

Turkish Russian Political and Economical Relations

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Abstract

This study has been investigated Turkish Russian Political relations from the historical beginning of those relations until today as condensed academical research. In this research we have clarified what's the Turk means for Russians and also, Russian race's perception in Turkey. For the best explanation of this academical work we should underline that's Turkey was an old Ottoman Empire's second generation and the Russian Federation was the USSR's(Soviet Empire's) continuation. As we neglected this academical research from the all dimensions, but political investigation between those two countries are more important for world politics. In this way, Russian today's President Vladimir Putin's political behaviour was an exponent for Turkey Prime Minister Recep tayyip Erdoğan's regulations and instructions in nowadays. An important steps has been started as travel without a visa between Russia and Turkey. Also an economical agreements and treaties has been signed between Turkish and Russian leaders as well in the all areas, mostly in the War Industry technologies area and in fruit sector as well. Turkish economical growth was the world's high impact factor in the AKP government, during Erdoğan's period. Turkish economy has been developed from \$300 Billion USD to the \$1,2 Trillion USD in last 10 year. That means Turkish economy has grow about a 1 Trillion USD in 10 year and this is a fantastic digit and the world. Also Turkey has been improved it's economy from 26. Th place to the 17. Th place between those years. Russia also developed it's economy from \$500 Billion USD to \$3,7 Trillion USD between Putin's rulership in Russian Federation. This means that Russia's new President Vladimir Putin holds a magic wand.

Keywords:Economical, Political, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Russia, Turkey, Vladimir Putin.

Introduction

USA's getting confused against their military forces getting stuck in Afghanistan and Iraq and Iran's challenges is encouraging Russia. The USA-Russia power struggle on the line lying from The Baltic to Kirghizistan is reminding of the Cold War. In the comprehensive report titled 'Russia's Wrong Direction: What the United States Can and Should Do?', that was prepared by the independent task group of the famous CNR and published on the March of 2006, it was stated that with Putin's second period in the government the Russian society and Russia's foreign policy is continuing to change in a way that can cause troubles for USA and those cases were accentuated. It is continuing to be important for USA that the cooperation with Russia is carried on. Preventing the terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, Russia's cooperation related to the Iran, energy and HIV/AIDS issues matter to develop USA's benefits. However in many areas USA-Russia relations have disappointed hopes. Russia is headed to the wrong direction. For all this reasons it would be more suitable that USA makes 'cooperation in chosen areas' instead of 'comprehensive partnership' and also 'oppositon in chosen areas'.

Again in the year 2006 USA Land Forces Command's organ 'Strategic Studies Institute' published a report titled 'Iron Triokas, The New Threat From The East', that was prepared by Richard J. Krickus and examines Russia from the perspective of USA. 'Russia is a threat.' In his report Krickus defines Russia as a threat. USA, that focused on the global terror after 11 September 2001, has neglected Russia, that is holding a security thread. This is a delusion based on two reasons.

First one is related to that it became a perception that the violence in the Caucasus, demographic and health crises, economical uncertainties, income unevenness and returning to autocracy were going to form a problematic Russia. The second delusion in the perception is related to that Russia is a living threat and this threat is appearing by Russia's bringing its power on the security policies of the Central and Eastern European countries back on.

According to Krickus the actors and the circumstances of the Russia's new attitude can be expressed as 'Iron Trioka'(Iron Triad) 'Powerfull Leader' like Putin, that whilom aimed to improve Russia's security benefits by exploiting the energy wealthiness of the regions, that were under Russia's control, is the first element of the 'Iron Triad'. The dictators of the economy, that are using the energy card of the Russia, mafia and extrajudicial military personnel are forming the second leg of the 'Iron Triad' while the regional actors, that are forming an atmosphere for Russia's benefits on the region, that is on the east of the Baltic Sea, are forming the third. Kriskus is not seeing Russia as only a military threat but as an element, that can destabilise the region and the whole Europe, and he wants precautions to be taken.

Just unite the geographical area which encloses the Baltic Sea, Estonia which has a shore border to Baltic Sea, Letonia, Lituania, Polonia, and after that Belarus, Ukrania, Romania and Bulgaria with a line on the map of Eurasia and add up Black Sea Region and Caucasia to the area. Just expand the area in such a way that it will include the Caspian Sea, Cenral Asia countries, Kazakhstan, Uzbekhistan, Kirghizistan, Tadzhikstan. Here on this geography there takes place the USA- Russia power struggle and it seems that this struggle will gain fever and grow. The USA would like to control the hwyl of Russia on the Baltic area and surround her by democratizing and drawing the East European countries into the NATO; and expand the containment line by controlling the Black Sea region through its future base camps in Romania and Bulgaria by getting into the Black Sea region and settling in South Caucasia. The energy-rich Caspian Basin and the Central Asian countries both form USA's containment line extension and the life space within this power struggle.

Despite the demographic and democracy problems, fifteen years old Russia is far more powerful now. Putin has well centralized the political strength, fixed up the stability on a large scale. Also restored and revived the economy. Rising oil prices reflect on the Russian balance sheets as handsome profits and Russia's foreign exchange reserves have exceeded 180 billion Dollars. Russia owns rich strategical resources. The richest natural gas reserves exist in Russia. On the rank order Russia takes the eighteenth place and is the second greatest oil exporter. This allows her to use this power as a weapon when the need arises. Russia has no more tolerance for losing and USA's coming close to her. It gains Russia power to collaborate strategically with China against the USA. Due to the confusion arising from the USA's military forces coming to a deadlock in Afghanistan and Iraq and challenges of Iran against USA encourage Russia. The USA-Russia power struggle on the line extending from Baltic to Kirghizistan reminds the Cold War era.

How Russians and Turks Perceive Each Other?

How two community perceive each other is very important in terms of determining the degree of relations among them. Besides our economic and social relations, in Russia that also take an important place in our foreign policy, common beliefs about Turks, especially attitude against the Turkish made article, is determinative in a great deal of matters as well as approaches in foreign policy. Similarly, image of Russia in Turkey occasionally leads us to perceive events happen in our neighbour wrongly. This however, prevents relations to improve into the necessary tone. In this chapter we will try to go over Turkey's and Russia's views about each other. At first we should see this: There are differences between Russia that is perceived in Turkey and Russia in reality. We must put the Russia in the necessary place in our head. Our current image of Russia largely shaped/was shaped in the Cold War period. Wars made during the Otoman Empire period were used effectively in the shaping of this image. Primarily we should overview through this perspective.¹

Public, tradesfolk in the public are faster in the matter of changing this viewpoint. But, governors of states, bureaucrats and soldiers both in Russia and Turkey can still carry the traces of past or they don't have proper visions belonging to the new situation. How much we can get closer to Russia in political, economic and cultural issues? Or how much we can have them get closer to us? Primarily the answer of this question should be given.

¹ÖZBEK, N., "New Orientations in Russian Foreign Policy", Eurasia File, Volume: 3, No: 4, Ankara, 1996.

When talking about Russia, we remember the concepts like Great Petro, Catherina, policy of going down to the hot waters, danger of communism. The concepts that gain admission during the last 15 years are: shuttle trade, tourism of Antalya, blue current, Turkish builders, Turkish students who study there. As it is seen, concepts are changing from comminatory concepts into commercial and cultural terms. That is to say, the contents of our relations are also changing. In Russian history books, a beheading and shedding blood image have been ascribed to Turks. To be like a Turk having been used in the meaning of feeble minded and clumsy. But nowadays it is possible to divide the views about Turks into three. The first group is people who have no idea concerning Turks. The second group is people who have positive conviction. These are people who had come to Turkey for tourism or commerce, or people who acquainted with a Turk in Russia. The third group however, is people who have negative conviction. These are generally jingoists and orthodoxs. We can add the soldiers and state bureaucracy brought up during the Soviets.²

We, Turks hadn't made a great effort to acquainted with our 500 year neighbour. There were no serious reviews, books and etc. written about Russia and Russians neither in the Otoman nor the republic period. A.N. Kurat's history books named "Russian History" and "Russian-Turk Relations" couldn't be outreached yet. There was no university which educated Russian history till 1991. Now the status is a little bit better. Russian language, history and politics are given together at some of our universities. Yet it isn't enough. However Russians had begun to explore Turks so early. In 1754 Turcology had been begun to teach at Kazan University in Russia. In 1818 Oriental Institute was builded in Moscow. The number of written book and article by this time is over ten thousand. Turcology studies are being done currently in a great deal of universities.³ In our relations, economy is going ahead of politics. Businessmen are compelling the politicians. People go beyond themselves are primarily the businessmen. Commercial relations that begin with gas purchase, construction, shuttle trade and tourism are proceeding through Turks building factories there and Russians aspiring TÜPRAŞ here. The framework of the cooperation between us may extend along to political cooperation in Caucasus and Central Asia. In the word of one English statesman, "England hasn't got conventional friends and conventional enemies. England has benefits." We should behave according to this and give up emotionality in foreign policy.⁴

Russia is one of the known nations that had established an empire.⁵ It has got a comprehensive cultural and historical infrastructure. There had been a great many characters who have worldfamed importance in literature, philosophy, art and science. Although the Tsarist Russia was collapsed, this imperial notion had proceeded. The Soviets is one of the big empires of history. After the subversion of the Soviets, a short period of interregnum had been experienced in Russia. However Putin, head of the state, aroused this imperial discourse again after coming into power. This notion was accepted on behalf of the society. We call this, pretension of becoming a superpower. The pretension of becoming a second polar against America. The declaration, made by Putin recently, related to irrepressible atomic bomb should be evaluated in this context. In the last decade so many Turkish Authority visited Russia but they could not set up an elite and consistent foreign policy with Russia. But after these visits, the relationships with Russia were not good as expected. The politicians of both countries could not make important steps to developing the relations.⁶

²CROZIER, Brian; **The Rise and Fall of The Soviet Empire**, An Imprint of Prima Publishing, National Review, California, 2000, s. 57-127.

³MANSUR, Raul; Moscow. The Series of Visual Travel Guides, Dost Kitabevi Publishing, Ankara, 1999, p. 34-123.

⁴IVANOV, İgor Sergeyeviç; Foreign Policy of Russia and the World (Compilation from Articles and Conferences), International Relations Moscow State University, Russian Diplomacy Encyclopedia – ROSSPEN Publishing, Moscow, 2001, p. 23-89.

⁵KAPUSCİNSKI, Ryszard; Imperialism, Om Publishing, First Edition, İstanbul, 1999, p. 56-90.

⁶Dr. İhsanÇomak, Foreign Policy Analyst, dricom11@yahoo.com,

<http://www.usak.org.uk/junction.asp?mod=articles&st=PrintArticleDetail&id=63&lm=58649JLFD0932&ln=TR>, 2007-07-03.

In our thoughts, the visit of Putin is much exaggerated in the public opinion and we have great expectations. Initially, Turkey has to determine the limit of their proximity with Russia. Then, it can be possible to enlarge the frame formed by Russia for Turkey within the Russian policy.

Russia in the Period of Putin: The Return of Real Politic

The 'well-intentioned' politicians who were catastrophic to their people by exaggerating their period came to a bad end. The biggest victory of the multi dimensional attack against socialism was the disassociation of Soviet Union and Warsaw Treaty Organization states. It is taken into consideration that If the mentioned states have formal characters in the relationships with socialism, it will be realized that 'the victory' declared is not be a certain defeat of socialism. The important thing in view of our topic is the characteristic of 'New System' which was set up by the imperialist block under the leadership of USA, 'the winner' party⁷. As it is said over, the main characteristic of this system was set forth as 'unipolarity'. In view of international relation, there are two hypotheses lying behind the thesis:

1. Soviet Union (Russia), which is the 'other pole', was destroyed and will not have an outstanding role in the world scene in the anticipated future.⁸
2. The victorious imperialist block will fill elementarily the hegemonic gap remained from its opposite pole like as the sand in the hourglass by preserving its unity and integrity.

After ten years later from 'the victory', it is verified with each international development that the second hypothesis fell down certainly. The imperialist block is far from preserving its integrity after quelling its domestic enemy (the movements of worker struggling for power and national movements struggling against imperialism) temporarily by the effect of disassociation of Soviet Union which was 'the common enemy'. Actually, the elimination of 'the common enemy' made the conflicts of interest between USA, Germany, France, England and Japan underlying 'the victorious block' and the policies suppressed since 70 years came to the fore again. It is an actual example for us that these nations and their allies, who killed lots of people in Iraq as a show of force against the whole people in the world in 1991, fell into a dispute after the last USA- England attack to Baghdad in 16th February.⁹ Is the anticipation as 'Russia will not get on its feet again' which is another factor of the hypothesis true? Before answering it is necessary to remind that 'USA and the other 'victorious' imperialists were acting thoughtlessly depending on this anticipation for 10 years. Then, the inter-imperialist relations will eventuate in new inversions and the consequences of the failure of this anticipation will not be useful for the people that adopted the anticipation.¹⁰

At this point it is required to consider closely that Russia had started in Putin's period international attacks. After falling of USSR was one of the ascertainment that / which had been given voice by American ideologes: "USA had been rescued at/in welt politic from ideolocigal barriers any more." This was meaning , that American foreign policy had reached again middle class, which was prior to socialist blackto "real politic" real policy period. If it is required to give an example :some of countries and realationships which was acceptable more or less effect area of USSR will have been gained new oppurtunities for the hegemony projections not to be hinder ideological obstacles and would have been improved.

Indeed, in the last decade had been experienced that a series of country from Indian to Anglo , which were in Soviet effect area , into the effort of including fully to imperialistic system ocular condensation. Meantime, hegemony classes of some countries such as Turkey, Greece and Pakistan started to bewail in the direction of "losing their importance" after Cold War. Provided that issue one or another imperialist got rid of ideological connection, it would be at fault to think this connection would prevent only some blows of USA. What for USA was valid, also were valid for other imperialists, especially for the Russian imperialism which they had rescued entirely from socialistic mask. In the last years well known imperialists of the world started to keeping on the conflict and dangerous waters of " Real Politic".

⁷ ÇEÇEN, A., "Internationalism of National States Against Globalism of Imperialists", Global Report, no: 1, 2001.

⁸ AKTÜKÜN, İlker; SSCB' den BDT' ye Nasıl Varıldı. Marksist Bir Tahlil İçin Saptamalar, Sorun Press, 1. Edition, İstanbul, 1995, p. 67-90.

⁹ MARPLES, R. DAVID; Russia, 1917-1921, Pearson Education Limited, Essex, 2000, p. 12-89.

¹⁰ St. Petersburg Press (2000-2007)

In the Revisionist USSR period emphasized to "defending" view of Russian administration to west with strong attack effect of imperialist block and as unavoidable. Except of some exceptional couldn't develop and attack except for protecting their positions in the west.

The basis of this effort had been that politic: " One group of weak country, which were traditional Russia and the Russian effect area between Russian front and enemies." And Putin is face to face much more serious situation, because those talked of weak countries (such as toward to west Ukraine, Belarus; toward to south Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia...etc) had snatched to west effect area. Like Poland old members of Warsaw Treaty Organisation members of affiliated with NATO 's members are shown that "buffer had started to come to pieces by the western imperialists. As a reminder, in summits, which was made about to Germany's combination in the circumstances of the being USSR, NATO had promised won't expand one milimeter to eastwards and won't accept any Warsaw Treaty Organisation country as a member of them. Putin's Russia seems quite angry not keeping these promises.

In remuneration for three Europe country NATO, Russian started to take precautions. First, accepting to USA the Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) to NATO announced clearly that it will see as red line invasion. This definition was meaning that NATO's expanding to Baltics will be accept direct threat to Russian national interests. Second precaution came from the security area. Russian administration became aggressive its nuclear doctrine with a shocking blow to the world. Old doctrine in USSR's period was giving a guarantee that USSR won't be the first part of this nuclear attack. However, this new doctrine gave using nuclear power the green light in case of being vital threat to national interest.

Russia aftermath the USSR (The Union Of Soviet Socialist Republics); depicted a scenery of a government which was economically, military, administrative, politically and socially in essential collapse. In order to comprehend the dimensions of the collapse, it will be adequate to convey that the result of the period named as the " Cold War" in failure, is described as the "Russian Brest-Litovsk" by the perspectives of our present day Russian strategists. It is a fact that after First World War, like German imperialism, Soviet social-imperialism was also faced with a bill of thrashing defeat. Who "extended" the bill was USA and its allies and in this bill there occurred a series of heavy "pen", from Russian economy being subordinated by western monopolies to the counteraction of Russian policy by various ways, from "American style of living" to "Western type democracy", till the disposal of "Russian spheres of effect " in world regions of importance.

The bill, was tried to be paid by Boris Yeltsin who was passionately supported by USA and his cadres. Economy was indexed to IMF (International Monetary Fund) patented " shock treatment" (a Russian term full shock, zero treatment!), national government under the name of "western type democratization", was cell divided, even town managements almost turned into a state of independent, regional duchies. While Western imperialists started making the horse prance at East Europe and Caucasia which are traditional " Russian domains", positions at Middle East, Africa and Latin America were abandoned. American hegemony, which was imposed on cultural and ideological areas, lasted till the break up of national identity. Let' convey a tragicomical example that shows how heedless were the attacks of USA imperialism: In recent years, in a very important part of Hollywood films screening in the whole world and surely in Russia, (Red Wave, The Jackal, The Saint, GoldenEye, The Peacemaker, Air Force-1, Ronin, The Blues Brothers 2000...) mafia who is showed as the "enemy", marauder generals who are a waste of cold war, old inquiry agents, nuclear weapon smugglers and launders, the common characteristic of all these is that they are "Russian". It is known that this table reflects at least one side of the coin, but the problem is, what feel Russian youth and community who watch these films.!

Main Lines of the American Attack

Madeleine Albright, a familiar name, who was the foreign minister of Bill Clinton period talks about the nearly insolent politics of USA about Russia and its "old effect areas" in this way :

"America's approach here is helping the countries to get rid of the useless habits of the past, and to accept that cooperation will provide a richer, proud and peaceful shared future, as in other areas around the world. This principle reflects to our support programs intended for New Independent States : These are programs such as building up democracy, encouraging the economic development, preventing the arming, educating judges, advancing the status of women, providing the basic human requirements,

supporting academic programs like Muskie scholarships. Board of Citizen Democracy, Sister Cities, Open Society Institute, Eurasia and MacArthur Foundations and others are helping our tries to strengthen the civil society and to create strong communities... Even for United States , the future is not guaranteed.

If we are too lazy to look beyond our borders, we can see that a new world is being formed at which our presence is not felt, our values are not shared, our products are not welcomed and our citizens are not secure. But if we repeat our promise of helping the Independent States and others who are worthy, we will see that, everywhere the children are citizens and participators, they leave aside their origins and build up communities, and they are participators in the global market. Free societies and open economies make progress in that way, allies and friends of USA are formed by that way.”¹¹

Every topic that is coming to mind, being in Albright’s interest , from the judges’ education acts to the statue advancement of the women , must give an idea about the content of the attack against Russia.¹²

The main goals of USA regarding the “transformation” of Russia can be listed as :

- 1) Banking Sector : Ensuring the financial dependency of the Russian Banks to USA, under the name of “Saving from Speculation and Arbitrariness”
- 2) Energy Sector : It is calculated that in the next 7-8 years ahead, for reaching the production rate that was present just in 1988, Russia must make an investment of 15 Billion dollars per year . Western energy monopolies, first among them being USA , are covetting this profitable field. In exchange of these “services”, USA is insisting on subjects such as clarification of tax regime, the act of taking the property rights under guarantee and international arbitration. In case such laws are laid down, Russia, who is owning rich oil and gas reservoirs, will be dependent to foreign capital in the energy field.¹³
- 3) Food : The damage on Russian agriculture caused ten millions of people to come face to face with the threat of starvation. Especially north and south regions and poor masses in big cities ended up being in need of foreign aid. USA is subjugating terms such as “tax discount for customs and foreign capital” for the food aids it did, and will do.¹⁴
- 4) Cultural and Ideological Area : Hundred millions of dollars transferred to various funds in accordance with Freedom Support Act in USA are used to in Russia , too, in addition to other countries, for the goal of making the so-called “Western Ideals” common. Right along with scholarships given in this content, thousands of American supported organizations are formed under the name of “non-governmental organization”. Those organizations take upon themselves functions such as taking of the Russian politicians to USA for “education”.¹⁵
- 5) Waekening the army : Agreements like START 1 and Chemical Weapons Convention brought down the power of Russian army to minimul level. And now, by START 2 and START 3 agreements, that army power is being tried to be completely eliminated.¹⁶

At the end of the intensive ‘American Aid Progression’ which was tried to continue presently, situation of the country was heart-rending as of March 2000. National income had decreased forty percent rate, indusy and agriculture had collapsed, investment had gone down. Forty percent of population below poverty limit, was living less a dolar income in a day. Although inflation reduced paralel decrease of public buying power, it was approximately thirty percent. Average life had declined sixty age at men. Deaths had passed births fifty percent rate. Four third of drinking water was dirty according to international standards.

Situation wasn’t very great at military area. At the end of the armament program which was presented as ‘Mutual Peace Progression’, while USA army was staying very strong, nuclear warhead had been destroyed remain from Soviet, three countries which were the member of the ancient North bloc had been completely purified from weapons.

¹¹ ILHAN, A., “Eurasia Truth” – “Eurasia Center of the World” – “Eurasia Belongs to Eurasian”, Republic, 1998

¹²<http://www.putin.ru>

¹³ STANKOVIC, S., “Russia In Search of Itself”, Eurasia File, Volume: 1 Issue: 1, Ankara, 1994

¹⁴ Republic (2000-2007)

¹⁵ TEZCAN, Y., “Power Struggle Over Eurasia and Turkey”, Defense, Issue:2, Ankara, 1998

¹⁶ <http://www.russianembassy.org>.

Hundreds of ballistic rockets, bomber and submarine (183 of these were nuclear submarines) had been existed. 80 tone refinement uranium at Russia's control, had been bought very cheaply by USA, a series of agreement had been signed to Russia leaders for preventing armanent again. Basic aim, demilitarization of the relations with Western.

The same events happened at civil society. 35 thousand young Russian were removed and educated under 'USA Support Program'. Credit and education was provided to 275 thousand small business. Finance was given to 300 television canals and indefinite newspapers which were expansive wide Russia ground. Dozens of American Finance Foundation and Ideology Company started to influence within Russia politics. During Yeltsin period, persons who were recommended by these companies or came direct from these companies, had an important influence Kremlin corridors.

The most intensive state, under Nixon Government, principal strateji of USA army protected inevitably the force which would 'get over with two and a half conflict at the same time' (towards USSR and China war plus region war) and after, 'get over with one and a half conflict' (towards USSR or China war plus region war). George Bush period, this strateji was changed as getting over with region wars at the same time. Therefore, this was notice that Russia had been 'out of the game'.

The Rise of Putin

Vladimir Putin take his first step to become 'the only leader' of the country undercircumstances which we tried to outline in upper lines. When Boris Yeltsin appointed this old KGB member whose name had never been heard in national policy in 16th August 1999, his politic life is thought to be finished in a couple of months later like many other 'President Of Yeltsin' before him too. According to the comments which took place nowadays in Russian media, Putin's most vital personality was his loyalty and Yeltsin chose him completely because of that reason.¹⁷ His aim was to make his personal defraudation and his dirty jobs not to be irritated after his expiring government. In the following days, it was understood that the mentality represented by Putin was much more than that.

The thing which made Vladimir Putin's star shine was the Chechnya problem which had prepared many organizer politician's political death. In the same month when Putin became president, Shariatic Vahhabi Operation which got Saudi Arabia's and Pakistani's assistance directly and USA's assistance indirectly made a critical movement and entered their neighbour country Dagestan. The declared aim was uniting Chechnya and Dagestan under Sharia's flag and after ran away the Russians founding the Independent Islamic Government. This group which did not hesitate to show Chechnya people's national demands to the western imperialists for he sake of their benefit was expecting that the corruption seen in all fields in the last period of Yeltsin in Russia would be beneficial for their case and after 1994-'96 war Russian Army would hesitate to embark a second Chechnya adventure.

Yet Vahhabi's Dagestan attack meant the 'last drop' in Caucasia for Russian imperialism. Firts of all, the oil pipeline between Baku (Azerbaijan) and Supsa (Georgia) was opened again with the support of USA. After that event, Azerbaijan and Georgia signed an agreement for Baku-Ceyhan pipeline. The usage of these two pipelines which were planned to be secured by NATO meant that even a gram of oil would not drain from the Russian land. If the Vahhabi attack directed towards Dagestan meant the Chechnya's first step of gaining independence from Russia, same thing could be happened in this area too. Russia was under threatened of losing Nort Caucasia. The bombs which exploded in Moscow and the other big cities respectively and which caused approximately 300 civilian's death helped to Putin's government to manufacture public opinion for a counter attack. The Russian attack which still continues was started in September 1999.¹⁸

With the contribution of 'the independent media' which was under Kremlin's control this old spy who was seem insignificant a few months ago was propagated as 'the iron fist which Russia needs'.¹⁹

¹⁷ YELTSİN, Boris; Geceyarısı Günlükleri, Türkiye İş Bankası Culture Publication, İstanbul, 2000, pg. 78-90.

¹⁸ MANSUR, Raul; Moscow. Görsel Gezi Rehberleri Series, Dost Bookstore Publication, Ankara, 1999, pg. 34-123.

¹⁹ <http://www.mid.ru>.

Yeltsin, with a last movement, suddenly resigned on December 31 in 1999 and assigned his place to Putin until the election. The three months time after the resignation which caught the outs unawares would be enough to ensure success for Putin in election.

Manifest of the Millennium

Vladimir Putin was giving too different answers from previous Yeltsin to the questions raised both domestically and by the West as to 'who he was and what he wanted to do'. A speech that outlines the duty Putin set for himself, has a special importance.

This speech, titled 'Russia On the Threshold of the Millennium' and made at the end of 1999, is known for a typical bourgeois pragmatism and eclecticism. Nevertheless, at the expense of trying the reader's patience, we have to relay the important points of this speech.

Putin is relaying the socio-economic condition of the country with these data: 'National income of our country diminished almost in half at the 1990's... In the aftermath of the 1998 crisis, per capita income dropped to 3,500 USD and this is five times lower than the average of G7 countries. Structure of the Russian economy has changed and the key sectors have become petroleum, energy engineering and metallurgy. These correspond to % 15 of the national income, % 50 of the total industrial output, % 70 of the exports. Efficiency in real sectors has experienced a great slowdown. It is above the world average in the production of raw materials and electricity, but the condition in other sectors is % 20 to 24 of the U.S.A. average. % 70 of our machinery and equipment is older than 10 years and this is higher than the twofold of the figure in developed countries. These are the results of ever-decreasing national investments especially in real sectors. Foreign investors are not deemed to be rushing for contributing to the development of Russian industry.'

The total of the foreign direct investments (FDI) toward Russia is only 11.5 billion USD. As for China, it received 43 billion USD in FDI. While the top 300 international companies were allocating 216 billion USD for research and development in 1997, Russia made a deduction in this field. Only % 5 of Russian companies are concerned with productive output. Foreign companies have far surpassed Russia especially in the field of science-intensive civilian production. Russia is responsible for % 1 of such products in the world market, the U.S.A. is providing % 36 and the Japan is % 30.'

Putin proceeds to the vital questions next: 'The question of the Russia is what to do now. How can we provide full capacity operation of new market mechanisms? How can we overcome the deep ideologic-political disunity in the society? Which strategic targets can unite Russian society? What kind of a rank will Russia hold in the international society in the 21. century? Which economic, social and cultural boundaries do we want to achieve within the next 10 to 15 years? What are our strong and weak points? And at the moment, what kind of material-moral sources do we have?'

All these should not leave the impression of Putin's 'passion for socialism'. He, was only after a political gain from this passion and does not hide his hostile attitude toward socialism: 'Russia has spent three fourths of the last century under the implementation of the communist doctrine. It would be a mistake to omit, even deny the undeniable achievements of those periods. But it would be a greater mistake not to comprehend the extraordinary price, our people and nation paid for this Bolshevik exercise, even further its historical uselessness. Communism and the Soviet power did not make Russia a dynamic society and a country in welfare with free people. Communism pushed our country behind the economically developed countries by clearly displaying awkwardness about a stable national development. This road, very far from the main road of civilization was an impasse.'

These perversions do not seem to be much different from those of Yeltsin or Talbott. But Putin was also saying different things that Yeltsin could never be and this was what it counts: 'Experience of the 1990's clearly shows that without paying an excessive price, and actual renewal of our country can not be provided with the abstract models and programs extracted from the foreign school books. A mechanical imitation of the experience of the other countries will not guarantee success. Every country, including Russia has to search its specific way of renewal.'

After he drew today's alarming table, Putin lines up some kind of principles needed to be followed in order to get rid of the current situation. In the second part of the speech in which the the problem of the country is declared to get limited to not only economical but also political and to an extend ideological, psychological and ethical; the recipe for the sovereignty is being defined. This recipe consists of three parts: 'Russian ideal', 'Powerful State' and 'Effective Economy'. So, what is this Russian ideal? We see that on one side of this concept lies the "social convention" Notion of the French Revolution: "The lack of Civil Convention and unity is the reason for our reforms being slow and painful. We spend our force for political fights instead of visible Works for the amendment of Russia. What the Russian people want is only stability, trust for the future and the possibility for the planning of both their and their childrens' forthcoming decades. They want to work in a durable, peaceful and secure law order. And they want to take advantage of the opportunities came by the ownership, free enterprise and market relations.

On this basis, our community began to accept the supranational global values before the national, communal or ethnical benefits. These values are freedom of expression, travelling to out of borders and other political rights as well as human rights. People appreciate the ownership, free enterprise and getting wealthy. The other side carries a national quality: 'another step for the unity of the Russian society is the traditional values of them: Patriotism, the faith on the sovereignty of Russia, Statism and Social Solidarity. If we leave aside the exploitation of nationalist emotions, the difference of Putin from the initial ones lies in the third article: 'A powerful state for the Russians is not an abnormality to get rid of. On the contrary, they assume it as the source and guarantor of the order, the initiator and the main propulsion of every change.'²⁰

Putin is claiming to find a solution to the identity problem by creating a "Russian ideal" from all of these: 'In my view, the new Russian ideal will arise from the global, general humanitarian values along with the compound or organical combination of traditional Russian values succeeding in the historical aspects.' 'We happen to see the first signals of Putin reforms under the title of 'Powerful State'. The new leader sees the first step of the political unity in the unity of judgement: 'In Russia more than 1000 federal laws are still in force while in republics, regions and autonomous areas thousands of laws are in force. Not all of these are compatible with the constitution. If Ministry of Justice, Attorney Generalship and Judgement works as slow as they do today, a bunch of laws against the constitution may cause judicial and political problems. Under the circumstances, constitutional security of the state, capacity of federal center, controllable position of the country and unity of Russia gets endangered. ' The target of these remarks is the policy of United States' named decentralization. Putin, in the part of 'Effective Economy', makes a clear warning to the Western Friends: 'It is quite early to bury Russia as a great power.' Right after this, the musts of Russia are listed in three articles²¹:

1. A long term development strategy,
2. Arrangement of economical and social areas by the government,
3. A reform strategy compatible with Russia.

The elements of this strategy is as follows: 'Dynamic economical development', 'an energetic industrial policy', 'a rational structural policy', 'effective financial system', 'struggle with off the record economy and organized crime in economy, finance and credit sectors', 'a continual integration of Russian economy into world's economical structures' and 'modern agricultural policy'.

The call made at the end of the speech is also remarkable: 'During the last 200-300 years, Russia, for the first time, experiences the danger of falling into the second, even the third league among the countries of the world. We barely have time to eradicate this threat. We are to force all of the entellectual, physical and ethical powers of the society.'²²

Also, we are in need of a coordinated and creative labor. No one else can do it for us. Everything is up to us, only to us.'

²⁰ ONAY, Yaşar; *Russia and Change*, Nobel Publications, 1. Press, Ankara, 2002, p. 67-90.

²¹ Akşam (1998-2007).

²²<http://tr.rutam.org>.

After giving an 'alarming' table for today, Putin arranges some 'principles' that should be followed in order to be recovered from current situation. In the speech of defining the country's problem as 'not only economic, but also politic, and to some degree ideological, spiritual and moral', the 'rescue prescription' is defined at its second part. This prescription consists of three parts: 'Russian Ideal', 'Strong State' and 'Effective Economy'. Then, what is this 'Russian Ideal'? In a part of this concept, we see that French Revolution's 'social contract' concept is underlying: 'Due to the absence of Civil contract and union, becomes the reason for our reforms to be that much slow and go hard. Instead of concrete assignments for renewing Russia, we spend our power for political fights. [Russians] wish the opportunities of planning stability, believing in the future and planning their and their children's decades. They wish to work in restful, secure and reliable law and order. They wish to evaluate the chances of possession, free enterprise and the chances that are being created by types of market relations. Our citizens, at this point; above benefits of society, groups or ethnicities, began to agree with supra-national universal values. These values are the independencies of free speech, free foreign travel and other political rights with human independencies. People appreciate becoming to be the owner of a possession, doing a free enterprise and making good money.'

The other leg carries a 'national' qualification: 'For the unity of Russian society, the other leg is Russians' traditional values: Patriotism, believe in Russia's greatness, statism, social solidarity.' If we ignore the exploitation of national emotions, Putin's difference from the previous ones is at the third code: 'For Russians, a strong state is not an abnormality has to be recovered. On the opposite, they see it as a source and guarantor of solidarity, the starter of every transition and its basic driving force.'²³

With creating a 'Russian Ideal' from all these, Putin is at an assertion of solving the identity problem: 'I think the new Russian ideal will appear with; the composition of universal, general humanistic values with traditional Russian values that have come through time or with their organic combination. Besides, at the title of 'Strong State', we see the first signals of Putin 'reforms'. New leader, sees the first step of political unity as the unity of justice: 'In Russia, there are still federal laws above 1000, there are several thousands of laws in republics, regions and sovereigns. All of them are incompatible with the constitution. If the Ministry of Justice, Office of the Chief Public Prosecutor and jurisdiction, behave slowly like they today behave for solving this problem, laws that are against constitution, can create judicial and political problems. At this circumstance, state's Constitutional security, the capacity of federal center, governing the country and Russia's totality come to be in danger.' These words target the politics of 'regionalism' and 'decentralization' that they are being imposed by USA. Putin, in 'Effective Economy' part, warns 'Western Friends' clearly: 'It is too early for burying Russia that is a great power, into a grave.'²⁴ After then, he lists three statements that Russia has to do :

1. A long term development strategy,
2. Organizing economy and social place by state,
3. A reform strategy that fits Russia.

This strategy's elements are 'dynamic economic development', 'energetic industry politics', 'rational constitutional politics', 'efficient financial system', 'at the field of economic-financial-credits, informal economy and struggle against organized crime', 'constant integration of Russian economy to world economic constitutions' and 'modern agriculture policies'.

The call that is at the end of the speech, should also be given importance: 'For the first time in last 200-300 years, Russia is at the danger of going down to second or even third league through world states. We have no time left for destroying this threat. We should force all the intellectual, physical and moral powers of the nation.'²⁵ We need to work coordinately and creatively. No one will do this for us. Everything are resisting on us, only us.'

Putin Operations Begin

One of the primary results concluded from this comprehensive "millennium speech" is the determination of Putin to unite the "nation" behind interests and policies of Russian imperialistic bourgeoisie.

23ONAY, Yaşar; Rusya ve Değişim, Nobel Yayınları, 1. Baskı, Ankara, 2002, s. 67-90. ONAY, Yaşar; Russia and Transition, Nobel Publications

24Akşam (1998-2007).

25STANKOVIC, S., "Russia In Search of Itself", Eurasia File, Volume: 1 Issue: 1, Ankara, 1994

By all means, to ensure this “aggrieved” role is featured and enthusiastic calls to laborers and proletarians during Soviet Union are imitated unsuccessfully. Another result is responsive to “identification” problem of Russian bourgeoisie: Putin and the class he represents see USSR period as a “bad experience” and “deviation” and therefore they accept that their roots reach to Russian Tsardom. One of the elements of long-awaited “Russian ideal” is based on “free market” and the other on “traditional Russian values”. It is clear that “national solidarity” intended on this basis bear a reactionary characteristic; however, it cannot be concluded from here that US would be “content” with these circumstances.²⁶

Actions of Putin within this framework are not at all compatible to US impositions. The new leader first established “Strategic Research Center” as a commanding council to ensure economical renewal. After that he increased income tax. And finally he rolled his sleeves up to subjugate administration of 89 republics and region to the center, and created seven “super regions” administered through direct assignments.

Membership of these administrators in Council of Federation which is the top layer of Russian parliament was cancelled. Military based politicians who proved their commitments to the center were appointed to several republics and regions by voting or assigning: Gen. Boris Gromov (Moscow)²⁷, Gen. Vladimir Şamanov (Ulyanovsk), Gen. Vladimir Kulakov (Voronez) and Admiral Vladimir Yegorov (Kaliningrad), and Colonel Aleskey Lebed and Aushev selected before Putin. Putin appointed soldiers to seven “super regions”: Pulikovski, Latişev, Çerkesov and Poltavçenko.²⁸

These “military steps” were clear evidences for American supported politicians in Putin’s Kremlin to give their places to old-new military men. As a matter of fact, the share separated from the budget for military was increased as much as possible. Reflection of the on-going cleaning to international public opinion began by crossing to media area. Media barons Boris Berezovski and Vladimir Gusinski who are the most important ones of Russian “oligarchs” appeared during Yeltsin period began to have hard times. Offices of two US supported bosses was swooped down in 2000, their directors were put under surveillance together with themselves, they were investigated for embezzlement and by this way they were made ineffective. As a reminder, Berezovski had 49 percent of state channel ORT during Yeltsin period. MediaMOST of Gusinski embodied several newspapers and TV channels, one of which is NTV. At the same time, “sudden attacks” were made to these bosses and Lukoil, Norilsk Nikel and Avtovaz companies which had become finance source of other Pro-Americans. Curiously enough, Berezovski was one the people organizing the rise of Putin. It seemed like “Continuing Yeltsin period without Yeltsin” dreams of him and people like him came to nothing. Because of people’s anger to these parasites, almost no power dared to stand before Putin. Even opposition parties in Duma were supporting the steps taken passionately. Opposing leader Grigory Yavlinski addressed as: ‘USA government fooled us. While they were preaching on free market and free society, they passionately continued to support a small group most suitable to Washington’s choices.’

Washington in a little bit daze, in case, could not respond much to those steps that Berezovski and Gusinski, who went to Washington at the end of September, 2000 to ‘complain’ about Putin, got back by making out that they “had bitten the dust”. Washington knew that encouraging these two magnates would added up to coming face to face with Putin whose intention had not been clear yet. Paul J. Saunders, a right-wing writer, explains about this attitude as: ‘The latest developments has an evidential reasoning that the Kremlin aims to become more powerful on Russia’s mass media. However, reading these actions as if there is an attempt for the freedom of the press will result in ignoring the Russian realities and other suspicious developments.’²⁹

After all, Washington, for instance, had just to make a weak objection considering ‘the democracy’ and the ‘freedom of the press’ when Andrei Babitski, a news reporter on the Radio Liberty which was in relation with the U.S.A, was arrested.

²⁶ AKTÜKÜN, İlker; SSCB’ den BDT’ ye Nasıl Varıldı. Marksist Bir Tahlil İçin Saptamalar, Sorun Publications, 1st edition, İstanbul, 1995, page 45-90.

²⁷ MANSUR, Raul; Moskova. Görsel Gezi Rehberleri Serisi, Dost Kitabevi Publications, Ankara, 1999, page 34-123.

²⁸ ROSE, Richard & MUNRO, Neil; Elections without Order. Russia’s Challenge to Vladimir Putin, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, page 67-145.

²⁹ <http://www.gazetasng.ru>.

'The witch-hunt' process - taking the intellectuals backed up by the U.S.A into custody or squelching them - has still held on since Babitski.³⁰

Another step, which was symbolically important, was taken by the new Russian governance on the road to the construction of a national identity, of which Putin complained about the inexistence. The anthem of the Soviet Union was adopted as the national anthem in law enacted by Duma. The music remained unchanged but the lyrics had been replaced by nationalist-chauvinistic lines reminding the Tsarist Russia!³¹

Right after that, Putin put pressure on the neighboring states about discharging the debts mostly arising from oil and gas and thus began to use it as a trump in order to have a political clout over them. These states had to accept that they were dependent on Russia as well as they were not in a resisting position against it!³² The very annoying part would have definitely played by Putin in arena of international politics. Putin made his first statement in 'Millenium Summit' in September, 2000 by announcing his intention in that arena.

He began his speech by affirming that the U.N. guaranteed the freedom from the arbitrariness of hegemony and diktat, a direct target to the U.S.A. Then he laid emphasis on the ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile) Treaty, which was ignored by the U.S.A., as the "foundation" of international disarmament. He, finally, asserted that the countries had rights to "national self-expression" and "independence", again targeted the American hegemony. The following day, two writers from the U.S.A. said: "Vladimir Putin's speech shows how misguided the Clinton administration was in its portrayal of the new Russian leader as a 'leading reformer'."³³

Russia is on the Stage of Realpolitics

At this point, it is needed to look closely to the breakthrough that Russia started during the Putin's period. After Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' collapse, one of the ascertainments uttered by American ideologues was America's having get out from the ideological blocks in the international paths. This meant America's foreign politics' return to the pre-socialist block bourgeois Realpolitics' (realist politics) period. If it is needed to sample, the relations with the countries that little or more accepted as in the USSR's influence zone could be improved without facing with difficulties and new opportunities would be gained for hegemony projection.

Actually, in the last decade, in the effort of precisely counting some countries -that in the 'Soviet influence zone' from India to Angola- to the imperialist system, a dramatic concentration occurred. Meanwhile, some countries', such as Turkey, Greece and Pakistan, dominant classes started to complain that they lost their importance after the Cold War. However, if the matter is this or that imperialist's getting rid of the ideological links, it is inaccurate to think that these links just handicap America's move. The valid thing for the USA was valid for the other imperialists, especially Russian imperialism that got rid of its socialist mask. In recent years, world's certain imperialists started to advance in Realpolitic's conflicting and dangerous waters.

In the period of revisionist USSR, Russian governance's view to west had been giving priority inevitably to defence with the impact of imperialist block's heavy attack. Soviet imperialism, excluding some exceptions, could not advance even a small move except from protecting its west position. In the basis of this effort was Tsarist Russia's traditional politics that means "some weak countries' -being in the Russian influence zone- being stand between the Russian borders and foe." But Putin is face to face with a more serious case, because point at issue countries (in the west Ukraine, White Russia, in the South Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia) are about to be lost. Old Warsaw Pact's members like Poland, having join the membership of NATO, shows that the tampon is started to be disintegrated by the west imperialists. It is needed to remind that, in the condition of USSR's existence, in the summit of two Germany's unity, NATO promised that it would not expand even a millimeter to the East and accept any Warsaw Pact countries to its membership. Putin's Russia seems to be resentful for this promises' not to be done.

³⁰ <http://www.russia.com>.

³¹ CROZIER, Brian; *The Rise and Fall of The Soviet Empire*, An Imprint of Prima Publishing, National Review, California, 2000, p. 57-127.

³² Milliyet (2003-2007).

³³ TIMAKOVA, Natalya, KOLESNIKOV, Andrei, GEVORKYAN, Nataliya; *First Person: An Astonishingly Frank Self-Portrait by Russia's President Vladimir Putin*, Public Affairs Publications, New York, 2000, p. 56-89.

As reciprocation to three East Europe countries' acceptance to NATO, Russia started to take some apparent precautions. First, it clearly announced that it would see three Baltic countries' (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) being taken to the NATO, as an assault to the red line. This definition meant NATO's broadening to Baltic would be accepted as a direct threat to Russia's national interests. Second precaution came from the field of security concept. Russian government, with a world shocking move, made the nuclear doctrine offensive. Old doctrine in the period of USSR guaranteed that it would not be the first side starting the nuclear attack. But in the new doctrine, in case of a vital threat to the national interests, it give green light to the nuclear power usage.

Russian's third precaution was to come into exist a formation in which who is the 'boss' can not be argued resembling the old Warsaw Pact in the East Europe .Started parallel to the Independent Countries Community's (ICC) becomin nonfunctional,the first step of the enterprises was to buil a union between the White Russia and Russia resembling a confederation (a company in external policy , the same money unit).After the communists' coming into power in Moldavia, this country has a chance to participate in the unity.On the other side,supporter of the West,Ukrainian leader Leonid Kucma's withdrawn from the public life with the scandals and not taking the supports that he except from his friends caused this country being forced to the 'unity' by Russian.

Although it seems impossible at the moment , in the last ten years, having often supported from the USA and becoming the third country,the Ukraine's return to the Russian imperialism's arms undoubtedly will be an extraordinary victory for Putin.Even the Putin government is limited,the evidences,too,relating that it is on the around of a big alliance and can form an alternative to the 'USA' in West,are becoming powerful.Lastly on February, German Minister of foreign Affairs Joschka Fischer's visit to Moscow, was the scene of some critical meetings.After debating USA's National Rocket Defence Shield (NRD),Fischer and Putin expected Germany's being a kind of 'mediator' between Russia and USA even they do not express clearly.From the supporter of USA the Carnegie Foundation's Moscow Office, Alexander Pikayev, was evaluating this visit with a disturbing question: Whether is this a long-term Russian-German agreement or is thistemporary relating to the hesitation in the relationship of USA-Russian.While Alexander Rahr from the German Foreign Politics Association was in the view of 'the field had been opened for the other east-west connection' because of the falling of the government.While the common point the strategist are like-minded is that the'defence diplomacy' days between Yeltsin and Helmut Kohl,it means the politics' talking too much but doing nothing is over.³⁴

But still,it should be remembered that with paying Russian almost 20 billion dollars debt to the Germany,the problem of ownership of the Kaliningrad (or Koenisberg) in the Baltic,will be a great obstacle for two countries'forming a long-term 'alliance'.European Integration is evaluating the Kaliningrad, which passed to the U.R.S.S. from Germany during the Second World War ,as a ' Troy Horse ' in the middle of the 'Europe'.

But while Russia using the Kaliningrad as a military base,on the other hand it tries to maket his region a kind of 'Russian Hong Kong' which will reduce the economic problems.Putin's dashes in south worths to attention.First of all the new leader strengthening their relationship with Armenia and stiffend the existance of Russian military in this country.The Russian attack in the Chechenia was used as a means of renewing the pressure on countries in Middle East³⁵.This pressure seems especially to the neighbour country Georgia.Really, achieved to escape from a series of assosiation ,Georgian leader Eduard Sevardnadze was expressing clearly that this country hah to enter the 'NATO',³⁶.

With the Second Chechen War,this split voice was comparatively digested.It should be remembered one more time that Chechenia's gaining an 'independence'supported by USA will abolish the Russian last control point in the region and there will not be any obstacle in front of the petrol-natural gas tube line passing through the soils belong to the West's 'customer'regimes.Related to USA and its alliences'expressions:We respect to the Russian's soil wholeness',there is the problem of tube-lines on the backwards of summons with regards to the war has to be ended with a political solution.

³⁴ TÌMAKOVA, Natalya, KOLESNÍKOV, Andrei, GEVORKYAN, Nataliya; First Person: An Astonishingly Frank Self-Portrait by Russia's President Vladimir Putin, Public Affairs Publications, New York, 2000, p. 56-89.

³⁵ TIKENCE,M.'Russian Federation's Middle East Policy' ,Strategy,96/3,Ankara,1999.

³⁶ DAGI,Zeynep,'Russian's Near-Enviroment Policy and Turkey', Tradition and Change in Turkey's Foreign Policy,1998.

However, the problem is not just because of the petrol. Winston Churchill's speeches in 1919 are still current: 'Controlling the Old Russian Empire, if the North Caucasus and Khazar Region are not under the control of Western powers, it will not be confident'.³⁷

Russian-Iran Co-Operation in Caucasia and Middle East

When mentioning Caucasia and Caspian, it is also essential to examine the alliance between Russia and Iran, which is an exact model for the "Realpolitik". As it is acknowledged, two countries have a relationship whose dimensions extend gradually for the last three-four years and which even gains a "strategic" characteristic. In the military field, an intense arms transfer attracts attention from Russia to Iran. Up to now, Russia has delivered arms in Iran in bulk amounts which consisted of a nuclear submarine, war planes and tanks. Moreover Russia, challenging the USA embargo for Iran, supports both the country's "civil purposed" nuclear power plants and ballistic rocket programs through technology transfer. However, commercial relations between these two countries are not in the desired level yet. As of 1997, the trade capacity between Iran-Russia reached only to half billion dollars and this amount was even below the capacity of Turkish-Iran trade. As for the political cooperation between said countries, it is in the wake of developing despite the existing certain weighty issues.³⁸

The Caspian lays the foundation of a possible Russia-Iran axis. Remembering the top level council's Moscow visit under the presidency of Iran President Hatemi in march, the main topic of this visit was the Caspian itself. Yet, Iran and Russia have not adopted a common attitude on this vital issue such as the status of Caspian Sea. Iran asserts the dissertation of Caspian's "being shared equally among five coastal states". As for Russia, it is not meaning to give up the SSR's heritage in this area; it takes a stand towards sharing the Caspian Sea particularly between Iran and itself and leaving "fragments" to the other coastal states.³⁹

The failure of both states to reach a settlement regarding Caspian is known to strengthen the USA's hand, which is the "alien" side and which has completely opposite projects with those of Russia and Iran. Therefore, it may be alleged that these two regional states which are under the Baku-Ceyhan constraint, will either find a common path or have to leave Caspian to the USA in an indirect manner.⁴⁰ The political scissors in the other important issues between Tehran and Moscow is gradually closing. While the opposition is supported by arms and education against Taliban who is boosted in the Afghanistan by Pakistan and the USA; the government is supported against the followers of sharia in Tajikistan. Two countries display such an attitude as supporting Armenia in Karabakh issue as well as being ready to play role as the "alternative mediator" at any time. Iran, even going far more, stands near Russia, but not Muslim Vahhabies in the Chechenia matter.

Iran-Russian axis comes into agenda not only within Middle Asia and Caucasia, but also within Middle East day by day. The government of Iran which was excluded from the Middle East "peace" process by the USA, plays a disturbing role for the USA peace, through its local forces that it moves in Palestine and Lebanon. (Hamas, Hizbullah and Islamic Jihad). In the diplomatic front, both countries support Palestine against Israel, therefore they gained the sympathy of the public of the region. It is possible to utter that two countries will strengthen their positions in Middle East diplomacy, in case the "American Peace" that is insisted on Palestine continues to stumble.

Leaving aside the developments such as intervention in Cyprus problem via Russian bases reopened in Syria and S-300 missiles given to Greece, it will be seen that Russian's policy in West-South wing and Middle East are policies of 'gathering of strength'. So indeed, despite all complaints and protests of Western imperialists, Russian imperialism demands its spheres of influence which it deems as its 'legitimate right' in these regions and tries not to leave its 'backyard' to foreigners. Head of 'Russian eagle' looking at East, Asia-Pacific is watching a much more active and aggressive attitude in Putin period. It is a known fact that Russian imperialism didn't or couldn't attach enough importance to the Asia-Pacific as from 1960's. The most important reason of this 'neglectful' attitude was the division of China and Soviet Union and USA's boundary conflicts with Japan the most important ally of her in the region.

³⁷ CECEN, A., 'National Countries' Internationalism Against to Imperialist Globalism', Global Report, series:1, 2001.

³⁸ MARPLES, R. DAVID; Russia, 1917-1921, Pearson Education Limited, Essex, 2000, s. 12-89.

³⁹ AKTÜKÜN, İlker; How SSR ended in CIS. Determinations for a Marxist Analysis, Sorun Publications, 1. Edt., İstanbul, 1995, p. 78-120.

⁴⁰ <http://www.gaikoforum.com>.

However the famous 'ideological limitations' of Soviet-time also surely had an impact on some points. For all these reasons, Russia was frequently called as 'the sick man of Asia'. However 'New Russia' joined the APEC (Association of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) more quickly than anticipated, built an unexpected 'strategical alliance' with China and started to strengthen the relationships with ASEAN countries. As Indian and Russian relations was proceeding in a similar line as in the soviet-time, the problems with Japan were also in a way of solution. As a consequence of all these, Russia's trade with Asian countries increased to 31.5 billion dollar in 1997 while it was 21.4 billion dollar in 1994.

The Asia-Pacific region is described as 'the clash area of near future' by USA the dominant imperialist power. However, the difficulty of USA to take up a suitable position with this ascertainment gives a hint about the future of USA hegemony. 'Unconcern' towards Russia's actions in the region can be denoted as the most important evidence of this difficulty. Actually, USA didn't even take Russia's Asia attacks, chiefly the relations with China, seriously to date. US strategists had passed over and sniffed at the first steps of presently much debated alliance between Russia and China. 'As the most importantly and widely, the increase of Russia's action in the region was interpreted as a tactical step more than a strategy. According to this interpretation, Russia didn't show a long-term interest in the region; took steps which are shaped by anti-Western attitudes and immediate economic needs.' explains Rouben Azizyan the reasons of this attitude.

The viewpoint which had dominated American strategists up to recent period is clearly expressed as 'wrong', by ascribing to 'Clinton era', by the sympathizer groups of Bush government. Already in 1992, Moscow⁴¹ showed her intention for being much more active in the Asia-Pacific, by changing her 'America and Asia focused' foreign policy. 'Russian diplomacy should act in accordance with the spirit of ancient Russian emblem; in this emblem an eagle with two heads looks both West and East.' said the last President Boris Yeltsin, in his Seoul visit in 1992.⁴² The main futures of Russia's new Asia policy are mentioned by the Foreign Minister of the period Andrei Kozirev, who spoke at China People Diplomacy Association in 27th January 1994. According to Kozirev, Russia's priority was improving the trade relations with the region countries. Already in that time one-third of Russia's total foreign trade was made with Asia-Pacific countries. Secondly and maybe the most importantly, Moscow 'didn't see the contradictions with the region countries as irreconcilable and would work to establish stable and well-balanced relationships with them.' Russia declared in this way that she would make an effort to reduce the tensions which has been continuing for decades with Japan and China.⁴³

Finally, two countries are acting together in cessation of BM embargo and American attacks on Iraq as if showing that there is no limit in pragmatism of Iranian mullahs. Here it is beneficial to mention the approach of Bush government in USA to Iran by opening a paranthesis. It was being asserted that Bush and his team would show a 'different' approach to Iran from the point of view that they were under the influence of American petroleum monopolies. However, Bush surprised several environments by deciding to reagravate the sanctions against Iran which had been alleviated before. This step is seen as a signal that USA-Iran relationships will stiffen not soften at least in the short term. After 'carrot' policy followed by Clinton government against Iran, such a harsh step, of course, is also related to Russian-Iran axis. USA will continue to shake sometimes 'carrot' and sometimes 'stick' in order to prevent these two forces which may damage Middle East and Caucasia plans from collaborating.

Yeltsin featured Asia-Pacific as 'the third priority of Russia' in his speech, made at the Federation Council in June 1996. First and second priorities were Commonwealth of Independent States and Western Europe. USA had engaged in Asia in paralel with growing unrest. 'Strategical partnership' with China was the priority in Asia. Collaborating by signing a peace treaty with Japan was also mentioned in the speech.⁴⁴

⁴¹ STANKOVIÇ, S., "Rusya Kendisini Arıyor", *Avrasya Dosyası*, Cilt: 1 Sayı: 1, Ankara, 1994.

⁴² DAĞI, Zeynep; *Rusya'nın Dönüşümü. Kimlik, Milliyetçilik ve Dış Politika*, Boyut Kitapları, 1. Baskı, İstanbul, 2002, s. 67-123.

⁴³ TEZCAN, Y., "Avrasya Üzerindeki Güç Mücadelesi ve Türkiye", *Savunma*, Sayı:2, Ankara, 1998.

⁴⁴ http://www.kremlin.ru/withflash/Vneshnyaya_politika619.shtml

In addition to NATO's insistence to stretch in the East, when the Kosovo attack began, Moscow increased her activity in the region to the top. 'Russia is going to ask for new allies in the East against to expansion of NATO to the East' declared the Minister of Defence Pavel Gračev, in November 1995.⁴⁵

In this direction; the relations among Russia, China and, India have rapidly improved, moreover Russian politicians have started to talk about establishing a 'strategical triangle' among three states. It is obvious that this 'triangle' the establishing possibility of which is gradually increasing despite all obstacles will carry the target to be a focus against USA hegemony.⁴⁶

Nonetheless, Russian imperialism is in case of exhibiting a balanced attitude which doesn't oppose each its benefits in Asia and Europa, depending upon announced precedences. This "balance" is headstone of also the policy called "Eurasia Approach"¹ today. According to commentator Karen Brutents, this approach " is strengthening the central geographic position and physical existance of Russia in Europa and also in Asia objectively."²

Moskow management was assessing that getting strong of China could cause a new power balance which would be able to gain advantage for Russia. Not only China and India , but also Iran was included to strategic cooperation plans. It is seen that Russia-China agreement that was knitted by correlative visits, signed deals and arms sale gradually turned into an anti-American color. When China gradually hardens its resistance against enlargement of NATO, Russia is targeting military existance of USA in Asia and USA-Japan safety agreement.

At Pekin visit of Russian Secretary of Defence Igor Sergejev on October 1998, two countries announced that they would take common action on three international problems. Two countries were going against expanding of NATO "categorically", condemning West to use force in Kosava and criticizing the anti-rocket defence shield which USA wanted to build up in Asia with Japan.

Two countries started to take common action against West compulsion about subjects like Taiwan, Tibet and Chechenia which were "smaller issues".³ It is needed to remind that, when a few years ago China didn't care about enlargement of NATO, the term's Russian Secretary of Defence Igor Radyonov was saying that USA-Japan agreement wasn't creating anxiety. However now, for example Russian diplomat Yuli Vorontsov, was saying " NATO is converting to a global organization. For this reason, it is needed to make other countries our allies." As a component of Russia's this activity, it is needed to mention about arms and technology exportation towards China. Stil, Russia who is the most important importer of China will get the most profit from the China management decision taken in past weeks about "increasing military budget in the rate of 18 percent yearly". Arms sale of Russia to China triple increased in last six years and today one third of annual tradition between two countries is in military type. The source of seventy percent of arms imported by China is Russia, and 30-40 percent of Russia's total arms sale is going to China. Between 1991-'97, China bought arms worth 6 milliard dollars from Russia and this importation is continuing to exist at average 1 milliard dollars level yearly.

China bought 48 Sukhoi Su-27 type war planes, 8 S-300 air defence misilse systems and 4 Kilo-class submarines between 1992-'97. On March 1996, after the show of force of USA in Taiwan Bosphorus, new purchase orders came: 2 "Sovremenny" class guided missile destroyer and KA-27 and KA-28 type helicopters. It was reflected to press that, because of the same annoyance , China targeted to build up its own airplane carrier by buying Russian technology. Moskow could set goal to increase total arms exportation to yearly 6 milliard dollars in the next years because of China's big interest in lots of Russian made arms from flame throwers to ironclads.⁴

But the cooperation between two countries is not limited to only arms sale. Russia is helping to also China's nuclear power station building programme. Today, more than 200 Russian firms are taking office in building power station in Lianyungang in Jiangsu region of China. In last six years, nuclear exportation of Russia towards China increased to 150 million dollars from zero yearly. It is expected this amount to be doubling in next years. As a result of such a cooperation, Pekin is addicted to Moskow for maintenance and repairing of possessing developed submarines and war planes. Chinese officers are getting training in Russia. There were 177 Chinese officers getting training in Russia by 1998. The number of Russian military consultants and experts who were charged with supporting China army was 5205.

⁴⁵ TEZCAN, Y., "Avrasya Üzerindeki Güç Mücadelesi ve Türkiye", Savunma, Sayı:2, Ankara, 1998.

⁴⁶http://www.kremlin.ru/withflash/Vneshnyaya_politika619.shtml

Conclusion

We have mentioned that the end of the ideological conflict of the “Cold War” created new opportunities not just for the US, but also for Russia and the other competing imperialists. From the perspective of Russia's Asian policy, the most recent example of this is the Korea problem. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia, the US, China and Japan have been gradually confronting each other in a frequent and dangerous way on the problem of the Korean Peninsula.⁴⁷

Moscow's current policy on Korea relies on three basics:

1. Russia is a neighboring country to the Korean Peninsula.
2. A conflict in Korea would threaten Russian interests.
3. Russia wants to have good relations with both North and South Korea.

On this basis, there have been two changes in Moscow's Korean policy . The first was Yeltsin's “caring for South Korea” tendency in the beginning of the '90s. The second change, which corresponds to the Putin period, however, fixed this “historical drift.” In the new period, Moscow followed a policy of having “balanced relations with both South and North Korea.” It is known that this policy would serve to increase its influence on the peninsula, because Russia has some qualities that other “concerned” countries do not have. It does not pursue an expansionist political line like China, it does not arouse “bad memories” and it does not repel like the US. Thus, both North and South Korea consider Russia a “stabilizing actor between China and Japan.”

After all, the US followed the policy of “elephants” toward these two Asian powers and behaved toward Koreans as if they were the “porcelain in the China shop” since it does not need to take local powers into its reckoning.⁴⁸ The target at the core of this alternative approach, which Putin showed during his visit to the Korean Peninsula, is not very easy to be achieved after all. Russia has to follow an approach that would not “annoy” the North or the South that would contribute to the consolidation of the peninsula even if they are not ready for this. If Russia happens to achieve success in such a delicate policy, it would be a giant leap toward its biggest aim in the region, because the union of the two Koreas would eliminate the only excuse for the American occupation forces in the Far East.⁴⁹

It is possible to say that the predictions done before the summit conference with regard that the conference would be unsuccessful were almost exactly realized. Poland and Baltic Countries once more expressed their discomfort about the agreement signed between Russia and Germany which offers to export the Russian gas underneath the Baltic Sea. However, the countries at issue oriented their criticism not only to Russia but to Germany, as well.⁵⁰

Russia also revived the energy issue in the summit conference. Moscow that gains important achievements in Central Asia⁵¹ and guarantees to export the Central Asia gas to Europe over Russia wants to possess the domestic markets of European countries. It creates a discomfort in Russia that European countries do not open their domestic markets to Russian energy giant Gazprom and that they consider this as a Russian expansionism. Another issue that Russia feels discomfort with is that USA places rocket defense systems in the territories of new European countries. Although the EU platform was not suitable to discuss this matter, Moscow brought forward this issue in the summit conference. However, as it was in the energy area, the sides could not get an agreement on this issue. Though the deadline of the agreement offering to collaborate was not extended, the sides decided to carry out the negotiations on abolishment of visa regime. The trade scale of 231 milliard Dollars between Russia and EU indicates that the relationships are not so poor. As a matter of fact, EU is the biggest trading partner of Russia.⁵²

⁴⁷<http://www.mfa.gov.tr>.

⁴⁸YELTSİN, Boris; GeceyarısıGünlükleri (Midnight Diaries), TürkiyeİşBankasıKültürYayımları (TürkiyeİşBankası Cultural Publishing), İstanbul, 2000, p. 78-90.

⁴⁹<http://www.nartajans.net/nuke/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1888>, 2007-07-03.

⁵⁰ DAĞI, Zeynep, “Russia’s Near Surrounding Politics, and Turkey” “Conventions and Change in Turkish Foreign Politics” 1998

⁵¹ TİKENCE, M “Central Asia Politics Of Russian Federation” Strategy, 96/3, Ankara, 1999

⁵² ÖZBEK, N, “New Trends in Russian Foreign Politics” Eurasia File, Volume:3, Number:4, Ankara, 1996

The topic that was dealt both before and after the summit conference was the democratization problem and violation of human rights in Russia. The representatives of the opposition group made a parade on this issue in Samara on the same date with the conference. That the opposition leader of “Civil Front Union,” the world champion of chess, Gari Kasparov wasn’t allowed to get on the plane, to some extent, justifies the EU countries’ fears related to the democratization problem in Russia. Even though the EU countries, mainly Germany, dealt with the subject in the conference, the answer of Putin was ready. Putin said that there isn’t a “perfect democracy” in any place of the world, the demonstrations in Samara do not pose any risk, and thus, the government did not do anything to stop them. Moreover, Putin called for an objective treatment towards Russia stating that EU applies a double standard both in energy and democratization areas.⁵³

In conclusion, Russia- EU summit conference showed that the sides would not be willing to step back on many important issues. Baltic countries, on the other hand, will go on to oppose to Russia by getting support both from USA and EU. The disagreements between Russia and old Iron Curtain countries obstruct the improvement of cooperation between Russia and EU, drastically.⁵⁴

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