. The communist regime, a typical product of the komintern border expansion, imposed a socio-political model where axiological landmarks of the controlled space were replaced⁴²⁹.

The collapse of communism produced the recoil and, ultimately, the fading of the Komintern border from the central and south-European space. A contradictory process developed in this space, after 1989. On one hand, the area witnessed the resurrection of national and democratic panideas, and on the other hand, the attack of “*regionalized*” and “*globalized/unified*” panideas over national territories. Daniel Beauvois, referred to the impact of the phenomenon on the political organization of this space and noticed, “*Ask the Russian, Poland, Czech, Hungarian politicians who are*

⁴²⁷ See, General G.D. Mărdărescu, *Company for the Manumission of Ardeal and occupation of Budapest (1918-1920)*, Bucharest, 1921; Dumitru Preda, Vasile Alexandrescu, Costică Prodan, *Defending Great Romania between 918-1919*, Bucharest, 1994.

⁴²⁸ Mihai Ungheanu, *Komintern after Komintern. The Cultural Holocaust theory*, in vol. Ilie Bădescu, Dan Dungăciu, *cit. work*, vol. II, p. 290.

⁴²⁹ Milan Kundera, *Tragedy of Central Europe*, in vol. “Europa Centrală, Nevroze. Dileme Utopii...”, pp. 234-235.

about to destroy the post-Stalinist regim, what paradigm they have in mind. They will all answer that: a Europe of human rights, built after the Western model of a civilized Europe and the State of Justice”⁴³⁰. From this point of view, it is hard to say which of the predominant panideas may catch in the European political space and how the borders and the security architecture of Europe in the third millennium can be influenced by it. The geopolitical EU area extends irreversibly eastwards to the Caucasus and the Caspian region, and southwards to the Mediterranean basin and North Africa but it is difficult to predict the limits of the European enlargement. Basically, this is a political decision but the degree of cultural compatibility and civilisation between the areas of interest and the West should not be overlooked.⁴³¹

It is too early to believe that media globalization and the new theories that promote multiculturalism will automatically erase the “hard” elements from the identity pattern of different areas of civilization⁴³². Beyond the irresistible attraction of the West, and of its level of civilization over other human communities, a sort of justified fear prevails sometimes in the perception of the Western society. The Polish writer and analyst R. Kapuscinski, studied the Third World, and he concluded that a particular type of society called

⁴³⁰ Daniel Beauvois, *Let's not mistake about paradigm*, in vol. “Central Europe...”, p. 97.

⁴³¹ See Sophie Bessis, *The Occident and the Others. History of a supremacy*, translation by Narcisa Șerbănescu, Runa Printing House, Bucharest, 2004, pp. 13-18; Jürgen Gerhards and Silke Hans, *Why not Turkey? Attitudes towards Turkish membership in the EU among citizens in 27 European countries*, on line http://www.polsoz.fuberlin.de/soziologie/arbeitsbereiche/makrosoziologie/mitarbeiter/lehrstuhlinhaber/dateien/Why_not_Turkey.pdf, accessed at 23 July 2010, 20.15.

⁴³² Christian Joppke, *The retreat of multiculturalism in the liberal state: theory and policy*, in “The British Journal of Sociology”, vol. 55, issue 2, 2005, on line <http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/socialchange/research/social-change/summer-workshops/documents/theretreatofmulticulturalism.pdf>, accessed at 13 July 2010, 23.00.

“the historic society”, still survived”⁴³³ in its countries. “*In this society everything happened in the past. Their energies, feelings, passions are all past-oriented, dedicated to history discussion and understanding. They live in a world made of legends about the country establishers. They are not capable of talking about the future because the past gives birth to passion as history does*⁴³⁴. They “produce only violence, hatred and death. It is a heavy burden that hardens development”⁴³⁵. Making the West the devil, while turning one’s own past into the angel of civilisation has been a recurrent exercise that shaped and sized the identity pattern for the younger generations in this type of society. Referring to this aspect Sophie Bessis showed that “*the manuals of the Arab states regarding the world history have an anti-occidental extremely violent attitude and encourage the readers to continually repeat the arabo-islamic supremacy*”⁴³⁶. In the mold of the identity pattern for the younger generation of the extra European world, the fear of the West and the rite of mystic inheritance and of pure origin are frequently thrown in the mix. Iran’s experience in the 1970s, when the society modernization effort was perceived as an attempt “to destroy identity” may find a reasonable explanation in this paradigm. The fast technology import and the Iranians’ inability to adapt under these circumstances made them feel humiliated. This feeling unlocked a very strong reaction of rejection, efficiently exploited by the fundamentalists and by ayatollah Khomeini, who took over power and caste their anti Western attitude into the policy and the ideology of the state.

The emotional and religious movements that we witness today in the Islamic world made certain analysts consider that in fact we face a new geopolitical trend, which is *Islamism*⁴³⁷. Even if we are

⁴³³ Ryszard Kapuscinski, *A world, two civilizations*, in vol. Nathan Gardels, *cit. work*, p. 11.

⁴³⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁴³⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴³⁶ Sophie Bessis, *cit. work*, p. 296.

dealing with a “clash of civilizations”⁴³⁸ or the “*geopolitics of Islam*”, we must consider all elements that “evolve” on this map of the spiritual space in order to understand the geopolitical evolution started in the beginning of the XXIst century. The revolutions that swept North Africa 2011 leading to the downfall of the authoritarian leaders of Tunisia, Egypt or Libya⁴³⁹ did not lead to democratic regimes of a Western type but to a radicalization of pan Islamism.

The media space is an element of postmodern geopolitics. The public opinion representations and perceptions of the geopolitical evolution came almost entirely from the products of media communication. Media outlets engaged in the production, reproduction and distribution of information and knowledge in the broadest range of symbols related to the experience of the social life⁴⁴⁰. Media information and knowledge shaped peoples’ perceptions about the surrounding world, including geopolitical evolutions in different regions of the world. The role of the media in influencing public perceptions and opinions about significant political and social issues has long been the subject of both speculation and research. It is widely accepted that what we know, think and believe about what

⁴³⁷ See, S. M. Murshed, S. Pavan, *Identity and Islamic Radicalization in Western Europe* MICROCON Research Working Paper 16, 2009, Brighton: MICROCON; International Crisis Group (ICG) Report Middle East/North Africa (2005). „Understanding Islamism”, on line http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/middle_east_north_africa/egypt_north_africa/37_understanding_islamism.pdf, accessed at 13 July 2010, 23.00.

⁴³⁸ See, Chen Li, *How Inevitable Is A “Clash of Civilizations”?* in “Journal of Cambridge Studies”, Volume 5, No. 2-3, on line <http://journal.acs-cam.org.uk/data/archive/2010/201002-article11.pdf>; Ken Hackett, *A Clash of Civilisation Between Islam and the West: Is it Inevitable?* ne http://www.huffingtonpost.com/catholic-relief-services/a-clash-of-civilizations_b_212113.html, accessed at 13 July 2010, 23.00.

⁴³⁹ Constantin Hlihor, *What is behind Lyibia* in România Liberă.ro, on line, <http://www.romanialibera.ro/opinii/interviuri/ce-se-ascunde-in-spatele-razboiului-din-libia-223125.html>.

⁴⁴⁰ Dennis McQuail, *Communication*, European Institute Printing House, Iași, 1996, p. 51.

happens in the world beyond our personal experiences, is molded, and some would say orchestrated, by the way these events are reported in newspapers and covered by radio and television”⁴⁴¹. The confrontation started by the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda in September 2001, had a follow up in the symbolic space via the media⁴⁴². It is hard to accept that by targeting the “Twin Towers” and the Pentagon, the terrorists wanted to damage the American economy and to destroy the command centre of the US army. They struck two different important symbols of the free world producing an event that kept the international media and the public opinion in limbo.

In this case as in other terrorist attacks from Madrid, London or Moscow, the essence of the confrontation did not hinge on the physical-geographical space but on the virtual, mediatic space focusing on a precise strategic purpose: the destruction of the American myth of total protection in front of risks and threats and the modern society vulnerability. The field of social representation at the level of the perception of the American public opinion of the individual and collective security, of the civil rights and liberties recorded dramatic changes. In other words, the space of confrontation moved in the symbolic and images space. This aspect made some analysts think that, in fact, the crisis “*did not exist in the real word, it existed only in the discourse. It becomes alive only after it has been described in words. A certain situation becomes critical only after it has been thus identified and this label is given by the mass-media*”⁴⁴³.

⁴⁴¹ Barry Fields, *School Discipline Coverage in Australian Newspapers: Impact on Public Perceptions, Educational Decisions and Policy*, on line, accessed at 23 May 2010, 23.00, <http://www.aare.edu.au/05pap/fie05290.pdf>, accessed at 23 May 2011, 23.00.

⁴⁴² See, Timothy W. Luke, *Postmodern Geopolitics in the 21st Century: Lesson from 9.11.01 Terrorist Attacks*, in <http://www.cusa.uci.edu/image/CUSAOP2Luke.pdf>; Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *Communication in international conflictst*, p. 214.

⁴⁴³ Peter Bruck, *Crisis as Spectacle: Tabloid News and the Politics of Outrage*; apud Simona Ștefănescu, cit. work, p. 221.

The crises and conflicts that appeared in the system of international relations after the end of the Cold War, the geopolitical rivalries in the areas rich in oil and water/food supplies, the fight against the attacks planned by terrorist organizations were strongly influenced in their development by mass media. Media are at the heart of many public debates and so are terrorism and Islam as part of a global discourse in the United States⁴⁴⁴ since the events of 9/11. By paraphrasing the analyst Eytan Gilboa, we think that the new challenges and needs of world politics in the post-cold war/post-9/11 era have been influenced by three interrelated revolutions in mass communication, politics, and international relations. The revolution in communication technologies created two major innovations: the Internet and the global news networks, such as CNN International, BBC World, Sky News, and Al-Jazeera, that can broadcast, often live, almost every significant development in world to almost every place on the globe⁴⁴⁵.

In reporting conflicts, the media risk to lose their neutrality and independence. They report about events from a geopolitical domain in a biased manner either by omission, by demoting or by the introduction of some “refraction” elements between the concrete reality and the reality produced by pictures. Different methods to filter reality, to make it pass through a gate that makes a piece of information become news contribute to the defense or imposition of certain stakeholders’ interests into a geopolitical debate. These interests promoted by certain media empires do not affect only the

⁴⁴⁴ Sonia Ambrosio de Nelson, *Understanding the Press Imaging of ‘Terrorist’: A Pragmatic Visit to the Frankfurt School*, in “International Communication Gazette”, 2008; p. 70, p. 325, on line, <http://gaz.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/70/5/325>, Downloaded from <http://gaz.sagepub.com> at HINARI on November 20, 2009.

⁴⁴⁵ Eytan Gilboa, *Searching for a Theory of Public Diplomacy*, in “The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,” 2008, p. 616; p. 55, on line, <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/616/1/55>, Downloaded from <http://ann.sagepub.com> at HINARI on November 20, 2009.

international public opinion but also the political elite involved in these geopolitical conflicts or debates. Under the „news pressure” diplomats make a series of decisions that meet the public opinion’s expectations induced by the media. Experts call this the *CNN effect*⁴⁴⁶.

According to Eytan Gilboa „*senior officials have acknowledged the impact of television coverage on policymaking*”. In his memoirs, the former Secretary of State James Baker III (1995) wrote: “*In Iraq, Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, and Chechnya, among others, the real-time coverage of conflict by the electronic media has served to create a powerful new imperative for prompt action that was not present in less frenetic [times]*”⁴⁴⁷.

Scholars noticed that the mass-media presence, especially the tv. live broadcast crews in the confrontation space, altered considerably the development of events and the behavior of the stakeholders. Some experts concluded that this was even more visible in societies in transition which were vulnerable because of a precarious or developing civil and political culture⁴⁴⁸. In the societies of the former Soviet or Yugoslav space, in Rwanda, or Somalia, media generated conflicts and induced further tensions through biased reporting of political events or by demonizing the enemy. According to Mark Frohardt and Jonathan Temin, „*media can be extremely powerful tools used by that intent on instigating conflict.*

⁴⁴⁶ Eytan Gilboa, *The CNN Effect: The Search for a Communication Theory of International Relations*, in “Political Communication”, pp. 22:27-44, Copyright - 2005 Taylor & Francis Inc, on line, http://210.240.189.212/ntcu9400/9402/9422/ftp/3_class/00_full_paper/AEL092328_%20Search%20for%20a%20Communication%20Theory%20of%20International%20Realations_%E9%99%B3%E6%98%AD%E5%90%9B.pdf, accesat at 27 June 2010, 23.00.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴⁸ Mark Frohardt and Jonathan Temin, *Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies*, United States Institute of Peace, in http://www.internews.org/pubs/humanitarian/TheMedia&TheRwandaGenocide_Chapter32.pdf accessed at 23 June 2010, 23.00.

Media are multipliers: they amplify and disseminate messages and opinions. Media spread information and misinformation, shape individuals' views of others and can heighten tensions or promote understanding. This makes controlling media and their messages an important goal for anyone intent on promoting conflict"⁴⁴⁹.

Once the media space surfaces into the geopolitical disputes the question arises whether the political rivalry equation does not alter dramatically. From a classical perspective, geopolitical rivalries were like A versus B. The presence of the media in the geopolitical field introduced the *A/BMedia* player that influenced the outcome of the disputes. The military analyst and politician Richard Ek believed that the apparition of new technologies in the confrontational field changed not only the war physiognomy, but also that of geopolitics⁴⁵⁰. The media influenced the emergence of a new geopolitical dimension, the "*popular geopolitics*", which differed from the *geopolitical discourse*, a product of the research and analysis institutes and of the academia⁴⁵¹. It is very close to propaganda cartography in *classical geopolitics*.

The media space does never overlap the real one in the geopolitical confrontation. It will be composed / recomposed according to the expectations of the public opinion and of the main actors. A special type of war is fought in this particular space, where the weapons will be pictures, words and symbols *as ammunition of mind*. Disinformation, manipulation and intoxication of the opponent/competitor in the geopolitical field are considered new fighting operations and tactics. Under such circumstances, we end up with two geopolitical fields: a *real* field in physical-geographical conflict where the common citizen and the public opinion have no

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁵⁰ Richard Ek, *A revolution in military geopolitics*, in "Political Geography", 19, 2000, pp. 841-874,
http://www.geo.hunter.cuny.edu/courses/geog334/articles/a_geopolitics.pdf,
accessed at 26 June 2010, 22.00.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

access and the *mediatic representation* where the viewer records the so-called reality of the geopolitical field through camera lenses or a magnifying glass. The crises and conflicts of the former Yugoslavia or Central Asia and Caucasus where actors with totally different interests clashed, confirmed these assertions. In the presentation for the public opinion of Kosovo war in 1999 a different actor played its role, along the stakeholders directly involved, the public relations company *Rudder Finn*. This company demonized the Serbian political regime with remarkable results in the international political media⁴⁵² using mediatic clichés launched by the international mass media. With the help of the cinematographic corporation *Twentieth Century Fox Pictures* belonging to the media mogul Rupert Murdoch, the American public opinion received a different version of the Bosnian crisis offered by the public relations company Rudder and Finn. This variant is defined by analyst Gearoid O'Tuathail as "film of propaganda"⁴⁵³.

Analyzing the way the media shaped the image of the Russian-Georgian conflict in the international public opinion in the summer of 2008 Gordon M. Hahn – Analyst/Consultant, for Media Watch Russia Other Points of View – Russia Media Watch; Senior Researcher, Monterey Terrorism Research and Education Program and Visiting Assistant Professor, Graduate School of International Policy Studies, reached the conclusion that „The five-day Georgian-Russian war saw Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and other Georgian officials waging an aggressive propaganda campaign and, in many ways, a disinformation war in the Western mass media. This media offensive was the result either of a carefully crafted disinform-

⁴⁵² Frank J. Stech, *Winning CNN Wars*, in „Parameters” Autumn, 1994, pp. 37-56; Călin Hentea, *Weapons that do not kill*, Nemira Printing House, Bucharest, 2004, pp. 54-57.

⁴⁵³ Gearoid, O'Tuathail, *The Frustrations of Geopolitics and The Pleasures of War: Behind Enemy Lines and American Geopolitical Culture*, in <http://www.nvc.vt.edu/toalg/website/Publish/Papers/BELpublished.pdf>, accessed at 11 August 2011, 14.00.

mation war or a rush by Western governments, mainstream media, and think tanks to take the Georgians' side of the story, and their side only. Either way, the Georgians were able to put up an effective and constant barrage of propaganda and disinformation against the Russians”⁴⁵⁴.

Sociologist George Gerbner researched the effects and the consequences of violence promotion through mass-media and concluded that a “new imperial network” was about to appear, based on violence and mediatic terror⁴⁵⁵. From this perspective, we can say that the media space may become a “creation” of the *hired journalist*⁴⁵⁶ in case of intense major confrontation, who should be only an *observer* as he usually is in peacetime. The second war in Iraq illustrated in the best way the role of the mass media as type *AB* actors in the geopolitical dispute over the Middle East. In the geopolitical field of the dispute during the first war, three distinct mediatic spaces coexisted: Anglo-American, Arab and West-European⁴⁵⁷. Each of them had its own perspective on the events development according to its interests and the characteristics and expectations of the information consumer – their own public opinion. If we count these media actors as well, at least three mediatic spaces emerge that tried to shape our attitude and behavior regarding the events from the Gulf: the one created by the Anglo-American coalition, the one presented by the Franco-German duo to which we add the Russian federation and the Arab mediatic space.

For the international political environment, it is vital to know the way geopolitical spaces are structured as a result of the

⁴⁵⁴ Gordon M. Hahn, *Georgia's Propaganda War and the Georgian-Russian War on line*, www.russiaotherpointsofview.com/.../Georg...

⁴⁵⁵ George Gerbner, *Violence and Terror in and by the Media* <http://www.asc.upenn.edu/gerbner/Asset.aspx?assetID=412>, accessed at 11 August 2011, 14.00.

⁴⁵⁶ Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *Communication in international conflicts*, p. 97.

⁴⁵⁷ Călin Hentea *cit. work*, p. 163.

stakeholders' behavior in their dispute/ cooperation to reach their goals in certain regions of the globe. The public opinion has gathered a growing ambivalent feature. On one hand, it has become an active part of the geopolitical game with the media as a pressure factor for politicians and state or non state stakeholders involved or not in a certain area of the globe. On the other hand, the manipulated public opinion is meant to have a predetermined attitude and behavior.

Chapter III

PARADIGMS OF GEOPOLITICAL ANALYSIS OR HOW WE EXPLAIN THE ACTORS' BEHAVIORAL OPTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

3.1. A few considerations on analysis methods in postmodern geopolitics

World policies are never “normal.” Unwanted or unexpected events – war, aggression, crisis, and instability – are facts of the international life. The issue is how a state should react to such events. For this reason, politicians need information and expertise when making international decisions. From this point of view, knowledge has become an indispensable ingredient without which the contemporary society could not work in any field, especially in the foreign affairs because of extended economic, social, cultural and spiritual interdependencies impacted by globalization.

The adaptation to a society under the influence of the Internet networks remains a problem because the new technologies and especially the internet influenced not only the way diplomats and foreign affairs politicians developed their activities, but the object itself of their activity. The time of reaction in critical situations has shrunk, and a diplomat rarely succeeds to exceed the speed with which a great part of relevant information reaches the public. Consequently, the diplomat's obligation is to keep up with the continuous flow of analyzes in a manner that can influence the reaction of politicians in his or her own country. The capacity to forecast long-term socio-political evolutions of the environment where he/she lives and the ability to think in perspective based on the information gathered from personal sources become essential

elements of diplomatic activity at the time of instant transmission of information. Forecasts, diagnoses and decisions in the foreign policy of a state can be done by applying a few academic approaches. Geopolitics is one of them still used for this purpose. It answers the requirements that certain analysts placed in front of experts when they made a choice because a good foreign policy requires⁴⁵⁸:

1. foresight (“what might happen”);
2. contextual analysis (“what is happening”);
3. policy analysis (“what can we do”), and
4. evaluation (“how are we doing/ how did we do”)

The classical geopoliticians of the nineteenth and early twentieth century thought that geopolitics could paint neutral and complete pictures of “how the world works”. According to Colin Flint, they made doubtful claims of historical and theoretical “objectivity” to support their own biased view of how their own country should compete in the world. Such a view of geopolitics is no longer up-to-date. Any claim to be able to “see” a pattern of global politics is immediately – rightfully – challenged as being limited and biased because it belongs to situational knowledge⁴⁵⁹.

Postmodern geopoliticians moved the analysis from the study of geography to international relations. According to Bruno de Almeida Ferrari „*Geopolitics and geopolitical analysis constitute the study of international politics seen from a spatial or geocentric perspective; the understanding of the whole is simultaneously its objective and justification. Where Political Geography handles with the interaction of geographical factors and politics, the interactions of political power and space, Geopolitics tries to provide a*

⁴⁵⁸ Alyson JK Bailes, René Dinesen, Hiski Haukkala, Pertti Joenniemi and Stephan De Spiegeleire, *The Academia and Foreign Policy Making: Bridging the Gap*, DIIS Working Paper 2011:05, on line http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/WP2011/WP_2011-05_Pertti_Joenniemi_The%20Academia%20and%20Foreign%20Pol_web.pdf, accessed at 11 August 2011, 14.00.

⁴⁵⁹ Colin Flint, *Introduction to geopolitics*, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2006, p. 33.

*geographic interpretation and studies the geographical aspects of political phenomena. It is therefore one discipline that is inserted on the realist tradition of International Relations theory and constitutes a method of interpretation of politics, with a vocation to perception and definition of aims, interests, conditions and factors of power”*⁴⁶⁰.

Other scientists underlined that geopolitical variables played an important role in conditioning the international business environment. Aside from distance and the geographical location, such variables included the consequences in the aftermath of colonialism, of the Cold War, of the post-Cold War years, of regionalization, of the distribution of the global population and their impacts over the operations from the international affairs. Several geopolitics scholars from international business mentioned many of these variables in their research⁴⁶¹, although they had not qualified as ‘geopolitical’ ones. Instead, they focused on the way geopolitical agents made strategic choices, and on the way they were worsened by competing goals and changing circumstances. In other words, increasing attention was given to agency over structure. However, decisions did not pop out within a social and political vacuum. As mentioned in the previous

⁴⁶⁰ Bruno de Almeida Ferrari, *Some considerations about the methods and the nature of Political Geography and Geopolitics*, on line http://www.ciari.org/investigacao/Politicalgeo_geopolitics.pdf, accessed at 23 september 2010, 20.00.

⁴⁶¹ See, T. J. Baerwald, *Geographical perspectives on international business*, in M. R. Czinkota, I. A. Ronkainen & M. H. Moffett (Eds.), *International business* (4th ed.), Orlando, FL:Harcourt, 1996; M. Chisholm, *Regional growth theory, location theory, non-renewable natural resources and the mobile factors of production*, in B. Ohlin, P. Hesselborn & P M. Wijkman (Eds.), *The international allocation of economic activity: Proceedings of a Nobel symposium*, London: Macmillan, 1977; J.H. Dunning, *Reappraising the eclectic paradigm in an age of alliance capitalism*, in *Journal of International Business Studies*, 26 (3), 1995, pp. 461–91; Idem, *Governments and the macro-organization of economic activity: A historical and spatial perspective*, in J.H. Dunning (Ed.), *Governments, globalization, and international business*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997; idem, *Location and multinational enterprise: A neglected factor*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, 29 (1), 1998, pp. 45–66.

chapter, agents were either empowered or constrained by structures. Countries make geopolitical choices, to fight a war, for example, while considering the wider geopolitical context.

From this point of view, geopolitics offered expertise support, challenged by some and accepted by others for the fundamentals of the states' foreign policy. Even when this was strongly denied – as was the case of USSR – Soviet experts and diplomats reacted to the geopolitical strategies imposed by the other superpower, the USA, not with ideological scenarios but with their own geopolitical strategies.⁴⁶² Opposed by the geopolitical scenario of containment – launched after the model of Nicholas Spykmen – the Moscow leaders acted according to a geopolitical scenario that historians called in a rather picturesque way „the frog jump over the containment barrier”⁴⁶³. This example suggested that geopolitical decisions were made with an eye on the global geopolitical context, and especially on the assets of a dominant power that might have set the agenda.

The type of geopolitics that a specialist has accepted, among other things, influences the choice of the geopolitical analysis model. Classical geopolitics studies used the term to describe the geopolitical basis of the national power. Geopolitics is, nowadays, a concept that refers to a large number of issues in the study of International Relations and its theoretical framework, as mentioned earlier. In a widely interdependent and rapidly changing world characterized by extreme complexity, geopolitical perspectives can be very useful to outline the international system, to the extent where Geopolitics provides some explanations and propensities, and identifies barriers and obstacles, also detecting potentials and vulnerabilities. In this sense, geopolitics should be taken seriously, as it builds up a social element and a technological argumentation in itself that helps the construction of imagination about the world. On the other hand, the essence of geopolitical analysis is the relation of international political power to the geographical setting ”*as it is not*

⁴⁶² Constantin Hlihor, *Geopolitics and geostrategy*, pp. 196-228.

⁴⁶³ *Ibidem*, p. 119.

possible to claim that geographical features of a geopolitical actor are not influencing the actions of that actor on international level ⁴⁶⁴.

Geopolitics as a method of gaining experience in solving the international problems seems to have gained an interesting perspective from the paradigm called *critical geopolitics*, which provided interesting insights into understanding the process of decision making, especially at the level of foreign policy ⁴⁶⁵.

Starting from the truthful idea that the classical studies of geopolitics have delivered effective models of analysis, ⁴⁶⁶ during the recent years, geopolitical experts promoted several models of analysis for international relations and behavior of stakeholders in the international politics. The American analyst Colin Flint advanced a model based on the theory of what he called the *Geopolitical code*. In his book, *Political Geography. World-economy, nation-state and locality* co-authored with Peter James Taylor he stated, „*Geopolitical codes are the practices of states. One components of geopolitical code is the way that such practice are represented to give them the meaning and the purpose. In other words, they need to be legitimized* ⁴⁶⁷. *A few years later, when talking about the concept, he simplifies it without altering the core: „The manner in which a country orientates itself toward the world is called a geopolitical code”* ⁴⁶⁸. The use of the analysis model worked out by the two experts requires proper answers to five questions ⁴⁶⁹:

- (a) who are our current and potential allies;

⁴⁶⁴ Wojciech Kazanecki, *Is Geopolitics a Good Method of Explaining World Events? Case Study of French Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*, on line, http://www.wiscnetwork.org/ljubljana2008/papers/WISC_2008-196.pdf, accessed at 24 september 2010, 20.00.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶⁶ Paul Ormerod, Shaun Riordan, *A new approach to the analysis of geopolitical risk*, in “Diplomacy & Statecraft”, vol. 15, issue 4, 2004, pp. 643-654.

⁴⁶⁷ Colin Flint, Peter Taylor, *Political Geography. World-economy, nation-state and locality*, fourth edition, 2000, p. 57.

⁴⁶⁸ Colin Flint, *Introduction to geopolitics*, p. 55.

⁴⁶⁹ Colin Flint, Peter Taylor *cit. work* p. 62.

- (b) who are our current and potential enemies;
- (c) how can we preserve our alliances, attract, grow and educate potential allies;
- (d) how can we counter our current enemies and emerging threats
- (e) how do we justify the four previous tasks to our public, and to the global community.

At first sight, the model of analysis is tempting and introduces a few elements that raise serious problems for the analyst of the equation. Definitely, geopolitics is a dispute of interests in a certain space and from this point of view, Flint and Taylor were right. The analyst must know the allies and the possible allies of an actor involved in a certain geopolitical field to understand the opponents' behavior and the other possible rivals' behavior, but all these are variables that only the diplomat can access and not the geopolitician. As for the justification of alliances and rivalries for power, that is not a question for the political analyst. Through his/her research, he/she must explain and not justify things. Immanuel Wallerstein was right when he pointed out that the researcher must not question whether the outcome was acceptable or not to a certain stakeholder when describing a phenomenon or a process from the domestic or foreign policy. "*What is and what should be are two totally different things*"⁴⁷⁰.

The model suggested by another American renowned analyst Gearóid Ó Tuathail rested on the answers to five questions:⁴⁷¹

- How is global space imagined and represented?
- How is global space divided into essential blocks or zones of identity and difference?
- How is global power conceptualized?
- How are global threats defined in spatial terms and how are conceptualized the response strategies?

⁴⁷⁰ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Decline of American Power: the U.S. in a Chaotic World*, Romanian edition, Incitatus, 2005, p. 140.

⁴⁷¹ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Postmodern geopolitics? The modern geopolitical imagination and beyond*, in Gearóid Ó Tuathail and Simon Dalby, *Rethinking geopolitics*, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002, pp. 27-28.

- How certain major geopolitical trends change after their identification and conceptualization by the great geopolitical players.

This model came out mainly from the analysis of the political discourse and from the way people make decisions in foreign policy and represent the world where stakeholders must act. It aimed to explain how political actors represented the international policy in terms of space. This model did not seek to identify the ways geography shaped geopolitics. It actually tried to show the way geographical claims and presumptions operated in political debates and practice.

French researchers produced lately interesting models of geopolitical analysis. François Thual from the Institute of International Relations and Strategy started his analysis model from the assumption that geopolitics was not a proper science. Reality could not be analyzed with scientific tools because no laws existed that an analyst might have discovered, and whose implementation could yield accurate results in the engineering sciences. In his opinion, a good geopolitical analysis meant⁴⁷²:

- To identify interested sides/stakeholders,
- To check their motivations,
- To describe their intentions,
- To detect developing alliances or, at least, alliances in the process of construction, whether at local, regional, continental and international level.

The brief presentation of such a geopolitical analysis highlighted a trend in the modern geopolitical research that attempts to avoid the geographical determinism as the basis for the comprehension of the states' policy in the contemporary international relations. Henceforth it is quite necessary to identify certain geopolitical paradigms that help to outline specific indicators used as observation and research tools of the players' behavior in the geopolitical field by operationalizing them.

⁴⁷² Francois Thual, *Methodes de la géopolitique. Apprendre à déchiffrer l'actualité*, in "Observatoire Stratégique", on line http://geo-phile.net/IMG/pdf/METHODES_DE_LA_GEOPOLITIQUE.pdf, accessed at 12 March 2010, 20.00.

The existence of paradigms that detailed *postmodern geopolitics* and guided the research of contemporary actors' behavior in the present international environment became a prerequisite for new institutions of analysis and prognosis with expertise functions and not for states' or other actors' justifying propaganda to support their foreign policy.

From this perspective, Thomas Kuhn was perfectly right when he wrote that "*in the absence of a new paradigm, deep research is impossible and there cannot be a criterion for the selection of the issues to be researched*"⁴⁷³, as there could not exist an academic community or a well-established geopolitics subject. Kenneth Waltz noted too, that observation and experience may not have yielded the information to lead to the understanding the causes that generated events⁴⁷⁴ within the study of international relations. He criticized all those who believed that the reality of the international environment was what we could be watched directly. „*What we think reality is in fact a theoretical construct, elaborated and re-elaborated in time*”⁴⁷⁵.

Theory offers the necessary comprehending tools for events that happen in the international environment. From this point of view, to debate the truth revealed by I. Kant, according to whom concepts were indispensable for knowledge, may seem to be a truism now. We cannot overlook, nonetheless, the true fact that we approach the „reality” of the international life⁴⁷⁶ within these concepts. Data do not speak for themselves. Understanding is not a passive registration, but an active construction: we need concepts to make sense of the world. They are the condition for the possibility of knowledge. By operationalization of paradigms we conclude “reading grids” that help us to distinguish between the significant from the non significant, the essential from the nonessential.

⁴⁷³ Thomas Kuhn, *cit. work*, p. 37.

⁴⁷⁴ Apud Kevin L. Folk, Thomas M. Kane, *The Maginot Mentality in International Relations Models*, in “Parameters”, volume XXVIII, no. 2, summer 1998, pp. 80-92.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁷⁶ Stefano Guzzini, *cit. work*, p. 12.

A good „reading grid” for a very accurate image of the state and non state actors’ behavior in international politics can emerge if we operate with the following geopolitical paradigms:

- **power** and the way it is used in the contemporary international relations,
- **interest** that the actors promote/dispute over different spaces,
- **perception** a player shares about the *other* in the international environment and especially the perception errors that may occur at a certain point,
- **guiding ideas and core values** which dominate the collective mentality at the level of a society or of large spaces, at the level of a civilization or even global level. Debabrata Sen pointed out „*that movement on space in terms of man, matter, and idea is the main driving force behind geopolitical growth and the basis of all geopolitical analysis*”⁴⁷⁷.

These elements are in fact ***the paradigms of postmodern geopolitics***. By operating with these paradigms, we come up with answers to three questions, which in fact, are the core of postmodern geopolitical studies: a) what appeals to an actor in a geographical space and why it is not present in a different geographical area of the planet; b) which hard/soft power means help it to maintain its presence in this space; c) how does it motivate/justify its presence in this space.

3.2. The balance of power and rivalry/cooperation in postmodern geopolitics

For many schools of thought in the international theory and geopolitics, power equals a core/key concept for understanding the stakeholders’ behavior on the political arena. Nevertheless, it is the *reality*, which has always concerned politicians because it was and will undoubtedly be the main support/vector for promoting the interests of a community related to other state or non-state players.

⁴⁷⁷ Debabrata Sen, *Basic Principles of Geopolitics and History: Theoretical Aspects of International Relations*, Delhi: Concept Pub. Co., 1975, p. 236.

The history of international relations in recent geopolitical studies proved that the use of power, in the relations among states or within coalitions, led to wars and conflicts of a larger or smaller extent and to solving major issues of the world via negotiations and observance of legal norms and principles.

For a long time, the central element of power was the armed force and its firepower. This was the key to victory in war and the means to acknowledge the great powers in the international affairs. Today, things do not follow this classical pattern anymore. Reviewing these changes, the French analyst François-Bernard Huyghe believed that not the classical war but « *The communication technologies redefine the frontiers, institutions, norms and power criteria* »⁴⁷⁸.

The introduction of the weapons of mass destruction and the unprecedented development of the communication means short-circuited war as a tool of politics that entered history through the presentation of Carl von Clausewitz. The confrontation between the two superpowers in the Cold War that avoided classical war for almost 50 years by using the *non-military* levers of power supports our research hypothesis that was the starting point in the current study. Defense and security analysts and theorists noticed that the strategists employed the powerful weapon of *words* used under the format of war propaganda⁴⁷⁹ since the First World War. Later conflicts brought new developments and inventions in the efficient usage of this type of weapon that encouraged new maneuvers in communications from PSYOPS to Strategic communication. In the communication process, information changed its traditional functions of bringing novelty and development to the human knowledge. This is one of the reasons why armed forces consider

⁴⁷⁸ François Bernard Huyghe, *L'ennemi à l'ère numérique: chaos, information, domination*, online http://www.huyghe.fr/livre_6.htm, accessed at 12 March 2010, 20.00.

⁴⁷⁹ Anne Morelli, *Principe elementaires de propagande de guerre*, Groupe Labor, 2006; Calin Hentea, *Weapons that do not kill*, Nemira, Bucharest, 2004 ; Mioara Anton, *Propaganda and war. The Eastern company, 1941-1944*, Tritonic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007.

information more and more carefully in the strategies they work out in most countries. From this point of view, the geopolitical rivalries among states and political-military blocks have become more important and thus, each stakeholder sought to understand the essence of transformation in the power potential and the power itself.

Theories and concepts that define power in international relations differ and sometimes they challenge each other according to the school or philosophy accepted by each of them as sufficient to explain and to understand this type of reality. In the academic research, there were Schools of thought and trends that promoted different views, sometimes highly opposed. The realists support the idea that a state/non-state stakeholder must use *hard power* in promoting its interests against other player's means, which ultimately means that the use of mechanical force against an enemy becomes legitimate⁴⁸⁰. In promoting the national interest, they say that the state must fight to improve its military power and reuse the favorable balance of power from the international arena. On the other hand, idealists promote the *soft power*⁴⁸¹, which implies the use of non-military means and the rejection of brutal power.

⁴⁸⁰ See, John Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of force geopolitics –Offensive realism and fight for power*, Antet Printing House, 2003; Ben Mor, *Hard Power and Strategic Communication in Grand Strategy*, Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association 48th Annual Convention, Hilton Chicago, CHICAGO, IL, USA, Feb 28, 2007, online http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p179796_index.html; Christian Wagner, *From Hard Power to Soft Power? Ideas, Interaction, Institutions, and Images in India's South Asia Policy*, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin, Working Paper No. 26, March 2005; Vasile Puscas, *International- Transnational Relations* (2nd edition), Eikon Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2007.

⁴⁸¹ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York:Public Affairs, 2004), p. x; Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power*, in "Foreign Policy", No. 80 (Autumn 1990), pp.153-171; Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *The Decline of America's Soft Power*, in "Foreign Affairs" (May/June 2004); Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Power and Interdependence in the Information Age*, in "Foreign Affairs" (September/October 1998); Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *US Power and Strategy After Iraq*, in "Foreign Affairs" (July/August 2003); Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power and American Foreign Policy*, in "Political Science Quarterly", vol. 119, no. 2, July 2004, pp. 255-270.

Charlotte Epstein wrote that: “*This reduction of power to its physical and manipulative dimensions overlooks the generative, facilitative, strategic aspects of power operating from the bottom up, in short, a productive power that constitutes the very meanings and social relations it regulates*”⁴⁸².

A nations’ soft power must rest on three types of resources: a culture capable of a thorough understanding of the social and political world we live in; political and ideological values largely supported, which confer moral legitimacy to a political group/elite in order to manage wisely for their benefit of its population; a foreign policy that does not rely entirely on classical military strategies and the brutal use of force. The USA had the wisdom to make Hollywood a weapon of “*distraction massive*”⁴⁸³ during the Cold War, which not only was more efficient than the tanks and the nuclear weapons, but it also induced the idea that the American life style was the right model for the modern society to millions of people.

The well-known professor and theorist in international relations Joseph Nye Jr. believed that the ultimate success of diplomacy must reside in an amalgamation of the two power theories – *hard* and *soft* in the XXIst century. When referring to this aspect, he wrote, “*Now it is very rare that people use entirely soft power or entirely hard power. I suppose Dalai Lama uses entirely soft power, but most of the actors end up using a combination of hard and soft power and the ability to combine hard and soft power – carrots and sticks and attractions – is what I call smart power. So an effective strategy of using power resources both hard and soft is smart power.*”⁴⁸⁴ The Bush Jr.

⁴⁸² Charlotte Epstein, *The Power of Words in International Relations. Birth of an Anti-Whaling Discourse*, on line <http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/chapters/0262050927chap1.pdf>.

⁴⁸³ Francois Bernard Huyghe, *Contre et prolonger la puissance : prestige, diplomatie publique, soft power*, on line, http://www.huyghe.fr/actu_407.htm.

⁴⁸⁴ “*Joseph Nye on Smart Power in Iran-U.S. Relations*”, interview in July 2008 at Belfer Center, on line http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/18420/joseph_nye_on_smart_power_in_iranus_relations.html.

administration supported politics that belonged to the realist theory although it did not apply classical strategies inspired by realism in solving the crises of the Middle East. The results did not meet the expectations either in the fight against terrorist organizations or in the war of Iraq⁴⁸⁵. From this point of view, the change made by the new secretary of state in the Obama Administration and the use of *smart power* seemed a reasonable solution to solve the intricate stack of problems from the Middle East and South-Eastern Asia. Hillary Rodham Clinton approached the issue in February 2009, and stated in front of the US Senate Committee for Foreign Relations: " *We must use what has been called smart power, the full range of tools at our disposal – diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal and cultural – picking the right tool or combination of tools for each situation. With smart power, diplomacy will be the vanguard of foreign policy.*"⁴⁸⁶

The way the EU imposed itself in the international relations, and its ways and vision for the solution of major issues in the contemporary world by means of what specialists call *normative power* proved that this might be a solution to build a stable and peaceful world. The concern states showed for their own image on the international stage led to a greater care for the respect of the rules and behavior principles in the relations among them. This does not mean that states should neglect their military power or ignore the use of other types of power such as the *word power*⁴⁸⁷. This type of

⁴⁸⁵ See *Villepin stigmatise l'échec américain en Irak*, on line <http://www.liberation.fr/monde/010121639-villepin-stigmatise-l-echec-americain-en-irak>; L. Carl Brown, *The Dream Palace of the Empire: Is Iraq a "Noble Failure"?* in *Foreign Affairs*, on line <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/61936/l-carl-brown/the-dream-palace-of-the-empire-is-iraq-a-noble-failure> ; Thomas L. Friedman, *The Real U.S. Failure in Iraq* On line <http://friedman.blogs.nytimes.com/2005/11/18/the-real-us-failure-in-iraq/>.

⁴⁸⁶ Cheryl Pellerin, *Foreign Policy's "Smart Power" Gives Science Diplomacy a New Role Integrated military-civilian strength invests in partnerships*, exchanges online <http://www.america.gov/st/scitechenglish/2009/February/20090213100705lcniellep0.1312372.html&distid=ucs>.

⁴⁸⁷ Jean François Lisée, *Les pouvoirs des mots*, preface to vol. Hervé Broquet, Catherine Lanneau, Simon Petermann, eds, *Les 100 discours qui ont marqué le XXe siècle*, on line <http://www.cerium.ca/Le-Pouvoir-des-Mots>.

power does not reside in amassing destruction means or economic constraints but in the respect of the international law. Some experts define this type of power as *normative power*, focused on the respect of international norms while others call it *civilian power*”⁴⁸⁸ based on the principle that what really matters are not the rules and the norms but their nature. We believe they are right because Germany, led by Hitler, tried to impose a new world order inspired by the Nazi ideology. Stalin and Nicolae Ceausescu also wanted to promote a new world order in their own way, based on Marxism and national communism. Each of them claimed “universal” rules and norms, which proved to be nonsensical and poisonous for most nations. Norms and principles must guide the very behavior of states where the respect of human rights, the rule of law and the principles of democracy must be landmarks for all the players of the international political arena. When referring to this, a distinguished analyst remarked metaphorically, “*civilian power works like water on stone, not like napalm in the morning.*”⁴⁸⁹

Civilian power starts from the appeal generated by the word and the idea embodied in the rules supporting behavior. From this point of view, language and its forms of manifestation in communities play an important role for the *soft power* on the international scene. There is a causal connection between *power* and *discourse* both in the relationships among individuals and among states and

⁴⁸⁸ Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse, *Venus Approaching Mars? The EU as an Emerging Civilian World Power*, draft Prepared for the Bi-Annual Conference of the European Union Studies Association (EUSA), Montreal, Canada, May 17-19, 2007, online http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/polwiss/forschung/international/europa/arbeitspapiere/2009-11_Boerzel_Risse.pdf.

⁴⁸⁹ Iann Manners, *The Concept of Normative Power in World Politics*, Danish Institute for International Studies, may 2009, on line, www.diid.dk/ima; see Calypso Nicolaïdis, *This is my Eutopia: Narrative as Power* in *JCMS* 2002 Volume 40 Number, 4. pp. 767-92, on line http://www.jeanmonnetprogram.org/hauser/RHowseKNicolaïdis_HauserS04_06.pdf.

other stakeholders involved in disputes or cooperation. The confrontation between the USSR and the USA during the Cold War for the control of the African states followed the classical steps of military action. Through the force of political discourse, each of them tried to „push” the ideological frontier at the expense of the Other. Even when war was unavoidable, the two superpowers did not fight head-on but resorted to what scholars called “*war by proxy*”.

Words and communication during the unprecedented development of telecommunications have gained a crucial importance in the evolution of contemporary society. Iann Manners rightfully noticed, “*In other words, the distribution of power among actors, the forms of power on which actors can draw, and the types of actors that may exercise power in a given situation are constituted by discourse and are, at a particular moment, fixed. Over time, however, discourses evolve as this system of power privileges certain actors, enabling them to construct and disseminate texts. Depending on the dynamics of their transmission and consumption, these texts may influence the broader discourse and shape the discursive context over time*”⁴⁹⁰. When referring to this aspect, Manuel Castells stressed also that today “*the fundamental battle being fought in society is the battle over the minds of the people. The way people think determines the fate of norms and values on which societies are constructed. While coercion and fear are critical sources for imposing the will of the dominants over the dominated, few institutional systems can last long if they are predominantly based on sheer repression. Torturing bodies is less effective than shaping minds*”⁴⁹¹. That is absolutely possible because man as a social being lives in a signifying world. For him the problem of meaning does not arise because meaning exists as such, it becomes obvious as a «natural feeling of

⁴⁹⁰ Cynthia Hardy, *The Power of Discourse*, Keynote Presentation Second International Conference on Discourse, Communication and the Enterprise (DICOEN 2003) Vigo, Spain, November 12-14, 2003.

⁴⁹¹ Manuel Castells, *Communication, Power and Counter-power in the Network Society*, in “International Journal of Communication”, no. 1, 2007, pp. 238-266; on line <http://ijoc.org>.

understanding»⁴⁹². The translation of the world and of its objects into signs and man's ability to give them meaning can be achieved through language. Man hides and reveals himself through language at the same time. Language may guide his destiny and uncovers his existential frustrations and his nonsensical utopias. Man reveals his inner self through language. Language unfolds the outer reality as man does not explain himself through words but he participates and is present through his words. A speaker witnesses his own manifestation while his intangible interlocutor does not reveal himself and is always on the outside. For this reason, the spoken word does not have the force to make contacts but rather to be an act of self-identification. Man's cultural creation defines who he is. Man is his own language, because culture is the system of the signs system. Even when he thinks he speaks, man speaks according to the rules that govern the system he uses in order to speak. To know these rules definitely means to know society, and the meaning determinations of what has previously been known as «res cogitans»: the determinations that make us a system of thinking⁴⁹³ and thus make us understand the ways to control and manipulate man.

All these things make us understand the power of words in the communication process in society and the politicians' discourse over the public opinion one way or another according to a nation's or a predominant group's interests within society. Communication and politics are co-substantial. Communication links cannot be isolated from the power relations that depend on the material or symbolic power accumulated by the political institutions and the agents engaged in these links, due to their form and content. The most frequently used forms of communication for this purpose are the discourse and the propaganda with all their forms of manifestation and substitutes. The political discourse enables individuals/communities to come to agreements. However, we must not forget that the

⁴⁹² A. J. Greimas, *About sense*, Univers Printing House, Bucharest, 1975, p. 27.

⁴⁹³ Umberto Eco, *Le signe. Histoire et analyse d'un concept*, Editions Labor, Bruxelles, 1988, p. 255.

same system of communication can lead to conflicts and discontent in the local and international society. Propaganda explains/justifies a conflict but it can also energise a nation in difficulty when facing the aggression of another nation.

The role personalities have must not be overrated, although some influenced the historic destiny of their people through their discourse. The flow of questions could go on: how would have Central and South Eastern Europe looked like after the First World War if the American president had not delivered the famous speech in January 1918, which stated the legal right of states enslaved the Austro-Hungarian, Tsarist and Ottoman empires to fight for their unity.

A review of these theories and visions on power in contemporary international relations prove that the *perception on power* and especially the *politics of power* is not the same⁴⁹⁴, after all. Some theorists on international relations have researched the phenomena/reality and focused their analysis on the capacity, the structure and the forms it took⁴⁹⁵. Others hinged on revealing the means of the power exercise in the international system⁴⁹⁶. Let us not overlook another opinion dedicated to the study of power based on the “*state’s capacity to conscript and organise the society in order to extract or produce the intern resources and power necessary to answer foreign constraints*”⁴⁹⁷. Gerard Dussouy considered that today we must not

⁴⁹⁴ Constantin Hlihor, *Geopolitics and geostrategy in analysing contemporary international relations*, U. N. Ap. Publishing House, Bucharest, 2006, pp. 175-191.

⁴⁹⁵ See Stefano Guzzini, *cit.*, p. 63-71; Idem, *Power in International Relations: Concept Formation Between conceptual Analysis and Conceptual History*, in [http://www.isanet.org/noarchive/Analysing%20\(wc\)/20the%20concept%20of0ppower.pdf](http://www.isanet.org/noarchive/Analysing%20(wc)/20the%20concept%20of0ppower.pdf); Mark Rupert, *Class Powers and the Politics of Global Governance*, in <http://www.maxell.sgr.edu/maxpage/faculty/sherman/rupert/Globalgov.pdf>; Bertrand Russell, *Political Ideals. Power*, Antaios Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002.

⁴⁹⁶ Reynoud Bosch, *Exposing the Concept of Power*, online http://www.Sase.org/conf.2004/papers/bosch_reinaud.pdf.

⁴⁹⁷ Apud, Ionel Nicu Sava, *Security studies*, The Romanian Centre for Regional studies, Bucharest, 2005, p. 157.

perceive power as a monolithic block but as a multitude of possibilities⁴⁹⁸. In fact, Susan Strange acknowledged that international relations should take into account “*four distinct analytic power structures: the power to influence others’ ideas [the structure of knowledge], the power to influence the access to credits [the financial structure], the power to influence the future of their security [the security structure], the power to influence their chances to a better life as producers and consumers [the production structure]*”⁴⁹⁹.

Peter Morris defined power starting from the answer he gave to the question: why do actors need power? He uncovered at least three reasons in response⁵⁰⁰: practice, morals and evaluation of the context in which they perform. From the practice point of view, an actor has to know if he has the ability to capitalise on his opportunities in the dispute with other actors. In terms of morals, he must know the values that characterize his actions. He must also evaluate the nature of the social system to understand the broader context⁵⁰¹. The quoted researcher’s vision is close to the one expressed by K. Deutsch who said that it was not relevant to judge only the state’s power in international relations. The capacity to „manipulate interdependencies”⁵⁰² should be added too. Can this be done without resorting to communication regardless of the form it is achieved in the contemporary international environment? Alvin Toffler stated that “*power involves the use of violence, wealth and knowledge (to its largest extent) to make people act in a given way*”.⁵⁰³ Robert A. Dahl considered power “*the ability to make others do what they*

⁴⁹⁸ Gerard Dussouy *cit.work* p. 56.

⁴⁹⁹ Susan Strange, *Political Economy and International Relations*, in Martin Grrifiths *cit.work* p. 84.

⁵⁰⁰ Peter Morris, *Power: A Philosophical Analysis*, Manchester Univerity Press, Manchester, 1987, pp. 37-42.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰² www.geostrategie.ens.fr/international/CR-2005/Compte-rendu.Sabatie.pdf.

⁵⁰³ Alvin Toffler, *Powershift / Puterea în mișcare*, translation from the English language by Mihnea Columbeanu, Bucharest, 1995, p. 24.

otherwise would not do”⁵⁰⁴. The Neo Marxist School of international relations defined power in the terms of economic and financial confrontation. It was the outcome of the confrontation in the system of international relations between the *Centre*, which tended to be hegemony and the *Periphery* that contested the former’s domination.⁵⁰⁵ Gianfranco Poggi identified three forms of manifestation of power in the contemporary international relations: politics, economy and ideological and normative power.⁵⁰⁶

In the beginning of the last decade of XXth of the century, Edward Luttwak pointed out the essential changes that would follow in the content and the features of power at the end of the grand mutations form the contemporary society. Within globalization, Luttwak said, „*the languages and logics of inter-state rivalry are increasingly predicated on “the grammar of commerce”*”⁵⁰⁷. The professor emeritus and sociologist Ulrich Beck, in his turn, warned that we must rethink power as a phenomenon and as a characteristic of the classical and non-classical actors in the international arena related to the growth of economic interdependencies and the acceleration of the globalization processes. Under such circumstance „*The world economy represents a sort of mega power by report to the state; it can change the national and international rules*”⁵⁰⁸. This mega power must not be perceived and judged by classical standards. When a state resorted to force in order to impose/defend its interests, it quoted its legitimacy and lawful right to use its power

⁵⁰⁴ Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City*, Yale University Press, 1961; Apud Mihail E. Ionescu, cit. work, p. 11.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰⁶ Gianfranco Poggi, *Forms of power*, Polity Press, Oxford, 2001, p. 23.

⁵⁰⁷ Apud, Matthew Sparke, *Geopolitical Fears, Geo-economic Hopes and the Responsibilities of Geography*, in “Annals of the Association of American Geographers”, 1997, no. 2, pp. 338-349, online <http://faculty.washington.edu/sparke/FearHope.pdf>.

⁵⁰⁸ Ulrich Beck, *Repenser le pouvoir dans un monde globalisé*, in “Constructif”, no. 19, february 2008, on line, http://www.constructif.fr/Article_37_65_463/Repenser_le_pouvoir_dans_un_monde_globalise.html, accessed at 12 August 2009, 12.00.

potential. Ulrich Beck warned that “*The mega power is neither illegal nor illegitimate; it is Trans legal and modifies the rules of the national and international systems. The power of not investing is present everywhere. Globalization is not a choice. Nobody imposes it. Nobody conducts it, nobody launched it and nobody can stop it. It is a kind of organised irresponsibility. We continually look for a responsible person, someone to complain to. But there is nobody out there, no mail address, nobody at the other line*”⁵⁰⁹. This short review of opinions regarding the content of power proved that we are far from a general agreement on the matter. This is why we consider that an analysis of power and the way it develops on the international scene and the communication it involves can open new channels of communication and provide new approaches to understand the manner in which power manifests itself in the contemporary world.

Irrespective of the nature of the classical actor/state or trans/multinational corporation (non classical), the power rivalries in geopolitics behave as social relations because they are in a permanent economic or another type of competition. Every stakeholder wants to influence the other and to impose its own point of view/interests, under these circumstances. These interests appear in state official papers, in political statements and speeches on different occasions, in negotiations and economic transactions. Consequently, they are transmitted/negotiated directly or indirectly with all actors that participate in the cooperation/commercial relations and even in conflicting events. From this point of view, *power* can be defined according to the following relational formula: an actor A (state or non-state actor) has the ability to compel actor B to do something it does not want or is not interested in. This means that A controls B and can impose its political will and values, aspirations and its own image about the world⁵¹⁰. This type of actor has the means to write the rules of the game on the international scene and to impose the

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵¹⁰ Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, McMillan, London, 1974, p. 34.

international normative system. It can modify the rules, the laws and the norms that regulate the actors' behavior in the geopolitics field and thus the legitimacy the power exercise if it is in his best interests. In other words, in this type of power, action does not seek physical constraint to impose its will, but extremely fine psychosocial mechanisms that act over the respective actor's "mind". Power takes the shape of a political, doctrinarian-ideological or cultural influence⁵¹¹. This thing has become even more possible in today's world than in the XXth century because the media, in general, and television in particular, have acquired a growing role as communicators. Even if we do not agree completely with those who think that, "*What does not exist in the media does not exist in the public mind, even if it could have a fragmented presence in individual minds*"⁵¹², we must give them some credit, as well.

Within this type of power, the action exercised by a stakeholder (state or non-state) on another stakeholder is no longer classical – constraint/physical destruction – but non-classical developed into communication processes meant to alter and control what American experts call the *mental map*. The control of *mental map* is reached through the use of the *word weapon*. To this purpose, forms of communication with high power of influence from the media to propaganda, public diplomacy as strategic communication⁵¹³ are currently employed. They are the tools of mass communication that impose values, norms and the principles that regulate the relations among stakeholders of the international environment. Professor Teun A. Van Dijk from the University of Amsterdam considered that the exercise of this type of power meant "*ideological framework. This*

⁵¹¹ Apud Felix Berenskoetter, *Unity in Diversity? Power in World Politics* on line <http://archive.sgir.eu/uploads/Berenskoetter-turin%20paper%20power.pdf>.

⁵¹² Manuel Castells, *cit. work*, in *cit city*.

⁵¹³ Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Capatina, *Communication in international conflicts*, Comunicare.ro, Bucharest, 2008, p. 112; Gilbert Rist, ed., *Les mots du pouvoir. Sens et non-sens de la rhétorique internationale*, in "Nouveaux Cahiers de l'IUED", n°. 13, PUF, 2002, Paris, Genève.

*framework, which consists of socially shared, interest-related fundamental cognitions of a group and its members, is mainly acquired, confirmed, or changed through communication and discourse*⁵¹⁴.

Research in this area concluded what specialists termed as symbolic power. The potential of this type of power stems from the essence of knowledge itself and belongs to the treasure of culture and civilization. One of the best known specialists in the field, referred to symbolic power and said that, *"as instruments of knowledge and communication 'symbolic structures' can exercise a structuring power only because they themselves are structured. Symbolic power is a power of constructing reality and one which tends to establish a knowledge (gnoseological) order: the immediate meaning of the world"*.⁵¹⁵

The information targeted accurately through the mass media is as important as the power exercised through the classical means⁵¹⁶. At the height of the Cold War, both sides reached their decisions in the shadow of a gun loaded with pictures/information. If Nicolae Ceaușescu had understood the impact of the mass media revolution, if he had considered the role of mass media in the fall from power of the Philipino President Ferdinand Marcos⁵¹⁷ Romania might have witnessed "a velvet revolution", like most of the other communist countries⁵¹⁸. On the 21st of December 1989, when he wanted to speak in front of the crowds massed forcefully in the heart of the capital city, the communist leader did not understand that his message lacked the *force* and the *effect* of the lashing words he had addressed in the aftermath of the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet

⁵¹⁴ Teun A. Van Dijk, *Structures of Discourse and Structures of Power*, in "Communication Yearbook 12", pp. 18-59, online <http://www>.

⁵¹⁵ Apud, *Geopolitics of Information Technology*, on line <http://www.idi.ntnu.no/~letizia/eit2007/reports/product%20report2.pdf>.

⁵¹⁶ Alvin and Heidi Toffler, *cit. work*, p. 203.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 347-348.

⁵¹⁸ Constantin Hlihor, *Romania. Fall of communism and birth of democracy. 1989-2000*, University of Bucharest printing House, 2006, pp. 37-45.

troops in 1968. The international context had changed profoundly. The map of political values had changed on the political scene for the past 20 years. The values considered sacred in the collective mentality during the last decades – sovereignty, independence, non-interference in the internal affairs of another state etc – had eroded and were replaced by other values that imprinted peoples' mental maps. The Western world had won the *information and imagological war*⁵¹⁹ in their fight against totalitarian regimes of the communist type. The mental map of the Romanian citizen from 1989 had altered dramatically from the previous one of 1968. In this type of confrontations, victory was not won by physical elimination or conquest of the enemy and by the occupation of its sovereign territory. Victory came with the “occupation of the enemy’s mind” with those representations and convictions that turned it into an ally from an adversary⁵²⁰. This is one possible explanation of the fact that people did not perceive the so-called agents infiltrated by foreign powers as enemies of the state, as Ceausescu attempted to describe the participants at the popular revolt in his speech. Quite the opposite happened, Ceausescu himself was perceived as an enemy of the people. The Romanian collective mentality had witnessed a huge realignment of the binominal *fiend-foe* because of the *soft power*, implemented by the adversaries of the communist world.

The governments of the great powers and not only they alone, decided to invest even more in the development of the international mass communication and to work out proper strategies in this

⁵¹⁹ Loup Francart, *La guerre du sens – Pourquoi et comment agir dans les champs psychologiques*, in “Economica 2001”, Georges Soutou, *Quel renseignement pour le XXIe siècle?*” co-operative work, Lavauzelle, 2001; Jacques Baud, *La guerre asymérique ou la défaite du vainqueur*, Editions du Rocher, 2003.

⁵²⁰ Steven Lambakis, *Space Control in Desert Storm and Beyond*, Orbis, vol. 39, no. 3 (Summer 1995) on line http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq_pubs/surv8.pdf; *The United States in Lilliput: The Tragedy of Fleeting Space Power*, in “Strategic Review” Volume 24, nr. 1, Winter 1996.

domain⁵²¹, once people became aware of this change. Christian Salmon noticed that the phenomenon became largely familiar to scholars, too: „*historians, jurists, physicians, economists and psychologists have discovered the power that histories turned into reality.*”⁵²² Very much was at stake for a time when media are or tend to become global and attempt to control the information coming in or out of different countries and regions. Seen from this point of view, the power of communication is even stronger than the power of information because it sizes up the usefulness of information by the force of the rational argumentation. Some specialists admit that in nowadays public space „*There is the battle of histories and not a battle of ideas...*”⁵²³ A few days after the attacks of 11 September 2001 the leadership of the Pentagon met some Hollywood script-writers at the **Institute of Creative Technologies** in Los Angeles to set up a strategy of restoring the image of the USA damaged by the attacks. According to Karl Rove, one of the organizers of the meeting, its purpose was that “*the architects of the Scheherazade knew how to rebuild by proposing a new counter narration what the terrorists had destroyed*”⁵²⁴. The process of **storytelling** seems to become a mass phenomenon covering almost all the public domain from advertising to commerce, from power administration and „electoral battles” to the non-classical war and the post war reconstruction⁵²⁵. Robin Melo

⁵²¹ See Christian Salmon, *Storytelling. La machine à fabriquer des histoires et à formater les esprits*, Editions La Découverte, 2008.

⁵²² *Ibidem*, pp. 10-11.

⁵²³ *Ibidem*, p. 122.

⁵²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 163.

⁵²⁵ Evan Cornog, *The Power and the Story. How the Crafted Presidential Narrative Has Determined Political Success from George Washington to George W. Bush*, The Penguin Press, New York, 2004; Dan Bar-On, eds., *Bridging the Gap: Storytelling as a way to work through political and collective hostilities*. Korber-Stiftung, 2000; Jessica Senehi, *Constructive storytelling: Building Community, Building Peace*. Peace and Conflict Studies Journal, 2002; Robert Guy McKee, *Storytelling for Peace-Building: Toward Sustainable Cultural Diversity*, on line <http://www.gial.edu/GIALens/vol13-1/McKee-Storytelling.pdf>, accessed at 10 August 2009, 10.

from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater believed that storytelling was the oldest means of communication used by people to share their ideas and images because of their social or some other experience⁵²⁶. This is why this method of communication within the international relations has had such a great power in times of peace and in times of crises, as well. In his review of the power that storytelling had in rehabilitating a post-war conflict society, Grace Kyoon concluded that, „*Storytelling is one strategy for peace building that has the capacity to transcend cycles of violence and reach into the forgotten recesses of the human heart to appeal for peace. Stories have the powerful quality that they are non-threatening in nature and can step into a tense situation without having to put actors in a conflict in an awkward position*”⁵²⁷. Robert Guy McKee researched the effect of storytelling in the crisis areas and applied it to a region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. „*Storytelling for peace-building in Mangbetu (north-eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo) – he noted – is used to sketch and illustrate a simple model of the indigenous knowledge-sustainable development relationship.*”⁵²⁸

It is possible to witness such a phenomenon as a result of the development of media technologies and the multiplication of social psychology studies. It was not hard to reach an obvious conclusion: from all forms of influence that man applies on the attitudes and the behavior of another man *argumentation* is the only one that respects dignity, autonomy and the spiritual integrity of the speaker. It does no humiliate or constrain by the use of force, it does not corrupt or

⁵²⁶ Robin Melo, *The Power of Storytelling: How Oral Narrative Influences Children's Relationships in Classrooms*, online <http://www.ijea.org/v2n1/index.html>.

⁵²⁷ Grace Kyoon, *Storytelling and the Moral Imagination: Mothering Peace*, on line http://www.monitor.upeace.org/archive.cfm?id_article=583, accessed at 10 August 2009, 11.30.

⁵²⁸ Robert Guy McKee, *Storytelling for Peace-Building: Toward Sustainable Cultural Diversity*, on line <http://www.gjal.edu/GIALens/vol3-1/McKee-Storytelling.pdf>, accessed at 10 August 2009, 10.

threaten but it induces a certain idea, a hypotheses, an attitude, a decision or programme to the free will of human consciousness. Argumentation addresses reason and soul; it presents the speaker with new motifs or supports to make him accept a new thesis, a new programme of valuable judgement. It is a form of inter-human communication, a transfer of ideas or beliefs through discourse, through the spoken or written word and it challenges a free expression of the speaker's opinion.

The power of words cannot materialize in the international relations outside the communication processes irrespective of the means or technique used. "*People*", the well known linguist M.M. Bahtin remarked, "*understand the world according to them and their whole self existence is oriented towards the others' world and language.*"⁵²⁹ In the communication process, the word/sign proves its power over the others. Ivana Markova tried to prove this by analyzing an excellent work by V. Havel⁵³⁰. She studied a scene from the everyday life of the Czech society under the communist regime during the time of the so-called *normalization* imposed by the Soviets after the failure of the Prague Spring in August 1968, narrated by the former Czech president. A grocer, a vegetables seller, displayed the Marxist slogan "*workers from all countries unite*" in the window of his shop. I. Maronkova concluded that the power of the message did not reach the customers and the pedestrians. They were only interested in the quality of the products and the services offered by the grocer and not in his political beliefs. The message protected the grocer. He tried to convince the leading communist authorities in Czechoslovakia that "*I am grocer X and I am here and I know what I have to do. I behave the way I have to. I am a trustworthy person and I must not be blamed. I surmise and I have the right to lead a tranquil life*"⁵³¹.

⁵²⁹ Ivana Markova, *cit. work*, p. 131.

⁵³⁰ V. Havel, *The Power of Powerless*, Vintage Books, New-York, 1992.

⁵³¹ Ivana Markova, *cit. work.*, p. 163.

Quite often, a similar behavior may be encountered in the international world. What is relevant from this point of view is the way the leaders of the communist parties from the Soviet camp reacted and approached the political events in Poland at the beginning of the 1980s during a meeting of the heads of states and parties from the Warsaw Pact on December the 5th 1980. At the summit, the Kremlin leader pronounced the Polish crisis a very serious drawback for the whole socialist community and stated that it was “*Extremely important to re-establish control of the Polish United Labour Party on the means of mass information*”⁵³². The speeches delivered by the heads of states and parties present at the meeting relayed these ideas in a more or less clear language. It was one of the ways that submission displayed in front of hegemony even if the official rhetoric words like independence or sovereignty never failed to be quoted⁵³³.

A very important problem for the analysis of geopolitics is the measurement of power and the way it is distributed/redistributed in international relations. Analysts who believe that power in international relations cannot be measured⁵³⁴ but can be appraised are right. The tools devised for that purpose depend on the concept that the analyst deems appropriate to define power. It is ultimately a choice conditioned by a personal perspective. It is an activity that yields to relative results but no country can succeed without it. No state can act in the realm of regional and international relations without some quantitative or qualitative device to measure power. Studies on measurement of National Power are not recent and cover many countries. In 1741, the German statistician Johann Peter

⁵³² Leonid Ilici, *Brejnev's speech at the meeting of the heads of state and party of the participating countries to the Warsaw Pact*, Moscow, 5 December 1980, in Petre Opreș, *The Polish Crisis from the beginning of the '80. Reaction of the Romanian Communist Party*, Printing House of the University of petrol-Gas of Ploiești, 2008, p. 151.

⁵³³ See the speeches delivered by the Romania, Hungarian, Czech, Eastern-Germany, Bulgarian and Polish communist leaders, in Petre Opreș, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-161.

Süßmilch concluded that “if a country had three times more inhabitants than another, it is three times, more powerful, safer and more prestigious or the splendour of the smaller country is three times smaller”⁵³⁵.

One of the most influential measurement patterns was developed by Ray S. Cline⁵³⁶ who started to introduce some qualitative elements together with the regular quantitative ones. In his view, the *national power* was the outcome of the sum of the “critical mass” of a certain country (“population” plus “territory”), “economic resources” and “military resources” multiplied by the sum of “strategic purpose” and “the national will”⁵³⁷. He tried to calculate the national power that could be perceived analyzing a number of critical factors including population, the military power, military capabilities, the national will or the strategic purposes considering the following formula: $Pp = (C + E + M) \times (S + W)$. The elements of the equation are quantitative and qualitative: Pp= the power perceived; C= the critical mass (population, territory, positioning). It is not only the simple number of inhabitants; it also includes their skills and education. E= economic abilities (e.g. G.D.P.) M= military capacity (e.g. military personnel, defense budget); S= strategic scope (objectives and scopes); W=will (popular support for the scopes). This model makes it hard to size up quantitative elements such as the popular support, for instance.

⁵³⁴ Stefano Guzzini, *On the measure of power and the power of measure in international relations*, in DIIS Working Paper, 2009:28, p. 6-8, on line, http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/WP2009/WP2009-28_measure_of_power_international_relations_web.pdf, accessed at 25 March 2010, at 21.00.

⁵³⁵ Nathalie T. Serrao, Dr. Waldimir Longo, *Exploratory Study of the Relevance of Scientific and Technological Capabilities on National Power*, on line <http://saopaulo2011.ipso.org/sites/default/files/papers/paper-614.pdf>, accessed at 23 March 2010, 22.00.

⁵³⁶ Ray S. Cline, *The Power of Nations in the 1990s: A Strategic Assessment*. University Press of America, Lanham, MD, 1994.

⁵³⁷ Apud, Nathalie T. Serrao, Dr. Waldimir Longo, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

Ashley J. Tellis, Janice Bially, Christopher Layne, Mellisa McPherson, Jerry M. Sollinger identified three dimensions of analysis in a much appreciated study. The first referred to “national resources”: “human resources”, “available capital”, “physical resources” (geography, territory), “entrepreneurship” and “technology”. “*National performance*” was considered the second dimension, which influenced and was influenced by the former. It amalgamated the basic mechanisms for the transformation of resources (latent power) into tangible instruments of power (usable power). The third dimension – “the military capability” – sought to identify the clear signs of National Power through the Armed Forces’ proficiency in combat, which was, according to the authors, the most important manifestation of a state’s power⁵³⁸, according to the quoted authors. The work of Ashley Tellis and his colleagues identified the way national resources or capabilities were transformed or converted into more usable power, primarily military power through state processes. The Tellis approach still remained in the realm of material capabilities, although it touched slightly what might be called the *power-in-being*. The term referred to the power that could be employed but it did not envisage the problem of power as the capacity to reach specific ends resulting from specific circumstances. It also searched beyond the concept of state as a “container of capability” able to visualise ideas, organization, and politics. The actual process of applying the framework to states relies on many data, and it is most relevant to focus on the most important ones.

The models of analysis described centred mainly on the classical stakeholders. States, especially the great powers, continue to dominate the power equation with their military capacity and the possibility to mobilise all the resources that the society has, in case of need. A good balance of power cannot be assessed if we do not include the non-state actors, regardless the formula we apply. There

⁵³⁸ Ashley J. Tellis, Janice Bially, Christopher Layne, Mellisa McPherson, Jerry M. Sollinger, *Measuring National Power in the Postindustrial Age Analyst Handbook*, Santa Monica, RAND, 2000, pp. 35-51.

is no geopolitical area where states fight or cooperate for their interests or cooperate where great financial or trading international and multinational corporations could possibly are not present.

These Non-State Actors can brandish their power broadly in three ways⁵³⁹: (1) *decisional power* in terms of policymaking and political influence in a country of interest. The case of the IMF or of the World Bank may prove the point. The two organisations do not have large armies but can control, in power terms, several countries that have impressive armies and arsenals of force; (2) *discourse power* in terms of framing/reframing of discourses; and (3) *regulatory power* in terms of rule-making and setting standards. One of these kinds of actors are the private credit-rating agencies, whose role and influence gained in importance with the rise of private capital flows and the recent international financial crises. The demand for risk assessments of national governments' ability to meet their foreign engagements – known as “sovereign credit ratings” – rose sharply as more governments with widely varying default risks, started to borrow on the international bond markets. More recently, private firms, operating in risky host countries, have also been accessing foreign bond markets and foreign investors have shown interest in domestic-currency bond markets. The result was a growing interest in the general risk evaluation of several countries. Two of the best-known private sector credit-rating agencies – Moody's Investors Service and Standard and Poor's, both American – have done these assessments for many decades⁵⁴⁰. That is one way non-state stakeholders can influence directly the sense of capital movement in the international politics and can guide a classical player to change profoundly the meaning of the relations it developed with another classical actor. The geopolitics of the XXIst century cannot be understood if only the classical stakeholders'

⁵³⁹ Abul Barkat, *Role of Non State Actors in the WTO: Improving Relationship Modalities*, on line, www.wto.org/.../session03_pres_barkat_e.d.

⁵⁴⁰ Irfan ul Haque, *Non-state Actors and Global Governance*, on line, <http://www.g24.org/Workshops/haque.pdf>, accessed at 12 December 2011.

contribution is considered, as the XIXth and the XXth century analysts used to do.

3.3. Interest in geopolitical rivalries between the actors of the international environment

The concept of interest is very important for postmodern theory of geopolitics, aside from the concept of power. Without this concept, a good understanding of the way great state and non-state stakeholders perform in the space of the international politics is almost impossible. The ways stakeholders behave in the system of contemporary international relations has diversified tremendously in the orientation, attitude and intensity they manifest. Their degree of engagement to solve international problems can vary from maximum to minimum, down to zero implication. For everyone, the 1991 Persian Gulf crisis was a major issue, but the degree of involvement differed. The USA and its allies acted directly to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, while China, for example, a permanent member of the UN Security Council and one of the major world powers acted on the diplomatic front only. Why? The great diplomat and political analyst Henry Kissinger, gave one possible answer. In his memoirs he noted that what mobilises a state is, among other things, its concern to solve its *national interest*⁵⁴¹. The historic analysis confirmed the American analyst's conclusion, especially for the periods when the predominant stakeholder of the international life was the state.

From the perspective of a geopolitical analysis, it is not possible to draw a coherent picture of a geopolitical domain only by researching the interests of classical actors. In the international life of today, not only the number, but also the importance of actors has

⁵⁴¹ Apud, Joseph Nye Jr, *The American National Interest and Global Public Goods*, on line <http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/International%20Affairs/2002/inta248.pdf>, accessed at 12 August 2011, 22.00.

changed radically. More and more, *non-state actors* come first. These actors are important because they „act as transmission belts, making government policies in various countries more sensitive to one another”⁵⁴² and not just for the simple reason that they pursued their own interests. On the other hand, a large number of these actors are involved in geopolitical rivalries especially in energy production, environment and markets. Some real business giants avoid the rules and regulations that apply to traditional stakeholders – the states – and their interests may become incompatible with the national interests of the classical stakeholder in certain cases. The interplay of geopolitical and economic interests is most evident in multi-billion dollar deals concluded by major global arms manufacturers like Lockheed, Raytheon, Dassault, Saab, Tupolev etc. Global military expenditure and arms trade was the single largest spending market in the world, totalling over \$950 billion in 2003 according to the estimates published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). The US and the European corporations receive enormous tax reductions and government subsidies in their arms trading⁵⁴³. Many scholars underlined that „*The growth of so many kinds of non-state actors challenges and even weakens the “state-centric” concept of international politics and replaces it with a “transnational” system in which relationships are more complex. These organizations changed the international environment*”.⁵⁴⁴ Political speeches or geopolitical analyzes associated this fact to

⁵⁴² Apud, Gustaaf Geeraerts, *Analyzing Non-State Actors in World Politics*, on line, <http://asrudiancenter.wordpress.com/2009/02/09/analyzing-non-state-actors-in-world-politics/>, accessed at 12 August 2011, 22.30

⁵⁴³ Dr. Deepak Sethi, *The impact of geopolitical factors on international business*, on line <http://www.freepatentsonline.com/article/International-Journal-Business-Strategy/178220126.html> accessed at 12 August 2011, 22.30.

⁵⁴⁴ Muhittin Ataman, *The Impact of Non-State Actors on World Politics: A Challenge to Nation-States*, in “Alternatives, Turkish Journal of International Relations”, vol. 2, no 1, Spring 2003, on line, <http://www.alternativesjournal.net/volume2/number1/ataman2.htm>, accessed at 12 August 2011, 23.00.

terms like the *national interest* and some derivatives such as “specific interest”, “global interest”, “regional interest”, “security interest”, “economic interest”, “political interest”, “ideology interest” etc.

The concept of national interest is quite uncertain and its meaning depends on the context of its usage. Henceforth, it is not possible to give it a universally accepted interpretation. Hans Morgenthau who approached the concept in his various writings also used the term „*national interest*” in different ways and assigned it a variety of meanings. Such a diverse understanding of the purport for a notion of wide interest is extremely important for scholars. At the level of the political practice such an occurrence cannot prevent a state to promote and follow the accomplishment of its goals at a certain point in time even if there has been a large debate about the change of the national interest into an international matter. One of the most enthusiastic supporters of this trend was Tony Blair. In a speech delivered in Chicago in 1999, he said that the globalization processes altered profoundly the international world and globalization „*is not just economic – it is also a political and security phenomenon. We live in a world where isolationism has ceased to have a reason to exist. By necessity we have to co-operate with each other across nations... We are all internationalists now, whether we like it or not... We cannot turn our backs on conflicts and the violation of human rights within other countries if we want still to be secure*”⁵⁴⁵. The financial crisis, which besieged Wall Street in 2008 updated the debate about the connections between the national interest and the states’ need to act united in order to solve the great issues of the contemporary world. This was also a matter including the EU decisions. At the European Summit of the Heads of states and government from the beginning of December 2011, the British Prime Minister, David Cameron said „*I am absolutely clear that it is possible to be both a full, committed*

⁵⁴⁵ See Norman Fairclough, Blair’s contribution to elaborating a new ‘doctrine of international community’, on line, www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/staff/norman/Blair.doc, accessed at 12 August 2011, 23.00.

*and influential member of the European Union but to stay out of arrangements where they do not protect our interests. That is what I have done at this Council. That is what I will continue to do as long as I am prime minister. It is the right course for this country and I commend this statement to the House.”*⁵⁴⁶

From this point of view, it is very important for the geopolitical analysis to have a good definition of the stakeholders' interests and of the one they have for a certain region or area of the planet. Both Henry Kissinger and Robert Art stressed that the identification of national interests was crucial for the development of the policy and strategy of any stakeholder, state or non-state. Interests are the foundation and the starting point for the political directives. They help to answer questions concerning the importance of a certain policy trend. National interests also help to determine the types and amounts of national power employed as a venue to implement a designated policy or strategy⁵⁴⁷.

As for the debates on interest, they are not typical of the contemporary times only. According to some scholars, the national interest “*traces its roots at least back to the pessimistic realism of Machiavelli in the 15th century. As such, it represents a repudiation of earlier Western sources in Hellenic idealism, Judeo-Christian biblical morality, and the teachings of medieval churchmen such as Thomas Aquinas. You may have splendid moral goals, argued Machiavelli, but without sufficient power and the willingness to use it, you will accomplish nothing*”⁵⁴⁸. While states were the main units

⁵⁴⁶ *EU summit: Cameron tells Commons he acted in UK's interest*, on line <http://www.euronews.net/2011/12/12/eu-summit-cameron-tells-commons-he-acted-in-uk-s-interest/>, accessed at 19 December 2011, 10.00.

⁵⁴⁷ Apud, Alan G. Stolberg, *Crafting National Interests in the 21st Century*, a paper presented at the International Studies Association West conference in San Francisco, California, September 28-29, 2007, on line, [se1.isn.ch/.../Files/.../Chapter_1.pdf](http://www.isn.ch/.../Files/.../Chapter_1.pdf), accessed at 19 December 2011, 10.30.

⁵⁴⁸ Michael G. Roskin, *National interests: From Abstraction to Strategy*, on line, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub356.pdf>, accessed at 19 December 2011, 10.30

of international politics, each of them tried to know/find out what could determine their orientation towards a certain space or another player. Without such knowledge no diplomacy, cooperation or the choice of conflict could have developed at a certain time. Some scientists decided to differentiate between the national interests (interests involved in the foreign relations of an actor) and the public interests (interests related to events happening inside the frontiers of a certain stakeholder) ⁵⁴⁹.

In the domestic field, these may be viewed as a way of structuring the needs from the perspective of the life and the activity inside a particular community, united into a form of political organising which is the national state. In a study published in the review War College of the USA, P. H. Liotta stressed that the national interest “*reflects the people’s identity – geographical identity and its culture, political likes, social consensus and its level of prosperity*” ⁵⁵⁰. Stephen D. Krasner defined the national interest in the same manner and he believed that this concept could mean “*the preferences of the decision-makers at central level*”, “*the objectives that refer to society’s general scopes, in long run, very important in justifying their classification as national interests*” ⁵⁵¹.

Taking as reference the foreign political context and the behavior that states employ in the relations among themselves, Hans Morgenthau, one of the best known classical supporters of realism, noted that the national interest “*...seen objectively, as a reality independent from the reflection, national interest, can be understood as the basis of possible behavior whose realization in a concrete historic moment maximises the existential interests of the state*

⁵⁴⁹ Alan G. Stolberg, *cit. cit. work*.

⁵⁵⁰ P. H. Liotta, *To Die For: National Interests and Strategic Uncertainties and Strategic Uncertainties*, in “Parameters”, US Army War College Quarterly, Volume XXX, no. 2, 2000, pp. 46-57.

⁵⁵¹ Apud, Dr. Petre Duțu, Cristina Bogzeanu, *National interests and use of national power tools for their promotion and defense. The case of Romania*, Printing House of the National Defense University „Carol I”, Bucharest, 2010, p. 12.

(*security, power, prosperity*)”⁵⁵². He defined interest as power because it belonged to “*politics core and is not affected by instances such as time and space*”. Henceforth, if all states were considered “*as political entities that follow their own interest of power, we shall be able to make justice to everyone twofold: we shall be able to judge other nations, as we judge our nation and elaborate the strategies that observe other nations*” interests and thus defend and promote our own interests”⁵⁵³. Hans Morgenthau’s beliefs stemmed from historic empiricism, like those of other theorists of the school of political realism. He noted, accordingly, that these ideas were watched in action starting with the ancient times down to our days. Thucydides, for example, said that the identity of interests was the safest connection between states and individuals. In the XIXth century lord Salisbury noticed, “*the only connection that lasts between the nations is the absence of different interests*”⁵⁵⁴. The school of realistic thinking founded on the premise that, as a tool for the policymaker, the national interest was meant to identify what served best the interest of a state in its relations with other states. The term “best” was defined in relation to power and security. Realists viewed national security as the ultimate foundation of a state’s national interest able to fend the threat of anarchy and constraints on sovereign states that were part of the international system. As a result, the state must endeavour to accumulate power and to ensure security. The result was a lack of security for stakeholders that were not members of the system.

In contrast, morals-based interests were defined “*more broadly to encompass intangible values like human rights, freedom from economic deprivation, and freedom from disease.*” While the military power could still be the national power element of choice,

⁵⁵² Apud, Stefano Guzzini, *Realism in international relations and the international political economics*, the European Institute, Bucharest, 2000, p. 88.

⁵⁵³ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁵⁴ See, Constantin Hlihor, *Geopolitics and geostrategy*, p. 223.

morality-based interests would promote concepts such as “*the values of national self-determination and economic egalitarianism.*”⁵⁵⁵ In similar terms, Martha Finnemore wrote, “*State interest is defined in the context of international norms and beliefs as what is good and welcome. [...] are often the results of foreign threats and home pressure. The state interests are defined by international values that structure them and give a meaning to international political life.*”⁵⁵⁶

From the postmodern geopolitical point of view, interest may be approached from a three-prong perspective. In the *concrete* reality generated by the interactions that take place following power rivalries at a global, regional and local level interest is the guiding line that makes a stakeholder act in a particular space and in no other. In *geopolitical theory and analysis*, interest becomes a tool to measure and identify to a certain degree the extent of an actor’s involvement in solving a problem of a certain region. From this point of view, James Rosenau was right when he concluded that *interest* was twofold. It was the researcher’s analysis tool in the review of the contemporary political phenomenon and a tool for action in the stakeholders’ hands. “*As tool of analysis – wrote James Rosenau – it is used to describe, explain and assess the sources of a nation’s foreign politics or its adequate nature. As instrument of political action, it is a means to suggest, justify or blame politics*”⁵⁵⁷

In *propaganda geopolitics cartography*, the description of national interest can very well become a tool for manipulation of national or international interests. In a world dominated more and more by the mass media, the “cannons” fully loaded with

⁵⁵⁵ James F. Miskel, *National Interests: Grand Purposes or Catchphrases*, in “Naval War College Review”, autumn 2002, p. 97.

⁵⁵⁶ Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 1, apud, Simona Neumann, *Traditional Security*, on line, xa.yimg.com/kq/groups/24458889/2036403783/name/Security, accessed at 19 December 2011, 10.30.

⁵⁵⁷ Apud Sergiu Tămaș, *cit. work*, p. 166.

information and pictures can easily persuade the public opinion about the “fairness” of its action and not necessarily about the truth and scopes that determined that specific action. For this reason, the open letter written by the famous American analysts of international relations -Robert Jarvis, Robert J. Art, George C. Herring, Jack S. Levy, Thomas C. Schelling, John J. Mearsheimer, Stephen Walt etc. was quite relevant because it stated that, “*As scholars of international security affairs, we recognize that war is sometimes necessary to ensure our national security or other vital interests. We also recognize that Saddam Hussein is a tyrant and that Iraq has defied a number of U.N. resolutions. But military force should be used only when it advances the U.S. national interests. War with Iraq does not meet this standard*”⁵⁵⁸

The classification and evaluation *criteria* of the interests promoted by actors in the international environment are numerous and very diverse. Hierarchy is important not only because it can be used as a framework for systematic evaluation of national interests, but also because it can also provide “*a way to distinguish immediate from long-range*” interest concerns using time as a standard⁵⁵⁹. According to the reference criteria, a wide range of classifications becomes available. Hans Morgenthau classified interests by four criteria. According to their importance and intensity, he identified two levels of national interest, the vital and the less vital. In terms of duration, there were temporary and permanent interests and according to the general nature, there were specific and general interests. It is worth noticing that Hans Morgenthau did not leave out their compatibility with other actors and from this perspective, interests were complementary and conflicting.

From a geopolitical point of view, at least two elements are relevant to establish the origin and the dimension of interests: the

⁵⁵⁸ *War with Iraq is not in America's National Interest*, on line, <http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/P0012.pdf>, accessed at 19 December 2011, 16.00.

⁵⁵⁹ P.H. Liotta, *cit. work*, Alan G. Stolberg, *cit. work*.

actors' nature and the geopolitical nature of the space of interest. From an actors' point of view, interests can be primarily classified according to the purpose they have in the international relations and they can be *national, economic, political, territorial, ideological, and strategic*. In the geopolitical analysis, the adoption of Morgenthau's model is useful because it rested on levels given by priorities identified by stakeholders at a certain time in their behavior and in the international relations. *Vital interests* were those related to the state security, independence and sovereignty and could not be negotiated, according to the supporters of the realistic theory. The breach of these interests led to war. The secondary interests were "hard to define", but could be negotiated and highly used in the international relations as part of the distinct art of compromise⁵⁶⁰.

Donald Nuechterlein's prioritization of national interests rested on the intensity of the reference frameworks currently found in public debates. He placed those interests essential to national survival at the top of the hierarchy followed by vital interests, major interests, and peripheral interests, in that order. Survival interests generated little discussion due to their nature and relative clarity. In contrast, the term "vital interest" was used with such frequency and applied so irregularly that it had been rendered almost meaningless by the many ways in which it was used. The concept itself, however, preserved a significant importance, particularly in the US after the Cold War, where interests of lesser intensity were frequently pursued. No nation must ever forget that some interests are above others and accept it may sacrifice less important interests for the sake of the essential ones, at a certain time⁵⁶¹.

⁵⁶⁰ P. H. Liotta, *cit. work, in cit. city*.

⁵⁶¹ Apud, Christopher D. Carey, *The Changing Nature of Credibility: From Interest to Instrument to Vital Interest or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love "the Box"*, on line <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA444257>, accessed at 24 October 2010, at 15.00.

Researcher Ronald W. Jones from the University of Rochester noted that new interest categories emerged in the international environment that opposed the existing ones promoted by the classical stakeholder – the state, as the process of globalization and the affirmation of non-state actors accelerated. He defined this type of interests as *private*⁵⁶² and estimated that they might develop rapidly while important domains of national economy went private in the developing or emergent countries, such as the postal services, telecommunications, energy production and distribution, and finance.

At the level of institutions mandated to produce expertise and other supporting elements needed by political elites to define and legitimate their interests through national strategies and politics, interests that a state may pursue at a certain time have a different meaning; they are more application-oriented and more pragmatic. **The US Army War College** implemented a methodology meant to outline the level and the intensity of interests in the American society. According to the US Army War College „*Nations, like individuals, have interests – derived from their innate values and perceived purposes – which motivate their actions. National interests are a nation's perceived needs and aspirations in relation to its international environment. U.S. national interests determine our involvement in the rest of the world. They provide the focus of our actions, and are the starting point for determining national objectives and the formulation of national security policy and strategy. Interests are expressed as desired end states. Interest statements do not include verbs or action modifiers.*”⁵⁶³

⁵⁶² Ronald W. Jones, *Private Interests and Government Policy in a Global World*, on line, <http://www.tinbergen.nl/uvatin/00051.pdf>, accessed at 24 October 2010, at 16.00.

⁵⁶³ H. Richard Yarger and George F. Barber, eds, *The U.S. Army War College Methodology for Determining Interest and Levels of Intensity*, on line, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/army-usawc/natinte.htm>, accessed at 12 February 2010, 23.00.

By using this methodology, American military experts concluded that US national interests could be classified „into four categories and three levels of intensity.”⁵⁶⁴ In the American specialists’ opinions, the interests that the four groups were based on were grouped as follows⁵⁶⁵:

(1) Defense of the Homeland covered the protection against an attack on the territory and people of a nation-state in order to ensure the survival and the preservation of the fundamental values and the political systems.

(2) Economic Prosperity referred to the achievement of certain conditions in the international environment that may guarantee the economic wellbeing of a nation.

(3) Promotion of Values provided the legitimacy or the expansion of the fundamental values of the nation such as free trade, human rights, democracy etc.

(4) A favorable World Order focused on the objectives of those states that promote the values and the fundamental national purposes, such as stability and democratic governments under favorable circumstances.

The usage of the analysis method based on intensity/degree of determination that drives a stakeholder to pursue the accomplishment of its interests of the four groups helped the same scholars to conclude that the US interests could be summed up in three distinct categories:⁵⁶⁶

(1) Vital – they will have immediate consequences for critical national interests if unfulfilled/ensured.

(2) Important – they will eventually damage national interests, if unfulfilled.

(3) Peripheral – the damage they produce will cause quite harmless consequences to damage severely national interests.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibidem.*

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibidem.*

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibidem.*

Romania experienced similar attempts to define and analyze the power factors in the pursuit of national interests. According to the experts from the Centre of Strategic Studies of the „Carol I” National Defense University, Romania’s national interests were stated in official documents such as The White Chart (2003), Romania’s National Security Strategy (2007), and the National Defense Strategy⁵⁶⁷. They all defined the concepts that could offer a global projection that the Romanian political elite worked out and structured the national interests at a certain time. The constitution was placed at the foundation of the basic guidelines that the Romanian state followed. The first article of the Constitution defined its basic interest „*Romania is a national, sovereign, independent and undividable state*”⁵⁶⁸. This statement of Romania’s vital interests was the basis for the definition of the next categories of national interests that considered the sources of the national power, and the relationships that the Romanian state entertained with other stakeholders from the international environment, as well as the convergencies and divergencies of interests, the other players’ capacity to influence Romania’s behavior in the international arena. Romania’s National Security Strategy listed the basic national interests that were not ordered according to their present or future relevance⁵⁶⁹:

- a) Complete and meaningful integration into the EU;
- b) Full responsibility as a NATO member;
- c) The preservation of the integrity, unity, sovereignty, independence and non-division of the Romanian state under the specific conditions of joining the European construction;
- d) Development of a competitive market economy;

⁵⁶⁷ Petre Duțu, Cristina Bogzeanu, *cit. work.*, pp. 42-64.

⁵⁶⁸ The Romanian Constitution, **The official Journal**, Part I no. 767 as of 31/10/2003.

⁵⁶⁹ *Romania’s national security strategy*, on line, <http://www.presidency.ro/static/ordine/SSNR/SSNR.pdf>, accessed at 14 March 2010, 18.00.

e) A profound modernization of the education system and an efficient enhancement of the human scientific and technological potential;

f) A rise in the citizens' well-being, living standards and health;

g) Promotion and protection of the national culture, identity and the spiritual life of Romanians within the framework opened by the unitary European process.

The identification of such interests became rather indefinite in operational terms for a geopolitical analysis. Which were the benchmarks to prove that the interest identified in the Strategy and placed at the top – complete and meaningful integration into the EU – could be actually fulfilled? How could a researcher measure real integration? Which of the EU member states could or could not be regarded as fully integrated? Similar problems of measurement and judgement persisted in other interests stated in official documents. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Romanian diplomacy was perceived as unable to support the national interests both inside the EU and in other international bodies and organisations by the public opinion at certain stages.

The comprehension and mainly the use of a certain methodology of analysis of the national interests are required in geopolitical games that take place in integrational spaces such as the EU. Obviously, the Union follows an over-all interest in agreement with the interests of all its members. Events produced by the financial crisis may have led to disputes, which could not be overcome through negotiations, as was the case of Great Britain. In certain experts' opinion, the negotiations related to the budget and the mechanisms of the redistribution of the EU finance⁵⁷⁰ could remain a high hurdle difficult to pass when financial national interests came on the agenda.

In the postmodern geopolitics, the power resources identification in the achievement of the interests set forth by a certain

⁵⁷⁰ See Mojmir Mrak, *Financial Perspective 2007-2013: Domination of National Interests*, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/policy_advisers/conference_docs/mrak_m_rant_dom_national_interests.pdf, accessed at 10 August 2013, 19.00.

stakeholder for a shorter or longer period is differently approached if compared to classical geopolitics. If a state presents an interest that may appeal or even win over the society/community/group on behalf of whom it has been proclaimed but it fails to identify the tools/ways and the resources to accomplish it then that particular stakeholder supports baseless ideals and groundless national aspirations – if it is a state – or unrealistic temporary strategic objectives – if it is the case of a non-state player, such as a financial multinational corporation. Romanians, like most of the small and middle-sized populations from Southeastern Europe, supported national unity as a fundamental national interest long before it was actually accomplished. In fact, fundamental objectives turned into basic national interests in conjunction with favorable international contexts. This very fact proved that national interests were connected to the use of national instruments of power in their promotion and preservation.

The connection between national interests (the independent variable) and the national power instruments (the dependent variable) the mutual link between the two variables, from out perspective. Petre Duțu and Cristina Bogzeanu concluded that the intensity of this connection could be estimated with the help of a tool called the *correlation coefficient*, but they did not explain the way it may have been used to measure such a connection. A parametre established similarities between interests and national power tools. This coefficient can reach values between + one, which equals a powerful relation and – one that is a strongly negative relation. If the coefficient reaches positive values, there is a straightforward connection between the two, meaning that the use of the national power instruments was profoundly profitable⁵⁷¹ if national interests were successfully promoted and preserved in international relations with activities, actions and flexible, creative and efficient measures.

When a state/nation's aims surpass power resources (military, economic), then two cases occur, from a geopolitical point of view.

⁵⁷¹ Petre Duțu, Cristina Bogzeanu, *cit. work*, pp. 50-52.

First, the aims become hegemony interests, which belong to imperialistic behavior from the international relations perspective. Second, a resigned and weary behavior is overruled by the interest of preserving the status quo. By definition, hegemony operates along political guidelines and requires geopolitical analysis and expertise to preserve its power and its structure. Geopolitical theories view the planet Earth as a natural/geographical entity as such. The world, by contrast, is a political/historic entity produced, accomplished and built artificially. Consequently, it is essential to understand that geopolitics is not a given fact but rather a human construction erected by or for hegemony. Both regional and universal hegemony can take over two ways of manifestation, at least. It can act either as a legitimate and accepted power or as hegemony without legitimacy⁵⁷². In this sense, it is relevant the case of the two superpowers during the Cold War. Most useful is the example of the two superpowers of the Cold War. The USA was perceived as a provider of prosperity and stability for Western Europe while the USSR produced adversity and a sort of tolerance hard to accept.

3.4. Perception as a tool in postmodern geopolitical analysis

The study of perception in international political analysis was an old and constant concern for experts and analysts of international relations⁵⁷³. In geopolitical analysis, it has been a more recent case that belongs to the neoclassical school (postmodern geopolitics and

⁵⁷² Martin Griffiths, *Beyond the Bush Doctrine: American Hegemony and World Order*, in "Australasian Journal Of American Studies", on line http://www.anzasa.arts.usyd.edu.au/a.j.a.s/Articles/1_04/Griffiths.pdf, accessed at 20 August 2010, 19.00.

⁵⁷³ See, Robert Jervis, *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1976; Peter Gourevitch, *The second image reversed: the international sources of domestic politics*, in "International Organization", Volume 32, Issue 04 September 1978, pp 881-912; Christian Davenport, *Multi-Dimensional Threat Perception and State Repression: An Inquiry into Why States Apply Negative Sanctions*, in "American Journal of Political Science", Vol. 39, No. 3 (Aug., 1995), pp. 683-713.

critical geopolitics) regardless of the method and the paradigm employed. The use for perception as a tool for knowledge was determined by the need of better comprehending reality in a geographical space where classical and non-classical actors disputed/cooperated in order to promote/fulfil their interests. In the Anglo-Saxon and French classical geopolitics, the picture of a region (the Heartland, the Rimland etc.) was a constant. Scholars of the two schools reached rigid patterns of interpretation, which proved wrong or even manipulative more than once.

When logical or sociological theories on perception apply, we can notice that *a better understanding of reality* is not the result of obtaining a unique/absolute image of that type of geopolitics in fact, but rather our acceptance of the image we consider as relevant. When referring to this aspect, Paul Watzlawick said that the political analyst does not deal with “*absolute relations*” but with *subjective representations, often contradictory, of reality*”⁵⁷⁴ in international relations. A superficial review of the media in different countries, in an attempt to detect geopolitical and geostrategical disputes on energy, for example, may prove that we are very likely to be flooded with a plethora of different pictures and opinions. The geographical features, the way people, social groups, ethnic communities face the challenges of the natural and social environment, their relations along history, the basic conditions for the development of the language, the mental structures, culture, civilization, mentalities have a major importance for the way they perceive the world, the social phenomena and processes, other people, the other’s behavior in time and space⁵⁷⁵.

As a result, the comprehension of power politics and of the interests that stakeholders display in a certain space is useful but not sufficient in analyzing the contemporary geopolitical phenomena.

⁵⁷⁴ Paul Watzlawick, *La realite de la realite*. Confusion, desinformation, communication, Le Seuil, Paris, 1978, p. 137.

⁵⁷⁵ Glen Fisher, *Mindsets: the role of culture and perception in International Relations*, 2nd ed., Yarmouth, Me: Intercultural Press, 1997, pp. 27-35.

Perception, as both a contemporary geopolitical process, and, as a tool of knowledge, fulfills and expands the efficiency of the geopolitical analysis⁵⁷⁶.

According to the stakeholders' understanding of their own role and place in the power equation in the geopolitical field, of their own interests and of their opponents, they usually adopt a certain type of political, military, economic behavior in that particular space. The image of the *other* in geopolitical rivalries has an outstanding role. A positive representation and an accurate perception on the others' behavior may assist an actor to avoid conflicts and opt for cooperation to meet the expectation it has for that particular place. *An oversized perception* of its own power potential matched by a *demoted* view of the power potential of its competitor from a space of interest may prompt the stakeholder to implement most frequently risky politics and actions for the international relations. Out of the countless examples history has provided two seem most relevant. In the first half of the XXth century Germany started the Second World War to impose its supremacy over the European continent and over the world. In the early 1980s, Argentina tried to conquer the Falkland Islands by the use of force.⁵⁷⁷ Both states had an *oversized* perception of their military power as compared to their opponent. In case a stakeholder adopted a mitigating view of its own power capabilities in relation to its opponent from a space of interest then its policy and action in the geopolitical field would be hesitant, and inclined towards the acceptance of compromises that might damage its fundamental short and middle term interests. The way France and

⁵⁷⁶ David L. Rousseau, Dan Miodovnik, *Deborah Lux Petrone, Identity and Threat Perceptions: An Experimental Analysis*, on line, <http://www.ssc.upenn.edu/~rousseau/APSA2001id.PDF>, accessed at 20 August 2010, 10.00.

⁵⁷⁷ See Stephen Badsey, Rob Havers and Mark Grove, ed., *The Falklands Conflict Twenty Years On: Lessons for the Future*, Frank Cass, London, 2005; Douglas Kinney, *National Interest/ National Honor: The Diplomacy of the Falklands Crisis*, Praeger, New York, 1989.

Great Britain reacted to Germany's forceful actions on the political European stage between 1936 and 1939 proved the case⁵⁷⁸.

The examples quoted above lead to the conclusion that errors of perception provided, in fact, the start of hostile actions. In any case, the concrete reality of the military and economic capacities of the stakeholders involved were completely different, as history proved afterwards. What is actually a distorted perception and what are the standards to label it as such? Is Robert Jarvis right when he asks, "What may rectify such a perception"?⁵⁷⁹ Glen Fisher noticed that "*There are fewer universal commonalities in human thought process than most people think. One of the trends that will run through our argument will be the need to be worry of those who claim universality for certain beliefs or for particular ways human being think or express emotions.*"⁵⁸⁰ As a result, perception errors must be considered a natural process because humans are identical biological beings but they differ completely in terms of social and cultural "products". We look at the world and at the international environment according to different moral, philosophical, religious and cultural values.

To what extent can the experience produced by the international environment be explained through the false perceptions that generated one type of behavior or another? Can we make a general statement from the experience provided by the international environment according to the inaccurate perceptions that determined different behaviors at different times? If we consider Robert Jervis's opinion that "*many perceptual errors are random*"⁵⁸¹, the answer is very hard to find with no knowledge of the mechanisms of the international environment and the factors that may lead to errors of perception. In geopolitics, power and interest rivalries may appear

⁵⁷⁸ Maurice Baumont, *Les origines de la seconde guerre mondiale*, Paris, 1974; Peter Calvocorressi, Guy Wint, *Total War. Cause and Courses of the second World War*, London, 1972.

⁵⁷⁹ Robert Jervis, *cit. work*, p.7.

⁵⁸⁰ Glen Fisher, *cit. work*, p. 28.

⁵⁸¹ Robert Jervis, *cit. work*, p. 7.

between actors that belong to different cultures and civilizations and act in cultural and social spaces that belong to neither of them. Let us imagine the perceptions on the oil geopolitics in Northeastern Africa where Western and Asian actors meet. All these point out that „*dealing with perceptions is not easy and in many contexts it may not be even particularly useful*”⁵⁸², but we do not believe that we must abandon this analysis tool. It is present and productive in the geopolitical writings of several scholars. Colin Flint did not employ directly the phenomena of perception by constructing a grid to analyze the contemporary geopolitical phenomena called a *geopolitical code*⁵⁸³ yet he used processes related to social representations and perceptions.

Understanding these processes is even more needed because the competition among states under the spur of globalization and the growing economic interdependencies have taken the centre stage⁵⁸⁴ and so have geopolitical rivalries from different spaces such as vital resources like energy, the control of their transport routes, or the commercial markets.

Perception is an important part of the contemporary geopolitical phenomena and a useful tool in analyzing the rivalries/cooperation between different actors and areas of common interest. Within the geopolitical theory and analysis, a result of observation is the comprehension of power relationships and interests that prompt certain stakeholders to dispute/negotiate the control or presence in a certain geographical area that support the guidelines for its foreign policy and actions in geopolitical situations. From this point of view,

⁵⁸² Erik Gartzke, *Alliance, Perceptions, and International Politics*, on line, http://politics.as.nyu.edu/docs/IO/4756/gartzke_friends_042002.pdf, accessed at 12 March 2009, 21.00.

⁵⁸³ Colin Flint, *cit. work*, pp. 79-105.

⁵⁸⁴ See, John Agnew, *Hegemony: The New Shape of Global Power*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005; R. Peet, *Geography of Power: Making Global Economic Policy*. London: Zed Press, 2007; Susan Strange, *The Retreat of the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

perception, in the geopolitical contemporary phenomenon, embodies a set of information accompanied or not by cartographical or iconographical representations that make up the picture of a geopolitical field in the “mental map” of the political elites and of the leaders/managers who rule the non-state players. It is the foundation of the geopolitical scenarios and projections. Mass media present quite often a “hot” geopolitical area in the format of a map. In most of the cases the map identifies friends and foes, and the crisis and the conflict region. The tragedies or the cooperation in the pursuit of common geopolitical interests is staged with the help of maps as well, and they turn territories into real “actors of history”⁵⁸⁵.

If we accept the fact that *perception* as an element of contemporary geopolitical reality and at the same time as a tool in the analysis methodology for geopolitics, then we face the question: what is perception and how can we define it? Phillip A. Ross said that perception is not reality⁵⁸⁶. What is it then? How can an actor – such as the classical stakeholder, the state – perceive a threat coming from another competitor in the geopolitical field?⁵⁸⁷ The answer can be found in the theoretical corpus of several academic branches such as psychology, sociology, cultural studies and communication sciences.

Experts from *East Asia Studies Center, Strategic Assessment Center, Advanced Analytics & Linguistics Division*, the United States Department of Defense, underlined that psychology is a basic component in the study and the usage of strategic deception and

⁵⁸⁵ Piers Fotiadis, *The Strange Power of Maps: How Maps Work politically and influence our understanding of the world*, University of Bristol, Working Paper no 06-09, on line, mideast.foreignpolicy.com/.../egypt_needs_..., accessed at 12 March 2009, 21.00.

⁵⁸⁶ Phillip A. Ross, *Perception is not Reality*, on line <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2003/04/prweb63134.htm>, accessed at 13 March 2009, 20.00.

⁵⁸⁷ Tianbao Zhu, *The Threat Perceptions and Developmental States in Northeast Asia*, in Working Paper, no. 3, 2001, on line, http://ips.cap.anu.edu.au/ir/pubs/work_papers/01-3.pdf, accessed at 13 March 2009, 21.00.

„perception management” in order to know the perceptions and the states’ behavior in international politics. The study of human psychology revealed the proficiency of deception activities, especially under stressful conditions confronting today’s decision makers in peacetime and wartime”⁵⁸⁸.

Psychology defines perception as an act that helps the individual to identify and gather information through his/her senses⁵⁸⁹. Man is able to know only a part of the physical reality using his senses. At the individual level, perception is influenced by the environment and by the previous knowledge about it, by philosophical, political, moral, cultural, spiritual values that he shares and represents him/her but also due to motivation and mood⁵⁹⁰. Thus, perception is a cognitive process where information and previous experience related to reality play a very important role. Perception of the inner self is most often made according to the attitudes that individuals have about themselves⁵⁹¹. In this way, individual perception must not be seen as a sole reflection of physical stimuli in different parts of the central nervous system but also as a reflection of man over the others, and the others’ on man himself⁵⁹². People perceive the socially constructed reality through the means. When we represent the difference between the democracy of the ancient Greek society and the modern Western society, we do not receive any stimulus from the external reality, and we rely on the information and the knowledge acquired along our entire life and

⁵⁸⁸ Dr. Eric C. Anderson, Mr. Jeffrey G. Engstrom, China’s Use of Perception Management and Strategic Deception, on line, <http://www.uscc.gov/researchpapers/2009/ApprovedFINALSATICStrategicDeceptionPaperRevisedDraft06Nov2009.pdf>, accessed at 13 March 2009, 21.00.

⁵⁸⁹ Nicky Hayes, Sue Orrel, *Introduction in psychology*, Bucharest, 1997, p. 180.

⁵⁹⁰ Philip Brickman, *Is it Real?*, in *Journal of Experiential Learning and Simulation* 2, 39-53 (1980), on line, <http://sbaweb.wayne.edu/~absel/bkl/%5Cjels%5C2-1e.pdf>, accessed at 15 March 2009, 20.00.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibidem*

⁵⁹² *Ibidem*

which we consider to be true, correct and useful. The same thing happens with the representation of a geopolitical field/situation where power and interest rivalries take place. In his references to the geopolitical American and Soviet rivalry over Afghanistan, Richard K. Herrmann explained it by analyzing perception. He reviewed the type of perceptions that prompted the leaders from the Kremlin to invade this country and the American politicians' perceptions who got involved in the region in order to eliminate the Soviet presence⁵⁹³. In fact, he analyzed a large amount of information such as pictures, social and political representations of the political elite of the two superpowers during the Cold War. On March the 4th, 2007, Dr. Steven Cull stated before the House Committee on Foreign Relations, the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight from the US Senate „*that America's image in the world is not particularly good these days*”⁵⁹⁴. He relied on the information broadcast by the BBC World Service and Globe Scan study carried in 26 countries around the world⁵⁹⁵

Perception can be considered a mixture of information because this is not a mechanical process. The image offered by the individual's external or internal environment is filtered, processed and then integrated by the inner self. This is more obvious especially when the individual perceives the environment completely different from the physical reality as is the case of the social environment⁵⁹⁶. In this type of environment, the individual does not act according to the stimuli, to the objective information, but according to his representations about the social reality. This explains in a way why a social fact is an event

⁵⁹³ Richard K. Herrmann, *Perceptions and Behavior in Soviet Foreign Policy*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985, pp. 27-46.

⁵⁹⁴ Dr. Steven Cull, *America's Image in the World*, on line, http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/views_on_countriesregions_bt/326.php?nid=&id=&pnt=326, accessed at 25 September 2010, 17.00.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁹⁶ See, Pantelimon Golu, *Social Psychology*, Bucharest, 1974, pp. 138-145; Alain Lieury, *Manual de psihologie generală*, Bucharest, 1996, pp. 22-55.

that takes place in the geopolitical field and is “*seen*” differently by individuals who have the same set of information but with different political, moral, religious beliefs. The Kosovo crisis offered a relevant example in the late 1990s. NATO, led by the United States, conducted a 60-day bombing campaign against Yugoslavia and its backbone component, Serbia in 1999. Yugoslavia had been charged of sponsoring the mass murder of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, just as it had done against Bosniak Muslims. The campaign aimed to force the Yugoslav army out of Kosovo and to allow the NATO forces to occupy and manage the province. Each nation from each side had a different perception of the NATO operations.

For the most part of the Western population, the cause was the serious interethnic incidents derived from the behavioral psychology of ethnic groups belonging to former Yugoslavia. “*In the West, said Jonathan Eyal, there is the perception that the population of the Balkans has gone crazy and that they are anxious to fight each other and they are just waiting for a pretext. But this is not true*”⁵⁹⁷. The Romanian analyst Mihail E. Ionescu considered that the main cause of the crisis was “*the extension of the Jugoslavian syndrome which in 1992 aimed to remap the political map of former Yugoslavian by violent means*”.⁵⁹⁸

Research in postmodern geopolitics employ more and more often perception as a tool of analysis in the comprehension of the developments in the international politics, irrespective of the geopolitical rivalries at regional or global level. In a very recent work, Attila Marjan reviewed the geopolitics of perceptions, which can be useful to answer a lot of questions in times of change and instability, such as⁵⁹⁹: how does America, China and Europe perceive

⁵⁹⁷ Jonathan Eyal, *Violence in Kosovo will continue for years but will not extend to the neighbouring counties*, in “Curentul” of 29 March 1998, p. 9.

⁵⁹⁸ Dr. Mihail E. Ionescu, *Kosovo of the return to the past*, in “Curentul” of 29 March 1998, p. 11.

⁵⁹⁹ Attila Marjan, *The Middle of the Map. Geopolitics of Perceptions*, John Harper Publishing, 2011.

one another? How do they see each other's role in the emerging new world order? Are we at the dawn of a new Sino-American bipolar dominance or does Europe still have a role to play? Will the global financial crisis herald the end of Western-style liberal capitalism and the start of an Asian century? What can the world still learn from Europe and what must Europe learn from the rest of the world to avoid becoming a cultural museum?

From the point of view of significance, the term *perception* is used in geopolitics as close as to what psycho sociology calls *social representation*. In this case, the term goes beyond the “*perception stage*” and contains elements of information, cognition, ideology, norms, beliefs, attitudes, opinions and images found in different forms of social representations.

Research in the field of social representations was recently approached by Serge Moscovici. He reviewed a “lost concept”, coined at the end of the XIXth century by Emile Durkheim: *collective representation*. The term collected psychical and social phenomena that included knowledge, myths, and ideologies. Collective representations belonged to the social branch because they were the result of common features in a group of individuals or in a community. E. Durkheim concluded that they were equally part of psychology, because the perception of reality and the organisation of thinking were individual processes⁶⁰⁰. Serge Moscovici went beyond E. Durkheim's vision and he wrote that the social representation was “*a system of values, notions and habits related to objects, aspects or dimensions of the social environment which allow to establish not only the life framework for individuals and groups but also equally constitute a means of perception orientation and answer elaboration*”⁶⁰¹.

⁶⁰⁰ Serge Moscovici, *Social psychology or the machine of gods*, edition III, translation by Oana Popârda, Polirom, Iași, pp. 27-58; Adrian Neculau, preface to vol. *Psychology of the social field: Social representations*, translation by Ioana Mărășescu, Radu Neculau, Bucharest 1995, p. XIII.

⁶⁰¹ Serge Moscovici, *La psychanalyse, sa image et son public*, PUF, Paris, 1976, p. 43; apud Adrian Neculau, *cit.*, p.XV, note no 8.

According to Moscovici, social representation requires three conditions: a spread of information about the object of representation, the attitude of the group on the object of representation and, finally, the need people feel to produce behavior and coherent discourses about an object they know rather vaguely⁶⁰². The same is also true in international politics especially in terms of geopolitical representations because the image of the Other is more important in determining the type of behavior actors follow in areas of political interest. Some specialists consider that „*the perception of a foreign country's actions is strength. Clearly, a strong enemy is more threatening than a weak enemy. Friendliness/hostility and strength/weakness constitute...the building block of the image of the others*”⁶⁰³.

The definition of representations differs from one school to another and even from one author to another sometimes. We shall review those definitions that are the closest to the understanding/meaning they might have in the postmodern research and geopolitical analysis. Thus, according to Denise Jodelet, “*social representation is a form of scientific knowledge, a science of the common sense whose content is represented by important functional operations of social thinking. It largely designates generative and social thinking*”⁶⁰⁴. The quoted scholar concluded that the notion in itself has a particular value for humanistic sciences from sociology to history and anthropology but it does not necessarily connect them to geopolitics. We believe it useful for international relations or security studies that focus on the research of the international

⁶⁰² Pierre Moliner, *Five questions regarding the social representations* in “Psychology of the social field: Social Representations”, pp. 101-102; further in “Psychology of the social field ...”.

⁶⁰³ Emanuele Castano, Simona Sachi, Peter Hays Gries, *The Perception of the Other in International Relations: Evidence for Polarizing Effect of Entitativity*, in *Political Psychology*, Vol. 24, no. 3, 2003, p. 450.

⁶⁰⁴ Denise Jodelet, *Representations sociales: phénomènes, concepts et théorie*; Apud Adrian Neculau, *cit.*, p. XVI; *Ibidem*, *Social representations, a field in expansion*, in vol. “*Psychology of the social field...*”, pp. 102-103.

environment as well. Starting from the fact that any representation is a form of global and unitary vision of an object and a subject, Jean Claude Abric defined social representations as “*the product and process of a mental activity through which a group or an individual reconstruct the real and give it a certain signification*”⁶⁰⁵. According to this definition, social representation is a mixture of information, beliefs, opinions and attitudes generated by a given object. It plays a key role in the dynamics of social relations and, in Jean Claude Abric’s opinion, the following four functions are essential: knowledge, identity, orientation, and justification⁶⁰⁶.

In his review of the definitions largely used in the specialized literature, Adrian Neculau considered that “*social representations designate an evaluation tool, a reading grid for reality, a positioning in the world of values and a personal interpretation of this world*”⁶⁰⁷. It is a remaking and a reconstruction of reality through the individual’s life philosophy because it is at the crossroads between objective, „scientific” thinking and the actual reflection of the environment. Equally, social representation is a tool with which social actors regulate their relations and also a mechanism used to build theories and ideologies about the social environment. The definition stated by the Romanian sociologist is a good starting point for the construction of a definition of perception in geopolitics.

Geopolitics, perception can be defined as a *reading grid of rivalries and cooperation between two or several actors who dispute/negotiate their interests in a certain virtual geographic area. It is a way to see, understand and interpret rivalries/agreements between two actors in an area of interest*. As we can see, this definition brings an element that lacked in the definition suggested

⁶⁰⁵ Jean-Claude Abric, Social representations: theory, in vol. “Psychology of the social field ...”, p. 129.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 132-134.

⁶⁰⁷ Adrian Neculau, *cit.*, p. XVII.

by psychology or sociology – *interest* that is approached from all perspectives. In order to prove our theory, we return to the great international actors' perception of the Kosovo crisis and especially the way they envisaged the solution at that time. The Russian diplomacy had a totally different perception than the US State Department. Thus, the former Russian foreign minister, Evgheni Primakov, suggested a solution for this crisis by "*treaties between the Serbian authorities and the representatives of the Albanese minorities by strictly observing Yugoslavia's territorial integrity*" and the former American Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, asked for international involvement to solve the conflict and for sanctions against Belgrade.⁶⁰⁸ The European Union followed in its turn a solution under international mediation but it was much more reserved on sanctions against Belgrade considered essential by the USA. These were the perceptions induced by immediate interests of the great powers involved in solving a difficult issue regarding security and stability on the European continent. Later on, these sanctions were modified according to the changes that took place in the negotiations of interests over the Balkan space. When referring to this, the former ambassador of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to Bucharest, Desimir Jeftic, said: "*It is a fact that the most important international powers know precisely the real situation in Kosovo and Metohia, but when they have to make decisions about it, they are usually influenced by their own political interests and not according to the rules and principles of international law*"⁶⁰⁹.

In geopolitics, perception must be understood and defined from its scope where „*the observing subject*” (diplomat, analyst, expert, journalist etc.) reflects a reality generated by rivalries and cooperation for fulfilment of its interests in a geographical space.

⁶⁰⁸ Tudor Lavric, Mădălina Mitan, Aurora Caravasile, *Great world power centres are confronting at Kosovopole*, in “Curentul”, of 29 March 1998, p. 12.

⁶⁰⁹ Iulian Neamțu, *Interview with the Ambassador of the F.R. of Yugoslavia in Bucharest, Desimir Jeftic*, in “Curentul”, of 29 March 1998, p. 10.

From this point of view, we can identify at least three types of perception that these actors will have:

a) A *reality-based* perception. It can give different degrees of inadequacy in relation to the realities of the „geopolitical field” according to the quantity and quality of information that the „watcher” has received. Errors may occur but these are not purposefully introduced in the process of construction of the geopolitics image. These are determined by the imperfect instruments and techniques of analysis and influenced by the predominant ideologies in society.

b) A *distorted-perception*, regarding concrete realities. Representations are altered/distorted by the influence of values in a certain society or specific to an area of culture and civilization (The West, The East, the Black Africa etc) and accepted by the „observer” and the interests of an actor in relation to the Other. In the first case a lot of „examples illustrate current difficulties between the Muslim world and the West primarily the United States. These misperceptions are present on both sides”⁶¹⁰. For the later, it is relevant the way the USA and the USSR regarded each other during the Cold War⁶¹¹.

c) A *diffuse-perception* at the level of public opinion, generally determined by the media but also by the stereotypes and

⁶¹⁰ See, dr. Mathieu Guidere, dr. Newton Howard, *The Clash of perceptions*, in Defense Concepts Series, Centre for Advanced Defense Studies, on line, http://www.c4ads.org/sites/default/files/cads_report_clash_nov06.pdf, accessed at 11 May 2009, 16.00; Fawaz A. Gerges, *Islam and Muslims in the Mind of America*, in “The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science” 2003; 588; 73, on line <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/588/1/73>, Downloaded from <http://ann.sagepub.com> at HINARI on November 20, 2009.

⁶¹¹ See, Alex Roland, *Perception and Paradox in the Cold War, Reviews in American History* Vol. 21, No. 3 (Sep., 1993), pp. 502-506, on line <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2702789>; Richard K. Herrmann, *cit.*, pp. 22-31; Robert D. English, Jonathan J. Halperin, *The Other Side: How Soviets and Americans Perceive Each Other*, New Brunswick and Oxford, 1991; Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *cit.*, pp. 156-165.

psycho fixations of religious or historic nature. In analyzes, this is called *popular geopolitics*⁶¹²

In the geopolitical reality, we meet all these three types of *perception* to different degrees. The actors of the geopolitical field perceive realities and cooperation interests, build an image, more or less aggregated to the nature and quality of information about resources, economic and strategic advantages/facilities offered by the space of interest. Above all, they try to know the other actors' intentions and behaviors for the specific area. When analyzing the factors that can influence the actors' image regarding their behavior in the system of international relations, Stephen Walt concluded that the power politics determines the way an actor decides to protect/impose its interest and not the perception about the amount of power. Walt reached this conclusion through a study of the way a very powerful state – the USA – and a less powerful neighbor state – Canada – perceived each other in the interwar period⁶¹³. At that time, the USA did not have a conflicting behavior towards its neighbor and Canada did not perceive accordingly Washington as a threat to its interests. The resulting image and its match to the actors' needs becomes a stimulus. It may guide the orientation of the specific stakeholder in the geographical space in question. According to the way it perceives the other actors in the geopolitical field, it will adopt a type of cooperating or conflicting behavior⁶¹⁴. History can offer many other similar examples⁶¹⁵.

⁶¹² Klaus Dodds, *Hollywood and popular geopolitics of the war on terror*, on line http://royalholloway.academia.edu/KlausDodds/Papers/174478/Hollywood_and_the_Popular_Geopolitics_of_the_War_on_Terror; J. Dittmer, *The Tyranny of the Serial: Popular Geopolitics, the Nation, and Comic Book Discourse*, in "Antipode" 39 (2), pp. 247–68., 2007.

⁶¹³ Stephen Walt, *The Origin of Alliances*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N Y, 1987; apud David L. Rousseau, Dan Miodovnik, Deborah Lux Petrone, *cit.*

⁶¹⁴ David L. Rousseau, Dan Miodovnik, DeborahLux Petrone, *cit.*

⁶¹⁵ Andrei Miroiu, *Ballance and hegemony*, Tritonic Printing House, Bucharest, 2005, pp. 80-98.

Quite relevant were some Western officials' perception about the Romanian Principalities in the first half of the XIXth century. Captain J. Desaint, staff officer and aide-de-camp of general Aspic, France's Ambassador in Constantinople, gathered information about their economic, demographic, military and strategic possibilities⁶¹⁶ "while crossing" the Romanian provinces in the summer of 1848. In other words, he *perceived* only the realities that *interested* him. He reached the following conclusion: "*Regarding the present state of affairs, if war breaks between Russia and Turkey, we cannot expect the slightest help from these two Romanian Countries, we must regard them as lost territory. If, on the contrary, peace is maintained, Europe has the major interest to develop all the means to regenerate Romania and build a strong nation in the north Danube*"⁶¹⁷. This brief presentation undoubtedly found its way into France's geopolitical perception of the strategic, military and economic values that Romania had in its dispute with the Tsarist Empire for the control of the Southeastern Europe and of the straits of Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. We can say that this perception weighed heavily in the French attitude and behavior towards Moldavia, Muntenia and the Romanians' vital interests in the second half of the XIXth century. This is another explanation why France was the main European actor who strongly supported Romania's union. At the Peace Conference from Paris in 1856, it supported the national unification by joining Moldavia and Muntenia in a single entity.

The analysis of perceptions in postmodern geopolitics is an extremely important activity for any stakeholder involved in different areas of the contemporary world. In the geopolitical field, the actors' *perception* is funneled to acquire information on the opponents' strengths and weaknesses from an economic, political and military point of view⁶¹⁸. If a stakeholder wants to gain a

⁶¹⁶ C. Neagu, D. Marinescu, R. Georgescu, *Deeds from the shadow*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1975, pp. 239-248.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 247.

⁶¹⁸ Robert Kagan, *cit. work*, p. 25; Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, pp. 94-95.

favorable position in the system of international relations and to interfere in a certain space of interest, it must know its competitor's/partners' strengths and weaknesses. A miscalculation based on inaccurate information, misperception, and superficial knowledge of the intentions of the other competitors in a geopolitical field can have disastrous consequences for a player. They all could lead to dramatic outcomes, and ultimately even to the disappearance from the geopolitical map⁶¹⁹ of the world.

The American military analyst Nader Elhefnawy researched the role of perception in military conflicts after the Cold War, and concluded that „*four myths of American space power*”⁶²⁰ persisted in the perception of the armed fighting. The first referred to the belief that the US space power was predominant and that it had the ability to annihilate any competitor's space power. This was only half-true because it was the conclusion of the conflicts analysis that took place after the Cold War. The attack on the Twin Towers in September 2001 ruined this American myth forever. Those who had induced this myth did not see the fact that the USA had confronted only „second hand” powers whose economies were not characterised by technological or cybernetic revolutions.

Stakeholders tend to examine potential defaults to take to the best position in the power equation. A constant correction of the perception of a stakeholder's own power and primarily that of the virtual enemy led to the emergence of the *security dilemma* and of the arms race during the Cold War⁶²¹. Analysts of the contemporary political and military phenomena concluded that the end of the Cold War did not bring the elimination of the programmes for the improvement of the “Nuclear triad” of the great powers⁶²². In fact,

⁶¹⁹ Adrian Miroiu, *cit. work*, pp. 82-83.

⁶²⁰ Nader Elhefnawy, *Four Myths about Space Power*, in “Parameters”, Volume XXXIII, no.1, spring 2001, pp. 124-132.

⁶²¹ See, *Modern race of arming. Dimensions and implications*, coordinator dr. Nicolae Ecobescu, Bucharest, 1980; Nicolae Ecobescu, Vasile Secăreș, *From the arms control to disarmament*, Bucharest, 1985.

⁶²² Florian Gârz, *cit. work*, pp. 69-74.

the arms race has been growing more sophisticated and more expensive. *Perception* and *misperception* in the contemporary geopolitical field take a central place on the contemporary geopolitical stage because they have a crucial role in the stakeholders' behavior. This two-prongs conclusion may generate a certain frame of mind and a settlement of their behavior in the system of international relations, in the long run.

Through perception, an actor concludes its own vision of the geopolitical reality, which allows it to justify its actions, to understand reality through its own system and to relate it to its own ability to act, and, consequently, define its own role in the dispute over different regions. Robert Jervis pointed out that political leaders forced to face the same input from the international environment reacted differently because they had different representations of the same system, molded by mentalities, prejudices and stereotypes⁶²³.

From the perspective of geopolitics, *perception* is a working tool, an asset, a reading “*grid*” of reality/ geopolitical phenomena, which provides an image more or less accurate, according to the reliability of the providers⁶²⁴. In this case, perceptions resembled what Denise Jodelet called representation as a means of practical knowledge, which related the subject to an object⁶²⁵. The subject, in this case, was the geopolitical analyst or journalist interested in an issue/crisis from a geographical space and the object “*perceived*” was the geopolitical reality itself.

In geopolitical analysis perception has always been the representation of *something* – either the power or the power relations

⁶²³ Robert Jervis, *cit. work*, pp. 3-32.

⁶²⁴ Frances Hellebein, Marshall Goldsmith, and Richard Beckhard, eds, *Leader Of The Future: New Visions, Strategies, and Practices for the Next Era*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996, pp. 36, 226; 253-254; Bill Creech, *The Five Pillars of TQM: How To Make Total Quality Management Work For You*, New York: Truman Talley Books/Plume, 1994, pp. 320-326; Perry M. Smith, *Taking Charge: A Practical Guide for Leaders*, Washington, D. C.: National Defense University Press, 1986, pp. 56-58.

⁶²⁵ Denise Jodelet, *cit. work*, p. 110.

among the actors in a certain space – that belonged to *someone*: to the political analyst, to the politician and even to a decent average person. That is why perception is in a relation of symbol-creation with the object (it takes its place) and a relation of interpretation (it gives it meaning)⁶²⁶. Both for the politician and the diplomat engaged in the interests' dispute in the name of the state/non-state actor, political and strategic culture must be enhanced by full knowledge of the role perception played in the actors' apprehension of the geopolitical field.

As a tool of knowledge in the geopolitical theory and analysis, perception fits into a *discourse*, press *information* or into the most complex form of a *scenario*, meant to shape the geopolitical reality into different degrees of adaptation. The pictures gathered by a journalist, for example, on the crisis in Kosovo will be usually more approximate than the image built by the analyst and politician, because the information (the input) is different in terms of quality, most of the time.

On the other hand, we deal with a *perception* at the level of public opinion, which is close to what psychology experts call "naive" knowledge, which should not be discarded as false⁶²⁷. This is only mediated and filtered according to the interest the major stakeholders have in one area or another. The causes of the conflict, and mainly those responsible for the crimes and the terrorist acts committed during the Bosniak crisis, for example, were perceived differently in the mainstream news media of the West, and in Moskow. From this point of view, not all the stakeholders in the geopolitical field have an identical perception of the real facts. As in the case of the social representation for the individual/community⁶²⁸, the stakeholders' perception from the geopolitical field is not a simple reflex of reality, but a reflection of a reality in a significant structure. This significance is determined by the context. First, it depends on the discursive-informative context because the analyst/

⁶²⁶ *Ibidem.*

⁶²⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁶²⁸ Jean-Claude Abric, *cit. work*, p. 129.

average person has a certain perception of the geopolitical field in most cases, appealing to a series of press information or discourses/stories reported by certain politicians.

Under these circumstances, it is necessary to proceed to a careful analysis of the conditions that generated the information/discourses/stories, because they are frequently targeted on an audience that must be *convinced* and which must receive arguments in support of a certain perception. History has many of such examples⁶²⁹. In the morning of 1st September 1939, Hitler announced the German people through an official statement that “*The Polish state refused an amicable dissolution of disagreements, which we desired and thus made use of guns. The Germans from Poland are terribly persecuted and sent away from their homes. A series of frontier violation, unbearable for a great power, prove that Poland is not willing to respect the Reich frontier anymore.*”⁶³⁰. All the printed and audio media from Germany relayed this theme. The German public opinion could not know that the secret services of the third Reich had orchestrated the so-called incidents from the Polish-German border. The perception of the would-be incidents could not be accurate in the representation of the common Germans. The Romanian diplomat Raoul Bossy recorded those events as follows: “*1 September. Start of the German-Polish war. Without a war declaration, Germany attacked Poland, and bombed Warsaw, Cracow and other centres. Hitler’s roars are heard on the radio. General conscription in France and England*”⁶³¹

The “communist camp” and the Western free world perceived differently the events in Budapest on the 24th of October 1956. The political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers’ Romanian Party decided to censor “*all mail coming from or going into the*

⁶²⁹ Adrian Miroiu, *cit. work*, passim.

⁶³⁰ Apud Mircea Muşat, Ion Ardeleanu, *Romania after the Great Unification*, vol. II, 1988, p.157.

⁶³¹ Raoul Bossy, *Memories of the diplomatic life*, 2nd volume, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1993, p. 150.

Hungarian People's Republic and to hold suspect correspondence"⁶³². Under these circumstances, the party media of Romania informed the public opinion about "*the count – revolutionary adventure of certain gangs that unleashed an armed attack against the people's power of Hungary*"⁶³³. The leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia had a totally different perception about the events of Budapest. A lettered dated January 1957, of the Central Committee of The Communist Union of Yugoslavia, addressed to Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union stated that, "*We consider that a great number of communists who support Nagy have honestly sided with the fight for socialism, and many of them have dedicated their entire life to communism. These people must be helped and must have the opportunity in the future to fight honestly for the good of their entire people, for socialism, even if they made mistakes. It is easy to label a man as a revisionist betrayer, or as conscious or unconscious lackeys of the reactionary forces*"⁶³⁴.

Information passed through the sieve of interests that the actors have in different crisis areas will usually produce *distortions and confusions* in the geopolitical perceptions. Under the circumstances, some conditions are met that allow the stakeholders involved in a crisis to justify their action in front of their partners in a given situation. This does not necessarily mean that a real knowledge of events has been achieved because the very perception itself has a very low degree of relevance in contrast with the geopolitical reality. The words of Senator Robert F. Kennedy highlighted the need of visionary leaders who might develop a strong awareness of the essential features of the pictures from reality and of perception in the development of the strategic image required by a

⁶³² 1956. *Explosion. Romanian, Yugoslavic and Soviet perceptions of the events in Poland and Hungary*, Mihai Lungu, Mihai Retegan, (eds.) Enciclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1996, pp. 74-75.

⁶³³ *Ibidem*, p. 108.

⁶³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 424.

state that attempted to impose its interests, “*Our future may lie beyond our vision, but it is not completely beyond our control. It is the shaping impulse of America that neither fate nor nature nor the irresistible tides of history, but the work of our own hands, matched to reason and principle that will determine destiny. There is pride in that, even arrogance, but there is also experience and truth. In any event, it is the only way we can live.*”⁶³⁵

Perception holds an essential role both in the dynamics of the temporary geopolitical phenomena and in the expertise that geopolitical studies provide for the heads of state and government before they act in the field of international affairs. Scientists must not overlook the fact that perception management has a major importance for an actor involved in a geopolitical region where it does not have the desired image. From the perspective of its functions, perception may meet its knowledge, orientation and justification function for the public opinion.

The knowledge function. As a process that accompanies the geopolitical phenomena/reality, perception is the way that helps stakeholders to process information and build an image of the geopolitical field. As an instrument/display of the geopolitical analysis, perception allows the specialist/analyst to gather knowledge from the geopolitical reality, to integrate it in a coherent interpretation system, and thus to place an actor’s geopolitical position in a given space. It facilitates the understanding of a general status of facts in a geopolitical field. The contemporary man, Ernest Cassirer said “*doesn’t live anymore in a symbolic universe. The language, the myth, the art and religion are part of this universe. They are the different grains that help build the symbolic network, the intricate canvas of human experience*”⁶³⁶. With the help of symbols, the analyst will “mold” the geopolitical reality and render

⁶³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 424.

⁶³⁶ Michael W. Ritz, *An Essay on the Concept of Strategic Image*, in <http://www.scribd.com/doc/1563891/US-Air-Force-mediarity>, accessed at 20 May 2010, 19.00.

it readable or unscripted in different linguistic or iconographical relationships. Any perception is a form of “vision” of the geopolitical field, which allows the analyst to give a meaning to the actors’ behavior and to understand the dynamics of an interest they promote in different spaces. He must have the ability to sieve through the reality of the geopolitical field and the “reality” built by the media⁶³⁷. The perception, which the analyst acquires by applying certain special techniques and methods for analysis, can achieve the expertise that contributes to the formation of the image built by the analyst in the mind of the politician, in its turn. From this point of view, it is right to conclude that those who make decisions behave according to their *perception* of reality and not as an answer to reality as such⁶³⁸. Therefore, perceptions play a key role in politics because they form an *operational reality*. Consequently, policy makers tend to act based on perceptions, whether they are accurate or not. For example, recent research proved that so-called “failed states” are not predisposed to wage war more than any other state. Yet the operational reality of the perceptions among the highest-ranking officials in the Bush administration led to the idea that such a failed state – Iraq – that belonged to the axis of evil, in the president’s vision, had the capabilities and the arsenals of weapons of mass destruction, which it was ready to use. This perception was a key factor in the U.S.-led intervention. That those perceptions were wrong remains a debatable matter in its own right. As far as the causes of the war itself were concerned, the operational reality (even though it differed from the objective reality) relied on the belief shared by President Bush, the Prime Minister Tony Blair, and others that Saddam Hussein did have such weapons and that they presented a long-term threat⁶³⁹.

⁶³⁷ Michael W. Ritz, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁶³⁸ Jon T. Rourke, Level of Analysis and Foreign Policy, in Rourke, John T. Rourke & Mark A. Boyer, *International Politics on the World Stage*, pp. 26-72, on line, <http://fs.huntingdon.edu/jlewis/syll/ircomp/303Rourke-IPnotes.htm>, accessed at 20 May 2010, 19.00.

⁶³⁹ *Ibidem*.

The orientation functions regarding an actor's behavior. As the previous examples on the beginnings of the analysis of the place and the role of perception in geopolitics have shown, the stakeholders' behavior in the geopolitics field – either in times of crisis or even war – is guided by the image they have about themselves, contrasting the image they build about their opponents/competitors. The image, as a product of perception correlated to interest, becomes an input that underscores the sense of an action a stakeholder develops in the geopolitical field.

From this perspective, perception works as a system of pre-decoding of the geopolitical reality because it determines the variety of expectations in terms of the stakeholders' behavior. Such a process can be put briefly as follows:

- a) phase 1: the observer receives an input from a geopolitical field;
- b) phase 2: the input associates to the information the observer gathered from previous knowledge;
- c) phase 3: the first input processing by comparison and analysis to the set of available information;
- d) phase 4: outlining of perception as images (graphical, symbolic representation, or a discourse);
- e) phase 5: a second processing updates, integrates and evaluates new information with the help of adequate psycho-social operators;
- f) phase 6: new reactions, attitudes and behaviors in the geopolitical field.

We shall illustrate these steps with two examples. The Western countries perceived the USSR as a major threat that pursued the expansion of communism beyond the Iron Curtain during the Cold War. The review of the USSR behavior in its sphere of influence, the analysis of the Long Telegram sent by George Kenan from Moscow and the public discourse of the communist leaders of Kremlin highlighted such a perception. The USA reacted and launched its politics of containment that discouraged any possible communist expansion. All the US allies perceived this strategy as

the only one that might have ensured their own security under the circumstances of the Cold War.

After the Cold war, instability in the Balkans and in the former Soviet Empire was perceived as a major threat for their security by most states from the area. Romania and Turkey for example, perceived the instability produced by the crises and wars of the last decade in the Black Sea and the Balkan area, as a major threat to the regional security but reacted differently to the recognition of the Kosovo independence.

Romania viewed the Kosovo declaration of independence as a threat to the stability of the region and of the world. The diplomacy of Bucharest refrained from an official recognition of the independence act. For the Romanian analysts and politicians, Kosovo was only the beginning of a long chain of alterations that might upset the entire world even more dramatically than the break of the USSR. Among the arguments that supported this possible scenario, were the attitudes of thousands of Kurdish, Armenian, Tchethcens and other nationalities that protested in front of the White House when the American administration decided to support the independence of the former Yugoslav province. The message on the slogans of the protesters – “Why yes for Kosovo, why no for us?”, “Kosovo is a unique case” – expressed clearly the frustration and the feelings of the participants. Some other countries supported the American decision and accepted the Kosovo independence but their arguments did not and, very likely, will not convince those who wanted independence at any costs.⁶⁴⁰

Turkey, in its turn, was among the first countries to recognize the independence of Kosovo (province). The act itself posed no direct threats for Turkey, whose government was well aware that some other countries would support the independence. Soon more than 50 states recognized the Kosovo independence. Yet some other

⁶⁴⁰ Mihail Orezeată, *Study: The Independence of Kosovo opens the Pandora Box*, in “Adevărul.ro”, 3 June, 2011, on line http://www.adevarul.ro/international/foreign_policy/opinii_fp/Studiu_Independenta_Kosovo_deschide_cutiua_Pandorei_0_492550994.html, accessed at 3 September 2011, 20.00.

governments from China, Russia, Greece stated officially that they did not and would not recognize the Kosova independence. Turkish authorities must have considered that an early recognition would be the best option simply because the international community had to endorse Kosovo's independence eventually.⁶⁴¹

An actor may change course according to the way it perceives the significance of the socially constructed space. Different symbols and the language that articulate the image of this reality can have different meanings from one nation to another and the ways nations react differ, too. The „Green Zone” of Baghdad is the best example. For the coalition forces, the two words describe the relative security of the area, meaning a „safe space”. For Islamic insurgents, the „Green Zone” is a privileged target for „sacrifice” because of its very name. In Islam, the *green* colour symbolizes what is *sacred*. It is not only prophet Mahomed's colour but it also refers to the paradise of all Muslims. Fighters therefore desperately seek to sacrifice themselves through suicide attacks inside the „green zone”, whose very name makes it an ideal target. This is a typical case of *misperception* (from the coalition's side) that may lead to misperceptions (on the side of the Islamic fighters). Both trends interact to generate a clash of perceptions with concrete implications into the real world – increased suicide attacks against an area supposed to be secure⁶⁴². This example showed that the function of the perception orientation was determined directly by the level of knowledge of the socially constructed space.

The justifying function of perception does not occur too often in the geopolitical theory and analysis. *Geopolitical cartography of propaganda* used it frequently enough, nonetheless. It allows state/non-state stakeholders to explain/justify their actions from the geopolitical field, in their relations with their partners/competitors. In

⁶⁴¹ Cenap Çakmak, *Why Turkey rushed to recognize Kosovo*, in “Today Zaman”, on line,

http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detail&link=136192, accessed at 3 September 2011, 20.00.

⁶⁴² Dr. Mathieu Guidère, Dr. Newton Howard, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

these cases, *perception* generates and facilitates the competitive/coercive behaviors in the geopolitical field. The negative perception of another player from the international relations system justifies a hostile behavior adopted towards it. Sometimes this reaction develops independently from the actual behavior of the player perceived as negative. For example, Great Britain, an important stakeholder in the European geopolitics, had a negative perception on the place/role played by the Romanian state during the war with the Soviet Union, even if Romania was not exactly an aggressor; it only reacted to the aggression of the Soviet Union, in June-July, 1940 when Russian troops invaded the Romanian space and annexed Bessarabia and Northern Bucovina⁶⁴³. Similar examples can be quoted from the case of the Kurds and even of the Palestinians, whose fight was negatively perceived by some actors with vital interests in the Middle East, an area tormented by crises and convulsions for more than half a century. The knowledge of misperceptions in the actors' behavior in the geopolitical field is important as well for the geopolitical analysis⁶⁴⁴. The wrong assessment of an actor's intentions in a geopolitical field, especially when it has a security strategy based on the preemptive war doctrine, can have dramatic results for the peace and the security of a region. Player A may perceive the power politics of actor B, the wrong way, starting from wrong estimates of its intentions and interests in the geopolitical field, and adopt preemptive actions for no real reasons. This fact could question the whole normative system of the international environment at a certain point in time. The case of the US intervention in Iraq in 2003 to prevent the use of the weapons of mass destruction by the Saddam Hussein regime was most relevant. In anticipation of the armed attack against Iraq, the "neocon-

⁶⁴³ See Constantin Hlihor, *22 of June 1941 or 28 June 1940?* in "The Historic Review", vol I, 1992, nr. 9-10, p. 1026; Ioan Scurtu, Constantin Hlihor, *Plot against Romania 1939-1947*, Tipo Mondo, Iași, 2010, pp. 9-31; Adrian Miroiu, *cit. work*, passim

⁶⁴⁴ Robert Jervis, *War and Misperception*, in "Journal of Interdisciplinary History", Vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 675-700.

servative” warmongers from the inner circle of George Bush and their London supporters made enormous efforts, both at home and abroad to “market” the necessity of war as a product of high moral value which they had wrapped and beatified in rather doubtful arguments. Their main objective was to convince both the officials of these governments and the American and the international public opinion about the only safe way to solve the Iraqi “crisis” – that was the urgent armed invasion of the area⁶⁴⁵. Mass-media welcomed the invasion of Iraq as an ethical and reasonable action. The asymmetric war between the American superpower and the weak Iraqi army was presented by televisions as a magical story. The massive bombings were reported in the manner of celebrating fireworks displays that very rarely killed real people and had been only meant to produce shock and awe. Reporters embedded with the American military units avoided to show pictures of the thousands of Iraqi soldiers and civilians killed by the missiles, the artillery fire and by the bombs of the mighty superpower. The invading troops were unanimously praised for their “courage”, “professionalism” and “dedication”. The brutality of the tyrant Saddam Hussein against his own people and the flashing victory of the “coalition forces” did not confer legitimacy to the Iraq war. Several other countries are ruled by savage dictators like Saddam Hussein. In a democracy, the public does not accept easily the politicians who use propaganda based on deception to obtain the popular and the parliamentary support for war. Commissions of investigation in the American Congress and in the British Parliament had to identify who and why produced genuine and counterfeited “proofs” to go to war. The truth is that Saddam’s so-called arsenal of weapons of mass destruction has never been found, the American and the British international prestige suffered and Bush and Blair lost a considerable part of their respect, both at home and abroad. The doctrine of the pre-emptive wars, with a

⁶⁴⁵ See, Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *Communication in international conflicts*, pp. 213-218; Nicolae Filipescu, *Propaganda and credibility*, in “Revista 22”, on line, <http://www.revista22.ro/propaganda-si-credibilitate-480.html>, accessed at 20 June 2009, 19.00.

doubtful legitimacy if based on prefabricated or fake information does not represent anything else but a deceitful policy of aggression.

The question is whether we can work out a methodology and if adequate working tools can be found to allow analysts to reach valuable conclusions about the real intentions one stakeholder or another may have in its relationships with other players. The available conclusions are not exceedingly encouraging but it is improper to conclude that misperceptions may lead to actions and behaviors of the conflictual type.

3.5. The influence of Ideas, Power and the Core Values over the geopolitical behavior of the stakeholders from the international politics

The behavior of the stakeholders in the geopolitical field can be anticipated, analyzed and interpreted by operating the paradigms presented previously. *Interests* can prove why an actor focuses on a geographical area although that area has issues identical to other areas for which the actor shows no interest. *Power* proves if an actor has the ability to be present in the space of interest. *Perception* helps players to put together an adequate image on the balance of power and interests of other actors in that area. Thus, a particular actor will know who it can ally/cooperate with in order to fulfil its interests. Nevertheless, these paradigms do not answer the question why do actors justify their presence in a specific interest space by relating to a set of unanimously accepted values, norms and principles? Why does an actor present in a geopolitical space motivate its action by evoking *guiding ideas* – what skeptics call its “*idola fori*” or idols of the market place⁶⁴⁶? The answer comes up if one more paradigm

⁶⁴⁶ Fred Dallmayr, *Liberal Democracy and its Critics: Some Voices from Asia*, The 11th Symposium on Confucianism & Buddhism, 2008/03/28, on line, <http://www.hfu.edu.tw/~lbc/BC/11th/disc/papers/01.pdf>, accessed at 23 June 2010, 19.00.

is added to the previous ones, namely the *guiding ideas* and the *core values*. These paradigms have a particular influence over the geopolitical behavior of stakeholders that fight or cooperate to achieve their goals in a geographical/virtual space. They are the „bricks” that build the international order with a great influence over the actors from the international politics.

The behavior of individuals in society and the behavior of states in the international politics have always been regulated by norms and principles. These are built, accepted or imposed through *guiding ideas* and a set of core values internationally, regionally or locally accepted. Thus, geopolitical actors always act in a *dual space* composed of a physical and geographical reality (they cooperate in different fields or make war) and the socially constructed reality (the international order).

The behavior of classical or non-classical stakeholders is influenced by these predominant ideas and the values that leaders have acknowledged and by their trust in their duration. A leading idea called sovereignty emerged after the Peace of Westphalia. For centuries, sovereignty remained the foundation of the norms and principles that governed relations among states. From this perspective, the international political space *socially constructed* cannot be universal, although, it has given the illusion of a unitary system for more than two hundred years while universalizing Western ideas were the foundation of international politics norms and principles. In fact, leading ideas and core values fragmented this type of space. History is rich in arguments provided by the evolution of the power centres and civilizations. Religion divided dramatically the world of the middle Ages. States wanted to impose their own values to the *Other* and to build a universal Christian/Muslim world through the crusade geopolitics. The socially constructed international space was fractured by ideologies and „materialized” by a frontier/Iron Curtain that separated the Western democratic world from the communist totalitarianism with no physical or external geographical links between them during the Cold War. The fall of the

bipolar adverse international system led to another fracture between the West and the Islamic world although under the circumstances of globalization rejected by the latter. The reaction of adversity against each other of the worlds built on guiding ideas and different core values came only naturally⁶⁴⁷. Largely, it explained the geopolitical failure of the great Western powers in building democratic societies in the Middle East, and in certain areas of Africa and the Central Asia.⁶⁴⁸ The policy of the Western states to interfere with internal matters to provide stability and security in regions of crisis and conflict was extremely generous but the state reconstruction processes did not hinge on the traditions and cultures of these areas⁶⁴⁹ in most cases. What does *rule of law* mean to a Muslim when he has been educated to follow the rules of society through the Koran all of his life? What is the relevance of leading a society by a political administration elected freely and democratically if the population of an African or Arab tribe does not understand it? Things do not seem to go in the direction of Western democracy in the Arab states, which have entered a long and complex process of political transformations unleashed by the so-called *Arab revolutions*. The *New York Times* columnist and geopolitician Thomas L. Friedman noted that „*the recent uprisings in the Arab world will probably not lead to the kind*

⁶⁴⁷ Fareed Zakaria, *The postamerican world. Romanian edition*, Polirom, Iasi, 2009, pp. 83-86.

⁶⁴⁸ T.W. Luke and G. Ó Tuathail, *On Videocameralistics: The Geopolitics of Failed States, the CNN International and (UN) Governmentality* in “Review of International Political Economy (RIPE)”, pp. 4, 4, 709-33, on line <http://www.nvc.vt.edu/toalg/Website/Publish/Papers/LukeToalCNN.pdf>, Jan Holzer, Jozef Janovský, Jaroslav Petřík, *Theory of Regimes and Failed States Theory: A Common Issue or Talking Across Purposes?* on line, http://www.psa.ac.uk/journals/pdf/5/2011/1142_634.pdf, accessed at 23 June 2010, 20.00.

⁶⁴⁹ Earl Conteh Morgan, *Peacebuilding and Human Security: A Constructivist Perspective*, International Journal of Peace Studies, Volume 10, Number 1, Spring/Summer 2005 in http://www.gmu.edu/academic/ijps/vol10_1/Conteh-Morgan_101IJPS.pdf, accessed at 23 June 2010, 21.00.

of mass democratization that occurred in eastern and central Europe after 1989"⁶⁵⁰. James Rogers may have provided an answer when he stated that, „*Indeed, many Europeans and Americans even came to believe their own propaganda, and forgot that they alone were responsible for what they had unleashed. What is more, market economics, liberal values and constitutional democracy ceased to be historically and culturally grounded ideologies, which emerged under certain – and arguably unique – circumstances in Britain, France and the Low Countries, and suddenly became ‘natural’ and ‘universal’ forms of social organisation that could swiftly be implemented anywhere, irrespective of existing cultural and political specificities*”⁶⁵¹. Western democracies have been conditioned and socially constructed just like any other political organization or system of values specific of an area of culture and civilization. There is no teleological force to guide mankind to the would-be lofty, sunny areas of constitutional democracy and of free markets of the same pattern that the European political culture and society have followed. When the constitutional democracy and the liberal values started to spread, they developed on the foundation of the soft and not the hard geopolitical European and American power. Its existence and its continuity depended on the Western soft power. If this type of national Western power – the British, the French or the American one, in particular – starts to waver, the liberal values will falter with it. This must bring back into focus the fact that we should ponder carefully over the collective responsibilities to defend our own economic and political system once we realize that it is ultimately as much conditioned and flexible as any other⁶⁵².

⁶⁵⁰ Martin W. Lewis, *The Simplistic World-View of Thomas L. Friedman*, in GeoCurrents, on line, <http://geocurrents.info/geopolitics/the-simplistic-world-view-of-thomas-l-friedman#ixzz1hXpDymdw>, accessed at 23 June 2010, 20.00.

⁶⁵¹ James Rogers, *The suicide of the West?*, in *European Geostrategy* 10 August 2010, on line <http://europeangeostrategy.ideasonurope.eu/democracy-citizenship/>, accessed at 23 September 2010, 20.00.

⁶⁵² *Ibidem*.

In order to understand how the *guiding ideas* and the *core values* influence the stakeholders' geopolitical behavior in international politics we have to see how they are defined and which their main features are. Ideas are the product of the human spirit in the cultural environment in a given era but not all of them influence the life and the evolution of the human society. They gain in meaning within the philosophical, political, economic, educational geopolitics thinking etc.⁶⁵³.

The modern times have brought the political idea to the forefront because it has a catalyzing role for the social organisation and times have synthesized in systems of political thinking. Such a system consists of a main core – the *guiding ideas* that are the basis for key postulates – and a number of rational or rhetorical ideas that justify and defend the guiding idea itself. Edgar Morin thought that this system of ideas could be open (scientific, cultural, literal theories etc.) or closed (political and religious doctrines)⁶⁵⁴.

In the classical geopolitical thinking, the scientist who approached the issue of the socio-organizing role of a certain idea was the German Karl Haushofer. He also launched the concept of *pan idea*. His vision seemed to be right up to a certain point, mainly when he stated that pan ideas reached their utmost value when they caught and rendered forcefully the predominant feature of a nation and of a certain time in history as well. Such a happy match could produce a process of self-assessment of a durable civilization and might project a new stage in the affirmation of a certain idea, unpredictable until that particular moment. It was decisive to watch carefully and to express the main trait of a people and a historic moment. „*Rome*”, he argued, „*was born in a day due to the instinct of expansion of a small tribe, the Latin's' tribe, but with a great pan idea, thrown over two obsolete civilizations and ideas: the Persian and the Greek-Hellenistic ideas*”.⁶⁵⁵ The error made by the father of

⁶⁵³ Edgar Morin, *La nature des idées*, on line,

http://www.scienceshumaines.com/la-nature-des-idees_fr_11716.html,
accessed at 23 September 2010, 22.00.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

the German geopolitics was that he related ideas to the spaces of sovereignty imagined by political leaders on a mental map. The implementation of such a vision worked out by a leader/people on what was termed as a legitimate area of expansion led to pan Slavism, pan Germanism, pan Hellenism, pan Turkism etc., which endorsed expansion and oppression politics over other peoples.

Guiding ideas are not related to the vision expressed by General Karhaushofer. A guiding idea is a philosophical, scientific, cultural, spiritual system of information specific of a certain era, which people consider as the supreme truth according to which they define their attitudes and behaviors in society. Since the classical antiquity until today, each era had its own *guiding ideas*. These are not automatically progressive only. Several guiding ideas can co-exist in a society with a totally opposed impact on it. The Middle Ages provided a great example of two guiding: the religious doctrine of the Catholic Church on genesis and the scientific theories about the origins of the Universe. The former was rigid and led to the emergence of the first totalitarian regime in the history of Europe and the latter encouraged an unprecedented development of civilization in the coming centuries. The Christian doctrine supported by the Roman Church led to tightly-controlled life along religious principles and taboos. Under this political regime, scientific research was censored by the guidelines imposed to science by the Roman Catholicism. There were a few great scientific personalities – such as Giordano Bruno – who paid with their own lives for the totalitarian control of science. But the force of the ideas launched by people who believed in the power of scientific knowledge led to the decay of the religious type of totalitarianism, which probably made Victor Hugo say that „*more powerful than all the armies of the world' are IDEAS!*”⁶⁵⁶

⁶⁵⁵ Apud, Ionel Nicu Sava, *German School of Geopolitics, Info Team Publishing House*, 1997, p. 111.

⁶⁵⁶ Apud, Lawrence Reed, *The Importance of Ideas*, on line, <http://www.ccsindia.org/ccsindia/lssreader/41lssreader.pdf>, accessed at 29 August 2010, 20.45.

The guiding ideas, which led to the progressive ideas of modernity, challenged the European peoples to fight against the Feudal political system and to support emerging democratic regimes. Without the idea „*justice-equality and brotherhood*” no changes could have occurred in the European system after the revolutionary movement of 1848-1849. However, some other guiding ideas of the European continent influenced the birth of ideologies like Nazism, fascism, Franco’s nationalism and other trends, as was the Romanian national-legionaries. They all marked bleak periods of political backwardness in the history of mankind. Henceforth, Lawrence Reed was right when he wrote that *”People, such as politicians, activists, clerics, teachers, can often be agents of change, but ideas are the instigators. In shaping public policy-including the larger question of free enterprise or socialism, democracy or dictatorship-ideas are of paramount, decisive importance. What people believe, in other words, says a great deal (maybe everything) about how they behave, for whom they vote, what laws and rules they embrace, what kind of system they’ll work to achieve. Change ideas, and you can change the course of history”*⁶⁵⁷.

The huge divide that marked international politics after 9/11 had geopolitical roots in the contradictions between the two main guiding ideas that operated in the Western and the Islamic⁶⁵⁸ worlds. Muslim, and primarily those from the Arab countries, held the West responsible for the delay in the development of all societies. Western countries suspected the Muslim communities of being the main provider of terrorism for Islamist organizations such as Al-Qaeda.

From a geopolitical point of view, a real war of these guiding ideas broke out with devastating consequences for the international relations. The USA and their allies have initiated a military campaign meant to eliminate terrorism, with an unpredictable end while the

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁶⁵⁸ Peter Gourevitch, *Interacting Variables: September 11 and the Role of Ideas and Domestic Politics*, in “Dialog-IO”, Spring 2002, pp. 71-80.

Islamic world from the areas of confrontation have been antagonized. The Americans have won the military battle with the Taliban from Afghanistan, they prevailed in Iraq under Saddam's rule, a dictator hated by his own people but the US lost the media war. The military intervention in this country did not lead to the improvement of the USA image created in the collective mind by Saddam's propaganda.

For this reason, certain American experts have researched the role of ideas and ideologies specific to Arabs to change the strategy in the important geopolitical areas for the White House. Analyst J. Michael Waller approached the matter and stated, „*People buy into an ideology, irrespective of its hue, for broadly the same reasons. Ideology provides people with a unifying identity and sense of community. It gives them a cause they can identify with. It provides a sense of purpose, meaning and shape to their lives. Ideology also provides someone else to blame for a people's misfortunes, and building up an image of an enemy to fight.*”⁶⁵⁹. Michael Waller concluded that it was possible to „*employ all of the tools of influence to expose the absurdity of an ideology's precepts by understanding the particularities of the ideology generated by the Koran. We can dispel the myths and lies on which the ideology is based. We can destroy the ideology's credibility and lure its supporters away by offering more tangible and realistic alternatives (even if those alternatives do not fit snugly with our own worldview). The bottom line is that an ideology such as Islamist extremism is built on foundation of sand which can be easily undermined by the right ideas and arguments, delivered via the appropriate channels*”⁶⁶⁰.

Postmodern geopolitics does not mean rivalry and confrontation only. It means cooperation with different stakeholders

⁶⁵⁹ J. Michael Waller, *Fighting the War of Ideas like a Real War, Messages to Defeat the Terrorists*, Published in the United States of America by The Institute of World Politics Press, 2007, p. 21.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 22.

having different interests in certain spaces. The support of cooperation is good for the realism provided by the pursuit of the national interests, in the case of traditional players, and for the specific interests in the case of the non-state player. Yet, this is not enough. States that share the same guiding ideas (political doctrines, ideologies etc.) have a tendency to cooperate. People feel the need of „cognitive agreement”⁶⁶¹ both in terms of what they know and of what they wish. They wish that the world they live in *made sense* and that they are part of this entity in a significant and controllable way.

The construction of this *sense* is achieved through communication, information gathering and the comparison of the specific image of the international environment. If the acquired information does not match such image, there is a great possibility that it is rejected and may generate frustration or rejection. Deutsch was right when he noted that, „*we all bear in mind the image simple images, more or less realistic, on the world we live in. Most often, these images are partially realistic and imaginary, but in every situation, due to their solidarity and arrangement, they confer us a feeling of security. Usually, we admit these images a priori, so that we are not aware of them. We are very certain of our own realism but we are terrified by others' ideological „blindness” who does not share our points of view.*”⁶⁶²

The force of this mechanism of acceptance/ attachment to a series of lasting images about our own country/community and other countries and the denial/rejection of the information that does not fit into stereotypes and accepted ideas do not provide answers about the behavior of states in the geopolitical field. For the defense of their state and nation not only the politicians but also common people would have rather given their lives than lose their faith and national conscience in the XIXth century and the beginning of the XXth century. This same is also true for other „sets” of such *guiding ideas* – democracy, freedom, justice etc.

⁶⁶¹ Karl W. Deutsch, *cit. work*, p. 51.

⁶⁶² *Ibidem*.

Education and contextualized social and political language generate such *guiding images* both at the level of society and of the international environment⁶⁶³. They are positively or negatively determined by the values that dominate society at that point and they are influenced by mentalities, historic traditions and stereotypes the society witnessed in a given period, by psycho fixations and political idiosyncrasies, and by the patriotic discourse and propaganda as well. These are pertaining to the political decision makers but also to the public opinion. They occupy an important place in the action of security preservation in case a group/state feels threatened. These guiding images have been created with the help of cartographic representations and symbols that the geopolitical discourse operates with.

Man has not been born with the feeling of duty for the country/community he belongs to. He has not been born with moral, religious, political or ideological values either. He is shaped by society through the education he receives in his family and in the institutions of the society. This is why we believe it is important to have a thorough knowledge of the cultural context and of the mentalities where geopolitical rivalries/cooperation exists and particularly of the way people belonging to different cultures and civilizations relate to them. We consider that, in fact, states, in their geopolitical behavior, make a rational choice of the way they build their international relations and the means they implement in keeping with the guiding ideas and the set of values and ideals they promote and defend.

Human behavior is significantly shaped by norms and values. As a result, it is very important to define its social value and role in order to see how it influences the head of states' behavior in certain circumstances of the international politics. This is no easy task, if we have in mind the polysemantic nature of the term „value” starting

⁶⁶³ Robert H. Jackson, *The Weight of Ideas in Decolonization: Normative Change in International Relations*, in vol. “Judith Goldstein”, Robert O. Keohane, (eds.), *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993, pp. 111-138.

from the common meaning of the price paid for merchandise or the standard of quality of goods/services to its philosophical significance.

From the perspective of the postmodern geopolitics, sociologists and psychologists have given it the most appropriate meaning. Just like geopolitics, sociology analyzes the relations among human groups and among the stakeholders from the international environment. For psychology, values represent the individuals' points of orientation in the surrounding world. They become decoding systems for possible actions that allow the identification of possible meanings and benefits derived from everyone's preference scales, depending on motivations, needs and personal aspirations⁶⁶⁴.

Irrespective of the way they are defined, values, do not exist in them and cannot exist independently of the human consciousness. They are the result of social experience and have a historic characteristic. Perception and the means of defining it differ from one school of sociology to another and from one researcher to the next one. The author Petre Andrei defined value as „*an inherent disposition of the spirit, which reflects the functioning relations of a subject with an object where the object being a reason to update the psychic disposition towards values*”⁶⁶⁵. In Petre Andrei's opinion any subject, any individual or a human group has a system of values, and attempts to materialize it in goods that are the purpose of the human action. Tudor Vianu interpreted values as acts of volition. In his opinion, “Representation comprises images, thinking comprises abstract ideas, feelings comprise emotions, and volition comprises values”⁶⁶⁶. Similar to concepts, values had a general character, but

⁶⁶⁴ Bogdan Voicu, *Values and sociology of values*, draft, on line, <http://www.iccv.ro/valori/texte/valori-cvb,%20v4.pdf>, accessed at 24 December 2011, 12.00.

⁶⁶⁵ Petru Andrei, *Philosophy of value*, Iași, “Petre Andrei” Academic Foundation, Iași, 1997, p. 17.

⁶⁶⁶ Tudor Vianu, *Works*, vol. 8, *Studies of culture philosophy*, Bucharest, 1976, p. 78.

they “are general in relation to the human conscience, which includes them through acts of volition”⁶⁶⁷.

There is a large scale of values and their classification is extremely different according to the standard of reference. When we speak about the values of the human society, we must remember the complex meaning that the term has from one person to another, at different times, in one community or another. Thus, some are general, universal and indestructible values in themselves, others are relative, partially available and possible to be downgraded and replaced by some others in different historic contexts, from one value hierarchy to another, from one person to another... The predominant values in a society are turned into norms, which define the institutions and the functioning of the whole society. Symbols are decoded and convey messages according to the values that guide the way individuals perceive the world.

The temporal persistence of certain norms and institutions becomes a factor that can lead to interiorization of values that are the basis of these norms and institutions. They determine the ideals and goals largely shared by the actors of the international environment: freedom, independence, sovereignty, the right to political self-determination, territorial integrity etc. They are only just a few political ideals that determined the principles and norms of international public law in the last century.

The political, moral, and ethical values that dominated each historic era in the development of the international society were the starting point of negotiations for the main stakeholders of international politics in their attempt to issue a set of principles and norms that produced the world order agreed/imposed by treaties. One remark should follow. Political values can be the result of their negotiation and acceptance by the international actors while moral norms are not. Morals have no universal meanings no matter how much we believe in the power of globalization and interdependencies. The war between Iraq and the multinational coalition led

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 79.

by the USA was quite conclusive. From the American foreign policy point of view, Saddam Hussein's ousting was a moral must. From the point of view of Arab, European and Asian countries, the invasion of the coalition forces was an unjust occupation of the sovereign Iraqi territory⁶⁶⁸. From this point of view, Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevenhouse rightfully noted that, „*in the case of divergent moral norms, morale is a cause of misunderstandings and conflict rather than stability factor.*”⁶⁶⁹

Henceforth, once these norms have become global, values that supported the international regulations have also been endorsed and implemented. Joseph S. Nye Jr. and Robert O. Keohane pointed out that, in the international politics, „*regulations and procedures are neither complete nor well applied in the well-organized internal political systems, nor the institutions are not powerful or autonomous*”⁶⁷⁰. Susan Strange added that, „*the rules of the game include a few national, international rules and also private rules – and large areas of total lack of rules*”⁶⁷¹. In vast areas with countless spots under no regulations „geopolitical games” usually interfere among state actors and especially the non-state actors particularly in oil production and financial mechanisms and networks.

The changes that occur in the system of values automatically lead to the irrelevance of the principles and norms of the international law and the apparition of what experts call the new world disorder in the international system, such as instability and the lack of security.

⁶⁶⁸ Morice Vaisse, *International relations after 1945*, Romanian edition, translation from French by Diana Gal, Elena Zierler, Institute of Euroregional Studies, University of Oradea Printing House, 2010, pp. 235-237.

⁶⁶⁹ Joshua S. Goldstein, Jon C. Pevenhouse, *International relations*, Romanian edition, translation from the English language, by Andreea-Ioana Cozianu, Elena Farca, Adriana Ștraub, Polirom, Iași, 2008, p. 338.

⁶⁷⁰ Robert O. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye, *Power and interdependency*, Romanian edition translation in the Romanian language by Adriana Ștraub, Polirom Printing House, Iași, 2009, p. 64.

⁶⁷¹ Susan Strange, *What Is Economic Power, and Who Has It?* in “International Journal”, Vol. 30, No. 2, Force and Power, Spring, 1975, p. 219.

That was exactly the case of the international society after the end of the Cold War. From the geopolitical point of view, the changes that occurred in the international regimes⁶⁷² were very important in the analysis of rules that motivate the stakeholders' behavior in different geopolitical fields. The bipolar world of the Cold War era kept a balance, stemming from terror, nonetheless. Yet it ensured predictability, stability and security in the relations between states⁶⁷³ because they followed a series of norms and principles accepted by the UN Charter based on the political values endorsed by member states as a guarantee of a stable world. Unilateralism which imposed itself spontaneously after the collapse of the opposing poles brought to discussion all the law principles from the bipolar order: sovereign equality, non intervention, and armed threat etc.

In the absence of the old rules, the unavoidable abuse of the only superpower (any power corrupts; absolute power corrupts in an absolute manner) induced greater chaos to the extent that the USA proved able to win any war but unable to impose peace⁶⁷⁴. The explanation resides in the fact that the US administration did not think of the new order in the equation „new system of values –new set of international principles and norms” but in the geopolitical grid starting from the model designed by N. Spykman. We do not doubt the value of his geopolitical model, as we proved in a previous chapter, but we do review the opinion that the international relations were completely different at the end of the Cold War. When referring to this aspect, John Bellami Foster noted in *Monthly Review*, „The Department of Defense lost no time in initiating a strategic review known as the *Defense Planning Guidance*, directed by Paul Wolfowitz then undersecretary of defense for policy. Parts of this

⁶⁷² See the meaning and the changes in defining the international regimes at Robert O. Keohane, Joseph S. Nye, *cit. work*, pp. 341-344.

⁶⁷³ Adrian Severin, *From „The Order of the Cold War” to „The New World Disorder”*, on line, http://www.fisd.ro/PDF/mater_noi/De%20la%20Razboiul%20Rece%20la%20dezordinea%20globala.pdf, accessed at 23 December 2011, 12.35.

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibidem*.

classified report, leaked to the press in 1992, stated in a Spykman-like language that, “*Our strategy [after the fall of the Soviet Union] must refocus on precluding the emergence of any potential future global competitor.*” Wolfowitz also took an idea from the Heartland doctrine, and argued, “*Russia will remain the strongest military power in Eurasia and the only power in the world with the capability of destroying the United States. The Defense Planning Guidance proposed a global geopolitical goal for the United States of permanent military hegemony through pre-emptive actions. Yet, strong objections from U.S. allies forced Washington to back off from the draft report’s explicit commitment to unilateral domination of the globe.*”⁶⁷⁵

More and more analysts and theorists consider that the unipolar international order centered on the US as a hegemonic stakeholder has ended⁶⁷⁶ and we can conclude that the rules and norms of international law have not been worked out yet to replace the existing ones left over from the bipolar period. Military intervention actions with low legitimacy or even lacking legitimacy and the UNO approval were carried out. They short-circuited the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of a sovereign state but the principle of intervention was not institutionalized as a norm in the public international law.

The International Court judged the war criminals that had broken the rules of law in the conflicts of former Yugoslavia and „*the doctrine of a right war was sub mined even more than in the case of war crimes which changed the military actions*”⁶⁷⁷. Rules of intervention, sometimes of military intervention, have been set up in

⁶⁷⁵ John Bellami Foster, The New Geopolitics of Empire, in “Montley Review”, issue 8, vol. 57, 2006, on line, <http://monthlyreview.org/2006/01/01/the-new-geopolitics-of-empire>, accessed at 20 December 2010, 09.00.

⁶⁷⁶ Ian Clark, *China and the United States: a succession of hegemonies?* On line, http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/International%20Affairs/2011/87_1clark.pdf, accessed at 20 December 2010, 09.00.

⁶⁷⁷ Joshua S. Goldstein, Jon C. Pevenhouse, *cit. work*, p. 379.

order to re-establish human rights in tyrannical political regimes but they were selectively applied according to geopolitical interests.

The politics of double standard in the actors' behavior on the international scene was a rule. The international community interfered to put an end to crimes and abuses committed by the political regime of Milosevic in Kosovo, but it fell short of criticizing similar acts of the Russian troops in Chechnya. The politician and analyst Adrian Severin, referred to the norms' effect, or rather the lack of them, on the international relations regarding the human rights and he noted „*The doctrine of human rights, as well as the doctrine regarding the rights of minorities* (the latter being the effect of the political project known as the nation states' political project regarding the creation of political superstructures based on unaffected identity aggregates but, also, the cause of this failure due to the fragmentation of these states) *have given birth in their turn, to international non-state law subjects who often – also by manipulating and activating the public opinion – influence the world dramatic evolutions.*⁶⁷⁸

In the absence of a set of political values fully recognized in the international politics it will be hard to define the new system of principles and rules that might determine the actors' behavior in the regional or global geopolitics. The epistemological dilemmas are significant because *most concepts that the theory of international relations operates stem from the era of the Cold War. The old judicial and economic concepts will have to be adapted to new realities*⁶⁷⁹. In this context, the states have resorted to the old rules dictated by the *realpolitik* of the past centuries. From this point of view, „*It is clear that the old international rules do not satisfy the needs of the international actors, as it is clear that the new international rules and practices were not accepted by the international community*”⁶⁸⁰. Fareed Zakaria stated that in terms of new regulations in the present

⁶⁷⁸ Adrian Severin, *cit. work.*, in *cit. city*.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁸⁰ Vasile Pușcaș, *European themes*, EIKON, Cluj-Napoca, 2008, p. 54.

international world, the USA witness tensions in its foreign policy produced by the short-term national interests. If America opted for new regulations, practices and values that united the world, „the Americans should observe these rules, too”⁶⁸¹.

The evolution of the world politics will depend on the way politicians leading the great powers view the new international pattern and to what extent such patterns will accommodate the world order post 9/11. If they decide on the geopolitical model then the importance of interests and not that of values will be decisive. If a political solution is accepted it must be built on the political values generated by a political doctrine of the soft-power type. This vision still neighbors the classical type that overlooks the role, the interests and the power of the non-state players who tend to acquire a strategic part in the international politics, if we consider just two of them, the IMF and the World Bank.

⁶⁸¹ Fareed Zakaria, *The Postamerican World*, Romanian edition, translation by Crisia Miroiu, Polirom, Iași, 2009, pp. 208-209.

Chapter IV

THE GEOPOLITICAL ANALYSIS IN THE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Geopolitical studies were quite in fashion during the last years of the XXth century. Analysts tried to explain the causes of the great events that followed the end of the Cold War and to reconstruct the security architecture after the fall of the bipolar equation. Unfortunately, this growing interest for factual, empirical and geopolitical analysis was not followed by a rise in its qualitative approach. The interest for the improvement of the geopolitical method and analysis tools was at low ebb⁶⁸² and the result was quite logical: the quality of analyzes dropped. Thus, we can understand the opinion expressed by some critics who accused geopolitics of abusive treatment of political facts and, henceforth, it became a mere pseudo-science⁶⁸³. According to Wojciech Kazanecki „*Geopolitics is portrayed as being a theory that is “whimsically all-encompassing, (...) romantically obscure, (...) intellectually sloppy and (...) likely to start a third world war*”⁶⁸⁴.

⁶⁸² Martin Müller, *Doing discourse analysis in Critical Geopolitics*, in “L’Espace politique”, Online Journal of political geography and geopolitics, 12/2010-03, on line, <http://espacepolitique.revues.org/index1743.html>, accessed la 27 December 20011, 14.30.

⁶⁸³ Merje Kuus, *Geopolitics Reframed. Security and Identity in Europe’s Eastern Enlargement*, New York, Basingstroke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007 p. 5.

⁶⁸⁴ Wojciech Kazanecki, *Is Geopolitics a Good Method of Explaining World Events? Case Study of French Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*, on line, http://ue-wroc.academia.edu/WojciechKazanecki/Papers/1718154/Is_Geopolitics_a_Good_Method_of_Explaining_World_Events_Case_Study_of_French_Foreign_Policy_in_the_21_st_Century, accessed at 20 May 2010, 14.30.

This does not mean that the improvement and the progress of analysis methods did not occur under the impact of a true revolution in knowledge. The fact that some other “classical” branches of science, like political geography and history have updated their methodology⁶⁸⁵ should not surprise anyone. Analyst Paul Reuber remarked that the modernization of the geopolitical method allowed the research of the international relations to provide the chance to change some images and representations that the West, for example, had about Asia, the Middle East in general, and even to break the myths of some mechanicist patterns like those promoted in the beginning of the XXth century⁶⁸⁶. From this perspective, the studies and the research based on analysis methods and techniques specific of critical geopolitics⁶⁸⁷ can identify the mechanisms that led to the creation of these „representation-images” and may explain the way they manipulate the public opinion and sometimes, even the diplomats and politicians in cases of crises and conflicts⁶⁸⁸.

In spite of all criticisms, geopolitics is an efficient *tool* for the comprehension of the international environment in order to create the conditions for a state or non-state stakeholder to attain its interests in a given geographical space, if it commands the necessary resources to *work out projections* of the political, strategic, economic, financial, cultural, spiritual solutions in spaces of interest for all the actors of the international environment. Geopolitics has the capacity to *explain* the relationships among the phenomena under investigation. In association with geostrategy, research may lead to

⁶⁸⁵ Paul Reuber, *Conflict Studies and Critical Geopolitics Theoretical concepts and Recent Research in Political Geography*, in „Geo Journal” no.50, 2000, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Netherlands, www.ru.nl/socgeo/n/onderwijs/geogviolence/ReuberGeoJournal.pdf, accessed at 20 May 2007, 14.30.

⁶⁸⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁸⁷ K-J Dodds, J.D. Sideway, *Locating Critical Geopolitics*, in „Environment and Planning; Society and Space”, no.12, 1994, pp. 515-524.

⁶⁸⁸ M. Watts, *Black gold, white heat: state violence, local resistance and the national question in Nigeria*, in: Pile S. (ed.), *Place and the Politics of Resistance*, London, 1997, pp. 33-67.

an adequate knowledge of the international environment at a certain stage. Geopolitics can also point out the position of a stakeholder within the structure of the international system at a certain point, while geostrategy follows the way and the method that a stakeholder can maintain on a specific course⁶⁸⁹. As a result, *geopolitics* offers the theoretical framework necessary for an actor to establish its political interests in a certain space while *geostrategy* introduces the strategies, the aim and the chances for the pursued result⁶⁹⁰.

In the opinion of most geopolitical analysts who approach geopolitics from a postmodern point of view, they believe that the best method to research and to know the international geopolitical environment is the discourse analysis, although it is not highly productive, as it was first believed when it was launched in the beginning of the 1990s.⁶⁹¹ We believe that discourse analysis can be a method/way of geopolitical research. When using this method only, the results can be partial because geopolitics employs a complex approach as it was shown in the previous chapters. Geopolitical fact-finding, analysis and research must focus on all the three levels of manifestation: *the totally objective and concrete reality* of international politics; *socially-constructed reality within discourse*, international strategies and politics promoted by the actors of the international environment; *propaganda mapping* and justification of the power rivalries that take place in spaces of interest.

Geopolitics as *part of the objective and concrete reality* in international politics must use the *adequate methods* in order to study the actors' behaviors when cooperating/disputing their interests in a spiritual geographical space. These methods can be taken over from other branches of science as well, such as geostrategy, the theory of international relations, sociology or diplomacy. The power relations among states that have common interests at a

⁶⁸⁹ Gerard Dussouy, *cit. work*, pp. 34-35.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 35.

⁶⁹¹ See, Martin Müller, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

certain moment can be analyzed by using a tool generally called *the balance of power* introduced in the scientific environment by the supporters of realism. The use of this tool means to employ quantitative and qualitative research methods. We can turn to the *statistics method* in order to evaluate the military potential (the number and the structure of troops, weaponry and the military equipment) but we also need a method to evaluate the quality of power. The USSR had a military structure superior to the US army in many aspects and yet it could not avoid its collapse as a state because its potential power lacked the essential: trust and the legitimacy in front of its own citizens⁶⁹². On the other hand, the understanding of the attitude of international stakeholders in the geopolitical field does not cover efficiently the facts analysis. Both in geopolitics and in international relations, stakeholders are abstractions and not agents and as a result, we must analyze the leaders' behaviors and the interests that motivate them to make decisions one way or another.⁶⁹³ This implies to use methods specific to *psychology and political anthropology* and methods of political management⁶⁹⁴ as well.

As a ***language-constructed reality***, geopolitical analysis can be performed with the use of the *discourse analysis*. One of the well-known specialists, Norman Fairclough stated that, „*I see discourses as ways of representing aspects of the world – the processes,*

⁶⁹² Constantin Hlihor, *Romania. The fall of communism and rise of democracy*, Bucharest University publishing House, 2006, p. p. 48.

⁶⁹³ See more, Valerie M. Hudson, *Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations*, in “Foreign Policy Analysis” (2005) 1, pp. 1-30, on line http://graduateinstitute.ch/webdav/site/political_science/users/jovana.carapic/public/Hudson_FPA%20Actor%20Specific%20Theory%20and%20IR.pdf, accessed at 20 may 2009, 23.00.

⁶⁹⁴ See, R. C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck, B. Sapin, eds., *Foreign Policy Decision-Making (Revisited)*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2002; H. Sprout, M. Sprout, *Man–Milieu Relationship Hypotheses in the Context of International Politics*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1956; D. A. Sylvan, J. F. Voss, eds. (1998) *Problem Representation in Foreign Policy Decision Making*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*relations and structures of the material world, the 'mental world' of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and so forth and, the social world ...different discourses are different perspectives on the world, and they are associated with the different relations people have to the world"*⁶⁹⁵.

Discourse does not only describe a reality in the life of any society, it can also forward a desirable one under the form of national ideals and objectives. From this point of view, we believe that researchers were right when they concluded that discourse in geopolitics „*plays a role in the social construction of reality. Discourse does not merely describe things, it does things*”⁶⁹⁶. It is a strategic resource and a little more than that, available to politicians; it is also the foundation and a sub carrier for the global and regional geopolitical practice. Before the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers, the fight against this evil was not one of the top priorities of the American administration. After President George W. Bush addressed the nation in the very first hours after these tragic events, antiterrorism “*constitutes the top priority for the nation’s military and is the single most important mission around which to structure and organize the nation’s defense policy*”⁶⁹⁷. The American President made an efficient connection between the terrorist attacks on the USA or its interests, anywhere in the world, and the existence of dictatorship regimes, such as the regime of Saddam Hussein, a difference between poverty and the lack of democratic freedom. The American President’s opinions were supported by a series of political personalities in their

⁶⁹⁵ *Idem, Analyzing Discourse*, London: Rutledge, 2003, p. 124.

⁶⁹⁶ Cynthia Hardy, Ian Palmer and Nelson Phillips, *Discourse as a strategic resource* in “Human Relations”, Volume 53(9), 2000, pp. 1227–1248, The Tavistock Institute © SAGE Publications London, Thousand Oaks CA, online <http://hum.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/53/9/1227>, accessed at 20 May 2009, 23.30.

⁶⁹⁷ William D. Casebeer, James A. Russell, *Storytelling and Terrorism: Towards a Comprehensive “Counter-Narrative Strategy”*, in “Strategic Insights”, Volume IV, Issue 3 (March 2005), on line <http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2005/Mar/casebeerMar05.asp>, accessed at 27 July 2009, 22.00.

public speeches – Richard Perle, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Paul Wolfowitz, all outstanding opinion makers who mustered a strong influence and knowledge in the fight against the communist world led by the USSR during the Cold War, also experienced scholars in foreign policy. These discourses reshaped the geopolitical reality for many leaders of the Western world, allies of the USA.

The analysis of *geopolitical propaganda and justification mapping* of politics is based on the analysis of the methods and techniques meant to persuade and manipulate the public opinion and its reaction to one region or another in the world. They can be borrowed from communication sciences, especially from the international communication and the international mass media.

4.1. Geopolitical Methods used in the analysis and the explanation of the evolution in international politics

From the early 1990s, certain analysts started to clearly distinguish „*between geopolitical order and geopolitical discourse, the first a worldwide political economy of spatial practices, while the second is a congealed hegemonic organization of representations of space*”⁶⁹⁸. In order to understand why certain events take place in particular geographical regions with major consequences for global evolution, geopolitical analysis must follow the stakeholders’ behavior in *spatial practices* and avoid analyzes of the political discourse and the news value via media because the latter evolve in the *constructed geopolitical space* and the image we have is the image the actor wants us to have about these events in most of the cases.

Geopolitical analysis must answer at least four questions. First – *who are the actors involved in the geopolitical game in a certain space* – the answer must lead to the identification of *strategic players* but also of the *geopolitical pawns*. The search of a proper answer may

⁶⁹⁸ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Postmodern Geopolitics? The modern geopolitical imagination and beyond*, in Gearóid Ó Tuathail and Simon Dalby, cit. work, p. 18.

not overlook the presence of certain “*actors by proxy*”. Finally yet importantly, the relationships among *strategic players* and *actors-as objects* of geopolitical rivalry in a certain geographical space must be studied as well. It is wrong and improper to focus the analysis entirely on the classical stakeholder, the state altogether⁶⁹⁹. Although some opinions place the classical actors in a predominant position in certain key regions of the planet, there are enough cases where the non-classical actors, like the oil companies, are strategic players⁷⁰⁰. From this point of view, there are two relevant regions: Central Asia and North-Western Africa. These are areas rich in oil fields and the states in the region are by far too weak to become real players in geopolitical rivalries. At the beginning of the XXIst century, the non-state actor entered the strategic field, as well. The attacks of the Al-Qaeda terrorists on the „Twins Towers” appalled experts, diplomats and the army generals. Analyst George Cristian Maior thought that, “*the extremely significant presence of non state players in the political and global strategic equation was hard to imagine and explain in understanding the present structure of international relations*”⁷⁰¹.

The second question – *Which are the economic, political and strategic elements that motivate an actor to interfere in a space other than the one under its sovereignty?* Operating the paradigm *the actor’s interest in the geopolitical field* may provide the right answer. The outcome is available, quantifiable criteria and indicators that may help to map an actor’s priorities in that respective area. Stakeholders can identify those they can associate with and those that are going to stand up against strategic supremacy. That is one way to reach what the French analysts call „réseau hiérarchisé”⁷⁰²

⁶⁹⁹ François Thual, *Methodes de la geopolitique. Apprendre à déchiffrer l’actualité*, on line, http://geo-phile.net/IMG/pdf/METHODES_DE_LA_GEOPOLITIQUE.pdf, accessed at 27 July 2009 22.30.

⁷⁰⁰ George Cristian Maior, *Incertitude. Strategic thinking and international relations in the XXI century*, RAO, 2009, pp. 91-98.

⁷⁰¹ *Ibidem*, p. 93.

⁷⁰² François Thual, *cit. work, in cit. city*.

(hierarchy network) that includes both friendships and rivalries in the geographical and virtual spaces. Not only the rivalry between the non-state actors like *Google* and *Yahoo* has become „planetary” but also the growing extent of the attacks in this virtual space. „*For the moment, most incidents affect the governmental companies and organizations which are involved in arms fabrication, financial operations, or activities related to hi-tech or science research*”, said Alexander Gostev, author of the report „*Cyber Threat Forecast for 2012*”. In 2012, the companies that work in industries like natural resource extraction, energy, transportation, food and pharmaceuticals will be equally affected as the companies that provide Internet services and information security”⁷⁰³. From this point of view, in the future it seems that certain countries will be less affected by tangible elements, as geopolitician used to call the beginning of the XXth century, and which provided elements of power for the states – their geographical position (continental powers vs. maritime powers), the size and the quality of population, soil productivity and the amount of natural/mineral resources etc. Rivalries come from the fight to control the transport routes of energy and for the influence over regions rich in energy and food resources and not for their physical and geographical conquest⁷⁰⁴.

To know accurately the degrees of influence exercised by a power or a non-state actor in a certain geographical space, we must use the methods specific of psychology, sociology and of the communication sciences. In fact, there is nothing new in the revival of specific methods from other scientific branches in the geopolitical studies because Martin Wright warned in the 70s and 80s of the last century „*We cannot treat international politics in a simple way, in*

⁷⁰³ Kaspersky Lab., *Cyber threat forecast, for 2012*, on line <http://www.kaspersky.com/images/Kaspersky%20report-10-134377.pdf>, accessed at 27 December 2011, 22.30.

⁷⁰⁴ George Cristian Maior, *cit. work*, pp. 113-114.

mechanic terms. [...] People own not only territories, raw materials and arms; they also have their own beliefs and opinions."⁷⁰⁵

What strategy will the actor adopt in order to attain its interests in a certain area? This is the third question that geopolitical analysis must answer. Today the classical and non-classical means of the use of power match so well that it is hard to give a clear-cut answer between *hard power* and *soft power*. The solution resides in the employment of both paradigms. Most of the times an *actors' power* determines the type of behavior adopted in geopolitical „games” on extended spaces and the *perception* of the space occupied in the power equation leads to a reasonable choice of the type of power implemented. These elements of analysis may be identified in the way certain analysts define geopolitics. According to the director of *International Centre for Geopolitical Studies*, from Geneva, Dr. Gyula Csurgai, geopolitics itself is «*a multi-dimensional method that analyzes the conflicting strategies of the different competitors (state and non-state) for the control of a given space at a given moment in historical evolution. These strategies are often influenced by geopolitical representations (“mental maps”)*”⁷⁰⁶. The operation of this definition allows us to highlight the actors' behavior in the geopolitical field. In an answer to the question why we must know the opponents' behavior in a geopolitical field, Barry R. Schneider answered presently with a paraphrase of Sun Tzu: this is the only way we can overcome the opponent's intentions and actions and reduce our loss to the minimum⁷⁰⁷. In order to do this, we must combine the analysis of classical with neoclassical strategies. The existence of an impressive nuclear arsenal as well as the

⁷⁰⁵ Martin, *cit. work*, p. 89.

⁷⁰⁶ Gyula Csurgai, *Geopolitics, Geo-economics and Economic intelligence*, in “Strategic Data link”, March 98, on line, <http://www.opencanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/SD-69-Csurgai.pdf>, accessed at 12 February 2009, 19.00.

⁷⁰⁷ Barry R. Schneider, *Deterring International Rivals From War and Escalation*, in http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/cpc-pubs/know_thy_enemy/index.htm, accessed at 12 may, 2010.

proliferation of the countries that have weapons of mass destruction cannot exclude under any circumstances the classical analysis of military strategies adopted by countries like Iran or North Korea. This approach is even more pressing as interdependencies in the geopolitical field have grown.

The continuous expansion of complex interdependencies between state and non-state actors creates a diminution of the global security besides the asymmetrical threats. Thus, both state and non-state actors must opt for the evaluation and the counterbalance of global threats while analyzes develop a new role of early warning and strategic anticipation. Vasile Pușcaș concluded, „*Asymmetrical interdependency is a very important tool of influence in cooperation and conflict. The power interaction with complex interdependency encourages institutional change. Institutionalization of the world politics has become more legal and this has positive effects on international cooperation.*”⁷⁰⁸

In the perception and the anticipation of the actors' behavior, a “pure” and “objective” science is a myth for the analysis of international relations and equally for geopolitics and geostrategy. „*A science that does not have a say in vital issues*“ – concluded Stanley H. Hoffman in an interesting essay about international relations theory – “*leads to pseudoscience of the political behavior, which accepts the values established by politicians, as pure empirical science cannot tell what we must do and in this way, it fulfils, in the enamel of science, mechanical task based on blunted beliefs*”⁷⁰⁹. Military analysts Kevin L. Falk and Thomas M. Kane noted, in their turn, that a part of the researchers on international relations believes that laws and statistics and mathematical formulae can be applied in order to decipher the actors' behavior, just as

⁷⁰⁸ Vasile Pușcaș, *Managing Global Interdependencies*, EIKON Printing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, pp. 77-78.

⁷⁰⁹ Stanley H. Hoffman, *The Long Road to Theory*, in “Documentary notebook”, vol I, no. 3/1981, p. 33.

„scholars find answers to questions related to the behavior of subatomic particles”⁷¹⁰.

Such trends appear when the review and the research of international political phenomena rest on false or inadequate assertions. Most often, they stem from the belief that researchers can discover laws and principles of the human behavior. Some thinkers and military analysts have „discovered”, for example, the law sizing up *the power potentiality* meant to forecast the necessary conditions to win a battle or even an entire war. The military history has proved it inaccurate. Marx and Engels “discovered” the law of the successive social and political systems and they projected “scientifically” the victory of communism over capitalism. The collapse of the USSR and its satellites proved the futility of such „laws” that supported a bankrupt political and ideological doctrine. Professor and political analyst Grigore Georgiu got closer to the political reality of our times. He noted that the failure of the Marxist political projections guided scholars towards the fundamental value of an accurate assessment in the research preconditions for social studies. He stated, “*Social thinking is more careful than ever before nowadays, in the aftermath of the revolutions from the East, because all projections could not anticipate the amplitude of the phenomena*”⁷¹¹.

Some analysts believe that the review of facts can help to identify the causes that have generated them⁷¹², but this is just another assumption that may lead to improper conclusions in the research of the international relations and, equally, in the geopolitical analysis. That type of reality described by a researcher in the

⁷¹⁰ Kevin L. Falk, Thomas M. Kane, *The Maginot Mentality in International Relations Models*, in “Parameters”, US Army War College Quarterly, Summer 1998, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, pp. 80-92.

⁷¹¹ Grigore Georgiu, *Identity and integrity. From disjunction to conjunction*, Bucharest, 2001, p. 40.

⁷¹² Roni Linsler, *Predictive Power of Role-play Simulations in Political Science: Experience of an e-Learning tool*, in http://www.simplay.net/papers/RPSpredictive_power.html, accessed at 08 april 2011.

aftermath of his fact analysis will never be an accurate copy, an identical double of the *actual reality*. Kenneth N. Waltz was very careful to note, „*What we think is reality is in fact an intricate elaborated and over elaborated theoretical construct during the years*”⁷¹³. Raw information has no meaning if we do not associate it with relevant theories. „*When we look at the international world*”, wrote Kenneth N. Waltz, “*We see a complex and endless row of events and facts*”⁷¹⁴. From this point of view, the analyst may very likely come to an unsurpassable hurdle: a lack of precision in measuring and evaluating facts, events and processes that “populate” the geopolitical field at a certain point. That is why we need a theory that offers the required paradigms to separate the particular from the general, the essential/relevant from the unimportant in the dynamic developments of the international environment/geopolitical field.

Starting from the premises launched by professor Ion Conea who concluded that geopolitics is “*the science of the day, that is the science of the phenomena that happen «today» and that they will be history tomorrow, just as the history of any past era was geopolitics for the time and during the time things we witness today are taking place*”⁷¹⁵, there are two analysis perspectives of the geopolitical field/reality we must consider. First, the historic approach concerns the past and is mainly empirical. Second, the situational analysis of the future is definitely normative. Both perspectives of research in geopolitics may bring to light the most relevant aspects of it.

Setting the past as a standard in the analysis of the geopolitical field is required by the very recurrent cycles that have occurred in the evolution of mankind. The purpose of this approach is not to transform geopolitics into history, but to discover the predominant tendencies along history and the lines of continuity from the analyzed geopolitical field⁷¹⁶, to decipher the causes that produce

⁷¹³ Apud Kevin L. Falk, Thomas M. Kane, *cit. work*, p. 86.

⁷¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 88.

⁷¹⁵ Ion Conea, *cit. work*, in *cit. city* p. 34.

⁷¹⁶ Stanley H. Hoffman, *cit.*, pp. 33-34.

modifications of the role and the place of certain status indicators of the geopolitical field, as highlighted by Stanley H. Hoffman in his research of both the past and the present in international relations. We may start from the example of the place and role of the power potentiality, which did not take a similar place in the system of relationships among stakeholders that fought for their interests in a certain space at all the stages of evolution of the international community. The study of the past diplomatic “constellations” or important events will allow us to distinguish between the new issues raised by the contemporary events and the old ones that reoccur in the evolution of the history of the international relations⁷¹⁷.

By comparing the results obtained in the research of the past from a certain geopolitical field, using specific methods of historic research for moments/times proper for the system of international relations, one may identify the lines of continuity and discontinuity in the behavior of the stakeholders, and may also foresee future tendencies in the respective field, with a certain degree of probability. The historic analysis of the geopolitical field for its past dimension can bring forward a series of generalizations that support certain inductive judgments in analyzing the present and the future evolution in this geopolitical field. Such generalities could concern: the foundation and the type of relations between a powerful/ dominating stakeholder and a small/dominated one⁷¹⁸, between a classical stakeholder (a national state) and a non-state player (a political and military block or an international political organization); the types of reaction of a small actor when its space of sovereignty has become a subject of dispute/understanding between the great stakeholders (empires for example); the respect/disrespect of the principles and rules of international law by the great actors when they dispute their interests in a geographical space which usually is a space of sovereignty of the smaller actor or of a larger state which

⁷¹⁷ Martin Wight, *cit. work*, pp. 165-208.

⁷¹⁸ Larry L. Watts, *Incompatible Alliance: Neo-relaisism and Small State Alliance Behaviour in Wartime*, Umea University, Sweden, 1999, pp. 32-48.

is not present in the power equation any more, as was the case of the Ottoman Empire in the XVIII-XIXth centuries. Still, we have to mention the fact that this was an atypical case for the evolution of the contemporary international relations.

The study of the past for a geopolitical field may help, on one hand, to distinguish between the present issues raised by the stakeholders' behavior in international relations and the old recurring issues, as well as between the causes that generated this type of behavior; it may also help to find the particularities in the promotion of the same type of interests and to distinguish the influence of the geopolitical environment, which is the most dynamic factor in the geopolitical field and its influence over the continuity/discontinuity lines in the development of such factors. On the other hand, the comparison of concrete situations of the geopolitical field at different points in time, where at least one of them belongs to the past, will allow a good selection of the factors and correlations which are really important for analyzing different actors. That is one way of avoiding the danger of insisting on a static scheme of interrelated variables without indicating their relative importance or overstressing the exclusive causes and random trends as invariables.

The historic method in the analysis of a geopolitical field is consequently very important because it may open the way to more complex issues and it may lead to syntheses and new interrogations. It is, also, very important to avoid granting an absolute power to this type of analysis. In his study, Bert F. Hoselitz pointed out that in international relations studies *“the reapplication of the comparative method to historic material is not possible if it is limited to a simple comparison of the chain events as they are essentially unique”*⁷¹⁹. As a result, we need to use general variables equally approached to identify the continuity and the discontinuity lines of the geopolitical field, as stated before.

⁷¹⁹ Bert F. Hoselitz, *On comparative History*, in *“World Politics”*, no. 2/1997; apud *“Documentary notebook”*, vol. I, no. 3, 1981, p. 38.

How does a stakeholder legitimate its geopolitical action in a given space? This is the last question of the four basic ones that initiate a geopolitical analysis process. A stakeholder may use classical strategies (such as propaganda), non-classical (public diplomacy, strategic communications etc.) or indirect strategies where stakeholders act by proxy. Strategies of image have been gaining relevance in the disputes among stakeholders present in different areas of high interests. The emerging conflicts after the end of the Cold War had to be solved by foreign military intervention in most of the cases. Politicians must decide the foreign military intervention, but they cannot ignore the public opinion from their countries⁷²⁰. Military experts consider that the media has become an army in itself for the modern war of today. It cannot kill but it may contribute essentially to victory⁷²¹.

In more instances than one, image strategies are used to position an actor in the international politics. The Romanian geopolitical studies adopted the idea and supported the image of a country that had been in the forefront defense line of the West that granted its relevant role in the European history⁷²². However, Romanians have not been the only ones who wanted to build such an image. Some Greek specialists consider that their country is a frontier between the West and the East. Minna Rasku in her work „*On the Border of East and West Greek Geopolitical Narratives*“ concluded, „*Placing Greece on a geopolitical map is an interesting task for many reasons. It is situated in a geographic area where the discussion of borders and place is vital. Both the east-west dilemma and the Balkan-Europe dichotomy touch Greece deeply. The Mediterranean creates an interesting border to the south, because there Greece faces Africa. The Aegean Sea to the east separates Greece from Turkey, with which*

⁷²⁰ See Călin Hentea, *Arms that do not kill...*, p. 48.

⁷²¹ See Stephen Badsey, *cit. work*, pp. 117-169; Philip M. Taylor: *War and the Media: Propaganda and Persuasion in the Gulf War.*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992, p. 31.

⁷²² Ilie Bădescu, *Geopolitics...*, pp. 210-217.

military conflict has been simmering throughout the past centuries, and from Anatolia, which traditionally has been referred to as a part of Asia, or even as Asia proper"⁷²³. Alexandr Dugin thought that the geopolitical place that might allow Russia to attain its imperial mission was Central Asia⁷²⁴. Professor David Newman from the Department of Geography, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheba, Israel wrote, in his turn, "*The geopolitical imagination and positioning of the country is, to a great extent, dependent on the way in which the individual identities are defined and understood, both internally (by the residents of the country) and externally (by other countries in the global system). The fact that a decreasing number of its citizens identify with the single, socially constructed, national ethos of Zionism is a testament to the fact that Israel has become a far more heterogeneous society on the one hand, and increasingly critical in its search for alternative forms of meaning and identity. This, in turn, will change the nature of the collective, geopolitical, identity of the State as a player within the global system*"⁷²⁵.

Under specific circumstances, image strategies are used to position players that are not subjects of the international law because they are not accepted as states in the international politics. That was the case of Kosovo only partially recognized as an independent state by the contemporary diplomacy⁷²⁶, or that of the unilateral declaration of independence of Transnistria province⁷²⁷ but there are many other examples such as the Kurds, the Palestinians, the Uigurs, and the Tibetans etc.

⁷²³ Minna Rasku, *On the Border of East and West Greek Geopolitical Narratives*, Jyväskylä University Printing House, Jyväskylä 2007, p. 9.

⁷²⁴ Apud, Ilie Bădescu, *cit. work*, pp. 194-205.

⁷²⁵ David Newman, *Citizenship, Identity and Location: The Changing Discourse of Israeli Geopolitics*, In K. Dodds, D. Atkinson (eds.), *Geopolitical Traditions? Critical Histories of a Century of Geopolitical Thought* Rutledge: London, 1998.

⁷²⁶ Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 186.

⁷²⁷ Sergei Markedonov, *Unrecognized Geopolitics*, in "Russia In Global Affairs", Vol. 4, No. 1, January – March, 2006, pp. 68-79.

The geopolitical analysis as a process requires a team of specialists who come from different scientific branches from politology, human and political geography, history, the theory of the international relations, diplomacy and security studies to the science of communication and the propaganda sociology. A single scientist or political analyst cannot accomplish a full scanning of a geopolitical situation at a certain time, no matter how knowledgeable he/she actually is. „The products” of geopolitical analysis do not have identical structures or purposes. They differ profoundly, according to the people who commission them and, mainly, according to their purpose. From this point of view, geopolitical analyzes can be:

a) *instruments/support* for the classical/non-classical actors’ decision made in international politics. From this point of view, geopolitical analyzes can be *geopolitical strategies and scenarios*. They are produced by specialized institutes/departments that act in different institutions of the state or by think tanks and independent research centres. They do not belong to the public sector and they do not use public information, but usually classified information, gathered by specialized institutions and personnel that work in the field of intelligence. In this domain, a number of European countries have quite strong institutional interfaces between research and politics. Many ministries of defense have developed various mechanisms to acquire knowledge from outside their ranks. A few European countries maintain defense analytical research capabilities (e.g. FOI, the Swedish defense research agency with some 1,000 employees; or FFI, the Norwegian Defense Research Establishment with about 360 scientists) that have loose links or no links at all with the government but enjoy a deep strategic trust (such as Qinetiq in the UK with about 6,500 employees, or IABG in Germany with about 1000 employees being entirely private, and TNO in the Netherlands with about 4,000 scientists, out of which about a quarter work in the defense public-private domain outside the government)⁷²⁸.

⁷²⁸ Alyson JK Bailes, René Dinesen, Hiski Haukkala, Pertti Joenniemi and Stephan De Spiegeleire, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

b) *Features, reports, analyzes* for the media and the public opinion have a non-classified character and are generally provided for public „consumption”. They are commissioned by media outlets mainly in cases when interest rivalries become open conflicts in one region or another. The neutrality of these „products” is highly doubtful and they may mean something to politicians only when the „CNN effect” still works ⁷²⁹;

c) *The geopolitical discourse* delivered by the representatives of the stakeholders involved in geopolitical cooperation/rivalries. In general, these speeches present reality according to their interests and guiding ideas, and fundamental values that dominate society, in the case of the classical stakeholder, or according to the organization culture in the case of the non-classical players.

4.2. *The stages of the geopolitical analysis*

There are countless methods and as many ways to distinguish among the stages that a scientific team must follow in the production of a geopolitical analysis. Certain specialists consider that a good geopolitical analysis has to follow four steps ⁷³⁰; others speak of five stages ⁷³¹ or even less ⁷³². Regardless of the complexity of the theme of research/analysis, a team of researchers cannot burn the following stages after receiving the commission from an institution or organization, or at the end of its own project to study the *topic/ problem* down to the final “product”:

1) The *Design research* identifies the objectives, the terms, the teams and the project managers as well as the financial-logistical resources for the project;

⁷²⁹ Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *Communication in international conflicts*, p. 197.

⁷³⁰ Merje Kuus, *Critical Geopolitics*, on line, http://www.isacomps.com/info/samples/criticalgeopolitics_sample.pdf, accessed at 30 May 2009, 20.45.

⁷³¹ François Thual, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁷³² André Cabanis, Jean-Marie Crouzatier, Ruxandra Ivan, Jacques Soppelsa, *Méthodologie de la recherche en droit international, géopolitique et relations internationales*, Idea Design & Print, printing House, Cluj, 2010, p. 71.

- 2) Gathering of the necessary information for the analysis by specialized institutions/teams;
- 3) Studying specific objectives by specialized groups according to the Design research;
- 4) Writing and presenting the research report.

The first stage of the geopolitical analysis. Every type of empirical research contains either an implicit, if not an explicit, research design. Basically, such a design means a logical sequence that connects empirical data to initial research questions and finally to the conclusions of the study. In a way, the research design is a blueprint of the research plan resting on four issues, at least: what questions to answer, what are the relevant data, what data to collect, and how to analyze the results. A geopolitical research also needs a model or a structure before collecting data or before the beginning of the analysis.

A research design is not just a working plan. A working plan explains what is to be done to finish the project and it is based on the research model of the project. What a research model really does is to ensure that the proofs gathered by the research answer the initial research question in a very straightforward and convincing way. Gathering relevant evidence means to identify the type of evidence needed to answer the research question, to test a theory, to outline a programme or to describe accurately some phenomenon. In other words, when planning a research project one must ask the question: what sort of acquired knowledge may answer the question (or test the theory) in a reliable way considering the starting hypothesis/research issue?"⁷³³

What really matters in this initial stage is to let the research group know exactly whether it is going to carry a theoretical or an operational research. The former tests new paradigms or theories.

⁷³³ Valerie M. Hudson, *Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations*, in "Foreign Policy Analysis", no. 1, 2005, pp. 1-30.

In this case, Barbara Geddes, for example, suggested, „*The big questions might be broken down into smaller questions that can more readily be tested. And testing theory against empirical evidence is primarily what Geddes has in mind when she speaks of theory building. In doing so, we should posit clear and falsifiable hypotheses deduced from our theory*”⁷³⁴. Secondly, we should test these hypotheses against the universe of cases to which they apply. Most importantly, we must test our hypotheses against cases that were *not* part of the inductive process from which the argument was initially proposed. Ideally, this should include as many remarks regarding each hypothesis as possible. In fact, Geddes argued, „*that we unfortunately cling to the details of our knowledge and the cases we know at the expense of building theory*”⁷³⁵.

In the case of operational analysis, research is organised in a completely different manner. Once problems to be solved have been identified, the group sets out the hypothesis and the research objectives. It also selects the proper concepts for the operational process. In his remarks about the stages under such circumstances, George Thomas, cited David Collier and Henry Brady and pointed out that, „*Most importantly, before testing a hypothesis we want to be clear about concepts and theories. After all, concepts and theories are not prefabricated things to be randomly picked up by the political scientist eager to test this or that hypothesis, but the very building blocks of social science – they are the basis of good causal inference. Thus just where we cut into the process – whether we start with propositions, cases, or concepts – depends on the particular research in which we are engaged. The Research design deals with a logical problem and not a logistical one*”⁷³⁶. There is a tight connection between the research design and the data collection.

Data collection concerns mainly the quality and not necessarily the quantity of information. Reliable information may influence

⁷³⁴ George Thomas, *cit, work*, p. 856.

⁷³⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁷³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 857.

decisively the efficiency of the analysis of a certain geopolitical field/area. In her opinions about the importance of data gathering for the analysis of public foreign politics of the USA Valeri M. Hudson quoted two renowned experts Andriole and Hopple (1981) and noted that “*the government provided over \$5 million for the development of events data sets during the time period 1967–1981*”⁷³⁷. In the general process of data gathering worked both specialists and university undergraduates charged to “sieve through” the media information, to identify chronologies and other sources from the foreign policy, which they later coded according to the listed rules from the coding handbooks (generally very thick). The code was checked periodically for reliability and finally stored on a computer card⁷³⁸.

This is how coding systems such as WEIS or COPDAB⁷³⁹ appeared in the USA. They had specific coding and storing systems divided into political interactions recorded as “events” and categories of stakeholders also coded. All these data were gathered both from open and classified sources. The French analyst François Thual concluded that the information that might lead to good analysis had been gathered by the intelligence (spying) community. They are „*the real deposits with the state’s intentions and interest groups*”⁷⁴⁰. Intelligence services gathered initially sensitive information for the military structures. Today, they have expanded their surveillance operations to the economic and the commercial areas⁷⁴¹

⁷³⁷ Valerie M. Hudson, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*, p. 9.

⁷³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 10.

⁷³⁹ Philip A. Schrodt, *Event Data in Foreign Policy Analysis*, in Laura Neack, Patrick J. Haney and Jeanne A.K. Hey, *Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation*, New York: Prentice Hall, on line, <http://eventdata.psu.edu/papers.dir/Haney.pdf>, accessed at 30 May 2009, 22.00.

⁷⁴⁰ François Thual, *Apprendre à déchiffrer l’actualité*, on line, www.dachary.org/obses/geopo.html, accessed at 30 May 2009, 21.00.

⁷⁴¹ See for more informations, Robert Salmon, Yolaine de Linares, *L’intelligence compétitive; une commination subtile pour gagner ensemble*, **Economica**, Paris, 1997.

including private businesses⁷⁴². In the later years, the intelligence activity has provided valuable information for research organisations, for famous think tanks a.s.o⁷⁴³.

In the fight for the control of energy resources and transportation any information that provides some advantage to one competitor or another is classified as *top secret*. Both the US and the USSR organised covert operations to protect their interests in different areas of geopolitical interest during the Cold War. Such actions would have failed lamentably had they not been based on secret information⁷⁴⁴. Such operations are carried out even today, mainly in the geopolitical domain of natural resources, but not only. It was no coincidence that the Russian Federation issued a law in February 2004 that labeled any information about the oil resources of the country a “state secret”⁷⁴⁵. The American Central Intelligence Agency opened an analysis centre that studies the resources competition, the desertification threats and the climate change, massive population migrations etc., and all these reports were stored as classified documents⁷⁴⁶.

Data collection means not only a large amount of work, but also the use of certain methods and techniques from different fields such as statistics, sociology, geography, economics, strategy and

⁷⁴² Martin Petersen, *What We Should Demand from Intelligence*, in “Intelligence and the National Security Strategist: Enduring Issues and Challenges”, National Defense University Press, Washington D.C., 2004, p. 429.

⁷⁴³ Zhongzhi Shi, *On Intelligence Science*, in **International Journal of Advanced Intelligence**, Volume 1, Number 1, November, 2009, pp. 39-57.

⁷⁴⁴ See John Prados, *Războaiele secrete ale președinților*, translation from English J. Tutunea, editura Elit, f.a; Ethan Kaplan, Arindrajit Dube, Suesh Naidu, “Coups, Corporations, and Classified Information”, in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, on line, <http://qje.oxfordjournals.org?content?early?2011?08?100/qje.qjr030.full>, accessed 23 November 2011, 23.00.

⁷⁴⁵ Alexander Sutyagin, *Russia: Top secret oil*, in “Pravda on line”, Apr. 28, 2004, <http://energybulletin.net/node/93>, accessed 23 November 2011, 22.00.

⁷⁴⁶ David Kravets, *CIA Says Global-Warming Is Classified*, on line, <http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2011/09/cia-classified-global-warming-intelligence/> accessed on 22 November 2011, 202.00.

history. Event data were originally developed by Charles McClelland in the early 1960s as a bridge between the traditional approach of diplomatic history and the new quantitative analysis of international politics advocated by the behavioral approach. McClelland started from the assumption that history could be split into a sequence of discrete events such as consultations, threats, promises, acts of violence and so forth. Event data built a link between the then-prevalent general systems theories of international behavior and the textual histories, which provided an empirical basis to understand that behavior⁷⁴⁷. The computer and its large use in universities and study centres of international relations cleared a series of old hardships. Prestigious universities manage their own databases on international politics, which are used in the teaching activity for case studies in the field of geopolitics and international relations carried out by undergraduates.

However, a series of difficulties in data gathering could not be overcome, especially regarding the access to information that is not meant to reach the public opinion through the mass media, but is highly relevant for a stakeholders behavior or interest in a certain geographical space. Sometimes, access to these data is possible after a long period of time when they lose any relevance for the analysis of the situation, and preserve some meaning only for the historic study and education activities. F. Thual commented that all states, regardless of their size, operate counterespionage institutions besides the secret services to prevent competitors from the geopolitical field to gather *top secret* information⁷⁴⁸ about them.

Countries of a strong traditional analysis in international relations host specialized centres for information gathering and management, where scientists use the most advanced methods and state of the art computer technology. Data and information collected for the analysis of the geopolitical field must contain:

⁷⁴⁷ Philip A. Schrodtt, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁷⁴⁸ François Thual, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

1. A *geographical space/web* assigned to the geopolitical filed; all data and information collected must be comprehensive enough to allow answers to the following questions: type of territory (a state or a part of the state, a region/assembly of states, international territories etc.); geographical position, neighbors and adjacent spaces; the configuration according to the political, economic and spiritual sovereignty (independent, autonomous, enclave etc.); the extent of this territory; geographical characteristics (climate, land, vegetation, watershed etc.); population (number of inhabitants and the level of education, degree of occupation and socio-professional structure, the major religion and the level of tolerance of proselytism by other religious denominations); available/operating resources (energy, food, water, raw materials for high-tech); the state of infrastructure (degree of modernization, the length and the density of land, water and air connections with the outer world, the number of harbors, airports, information access via Internet, and web connections etc.); the horizontal and the vertical structure of the national economy (the ratio between national and inter/transnational capital, the speed of capital circulation on the domestic market, the safety degree for capital in the economy of the respective territory etc.)

All these questions are criteria and indicators of data gathering and in the management of databases they become useful in the analysis and the geopolitical rating of a particular space. Such data may be collected from open sources and not only, according to the received economic orders and the strategies employed, to the official policies and the public discourse of a stakeholder that claims its interest/lack of interest for a given space. Databases can accumulate appropriate information stored and used whenever the need arises.

2. Another segment of data collection and storage focuses on the *actors and their behavior* in the analyzed space⁷⁴⁹: supplementary

⁷⁴⁹ See Bruno de Almeida Ferrari, *Some Considerations about The Methods and The Nature of Political Geography and Geopolitics*, in http://www.ciari.org/investigacioncao/Politicalgeog_geopolitics.pdf, accessed on 22 November 2011, 202.00.

data and information describe the type of actors engaged in geopolitical rivalries (state, non-state – political-military organizations, international financial organizations etc.); the reliability and the structure of bi/multilateral military alliances in the area or in their geographical neighborhood (formal, long-lasting, mutual, and their foundation) the type of identity pattern and the values it is based on (predominant mentalities and prejudices, the perception of the “foreigner” and the attitude towards outsiders, the solidarity degree in human communities, the nature of the relationships between the majority and minority members, the degree of mutual tolerance) each stakeholder’s positioning in the structure of geopolitical relationships (the position can be established in the pattern the centre versus the periphery and conflict- cooperation etc); ways and means currently used to promote/impose individual interests (hard power or soft power, negotiations, the use of force etc).

3. Data and information on the *power potentiality* of the actors involved in the respective geopolitical field: material resources (financial, commercial, production, the size and the equipment level of the army, the type of the military arsenal – classical or mass destruction etc.); the population’s level of education and professional knowledge and the level of culture (the level of the scientific research in priority scientific branches, the degree of practical implementation of fundamental research etc.); the diplomatic prestige and the “congeniality capital” that a stakeholder musters in the international environment (the respect for political leaders, the understanding of the political regime in the international life etc.) the acceptance/rejection degree of the interests promoted by the lawful leadership of the respective stakeholder by the majority of the population (patriotic feelings, or the degree of acceptance of organization culture promoted by non-state players);

4. Data and information gathering about the *actors’ perception* of the geopolitical field is more difficult and more important for analysis process. They have to refer to: an actor’s representation about the power of the competitor/partner; the way it perceives its own power; the way it looks at the actors’ behavior as opponents/

partners (does it induce a feeling of fear, insecurity or security); the actors' representations of the main threats that endanger the accomplishment of its interests for that specific geopolitical field; the way it „balances” the chances to win/lose in the interest rivalry that involves this space (the perception of security, financial, commercial, identity, prestige risks etc.); the representation it has about the other actors' interests from the analyzed geopolitical field (the perception of identical/close or opposing interests that endanger its own interests or help to fulfil them etc.);

5. Information and data relating to the way an actor perceives and relates to the *principles and rules of public and human international law*: to what extent actors adapt their behavior to the norm of the public international law; the extent to which it follows the rules and the resolutions of the international bodies with universal vocation and legitimacy.;

6. The activity of data gathering on *ways crises were previously solved/managed* in this geopolitical field are important for anticipating the possible similar reactions; only relevant events for the study of a crisis must be considered.

All this information must be highly reliable, accurate, and definitely relevant for reality. Each domain and sub domain mentioned in the collection of information must be connected to *specific analysis criteria*. For example, when we want to know what types of actors are rivals in a certain space, we have to resort to criteria that separate them according to their size, (failed states, small, medium, big powers, superpowers etc.), according to their relations and interactions (*political* – states, regional political organizations, global; *economic* –financial organizations and institutions, commercial; *cultural* etc.).

The third stage of geopolitical analysis⁷⁵⁰ concerns information processing according to the established hypotheses and objectives and to the research specialization. This stage takes the

⁷⁵⁰ Constantin Hlihor, *Geopolitics and geostrategy...*, p. 173.

longest time planned right from the beginning. When everybody has identified individual methods and tools according to the overall objective, the research timetable may be implemented. As an addition to the previous argumentation, I have to stress the idea connected to the research methods that help to aggregate a coherent image of the dissimilar spaces of everyday life. This falls into a pattern noticed by Gerard O'Tuathail (2010, 8) who wrote „*How is ground-level expertise to be acquired and what are the ethics of the research methods employed?*”⁷⁵¹ He pointed out the difficulties and the time management of extensive fieldwork. The groups must collaborate to confirm and test certain working hypotheses. Each group manages one side of the geopolitical research and analysis.

A group of researchers/analysts processes the information about the *actors* to build architecture of *geopolitical relations* of the analyzed space. This can turn into documents, information, reports followed by graphical designs, icons, mapping, multimedia, according to the group's preferences. Irrespective of its format, the architecture of relations must rest on judgment values and reviews of the strategic stakeholders, the geopolitical powers and the stakeholders that act by proxy and, last but not least, of the object-players from geopolitical rivalries/games. The constellation of formal relations (alliances, economic and strategic partnerships etc) or informal ones gather in their consistency with the first conclusions and analysis coming from the other working groups.

Another working group will *research and analyze the information on the space* of rivalries/cooperation in order to fulfil certain interests⁷⁵². The analysis must reveal the fundamental

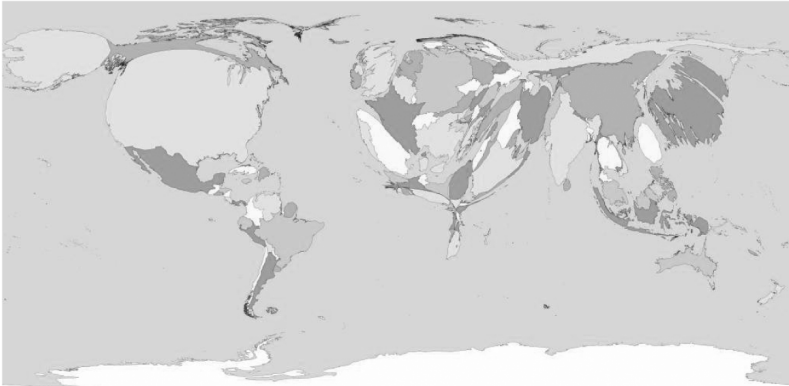
⁷⁵¹ G. G. O'Tuathail, *Localizing geopolitics: Disaggregating violence and return in conflict Regions*, in *Political Geography* no. 29(2010), pp. 256-265, on line <http://gerardtoal.files.wordpress.com/2010/01/localizinggeopolitics2010.pdf>, accessed at 23 november 2011.

⁷⁵² See a concrete analysis, Julien Dedenis, *Sahara occidental essai d'approche geopolitique*, Université de Rouen, Laboratoire AILLEURS, on line, http://www.georouen.org/IMG/pdf/Sahara_occidental._Essai_d_approche_geopolitique.pdf, accessed at 23 november 2011.

characteristics of that space and evaluate them on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means the absence and 10 the maximum manifestation of the element which characterizes it. The analysis of sovereign spaces that make up the geopolitical region/field follows four essential dimensions: a) *economic*; b) *political*; c) *strategic*; d) *cultural and spiritual*. From this point of view, the group must include teams of analysts who specialize in all these fields.

The economic dimension is by far the most important because the geopolitical rivalries of the XXIst century surface especially in the control of water, food and energy resources. The competition for the „occupation” of the commercial spaces and financial markets has become acrimonious. Natural resources that feed the high-tech industry deepen rivalries between the non-classical actors interested in an area. The links between multinationals/ transnational and the states from the surrounding area, especially in the case of financial circuits, security and speed circulation of capitals in an area⁷⁵³ should not be overlooked. An important issue of analysis is the degree of economy upgrading both in terms of structure and infrastructure. The technology level and the amount of scientific discoveries implemented in the product unit is another element, which gives an accurate representation of a territorial economy. The economic growth rate, the population's degree of borrowing must be taken into account. Graphical tables, maps, multimedia products that review and highlight the core of an economic feature, must accompany the analyzes. The graphical representation of energy consumption at global level may offer a sample. This synthetic picture of the energy consumption renders the stage of industrialization, the level of the living standards etc. and builds up a forceful image and a convincing example. The choice of format belongs to the team's inspiration and ability to present concisely certain key points of the economic dimension of the space.

⁷⁵³ Robert D. Blackwill, *The Geopolitical Consequences of the World Economic Recession – A Caution*, RAND Corporation, on line, www.rand.org, accessed at 20 December 2009, 15.00.



Source: <http://www.worldmapper.org/>, accessed at 20th September 2009 hour 20.30

The political dimension requires to operate with a socially-constructed space. „In other words, spaces are constructed and reproduced through discourse and social practices. They are imbued with power relations, who, when they change, can alter the nature and the borders of the spatial subject together with the identity of its constituents”⁷⁵⁴. The analysis focuses on the “gap” between the political space imagined by the political elite as political aspiration in the collective mentality and the reality of the political frontiers admitted by the international community. For example, in a Southeastern European space, radical leaders insinuated in the collective mentality and sometimes in the public speeches such terms as, Greater Bulgaria; Greater Serbia; Greater Romania; Greater Hungary; Greater Albania; or Greater Greece. The physical map of this region, which consumes more geopolitics than it can generate, shows, at a brief glance, that there cannot be so many „Great” states. In such a limited space, an explosive potential of the political frontier has accumulated. Another element of analysis for this group is to draw a „map” of the trust degree of the public opinion in different political personalities and in

⁷⁵⁴ Hilde Dominique Engelen, *Post-Cold War Spatiality The Northern European Perspective, Cooperation and Conflict* 2004, pp. 39; 333, Downloaded from <http://cac.sagepub.com>, at HINARI on November 20, 2009.

other fields with electoral „potential”: the trust degree of the population in the state and the political leaders who are preferred by the population in countries that make up the „geopolitical field”. These elements of the analysis can be complemented with other elements specific of a country or a region.

The spiritual dimension of space is a virtual territory that relies on the spiritual and cultural map. In the sovereign political space, several religions may coexist, or, on the contrary, can fight for hegemony. The relationships among different denominations and their relations with the political power, especially in case of political or socio-confessional conflicts as was the case of the Balkans after the Cold War must be analyzed. According to some scholars, „Religion was effectively manipulated as a cultural marker and mobilized as a standard for ethnic exclusion of other groups with little regard to the fragile multi-ethnic tapestry. Leaders of the three monotheistic confessions of Yugoslavia (for this project, Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy) all engaged in effusively distributing nationalist rhetoric with little as to other’s interpretation. As will be noted later, such blatant lack of sensitivity for other’s historical experiences reinforced old stereotypes and exacerbated current nationalist identity formation”⁷⁵⁵. The impact of religion on the State’s economic and social dimensions must be also analyzed. Also, the symbolic architecture and its legitimacy, the human society in its whole are obvious in the society subjectivism context. Even in cases when autonomy extends to all fields of society, religion participates with its „Peace of God” to people’s detachment from their dependencies and solidarity and thus creating the premises for economic, scientific and technical premises.⁷⁵⁶

⁷⁵⁵ Alexander Mirescu, *Religion and Ethnic Identity Formation in the Former Yugoslavia*, on line <http://www.georgefox.edu/academics/undergrad/departments/soc-swk/ree/2003/mirescu03.doc>, accessed at 20 December, 2009.

⁷⁵⁶ D. Herbert, *Christianity, Democratization and Secularization in Central and Eastern Europe*, in *Religion, State & Society*, vol. 27, no. 3 - 4, September - December, 1999, p. 277.

The strategic dimension is an essential element in the role played by sea straits and canals (Suez, Panama, Malacca) where millions of oil barrels transit daily to the great consumers of the XXIst century. When referring to the strategic importance of the Malacca strait, Mokhzani Zubir noted “*Every year, more than 60,000 ships pass through the Strait of Malacca carrying various cargoes, from crude oil to finished products from all over the world. This number is nearly three times the number of ships that navigate through the Panama Canal and more than double the number that uses the Suez Canal*”⁷⁵⁷. The strait connecting the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean is one of the busiest sea lines in the world. One third of the world trade passes through the strait, informally nicknamed the main blood vessel of the world economy. Since the Strait of Malacca is so vital to the world community, its safekeeping, in terms of the security of the sea lane of commerce especially, must be preserved in order to keep open the strait and to guarantee a secure passage for the world trade. Any disruption or traffic threat posed in the Malacca Strait, by terrorist groups or by nation states may definitely prompt many parties to interfere and take control. The need of economic vital resources and the access to the oil fields lead to cooperation links deemed to achieve a rational and fair re-distribution. However, similar motivations can end up in military conflict situations wherever resources are scarce or a limited group of stakeholders control them and reject any attempt to share them with outsiders. Even a brief review of the present international environment reveals that actors that may push towards crises and threats in the international relations system should not be underestimated. The competition among the big players for the control of the “geopolitical pivots” on the “wide chess board”

⁷⁵⁷ Mokhzani Zubir, *The strategic value of the Strait of Malacca*, on line, <http://www.aspirasi-ndp.com/en/archive/ThestrategicvalueoftheStraitofMalacca.pdf>, Downloaded on December 23, 2010.

preserve the stability and the security of the regions crossed by the highways of natural resources transfer⁷⁵⁸.

In this third stage of the geopolitical analysis the group that *studies the interests* held by the actors in this space works using an interdisciplinary analysis method. Some experts go through the content of official documents (constitutions, governing programs, national security strategies) and follow some specific guidelines, (energy, environment, health etc.), together with economic strategies of social development etc. Others use comparative methods and statistical mathematics required by the operation needs of economy/ key sectors and the resources available to a player. A classical example is the tension the industrialized Western countries face because of the contrast between their oil consumption and their capacity to provide it.

From this point of view, we should note that an actor's presence in the Central Asia or in the Middle East may be justified by political reasons but the real interest comes from the economic value of such regions. In spite of the huge geographical distance, the USA have become an even more important player for quite some time now, interested both in exploiting the oil resources of Central Asia and in preventing the Russian monopoly over this geopolitical space⁷⁵⁹. With its presence, the USA follows its geostrategical objectives in Eurasia and it represents its own economic interests, at the same time. While referring to these issues, analysts Henk Houweling and Mehdi Parvizi Amineh concluded, „*US oil production from domestic sites peaked in 1970. An indebted US at the beginning of the twenty-first century may have driven itself into a corner. The US, continuing its mission to civilize the world, May in this way, search for a bold way out by unleashing preventive warfare in West and CEA. In 2000 the US took*

⁷⁵⁸ John H. Noer, *Southeast Asian Chokepoints: Keeping Sea Lines of Communication Open*, Institute for National Strategic Studies, in “Strategic Forum”, Volume 98, December 1996; Ashley J. Tellis, Chung Min Lee, James Mulvenon, Courtney Purrington, and Michael D. Swaine, *Sources of Conflict in Asia*, in Zalmay Khalilzad and Ian O. Lesser ed, *Sources of Conflict in the 21st Century: Regional Futures and U.S. Strategy*, RAND, 1998.

⁷⁵⁹ Constantin Hlihor, *Security politics* ..., p. 139.

20 million barrels of oil daily out of the global stock, which is about 50% of the combined daily use by the industrialized countries of the West and Mexico."⁷⁶⁰

A group of strategy and defense experts, economists and media sociologists and researchers must review the *power analysis* and the presence of a balance of power at this stage. They record the defense potential and capacity of a particular stakeholder. Computing formulae acknowledged by military sciences and the theory of international relations help researchers to compile a balance of power of the stakeholders interested in the area. This stage of the study must consider potential stakeholders that interfere in case of unexpected tensions and the threat of an open war loom in the area. It should also consider every stakeholder's ability to project its own power in the respective geopolitical area⁷⁶¹. Another important indicator is the analysis of the trust degree that each stakeholder's army enjoys from society and also the discipline, the ethics and the unity within the military ranks⁷⁶².

The stakeholders' capacity to "set the public agenda" is a very important power factor that must be considered by such an analysis. It identifies the actual degree of influence that a stakeholder may muster in its relationships with other players from the international arena⁷⁶³, and it must underscore the resources and the capacity of a stakeholder to "set the agenda" of an international organization (classical, like the UN, the OSCE, the OAU, non-classical NGOs, or

⁷⁶⁰ Henk Houweling, Mehdi Parvizi Amineh, *The Geopolitics of Power Projection in US Foreign Policy: From Colonization to Globalization*, in "Perspectives on Global Development and Technology", Volume 2, issue 3-4, 2003, p. 372.

⁷⁶¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 339-389.

⁷⁶² Harry Bondy, *Postmodernism and the Source of Military Strength in the Anglo West*, in "Armed Forces & Society", 2004, pp. 31; 31, on line <http://afs.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/31/1/31>, Downloaded from <http://afs.sagepub.com> at HINARI on November 20, 2009.

⁷⁶³ Gérard Dussouy, *Pragmatisme et géopolitique - Les opportunités méthodologiques d'une retrouvaille épistémologique*, in "L'Espace Politique", on line <http://espacepolitique.revues.org/signaler1752.html>, Downloaded on December 23, 2010.

lobby associations) and to influence the decision making process of such international bodies. Some researchers consider that analysts should identify the possibilities that may lead a stakeholder “to control the area through a tight information distribution, through the mass media and through social networks, [...] to discourage people to make social or political demands by shaping the public perceptions, preferences and knowledge [...]”⁷⁶⁴. A manipulated consensus may deprive segments of the population to claim their real interests and to exercise their power according to such interests. This analysis does not refer to totalitarian states only: it applies to the so-called Western democracies as well. The power to negotiate, the power to entrance through the prestige of the promoted political values and the ethical behavior in the international relationships may have a greater significance than the influence of military arsenals in the pursuit of interests in a geopolitical space. In the geopolitical attitude of states/non-classical stakeholders to the contemporary international relations power does not come in a “pure” form (soft or hard) and the analysis must approach events in a comparative manner to identify those elements of power that a stakeholder may use⁷⁶⁵:

Areas	Hard Power (coercive)	Soft Power (co-operative)
Military	disputes, War	UN Peacekeeping
Political-Diplomatic	Threats	Confidence Building Measures exchanging information
Economic	Embargoes	Unilateral Free Trade
Psycho-Cultural	Cultural Infiltration movies, human rights, NGOs	Cultural Exchange tourism, foreign students

⁷⁶⁴ Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, second edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pp. 27-28.

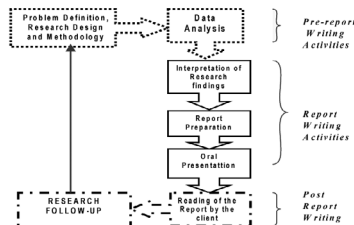
⁷⁶⁵ Karl Hermann HÖHN, *Geopolitics and the Measurement of National Power*, Dissertation zur Erlangung des Grades des Doktors der Philosophie im Fachbereich Sozialwissenschaften der Universität Hamburg, <http://powermetrics.bplaced.net/5A09E756.tmp.doc>, Downloaded on December 26, 2011.

Some elements that catch the attention of the analysis group have only an *explicative* and not a *normative* value. Researchers may resort to totally different methods and tools if other theories and concepts that define power are more appropriate for analyzing one player or another. This is also true for the activities of analysis groups mentioned above.

The fourth stage of the analysis process pursues the production and the delivery of the research report to the beneficiary or the publication of the research results in case the research subject was part of a program of a scientific research institute. The research report must contain data referring to: the title, the author(s), the client's name(if it exists), its use and purpose, the hypotheses and the research objectives, methodology and the research tools, sources of information and the team competence, results and findings, conclusions and recommendations, research limitations. There is no set standard to write and to lay out a research report. The format and the graphical design depend on the personality of each researcher. An infinite number of models gathered the results of applied or fundamental research. In most cases, the results of theoretical research produced books, monographs, treatises etc. A pattern that seemed most appropriate for the geopolitical analysis may provide a useful guide for the process ⁷⁶⁶.

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REPORT PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION PROCESS



MARKETING RESEARCH

⁷⁶⁶ *Research Report Realization and Presentations*, on line, <http://www.apmf.org.sg/Topic6.ppt#256>, Downloaded on December 26, 2011.

4.3. *The geopolitical discourse as a tool for international politics remapping*

The analysis in the field of *geopolitics, as a discourse-constructed reality* has developed significantly in recent years under the impact of rapid changes in international politics and as a consequence of the fact that classical explanations and methods could not provide valuable projections and scenarios. From this point of view, „*the new geopolitical and cognitive strategies that make the basis of globalization projects favors debates and critical analysis of power relations present in the discourse, together with representations and hierarchies used by them in constructing and imagining polarized mapping of the world...*”⁷⁶⁷ This implies a re-evaluation of the actors’ traditional analysis tools and methods in regional and global geopolitics. Recent changes in the global economy, generated by the accelerated growth in the South Eastern Asia and Latin America (Mexico and Brazil) and Russia’s prominence have influenced the space organization of power after the end of the Cold War. Such an organization becomes an institution in itself through the geopolitical discourse and the “re-imagining maps” by new representation faults. New oppositions have appeared on the Mental Map: The West versus Islam⁷⁶⁸; the industrialized North versus underdeveloped South, Europe versus the Balkans, Europe versus America, and the Balkans versus Central Europe etc.

All these images present in the public opinion’s mentality remapped the geopolitical layout. In Europe, the space of political

⁷⁶⁷ Eva Monica Szekely, *Over passing cultural stereotypes Image of the Other in journals and traveling writings*, on line, http://www.upm.ro/facultati_departamente/stiinte_litere/conferinte/situl_integrare_europeana/Lucrari_2/Eva%20Szekely.pdf, Downloaded on December 28, 2011.

⁷⁶⁸ Mohamed Hamoud Kassim Al-Mahfedi, *Edward Said’s “Imaginative Geography” and Geopolitical Mapping: Knowledge/Power Constellation and Landscaping Palestine*, in “The Criterion: An International Journal in English”, on line <http://www.the-criterion.com/V2/n3/Mahfedi.pdf>, Downloaded on December 28, 2011.

geography of certain states on the continent, such as Greece, Bulgaria, Poland, and Romania has remained the same but their geopolitical position has changed, quite significantly for some of them. Romania, Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria belonged to „*Eastern Europe*” during the Cold War. After the collapse of the European communism, Hungary and Poland joined the „*Central Europe*”⁷⁶⁹, and Bulgaria and Romania, wanted to be part of *South-Eastern Europe* following their Balkan geographical positioning. An analyst’s unbiased explanation came from an accumulation of valid information connected to the developments in the area of study. In Mamoru Sadakata’s opinion from the Nagoya University, Japan, „*This dichotomy implied past experiences of parliamentary democracy and economic development in these former socialist countries. Historically, the division line between Central Europe and the Balkans overlaps with that of the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires. In the case of the former Yugoslavia, this line cut the country into two halves, with Slovenia and Croatia belonging to Central Europe and the other republics to the Balkans*”⁷⁷⁰.

The Japanese researcher reached his conclusions based on the reports of the reliable and influential newspaper *The Chicago Tribune* and not on the image the nations from the area tried to reassess after the fall of the communist regimes. According to the American daily, “*A new curtain is falling across;/, eastern Europe, dividing north from south, west from east, rich from poor and the future from the past. As Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic sprint into the future of democracy and market economics, Romania and Bulgaria slide into Balkan backwardness and second-class citizenship in the new Europe*”⁷⁷¹. A decade later, when the political

⁷⁶⁹ Tony Judth, *Rediscovery of Central Europe*, in Adriana Babeți, Cornel Ungureanu, *Central Europe. Nevrosis, dilemmas, utopias*, Polirom, Iași, 1997, pp. 17-42.

⁷⁷⁰ Mamoru Sadakata, *The Balkans Between The Eu And Nato: Focusing On The Former Yugoslavia*, in “Rumanian Journal of European Affairs”, no.3, vol.6, 2006, p. 38.

⁷⁷¹ *Ibidem*, p. 39.

and intellectual elites from Romania made sometimes painful efforts to “escape” from “the Balkans” the news and rating Agency of the Black Sea *Karadeniz Press*, placed Romania in the geopolitical equation of the area in the following terms: „*Unfortunately, Romania’s Balkan vocation, of an equidistant, harmonious, conciliatory player, has not found a healthy formula after the fall of the communist system and the end of the Cold War. The NATO and EU, membership, the breakdown of Yugoslavia, the distant relations with Turkey can partially explain the decay of a political and diplomatic tradition that yielded remarkable results in the past*”⁷⁷².

In the case of Romania, these changes of perception followed a rise in volume and intensity of the ideas/images broadcast in the public space that positioned Bucharest on the post-Cold War map. In this process of changing geopolitical perceptions, two “agents” played a crucial role. On one hand, the political and cultural elites redefined the country’s place on the political map of the continent through their discourses, and, on the other hand, mass media worked as a “transport” vector of such images created by the public discourse⁷⁷³. How was this possible? What has changed in the contemporary world? Why are our mental maps altered by the domestic and the international media? In order to answer these questions and many others, postmodern geopolitical analysts suggested different working methods and tools. One of the most-appreciated studies was Gearóid Ó Tuathail’s model that launched the „framework for analyzing practical geopolitical reasoning”⁷⁷⁴ in

⁷⁷² Apud, Corneliu Vlad, *When Romania was Balkan leader*, on line, <http://karadeniz-press.ro/kara/cand-romania-era-lider-balcanic/>, Downloaded on December 29, 2011.

⁷⁷³ Dušan I. Bjelić, *Edited Identities and Geopolitics of Global Media*, in “Ethnographic Studies”, issue no 9, November 2007, pp. 6-19.

⁷⁷⁴ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Theorizing practical geopolitical reasoning: the case of the United States’ response to the war in Bosnia*, in “Political Geography” 21 (2002), pp. 601-628, on line <http://www.nvc.vt.edu/toalg/Website/Publish/papers/Practicalgeopolitics.pdf>.

the middle of the 1990s. We do not contest the efficiency and the scientific value of the model initiated by Gearóid Ó Tuathail but it is not clear if these analysis are meant for experts in the foreign politics, for politicians who make decisions in international politics or for the domestic and foreign media outlets that react and sometimes (re)create the geopolitical events of certain spaces characterized by battles for power and interest rivalries. „The CNN effect” that surged during the final decade of the past century somehow escaped the analysts’ interest, which did not mean that it can not leave imprints in the foreign policy of certain states, after all. Mass media still have a strong impact in the circulation of messages towards the “consumer” of domestic and foreign news that no politician can ignore. The PR strategies and media scenarios turned into “dangerous weapons” for those classical stakeholders that lack significant technological and financial resources⁷⁷⁵. First, we must identify the role and the place of two key elements that support *narratives* and *storytelling* strategies to understand the way such mechanisms are built and the way they operate.

Christian Salmon believed that the world entered a revolution with unforeseen consequences after the beginning of the 1990s: the consumption of virtual „products”⁷⁷⁶. People no longer chose products mainly by their quality. What really mattered were the prestige and the fame that the brand of a product enjoyed. In the beginning of the XXIst century, another stunt happened and the brand image was associated to a narrative. This “revolution” passed very easily from the commercial world into the political one, used successfully in the geopolitical representations. Although the studies about the role of the narration and storytelling in shaping the public opinion appeared in the socio-political research from the United

⁷⁷⁵ Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *Communication in international conflicts...*, pp. 91-112; Simona Stănescu, *Media and conflicts*, Tritonic, Bucharest, 2004, pp. 21-25.

⁷⁷⁶ Christian Salmon, *Storytelling, la machine à fabriquer des histoires et à formater les esprits*, La Découverte, 2007, pp. 21-23.

States⁷⁷⁷ as early as the last decades of the XXth century, the political practice adopted such discursive techniques only when the American President Clinton⁷⁷⁸ staff started to prepare his campaign for the White House. The popularity enjoyed by his discourse based on great success stories for the American stage was explained by social and psychological reasons. Michael Jackson remarked, „*In other words, while storytelling makes sociality possible it is equally vital to the illusory self-protective, self justifying activity of individual minds.*”⁷⁷⁹ The power of words has grown more important than ever in the history of mankind due to the unprecedented development of the mass communication means. From this point of view, Michael Jackson was perfectly right when he concluded, „... *though storytelling mediates our relations with worlds that extend beyond us. The important thing is not how we name these other world but how narrative enables us to negotiate an existential balance between ourselves and such spheres of otherness.*”⁷⁸⁰

A redefinition of spaces at global level (the Occident-the Islamic Orient; transition from unipolarism to multipolarism etc.) and regional (European integration) had a great impact on geopolitics as a language constructed reality. The phenomenon of storytelling is a suitable framework for understanding how actors (re)define their geopolitical positions or how they (re)construct political and national identity, although it is seldom used as an analysis tool in geopolitics. From a psychological point of view, the need for identity (cultural, ethnic, and linguistic) is a natural requirement for the human psychic balance. The need of otherness, the need to compare to another, ensures the possibility of a dialogue.

⁷⁷⁷ Michael Jackson, *The Politics of Storytelling. Violence, Transgression and Inter subjectivity*, Museum Tusculanum Press, Copenhagen, 2002, p. 14.

⁷⁷⁸ Christian Salmon, *Une machine à fabriquer des histoires*, in “Le monde diplomatique”, novembre 2006, on line <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2006/11/SALMON/14124>, Downloaded on December 29, 2011.

⁷⁷⁹ Michael Jackson, *cit. work*, p. 15.

⁷⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 23.

The comprehension of the mechanisms that change the geopolitical perceptions requires the understanding of some other mechanisms that influence socially such *new narratives* launched in the international public opinion through the public and mediated discourse by emerging nations after the end of the Cold War. We shall explain these mechanisms starting with Foucault's theories applied to postcolonial studies about the power relations mirrored in the world mapping and from Foucault's idea that "*there is no form of thinking that claims an absolute „truth” excepting the discourse play – all political and social forms of thinking being thus comprised by the game of knowledge and power*"⁷⁸¹.

The narrative geopolitics aims to explore the way the frontiers of the new states were drawn and imprinted into the collective mentality and the manner this process continues. Critical geopolitics explains places, spaces, borders, centers, and peripheries through the political purpose and the public discourse. Places and borders are not something given from above, and they should not be taken for granted. We produce places on purpose. Borders are man-made social constructions⁷⁸². These stories try to answer questions like 'who are we?', and 'who are the others?'; 'where do we belong?', and 'where we do not belong?', from the perspective of the statesmen. The process of claiming national identity and outlining its borders is closely linked to geopolitical debates. Their objective is not only to make *our* people understand where the border lies, but also to force the *others* to admit the existence and the importance of the border. In the first years after the end of the Cold War the narratives geopolitics launched by Samuel Hugginton started an ample and long debate about the "clash of civilizations".

On the other hand, it has become a commonplace to note that the Islamic world and the West seem to be mirrored in an intensifying cycle of political and cultural conflict. The most significant source

⁷⁸¹ *Ibidem.*

⁷⁸² Minna Rasku, *cit. work, in cit. city.*

of rivalry is the profoundly unstable nature of the American relations with the Muslim Middle East. In matters related to the Persian Gulf geopolitics, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the politics of the Islamic revival, the American policy tends to maintain stability and control through a system of regional alliances, faced with contrary regional preferences favoring dramatic changes. Disagreements generated by conflicting interests and expectations spill over into the cultural domain. They borrow a political character to identities and escalate the conflict dynamics where the basic arrangements of values, beliefs and the perceptions of the “Other” are regarded as threatening and biased. The result is an atmosphere of suspicion, mistrust, and disrespect where efforts to dominate and to suppress adversaries, displace initiatives to collaborate in the search for intercultural understanding and for the means of mutual political accommodation. On both sides of the troubled relationship between the Americans and the Muslim Middle East, a deep estrangement and a growing belief in the futility of communication⁷⁸³ has been growing.

The analysis methods specific of narratives may yield effective understanding solutions of the way power and interest rivalries can be overcome in the newly defined spaces in the political discourse of the great powers – the Global Balkans, the Great Middle East, the Black Sea extended area, the Asian Balkans etc. Some well-known geopoliticians thought that, „*A fundamental unit in the critical analysis of geopolitical discourse is a storyline*”⁷⁸⁴.

⁷⁸³ Nathan C. Funk, Abdul Aziz Said, *Islam and the West: Narratives of Conflict and Conflict Transformation*, in “International Journal of Peace Studies”, Volume 9, Number 1, Spring/Summer 2004, on line http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol9_1/Funk&Said_91IJPS.pdf, Downloaded on December 22, 2011.

⁷⁸⁴ John O’Loughlin, Gearóid Ó Tuathail, Vladimir Kolossov, *Russian geopolitical storylines and public opinion in the wake of 9–11: a critical geopolitical analysis and national survey*, on line, https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:m1mOhr89GR4J:www.nvc.vt.edu/toalg/Website/Publish/Papers/Storylines2004.pdf&hl=en&gl=ro&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESidOBGJFjGRHQNT19iaPG2M47LSqs3Ue1JDr3ok3PVa2BtUDFUVzTmRNVlW-ypK4cpA27ozSFUB_6Vte5otciqEt8Kan8bFZAGw-SWeldy1i81gmeefBWK1AjFU74CkrPuNHg-z&sig=AHIEtbRj0ffV7wxdrMZU7rHSNtd4zvGjZg, accessed at December 22, 2011.

The importance of a geopolitical myth and of the values it is based on seems to grow as the media keeps developing. The presence of “success stories/narratives” in the political arena can, therefore, have a predominant impact on the way people perceive their political reality. For example, Marc Howard Ross, defined narratives as “*frameworks for action*” through which members of particular identity groups “*understand the social and political worlds in which they live, and explain the conflicts in which they are involved.*”⁷⁸⁵ According Philippe Mongin, „*A narrative can be defined as a report of human actions and events that make the temporal order of these actions and events clear, with the primary purpose of making them intelligible to the public*”⁷⁸⁶. Some “*discussion of ontological narratives points to a similar idea when she refers to the need to recognize the place of ontological narratives in social life so as to explain issues such as “collective actions” and “group-formations”*”⁷⁸⁷.

In geopolitics, *narratives* are closely linked to another phenomenon –storytelling, as we have already mentioned. A storyline can be defined as the way in which geopolitical events, locations, stakeholders, processes and interests are organized into a relatively coherent narrative of explanation and meaning. Unlike the scripts that political leaders study to react to everyday events or to articulate their policy in front of the media, storylines are arguments that gradually become coherent and concentrate on consistent changes and challenges from the public politics. The geopolitical culture of a state is generally characterized by a series of antagonistic and competing geopolitical traditions used to facilitate writing

⁷⁸⁵ Ross, Marc Howard, *The Political Psychology of Competing Narratives: September 11 and Beyond*, in Craig Calhoun, Paul Price, Ashley Timmer, eds., *Understanding September 11*, New York: New Press, 2002, p. 303.

⁷⁸⁶ Philippe Mongin, *Analytic Narrative*, on line [https://studies2.hec.fr/jahia/webdav/site/hec/shared/sites/mongin/acces_anonyme/page%20internet/\(O22\)%20Mongin%20EncPolSc%2010pdf.pdf](https://studies2.hec.fr/jahia/webdav/site/hec/shared/sites/mongin/acces_anonyme/page%20internet/(O22)%20Mongin%20EncPolSc%2010pdf.pdf), accessed at December 22, 2011.

⁷⁸⁷ M. Somers, *The narrative constitution of identity: A relational and network approach*, in “Theory and Society”, no. 23, 1994, p. 618.

similar contending geopolitical storylines about developments and dramas in foreign policy⁷⁸⁸. Dimitri Trenin, for example, argued that the Russian geopolitical culture at the dawn of the new millennium was characterized by three competing geopolitical traditions and visions: a greater Russia tradition, an anti-Western tradition, and a European tradition⁷⁸⁹. They all took shape in time and “geopolitical success stories” entered the public conscience. Narratives and storytelling are very important in the geopolitical discourse building.

The discourse study has become extremely popular in political geography and elsewhere over the last decade. Most important appears to us the need of the definition/conception of the term *discourse* in general and of the *geopolitical and media discourse*, in particular to understand how, the discourse help people to compose and re-compose their social universe, how anxieties, frustrations, feelings and social behaviors appear or disappear under the influence of such phenomena. Anyway, this field witnessed a great „inflation” of opinions⁷⁹⁰.

⁷⁸⁸ John O’Loughlin, Gearoid O’Tuathail, Vladimir Kolossov, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁷⁸⁹ Dimitri Trenin, *From pragmatism to strategic choice*, in Andrew K. (Ed.), *Russia after the Fall* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC, 2002, pp. 187–204.

⁷⁹⁰ See Michel Foucault, *Words and things*, translated From the French language by Bogdan Ghiu and Mircea Vasilescu, Printing House RAO, Bucharest, 2006; Dumitru Borțun, Silvia Săvulescu, *Analysis of the public discourse*, Comunicare.ro Printing House, Bucharest, 2007-2008; Nina Ivanciu, *Epistemology and reception*, Univers Printing House, Bucharest, 1988, pp. 16-22; 65-71; Roberto Izurieta, *State communication in the age of entertaining*, AMA Impact, Bucharest, 2003; Philippe Breton, *Word manipulation*, European Institute, Iași, 2006; Daniela Roventă-Frumușani, *Discourse analysis. Hypotheses and cases*, Tritonic Printing House, Bucharest, 2005; Camelia Mihaela Beciu, *Persuasive strategies in the political discourse*, Universities XXI Printing House, Iași, 2005, idem, *Political communication*, Comunicare.ro Printing House, Bucharest, 2002; Marina Rotaru, *Tony Blair and the new Labourite speech. A critical analysis of the political discourse of the Party New Labour*, Lumen Printing House, Iași, 2006; Cesare Segre, *History, culture, critics*, Univers Printing House, Bucharest, 1986, pp. 316-360; Horia Dulvac, *Discourses and parties*, AIUS Printing House, Craiova, 2005.

The discourse as a main element of public communication appeared in the scientific literature in the 1970s as a major topic especially for linguists. In the 1990s, the School of Copenhagen started public debates on the security theory and the special type of a security discourse took the central stage. On this issue, Ole Weaver referred to the discourse analysis as a „foreign politics theory”⁷⁹¹. That was a way to admit the role of language in structuring social relations of power in the international environment. Each communication situation is influenced by the power structures where the speakers are placed, conventionally or otherwise.

The French school of linguistics circulated the term „discourse”, while the Anglo-Saxons imposed „discourse”, similar to the term of „functional style” accepted by the Russian school. The reason of the synonyms of the term lies with the specifics of the national school only, and not with the reference to the same subject. While for the Russian tradition, the „functional style” presented certain types of texts – colloquial, bureaucratic, journalistic and others together with the grammatical and lexical system specific of each of these types of texts, the Anglo-Saxon tradition had nothing similar as an object of stylistics⁷⁹². For the common use, dictionaries offer two main explanations for the notion of discourse. First, it is „*the type of public expression on a given theme, written or oral*” and second, it is „*an act of speaking*”, „*an act of linguistic communication*”⁷⁹³. Scientifically, the discourse must be understood from the meaning of two approaches: the discourse as a social practice, and the discourse as a form of action, of what people do for themselves or together with others. According to M. Foucault „*the discourse is a means of representation of social practices, a form of knowledge or what*

⁷⁹¹ Ole Weaver, *European Integration and Security: Analysing French and German Discourses on State, Nation, and Europe*, on line, <http://www.palgrave.com/pdfs/1403917191.pdf>, accessed at 13 October 2011, 20.00.

⁷⁹² See *Dimensions of the implied in the political discourse*, on line, http://www.cnaa.md/files/theses/2010/15445/vitalina_bahneanu_thesis.pdf, accessed at 13 oct. 2011, 20.45.

⁷⁹³ Cesare Segre, *cit. work*, p. 316.

people say about social practices”⁷⁹⁴. Daniela Roventă-Frumușani found out that the discourse definition developed several „interpretative derivations”, such as⁷⁹⁵: *a tendency to restraint to oral communication* (face to face interaction), although the written practice updates the discursive mechanisms and strategies strictly contextualized (like *face to face interaction*); *a tendency to consider the communication competence as part of the language linguistics*, operating with a partner/ideal author (in reality, any speaker is characterized by a certain combination of socio-linguistic, discursive, cultural abilities, better said, the competences include socializing areas and strictly individualized areas); *the tendency to separate the linguistic competence from communication competence*, the latter completing the former. Or, the two competences are interdependent. The communication competence is the result of the interaction of several competences – linguistics, socio-cultural, encyclopedic, and generic. For this reason, the discourse „*was fashioned as a key-notion of linguistics in the last decades, and it was placed at the frontier of linguistics with sociology, psychology, communication theory, language philosophy*”⁷⁹⁶ and postmodern geopolitics.

Most often, discourse is defined as „*the manifestation of the pragmatic nature of communication, being communication to its core, under certain conditions, or parole plus the conditions revealing, in its core, the acting nature of speaking*”⁷⁹⁷. Some scholars view discourse as a textual affirmation and mainly as an act that takes place under specific circumstances (participants, institution, place and time)⁷⁹⁸: „*a discourse is articulated in different genres, which correspond to two social practices, differentiated within the same field*”⁷⁹⁹. Sometimes, the discourse is considered an *event* (meaning that the discourse is

⁷⁹⁴ Elena Dragoș, *Introduction to pragmatics*, House of Science Book Publishing, Cluj, 2000, p. 54.

⁷⁹⁵ Daniela Roventă-Frumușani, *cit. work*, p. 65.

⁷⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 69-70.

⁷⁹⁷ Elena Dragoș, *cit. work*, p. 54.

⁷⁹⁸ F. Rastier, *Sens et textualité*, Paris, 1989, p. 40.

⁷⁹⁹ *Idem*.

temporal and present, while the language system is virtual and beyond time), something that takes place when somebody speaks. The speaker always refers to a world that he/she expresses, describes, and represents⁸⁰⁰. The aim of the discourse would be „*to produce discrete utterances, unique, through which the language is updated in speaking by the speaker*”⁸⁰¹. We could conclude that the discourse „*is not a concrete object offered to intuition, not an obvious reality, but the result of a construction, an organization that sets its goal for the realization of a text, which is the linguistic form of speech*”⁸⁰².

Discourse as an abstract form of knowledge cannot be reduced bluntly to the linguistic element identified as a sum of constituent acts, interrelated through texts in a narration, because meanings/representations and even perceptions of realities cannot be achieved out of a socio-historic context. From this point of view, the pragmatic approach explained by D. Maingueneau offered a more adequate definition of the discourse meant to describe the socio-historic or geopolitical realities in a certain internal or international socio-political context. „*Discourse is a transphrase „organization” revealed by an articulated typology, emitted in socio-historic conditions*”⁸⁰³. Anne Reboul and J. Moeschler⁸⁰⁴ came to a definition where the discourse „*is not a linguistic phenomena and for this reason, it cannot be reduced to the stages that compose it; it is a pragmatic phenomena which cannot be reduced to the statements that compose it. The distinction between the sentence and statement is major: if the phoneme, morpheme or sentences are linguistic units, the statement is a pragmatic unit*”. In other words, the position of the

⁸⁰⁰ P. Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics essays*, Romanian edition, Bucharest, 1995, p. 95.

⁸⁰¹ E. Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, Paris, 1966, p. 250.

⁸⁰² D. Maingueneau, *Initiation aux méthodes de l'analyse du discours. Problèmes et perspectives*, Paris, 1976, p. 16.

⁸⁰² D. Maingueneau, *cit. work*, p. 19.

⁸⁰⁴ Anne Reboul, J. Moeschler, *Pragmatics today*, romanian edition, Publishing House Echinox, Cluj, 2001, p. 195.

two linguists was straightforward: „*a discourse is nothing more than the sequence of statement that composes it*”⁸⁰⁵. As a social reality, the discourse has the following aspects: the communicator’s intentions (text analysis and presupposition); interaction communicator-listener (psychological conditions) and efficiency⁸⁰⁶. All these elements applied to geopolitical discourse analysis help us to know the future position of an actor in certain areas of dispute and interest.

This is why we cannot consider the discourse as a collection of sentences uttered by a speaker, which refer to a unique subject. Teun van Dijk was perfectly right when he noted that the discourse was a form of action, an act with social relevance, which reflected power structures, hierarchies, interactions, roles and social identities. From this perspective, „*discourse should be studied not only as a form, understanding and mental process, but also as mental structures and hierarchies of interaction and social practice as well as their functions within a context, society and culture*”⁸⁰⁷. Another specialist, Charlotte Epstein, wrote: “*A discourse is a cohesive ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations about a specific object that frame that object in a certain way and, therefore, delimit the possibilities for action in relation to it*”⁸⁰⁸. Norman Fairclough viewed the discourse as a text, an example of discursive and social practice. He also concluded that linguistic changes resulted in many present social changes⁸⁰⁹ to a great extent. In a recent book, he wrote: „*I see discourses as ways of representing aspects of the world – the processes, relations and*

⁸⁰⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁰⁶ Georges Vignaux, *L’argumentation. Essai d’une logique discursive*, Librairie Droz, Geneve-Paris, 1976, p. 14.

⁸⁰⁷ Teun A. van Dijk, *Discourse as Interaction in Society*, in Teun A. van Dijk, (ed.), *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, volume 2, *Discourse as Social Interaction*, Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, 1997/2000, p. 6.

⁸⁰⁸ Charlotte Epstein, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁸⁰⁹ Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1992/2000, p. 6.

structures of the material world, the 'mental world' of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and so forth and, the social world ...different discourses are different perspectives on the world, and they are associated with the different relations people have to the world"⁸¹⁰.

Discourses not only present a reality from the life of a certain society, they can also project a better society as national ideals and goals. From this point of view, we believe that the authors who accept that the discourse „*plays a role in the social construction of reality. Discourse does not merely describe things, it does things*”⁸¹¹ are right. It is a strategic resource available to politicians and not only to them. It is both the basis and a subcarrier for practices in the international relations. It is a well-known fact that the fight against terrorism with conventional means (the physical destruction of totalitarian structures of power and the armed struggle against terrorist organizations) led to huge material and financial expenses, to a significant loss of human lives, and the results were modest in some analysts' opinion, considering the painstaking efforts that had been made. Critics of the George Bush Jr. administration thought that such a strategy posed a question of image of the US in the world, in general, and in their own area, in particular. In the debate over such issues colonel Michael Wadsworth from the US Army College thought, “*the war on terror is increasingly perceived as a misguided American intervention to impose democratic reforms in the Middle East*”⁸¹². The analysis of the events from the Middle East produced

⁸¹⁰ Idem, *Analyzing Discourse*, London: Routledge, 2003, p. 124.

⁸¹¹ Cynthia Hardy, Ian Palmer and Nelson Phillips, *Discourse as a strategic resource* in “Human Relations”, Volume 53(9), 2000, pp. 1227–1248, The Tavistock Institute © SAGE Publications London, Thousand Oaks CA, online <http://hum.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/53/9/1227>, accessed at 11 August 2009, 21.00.

⁸¹² Colonel Michael P. Wadsworth, *Winning the War of Ideas: Assessing the Effectiveness of Public Diplomacy*, on line <http://docs.google.com/gview?a=v&q=cache%3Ab1iG08PcQtUJ%3Ahandle.dtic.mil%2F100.2%2FADA448271+The+Power+of+Metaphor%3A+Story+Telling+on+international+relations%2C+diploamcy&hl=ro&gl=ro>, accessed at 11 August 2009, 21.00.

countless explanations⁸¹³ in recent years. We try to see if one of the possible explanations does not reside in the fact that the Pentagon avoided the use of *soft power*, including the consequences produced by discourse and counter-discourse in the international relations⁸¹⁴. It is quite interesting to note that outstanding officials of the Bush Administration did not reject the use of power with the help of specific communication approaches at the discourse level. On the occasion of investing new dignitaries at Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs in March 2005, the former Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, said: *“The time has come to look anew at our institutions of public diplomacy. We must do much more to confront hateful propaganda, dispel dangerous myths and get out the truth. We must increase our exchanges with the rest of the world. We must work closer than ever with educational institutions, the private sector and nongovernmental organizations and we must encourage our citizens to engage the world to learn foreign languages, to understand different cultures and to welcome others into their homes. And to be successful we must listen. An important part of telling America’s story is learning the stories of others... While we must never compromise our security, we must never close ourselves to the rest of the world... I have said the time for diplomacy is now. Well the time for public diplomacy reform is also now.”*⁸¹⁵

⁸¹³ James W. Skillen, *With or Against the World? America’s Role Among the Nations*, Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005; Anthony H. Cordesman, *Winning the “Long War” in Iraq: What the US Can and Cannot Do*, on line http://csis.org/images/stories/burke/070611_cordesman_test_B.pdf, accessed at 11 August 2009, 18.00; Anatol Lieven, *America Right Or Wrong: An Anatomy Of American Nationalism*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2004; James A. Russell (ed.), *Critical Issues Facing the Middle East: Security, Politics and Economics*, Palgrave MacMillan 2006.

⁸¹⁴ See the opinions of professor Bruce Gregory from George Washington University, *Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication: Cultures, Firewalls, and Imported Norms*, on line <http://www8.georgetown.edu/cct/apsa/papers/gregory.pdf>, accessed at 14 August 2009, 22.00.

⁸¹⁵ Remarks of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, *Announcement of Nominations of Karen P. Hughes as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy*

In the research we have carried out to understand the way the discourse analysis can help to anticipate the type of behavior a stakeholder may follow in a designated space and the expectations it has from the public opinion following its discourse, the definition produced by Georges Vignaux seems to be most appropriate. He concluded that, „*the discourse represents the array of the orator's strategies he addresses the public in view of altering the public's opinion over a situation or object; this is an act, an intervention of the eminent subject and also a representation that the audience accepts*”⁸¹⁶. This concept focuses on the discursive representation that a speaker works out according to the subject, and to its perspectives about a virtual audience⁸¹⁷.

The whole matter approaches the way a communicator proves to command the abilities needed to answer people's basic questions, and to send messages closely related to current realities. A politician's speech must reach deeply into the listeners' soul, must win hearts and minds and change profoundly people's views of the geopolitical developments sometimes. The cases of the two Iraqi wars proved the point. With the first war in Iraq President Bush's speech⁸¹⁸ was extremely well received and he convinced the world public opinion and most of the international stakeholders that the situation could not be managed without the use of force. He enjoyed international legitimacy. A decade later, George W. Bush did not reach similar results. The storytelling he offered did not sell well⁸¹⁹.

and Public Affairs and Dina Powell as Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, March 14, 2005, on line <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/43385.htm> accessed at 14 August 2009, 22.00.

⁸¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 20.

⁸¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

⁸¹⁸ *President George Bush Announcing War Against Iraq*, on line <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/bush-war.htm>, accessed at 23 oct 2011, 20.00.

⁸¹⁹ Dennis R. Bullock, *The Iraq War Discourse of President George W. Bush: Reconstituting the Soviet-style Threat, Justifying American Power and Manifesting the one-sided Worldview*, on line http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/pdfs/Dennis_Bullock_thesis.pdf, accessed at 23 oct 2011, 21.00.

In terms of understanding the way a discourse leads to increasing or decreasing power rivalries and interests in certain geopolitical spaces, it is important to analyze the special type of *conflicting* discourse. We start from the assumption that the relation between the speaker and the audience in the process of communication maybe in full agreement or disagreement, according to each participant's interests and purposes in the exchange of messages. When a speaker/collocutor delivers a speech, he/she may intend to create a two-ways agreeable relationship with the public he/she addresses, or the speech tries to *distance* the speaker from the audience and the audience may attempt to *dominate* the speaker and even to isolate him/her. The option for a conflicting discourse may start a war of words that turns the dialogue partner into an opponent⁸²⁰. The ultimatum message the Soviet government sent in the summer of 1940 when Romania requested the "return" of Bessarabia and Northern Bucovina to the homeland, did not leave an open door to negotiations⁸²¹. The former president George W. Bush's speech sent a similar message when he asked Saddam Hussein „to step down" from power. A con locutor attempts to find his/her own place not only in the space of discourse, but also in the society as a whole through his/her speech while his/her adversary tries to remove and force him/her into a different place than the projected one. From this perspective, the image of "the axis of evil" helped President Bush to displace a number of states like Iran, the Communist Korea, Somalia and several others.

The sociologist Uli Windisch defined conflicting speech as "a discursive reality of that part of discursive reality that is crossed by a conflict"⁸²². The author considered that a conflicting discourse

⁸²⁰ Steluța Coculescu, *Distortion of the addressee ethos in the Romanian political televised speech*, on line http://www.philippide.ro/distorsionari_2008/073-084%20COCULESCU_RED.pdf, accessed at 23 oct 2011, 20.00.

⁸²¹ Ioan Scurtu, Constantin Hlihor, Year 1940. The drama of the Romanians between the Prut and Nistru, AISM, Bucharest, 2002, pp. 67-73.

⁸²² Apud, Steluța Coculescu, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

belonged to *a single person*, to a *single side* that starts a conflict; that single person approached another enunciating person through a previous speech and attacked him/her following a disagreement or differences of opinion. In case of such a type of communication in internal or international politics any speaker who happened to be a head of state or a diplomat, built in fact a threat for the addressee. If the addressee was a weaker actor and if the threat from the speech was convincing, that actor complied with the requirements imposed by the collocutor. A space of security resulted from this relationship (the doctrine and the strategy of nuclear deterrent, promoted by the great powers during the Cold War). This line of reasoning used discourse to build diplomatic pressure, to impose economic or financial embargoes and the military deterrent. On the contrary, if the same weak receiver (a state or a political regime) perceived that the threat from the strong speaker was not only possible, but also unavoidable regardless of its reaction, the weaker receiver would adopt a “suicidal” adverse behavior. That was how a number of local conflicts broke out during the Cold War such as the China-Vietnam border war, or the second Iraqi war. Language defines a power structure/relationship among the stakeholders from the international environment or inside a given society through this particular type of discourse. Power refers to the relations of difference and their effect on social structures. Language creates power, expresses it, and is involved anywhere where a battle for power develops. Power does not derive from language, but language can be used to provoke, diminish or change power distribution for a longer or shorter period of time. The analysis of the political speeches delivered by certain heads of state in the last one hundred years proved that few linguistic tools were left out to express power at a certain time. This is obvious especially in cases of conflict. Historic events leave their mark on the discourse through the language used. Some researchers concluded that the Vietnam and the Iraq wars produced their own language to express the vicious nature of wars, on one hand, and to reflect the vivid “*rejection of the official rhetoric*”⁸²³, on the other. Indeed, any

war is a conflict of ideologies, first and foremost, and a distorted language has a two-prongs result: first, it attempts to *manipulate* the opponent (the military and the civilians) through propaganda, then to misinform its own supporters to hide the cruel reality of war (human loss, failures, atrocities).

Steluța Coculescu concluded that the objectives followed by the a communicator through the conflicting discourse are ⁸²⁴: (1) to fight the opponent's claims and ideas, (2) to be successful in promoting its own doctrines and visions, (3) to gain the support of the population that witnesses the conflict for those doctrines and visions. The conflicting discourse, obviously constructed on the opponent's negative speech, addresses a witness target-public, other than the opponent; through the counter-discourse it produces, the author of the conflicting discourse seeks of attack both the opponent's speech and the opponent itself that cannot react at this stage. In order to succeed, it works out strategies that result in a spectacular, theatrical, even vulgar discourse sometimes to win and attract the public. Consequently, it distorts the entire discourse of the opponent; it *denies, disqualifies, rejects, deforms, refuses, paraphrases* and even *de structures the opposite speech*, ruining the entire personality of the opponent. These operations translate into the battle for power meant to set hierarchical relations of inequality. The provider of the conflicting speech seeks to *distort* the opponent's image, to dominate it, and cram it into an inferior position. Such purposes are pursued especially in times of crisis and instability in the international security environment. U. Windisch calls this type of communication a *manipulated discourse*, and the discourse that denies it, *the manipulating discourse*.⁸²⁵ These are specific for all forms of propaganda and actions of disinformation and intoxication.

⁸²³ Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 91.

⁸²⁴ Steluța Coculescu, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁸²⁵ *Ibidem*.

The manipulated and the manipulating discourse are sometimes used in politics and in a state's domestic policy. Extremists and ultranationalists use it for electoral purposes, neglecting any possible consequences: growing radical demands, interethnic tensions and even conflicts among religious groups and ethnic communities. *An action of changing opinions, attitudes and behaviors is achieved by exposing to such messages individuals or human groups targeted to achieve objectives projected by outsiders (individuals or organizations) free from any physical constant, avoiding the gap between the remote objectives of the target groups and of those who exercise their influence.* The purpose is accomplished if the human subjects (individuals, groups of people and crowds) do not realize that they will join an action opposed to their own interests.⁸²⁶ In these cases, the media play an ambivalent role that depends on the geopolitical interests in a space of rivalry⁸²⁷. Media outlets can lead to the mitigation and finally the solving of a conflicting situation, but they may very well maintain confusion and feed the conflicts and the public fear. From a geopolitical point of view, we can conclude that the media have become genuine armies in what we can call the war of images. According to Kenneth Payne,

⁸²⁶ See, Ionuț Isac, *Political Mythology, historic mythology and manipulation in post-totalitarianism. Historiography bends in the official political discourse in the Republic of Moldova*, on line, <http://www.humanistica.ro/anuare/2010/Continut/art11Isac.pdf>; S. Chelcea, *Social influence and behaviour manipulation*, in "Science and Technology", no. 5, 1990, pp. 15-17; idem, *Benchmarks for a psycho sociologic analysis of manipulation*, in "Psychology review", no. 1, 1992, pp. 37-44; idem, *Public opinion. Do masses think about why and what elites desire?* Bucharest, Economic Publishing House, 2002, pp. 145-151.

⁸²⁷ Mark Frohardt Jonathan Temin, *Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies*, Special Report, United States Institute of Peace, on line, <http://dspace.cigilibrary.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/4590/1/Use%20and%20Abuse%20of%20Media%20in%20Vulnerable%20Societies.pdf?1>, Andrew Puddephatt, *Voices of war: Conflict and the role of the media*, International Media Support, on line, <http://www.i-m-s.dk/files/publications/Voices%20of%20war.pdf>, Downloaded 14 august 2009.

„*The media, in the modern era, are indisputably an instrument of war. This is because winning modern wars is as much dependent on carrying domestic and international public opinion as it is on defeating the enemy on the battlefield. And it remains true regardless of the aspirations of many journalists to give an impartial and balanced assessment of conflict*”⁸²⁸.

Media experts and analysts noted that the Balkans became a real battleground for the *war of images* after the fall of the communist regimes in Europe and the USSR. A well-known war correspondent, Martin Bell rightfully noticed, „*The news was there where the journalists were*”⁸²⁹ in the case of the Balkan conflicts. In the dispute of interests between the states of the former Yugoslavia, the Bosniaks and the Kosovo Albanese comprehended it decisively. They hired a PR company from the USA, Rudder Finn, to gain a favorable image in the international public opinion. The campaign set up by the company led to the stigmatization of the Serbs in the Western media and to the collapse of their image with political consequences in the long run⁸³⁰.

From the numerous cases promoted by Rudder Finn in the international media, we shall quote the pictures broadcast by televisions and the stills printed by the most important newspapers, representing the controversial mass grave of Raceak. These pictures produced a strong disapproving trend in the world public opinion, which later turned into a lever of pressure from the Western governments and finally ended with the NATO military mission in

⁸²⁸ Kenneth Payne, *The Media as an Instrument of War*, Parameters, Spring 2005, pp. 81-93. Downloaded from <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/05spring/payne.htm> , 1 September, 2009, For more on the role of the reporter in conflicts please see pages 187-8 in Seaton, J., *Carnage and the Media: The Making and Breaking of News About Violence*, London, Allen Lane (Penguin), 2005.

⁸²⁹ Margaret H. Belknap, *The CNN Effect: Strategic Enabler or Operational Risk?*, in “Parameters”, US Army War College Quarterly, Autumn 2002, Vol. XXXII, No. 3, pp. 105-106.

⁸³⁰ *Ibidem*.

Yugoslavia. Later on, what had been presented as a massacre of the civilian Albanese population by the Serbian security forces at Raceak actually proved to be the graves of Albanese fighters from the UCK killed in action⁸³¹. The fact of the matter is that the Serbian forces were not taken by surprise completely by the information war practiced by the international Coalition and they replied professionally on several occasions.

Unlike the conflict in Bosnia-Hertzevovina, the Serbs adopted the press-pool system in Kosovo, employed successfully by the US army in the first Gulf war. They controlled the main source of information and restricted the journalists' access to direct military operations⁸³².

The most convincing example of the role played by the image strategies today in the interest disputes is rendered by the way belligerents on one hand, and several important stakeholders, on the other, used the media to promote their interests especially those connected to the geopolitics of oil resources. First, the British-American forces lost their grip on the war reports. Secondly, the Arab world had its own news channel that broadcast the „realities”, which most of the time were not the same with the „*really of the American or British televisions*”⁸³³. Last but not least, mass-media from some European countries followed their own national interests through news reporting from the military operations theatres.

The Serbs did not have a correct image strategy and could not influence the Western media in any way. According to Małgorzata Smolak „*It is commonly believed that Milosevic's biggest mistake was failing to understand the need for modern propaganda in the West, which would help to promote Serbian arguments. The authorities in Belgrade had underestimated the importance of their*

⁸³¹ See more, Robert Saylor, *Yugoslavia: Implications of an Unjust War*, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, pp. 17013-5050, Downloaded from <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA480196>, 11 September, 2011.

⁸³² *Ibidem*.

⁸³³ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 268.

*influence on public opinion and Milosevic had never changed his distrustful and contemptuous attitude towards the western media”*⁸³⁴. Unlike the leaders from Belgrade, those representing the separatist republics understood the role of the media in the new wars and spent millions of dollars to hire the best PR companies⁸³⁵.

In the conflicts of the Balkans, some of the most active players in the war of the pictures employed the most powerful PR agencies: the Washington World Group, Ruder Finn, Global Enterprises Group, Jefferson Waterman International and Burson-Marsteller”. PR agencies that operated for non-Serbian customers listed the following objectives of their mission⁸³⁶:

- U.S. recognition of the independence of Croatia and Slovenia,
- The perception of Slovenia and Croatia as modern states of Western European caliber,
- The portrayal of Serbs as suppressers and aggressors,
- The identification of the Serbs with the Nazis,
- The formulation of the political programme of the Kosovo Albanians,
- The portrayal of the Croats, the Bosniak Muslims and the Kosovo Albanians as the only innocent victims,
- The acquisition of NGOs, academics and think tanks for the accomplishment of their own goals,
- Favorable negotiating results for the Albanian side in Rambouillet,
- Cultivation of US investments in the Yugoslav successor states and

⁸³⁴ Małgorzata Smolak, *The Influence of Mass Media on the Course of Contemporary Military Conflicts. A Case Study: the Balkan War*, downloaded from <http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/smolakccpaper.pdf>, 11 September, 2011.

⁸³⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁸³⁶ Jörg Becker, *War Marketing. How US-American PR agencies market the ex-Yugoslav wars*, downloaded from http://www.alexanderlanger.org/files/Becker_WarMarketing.pdf, 11 September, 2011.

- Montenegro's secession from Belgrade.

All these objectives had nothing in common with the journalist's role and scope in society. He/she soon became a tool for the promotion of a geopolitical cause dictated by the main stakeholders' interests in the conflicts from the Balkans. Just how successful the work of these agencies was can be realized from the comments by a leading manager of the Ruder Finn PR agency under contract with the governments of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and with the leadership of the Kosovo Albanians: "*Our work is not to verify information. We are not equipped to do that. Our work is to accelerate the circulation information favorable to us, to aim at judiciously chosen targets. (...) Speed is vital. (...) The first statement counts. The retractions have no effect*"⁸³⁷.

Media strategies, the geopolitical discourse and other means of geopolitical rivalries were not used only in the wars from the Balkans or from the Persian Gulf. According to John Pilger „*In the US Army manual on counterinsurgency, the American commander General David Petraeus describes Afghanistan as a “war of perception... conducted continuously using the news media”*. *What really matters is not so much the day-to-day battles against the Taliban as the way the adventure is sold in America where “the media directly influence the attitude of key audiences”*⁸³⁸. The geopolitical reality where actors cooperate or fight to fulfill their interests is substituted by a socially constructed reality with media assistance. A gap opens between the two realities⁸³⁹ that the public opinion cannot bridge. The final purpose is to gain legitimacy in the geopolitical games over extended areas.

⁸³⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁸³⁸ John Pilger, *Why are wars not being reported honestly?*, in “The Guardian”, Friday 10 December 2010, downloaded from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2010/dec/10/war-media-propaganda-iraq-lies> 11 December 2011.

⁸³⁹ Josh Meyer, *Gap between U.S. perception and reality in Iraq, Afghanistan*, downloaded from <http://nationalsecurityzone.org/site/gap-between-u-s-perception-reality-in-iraq-afghanistan-author-positifs/>, 11 December 2011.

These strategies can be built inside the main core of the geostrategic used by the great actors who wish to impose their interest in one space or another. One of their advantages is that they do not fire any ammunition, which may cause the physical elimination of an opponent/competitor from the geopolitical field and provide the chance to use the information and cybernetic means that lead to the conquest of supremacy in the virtual space. The gains in the virtual space can be assessed in *material gains*.

Chapter V

GEOPOLITICAL STRATEGIES AND SCENARIOS: READING “GRIDS” OR TOOLS FOR THE (RE) CONSTRUCTION OF THE LOCAL, REGIONAL OR GLOBAL POLITICS?

Faster changes in the contemporary world force politicians to access more projections, scenarios and strategies about the great issues of the world, from the economic and financial developments to reshaping the world order⁸⁴⁰. From the international politics point of view, we witness “the rise of the rest”⁸⁴¹ against the American hegemonic power. Will this lead to a Post Western World? Will there be a new bipolar equation with China and the USA as the major geopolitical stakeholders or multiple poles will emerge in a world of power centers with variable geometry and multiple peripheries? Will

⁸⁴⁰ See, *George Friedman*, *The Next 100 Years: A Forecast for the 21st Century*, *Doubleday*, 2009; *Josh Levin*, *How Is America Going To End?*, Downloaded from http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/the_end_of_america/2009/08/how_is_america_going_to_end_6.single.html, 23 November 2011; *Uri Dadush*, *Bennett Stancil*, *The World Order in 2050* Downloaded from http://carnegieendowment.org/files/World_Order_in_2050.pdf, 23 November 2011 20 predictions for the next 25 years, in “*The Observer*”, *Sunday 2 January 2011*, downloaded from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2011/jan/02/25-predictions-25-years>, 23 November 2011.

⁸⁴¹ Simon Serfati, *Moving into Post-Western World*, in “*The Washington Quarterly*”, no. 34:2, pp. 7-23, Downloaded from http://www.twq.com/11spring/docs/11spring_Serfaty.pdf, 23 November 2011; Giovanni Grevi, *The inter-polar world: a new scenario*, in “*Occasional Paper*”, no. 79, Paris, European Union Institute for Security Studies, June 2009, <http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/op79.pdf>.

geopolitics be definitively replaced by geo-economics, geo-information, geo-ecology etc.? Will the world enter a shortage of resources and will a great confrontation break out in search of energy, food and water? Will the climate and geophysical changes be more worrisome than the lack of natural resources? The range of questions could extend and the answers may require several books on the matter. Even so, it is not at all certain that the right answers will satisfy and provide a truth full image of these evolutions. One thing is sure in the set of the analysis methods and techniques in order to find answers to these geopolitical questions: the geopolitical analysis procedures can not be left out.

Two important instruments of such an arsenal have an outstanding importance – scenarios, and strategies adopted by the actors as official politics at a certain point in time according to their agenda interests for a longer or shorter period⁸⁴². Although we are convinced that both scenarios and strategies have obvious limits and weak points, researchers engaged in expertise and the development of international politics cannot ignore them.

5.1. The stakeholders' geopolitical strategies in international politics

The national strategy for the classical stakeholder and the sector/objective-oriented strategy specific of a non-classical player is a tool that helps stakeholders to project their foreign policy objectives according to the threats and the risks they face, the means they use in order to eliminate them and the resources at their command to do it. Most commonly met are the national security strategies and the market strategies. Any stakeholder engaged in the

⁸⁴² G. Wright, P. Goodwin, *Decision making and planning under low levels of predictability: enhancing the scenario method.*, in “International journal of forecasting”, 25 (4), 2009, pp. 813-825, downloaded from <http://dro.dur.ac.uk/6156/1/6156.pdf>, 24 November 2011.

international politics has its own strategy that guides the identification of its own geopolitical interests. If they have excessive ambitions, certain states, corporations or other non-state players base their strategy against the vital interests of other countries and nations⁸⁴³. In the beginning of the XXIst century, the American experts notified politicians and the public opinion about the fact that the USA needed a grand strategy.⁸⁴⁴ After the fall of the Soviet empire, Russia redefined its geopolitical strategies according to its interests at a certain point⁸⁴⁵; China directed its own behavior and strategy in a changing world. Viewed through the sand glass of time, the security strategies employed by various Chinese regimes join an overall “Grand Strategy” that attempts to cover three interrelated objectives: (1) to control the periphery and thwart threats to the ruling regime; (2) to preserve domestic order and the general well-being against the backdrop of different forms of social conflict; and (3) to attain or maintain geo-political influence as a major, or even primary, state.⁸⁴⁶ Doctor Uwe Nerlich underlined that “*Growth is one of the cornerstones of China’s national strategy and second priority, growth, was pursued through four modernizing goals. These were agriculture, industry, science and defense*”⁸⁴⁷.

⁸⁴³ Tariel Putkaradze, *Some Aspects of the Geopolitical Strategy of Georgia*, downloaded from http://www.kas.de/upload/auslandshomepages/PolDi_suedkaukasus/Causes_of_War/Causes_of_War_georgia2.pdf, 26 November 2010.

⁸⁴⁴ *Thomas P.M. Barnett Interview: Conversations with History*; Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley, downloaded from <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people5/Barnett/barnett-con4.html>, 26 November 2010.

⁸⁴⁵ Celeste A. Wallander, *Russia: The Domestic Sources of a Less-than-Grand Strategy*, in Ashley J. Tellis, Michael Wills, *Domestic Political Change and Grand Strategy*, eds, downloaded from http://www.nbr.org/publications/strategic_asia/pdf/Preview/SA07/SA07_Russia_preview.pdf, 26 November 2010.

⁸⁴⁶ Rand Corporations, *Interpreting China’s Grand Strategy*, downloaded from http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB61/index1.html, 28 November 2010.

⁸⁴⁷ Phd. Uwe Nerlich, *Geopolitics: China’s phased approach to national strategy*, downloaded from <http://www.geopolitical-info.com/en/article/1316596877569208900>, 28 November 2010.

In August 2009, Sven Scope highlighted the fact that it was high “*Time for a European Union grand strategy*”⁸⁴⁸. A year later, Jolyon Howorth identified “*five reasons why an EU grand strategy is becoming both urgent and indispensable. The first is that, in the unstable multi-polar world we are entering, the EU’s assets are increasingly sparse. (...) The second reason is that the world’s other major players all act in a clear strategic way. (...) The third reason why a grand strategy is needed is that historical events are moving with ever increasing speed, and the other global players are all negotiating multiple strategic partnerships with one another, based on perceived long-term interests. (...) Fourth, from a purely security perspective, the lessons of the past 10 years suggest that regional stabilization and global governance will require a far more comprehensive, subtle and coordinated approach to the world’s trouble spots than has been forthcoming to date. (...) Fifth, the apron-strings are no longer available (...)*”⁸⁴⁹.

As for the strategies adopted by non-state players, they differ completely by the role they play in international politics, by the degree of power that they command compared to the classical stakeholders and by the nature of the activities they perform. However, some geopolitical experts concluded that the implemented strategies differed, according to their domain of activity, after analyzing the strategies adopted by a non-state player with a remarkable share in the capital flow. Non-state players in the international financial policy, such as the International Monetary Fund, used to employ regulating and insurance mechanisms for different areas of the globe. For such an international financial

⁸⁴⁸ Sven Scope, *Time for a European Union grand strategy* downloaded from <http://europeangeostrategy.ideasoneuropa.eu/2009/08/18/time-for-an-eu-grand-strategy/> 28 November 2010.

⁸⁴⁹ Jolyon Howorth, *What Europe badly needs is a “Grand Strategy”*, downloaded from http://www.europesworld.org/NewEnglish/Home_old/Article/tabid/191/ArticleType/ArticleView/ArticleID/21474/WhatEuropebadlyneedsisaGrandStrategy.aspx, 28 November 2010.

institution, for instance, “the lended amount and the level of conditions for the loan might be used by creditors to control or take over the debtors’ strategic resources”⁸⁵⁰. In the field of energy, the strategies of the great-specialized companies will prevail against the states in case the great powers are not involved. Some analysts still operate with national rivalries in the oil rich areas of the world. Statistics from 2007 proved that some regions of energy production and transport were fighting for their interests in the most recent geopolitical field, mainly the African one where companies and not countries were engaged. The following table shows that only a few companies can manage the needed resources to impose their interests in four oil-producing countries⁸⁵¹:

Country (production in thousands of b/d)	National companies	Main foreign companies	Type of contract
Cameroon (82)	SNH	Total (70%), Perenco, Exxon Mobil, Pecten	PSC
Republic of Congo (Congo Brazzaville) (222)	SNPC	Total (70%), ENI, Zetah, CMS Nomeco, Congorep, Shell, Exxon Mobil, BP, Marathon Oil, Anadarko	Joint ventures, PSC since 1994
Gabon (230)	SNPG	Shell (50,000 b/d), Total (85,000 b/d), Perenco (47,000 b/d) and small private companies (Marathon Oil 26,000 b/d, Vaalco (15,000 b/d), Addax (6000 b/d), Maurel & Prom, Tullow Oil)	Concession contract and PSC
Chad (144)	SHT	Exxon Mobil (40%), Chevron Texaco (25%), Petronas (35%)	PSC

The commercial interests of giants from the oil industry collided with the political interests of some leaders from the oil exporting countries. Consequently, we witnessed events like those in Lybia that shifted the basic strategies of such stakeholders from the

⁸⁵⁰ Julien Reynaud, Julien Vauday, *IMF Lending and Geopolitics*, Working Paper Series, no. 965, November , 2008, p. 11, electronic library at http://ssrn.com/abstract_id=1292331, 28 November 2010.

⁸⁵¹ Apud, Philippe Hugon, *Cooperation: New Players in Africa*, in “Revue internationale de politique de développement”, downloaded from <http://poldev.revues.org/138>, 28 November 2010.

commercial to the political side. Several analysts concluded that some of the major oil companies helped the civilian population to oust the Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi from power. Clifford Krauss quoted by Philippe Hugon remarked, "*Colonel Gaddafi proved to be a frustrating customer for many international oil companies. The Libyan dictator frequently raised fees and taxes, imposed tough restrictions and made other inconvenient demands*"⁸⁵²". The Western companies, on one side, and the Russian, the Chinese and the Brazilian ones, on the other, fought the battle for the control of Libya's oil fields in the post-Gaddafi era. Abdeljalil Mayouf, executive director from Libya's state-owned Arabian Gulf Oil Company (AGOCO) told Reuters: "*We don't have a problem with western countries like the Italians, French and UK companies. But we may have some political issues with Russia, China and Brazil.*"⁸⁵³

The strategies planned by non-state actors who came into the international environment following negotiations and arrangements resulted from the promotion of national interests may pursue different objectives and interests. Some of them will produce strategies meant to highlight the role they have in solving important international political issues. At their Summit meeting in Lisbon, (2010) the NATO leaders adopted a new *Strategic Concept* used as the Alliance's roadmap for the next ten years. The commitment of the alliance to defend its members against outside attacks became the cornerstone of the Euro-Atlantic security. The document defined NATO's vision for an evolving Alliance that would maintain its capacity to defend its member states against contemporary threats and engaged NATO to become more flexible, more capable and more effective. According to NATO Secretary General "*NATO is an unparalleled community of freedom, peace, security and shared values (...) but the world is changing. We face new threats and new*

⁸⁵² *Ibidem.*

⁸⁵³ Michael Hughes, *Libya endgame: It's the oil, stupid*, downloaded from <http://www.examiner.com/geopolitics-in-national/libya-endgame-it-s-the-oil-stupid>, 28 September 2011.

challenges. And this Strategic Concept will ensure that NATO remains as effective as ever in defending our peace, our security and our prosperity."⁸⁵⁴ Stressing that the time had come for NATO to develop new capabilities and new partnerships, the new Strategic Concept paved the way for the Alliance to upgrade its ability to carry out its core mission of collective defense, while continuing to promote international stability. The new Strategic Concept urged allies to invest in key developments to meet emerging threats and to agree to support the necessary capabilities inside NATO for the defense against ballistic missile and cyber attacks.

The geopolitical strategies of the global or regional actors will influence a (re)configuration of the international order. At the level of strategic stakeholders, these strategies will lead to growing rivalries in certain spaces and to a better collaboration in others. The anticipation of these characteristics allows geopolitical analysts to forecast the global or regional architecture. However, it is necessary to understand why they have become so important and how geopolitical strategies are built both for the classical and the non-state players.

5.1.1. *The emergence and the evolution of strategy as a stakeholder's tool of organization and action in the international environment*

Definitions and the general ways of understanding strategy cover a wide and diverse range of views and perceptions. Strategy originates in the Greek word *strategos*, which means leading an army (*stratos* – army; *ago* – to lead)⁸⁵⁵ and it has developed its meaning, interpretation and practice in time, partly because strategy has been used in other domains than the army and the military

⁸⁵⁴ *NATO adopts new Strategic Concept* downloaded from, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_68172.htm, 28 October 2010.

⁸⁵⁵ See Herve Coutau-Begarie, *Treaty of strategy*, vol. I, Romanian edition, UNAp Publishing House „Carol I”, Bucharest, 2006, pp. 41-74.

conflicts. From the ancient times, Plato made the connection between politics and war. Even before the great thinkers of the ancient Greece, Sun Tzu (the VIth century B.C.) became the first acknowledged theorist of strategy. His *Art of war* is still studied by all the strategists that succeeded him, and his ideas preserve their amazing value even nowadays. The Chinese thinker underlined the priority role of psychological means over the military ones, a vision that accommodates best the nuclear realities of the contemporary age. However, mankind had to wait until 1794 the emergence of the strategic pattern in the current language for the first time in the writings of the Prussian general Frierdrich Wilhelm Bulow⁸⁵⁶.

Even a brief review of the manner to manage activities in the most diverse domains – from politics, economics, culture, and sports to literature and arts – proves that decision-making may seem nonsensical without a proper *strategy*. Today, the concept has unlimited use which leads to a proliferation of definitions that influence the meaning given to strategy. The degree of understanding it properly has not expanded while its confusing use has grown because the meanings conferred by the military theory does no longer come even closer to the one accepted in the economic domain when a corporate strategy is worked out. A similar fate had the proliferation of the concept of war in polemology. Strategists operate with terms like economic war, electronic war, PSYOPS war, image war, information war etc., and the classical term of *war* is hard to detect. From this perspective, we think that the identification of a number of concepts and scientific branches closely related to this term may save us from any misunderstanding and may avoid the risk of losing our own identity, once strategy is clearly defined. From the military language, strategy floated and was used in economics for a greater success in business and finally specialists ended up with what

⁸⁵⁶ Alexandre del Valle, *From the strategy to the geopolitics, several elements of a multidisciplinary approach*, downloaded from <http://www.strategicsinternational.com/3engegepolitic.htm>, 27 march 2010.

they called the “corporate strategy”. It seems that the term was first used by von Newman and Morgenstern in 1947 when they produced the theory of games in business planning. One year later, they were followed by McDonald who built a real global empire in the *fast-food* industry⁸⁵⁷.

Globalization and the growth of economic interdependencies produced not only more numerous studies and research projects in the field of strategy in most businesses, but they also led to the transfer of other methods and techniques specific only of the military field in the past. This is how a *School of economic war*⁸⁵⁸ opened in France, in 1995, after the American model, which trained specialists in the domain of the economic information and the technique of scenario writing in a very diverse area of study. The future strategists instructed in such education institutes become “the generals” in command of the non-state players promoting their own interests in several geopolitical regions while the confrontation trophy is the control of the energy, water and food supplies, among others. It is the *SWOT analysis* that will choose the winner/loser of future confrontations and not the *campaign plan*, produced by the major general staff of different armies, as it happened in the past centuries. Such an analysis has become a common tool for any type of management not only in economics, but also in the policy of the most diverse domains⁸⁵⁹.

Strategy does not exist in itself. It has always been a link between whatever stakeholders pursued, on one hand, and the methods and the tools of all calibers they employed to attain their

⁸⁵⁷ Mc. Donald, *Strategy in Business, Pocket and War*, Norton, New York, 1948; apud Abdelkarim Moussa, *Cadre épistémologique de la stratégie d'entreprise et utilisations de la stratégie militaire dans le domaine des affaires*, online, <http://www.cpage-cpa.ac.ma/cpa/francais/colloque/moussa2.htm>, 27 march 2010.

⁸⁵⁸ Interview de Christian Harbulot sur France Info, online, <http://www.ege.fr>, 27 march 2010.

⁸⁵⁹ *Analyse stratégique*, online, <http://www.businesspme.com/articles/strategie/8/analyse-strategique.html>, 27 march 2010.

objectives, on the other. It may mean the very art of the ways to follow in reaching projected objectives. From this point of view, strategy has related to the historic context of a society. In the Euro Atlantic space, strategy will always have a particular meaning and manner of implementation, completely different from the Russian and even the Chinese ones⁸⁶⁰. From this perspective, the renowned specialist in economic strategies Henry Mintzberg noted that no fewer than ten Schools of thinking identified particular means and ways of construction and application of strategies. Each of them considered its own perspective the ideal starting point in building a good strategy. He himself defined strategy in five different ways: strategy as *perception*, which designates a pre-established pattern of action in order to solve an issue; strategy as a *sketch* or *project*, which consists of a maneuver meant to identify an opponent or a competitor; strategy as a *model*, which builds the consistent structure of behavior; strategy as a *positioning of a company*, which resides in the means of identification for the place an organization holds in the surrounding environment, most frequently on the market; strategy as a *perspective* which means not only the identification of a position but also a certain type of perception reflecting its actions related to the market and technology⁸⁶¹. In this definition, behavior holds the most important place because consistency supports it. In fact, consistency defines strategy while the lack of it leads to its opposite, the absence of strategy, even in cases when it is formally mentioned in the political activity or in any other domain. Andreas Martschitsch believed that, “*these must not be mistaken with the plan and planning of action/activity*”⁸⁶². In his reference to this aspect, Peter Drucker wrote, “*long term planning does not contain future decisions*

⁸⁶⁰ Andreas Martschitsch, *What is Strategy?* online, oblix.ch/admin/dbproxy.php?table=infofile&column=file_en&id=3&download=true, 27 march 2010.

⁸⁶¹ See Ion Juvin, *Theoretical Perspectives and methodology in the study of strategic thinking*, in “Psychology review”, tome 47, no. 1-2, 2001.

⁸⁶² Andreas Martschitsch, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

but only signals the future impact of the present decisions”⁸⁶³. This happens because strategy is, in fact, a combined result of all these plans, decisions and actions designed to fulfill a purpose/objective in different fields.

Strategies promoted in politics by a certain classical or non-classical stakeholder in a geopolitical domain connected closely to the interests that defined its objectives followed in the international policy. *Politics* works out objectives/purposes for the entire society or for a particular domain while *strategy* recommends the means and ways to reach them. Edward Luttwak quoted by Alexandre del Valle underlined that the real architecture of a strategy covered five levels: at the lowest level, techniques support the concept, the achievement and the implementation of certain means, persons and quantities in the use of space; *tactics* combine people’s technical abilities in a precise field of action. Two intermediate successive levels follow that have not been mentioned previously: the operational one (a frequent term employed by the military), which establishes the meeting point of time and space, and the available means combining the operational level and those constants and variables pertaining to geography (generating the meaning of the geo-strategic pattern). Last comes the great strategy that becomes available and must determine the coherent convergence of the efforts from the international policy (military and/or civilian) with the decisions of the political power⁸⁶⁴. The “*great strategy*” describes the real-world framework of basic aims, ideals, and priorities that govern a nation’s approach to the rest of the world. In short, a grand strategy defines the national interest according to the leaders’ perspective. It states what a country plans to do to advance it. A grand strategy does not recommend detailed solutions

⁸⁶³ Apud PhD Senior Lecturer Ion Voievozeanu, *Defining Elements in the military strategy plans*, in vol. *Romania, member of the North-Atlantic Alliance*, UNAp Printing House, Bucharest, 2004, pp. 113-125; Peter Prevos, *Strategic Management and Business Performance*, online <http://prevos.net/ola/performance.pdf>, 27 march 2010.

⁸⁶⁴ Alexandre del Valle, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

to every problem, but it gives a powerful nation a roadmap of its future actions. It also presents a standard of the rest of the world and clarifies its own expectations from it.

The strategies of the policy adopted by a state and the politicians who promote them have certain features identified and excellently presented by Henry Kissinger. “*Intellectuals – he wrote – analyze the functioning of international systems; statesmen build them. There is also a great difference between an analyst’s perspective and a statesmen’s perspective. The analyst can elect the problems he wants to study while they are imposed to the statesman. The analyst can spend as long as it is necessary in order to reach the clear conclusion; the statesman’s overwhelming problem is time pressure. The analyst’s risks are null. If the analyst reaches the wrong conclusions, he can write another treaty. The statesman is allowed to try only once, his mistakes are irreparable. The analyst disposes of all facts; he will be judged according to his intellectual force. The statesman must act according to evaluations that cannot be proved when they are elaborated; he will be judged by history...*”⁸⁶⁵ This fact proves that there are no faultless strategies for any politician/multinational manager, but they cannot be ignored, either, if the implemented action is to reach planned objectives.

Non-state players, who are a rising presence in the international politics, have also been producing regional or global strategies, which meet or collide with the interests of a classical stakeholder, the state. A relatively small number of multinational companies rule over a wide majority of trade and investments. The largest 500 multinational companies account for over 90 per cent of the world’s foreign direct investments and they dominate half of the world trade⁸⁶⁶. The corporate world is in the process of a global

⁸⁶⁵ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, Romanian edition, All Publishing House, Bucharest, 1994, p. 24.

⁸⁶⁶ Alan M. Rugman Alain Verbeke, *Regional and Global Strategies of Multinational Enterprises* Kelley School of Business, Indiana University, downloaded from <http://www.bus.indiana.edu/riharbau/RePEc/iuk/wpaper/bepp2004-19-rugman-verbeke.pdf>, 20 September 2010.

transformation. Mergers, acquisitions, outsourcing and personnel shrinking have become common language everywhere. Privatization allows free enterprise to assume functions that belonged to governments only, until recently. The relevance of the international state borders faded while the business world followed a more global approach and the information technology era was shrinking the communication duration and the decision making process.

Definitions given to strategy in corporate practices differ from one scholar to the next and from one domain to another, as it happens in the case of the state stakeholders. Alfred Chandler defined strategy as “*The determination of the basic long term goals and objectives of an enterprise and the adoption of the courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals*”⁸⁶⁷. Kenneth R. Andrews defined strategy as “*The pattern of objectives, purposes, goals and the major policies and plans for achieving these goals stated in such a way so as to define what business the company is in or is to be and the kind of the company it is or it is to be*”⁸⁶⁸.

A classical player may attain its national interests in a certain geopolitical region if it can muster a *great strategy* and other sector strategies such a security strategy, environment strategy, commercial strategy, human security strategy etc.

5.1.2. *Stages and steps in scripting geopolitical strategies*

The way geopolitical strategies are built, the steps followed the means they are adopted as tools of the foreign policy or the marketing management (in the case of non-state actors) differ from one country to another. It is generally accepted that a good strategy means a process that covers several stages. Their number differ form one school of thought to another. Sarah Scalet concluded that a good strategy could

⁸⁶⁷ Apud, Prof. Thenmozhi, *Strategy Formulation : An Overview*, downloaded from http://nptel.iitm.ac.in/courses/IIT-MADRAS/Management_Science_I/Pdfs/9_1.pdf, 23 november 2010.

⁸⁶⁸ *Ibidem*.

be achieved in five steps⁸⁶⁹. The acknowledged scholars, James A. Baker III from the Institute for Public Policy of Rice University, and Edward L. Morse and Amy Myers Jaffe⁸⁷⁰, believed that four steps were quite enough. Other specialists thought that the process of strategy building must answer correspondingly three questions: Which are the targets? Which are the available means one can use? Which are the ways such resources can be put to work?⁸⁷¹

Two renowned American experts – P. H. Liotta and Richmond M. Lloyd presented their vision where the stages were built according to the following five fundamental questions: What do we want or do? How do we plan to do it? What or who is against us? What available means do we have to achieve it? What are the discrepancies? Why do we want to do it? The way the answer generates actions, methods and resources for their fulfillment is presented briefly in the following scheme⁸⁷².

The military analyst J.B. Bartholomees Jr. suggested a model for national strategy that implied a multilevel analysis along three guidelines: the international environment; the analysis of the domestic environment and the analysis of the foundation that supported strategies⁸⁷³. In terms of the international environment analysis, a number of threats and developments were considered,

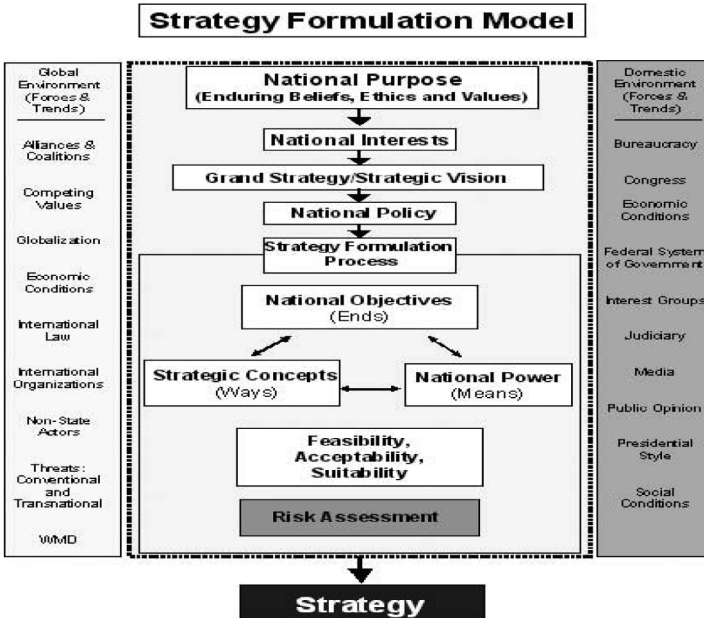
⁸⁶⁹ *An Alternative Strategy Process for Planning Government Space* online, http://www.spacefuture.com/archive/an_alternative_strategy_process_for_planning_government_space_programs.shtml, accessed at 27 December 2010.

⁸⁷⁰ Edward L. Morse și Amy Myers Jaffe, *Strategic Energy Policy Challenges for the 21st Century*, online, <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article3535.htm>

⁸⁷¹ Daniel Biro, *Strategic studies*, in vol., Luciana Alexandra Ghica, Marian Zulean, *cit.*, p. 125.

⁸⁷² P. H. Liotta, Richmond M. Lloyd, *The Strategy and Force Planning Framework*, in *Naval War College Review*, Spring 2005, vol. 58, no. 2, downloaded from <http://www.nwc.navy.mil/press/Review/2005/spring/art5-sp05.htm>, 27 december 2010.

⁸⁷³ J.B. Bartholomees Jr., *Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy*, downloaded from http://www.carlisle.army.mil/DIME/documents/592_07groh.pdf, 27 December 2010.



answered: Which are the objectives set by the government/non-state actor pursued through its policy? How can they be accomplished? What weaknesses, threats and opportunities may occur? What are the proper means (soft power/hard power actions, force and cooperation coalition /unilateral actions etc.)? Which are the risks and the predictability degree?

The answer to these questions offers a framework of possible stages in a political strategy:

a) The research and the analysis of political ideals and values that support a political regime in a society. Once they are assessed, the national and specific interests and mainly the priorities promoted by the state at a certain time can be understood and turned operational;

b) The analysis of the domestic and the foreign environment where a player acts to fulfil its interests;

c) The evaluation of sustainable strategic objectives compared to: resources, means of achievement and the acceptable risks for a player (state/non-state) related to a possible loss/gain;

d) The writing of a projection document assumed by a decision-maker and approved by its Parliament.

The production of a strategy project is assigned to a team of experts and analysts hired for this particular task by a political/decision-making institution responsible for it. The presentation of the final document to the debate by the public opinion prior to its adoption by the legislative body falls under the responsibility of the institution/actor in charge of security. Once the project passes the parliament approval, its provisions are implemented as the law of the land. Periodical supervisions trace the way its provisions apply to the social practice. Some final adjustments operate on the scenario and the resource assignment accompanying such stages.

Several analysts and experts in strategy building consider that the first stage must focus on the international environment to work out a proper strategy. This is an interdisciplinary analysis hinged on the geopolitical rivalry/cooperation. If the geopolitical dispute concerns rivalries in the energy industry, then the energy factors come first. This means the identification of major changes in the nature of the threats faced by energy security in all directions – the energy market, the industrial technology and transports, and in the production of new energy sources, in the medium and long-term economic growth of the major energy consumers⁸⁷⁵. An important element of analysis is the study of the impact of natural catastrophes and man-made disasters, industrial accidents and terrorist action on geopolitical strategy. At this stage, most relevant is the correct assessment of the ways and the trends in the international environment that may influence directly the society/state that the scenario has been designed for. They may not mean the same to a similar degree for everybody! A major change, for example, on the energy market – oil or natural gas – can have positive consequences for one

⁸⁷⁵ Simon Roberts, *Energy as a driver of change*, in *The Arup Journal* no. 2/2006 online, http://www.arup.com/_assets/_download/download630.pdf; accessed at 27 December 2010.

state and dramatic consequences for another that attempts to achieve its national interests. This is an area where the most intriguing scenarios have challenged those who produced national or specific strategies. One of the essential changes supported by these scenarios is the exhaustion of non-renewable resources in the coming years. We think that this is a false challenge. The development of science will lead to the discovery of new technologies that will chase away such anxieties. Such a concern may reverse the relationships between the classical and non-classical players in terms of the ownerships and mainly the control of energy sources⁸⁷⁶. The great oil companies can directly influence the energy security of countries with poor or medium developed economies. On the other hand, social and environmental responsibilities still fall into the care of the respective states. That was the reason that prompted the Russian Federation and Vladimir Putin to prevent, sometimes violently, the emergence of giant oil companies that might have undermined the state authority. The Yukos case was most relevant in this matter. The Kremlin leadership could employ energy as a weapon in the promotion of its interests in relation to other stakeholders.⁸⁷⁷

Following this “model”, a number of Latin American heads of state started a process of re-nationalization of the energy resources and of the exploitation companies. These are only a few of the essential changes besides those caused by what specialists called the “demand shock”, recorded recently following the massive growth of the Chinese oil imports. A few of the available examples prove convincingly that the world is far from entering a new international order, depicted so charmingly by the supporters of globalization in the final decade of the last century⁸⁷⁸. The troubles produced by

⁸⁷⁶ Michael Hirsh, *The Energy Wars*, in Newsweek International Editions, May 3, 2006 online <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12617717/site/newsweek/>

⁸⁷⁷ Nikolas K. Gvosdev, *A Dose of Realism on Russia*, in The Journal, Fall 2006, Number 11.

⁸⁷⁸ Andrew Gamble, *Politics and destiny*, translation by Nicolae Năstase, Antet printing House, 2001, pp. 34-35.

terrorist organizations, by the growth of the co-called revolutionary wave of nationalities both in the former USSR and the former Yugoslavia⁸⁷⁹ would lead to the emergence of new rivalries and to the “wars over energy”.

Nobody can rule out a possible “heating” of the competition for resources even if the great energy consumers follow the market rules. The reasons of such a scenario reside in the price growth decided by a powerful competitor to the limit where others can no longer afford to buy energy and in control of areas rich in energy resources through policies of investments. China has already become one of the competitors attempting to make the law in certain African regions. While rivalries develop in the control of strategic passages and compulsory transit points (The Suez, The Malacca Strait, the Panama, The Hormuz, the Gibraltar etc.) the analysis focuses on other elements from the international, regional and global environment. According to the French strategist Hervé Couteau-Begarie, a former President of the Institute of Compared Strategy, the integral or (total) American strategy remarkably coherent and is organized around three axes: the general economic strategy, the military strategy and the general cultural strategy⁸⁸⁰.

At this stage, information gathering implies a very great effort for analysis and data interpretation. The accuracy and the realism of a strategy are tightly related to the information gained by experts and analysts. Scholars that know not only the energy or the security matters must carry out the research. They must meet within an interdisciplinary team of scholars in IT, geography, climatology, sociology, business, defense etc. They have to be fully aware that the public information provided by institutions of the state or by the great corporations are only guidelines that may be considered mere

⁸⁷⁹ Dr. Michael A. Weinstein, *An Era of Instability in World Politics*, in The Power and Interest News Report (PINR) downloaded from http://www.pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=225&language_id=1, 25 June 2010.

⁸⁸⁰ Apud, Alexandre del Valle, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

projections. Many of some needed data are secrets guarded very carefully. In the Russian Federation, an oil tycoon has been imprisoned for releasing statistics to the public about the country's oil reserves, among other things. In fact, we think that the ongoing fight among several secret services for supremacy on the energy market is more important than the battle in the classical military theatres.

These are just a few elements identified as best examples. The essential analysis may focus on a completely different aspect than those we considered, depending on the interests features, on the changes recorded in the international environment and on the geopolitical interests of a particular stakeholder. Terrorism as a phenomenon and a process has been the core of the international environment analysis for a long time. Today the economic crisis lies at the heart of the matter.

Another stage in the process of a strategy production is the analysis of vulnerabilities, threats and risks, and the projection of the risks a state/non-state player may assume when it gets involved in one geopolitical area or another of utmost importance.

An essential element is the *identification and the social construction of a threat* against a society/ neoclassical actor. Scholars warn that the review of a wide range of scattered information to identify particular threats is no easy task for most people. Top experts must receive accurate data from specialized institutions. Based on these data, expertise specialists produce the „overview” of the threat⁸⁸¹. Once the threat identified, it must be taken to the political decision-maker who turns it into a *security issue*. Basically, any player from the political arena may notice/ perceive a threat against its security and may even take it to the public but it cannot label it as a security issue because „*security is a highly structured field, where certain actors are placed in power*

⁸⁸¹ John Hollywood, Diane Snyder, Kenneth McKay, John Boon, *Out of the Ordinary, Finding Hidden Threats by Analyzing Unusual Behavior*, RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, 2004, p.13.

*positions due to their general acceptance as authorized voices in the field of security because they have the power to define security”*⁸⁸².

Sometimes, these approaches are justified in a credible way, but they do not prove superior to other identification issues, agendas and political options. No proof is needed when a decision has been taken and an action becomes a political act. Actions are pursued when the majority of those charged to define security issues come to an agreement and not when the political options prove the right ones. This was the case of President George W. Bush and his main advisers on defense and security issues, when they decided to go to war in Iraq in 2003.

Threats against the individual or the community security have multiplied and diversified very much in comparison to the period when armed violence dominated the international system, the domestic social system and the social conflicts. From this point of view, unanimously accepted criteria of classification do not operate, especially when a political factor is needed to define them. Actually, when classification patterns and threat hierarchies operate it is essential to detect if they have “come” from the political agenda or have been “gathered” from a scientific agenda⁸⁸³.

Most relevant seems to us a comparison of the type of threat facing the US from the perspective of the two “agendas”. The renowned theorist of international relations John J. Mearsheimer sized up the threats facing Americans in the coming years although he thought that “*states will never have information about the situations they are facing (...) because the possible opponents have solid reasons to present in an altered way their own strengths and weaknesses and dissimulate their real purpose*”⁸⁸⁴. At the second annual conference held by the *Joint Threat Anticipation Centre* in April 2006, he said that the USA might face two main types of

⁸⁸² Ionel Nicu Sava, *cit. work*, work, p. 201.

⁸⁸³ *Ibidem*, pp. 240-241.

⁸⁸⁴ John J. Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of the force politics*, Romanian edition, translation by Andreea Năstase, Antet, Bucharest, 2003, p. 32.

threats: classical and asymmetrical.⁸⁸⁵ The great powers, the states on the „axis of evil” (or the rogue states) and terrorist non-state organizations pose classical threats. The major threat in the following twenty years will come from terrorist organizations, mainly from those frequently presented by the media lately such as Al-Qaeda. This conclusion derives from the perspective of the offensive realism that places the classical stakeholder at the heart of the international system. Some projections forwarded by prestigious analysts of the American policy influenced the American decision makers but how much did it matter? In February 2009 the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, admiral Mullen stressed in front of students and local leaders from Detroit „*The national debt is the single biggest threat to national security. Taxpayers will be paying around \$600 billion in interest on the national debt by 2012*”⁸⁸⁶.

Other theorists and analysts as Francis Fukuyama, Paul Pillar, general Virinder Uberoy or Peter W. Singer, had a totally different perception than John J. Mearsheimer. The theory arguing that the terrorist threat is the most important for the security of the USA „is correct to a certain point”⁸⁸⁷, because it is defined vaguely and does not provide the accurate means to identify the enemy the US is supposed to fight. “*Who are those who attacked us*” – asked Peter W. Singer, “*what is the nature of the threat: a man (Bin Laden); an organization (Al-Qaeda); a movement (al-Qaeda-ism/jihad-ism); an ideology (Islamism); a region (the Islamic world) or a whole religion (Islamism)?*”⁸⁸⁸ The administration „wrongly characterized the

⁸⁸⁵ *Idem, What are National Security Threats*, Center Workshop Conference Report, April 3-5, 2005.

⁸⁸⁶ *War and The Economic Crisis: Mullen: “Debt is Main Threat to U.S. National Security ... Pentagon Must Cut Spending”* in “Global Research”, August 29, 2010, downloaded from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=20810>, 23 October 2011.

⁸⁸⁷ Francis Fukuyama, *cit.*, p. 59.

⁸⁸⁸ Peter W. Singer, *The 9/11 War plus 5: Looking Back and Looking Forward at U.S.-Muslim World Relations* in Turkish Policy Quarterly, Volume 5, no. 3, Fall 2006, in http://www.turkishpolicy.com/default.asp?show=fall_2006, accessed at 23 October 2011.

threat of Islamism”⁸⁸⁹ and later combined it to the threat coming from the so-called *rouge states*.

The American military analyst Virinder Uberoy, pointed out that it was important not only to identify security threats. People must have a correct/adequate assessment of the nature and intensity it could show in order to take the proper and useful measures.⁸⁹⁰ As most security issues of the contemporary world originate in the stakeholders’ behavior in the international contemporary environment, it is highly interesting to detect the extent to which it is foreseeable. In the history of the Cold War, the lack of trust and communication led to crises and conflicts that could have been avoided⁸⁹¹. Similar situations occurred even after the communist threat vanished, although the world expected them to go away forever once transparency and trust in the system of international relations appeared.

The National Security Strategy of the USA stated „*the danger of a nuclear attack from the terrorist organizations and the problematic states such as North Korea and not long ago Iraq and Saddam Hussein*”⁸⁹², *impose rethinking and implementation of a strategy „to secure our national interests”*⁸⁹³. The document identified several other dangers and threats against the security of the American society, but they have not received the same attention as the first two. Such „differences” between the official list of threats to the national security and the academic environment occur in

⁸⁸⁹ Francis Fukuyama, *cit. work*, p. 14.

⁸⁹⁰ Maj Gen Virinder Uberoy, *Threat Perception For National Security*, online [http://www.ndtv.com/ent/bookextracts.asp?id=263&slug=Threat+Perception+ For+National+Security](http://www.ndtv.com/ent/bookextracts.asp?id=263&slug=Threat+Perception+For+National+Security).

⁸⁹¹ Constantin Hlihor, Ecaterina Hlihor, *Communication in the XXth century*, Comunicare.ro Publishing House, Bucharest, 2010, p. 31-39

⁸⁹² Lawrence J. Korb, Project Director A Council Policy Initiative, *A New National Security Strategy in Age of Terrorists, Tirants, and, Weapons Mass Destructions*, Publications Office Council on Foreign Relations, New York, 2003, p. 1.

⁸⁹³ *Ibidem*, p. 2.

countries from Europe or Asia. America is not a singular case but it is the most visible because its security politics sends ripples in the international environment and, unfortunately, the distance between the public opinion expectations and the effects of security strategy implementation is continually growing.

The way the American decision-makers perceive threats seems to have altered profoundly. The way they reassess the security threats in the priorities equation proves it beyond any doubt. According to the *Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence*, „*The strategic landscape has changed considerably for US interests over the past year. We see some improvements, but also several entrenched problems and slow progress in some areas for the near future. Several large-scale threats to fundamental US interests will require increased attention, (...)*”⁸⁹⁴. In the Director of National Intelligence Dennis C. Blair’s opinion, the number one threat for the US security is no longer the physical terrorism as it was identified after the 9/11 attacks. It comes from the cyberspace. Some progress has been recorded but a number of deeply rooted problems persist and certain areas witness a slow development. The American decision makers have experienced an essential change in their perception that surfaced at the end of a decade of evolutions and ample actions that occurred in hot geopolitical regions. According to the analyst quoted above “*The United States are confronting a dangerous combination of known and unknown vulnerabilities, strong and rapidly expanding adversary capabilities, and a lack of comprehensive threat awareness. Malicious cyber activity is occurring on an unprecedented scale with extraordinary sophistication. While both the threats and technologies associated with cyberspace are dynamic, the existing*

⁸⁹⁴ Dennis C. Blair, *Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence*, February 2, 2010, downloaded from http://www.dni.gov/testimonies/20100202_testimony.pdf, 20 December 2011.

balance in network technology favors malicious actors, and is likely to continue to do so for the foreseeable future”⁸⁹⁵.

Classified information disappears daily both from government and private companies data bases, undermining the confidence in the information systems, and in the very information these systems have been meant to store. Quite often unauthorized, persistent and even classified information is leaked and becomes available to unknown enemies that may prove something more than their capacity to “mock” at a certain vulnerability. There is no way to make sure that the infrastructure of our cyberspace will remain the only available and reliable information source in times of crisis. In a very dynamic space, we face more serious and accurately targeted threats. The new approaches of the cybersecurity must be a permanent way of development, testing and implementation of answers to the new technological and strategic challenges⁸⁹⁶. Different perceptions of security threats are not the only obstacle because theorists operate in the scientific field with slightly different definitions⁸⁹⁷ and they place threats sometimes on the same continuum of vulnerability and risk, which spreads even more the degree of confusion between terms⁸⁹⁸.

Some upgrading have been processed in several countries while others preserved rigid security strategies under the circumstances analyzed at the time of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Romania’s case may offer an example. Romanian officials have placed terrorism at the top of major threats⁸⁹⁹. When the report of the Romanian Service of Intelligence was released the Romanian president referred to the terrorist threats against Romania, and stated

⁸⁹⁵ *Ibidem.*

⁸⁹⁶ *Ibidem.*

⁸⁹⁷ Richard Ullman, *Redefining security. International Security*, vol. 8, no. 1, Summer 1983, pp. 129-53; Thierry Balzacq, *cit. work*, *passim*.

⁸⁹⁸ Ionel Nicu Sava, *cit. work*, pp. 189-199.

⁸⁹⁹ *Traian Bănescu SRI Report*, downloaded from <http://www.ziare.com/articole/traian+basescu+sri+bilant>, 20 December 2011.

that a growing risk of such attacks augmented because the flare of the armed conflict in the Arab countries area. Traian Băsescu challenged the Service to raise the alert level starting with the second semester of the year 2010. However, more than half of Romanians still consider corruption and poverty and not terrorism the most important domestic security threats⁹⁰⁰.

It is a situation that proves our perceptions may be right and in keeping with the *perceived object* or they may contradict them deeply. Actor A may amass weapons while actors B, C and D know the exact number, the deployment and the firepower, based on an accurate perception of facts. Yet, B, C and D have totally opposed relations with A: B is a friend related via cooperation agreements with A; C is not on very good terms with A because of some difficulties in cooperation and understanding in several domains; D has neutral links with the previous three players. A's growing arsenal may become a *threat* for player C if it decides to act against it. That is the typical case of a security dilemma. At the same time, A's growing arsenal is not a threat to B. On the contrary, B may take it as a security pledge provided by the treaties and the security arrangements concluded with A. For D it is only a matter of information-comprehension of the developments from the contemporary international environment.

From our own perspective, *a security threat comes from a material/immaterial factor, process or phenomenon associated to the will and the capacity of an individual/group, state to threaten the physical integrity and the interests of another individual, group of the system (political, social, economic, environmental, financial, energy etc.) that it belongs to*. It is a binomial between the factor of destruction *and someone's will to harm physically, functionally or structurally an individual, a system etc.*, and it has no relevance except for its relation to the vulnerability of the "target". The nuclear

⁹⁰⁰ Alexandra Fusoi, *Eurobarometer: Romania-an atypical European country according to its citizens*, downloaded from <http://cursdeguvernare.ro/eurobarometru-romania-%E2%80%93-o-europeana-atipica-dupa-temerile-cetatenilor-sai.html>, 20 December 2011.

arms of a stakeholder, A for instance, may not *threaten* state B in the least, because either it has deployed a complete and impenetrable missile defense, or it has a far larger capacity of military reaction than state A. The relation between A and C is a completely different matter in case state C does not have the right reaction forces or the defense system that may reject a massive attack from state A.

The classification of threats can be either more complex or less sophisticated according to the number of references it uses. In most cases, it operates with an overused criterion – the nature of the threat. From this point of view, threats may be *classical*, frequently associated to the states' conflictual behavior, and *non classical*, associated to non-state players. We consider that a less used reference which may yield a more adequate perception of the threats is the *nature and characteristics of the „target“*. This perspective divides threats into: military, political, economic, and social, identity, energy, environmental etc.⁹⁰¹ The *intensity* of a threat is a supplementary standard. According to these variables, threats are diffuse, prominent, major or minor. Approached from this perspective, threats may be of *proximity, probability of occurrence, specificity, consequences and historical setting*⁹⁰², according to some experts. Most threats in today's society „are more diffuse, hidden and vaguely defined“.⁹⁰³ The emergence of non-state players revived the *historic* criterion. Today we operate with classical threats and the so-called asymmetric ones, among which, terrorism is actually, classical, as well. Terrorism was not a typical phenomenon/ product of the Cold War. Considering the space expansion that threats may cover, they can be either regional or local. We still are reluctant to accept those classifications that identify global threats.

⁹⁰¹ *Ibidem.*

⁹⁰² Institute for Strategic Studies, *The concept of threat analysis (Part III: Changing Threat Perception)*. 2000, downloaded from, [http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+concept+of+threat+analysis.+\(Part+III%3A+Changing+Threat...-a081891204](http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+concept+of+threat+analysis.+(Part+III%3A+Changing+Threat...-a081891204), 23 June 2010

⁹⁰³ Timothy Garton Ash, *cit. work*, p. 10.

Some experts believe that humankind faces threats that can be previewed/identified and people may realize their existence. Other threats generally stem from the natural environment, as it is the case of earthquakes that can only be forecast. We believe that real threats derive only from the conflicting character of states/societies or of some specific groups of people. There are no threats beyond man's will to act in the general pursuit of a certain goal and of security if the interest and the will of the *other* are also considered. Hypersecurity for *someone* can turn into a threat for *outsiders* and neutral parties. Earthquakes associate to dangers. Nature does not intend to harm people.

Perception may be an important threats classification criterion. It can operate on threats resulting from individual or collective human decision and action. In the relationships between ethnic, religious, social or any other groups perceptions are influenced by stereotypes, psychical fixations, and the way social, political, religious, moral values are perceived mutually⁹⁰⁴. What stands for genuine values for a people/group can be a threat for others. This is all the more important as we witness a spectacular growing capacity for the transfer of goods and people and significant, amazing changes in the very essence of human communities. No aggregated human community can be regarded as a community unless its biographies stretching over a long period of time with an even longer life expectancy of the frequent and intense interactions are tightly knit. Globalization is currently affecting precisely this type of experience and some people perceive it as a decline, as the very death of real communities. Under the influence of this process, the „community ties become even looser by the day. Personal loyalty loses its effect while national, regional, community, neighborhood, family ties have

⁹⁰⁴ Claudia Seymour, *Social Psychological Dimensions of Conflict*, in *Beyond Intractability: A Free Knowledge Base on More Constructive Approaches to Destructive Conflict*; http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/social_psychological/, accessed at 10 april 2010.

lesser effect once a coherent image of the self is fading, too”⁹⁰⁵. What is globalization for *some* and what can it mean for *others*? For some, it can be a *threat* and for others, a vector of welfare.

The *estimation of the reaction type* meant to eliminate a threat that hovers over the individual or human community follows a complex process of analysis and research covering several stages. First, the „profile” of threats is built. The analysis of these „profiles” “establishes and classifies instant reactions in order to eliminate/annihilate them.

This is a crucial moment of the process, because a wrong decision in setting priorities may bring dramatic consequences for the actor who intends to safeguard *something*. The political history of the second half of the XXth century and the years that followed is full of such examples⁹⁰⁶. An important role for this operation is played by the expertise provided by specialized private or public institutions and by the influence of the pressure/lobby groups. In general, their interaction with the bureaucracy and the specialized bodies is a positive trend specific of democratic societies⁹⁰⁷. They improve the degree of wisdom and accuracy of the analysis by accepting several points of view and appreciation. Negative aspects that might appear should not be overlooked. The groups of interests do not represent equally all citizens in any contemporary democratic system. Ethnic/social minorities, the rich, the businesses, media strive to be very well represented while other groups, mainly the underprivileged ones, are almost lost in the “landscape” populated by the groups of interests. At the other end of the social scale, only one very rich person seems to have an equal influence over the configuration of the social threats

⁹⁰⁵ Maurice R. Stein, *The Eclipse of Community. An interpretation of American Studies*, 2nd edition, Harper and Row, New York, 1965, p. 329; apud Zigmunt Bauman, *cit. work*, pp. 36-37.

⁹⁰⁶ Maj Gen Virinder Uberoy, *Threat Perception for National Security*, in *cit. city*.

⁹⁰⁷ Vezi pe larg, Chareles E. Lindblom, Edward J. Woodhouse, *cit. work*, pp. 116-160.

as a mass organization scarcely funded⁹⁰⁸. This is more important as the role of mass media has grown and there are many experts who take more and more into account the *CNN effect* when building a certain type of politics. It is a well-known fact that the changes in communication have encouraged and developed interactions among three important types of external players who are influencing today the agenda setting for the state security, including the outlining of the types of threats that loom above all our heads, the media, the NGOs and the *policy-makers*⁹⁰⁹.

The analysis of the actor's ability to act/react against a threat means not only to identify the necessary power resources but also to know its vulnerability/weaknesses.

Evaluation of vulnerabilities is an extremely important action in building geopolitical strategies. People both individually and socially have always tried to assess their weaknesses but also those of their opponents. It was not by mere chance that the phrase "Achile's heel" was coined when referring to someone's weakness. From this perspective, vulnerability is an extremely important category for rating the security status of *something* or *someone*. This is even more important in the study of geopolitical rivalries from a geographical region or at a global level. Like the threat itself, this notion becomes relevant only in connection to other essential characteristics of the stakeholders that fight for more and more security. The perspective on the elements that define vulnerability to achieve a concrete meaning in the security discourse has generated several points of view⁹¹⁰. Understanding the way different actors define their vulnerabilities is essential to assess different types of reaction and behavior in foreign policy. A right or wrong perception

⁹⁰⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 134.

⁹⁰⁹ See Călin Hentea, *Arms that do not kill*, Nemira Printing House, Bucharest, 2004; *idem*, *Propaganda without frontier*, Nemira Printing House, Bucharest, 2002; Philip M Taylor, *War and Media*, Manchester University Press, 1995; Elena Lorena Popescu, *Challenges and dilemmas of the humanitarian intervention after the Cold War*, Lumen Printing House, Iași, 2006.

⁹¹⁰ See Ionel Nicu Sava, *cit. work*, pp. 189-190.

of vulnerabilities that characterize a certain stakeholder at a given time has a strong impact over the way it builds its own security policy. We believe that vulnerability and a stakeholders power meet in a straightforward relationship to be identified at its level of security and not somewhere between threats and vulnerabilities⁹¹¹.

At this point, a question arises: what is vulnerability and what are the possibilities to identify it in society? Some experts define vulnerability as the capacity of a system/subsystem to react to external stimuli that can influence or disturb its functioning⁹¹². Sociologist Nicolae Perpelea worked out an interesting point of view in defining and establishing the place and the importance of comprehending vulnerability in the contemporary society⁹¹³. He developed Bruno Latour's idea and concluded that people's perception that they succeeded to abandon a long period of history when they had thought to be protected „from the manifestation of a biological and anthropological constant as vulnerability⁹¹⁴” had been just an illusion. People face different types of vulnerability produced by the characteristics of the contemporary development in society. Vulnerabilities „come from the instrumental rationalization and from the interdependency networks where *humans and non humans* are caught”⁹¹⁵. We believe that vulnerability can be defined as „*a relation between the attraction of a possible target for a potential aggressor and its ability [of that target] to take the necessary counter measures or the level of rejection that the target can muster*”⁹¹⁶.

⁹¹¹ *Ibidem*.

⁹¹² B.L. Turner, R. Kasperson, P. Matson, J.J. McCarthy, R. Corell, L. Christensehn, N. Eckley, J. Kasperson, A. Luers, M. Martello, C. Polsky, A. Publisher and A. Schiller, *A Framework for Vulnerability Analysis in Sustainability Science*, 2003, PINAS, pp. 74-79.

⁹¹³ Nicolae Perpelea, *Arguments and concepts for a sociological analysis of the discourse on risks*, Institute of Sociology of the Romanian Academy, downloaded from, www.racai.ro/RISC1/NicolaePerpelea.pdf, 20 june 2010.

⁹¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁹¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁹¹⁶ Nancy A. Renfroe, Joseph L. Smith, *Threat/Vulnerability Assessments and Risk Analysis*, downloaded from, in <http://www.wbdg.org/design/riskanalysis.php>, 20 june 2010.

The vulnerability analysis implies the activity that identifies the “weak” parts from the power potential and from the manner of managing and using it, from the plans and the developing strategies of certain social economic or from any other areas of society that might be speculated by classical stakeholders and non-state players interested in that specific society that they could not promote/attain otherwise.⁹¹⁷

Basically, such research is carried out by specialized teams of high standards providing the best methods and techniques of investigation. No matter how good a political analyst may be in his/her own research field, he/she will never identify accurately the vulnerabilities of a missile defense system or of a banking network. There are tendencies to know and to promote such methods. One of them, the *Strategic War Room*, is largely used in the West⁹¹⁸. In the implementation of this method *Security Radars* are needed. They cover the whole national territory and work with centers of analysis, polling companies, specialized institutes on security matters, NGOs, all vectors that influence the public opinion.

Reliable investigators have detected some major vulnerabilities in Romania, described by researchers as: a strong dependency on vital resources hard to access; negative tendencies of demography and massive migration; high level of social insecurity, persistence of chronic poverty and an obvious social gap; a small percentage and the fragmentation and a low profile of the middle class in the

⁹¹⁷ Raymond J. Decker, *Key Elements of a Risk Management Approach*, Testimony Before the Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans Affairs, and International Relations; House Committee on Government Reform United States General Accounting Office, p. 5, in <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-02-150> accessed at 12 june 2010.

⁹¹⁸ See Steven M. Shaker, Theodore L. Rise, *Beating The Competition: From War Room to Board Room*, Global Associates Ltd, in www.oss.net/dynamaster/file_archive/040320/c667344105e2a2b6c7e0a5, accessed at 12 june 2010; Silviu Nate, *Trends in National Security Management*, Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu, in <http://www.studiidesecuritate.ro/pdf/metodo.pdf>, accessed at 12 june 2010.

organization of the social and economic life; a feeble civil spirit and inconsistent civil solidarity; poorly protected, underdeveloped infrastructure; an inadequate, underfinanced, inefficient health insurance system; an education system that is mismanaged, poorly funded and unable to answer the requirements of society; a crises management system improperly organised, dependent on insufficient resources; a poor involvement of the civil society in the debate and in solving security issues⁹¹⁹. A brief review of these vulnerabilities proved that the list may have been a lot more comprehensive. The long-term demographic decline of the Romanian society may become vulnerability. The tensions among different Romanian social groups cannot be ignored, either.

The degree of vulnerability of different political, economic, military and any other systems is directly related to the insecurity of these different systems and structures and influences the security risks. In the classical security studies vulnerability was usually connected to the capacity of states to supplement their military potential⁹²⁰. The risk of a classical armed conflict has declined constantly and vulnerabilities of this type no longer concern primarily those who monitor a climate of insecurity and instability in one area or another⁹²¹. They monitor closely vulnerabilities from the energy system, from banking and even from the public health system. From this perspective, we believe that it is absolutely necessary to draw a “map” at national level where each and every vulnerability is associated to a threat that might exploit it. A calculus of probability may prove significant in the identification of the degree where each vulnerability could turn into a real threat. This could allow experts to set evaluation standards of the vulnerabilities of a possible target:

⁹¹⁹ Romania’s National Security Strategy, Bucharest, 2007, *passim*.

⁹²⁰ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, pp. 201-216; Ionel Nicu Sava, *cit. work*, pp. 162-188.

⁹²¹ John Hollywood, Diane Snyder, Kenneth McKay, John Boon, *cit. work*, p. 23.

- Very high – a possible target is perceived as very attractive for a possible aggressor and the counter measures and ability to fight back are inadequate;
- high/moderate appeal – the possible aggressor is convinced that it will prevail; the counter measures have a low degree of reacting to the current type of threat;
- moderate/low activity – adequate counter measures, but insufficient power/resources;
- Low – a profile which does not encourage the action of possible aggressors; counter measures responsive to the type of threat and sufficient available resources/power.

These levels could be represented according to the table below:



Such a hierarchy of the vulnerability degree for one society or another is not enough. A vulnerability of the human collectivities is given by the sum of weaknesses that characterize different aspects of the material and spiritual life. A society can be less vulnerable to military threats and totally vulnerable from the economic perspective. Most relevant seems the case of the Soviet Union. The communist regime imploded when it faced the challenges of world supremacy, raised by its main opponent, the USA, although there were no great differences in the size of the military arsenals of the two superpowers. The perception errors in such cases may be as fatal for either of the stakeholders from the contemporary international environment.

Risks evaluation The analysis of a player's ability to act/react in order to eliminate a threat it has detected in a geopolitical field is

tightly related to the risks it may encounter. Risk is a main concept of security analyzes and studies. Like several other concepts, risk has acquired numerous interpretations and definitions depending on the scientific branch and the domain it was used for⁹²². The risk concept was introduced for the first time at the end of the XVIIth and the beginning of the XVIIIth century when research developed in the field of probability in mathematical statistics. It was used again in the economic theories in the middle of the XXth century. Its circulation expanded afterwards in other domains, from technology to the individual and the human society.

For the contemporary society, sociologist Ulrich Beck revived the issue of risk in his work *Risikogesellschaft*, published in the 1990s. The German scientist tried to convince that the contemporary industrial society produced not only the goods necessary for high comfort but also the accompanying risks⁹²³, unlike the society specific of the second wave. From this point of view, risk was not only an issue of scientific research, but also a condition to ensure the good functioning of society. The modern man must get used today to the idea that he must constantly find a balance between the existing risks of the modern society and the measures to keep him safe from them⁹²⁴.

The notion of risk is a key concept in understanding the nature of the contemporary society and in building the security politics and

⁹²² Paul Allard, *Éléments pour une problématique de l'histoire du risque. Du risque accepté au risque maîtrisé. Représentations et gestion du risque d'inondation en Camargue, XVIIIe-XIXe siècles. Mémoire pour l'Habilitation à la direction de recherches*, Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle, 2001, p. 23, in "Nouvelles approches en histoire économique", [En ligne], mis en ligne le 28 juin 2005, <http://rh19.revues.org/document341.html>. Consulté le 30 décembre 2006

⁹²³ See, U. Beck, *Risikogesellschaft. Auf dem Weg in eine andere Moderne*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt /Main, 1986; Ionel Nicu Sava, *cit. work*, p. 283; Nicolae Perpelea, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁹²⁴ Eric de la Maisonneuve, *Pour un concept de securite*, in *Agir*, no. 10, 2002, downloaded from, <http://www.societe-de-strategie.asso.fr/agir.php?id=10#sommaire>, Dernière mise à jour: 18 décembre 2006; Webmaster: Vincent Bernier, 1998-2006, Société de Stratégie.

strategies. What is risk and in how many ways can it affect our life, our property, our confidence, our identity, our freedom, our peace etc.? The term was defined in different ways according to the scientific branch that used it. Today studies about the environment, business, health, and any kind of insurances apply it frequently. There is no domain of analysis that does not approach risk⁹²⁵.

Risk is defined in general terms as the probability that an event may happen with unwanted consequences⁹²⁶. Merkhofer believed that it was not important if only the „bad” consequences when we define risk had been appraised, because it was seen as „*a sum of results deriving from evolutions which are not necessarily wrong*”⁹²⁷. Ulrich Beck defined risk as „*a situation which may appear when people do not know what to do*”⁹²⁸. *The professor and analyst Mary Douglas defines risk as „the probability for an event to take place, combined to the extent of its loss and gains”*⁹²⁹.

In geopolitics, regardless of the field where it is involved – from geo-economics to geo-culture and geo-information – when risk is defined, it must be associated to decision-making and to the degree of certitude/probability in case a decision may be implemented. From a formal point of view, risk covers the possibility that the result of a decision coincides to the anticipated value. The chance that the result of the decision may be more favorable than the anticipated value defines the *upside* potential. The possibility that the decision results are unfavorable in relation to the anticipated value, define risk as

⁹²⁵ P.L. Bernstein, *Against the Gods: The Remarkable story of Risk*, John Wiley: New York, 1996, p. 23.

⁹²⁶ Eric de la Maisonneuve, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁹²⁷ M.W. Merkhofer, *Decisions Science and Social Risk*, M.D. Reidel Publishing Company: Dordecht, p. 2.

⁹²⁸ Ulrich Beck, *cit.*, pp. 96-97; apud Marie-Claude Smouts, *Risque global et politique mondiale, Notes de lecture, Ulrich Beck, La société du risque. Sur la voie d'une autre modernité*, Paris, Aubier, 2001 in http://www.developpement.durable.sciences-po.fr/publications/cahier4_Smouts.pdf, accessed at 12 june 2010.

downside. The *upside* potential and the *downside* risk are relevant only for situations of speculative risks. A genuine risk has an exclusive *downside* feature with no *upside potential*. Decision-makers that prefer risk are tempted by the *upside* potential. It seems that risk-oriented decision-makers are only a few. Most decision-making responsible are especially worried about the *downside risk*⁹³⁰. Under these circumstances, most political decision-makers search for very good expertise. Thus, it is very important to know the social decision-makers' perceptions of the relation between the chances to fulfill a decision and the probability to fail.⁹³¹ From this point of view, we believe that in security analysis risk *can be the result of a relation between the force of a threat exploiting a weak point and the target's ability to react, multiplied by the impact produced by the possible consequences*. Knowing the degree of risk in which the contemporary man lives and acts has become a condition of modernity. The information about the dangers, weaknesses, and threats that exist in a society may become manners of behavior of an individual or of a group, once they are aware of them.⁹³²

Absolute security does not exist. Today nothing and nobody can guarantee 100 percent protection against any type of threat to any citizen or to any society at any given moment⁹³³. Yet people need security and are continually searching for solutions to find it. Solutions cannot be viable unless they were adopted starting from an adequate knowledge of the security environment. One of these

⁹²⁹ M. Douglas, *Risk and Blame: Essays in Cultural Theory*, Routledge: London, 1992, p. 40.

⁹³⁰ See Daniel Kahneman, Amos Tversky, *Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk*, *Econometrica*, Vol. 47, no. 2, March 1979, pp. 263-292.

⁹³¹ See Paul Slovic, Elke U. Weber, *Perception of Risk Posed by Extreme Events*, Palisades, New York, April 12-13, 2002, downloaded from http://www.ldeo.columbia.edu/chrr/documents/meetings/roundtable/white_papers/slovic_wp.pdf; G. Royal Society Study, Ed. *Risk: Analysis, Perception, and Management*, London: The Royal Society, pp. 89-134.

⁹³² Nicolae Perpelea, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁹³³ Eric de la Maisonneuve, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

solutions is the analysis and the management of the risks that a citizen and the society, as a whole, must „live with”⁹³⁴.

Today, it is common knowledge that the modern society needs more risk management in order to approach the incertitude at strategic level, in order to gain from any opportunity and to inform and to involve those responsible and interested in improving the decision-making process. At present, risk management can be seen as an issue of wide interest in any organization. Related to some other organizational initiatives, it will lead to the improvement of the decision making process and will ensure a transfer to the management based on results. An efficient manner of managing risk reduces losses and negative consequences and identifies those opportunities that secure an optimum security environment.

Some experts from the risk analysis area⁹³⁵ considered risk management a process of measuring or evaluating risk, which was the basis for strategies in different domains of society or institutions, including those that managed internal/external security. In the vision of the American Department of Defense risk management was defined as *a process of identification, evaluation and risk control which results from the action of the operating factors and decision making that lead to an equilibrium of risk costs and benefits of the mission*⁹³⁶. The strategies used in this case were extremely different in terms of the method and the means used, from the activity of transfer of the identified risk to another entity (person, organization, organization specialized in fighting it) to those that pre-empted risk and reduced its negative effects to a point that included the acceptance of some or all consequences of a risk that could not be avoided. The decision of the USA to start the war against global

⁹³⁴ See col. Iulian Bujoreanu, *Considerations on the risk evaluation in the Romanian management system of defense resources* PhD thesis, Technical Military Academy, Bucharest, 2006, online, http://www.mta.ro/doctorat/rezumat_tea_bujoreanu_iulian.pdf, accessed at 12 December 2011.

⁹³⁵ *Ibidem.*

⁹³⁶ *Ibidem.*

terrorism meant that the Bush Jr. administration expected actions/reactions from the terrorist organizations. The events of Iraq and Afghanistan seem to have confirmed all these assumptions.

Traditionally, risk management focuses on risk analysis derived from physical, judicial, financial causes (for example natural disasters, fires, accidents, lawsuits, investments in different commercial or production activities etc.). From this point of view, it was a priority process, considering first the risks with the highest degree of loss and the highest probability of occurrence. Lower risks and losses would be evaluated later. In practice, the process can be extremely difficult with a high degree of error when it is tested to balance risk priorities with a higher or lower probability of happening and a major loss that no actor could take.

Risk is analyzed differently, according to the domain that uses it⁹³⁷. Some experts consider that analyzes involve an activity in five steps: establishment of the context, identification of risks, risk analysis, risk evaluation and risk management⁹³⁸. The next perspective accepted all five stages but the content of each of them was different: identification and analysis of risks (frequency, austerity, costs, probability to take place); analysis of weaknesses (prevention and protection, organization, ability to recover after a threat, social factors); constitution of a „referential” with the resources that should be earmarked in order to manage an attack; evaluation of the degree of financial insurances coverage, in case of attacks to the national security (attacks on the Twin Towers revealed such „weaknesses”); establishing a pattern of priorities for the action plan, in case of massive attack along the entire chain of the energy industry – production, distribution, consumption. Others consider that only four stages must be covered: identification of threats, estimation of the conditions and degrees of the threats; identification

⁹³⁷ United States General Accounting Office, Accounting and Information Management Division, *Information Security Risk Assessment*, August 1999, online <http://www.gao.gov/special.pubs/ai99139.pdf>, accessed at 23 may 2011.

⁹³⁸ Col. Iulian Bujoreanu, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

of the ability and the way to eliminate the threats, possible loss and consequences; cost estimation for eliminating the threats⁹³⁹.

In the geopolitical reality, a classical stakeholder or a non-classical player must have a coherent perception of the risks in a certain geographical area of interest. These analyzes and reviews have become common for the strategic actors in different geopolitical areas. For the Balkans region, these analyzes have been carried out in time by institutions or experts commissioned by the state. The European Commission, through FRONTEX published the Western Balkans Annual Risk Analysis 2010⁹⁴⁰, and Victoria A. Greenfield and Frank Camm wrote a study about the same area of interest, for the United States Army⁹⁴¹, entitled „*Risk Management and Performance in the Balkans*”. The literature and the studies for areas where geopolitical rivalries end up in disputes or agreements for the control of the oil, natural gas, food and water resources were more comprehensive. Most revealing is the case of central Asia. For more than a decade people thought that this area contained huge energy resources. Geography has identified states from central Asia and southern Caucasus with a historical trade venue ruled by competition and even conflict sometimes. Traditionally, foreign powers regarded the whole region as a “gateway” to other parts of the world. Quite recently, soon after the former Soviet republics won their independence more than a decade ago, the potential of the region in energy production stirred new and additional interests. Today it is even more obvious that the foreign competition for

⁹³⁹ United States General Accounting Office, Accounting and Information Management Division, in *cit. city*.

⁹⁴⁰ *Western Balkans Annual Risk Analysis 2010*, downloaded from http://www.frontex.europa.eu/situation_at_the_external_border/art19.html, 20 December 2011.

⁹⁴¹ Victoria A. Greenfield, Frank Camm, *Risk Management and Performance in the Balkans* Published 2005 by the RAND Corporation, downloaded from, <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA439061>, 20 December 2011.

energy is just a part of a flippant balance of short and long-term complex economic and strategic goals. Some interested parties developed a balance further complicated by central Asia's crucial importance against the backdrop of the multinational answer provided by the terrorist attacks against the US on 11th of September 2001⁹⁴².

The diversity and the complex approach of numerous studies and risk analyzes is fully understandable. The types of risk exposures that a stakeholder faces are varied and they differ from one stakeholder to another. Such exposures could include the failure of business, the risk of planned financial losses, and the risk of a stability failure and so on. It is advisable to understand and to identify the risks as early as possible in order to implement the right strategy, to contain certain risks or to transfer them and to downgrade any negative consequence they may hide⁹⁴³.

As a concept, risk management has developed in different ways together with the special scientific branches relying on limited operational concepts and methods used (e.g., engineers who study nuclear power plant safety or financial planners who employ risk management in very sophisticated, specialized ways, but use different terminologies and frameworks for implementation not easily translated from one discipline to another). Managing risk has always been inherent to any type of activity. However, now more than ever, the need for a coordinated and systematic approach to the management of the stakeholders' risk behavior has emerged, considering recent events of local and global importance.

⁹⁴² Olga Olikier, *Conflict in Central Asia and South Caucasus: Implications of Foreign Interests and Involvement* downloaded from, http://130.154.3.8/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1598/MR1598.ch7.pdf, 20 December 2011.

⁹⁴³ See more, Shou Qing Wang, Mohammed Fadhil Dulaimi Muhammad Yousuf Aguria, *Risk management framework for construction projects in developing countries*, in "Construction Management and Economics" (March 2004) 22, pp. 237-252, downloaded from <http://sites.sjzu.edu.cn/xuyouquan/jxzy/3.pdf>, 19 December 2011.

Some specialists concluded that⁹⁴⁴ risk should be identified and mitigated according to a very clear set of strategic priorities. The overall goal of risk management is to downsize and ultimately to eliminate any risks wherever possible while preparing proper answers for those areas where risks may not be reduced.

For an actor that intends to get involved in a certain area, risk analysis and risk management are important chapters in the foreign policy of any statesman/government or leadership of a non-state player. Risk management means a systematic process of assessing and then dealing with risk. This is described in more detail in the following diagram. The process reviews the context, followed by the identification, the analysis, the evaluation, and the approach of risks⁹⁴⁵.

Risk management implies six steps on two levels of analysis, which are finally integrated in the decision pattern that an actor has attached to its presence or absence in that geopolitical area.

The first level means that the geopolitical region is regarded as an assembly with no particular focus on an actor. In the geopolitical studies, regions are defined according to the political interests and power relations where the geographical criterion was not relevant such as the Middle East/the great Middle East; the Balkans/the Global Balkans and so on. The first step starts with the review of the states from the area (historic, continuous and discontinuous, economic, socio-cultural and political features, mentalities, relevant for identifying both threats and vulnerabilities), the values and the interests of players present in the area. The second step identifies the threats specific of the area that might exploit a certain vulnera-

⁹⁴⁴ *Integrated Risk Management Framework*, Queensland Government, Department of Infrastructure and Planning, downloaded from, <http://www.dlqp.qld.gov.au/resources/policy/integrated-risk-management-framework-strategy.pdf>, 19 December 2011.

⁹⁴⁵ Todd Masse, Siobhan O'Neil, John Rollins, *The Department of Homeland Security's Risk Assessment Methodology: Evolution, Issues, and Options for Congress*, in "Congressional Research Service", downloaded from, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/homesecc/RL33858.pdf>, 19 December 2011.

bility⁹⁴⁶. This analysis process may be expressed graphically in the following pattern:

(A) The second level implies a risk management process in three steps. The first step identifies the risks. The perceived risk can be identified by a more or less productive formula. We do not share such views because we think that the human action in any domain cannot be computed and projected into the future with mathematical accuracy. Too many unknown variables interfere with the analysts work. Nevertheless it is important at least to try. The results of such calculations should be considered with the required apprehension! Any formula existing in the specific literature measures the intensity with which a threat exploits a vulnerability related to the capacity of a stakeholder to act within the equation threat-vulnerability. It identifies the place, the time, the reason and the way events may thwart, downgrade, delay or intensify the achievement of certain objectives. A comprehensive identification of all potential risks is essential in order to analyze and assess them properly for an adequate control of the remaining steps in the assessment process. Risks identification must be accompanied by the identification of the causes of each of them. It is quite possible that a risk may have more than one potential cause, which must require different verifications in their turn⁹⁴⁷. A note should be made that there is no single risk in a geopolitical zone. Threat A can exploit a vulnerability from the economic domain (the nuclear energy industry, lack of activity on the capital market, doubtful management qualities). Consequently, a number of risks specific of the structure and the infrastructure of that particular economy (financial-banking risk, industrial risk, market risk etc.) will emerge. The same threat can have different intensity in the socio-political field and from here another range of specific risks appear.

⁹⁴⁶ Laura Elly Novac, Petre Brezeanu, *Modern methods of risk identification in risk management*, downloaded from, <http://www.managementmarketing.ro/pdf/articole/27.pdf>, 21 december 2011.

⁹⁴⁷ *Integrated Risk Management Framework*, in *cit. city*.

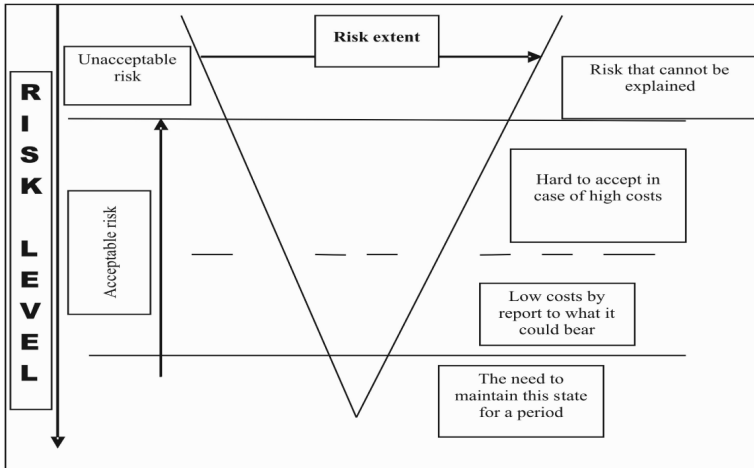
The second step is risk analysis for each domain recording risks (economy, society, politics, culture, faith, mentality etc.) and a risk pattern on five levels and categories

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
A (almost certain)	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
B (likely)	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
C (moderate)	Low	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
D (unlikely)	Low	Low	Medium	High	Extreme
E (rare)	Low	Low	Medium	High	High

Risks analysis in a geopolitical field and a pattern of losses, opportunities and gains related to an actor's interests imply certain behaviors as shown below:

- (a) **Extreme.** Immediate executive action required.
- (b) **High.** Executive action required.
- (c) **Medium.** Management responsibilities must be specified.
- (d) **Low.** Manage using routine processes.

An actor's reaction in a particular domain can be assumed according to the nature and the intensity of its interests that spurred its presence in a particular geopolitical space. An intervention may occur if a major political interest such as the *stability* and the *security of X area* was involved. If the costs for intervention in the area are high, considering the reaction of the domestic and foreign public opinion, the damage to the relations with other actors of the area (major risks) the intervention may occur, even with tremendous costs, as was the case of Iraq in 2003. If the political interest is low and the risks are high, then the actor's presence in the area is less probable as was the case of the USA during the intervention of the coalition led by EU charged to oust the Libyan dictator from power in 2011. The following table may explain the calculus of probability needed to decide whether to assume or to reject risks in a geopolitical field: (B)



The third step is an integrated process of analysis that *concludes certain plans of action and monitoring* and may differ from one actor to another according to its resources, reaction ability or interests.

This stage ends the implementation of control solutions and provides a periodical feedback in order to identify new risks. The method of identifying the profiles of risks yields a complex, interdisciplinary, strategic and systemic approach. The system generates a transparent, comparable and consistent evaluation of risks in the entire geopolitical region. The overview of risks addresses different risk priorities that most actors in the area face. The process must be adapted to each actor's interests as the existing differences produce different profiles. The prioritizing process allows focusing limited resources on key risks, which can distort an actor's objectives and scope. Another advantage is the continuous concern for the identification and the integration of new risks in the system.

The method is a combination of tested and reliable techniques applied strategically in the management of non-state players that have a wider experience in this domain than many classical stakeholders, if we consider small and medium-sized states. The process

and the system analysis offer the advantage of an integrated vision that avoids mistakes in case certain risks considered minor by the global or regional powers are taken into account. We believe that the USA misinterpreted certain risks when they decided to take a military action against Saddam Hussein. A risk prevailed that soon after the dictator's execution the American soldier was no longer perceived as a friend but as an enemy. A large part of the local population who had really hated Saddam did not welcome the American troops and prolonged the armed resistance. That was one instance when the danger of ignoring risks of low priority was eliminated.

No matter how well a scenario may be conceived as an instrument of analysis and planning in the international politics, it obviously contains unforeseeable elements that reduce its predictability in the geopolitical analysis. The unpredictable danger is provided by factors that belong to hazard and natural and industrial catastrophes. It may also stem from *rare phenomena/rare events* in society and in the international politics. In order to probe the unseen face of strategic planning Torsten Wulf, Philip Meissner and Christian Brands introduced two instruments in the analysis, which they called „**360° Stakeholder Feedback**” and „**Impact/Uncertainty Grid**”.⁹⁴⁸ A thorough geopolitical analysis must match the specific strategic techniques, methods and tools of strategy to those of the scenario.

5.2. The role of scenarios in postmodern geopolitics

The political world has noticed that the end of great world conflicts never covered the projections and planning developed initially, all the more so, after the end of the great world wars when

⁹⁴⁸ Torsten Wulf, Philip Meissner and Christian Brands, *A Scenario-based approach to strategic planning*, in “Working paper”, no. 5/2011, Leipzig, August 10, 2011, p. 211.

power and interest rivalries became more acute and dramatic. The German army was thought the best ever⁹⁴⁹ during the two world wars considering the capacity of the high command to plan and to provide war plans following the training of its personnel and their equipment, yet it was defeated in both cases. At that time, the operation plans were processed after the classical method and disregarded possible risks. Such an approach was soon implemented in marketing after the end of the second World War. In the early 1970s, after the first oil shock, *Shell International Company* noticed that the classical analysis method of unpredictable evolutions on the energy market did not match the circumstances generated by the oil crisis⁹⁵⁰. The company looked for solutions and the revolutionary idea came from the use of strategic studies „of war” adapted to peace situations. A new manner of research and analysis was born: *the scenario*. It applied on a large scale to the research carried out since the beginning of the 1950s by the famous Herman Kahn from RAND Corporation. He started from the analysis and the comprehension of the role that an unforeseen factor played in planning a fight. He noticed that most of the times, the military strategy had to plan the *unforeseen*⁹⁵¹ during the progress of fighting. He founded later a scientific research institute under the slogan “*thinking the unthinkable*”⁹⁵².

His studies and method were successful and today not only the business environment but the scientific research as well use them in different domains. In an article published by the „San Francisco

⁹⁴⁹ Colin S. Gray, *War, peace and international relations. An introduction to strategic history*, Polirom Printing House, Iași, 2010, p. 22.

⁹⁵⁰ Tom Leney, Mike Coles, Philipp Grollman, Raivo Vilu, *Trousse d’outil pour la construction de scenarios*, Cedefop Dossier series; 10, Luxembourg, 2004, p. 11.

⁹⁵¹ Herman Kahn, *Thinking About the Unthinkable in the 1980’s*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1984, pp. 11, 55, 58.

⁹⁵² John S. Ratcliffe, *Scenario Building: A Suitable Method for Strategic Construction Industry Planning* downloaded from www.buildnet.co.za/cdcproc/docs/1st/ratcliffe_js.pdf, 20 December 2011.

Chronicle” at the beginning of September 2005, Eamon Kelly, analyzed the surprise of the American authorities in front of hurricane Katrina. He concluded that a global power such as the USA must learn that the formula “*think the unthinkable*” applied not only to the field of economics or defense but also to security.⁹⁵³ Scenario scripting has become an increasingly important strategic planning tool as more corporations, organizations, and government agencies started to use scenarios.

A growing complexity of the international life will rise the degree of uncertainty for stakeholders that operate in the international environment. From this point of view, the concern to find solutions and reduce the incertitude area has developed in all domains, including geopolitics and geostrategy.

Scenarios, like similar tools, may broaden the way of highlighting the success chances of a stakeholder engaged in a geopolitical rivalry from a virtual/geographical space. They can also provide a creative venue in solving a situation that seemed a dead end previously. The scenario can be a way to educate and train, at the same time. It helps us to act using intuition and imagination.

The question ‘what is a scenario’ has received numerous answers, according to the specialization and the field of research one author or another has developed in his/her activities. Two of the most renowned experts, Paul K. Davis and James P. Kahan stated that „*there are many ways of defining and using scenarios*”.⁹⁵⁴ They defined scenario „*as a logical and consistent picture of the future. It can represent an extrapolation from the present based upon trend analysis or a discontinuity from the present and anticipated trends.*”⁹⁵⁵

⁹⁵³ Eamon Kelly, *US Must Learn to Think the Unthinkable. Storm Damage Shouldn't Have Been a Surprise*, in <http://www.gbn.com/ArticleDisplayServlet.srv?aid=32142>, accessed at 20 December 2011.

⁹⁵⁴ Paul K. Davis, James P. Kahan, *Theory and methods for supporting high level military decision making*, Prepared for the United States Air Force, Published 2007 by the RAND Corporation, p. 36.

⁹⁵⁵ *Ibidem*.

Other experts viewed a scenario as „*a story about what a projection of human action should be*”⁹⁵⁶. Others regarded it as „*a tool that helps us becomes more effective in the future actions*”⁹⁵⁷. Michael Priestley from IBM Toronto Lab defined the Scenario as a means to reach results⁹⁵⁸. The well-known analyst and projections expert, Peter Schwartz concluded that scenarios “*are powerful vehicles for challenging our mental models about the world*”. They can equally be tools that help to get a better understanding of the world in the nearer or distant future⁹⁵⁹. This was one way, stated the well-known expert, that “*our distrust in the multiple forms of the future is suspended by allowing us think that any of them can be done*”⁹⁶⁰.

In his work *Competitive Advantage*, M. Porter defined scenario as „*a coherent representation of what may become in the future*”⁹⁶¹. Professor David Stout, from the British Centre Foresight concluded unequivocally that the scenario was an imagined future and not at all was it a projection⁹⁶². One of the pioneers who supported the use of scenarios in the decision-making system, Arie P. de Geus wrote in „*The Harvard Business Review*” that scenarios „*are*

⁹⁵⁶ Eva Wollenburg, David Edmunds, Louise Buck, *Anticipating Change: Scenarios as Tool for Adaptive Forest Management. A Guide* Center for International for Forestry Research, Bogor, Indonesia, 2000, p. 2.

⁹⁵⁷ Diana Scearce, Katherine Fulton, *Wat If? The Art of Scenarios*, Global Business Network, 2004, p. 11.

⁹⁵⁸ Michael Priestley, *Scenario-Based and Model-Driven Information*, in xml.coverpages.org/PriestleyACMSIGDOC-2003-DITA.pdf.

⁹⁵⁹ Apud Ivan Klinec, *Strategic Thinking in the Information Age and the Art of Scenario Designing*, Conference at The First Prague Workshop On Futures Studies Methodology CESES, Charles University, Prague September 16-18, 2004.

⁹⁶⁰ Apud Dragoş Paul Aligică, Marian Zulean, *Strategic decisions in incertitude circumstances*, in vol. Luciana Alexandra Ghica, Marian Zulean, *cit.*, p.138.

⁹⁶¹ Apud Tom Leney, Mike Coles, Philipp Grollman, Raivo Vilu, *cit. work*, p. 21.

⁹⁶² David Stout, The use of Scenarios in Foresight, download from http://www.foresight.gov.uk/Previous_Rounds/Foresight_1994_1999/General_Publications/The%20Use%20Of%20Scenarios%20In%20Foresight/.

rather products of art than scientific analyzes”⁹⁶³ but extremely useful for those who acted in a highly uncertain environment. A scenario can be understood as “...*the generic name for different approaches such as the SRI’s (formerly the Stanford Research Institute) strategic planning scenarios, Godet’s scenario method and Battelle’s scenario technique. In theory, scenarios are a synthesis of different paths (events and actors’ strategies) that lead to possible futures. In practice, scenarios often merely describe particular sets of events or variables*”⁹⁶⁴.

These definitions, like some other unquoted ones, have something in common – the need to evaluate the chances to win/lose, the risks that a stakeholder has to face for its actions. The projection is the operation that outlines a future event and the probability that it might actually “come true”. To foresee means to decide whatever is going to happen while people still cannot control at the time of the decision-making⁹⁶⁵.

A scenario is not a simple activity of projection or planning some particular activity because it does not provide only one picture to show the future. It challenges the researcher to “look into” several types of future and to opt for only one of the possibilities that might suffer alterations in their turn if the situation arises⁹⁶⁶. Each of these developments into the „future” can request a certain strategy, means and resources. The military analysts P.H. Liotta and Timothy E

⁹⁶³ Arie P. de Geus, *Planning as Learning*, in „Harvard Business Review”, March-April, 1988; apud Diana Searce, Katherine Fulton, *cit. work*, p. 38.

⁹⁶⁴ F. Roubelat, *The prospective approach: contingent and necessary evolution*, in “Future Studies”, Vol. 4,200, p. 4, *Approaches for strategic foresight*, Int. J. Technology Intelligence and Planning, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2005, downloaded from <http://www.lampsacus.com/documents/StrategicForesight.pdf>, 12 December, 2010.

⁹⁶⁵ Constantin Opran (ed.), *Project Management*, Comunicare.ro Printing House, p. 27.

⁹⁶⁶ Sellamna Nour, *Scenarios and Strategies – Key Concepts*, download from <http://www.icra-edu.org>.

Somes concluded that when we operated with scenarios, in fact we faced two types of realities. In their opinion, “*the scenario operates with two worlds: a world of deeds and a world of perceptions. We are exploring facts that will take place in the future and at a certain time these are only in our minds*”⁹⁶⁷.

The scenario is a useful instrument when⁹⁶⁸: the decision-makers face a wide range of opinions; there are not many foreseeable opportunities of attaining the initial objectives; there is no long and very long term policy/vision; a common „language” and an action consensus is needed sometimes; the organization is open to innovation and change; there are enough resources to fulfill the goals etc.

One of the best known scenario experts, Ged Davis, who worked for Shell International in the 1970s in the company of a man who was to become the father of scenarios, Pierre Wack, remarked that the scenario became a useful tool for the situation when the decision had to be made in a moment of high incertitude⁹⁶⁹. The famous scholar pointed out that this practice did not convince everybody yet, and it was not the case to consider it a method with a high degree of generalization. Organizations belonging to a long list still reject this working tool because „it does not work in our case”⁹⁷⁰.

There are experts who argue that there is a difference between *scenario building* and *scenario planning*⁹⁷¹. The first case is a matter of “speculations related to the incertitude about the future”⁹⁷².

⁹⁶⁷ P.H. Liotta și Thimoty E. Somes, *The Art of Reperceiving Scenarios and the Future*, in Naval War College Review, Autumn 2003, Vol. LVI, No. 4.

⁹⁶⁸ *Ibidem*; Diana Scarce, Katherine Fulton, *cit. work*, p. 23.

⁹⁶⁹ Pierre Wack, *Scenarios Thinking: Concepts and Approaches*, Global Business Network, Emmeryville, 1996, p. 94.

⁹⁷⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁷¹ Dana Mietzner, Guido Reger, *Scenario Approaches – History, Differences, Advantages and Disadvantages*, EU-US seminar: new technology foresight, forecasting & assessment methods-Seville 13-14 May 2004, downloaded from <http://www.jrc.es/projects/fta/papers/Session%201%20Methodological%20Selection/Scario%20Approaches.pdf>, 15 November 2010.

⁹⁷² *Ibidem*.

Scenario planning means to train the managers to “operate” with the “incertitude” in the decision-making act⁹⁷³. From this point of view, John S. Ratcliffe stated that a good scenario might let people “see” several “faces” of the future, perceive the discontinuous lines in the evolutions of the present. It might have also thought and accustomed people to “work” with incertitude⁹⁷⁴. When referring to the difference between the two types of scenarios, the same author concluded that „*Scenario building is an instrument that aids decision-makers by providing a context for planning and programming, lowering the level of uncertainty and raising the level of knowledge in relation to the consequences of actions which have been taken, or are going to be taken, in the present*”⁹⁷⁵. It is important to accept that scenarios are not just simulations of various combinations of present realities; they are also experiments in thinking about how an organization will operate under a variety of future possibilities. Scenarios must identify and represent the entire complexity of the world and broaden the power of understanding in decision-making. It is not always out of the question that very simple scenarios may lead to the change, distortion, guidance of decision-makers to new possibilities. Nevertheless, it has been argued that scenario building can be considered: an objective method, as it is mainly based on data and information; a multiple method, since it uses and relies on subjective methods (such as the Delphi techniques) at various stages; a systematic method, because inter-relationships between areas and trends are highlighted in many cases; and a synoptically as well as a simultaneous method, since a variety of variables are analyzed at the same time⁹⁷⁶.

⁹⁷³ *Ibidem.*

⁹⁷⁴ John S. Ratcliffe, *Scenario Planning: An Evaluation of Practice*, School of Construction & Property Management, University of Salford, October 2002, p. 4.

⁹⁷⁵ Idem, *Scenario Building: a Suitable Method for Strategic Property Planning?* Dublin Institute of Technology, downloaded from, <http://arrow.dit.ie/futuresacart/> 13, 15 November 2010.

⁹⁷⁶ *Ibidem.*

According to David A.J. Axson, the usage of scenarios is a way to understand the forces that influence the progress of the world today. They will shape the future in demography, globalization, technological change and environmental sustainability. In the past, scenarios were used in the world of strategic planning, but nowadays many organizations from the most diverse domains, from economics to the social cultural one, implement planning techniques specific of scenarios in the area of operations, budget setting or the production of projections for the evaluation processes of their efficiency⁹⁷⁷.

A good scenario will always challenge and surprise those who have commissioned it. A modest/mediocre scenario meets expectations; it strengthens well-known conceptions and ideas, enduring misconceptions and stereotypes of the human activity, in any domain.

Considering the fact that scenarios proved useful and effective in different fields in recent years, they might be proficient tools for better understanding the evolutions of geopolitical rivalries either for the control of vital resources or for reshaping the international architecture at a certain stage. Scenarios are very important both for politicians who must make quick decisions in a more dynamic world and for those who work in this domain and are involved in providing expertise about such problems. In emergencies, the leaders' action will be taken confronting incertitude and not avoiding or ignoring the area of the unknown⁹⁷⁸. Scenarios are not recommendations for the political decision-makers who work out the foreign policy of a state/non state player and the geopolitical strategies pursued by such players. Similarly, they cannot be guidelines for the managing boards/managers of large trading, financial companies or for other players from the non-state environment involved in the international

⁹⁷⁷ David A. J. Axson, *Scenario Planning: Navigating Through Today's Uncertain World*, in "Journal of Accountancy", March 2011, downloaded from <http://www.journalofaccountancy.com/Issues/2011/Mar/20103483.htm>, 15 November 2010.

⁹⁷⁸ Tom Leney, Mike Coles, Philipp Grollman, Raivo Vilu, *cit. work*, p. 12.

politics at a regional or global level⁹⁷⁹. Scenarios are tools of knowledge. They help those who request such tools, and provide a better understanding of developments from the energy industry and of the challenges that they may be constrained to face. The scenario building activity in geopolitical rivalries does not differ from the production of scenarios for the military policy of a certain state. This exercise could fall into what specialists call the practical activity although this is an intellectual process based on a very deep knowledge of reality, on the methods and analysis tools proper to the selected domain of research, on a superior synergy within the working group, they may easily lead to *brainstorming*.

Several stages must be covered in the production of a scenario, irrespective of the domain it has been designed for. The stages number may differ from one author to another. Sellamna Nour identified six stages⁹⁸⁰: problem definition; priorities setting concerning the moving forces; a review of possible evolution trends; lay out/outlining the scenario; content conclusion; identification of the main evolution guidelines.

John S. Radcliffe, a specialist in the production of scenarios at the Dublin Technology Institute, stated that a good scenario was achieved if at least seven stages⁹⁸¹ were covered: identification and analysis of the theme; appreciation of the key decision factor; identification of moving forces; hierarchy; alternative projections of solutions; scenario development; scenario interpretation.

John S. Ratcliffe concluded that following and covering these stages did not automatically lead to a successful scenario. He also highlighted the rigorous selection of specialists who must be integrated in the working group whenever their expertise was

⁹⁷⁹ Interlaboratory Working Group on Energy Efficient and Clean Energy Technologies, *Scenarios for a Clean Energy Future*, US Department of Energy, November 2000, online, http://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy01_osti/29379.pdf, accessed at 15 November 2010.

⁹⁸⁰ Sellamna Nour, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁹⁸¹ John S. Ratcliffe, *cit. work*, p. 1.

needed. A diversity of opinions was compulsory and it was advisable that the final drafting of the scenario should not be left in the charge of only one person, or a smaller team.

In the process of a good scenario production professor David Stout believed that seven stages⁹⁸² should be covered: revision of the described situation; identification of economic, social, political and technological trends which could influence the scenario expectations; identification of the fundamental idea – the *Big Idea* for the working group; scenario building; revision of evolution trends in case of new threats or risks; selection of the action variant; evaluation. In David Stout's vision, scenarios were excellent working tools only when they offered a range of solutions which „revolve around the force which determines change in an action field”⁹⁸³.

One question to which scholars in the scenario practice and theory have not provided an accurate and unanimous answer is the one connected to the time its production takes and the necessary duration to make them actual working tools for decision-makers. Most experts believe that a scenario must stretch its analysis over a period of at least 10 years⁹⁸⁴. Other opinions envisage periods of time placed between five to fifty years⁹⁸⁵. Nebojsa Nakicenovic claimed that a good scenario in the energy industry must cover a period of at least a hundred years and sometimes even more. This might allow the analyst to operate with “pictures” of the relationship energy-sustainable development, difficult to accept nowadays⁹⁸⁶. The most appropriate period of building a good scenario is hard to define but those who recommended five or ten years were the closest to the reality of our times⁹⁸⁷. A century ago, things developed quite slowly in all domains. The speed they follow today in all domains, from

⁹⁸² David Stout, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁹⁸³ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁸⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁸⁵ Sellamna Nour, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

⁹⁸⁶ Nebojsa Nakinovicec, *cit. work* p. 335.

⁹⁸⁷ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 315.

fundamental knowledge to human praxis, would have been unconceivable a hundred or even fifty years ago. This very challenge to produce a scenario for the next one hundred years, attempting to make it a knowledge tool implies the acceptance of a large dose of hazard. Maybe this is the whole charm of the exercise⁹⁸⁸.

As for the time needed to produce a scenario, things are not clear.⁹⁸⁹ It is a generally accepted fact that a well-trained team does not need less than a few months and not more than a year to produce a good scenario⁹⁹⁰ from the moment of its assignment until the document presentation.

This brief introduction to the theory and practice of scenarios proves that scenarios take a wide and differentiated range of aspects. The aims that they pursue are very diverse, too, and a classification of scenarios is hard to attain⁹⁹¹. One of the well-known specialists in the scenario theory, I. J. Schoneboom divided scenarios in two categories: projective and prospective⁹⁹². We do not intend to analyze scenarios from this approach. A complete classification requires the identification of all possible criteria/references. The German analyst K. Steinmüller identified four criteria for scenario classification⁹⁹³. Scenarios could be sectoral/multisectoral depending on the extension of the activity/domain that a stakeholder was involved in the environment where it was compelled to act. According to the aggregation degree, they could be classified as micro, mezzo and macro scenarios. K. Steinmüller identified one more criterion in the

⁹⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 316.

⁹⁸⁹ Diana Searce, Katherine Fulton, *cit. work*, p. 64.

⁹⁹⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁹¹ Kalev Sepp, Olavi Hiimäe, *Land Use and Land-use Scenario*, Estonian Agricultural University, 2004, p. 35.

⁹⁹² I.J. Shooneboom, *Overview and state of the art of scenario studies* in J. F. Th. Schoute et al. (eds.), *Scenario Studies for the Rural Environment*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1995, pp. 15-24.

⁹⁹³ K. Steinmüller, *Grundlagen und Methoden der Zukunftsforschung Szenarien*, Delphie, Technikvorschau, WerkstattBericht 21, Sekretariat für Zukunftsforschung, Gelsenkirchen, 1997, pp. 54-56.

direction of evolution. From this point of view, they were also projective or prospective. By the extent of exploitation, scenarios divided in domineering, limited and highly exploring.

Another two analysts who approached the scenarios issue – Fahey and Randell – considered that scenarios could be identified as global/Global Scenarios, industrial/Industry scenarios, technological/Technology scenarios⁹⁹⁴ etc. There are several scenario typologies available, such as those suggested by C. Ducot and G. J Lubben, N. E. Duncan and P. Wack, Godet and Roubelat (1996), Postma *et al.* (1995), and Heugens and Van Oosterhout (2001). Each of them revealed fundamental distinctions among several scenario types. Yet, as typologies epitomized a state of facts at a certain time, they became obsolete as each particular domain developed. One more thing stemmed from the fact that such classifications did not reflect a distinct progress in the development of the contemporary scenario. Gert Goeminne, Emilie Jempa and Kanko Mutombo⁹⁹⁵ classified scenarios by a formula useful for understanding the type and form of expression that could be productive in the geopolitical scenario building at local, regional or global levels.

According to Moya K. Mason⁹⁹⁶ two schools of thought shared the scenario planning. One suggested that the goal of scenario-based planning was to enable large organizations to respond swiftly in times of trouble. This could be called the risk-reduction school. The other, claimed that the goal of scenario-based planning was to set up a vision that not only one organization, but also an entire industry

⁹⁹⁴ Apud K. Steinmüller, *cit. work*, p. 55.

⁹⁹⁵ Goeminne, Emilie Jempa, Kanko Mutombo, *The Field of Scenarios: fuzziness as a chance for building appealing future visions*, Working paper for the CONSENTSUS project, downloaded from http://www.belspo.be/belspo/SSD/science/Reports/A3_Goeminne_Mutombo_The%20field%20of%20scenarios_WP2_CDO_ULB.pdf, 14 October 2010.

⁹⁹⁶ Moya K. Mason, *Future Scenarios: The Art of Storytelling* downloaded from <http://www.moyak.com/papers/scenarios-future-planning.html>, 14 October 2010.

could pursue the objective to be the best among all the competing visions. This could be called the revolutionary school. The Risk-Reduction School approached scenarios as tools that stimulated a creative debate and discovered weak trends. Scenarios should enable managers to respond more effectively to changes as the future unfolded, and help them to reduce their risk of running over the hurdles of change. The approach of the Revolutionary School classified scenarios as tools to help large organizations to reach the goal of completing a vision they believed was the best for the future. Scenarios were used to structure deliberations about choosing one vision from the alternatives for an organization and to identify the tasks that were required to achieve it.

The geopolitical scenarios have an integrated character of wide generality and are interdisciplinary⁹⁹⁷ because the evolutions in this area have an impact on the entire society. Unlike the political analyzes, scenarios do not focus research only on the developing evolutions in a geopolitical domain. They present medium and long-term variants of such confrontations/cooperations, connected to the access of other competitors in the area, to the political evolutions inside the states of the region and the structure of the economic and socio-cultural cooperation, mainly in terms of strategic alliances/partnerships⁹⁹⁸.

Those scenarios built for different types of rivalries (resources, markets, financial circuits⁹⁹⁹ etc.) and different interest regions may also assume persuasive functions if they are relayed and broadcast to the public opinion by the media. First, the public opinion may be made aware of the dangers/opportunities that might emerge if a hegemony leader is replaced/ousted in a certain geopolitical region.

⁹⁹⁷ Constantin Hlihor, *cit. work*, p. 314.

⁹⁹⁸ Joop de Vries (eds.), *Geopolitics: The next Wave*, in “The Challenge!”, Forum: www.chforum.org.

⁹⁹⁹ Benjamin J. Cohen, *Global Currency Rivalry: Can the Euro Ever Challenge the Dollar?*, in “Journal of Common Market Studies”, no. 42:4, 2003, (September), pp. 575-595.

A fact-finding scenario for the energy industry from an area of intense geopolitical rivalry or population growth may acquire significant persuasive and propaganda functions. We believe that analysts Diana Scarce and Katherine Fulton's assertions that proved a scenario would be mainly used in the education and training of the directors of different institutions and organizations in order to change their mentalities in operating with the future prospects, usually called „Mental Maps” by the two experts, were relevant mainly for geopolitical scenarios.¹⁰⁰⁰

In the specialized literature, different specific methods and ways built scenarios¹⁰⁰¹. A large number of experts concluded that there was no universal and unanimously accepted method. In his study published in 1999 in the review *Whole Earth Quarterly*, Art Kleiner wrote that scripting scenarios was both an art and a science at the same time¹⁰⁰². The production of these scenarios was not accessible to whoever attempted it, now matter how good a specialist he/she was. It required teamwork in an inter-disciplinary environment. The renowned researcher of the theory and the practice of scenarios Ged Davis, concluded that such a team may unite fifty to sixty people¹⁰⁰³ highly trained and experienced in international politics and diplomacy, economics, military strategy and theories, sociology and energy, social psychology, anthropology, mass-media experts etc. Building a geopolitical scenario cannot differ too much from the general means of building such a fact-finding construct.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Diana Scarce, Katherine Fulton, *cit. work*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁰¹ W.R. Huss, *A Move Toward scenario analysis*, in „International Journal of Forecasting”, no.4, 1988, pp. 377-388.

¹⁰⁰² David Lehrer, *Scenarios and the Scenario Management Tool*, online, http://systemsresearch.ac.at/projects/dead_sea/downloads/whatAreScenarios.pdf, accessed at 12 December 2011.

¹⁰⁰³ Peter Leyden, A GBN Conversation with Ged Davis, in http://66.249.93.104/search?q=cache:aF3bSJbtmNoJ:www.weforum.org/pdf/CSI/GBN_Davis_interview.pdf+building+geopolitics+scenarios&hl=ro, accessed at 12 December 2011.

Geopolitical scenarios may have a *prospective* character when the player that commissions this product was only interested in knowing the possible evolutions in certain interest areas or at global level. A very rich and diverse literature on the subject has been published lately and its review is currently a difficult task. According to the American analyst Michael T. Klare “*Devising a strategy to avoid major conflict should be a policy priority. The problem of the U.S.-China relationship is pivotal; they should seek to find and develop common interests*”¹⁰⁰⁴. *Both might collaborate to find petroleum alternatives and develop “a new industrial paradigm”*¹⁰⁰⁵. The problem of carbon sequestration from coal burning is urgent. Japan-China and India-EU are other collaborative partnerships. Such partnerships might “possibly create a new dynamic”¹⁰⁰⁶. “*Make no mistake: Rising powers /shrinking planet are a dangerous formula. Addressing the interlocking challenges of resource competition, energy shortages, and climate change will be among the most difficult problems facing the human community. If we continue to extract and consume the planet’s vital resources in same improvident fashion as in the past, we will, sooner rather than latter, transform the earth into a barely habitable scene of desolations*”¹⁰⁰⁷

The geopolitical scenario that concerns rivalries in concrete domains such as energy and mineral resources can be also *operational* if the player that required it was directly involved in their production, their transport or their distribution. All the more so when that player needed a scenario in case it intended to enter the competition on a different market or geopolitical arena.¹⁰⁰⁸ Louis Michel, former European Commissioner for Relations with the African, Caribbean and Pacific States, Development and Humani-

¹⁰⁰⁴ Michael T. Klare, *cit. work*, pp. 241-249.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 249-255.

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 259-261.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 269.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Joop de Vries (eds), *cit.*, *The use of Scenarios in Long Term Defence Planning 2002-11-11*, in “Plausible Futures Newsletter”, downloaded from <http://www.plausiblefutures.com/cparticle55074-6691.html>, 12 august 2011.

tarian Aid referred to Africa and underlined that „*At the dawn of the 21st century, the world is changing under the combined influence of the globalization of the economy and the “multi-polarization” of power. Nowhere is this truer than in Africa. Africa is evolving and changing more than many other regions of the world. Africa is once again being courted by all the global powers, with the United States and China leading the way. It is no longer regarded as a “burden”, but as an opportunity, a “new frontier”. This new multiple worlds pose a challenge to the Western world as a whole*¹⁰⁰⁹.

We believe that a distinction should be made between an operational scenario and a prognosis. These two words must not be mistaken under any circumstances. Unlike the scenario, a prognosis aims at the identification of possible evolution of processes and phenomena from countless domains of the analyzed human actions. Specialized institutes and think tanks devise such tools. They have operational features because they support the decisions from politics, economics and the social life, in general, as well as the international policy for any type of stakeholder¹⁰¹⁰.

In recent years, more and more states and international organizations produced scenarios on matters of a global interest. The most frequently quoted ones with an impact over the international politics were those on the energy industry and the mineral resources, more recently. According to Bram Buijs and Henrike Sievers, “*In recent times, tensions have been running high concerning possible scarcities of natural resources*”.¹⁰¹¹ The great consumers of energy

¹⁰⁰⁹ Louis Michel, “*Europe-Africa: the indispensable partnership*”, Speech at The London Schools of Economics, 17 January, 2008, downloaded from http://www2.lse.ac.uk/publicEvents/pdf/20080117_Michel.pdf, 12 august 2011.

¹⁰¹⁰ See Jr. Harry G. Summers, *The New World Strategy: A Military Policy for America's Future*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1995, p. 61.

¹⁰¹¹ Bram Buijs, Henrike Sievers, *Critical Thinking about Critical Minerals Assessing risks related to resource security*, downloaded from, http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2011/20111111_ciep_bgr_briefingpaper_buijs_sievers_critical_thinking_about_critical_minerals.pdf, See, also “Euractiv”, *Raw materials: Towards a Global Resource War?*, downloaded from <http://www.euractiv.com/en/specialreport-rawmaterials/raw-materials-global-resource-war-news-502704>, 3 March 2011.

and raw materials – the USA, the EU, China or India as well as smaller states such as Ireland or even Bangladesh that recorded lower consumption compared to the size of their population, were willing to have such working tools available for political decision makers in society. Major approaches in geopolitics implemented in scenarios looked into the future international order and the power relationships, which might emerge in the coming years at regional and global levels. Everyone agrees that the world is changing. The question is in which direction. There are many scenarios devised lately, with an impact on public opinion and politicians. The political and military leaders' vision of the international world in the following years is based on a continuum from catastrophes to optimism. For example, in his monthly press briefing in Moscow, army General Nicolay Makarov stated that the Russian military organizations must be ready for the worst possible developments. *“The situation in the world is complicated and it is constantly changing, especially in North Africa and the Middle East. What happened in these regions was difficult to predict and the events developed at a tremendous speed,”*¹⁰¹² (...) *“No one can tell now what will happen there. However, this is a signal for all states. We, the military, must be ready for the worst scenarios.”* On the other hand, Jerome Glenn offered a hopeful scenario for 2050, when the world may turn out to be a pleasant place to live in. According to him *„Despite a somewhat gloomy outlook at present — with headlines dominated by wars, ethnic strife, AIDS and environmental degradation — there is much hope for a better future. Its main catalysts could be science, technology and the Internet”*.¹⁰¹³

The financial crisis that started in 2008 and especially the growing sovereign debts at regional and global levels will have

¹⁰¹² *Dangerous Crossroads: Russian Military Chief: Prepare For “Worst-Case Scenarios”* In *Unravelling World*, downloaded from,

<http://www.pakalertpress.com/2011/09/14/dangerous-crossroads-russian-military-chief-prepare-for-worst-case-scenarios-in-unravelling-world/>, 21 October, 2011.

¹⁰¹³ See Jerome C. Glenn, *A Better World in 2050?* downloaded from <http://www.theglobalist.com/StoryId.aspx?StoryId=2196>, 21 October, 2011.

unthinkable consequences on the geopolitical balance and international relations. From a geopolitical point of view, the EU is constantly concerned about Germany's expanding influence¹⁰¹⁴ and some analysts predicted that geopolitical tensions within and between countries would continue to negatively influence the euro zone's ability to overcome the debt crisis. The growing risks are that one or more governments will refuse to continue financing the bailouts and/or abide by creditor-imposed bailouts, thus precipitating a disorderly debt default. The markets are justifiably becoming more nervous about the euro zone's permanent crisis mode, and its inability to deal with the fundamental underlying problems¹⁰¹⁵.

Similar to other domains, the process of scripting geopolitical scenarios takes a long time and covers several stages/steps depending on their nature and on the experience gathered by several countries and even some research institutes. In the case of the political scenarios, for example, that analyze the energy issue the number of steps/stages differed from one researcher to another and they varied from three or four¹⁰¹⁶ to seven¹⁰¹⁷ such stages. The activity meant to devise a scenario can only start when the agenda of a classical stakeholder or non/classical player has provided a topic/theme of interest and a team has been set up to approach it¹⁰¹⁸. Art Kleiner considered that if the issues were not correctly identified,

¹⁰¹⁴ Dr. Luis Simon, The Euro-debt crisis: from finance to geopolitics? downloaded from <http://www.rusi.org/analysis/commentary/ref:C4ED8CBAE97CFA>, 25 October, 2011.

¹⁰¹⁵ *Current economic crisis is not simply financial or economic, but also geopolitical*, Report by Economic and Strategy Team National Bank of Canada, downloaded from, <http://www.fxstreet.com/fundamental/analysis-reports/the-geopolitics-of-the-euro-zone-debt-crisis/>, 25 October, 2011.

¹⁰¹⁶ Diana Scarce, Katherine Fulton, *cit. work*, p. 34.

¹⁰¹⁷ W.R. Huss, *cit. work*, p. 381.

¹⁰¹⁸ *Exploring the Future, Scenarios: An Explorer's Guide*, Global Business Environment, Shell International, 2003, p. 42.

¹⁰¹⁹ Art Kleiner, *Scenarios are imaginative pictures of futures, but the picture is just a means to an end*, in *Whole Earth*, Spring 1999 downloaded from, <http://www.wholeearthmag.com/ArticleBin/224.html>, 25 October, 2011.

the team risked to “waste the time”¹⁰¹⁹. A correct identification does not necessarily involve the interpretation of data and information which generate the topic because its resolution through a scenario means, “*to operate with the image we have on that reality*”¹⁰²⁰.

The manner of setting up a team may differ from one domain to another. It can be formal, informal or a *think tank*. It is led by a director who is more of a guide than a manager¹⁰²¹. The team members must understand the requirements put forward by the one who has commissioned the scenario in order to state correctly the key issues¹⁰²² and to draw a *clear road map*¹⁰²³. The team must be provided with the research conditions and the needed resources.

The French analyst Bernard Laponche remarked that a good scenario in the energy industry must be based on a set of hypotheses that reviewed the developments in the production and the demand of energy related to population growth, to the rate of economic growth, in short, to what he called “*déterminants de la demande*”¹⁰²⁴.

The first stage in devising an energy scenario started with the understanding of the demand of the stakeholder that had commissioned a review of the international political environment. The team must clearly comprehend the nature of the *interest* followed by the stakeholder. The team must be able to give relevant answers to the following questions¹⁰²⁵: Which is the stakeholder’s fundamental

¹⁰²⁰ Pierre Wack, *cit. work*, p. 59.

¹⁰²¹ J. Rojot, A Bergmann, *Comportement et organisation*, Vuibert, 1989, p. 27.

¹⁰²² Eva Wollenburg, David Edmunds, Louise Buck, *cit. work*, p. 3.

¹⁰²³ John S. Ratcliffe, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

¹⁰²⁴ Bernard Laponche, *Energie et développement durable: l’avenir est ouvert*, in Tempsreels online <http://www.temps-reels.net/article1301.html> accessed at 12 may 2010.

¹⁰²⁵ See how a team acts when it builds an economic scenario in this phase at Juergen H. Daum, How Scenario Planning Can Significantly Reduce Strategic Risks and Boost Value in the Innovation Chain, „New Economy Analyst Report”, September 08, 2001, http://www.juergendaum.com/news/09_08_2001.htm, accessed at 12 may 2010.

interest in relation to its own energy policy and that of other players? Is this interest stated in public terms? If not, what are the purposes contained in interests presented to the public opinion? Is the player able to influence the direction of the developments in the geopolitical field at the time of planning the geopolitical scenario?

That is the moment when both technical and statistical information gathering started to appraise the evolutions in the energy industry, as well as the status of the economy and the rate of the population growth. It is also the point where researchers collected information about deep changes in the international security environment, mainly those from regions rich in resources, but marred by several problems. An important operation was the identification of the types of threats in the targeted geopolitical field and the nature of the threats a player must face, and the stereotypes, preconceptions that can be identified in the collective thinking of the analyzed areas¹⁰²⁶. Are there players who confront or cooperate in the energy field tempted to use hard/soft power? The expected time limit for the production of the scenario is anticipated at this stage. It depends on a number of subjective and objective factors. The answer to several questions guided the research team to valuable open or unknown information sources. Reliable information sources could be identified with the help of the electronic data bases, such as the National libraries, universities, EBSCO or ProQuest. The use of such tools cannot substitute the reading of topical books and the use of unpublished research studies, in case research partnerships have been concluded with similar institutes. The CDORA team made extensive use of a wide variety of publications to support the research, writing and analysis of the force planning scenarios.

Exploration is a stage that means not only a thorough knowledge of the analyzed geopolitical field but also a full use of the imagination and the intuition associated to specific scientific analysis

¹⁰²⁶ Dana Mietzner, Guido Reger, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

¹⁰²⁷ David Stout, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

tools and techniques¹⁰²⁷. At this stage, the activity is focused on identification of the key factors – *driving-forces*, or *facteurs-clés in French*. In the opinion of several specialists, the driving force is a concept tool that leads to the anticipation of later evolutions in the energy industry¹⁰²⁸. Driving forces represent such elements as social dynamics, technological issues, economic issues, political issues, and environmental realities¹⁰²⁹. We have little control over driving forces, and the only way we can leverage them is to recognize them for what they are, to understand their effects, and to contribute to creating new driving forces if we do not like what we find.

The *driving-forces* can influence or change decisively the initial characteristics of the evolutions identified by the team members when they stated their objective. Once identified, key factors are selected according to their relevance, significance, and capacity to influence the events of the energy industry. Most methodologies of scenario writing¹⁰³⁰ identified two types of driving forces: predetermined and uncertain. The predetermined driving forces are those elements anticipated by prognosis and possible to occur, such as an energy production surge, the fuel consumption etc. These can easily be identified through the *analysis of societies/states* focused on the economic, demographic, social, ethnological, military fields etc., and the *analysis of the international environment* focused on the stakeholders' national/strategic interests, their type of behavior in international politics, the evolution of the norms and principles system which make the international public law etc.

From the analysis of the economic domain, the driving forces can be identified by operating the information regarding:

- natural resources, especially water, food and energy resources;

¹⁰²⁸ Driving Forces, in *Scenario Thinking* online http://scenariothinking.org/wiki/index.php/Driving_Forces .

¹⁰²⁹ Moya K. Mason, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

¹⁰³⁰ Margaret Chandler, *Long Term Strategic Thinking Placing the Pembina Institute in Divergent Scenarios of the World*, ©2005 The Pembina Institute for 2025, Drayton Valley, Alberta T7A 1S7 Canada, p. 4.

- the economic development rates at macro and micro-economic levels;
- the circulation speed and the security of financial capital;
- economic connections with the traditional partners in the international trade;
- Economic development from one stage to another and the identification of causes that led to economic stagnation/economic growth.¹⁰³¹

The demo-social domain, demo social analysis, identified the driving forces by reviewing:

- the dynamics of the population growth;
- Changes in the social structures (the rate between genders, the percentage of the economic active population and pensioners, the role played by the youth in the following ten years etc.);
- rise/cut of public expenses;
- Welfare etc.

From the analysis of the international environment:

- the types of actors
- their capabilities encountered;
- the military/political-military coalition
- international law and so on

The identification of the uncertain „driving forces” requires analyzing those factors that lead to major changes in: the energy supply for the population and for industrial consumers; behavior of energy consumers to save/waste energy; evolution of prices and possible crises and major conflicts among the global energy consumers etc.

The third stage in devising a scenario – *syntheses/conduct research, writing and analysis* focuses on the analysis of the identified driving forces and requires placing them in hierarchies according to their chances to take place and alter the geopolitical field in different periods of time from the analysis. They will be rated on a scale/matrix from the highest degree of certitude to actually happen (such as the domain of demographic statistics) to the „zero”

¹⁰³¹ John S.Ratcliffe, *cit. work, in cit. city.*

chances of becoming a reality (such as the public opinion)¹⁰³². To give an example, we quote a possible pattern setting of the driving forces for an energy industry scenario produced by specialists from *The Pembina Institute*¹⁰³³.

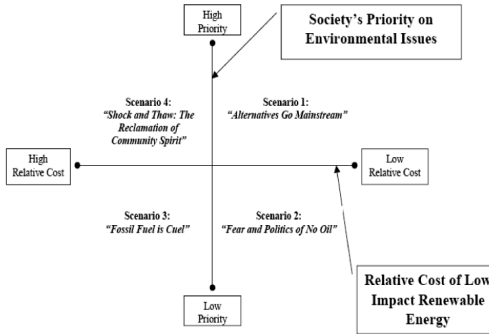


Figure 1 Pembina Institute Scenario Planning Story Plots

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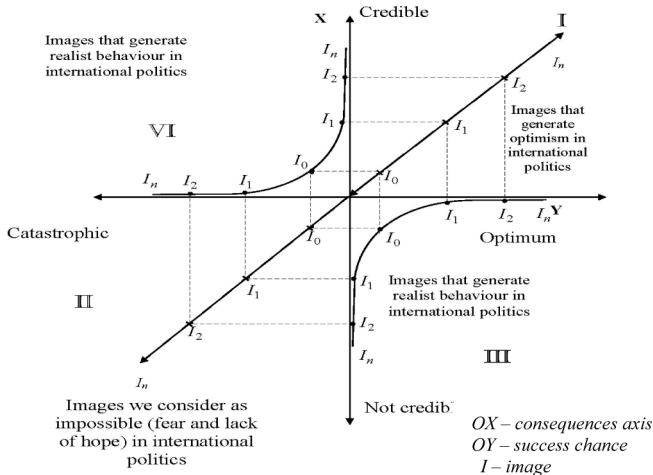
At this stage, all possible threats from the geopolitical field, which could endanger an actor's interests in this space, were identified. The review of the relation between the chance to succeed, the accomplishment or the failure to attain proposed interests render the risk degree that an actor must consider when deciding whether to be present or not in that specific geopolitical area. The multiple analysis variables of the predictable or uncertain „driving forces” lead to a hierarchy of the factors that modify essentially the energy pattern in a given society, in a region or even at the global level. At this particular stage, some researchers considered that the scenario scripting must not be based on the scientific argument only, and it may also include „intuitions, beliefs which are not necessarily the result of the scientific knowledge. These can be rooted in the popular culture and even religion”¹⁰³⁴.

¹⁰³² *Ibidem*, p. 29.

¹⁰³³ Margaret Chandler, *cit. work*, p. 6.

¹⁰³⁴ Paul Erickson, Clark Miller, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

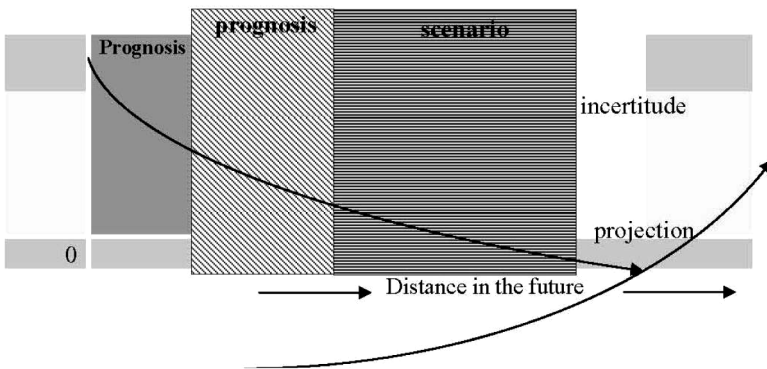
The following stage concerns to *scenario building* that is an anticipation of the possible trends in the geopolitical evolution of a space. The result will lead to those “multiple” alternatives of the future. The number of the variants built for „the projection” of possible evolutions of the analyzed space differed from one author to another. Some opinions argued that the decision to act should be made in two or three variants¹⁰³⁵, but most of them led to five to ten stages. In our opinion, the number of the variants is very important, although we must not neglect the means to present the *possible images* of how the world will look like when the civilization degree depends on the daily used energy quantity, the means to relate to the resources of energy and especially the way the actor will answer the challenges generated by the resources crisis. These images can be described according to the combinations obtained by the evaluation of interactions between different types of driving forces. These “pictures” must be accommodated along an axis that moves from *catastrophic* to *optimum*, crossed by another from *credible* to *unbelievable*. They result is a multitude of miscellaneous combinations with at least four main characteristics:



¹⁰³⁵ Garry D Peterson, *Scenario Planning: Atool for Conservation in an Uncertain World*, in „Conservation Biology”, Volume 17, No. 2, April 2003, p. 361.

As this image can prove, debates within the scenario writing team must not be deterred by behaviors that lead to choosing the variants that focus on what was fashionable or on what may have been expected by those who commissioned the scenarios. Experts L. Fahey and P. Randall considered that this debate must be led by the following types of conflicting ideas regarding the development of the future evolutions in scenario building ¹⁰³⁶: present versus future; expected ending versus unpredictable ending; scientific versus imaginary; intellectual-rational versus emotional; probability versus possibility; constraint versus dialogue; quantity versus quality; optimism versus skepticism etc.

Writing and coding/Create of narrative scenarios is the stage where scenarios gain in content and in the graphical format. Scenarios prepared in this manner may prove useful tools in the research and the analysis of the success chances and in the identification of the risks, a player may assume when it works out its energy policy. A good energy policy must rely on the expertise provided by an excellent prognosis activity and by the challenges recorded in the energy or global changes. Analyst Peter O'Brien designed the following interesting graphical pattern on the interdependency between the prognosis and the scenario in building the states' foreign policy as shown below: ¹⁰³⁷

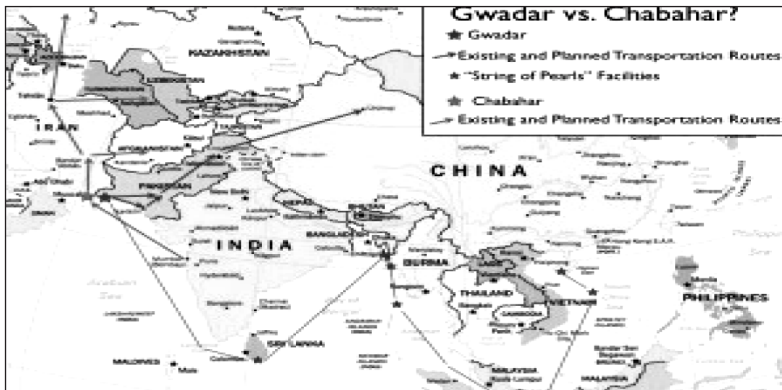


¹⁰³⁶ Apud John S. Ratcliffe, *cit. work*, in *cit. city*.

¹⁰³⁷ Peter O'Brien, *Scenario Planning A Strategic Tool*, Legislative Services, AusInfo, GPO Box 84, Canberra ACT 2601, http://affashop.gov.au/PdfFiles/13207_scenario_planning.pdf, downloaded 28 November 2010.

Regardless of the graphical pattern of this scenario and the links between them and the leaders and the managers of the energy industry, nobody can ignore today such tools of knowledge and operation. Maps play a special role in scenario presentation irrespective of the problem to be solved.

Geopolitical scenarios worked out by experts and institutions have an important impact on the consumer if they are accompanied by a visual “reading”. The review *Geo Currents* publishes in May a possible scenario of the geopolitical game played by the great powers in South-Eastern Asia. In short, it referred to the fact that “Pakistan had given China a base at Gwadar in the heart of Baluch territory. So, an independent Baluchistan would serve U.S. strategic interests in addition to the immediate goal of countering Islamist forces¹⁰³⁸. The illustration of this information led to several conclusions regarding the geopolitical games in the area.



More relevant is the way maps translated into pictures scenarios connected to the population growth, the global warming etc. One of them illustrated the rate of possible population growth in the following 50 years and the second illustrated the demographic repartition in 2050:

¹⁰³⁸ Balochistan and a New “Great Game” in Central Asia? downloaded from <http://geocurrents.info/geopolitics/balochistan-and-a-new-great-game-in-central-asia#ixzz1imcFYfVP28> November 2010.

CONCLUSIONS

The importance of scenarios as analysis tools in geopolitical practice must not be overstated. Both geopolitical strategies and scenarios are a direct output of the team's debates. Scenarios highlight topics that the team focused on, and largely ignore topics that were left out. Interestingly enough, much attention was paid to the dimensions of power and fear, whereas the technological and economic dimensions were not frequently mentioned and were not considered major driving forces. Another remark is that the team saw little evidence of wave patterns, although the initial project theme referred explicitly to "the next wave". The team's expectations corresponded to an irreversible transition rather than to a cyclical movement or wave. Geopolitics acts in global, regional or local spaces and will always be supported by interests and power. The projection and the representation of these two elements in international relations can be achieved using tools such as strategy and scenario, which guide the decisions that will eventually be made by politicians and leaders of international organizations/other non-state players.

It is possible that debates on the place and the role of geopolitics in the academic and university world will not die out soon because of its theoretical dimension and the possibility to offer the necessary instruments and methods for a thorough analysis of the international environment.

A number of reasons still stands, but most important is the fact that the force of the images and words associated to geopolitics are

used more often in the present media because the PR propaganda organizations and institutions, hired by both the classical and non-classical actors will continue to make the geopolitical theory and analysis a carrier towards the “target” for the subliminal messages with the purpose of manipulation and persuasion of the public opinion in relation to the events and the facts that will happen in the international environment.

This will continue to maintain some confusion regarding its place and role within the scientific branches that review the contemporary international relations and a certain reluctance of the academic and university environments. I strongly believe that the multitude of theoretical studies and scientific debates will finally lead to a clarification of concepts and to clearer relations between geopolitics and propaganda, between the manipulation and the intoxication of the public opinion that persist under the influence of various interests in the political world today. More and more people will be able to distinguish between geopolitics and political geography, geopolitics and propaganda or other manipulation and disinformation techniques used today in the “global media war” and thus the line that divides geopolitical *analyzes* from geopolitical *propaganda* are more “visible” both for the public opinion and for the experts.

I hope that the presentation and the challenge of this volume to all geopoliticians and international relations experts of all kinds will have an echo in the academic world and among the analysts of the international relations. It is necessary to have an important theoretical debate on the analysis techniques, methods and tools used in geopolitics in order to comprehend the international environment. For the time being, such debates are few and too marginal although the level and the intensity of the controversies and disputes on geopolitics are quite animated. Globalization persistently mentioned so often over the recent years has changed profoundly the international environment. Its knowledge cannot be attained but with

the help of a multi-disciplinary analysis. Geopolitics cannot be overlooked in the corpus of these scientific branches.

The present study of geopolitics brings to the front stage the fact that a break occurred in the second half of the tenth decade of the previous century, in the geopolitical knowledge that encouraged the emergence of new paradigms similar to the concept provided by Thomas Khun at the beginning of the eighth decade of the XXth century and skillfully employed by researchers from the socio-human domain. Such a break in the classical vision did not automatically mean that analysis and studies were no longer performed from this perspective today. There is nothing wrong in this regard, on the contrary they may bring new approaches for a scientific branch that has crossed endemic and identity gaps and could not define itself through a specific methodology or through a single object of study for a long time. Paradigms presented to the public debate by this study attempted to suggest a solution to overcome the deadlock and to develop the line of *critical geopolitics* which became more and more visible after the end of the Cold War. This book equally pleaded for the production of a specific geopolitical methodology of analysis.

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