

## **Changing Discourses of National Identity and Interest in East and West after Cold War**

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### **Abstract**

The present article tackles two issues: firstly, it proposes an understanding of the transformations in Eastern Europe after 1989/90, defining these processes as periods of intense struggle for the definition of political and social meanings and values, prominently of "democracy". Secondly, it attempts to scrutinise the discursive effects in the "West" of the collapse of "Real Existing Socialism". The article advances the proposition that the breakdown of the Soviet Bloc marked the beginning of a major, manifest challenge to basic political identities, in Eastern Europe *and* in the "West". On the one hand, Eastern Europe underwent a severe social crisis or "dislocation" (Laclau) encompassing deep uncertainties regarding key political principles and the whole political system: the "empty signifier" of "democracy" had to be filled with new meaning. New and old metaphors competed for providing new meaning to this signifier. Russia is a case in point. Definitions of democracy were mushrooming in the late days of Perestroika and during the 90s. Only with the ascent of Putin to power and the rise of the metaphors of "managed democracy" and of "sovereign democracy" in public discourse, a preliminary fixing of meaning and a new discursive hegemony could be achieved – here, existing studies are to be put in a new context. On the other hand, for the "Western" democracies, as exemplified by U.S. political discourses, the Soviet breakdown meant the loss of a "constitutive outside" (Staten). In this sense, the United States lost many of the certainties it had before 1989/90. In some instances, the Soviet breakdown put into question the *raison d'être* of whole policies, such as in foreign policy, forcing it to re-examine the understanding the U.S. position and role in the world. This process, as it will be argued, is the search for a new constitutive outside. As Chantal Mouffe argues, the creation of a "we" can exist only by the demarcation of a "they". The present article traces back this search in both "East" and "West" in its metaphorical dimension.

**Key words:** Russia, United States, international relations, discourses, metaphors, intellectual history.

## Introduction

"Not long ago we were being told (...) that liberal democracy had won and that history has ended. Alas, far from having produced a smooth transition to pluralist democracy, the collapse of Communism seems, in many places, to have opened the way to resurgence of nationalism and the emergence of new antagonisms. (...) Instead of the heralded 'New World Order', the victory of universal values, and the generalization of 'post-conventional identities', we are witnessing an explosion of particularisms and an increasing challenge to Western universalism." (Mouffe 2005: 1)

This brief excerpt of Chantal Mouffe's *The Return of the Political* underscores the big hopes and the big delusions that followed the end of state socialism in Eastern Europe. Much research has focused on the often difficult transformations in Eastern Europe – and much optimism has faded. In the 90s, the debate was still focused on 28 "Countries in Transition". But only ten years later the "Transition Paradigm" had to be revised (Carothers 2002). Then, analyses more carefully spoke of the "transformations" of the formerly communist states, and differentiated between the winners of globalisation (China, and Vietnam), the poorest successor states of the Soviet Union (the so-called CIS-7), the "failed states" of the Caucasus, the "democracy with adjectives" Russia and winners in Central Eastern Europe: the new member states of the EU (the CEE-8). For all these states, however, the end of the rigid structures of central planning and (mostly) of communist rule, represented a major rupture.

Less research has been undertaken in the consequences of this rupture for the "West". Chantal Mouffe is an exception to this rule. She quickly identified that also "Western" societies

"are undergoing a deep process of redefinition of their collective identities and experiencing the establishment of new political frontiers. This is linked to the collapse of Communism and the disappearance of the democracy/totalitarianism opposition that (...) had provided the main political frontier enabling discrimination between friend and enemy." (Mouffe 2005: 3)

Regarding the former Communist Bloc, she highlights the resurgence of ethnic, national and religious antagonisms. For the West "the very identity of democracy" is at stake, insofar as it depended on the existence of its "constituting other", represented by "Communism". She goes on that this also explains the success of far right parties in Western Europe, which quickly identified new enemies in the immigrants, as "enemies within", thus establishing a new political frontier.

The following paper will try to provide some empirical evidence for these claims. After having outlined some major theoretical assumption, I will analyse the impact of the end of the Communist Bloc

on the political identities in Russia. Of particular concern will be the change in the meaning of **democracy** and in the **national identity**, i.e. changes in two main political identities. In second step, I will scrutinize the effects on political identities in the United States: here, the **national interest** in foreign policy had to be redefined. The lively and long debate on what kind of foreign policy the U.S. should pursue provides sufficient evidence for the dilemma, the United States (but also Western European states) faced.

## **Theoretical Background**

### ***Identity, Discourse, Hegemony***

How do identities emerge? How do they change? How do they achieve stability? Already these questions hint at a basic theoretical assumption: identities are never completely stable or fixed. They are subject to change. Identities are "constituted in and by discourses" (Torfing 1999: 32). This construction of identities is an inherently political process, since it depends on competing hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses.

A discourse is defined as "a differential ensemble of signifying sequences in which meaning is constantly renegotiated" (Torfing 1999: 85). This means that in a basically unstable society, i.e. where no identity is fixed, discourses compete for creating meaning and significance. Identities are social constructions, which come into being through the competition of hegemonic (and counter-hegemonic) discourses for the definition of empty signifiers, such as "democracy" or "the nation". Counter-hegemonic discourses try to disarticulate hegemonic discourses, to disorganize a certain consensus, and to create an alternative one. However, hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses represent an inseparable unity, since they need each other to define themselves. "Reality" is thus only temporarily fixed and stable and only hegemonic discourses provide this always precarious stability.

Hegemony, in turn, is a process of articulation establishing a relation among elements, constituting an "outside" and an "inside", creating a metaphorical unity<sup>1</sup> – i.e., identities are always relational, they relate to a *constitutive outside*, a "radical otherness that, at the same time, constitutes and ne-

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<sup>1</sup> "For metaphor presupposes metonymy, as the discursive articulation of a paradigmatic equivalence requires that the different elements be in a metonymical relation. As such, hegemony based upon metaphor is always the end product of a series of discursive articulations, never the starting point." (Torfing 1999: 113)

gates the limits and identity of the discursive formation from which it is excluded" (Torfing 1999: 124). Or as Laclau & Mouffe put it:

"A hegemonic formation also embraces what opposes it, insofar as the opposing force accepts the system of basic articulations of the formation as something it negates, but the *place of the negation* is defined by the internal parameters of the formation itself." (Laclau & Mouffe 2001: 139)

### ***The End of the Cold War as Discursive Phenomenon***

How can this understanding of identity, discourse and hegemony contribute to understanding the rupture caused by the collapse of the Communist Bloc? In this theoretical perspective, the processes in Eastern Europe after 1989/90 are not, for instance, a "Democratic revolution" triggered by economic conditions or by the will of certain, a priori privileged social agents, such as elites or counter-elites, but in the first place a discursive "dislocation" (Laclau), i.e.

"a destabilization of a discourse that results from the emergence of events which cannot be domesticated, symbolized or integrated within the discourse in question." (Torfing 1999: 301)

Obviously, the collapse of the political and economic system could not be represented in the discourse of "Communism", and the demise of the USSR not in the one of the "Cold War". They did not fit. Thus, dislocations mark a **social crisis** of uncertainty concerning values, norms, meanings and identities that "Communism" or "Capitalism" or the "Cold War" previously had provided for. From this point of view, both the "West" and the "East" faced an open-ended, slow shift in hegemony, the crippling of an old hegemony and the outbreak of hegemonic struggles – in order to establish a new hegemony and hence restore social stability. With the following analysis inspired by this theoretical assumption, I will focus on the shifts in identities, in their construction and reconstruction. However, the crisis was to be found on different levels: in Russia, it was mainly its national identity, thus **a crisis projected inward**; in the U.S., it was about its role in the world, thus **a crisis projected outward**.

### **The End of the Cold War in Russia: Redefining its identity**

In the case of Russia, particularly two identities showed a particular crisis and appeared to be heavily contested: firstly, there was a crisis of "national identity" and secondly, a crisis of "democracy".

#### ***National identity***

The first dimension of uncertainty applies to the national identity and the "loss of the home country". In 1994, 81 percent of the Russians still identified the Soviet Union and not Russia as their home

country (Dunlop 1996). The USSR was seen as a proud super-power that had defeated fascism, exercised influence over half the world, and sent humans to space. The new Russia, on the other hand, did not even have a "real" national anthem until 2000: its lack of words reflected the Russian identity crisis. Even the last bastions of Russian pride such as the army and the social security system were severely damaged. As early as 1988, the confusion concerning the question of identity was so strong that all school examinations in history were suspended.

### ***Political Identity***

Secondly, there was uncertainty regarding the political and economic system. One-party rule and planned economy broke away and were replaced by "democracy" and "capitalism". Many people associated these terms with a better life. This applied especially to "democracy". The economic downturn until 1998, however, destroyed these hopes and discredited this concept as well as that of market economy, and triggered uncertainty about their superiority over Communism. Apparently, a strong association between democracy and prosperity existed. But instead of prosperity, Russia experienced a declining living standard, instead of "**Soviet clarity**" on the political level, there was "**Democratic chaos**", instead of one political party, many different political formations with unclear programmes developed (Service 1998: 532ff.) I will provide more detail concerning the struggles erupted to "fill" the empty signifier of "democracy".

### ***Metaphors of Democracy***

Studies of democratization processes often depict a bipolar view of the actors involved. On the one hand, there is the old regime, trying to defend the old order, clinging to old values and ideologies. On the other hand, there is the opposition, composed of young idealists, dissidents and civil society representatives who strive for Western-type democracy. This view, however, is too simple and reminiscent of Gramsci's discussion about "fundamental classes". In the late Soviet Union, neither the regime nor the democratic opposition were monolithic. Neither was the latter's understanding of democracy consensual: different views of democracy, i.e. of the political system to be installed, competed with each other. According to Lukin (2000: 192ff.), democracy was inter alia connected with the following metaphors:

- "**Freedom from state control**", i.e. as anti-thesis to the totalitarian control of the Soviet State, as negative freedom, secured by majority rule;
- "**Social justice**", i.e. an elimination of the privileges of the leading party officials and social equality;

- **"Prosperity"**, i.e. as better living standards and higher levels of consumption;
- **"Road to perfection"**, i.e. as a universal remedy, a panacea to reach a higher spiritual and moral level, a life without lies and vice.

Additionally, the political culture of the Russian "democrats" is characterised by polarized thinking and by a persistence of Marxist and Soviet categories. It is revealing that there is a longing for maximum negative freedom and for maximum social equality. Different, even contradictory positions coexisted.

Adopting a discourse-analytical lens, these different views of the Russian "democrats" could be interpreted as a competition of meanings to occupy the empty signifier of "democracy". However, they constitute only a fragment of the whole discourse. The competition of positions is also reflected by shifts on the level of the political elite, such as the positions put forward by the most prominent "democrat", Boris Yeltsin:

"While from 1988-91 Yeltsin's beliefs were 'democratic' they were closer to the communitarian-social justice type than to radical-market libertarianism. (...) However, after August 1991 Yeltsin's views radically changed and he supported the radical marketeers and Westernizers." (Lukin 2000: 293)

But this type of the Russian "democrats", with their call for "democratisation here and now" (Lukin 2000: 298) – by which they actually meant the introduction of market economy, "here and now" – widely failed to achieve a social consensus, and Yeltsin withdrew his support for the concepts of radical market liberalisers like Gaydar or Burbulis, finally dismissing them after the financial collapse in 1998. Lukin summarises that the understanding of democracy the Russian democrats held was too heterogeneous and, to some extent, not "democratic" in a Western sense:

"Many ideas borrowed from the West were reinterpreted within the framework of a belief system that saw democracy as an ideal society which could solve all of mankind's material and spiritual problems. (...) Finally, 'democratic' activists viewed democracy not as a system of compromises among various groups and interests (...) but as the unlimited power of the 'democrats' replacing the unlimited power of the Communists. Naturally, people who shared these beliefs could hardly create a liberal democracy based on the rule of law." (Lukin 2000: 298)

However, their diversified ideas did entail democratic features that "had to retreat under pressure from the dominant culture of the population" (Lukin 2000: 299).<sup>2</sup> This is a somehow disappointing

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<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, these interpretations of democracy kept some degree of relevance: "In a broader sense it can be said that the notions of the 'democratic' subculture greatly influenced the whole language of Russian politics and to a considerable extent became an integral part of it." (Lukin 2000: 299)

conclusion. Rather, one could argue that the discourse on democracy shifted towards an interpretation that differed from the heterogeneous conception of the "democrats". Instead, an interpretation as reflected by other social forces prevailed and provided a preliminary fixation.

### ***Russia's "Sovereign Democracy"***

This preliminary fixation was eventually achieved after 2000. During Putin's presidency a stabilization of state and society took place. This success does not only have economic reasons. Certainly, growth after 2000 contributed to the new stability. However, this phenomenon is primarily a discursive one.

During the Putin presidency, what could be labelled as the "national discourse of sovereign democracy", structured around the "state forces" (Zaslavskaya 2004: 497f.), contributed to taking up the aforementioned uncertainties and compensating for them: it contributed to fixing the meanings of democracy and the nation by proposing an all-embracing hegemonic project, which stresses the national uniqueness and distinctiveness, especially from the West<sup>3</sup>. The most obvious example for this over-arching project certainly is *Edinnaya Rossiya*, the party of power. Lacking a clear-cut programme, it embraces voters from different social backgrounds.

Putin and its aides could be labelled as "organic politicians". They represent a discourse on a Russian path to a political system, which proclaims the implementation of a "sovereign democracy". While the Russian regime does not propagate a clear-cut ideology, strong efforts are undertaken to foster "patriotic education" and to revitalise an authoritarian nationalism, including the Soviet imagery. The unity of Russian history, under explicit inclusion of the Soviet period, obviously is an important issue for the "state forces" in the framework of a revived "Russian Idea"<sup>4</sup>: this idea will continue to contribute to the construction of an illiberal state ideology (Scherrer 2004: 41). The question arises, to which extent "sovereign democracy" and the "Russian Idea" are linked to each other. It could be argued that Russian nationalism negatively influences the development of a democracy of the Western type.

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<sup>3</sup> "Vladislav Surkov, the deputy head of the Presidential Administration continually refers to Western experience when justifying the concept of sovereign democracy. There is an important conclusion to be drawn from this: (...) By either accepting or rejecting the West's ideas, Russia constructs its own identity." (Pankin 2007: 49). Makarychev concurs that the West and especially the EU constitutes a central point of reference for Russia: "Generally speaking, Russia is simultaneously longing for an exceptional status in her relations with the EU and, at the same time, does not know how exactly she has to turn it into her advantage. (...) This situation of inherent uncertainty and ambiguity (...) constitutes a framework for discursive hegemony which could be understood as a process of carrying out a 'filling function', i.e. a process of saturation of 'empty signifiers' with contextual meanings." (Makarychev 2005: 3)

<sup>4</sup> Concerning the „Russian Idea“, see Scherrer (2004)

Some data confirm this trend towards a new "certainty": the population's approval of the president, who represents the rearticulations of democracy and the nation, for instance, reached 81 percent in January 2004; nowadays, support is stable at around 70 percent<sup>5</sup>. There is also a strong support for the policies of the "state forces" towards politically, ideologically or economically deviant groups such as the "oligarchs" or the "liberal and social-democratic forces"<sup>6</sup>. They are perceived as representing particular interests. 42 percent of the respondents think, for instance, that all those who call themselves "democrats" are "enemies of the state" (Poliakov 2005: 17). Such positions can even be found among the younger generation: 39 percent of the respondents aged between 18 and 34 years would agree to cuts in democracy and freedom of assembly if this would contribute "to restore the power of Russia" (op. cit.: 18). These are views also spread by the Russian mass media, over which the Kremlin has tightened its grip since 2001. Thus, the space for a genuine competition of discourses has narrowed. The harassment and cooptation of the Russian civil society confirms this analysis; especially the legislation in force since April 2006 has further eroded the basis for alternatives, since it targets non-governmental associations. It would be *inter alia* their task to advance alternative political concepts, alternative concepts of "democracy", i.e. counter-hegemonic positions.

### **The End of the Cold War in the U.S.: Redefining its Identity and its Role in the World**

When Mikhail Gorbachev assumed power in 1985, the Cold War was still waged, maybe even more intensely than before. The USSR's foreign policy was still largely determined by the heritage of Brezhnev and his Doctrine. In the USA, Carter had been replaced by the determined anti-communist Ronald Reagan, who implemented a much less conciliatory stance toward the Soviet Union, which he dubbed the "Empire of Evil" in 1983. Reagan abandoned the course of Jimmy Carter, who had tried to intensify economic cooperation with the USSR and had adopted a policy of containing the USSR. Unlike his predecessor, Reagan put less emphasis on human rights. Instead, he was willing to challenge the Soviet Union in the "Third World" (adopting a strategy of "Rollback" instead of "Containment"), firmly supporting anti-communist movements, disregarding their democratic or human rights records, as long as they were fighting communism (notably in Nicaragua), and to invest all means necessary to prevail in the arms' race (Powaski 1998: 245ff.).

However, things changed: from 1986 on (the year of the Reykjavik summit), a gradual rapprochement between the two superpowers took place. A determinant factor for this development certainly

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<sup>5</sup> For current data see: [www.levada.ru/prezident.htm](http://www.levada.ru/prezident.htm).

<sup>6</sup> Another term coined by Zaslavskaya (2002).

was Gorbachev's understanding that due to the arms' race, his country was running out of resources. For internal renewal, he needed external peace and a less grim enemy. Also, the stance of Ronald Reagan changed: "During the latter half of his first term, Reagan began to display a more flexible attitude toward the Soviet Union than he did initially" (op. cit. 1998: 253). This led to a quite impressive cooperation of USSR and U.S. in ending various conflicts around the world (such as in Angola, Cambodia or Ethiopia).

Nonetheless, despite the reforms and the rapprochement having taken place, only very few observers in the "West" expected or predicted the complete collapse of the Soviet Empire and of the Soviet Union itself. Rather, their demise came as a surprise even to those particularly involved in the field of "Soviet Studies":

"Political scientists and their theories failed not only to anticipate any of the dramatic events of the last years but also to recognize the possibility that such changes could take place. (...) The failure of Soviet specialists and International Relation scholars was not empirical but conceptual. Because they did not consider the possibility of a peaceful but radical transformation, they did not grasp the significance of the data at their disposal." (Lebow & Risse-Kappen 1995: 1ff.)

The bafflement due to the precipitating events was such that George H.W. Bush displayed extreme reluctance in his reactions. Bush backed Polish President Jaruzelski in 1989 (deeply disappointing the majority of the Poles), he failed to quickly recognize Slovenia and Croatia as well as the Baltic's states independence (though the U.S. never had never officially recognized their annexation by the USSR in 1941 either), he tried to convince Ukraine to stay in the Soviet Union (delivering the so-called "chicken-speech" in Kiev<sup>7</sup>) and continued to support Gorbachev even after the August coup, preferring him over the "democrat" Yeltsin (Powaski 1998: 285ff.). Apart from German reunification, Bush tried to preserve as much as possible of the status quo, even if this meant supporting communist leaders or denying the principle of self-determination – at least he tried to delay the adoption of this principle.

Thus, also for the "West", including the United States, the end of bipolarity meant a heavy rupture or a "dislocation". Deprived of an enemy, the U.S. had to redefine its identity as sole superpower and its stance and role vis-à-vis the world:

"Lacking a clear enemy, Americans themselves grew confused about whether expanding their costly global engagement was really necessary. New theories of external threat to the United States

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<sup>7</sup> In the Ukrainian capital, Bush said: "Freedom is not the same as independence. Americans will not support those who seek independence in order to replace a far-off tyranny with local despotism. They will not aid those who want to promote a suicidal nationalism based on ethnic hatred." (quoted in Gaddis 2005: 255)

were thus developed: wars of civilization, generalized Islamic assault on the West, global terrorism, resurgent Chinese or Russian imperialism, international crime, the drug trade. Wretched 'rogue nations' were promoted to the front rank of those threatening the United States. None of this possessed much convincing intellectual or political warrant. The postulated threats were fragile structures built on speculation and worst-case scenarios, and some of them (...) were influenced by the commercial interests of military manufacturers." (Pfaff 2001: 228)

In the following, I will present, how discourses and metaphors changed between 1991 and 2001 in the U.S. foreign policy establishment. The analysis is primarily based on a content analysis (following Mayring 1983) of the journal *Foreign Affairs* that will be used as a proxy for the changes in the whole foreign policy establishment. *Foreign Affairs* is published by the Council of Foreign Relations, a non-profit and non-partisan organization. It has 3,400 members, among them nearly all past Presidents, Secretaries of State, Defence and Treasury, other senior U.S. government officials, as well as scholars and decision-makers from economy and civil society<sup>8</sup>. The Journal is widely regarded as one of the most influential periodicals in the field and as a major mouthpiece of the U.S. foreign policy establishment.

The analysis reveals continuities as well as discontinuities. Three major phases can be distinguished both in the actual implementation of Foreign Policy and in its discursive articulation. The first, relatively short phase is a phase that could be labelled as "euphoria". It lasted roughly from 1989, when bipolarity was de facto over, till approximately 1993. This was the period when the "End of History" (Fukuyama) and a "New World Order" (G.H.W. Bush) were declared. The second phase sets in, when it became apparent, that neither the former nor the latter were to be reached or achieved. Thus, from 1994 to 1999, a search began for a new foreign policy agenda and a redefinition of the National Interest. In this period, doubts also arise concerning the future of the United States and democracy in general. After 2000, there was increased contention about foreign policy goals. This increment was inter alia due to the conflict in Kosovo and the U.S. role in peace-building efforts but mainly due to a widespread discontent about the foreign policy conduct of the retiring president, Bill Clinton. Finally, after the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon of September 2001, the U.S. foreign policy establishment seems more self-confident and sure about the objectives: namely, fighting terrorism, protecting the homeland and defending "Western" values of freedom. However, despite this development and despite the insecurity it reflects, there also are continuities, such as the search for order in a world perceived as being in a state of disorder, the fear of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and their proliferation, as well as of "weapon states" or "rogue states".

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<sup>8</sup> See <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/about/>

### ***1st Phase, 1989-1992: Euphoria***

Despite the fact that Eastern Europe was in turmoil, with the Bush administration trying to contain it, also euphoria set in. The Cold War ended symbolically in December 1989, on a summit held on U.S. and Soviet navy ships in the stormy seas around Malta. A "hot war", Bush and Gorbachev declared, should never be an option again. While this was an important date, already beforehand a sense of victory had spread, especially among U.S. conservative scholars (Tsygankov 2005: 3f.) and policy-makers that became stronger in the early 90s, when the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union vanished. The most representative, controversial and famous piece reflecting this euphoria certainly is Francis Fukuyama's "**End of History**" article:

"Fukuyama's vision was a bold summary of (...) optimistic feelings in Western policy circles as expressed by some leading intellectuals. The 'end of history', in this sense, was not accidental in its appearance. Politically as a Bush administration strategist and intellectually as an ardent proponent of modernization theory, Fukuyama was well positioned to defend the worldwide ascendancy of Western style liberal capitalism." (Tsygankov 2005: 4)

More in detail, Fukuyama asserted that with the crippling of Communism, democracy and capitalism will become the ultimate form of organizing politics as well as the production and distribution of goods. The entire world was expected to adopt the "Western twin principles". In his own words:

"What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government. This is not to say that there will no longer be events to fill the pages of *Foreign Affairs*' yearly summaries of international relations, for the victory of liberalism has occurred primarily in the realm of ideas or consciousness and is as yet incomplete in the real or material world. But there are powerful reasons for believing that it is the ideal that will govern the material world in the long run." (Fukuyama 1989: 4)

On the strictly political level, this optimism was reflected by U.S. President Bush's vision concealed in the concept of a "**New World Order**". This concept was already earlier referred to by Gorbachev but is today mainly identified with Bush who elaborated it further. On at least three occasions, he clarified the idea. Firstly, during a joint session of the U.S. Congress in September 1990, he stressed that "A New World order may emerge – an era freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice and more secure in the quest for peace" (quoted in Coker 1992: 409). Secondly, while first air raids on Iraqi military were conducted in Kuwait and Iraq in 1991, Bush tried to place this military action in a wider context:

"This is an historic moment. We have in this past year made great progress in ending the long era of conflict and Cold War. We have before us the opportunity to forge for ourselves and for future generations a new world order – a world where the rule of law, not the law of the jungle, governs the conduct of nations. When we are successful – and we will be – we have a real chance at this new

world order, an order in which a credible United Nations can use its peacekeeping role to fulfil the promise and vision of the U.N.'s founders."<sup>9</sup>

In a speech to the Congress on 6 March 1991, when fighting in Iraq was over, he described again this New Order as one in which:

"Now, we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is the very real prospect of a new world order. In the words of Winston Churchill, a 'world order' in which 'the principles of justice and fair play ... protect the weak against the strong ...' A world where the United Nations, freed from Cold War stalemate, is poised to fulfil the historic vision of its founders. A world in which freedom and respect for human rights find a home among all nations." (quoted in Mayall 1991: 427)

For Bush and his aides, the Gulf War was a successful test of the New World Order. A month later, Bush, on the Maxwell Airport Base, summarised the renewed self-perception of the U.S., stating that "What makes us American is our allegiance to an idea that all people everywhere must be free" (quoted in Coker 1992: 410).

This optimism is also reflected in several issues of *Foreign Affairs* in the early 1990s. There was a lively debate about the end of bipolarity and whether this end means the beginning of a multipolar era. The most widespread opinion among the authors of *Foreign Affairs* in that period was the assumption the world has become unipolar. Charles Krauthammer is pretty clear about this new unipolarity when he stated that any "assumption of a multipolar world with power dispersed to new centers (...) is mistaken. The post-cold war era is unipolar." (Krauthammer 1991:23). Multilateralism for him was only "pseudo-multilateralism" (op. cit.: 25). Zbigniew Brzezinski (1992: 31) was also unambiguous in this regard: "The Cold War did end in the victory of one side and in the defeat of the other."

Theodore Sorensen argued that America's first "Post-Cold War President" faced a big challenge: "During his term the United States has the opportunity to lead the way in strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council" (Sorensen 1992: 24). Actually, U.S. leadership is out of question. The 1992 Draft Defence Planning Guidance for the 1994-99 fiscal years developed a "Strategy for primacy": this "Wolfowitz-Doctrine" elaborated how "to discourage advanced countries 'from challenging our leadership'" (Betts 2004: 24). The draft was later toned down to appease the allies.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/bush-war.htm#as>

In this context, Krauthammer (1992) strongly condemned isolationism and plead for a wider understanding of the U.S. national interest: "Isolationists say America should confine itself to vital national interest. (...) If the Persian Gulf is not a vital interest, then nothing is. All that is then left is preventing an invasion of the Florida Keys." (op. cit: 28f.). The U.N. cannot act without the United States; as "Operation Desert Storm" clearly showed: "The U.N. is guarantor for nothing. In the Gulf, without the United States, nothing would have happened" (ibid). Similarly, also Lawrence Freedman was convinced that "the U.S. is now well placed to define both the character of this new stage in international history and the West's role within it" (Freedman 1992: 49).

Nonetheless, first doubts and insecurities appeared. The period of euphoria that started in the late 80ies, was soon declining. The debates in *Foreign Affairs* reflected discourses in the society on whether withdraw from an active foreign policy and focus on resolving internal problems. The divide ran between Isolationists and Internationalists:

"This is the year in which President Bush will need to justify an activist foreign policy if he is to be reelected. He must do this against those in his own party who are raising old isolationist banners and Democratic opponents who sense a popular theme in the proposition that, with the evaporation of the Soviet threat, it is now time to concentrate on the multiple domestic problems of the United States." (Freedman 1992: 20)

And despite the widely recognised prevalence of the U.S. in the world, this world was increasingly perceived as a **chaotic place**:

"In the past the US warned its European allies about the dangers of parochialism and urged the West as a whole to follow a more global approach to security questions. That was a more straightforward proposition when the West confronted a strategic opponent also capable of operating on a global scale. Following the loss of such an opponent, no organizing principle has been identified as a replacement." (Freedman 1992: 21)

The Cold War, the threat posed by the Soviet Union, represented an "organising principle". Richard Pipes, the head of "Team B"<sup>10</sup> experts on the Soviet Union on the 70s in charge of analyzing intelligence data, succinctly stated: "Tension with the USSR paradoxically also maintained global stability" (Pipes 1991: 70). Instead, "There is not a single superpower, there is none. The United States was deprived of the role that provided its mission and self-justification (...). Thought is disoriented" (Pfaff 1991: 34). Lawrence Freedman posed the problem using metaphors of order and disorder, a vocabulary also adopted by other authors:

"Indeed the most striking feature of the global scene is its complex and untidy nature, so defying attempts to make sense of it through neat categories and simple formulas." (Freedman 1992: 22)

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<sup>10</sup> In which also Paul Wolfowitz worked.

and

"In each region political life appears no longer as a dialectic between imperialism and national liberation, or capitalism and socialism, but of order and disorder." (op. cit.: 27)

The world was also seen as a **dangerous place**. The main danger was perceived to emanate from WMD. They figured prominently in all accounts: for Krauthammer "The Post-Cold War era is the era of WMD" (Krauthammer 1992: 34). Nye viewed these weapons as a major reason for actively pursuing order in the world:

"But why spend anything on international order? The simple answer is that in a world of transnational interdependence, international disorder can hurt, influence or disturb the majority of people living in the United States. A nuclear weapon sold or stolen from a former Soviet republic could be brought into the United States in the hold of a freighter or the cargo bay of a commercial airliner. (...) In short, the new world order has begun. It is messy, evolving and not susceptible to simple formulation or manipulation. Russia and China face uncertain futures. Regional bullies will seek weapons of mass destruction." (Nye 1992: 94ff.)

This fear of WMD in the hand of "Weapon-States" (Krauthammer 1992) and later of terrorist was to haunt the authors of *Foreign Affairs* also in the following issues. At the end of this first phase, soberness prevailed in the statements of the authors. On the political level, the idea of a "New World Order" was also silently abandoned:

"By the end of the year George Bush had, for the most part, stopped talking about a new world order. Several of his advisers explained that he had dropped the phrase because he felt it suggested more enthusiasm for the changes sweeping the planet than he actually felt; he wanted, as a kind of antidote to all the uncertainties in the world, to stress the old verities of territorial integrity, national sovereignty and international stability." (Talbot 1992: 68)

For Nye the New World Order talk and the actual foreign policy reflected the rift between idealists and realists, between *Moralpolitik* and *Realpolitik*:

"Not long after the war, however, the flow of White House words about a new world order slowed to a trickle. (...) The White House thus decided to lower the rhetorical volume (...) The problem for the Bush administration was that it thought and acted like Nixon, but borrowed the rhetoric of Wilson and Carter." (Nye 1992: 83f).

## ***2<sup>nd</sup> Phase, 1993-1999: Increased Contention***

On January 20, 1993, Bill Clinton assumed power in the Oval Office. As he promised in a well-known interview, his aim was to "focus like a laser beam" on domestic economy. But of course, he also had a foreign policy agenda. And indeed, during his presidencies, the United States was engaged in major missions around the globe. Clinton repeatedly sent troops abroad. U.S. armed forces participated in the military interventions in Somalia ("Operation Restore Hope", December 1992-

May 1993 and "Operation Continue Hope", May 1993-March 1994), Haiti (1994), Bosnia (1995) and Kosovo (1999). Furthermore, "the threat vacuum left by communism's collapse sucked 'rogue states', which had been minor threats, into the USA's cross-hairs" (Betts 2004: 24). Clinton's agenda paid attention also to them.

Clinton's foreign policy doctrine was summarised by Security Adviser Anthony Lake in September 1993: "The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement, the enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies" (quoted in Haass 1995: 44). More formally, this doctrine was presented in the *National Security Strategy (NSSUS) of Engagement and Enlargement* – (July 1994). It stressed that:

"The central security challenge of the past half century – the threat of communist expansion – is gone. The dangers we face today are more diverse. Ethnic conflict is spreading and rogue states pose a serious danger to regional stability in many corners of the globe. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction represents a major challenge to our security." (NSSUS 1995: i)

To counter these new threats the strategy proposed three major objectives:

"Enhancing Our Security. Taking account of the realities of the post-Cold War era and the new threats, a military capability appropriately sized and postured to meet the diverse needs of our strategy, including the ability, in concert with regional allies, to win two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts. We will continue to pursue arms control agreements to reduce the danger of nuclear, chemical, biological, and conventional conflict and to promote stability. (...) Promoting Prosperity at Home. (...) Promoting Democracy. A framework of democratic enlargement that increases our security by protecting, consolidating and enlarging the community of free market democracies." (NSSUS 1995: 7)

This NSSUS was an opportunity to placate an increasingly worried foreign policy establishment. James Schlesinger made clear that "the United States has lost the magnetic north for calibrating its foreign policy." (Schlesinger 1993: 17). Also, complaints about the budget for implementing the U.S. foreign policy grew stronger:

"The Clinton administration's proposed fiscal 1994 defense budget makes it clear that, although the president may continue to affirm America's position as a superpower, he has denied the nation the military resources that role requires." (Tonelson 1993: 166)

The NSSUS also reflected the worries about the so-called rouge states, i.e. "those that reject the very rules and precepts upon which the [international] system is based" (Albright 1998: 51):

"With the end of the Cold War – and the passing of its unique disciplines – the world is becoming more rather than less anarchic. There are many trouble spots in the world; there will be countless more." (Schlesinger 1993: 27)

or

"The rogues – Iraq and North Korea most prominent among them – are openly hostile to the United States and are seeking or have sought nuclear weapons.(...) The number of rogue states is relatively small. The list of them invariably includes North Korea, Iran, Iraq, and sometimes Syria, Libya, and Algeria. Each is influenced by an ideology – Marxism-Leninism, Islamic fundamentalism, or Arab socialism – with anti-Western and anti-American features." (Mandelbaum 1995: 24ff.)

Neoconservative proposals followed a clear rationale when it comes to these states:

"Conservatives these days succumb easily to the charming old metaphor of the United States as a 'city on a hill'. They hark back, as George Kennan did in these pages not long ago, to the admonition of John Quincy Adams that America ought not go 'abroad in search of monsters to destroy'. But why not? The alternative is to leave monsters on the loose, ravaging and pillaging to their hearts' content, as Americans stand by and watch." (Kristol & Kagan 1996: 31)

Apart from the "monsters to destroy", also a concern arose about possible competitors on the world arena. Germany and Europe, Russia, but more China and Japan were carefully scrutinised. Zbigniew Brzezinski, for example, was concerned whether reunified Germany is going to dominate the European Union:

"It must be recognized that both Germany and Russia are in the midst of sensitive and complex national redefinitions. (...) a reunited Germany has the choice of either continuing to become an increasingly European Germany or seeking a German Europe (...). The ongoing redefinition of Russia poses potentially starker choices. Germany's democracy is not at issue, but Russia's democracy is tenuous at best. Moreover, Germany's commitment to the West is enduring; the only issue is how integrated or unilateral Germany's role within the new Europe will be." (Brzezinski 1995: 30)

Later, John Mearsheimer did not even rule out that there could be a nuclear rearmament in Germany:

"Five European States now have sufficient wealth and population to qualify as potential great powers: the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia. Of these, however, only Germany has the earmarks of a potential hegemon. (...) If American troops were pulled out of Europe (..) and Germany became responsible for its own defense, it would probably acquire its own nuclear arsenal and increase the size of its army." (Mearsheimer 2001: 50)

But beyond the imminently politico-military questions, it is in this second phase that the foreign policy establishment as represented in *Foreign Affairs* raised much more basic questions. Three articles appear especially indicative in this context: two of Samuel Huntington and one of Charles Maier. In "The Clash of Civilizations?", Huntington advances the well-known thesis that after U.S.-Soviet bipolarity, the world order will be shaped by the competition of civilizations and their possible clash. In his own words:

"It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. (...) The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future." (Huntington 1993: 22)

As also for other authors (as Inkenberry 1996 or Kupchan 1996, the latter asking for a renewed alliance between the U.S. and Europe in an "Atlantic Union" to replace NATO and EU), the "West" – which the U.S. is supposed to lead – remained for Huntington the only reliable partner. Indeed, he believed that "the central axis of world politics in the future is likely to be, in Kishore Mahbubani's phrase, the conflict between 'the West and the Rest'" (Huntington 1993: 41). However, Huntington was especially worried about the Islamic and Chinese civilizations. Thus, he attempted to construct another "constitutive outside" that the "West" misses since the demise of the USSR.

In "The Erosion of American National Interest", Huntington deepened this point and expressed furthermore his concern that since the bond that the Cold War created among Americans has vanished, the United States could face disintegration – in the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, he saw a first symptom of such a danger. Even more, he hardly sees the point in being American:

"Without a sure sense of national identity, Americans have become unable to define their national interests, and as a result subnational commercial interests and transnational and nonnational ethnic interests have come to dominate foreign policy. (...) 'Without the cold war, what's the point of being an American?' If being an American means being committed to the principles of liberty, democracy, individualism, and private property, and if there is no evil empire out there threatening those principles, what indeed does it mean to be an American, and what becomes of American national interests?" (Huntington 1997: 29f.)

In a similar vein as in "The clash of civilization", he then moved on to construct new enemies: earlier it was an enemy outside (China and particularly the Islamic World<sup>11</sup>), now he searches for them inside the U.S., and highlights the risks of immigration and the rise of the "cult of multiculturalism" (op. cit: 32).

Schlesinger (1997) saw democracy under stress of issues of race, technology and capitalism and asked whether democracy has a future. Charles Maier (1994) noticed an overall "civic discontent", the "erosion of civility" or even a "moral crisis" of Western democracy in general. He then argued that democracy does not satisfy civil society anymore: "It should not be surprising that the temptation to escape the political should revive as the discipline of the Cold War fades" (Maier 1994: 59). This leads to a resurgence of (mostly territorial) populism. Maier mentions Berlusconi in Italy and Perot in the United States, who both exploited populist antipathy toward establishment politicians.

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<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, he later rejects them as potential enemies – at least in the short term: "At present, thanks to the extent to which democracy and market economies have been embraced throughout the world, the United States lacks any single country or threat against which it can convincingly counterpose itself. Saddam Hussein simply does not suffice as a foil. Islamic fundamentalism is too diffuse and too remote geographically: China is too problematic and its potential dangers too distant in the future." (Huntington 1997: 32)

This crisis could only be "reversed by a commitment beyond borders and across frontiers" (Maier 1994: 64). This kind of moral crisis was still sensed by Kristol and Kagan two years later, who quickly established a link to foreign policy. For them, there was one possibility to solve this crisis: "The remoralization of America at home ultimately requires the remoralization of American foreign policy" (Kristol & Kagan 1996: 31).

Though the foreign policy of Bill Clinton was partially moralized, since not disinclined to humanitarian intervention and because democracy promotion was a top priority on the agenda, it was – according to the authors in *Foreign Affairs* – not sufficiently stringent and therefore maybe not apt to provide for a remoralization of American foreign and domestic policy as requested by Kristol and Kagan. For some observers, humanitarian intervention was not one of the virtues but rather one of the flaws of Clinton's foreign policy: "The strategic rationale for these operations, other than as charity, was dubious, so commitment receded when operations became costly without being conclusive, as in Somalia" (Betts 2004: 24). Also the attempt to "maintain the momentum of democracy's recent advances" (Albright 1998: 52) has not been unanimously welcomed. James Schlesinger asked even before Clinton became president:

"Do we really want to press greater democratization on Egypt? It would unlikely be beneficial either to our friend and ally, President Mubarak, or to Egyptian stability. Similar observations might be made about Tunisia, Morocco or even Jordan." (Schlesinger 1993: 20)

In the troubled Post-Cold War era, most of the *Foreign Affairs* authors longed for order and stability, for a guiding star in uncertain times. They asked for a moral stance, although some preferred stability in the world rather than democracy. "We are number one – now what?" This question of Haass (1999: 37) captures the mood. Despite successes like the Oslo-Accords, which went widely unnoticed in *Foreign Affairs*, Clinton's foreign policy provided no convincing answer to this question.

### ***3<sup>rd</sup> Phase, since 2000: A new war?***

The deficiencies of Clinton's foreign policy were quickly addressed by the Republican candidates in the 2000 presidential election campaign. Criticism grew as to whether acting in places like Somalia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, or Haiti, really corresponded to the U.S. national interest. While focusing on these places and temporarily cutting the budget for foreign policy (esp. the defence budget), the should-be priorities could not be sufficiently addressed, asserted some observers. Joseph Nye states, for example:

"If moral outrage or unilateralist temptations blind Americans to their other 'A list' priorities, the United States may dangerously overreach itself and turn a just cause into a counterproductive cru-

sade (...) But better consequences will flow if American values and goals are related to American power, and interests are rationally pursued within prudent limits." (Nye 1999: 34f.)

Especially two contributions to the *Foreign Affairs* set the tone: Robert B. Zoellick argued for "A Republican Foreign Policy"; Condoleezza Rice proposed to refocus on "Promoting the National Interest". Zoellick deplored that

"the Clinton administration never adopted a guiding strategy or even demonstrated a sustained commitment to foreign policy. As a result, Clinton has failed to define a new internationalism for the United States, thus letting historic opportunities slip away." (Zoellick 2000: 64)

He also advocated a "modern Republican foreign policy" that recognizes that "there is still evil in the world", i.e. "people who hate America and the ideas for which it stands" (op. cit: 70). Focusing on what Nye dubbed the "A-list", Zoellick underscored the threat posed by "rogue states" and the proliferation of WMD as well as the vital interests of maintaining access to oil in the Persian Gulf.

Rice (2000: 46) accused the Clinton administration of having tackled every foreign policy issue "on its own terms – crisis by crisis, day by day." She claimed that during the Clinton no clear "national interest" was articulated. Instead, it had been allegedly replaced by the "humanitarian interests" or the interests of "the international community". However, when she came to depict what the new fundament of foreign policy should be, she just repeated many pillars of Clinton's policy, such as promoting economic growth and political openness as well as dealing "decisively" with "rogue regimes" and their WMD potential (ibid). She highlighted Iraq as prototypical case and asked, already in 2000, for Saddam Hussein being removed<sup>12</sup>. Rice criticized the existence of a vacuum: "In the absence of a compelling vision, parochial interests are filling the void." (op. cit.:62). In an analogy to Zoellick, she calls for such a vision based on "American values":

"American values are universal. People want to say what they think, worship as they wish, and elect those who govern them; the triumph of these values is most assuredly easier when the international balance of power favors those who believe in them." (Rice 2000: 49)

In contrast to the scepticism in the previous 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase, Rice advanced a more assertive, self-confident image of the U.S. and its foreign policy, and stressed again that the United States fulfils a

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<sup>12</sup> "As History marches toward markets and democracy, some states have been left by the side of the road. Iraq is the prototype. Saddam Hussein's regime is isolated, his conventional military power has been severely weakened, his people live in poverty and terror, and he has no useful place in international politics. He is therefore determined to develop WMD. Nothing will change until Saddam is gone, so the United States must mobilize whatever resources it can, including support from his opposition, to remove him." (Rice 2000: 60)

historical mission: "But the United States and its allies are on the right side of history." (op. cit.: 46) – while few others "hold on to old hatreds as diversions from the modernizing task at hand" (ibid).

So far, and despite the increasing terrorism threat (1993 World Trade Center bombing, the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia, 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, 2000 attack on the USS Cole in Yemen), combating terrorism was a recurring but not prominent issue. Instead, the discourse of "rogue states" and WMD appears more often, possibly *combined* with the issue of terrorism:

"Nuclear or biological weapons in the hands of terrorists or rogue states constitute the greatest single danger to American security – indeed, to world security – and a threat that is becoming increasingly less remote." (Perry 2002: 31)

Indeed, there seems to be a logic of equivalence (Laclau & Mouffe) at work when "rogue states", "WMD", and "terrorism" are summarised as a combined threat. This becomes also evident in the 2002 NSSUS.

Surprisingly, and at least as far as reflected in *Foreign Affairs*, 9/11 did not represent the sharp break in the foreign policy discourse it is often assumed to be but rather a shift: all issues, especially that of terrorism and its dangers were already present before, but there was a clear change in emphasis towards the terrorism issue: "Today, counterterrorism is the top national security priority" (Betts 2004: 25). The reaction to the 2001 attacks was, in general, much like Francis Fukuyama's individual reaction to the event. Though 9/11 may be interpreted as a "downside of globalization: the backlash against westernization and American primacy" (ibid), Fukuyama stuck to his End of History thesis:

"Despite the events since September 11: modernity, as represented by the United States and other developed democracies, will remain the dominant force in world politics, and the institutions embodying the West's underlying principles of freedom and equality will continue to spread around the world. The September 11 attacks represent a desperate backlash against the modern world, which appears to be a speeding freight train to those unwilling to get onboard." (quoted in Tsygankov 2005:125)

In his contribution to the December 2001 issue of *Newsweek*, "Their target: the modern world", Fukuyama presented a couple of strong antagonisms and effectively contributed to constructing a new "constitutive outside": the "West vs. the rest", "Muslim believers vs. non-believers", "developed democracies vs. Islamo-fascism".

This bold portrayal of the world order after 9/11, was echoed in *Foreign Affairs* only insofar as there was a stronger stress on the superiority of the U.S., its hegemony or the persistence of unipolarity. For example, Brooks and Wohlforth stated that:

“But what truly distinguishes the current international system is American dominance in all of them [areas] simultaneously. Previous leading states in the modern era were either great commercial and naval powers or great military powers on land, never both.” (Brooks & Wohlforth 2002: 20)

The National Security Strategy of 2002 reflects both the two foreign policy discursive trends after 2000 identifiable in *Foreign Affairs*: (1) taking a moralistic stance in foreign policy and (2) making of counter-terrorism the top priority, reinforcing the position of “terror” in the threat-triad (rogue states”/”WMD”/”terrorism”).

On point (1), the Paper leaves no doubt: it starts with a quote of Bush jr.: “Some worry that it is somehow undiplomatic or impolite to speak the language of right and wrong. I disagree. Different circumstances require different methods, but not different moralities.” (quoted in NSSUS 2002: 3). Indeed, in face of the terrorist threat, the time for doubts (as between 1993 and 2000) seems to be over. The Strategy paper explains:

“In pursuit of our goals, our first imperative is to *clarify what we stand for*: the United States must defend liberty and justice because *these principles are right and true for all people everywhere*. (...) Embodying lessons from our past and using the opportunity we have today, the national security strategy of the United States must start from these core beliefs and look outward for possibilities to expand liberty.” (ibid., emphasis added)

Instead of Clinton’s “enlargement of democracy”, here there is the claim to “expand liberty”. Despite the similarity, this NSSUS opens much more possibilities to enforcing this aim.

Also regarding the second point, the chapter on terrorism and counter-terrorism begins with a moralistic Bush-quote: “Our responsibility to history is already clear: to answer these attacks and rid the world of evil” (quoted in NSSUS 2002: 53). The NSSUS elaborates the understanding counter-terrorism as a “war”:

“The United States of America *is fighting a war* against terrorists *of global reach*. (...) In the war against global terrorism, we will never forget that we are ultimately *fighting for our democratic values and way of life*.” (op. cit.: 5ff., emphasis added)

In such a “war on terror” for the very “way of live”, “inside” and “outside” are clearly defined and finally, the U.S. seems to have found the new foe that Brzezinski or Maersheimer sought as re-

placement for the Soviet Union. The discourse is now pretty similar to Reagan's "Empire of Evil". This new "Empire", however, comprises not terrorism alone. Rather, "Terrorism" is still closely linked to "rouge states" and the risk of WMD proliferation – terrorists are seen as clients of the "rouges":

"Other rogue regimes seek nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons as well. These states' pursuit of, and global trade in, such weapons has become a looming threat to all nations. We must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends." (op. cit.: 14)

The strategy against this unholy alliance is the centrepiece of this NSSUS – Preemption:

"The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction – and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively." (op. cit.: 15)

... or as Betts (2004: 2) calls it: "Primacy in your face".

## **Conclusion**

The demise of the Communist Bloc triggered a social crisis or discursive dislocation and led to a reshuffling of political frontiers not only in Russia but also in the "Western" world, as shown by the changes in U.S. foreign policy discourse. The main difference is that in the Russian case, we have primarily a crisis projected inward, and in the case of the U.S., a crisis projected outward, though also there, basic pillars of national identity, political system and national interest are called into question.

In the Russian case, the whole political system had to be redefined. Counter-intuitively, it was all but clear what the desideratum "democracy" should actually mean and be. Rather, the only clear thing was that "communism" had to be removed. Additionally, Russian national identity was seriously crippled since it formerly heavily relied on the Soviet imaginary. This renegotiation of political frontiers, this competition between different discourses, lasted almost ten years. After 2000, a certain social stability has been regained. Both national identity and the self-perception of the political system seem stabilised. A rise of nationalism and a definition of democracy which stresses Russian exceptionalism and independence took roots in Russia. After having completed this task and recovered from this crisis projected inward, also the return to an antagonistic foreign policy was possible that we witness today. The concept of "sovereign democracy" particularly stresses the own exceptionalism and the wish to stand aloof from the West, which should not interfere into domestic issues.

In the United States, enthusiasm about the "victory" in the Cold War soon was replaced by doubts about the own role in the world and – to a minor degree – about the own political system. The necessity of a constitutive outside, of an "enemy" was strongly felt. The foreign policy establishment, represented by the authors in *Foreign Affairs*, spent some effort in trying to find a solution for the missing foe, possibly outside the United States. Samuel Huntington "Clash of Civilization" is the most extreme swan of this tendency. Growing terrorism, especially the 9/11 attack, finally provided the antagonist the U.S. was looking for. Though apparently a destabilization, this terrorist attack also provoked a reassurance for the self-perception of the U.S., for what it stands and for what role it wants to play in the world. So both Russia and the U.S. seem to have recovered self-confidence. And it is this self-confidence that will also shape their future relationship.

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