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## The new Cold War and the emerging Greater Eurasia

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## ABSTRACT

The author argues that the current state of international relations can be characterized as a new Cold War with Eurasia emerging as its major battlefield and at the same time as a second, non-Western pole of a new confrontation. The reason for it is that the United States and some European countries are trying to reverse the decline of their dominance which they have enjoyed over the past five hundred years. The current situation is much more dangerous than it used to be during the previous Cold War, but this attempt will most likely prove futile. While the world comes through a period of intensifying competition, it will stimulate reformatting of the global geopolitical, geo-economic, and geo-ideological space. The authors assume that the evolution of the international system goes in the direction of a new bipolarity, where Eurasia will play a role of a new geostrategic and economic pole, while the West, probably limited by “Greater America” will become another one. In this new international reality, the U.S. will drift from the status of superpower to the position of an important global center of power. However, at the moment the contours of Greater Eurasia are only beginning to take shape.

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## 1. Introduction and problem setting

Over the past decade, researchers and political writers around the world have tried to understand the nature of the mounting tensions between the U.S. and the West on the one side, and Russia, China, and some other powers on the other. For most scholars of the liberal school, the tensions between the U.S., its allies and the rising powers were unavoidable deviations from the general trend of the latter’s integration into the liberal international order.

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From the standpoint of the realist school of thought that emerged following the Cold War, the international order has never been able to ensure long-term stability. On the contrary, scholars pointed to the enormous potential for conflict latent in its structure. Although their fears were largely justified, the evolution of modern international politics has also caught them somewhat by surprise. Most realists focused on U.S.–China relations during the last decade. Some believed it was inevitable that the conflict would deepen or even lead to war ([Mearsheimer, 2014a, 2014b](#)), while others believed that the transformation could proceed peacefully and lead to a new balance of power ([Kissinger, 2012](#)). However, both tended to view U.S.–China relations as the main factor leading to structural changes in international politics.

Since 2014, many in the West and elsewhere have begun viewing Russia as the primary challenge to the liberal international order. According to this thinking, Moscow has

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employed military and political tools with enough success to shake the very foundations of the international rules established after World War II. From the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis, the terms “new Cold War” and “Cold War II” have entered the academic lexicon (See: [Trenin, 2014](#); [Legvold, 2014](#)).

However, despite the widespread use of the terms in the academic and expert community, the understanding of this phenomenon and its implications for international politics remains very vague. Like the “classic” Cold War, the new confrontation is described most often as a clash between Russia and the West. However, such historic comparisons can be misleading. As a result, researchers often approach the new Cold War as specific to Russia and the West, or even Russia and the U.S. without considering other structural factors influencing international politics: the rise of China and other powers, the emergence and consolidation of Eurasia, the weakening of global institutions and global interdependence, economic and political regionalization, etc.

This narrow understanding produces an incomplete picture of the new Cold War and limits the possibility for a full-scale analysis of the phenomenon.

This article considers the evolution of the international system from a somewhat different point of view. It argues that the Cold War II should be analyzed not just through the prism of the confrontation between Russia and the West or Russia and the U.S., but in the context of broader historical and geostrategic processes. Three main factors determine these processes: the relative weakening of the West and its global dominance, the strategic rise of non-Western countries, and their consolidation as an alternative power center.

I argue that the historical macro-trends and structural conflicts that defined the start of the “classic” Cold War did not disappear after 1991. However, whereas the Soviet Union and its satellites played the role of the non-Western pole during the classic Cold War period, today Eurasia – primarily in the growing entente between Russia and China – plays the role of the non-West. The emergence of this “Eurasian pole” – that is, Greater Eurasia – makes Cold War II a much more complex, multilevel, and fundamental factor in world politics.

## 2. Conceptualizing the Cold War II

Since the advent of the term “new Cold War” in the academic literature, scholars started to debate about the real meaning of this term. Appearing as a historical analogy, it began to be filled with content, primarily through comparison with the “classic” confrontation.

Talking about the differences between the “classic” and the “new” “Cold War” many experts have been pointing out the structural weakness of Russia and its inability to be an independent and full-fledged pole ([Stavridis, 2016](#)). This statement is debatable: although, economically, Russia is obviously weaker than the West – or even the U.S. alone – its military capabilities, primarily nuclear, are comparable. This article will argue that the “non-Western” pole is not weaker geo-economically, but in some sense even stronger than the West if to regard it as consisting not only of Russia, but of all non-Western Eurasia – or at least those parts of it that

gravitate around the growing entente between Russia and China ([Trenin, 2015](#)).

Others noted the absence of an ideological component in the growing confrontation ([Legvold, 2015](#)). In the past, it was a clash between totalitarian communism and liberal-democratic capitalism. Now neither Russia nor China is trying to impose their models of development or ideology. However, they are offering an alternative. China is building an effective non-liberal economic model as an alternative to the liberal economic agenda (See: [Hsu & Wu, 2014](#); [Huang, 2008](#)).

If Russia is offering an alternative to the modern Western ideological narrative, it is hardly an ideology, but a set of traditional values underlying the life of the international community in general and each individual in particular: respect for sovereignty; focus on national interests; refusal to interfere in internal affairs; freedom to choose one’s own political, economic, and cultural development model; faith in God, traditional family values, patriotism, and self-realization (not individualism) through service to society, the country, and the world. While a number of works are dedicated to this problem ([Tsygankov, 2016](#)), this value gap, if it exists between Russia and the West, could hardly play a role of ideological confrontation, which structured the conflict decades ago. Absence of ideologies and severe ideological confrontation is one of the key reasons why the camps of the new Cold War are so vague and not very well structured in comparison with the “classic” Cold War.

On the strategic level, the Cold War II acquires more and more features of the “classic” confrontation of the second half of the 20th century. Opinion leaders and members of the American foreign policy establishment have started to admit that the Cold War is already underway and it goes in quite an old-fashioned way (See: [Haas, 2018](#); [Blackwill & Gordon, 2018](#)). By the beginning of 2017, the new confrontation was institutionalized and got all the elements of a long-term structural conflict. The U.S. adopted military doctrines giving the green light to new ambitious nuclear rearmament programs, openly speaking about the need to contain Russia and China as strategic competitors ([US National Security Strategy, 2017](#)). There have been also signs of a possible “missile crisis” in Europe, similar to that with Russian and American medium-range missiles in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In the information space, the old West’s hostility toward China and particularly Russia has reached the level that reminds one of the worst years of the previous Cold War (in the 1950s). The campaign against Russia’s alleged interference in the American election and the search for Russian “agents of influence” look very much like the McCarthy witch-hunt, an opinion shared even by many American observers ([Carpenter, 2016](#); [Cohen, 2018](#)). These tendencies appear to be following the Cold War-era pattern.

In the economic sphere, sanctions and countersanctions are becoming a norm. Although most of the anti-Russian sanctions are formally linked to the Minsk process and compliance with the Minsk accords ([U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2016](#), p. 3), in terms of the rising Russia–West confrontation it looks more and more like a system of long-term economic and technological containment reminiscent of CoCom – Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls. The Russian leadership says openly that the

sanctions against Russia will remain in place for years and does not expect them to be lifted any time soon (Russia Today, 2018). The Trump administration has gone even farther in containing China economically and started a tariff war. Although the anti-Chinese economic measures have a different legal form (duties rather than sanctions, although some sanctions are imposed, too), the strategic purpose of this policy is the same – to weaken America’s competitors. The U.S. administration is not even trying to hide its intentions. “Under my Administration, the theft of American prosperity will end. We’re going to defend our industry and create a level playing field for the American worker – finally,” declared Donald Trump, starting a trade war against China (White House, 2018).

In terms of its nature and strategic stability, this Cold War is more dangerous than the previous one. First of all, the level of leadership has plummeted dramatically in many leading countries. This is borne out by public opinion polls showing an unprecedentedly low level of trust in the ruling elites in the U.S. (Gallup, 2018) and most European countries. In this context foreign policy is used, by nuclear powers as well, as a means of consolidating society and addressing internal problems. As a result, modern leaders show an extremely low level of political responsibility in maintaining international stability and fulfilling their international obligations. Suffice it to compare current leaders with their predecessors of thirty or fifty years ago.

Apart from domestic problems, at the systemic level, structural tensions are mounting in international relations due to the unprecedentedly rapid changes in the balance of power and decline of most of the key pillars of the liberal international order. In fact, most of the global governance institutions such as the IMF, the WTO, the G8, the EU, and even the G20 are growing weaker or are in crisis (Krickovic, 2015). As a result, all aspects of international relations become less manageable at a time when the world remains highly interdependent. The crisis of global economic governance was first mentioned during the world economic crunch of 2007–2009, and the situation has become even worse since then, degrading into a fundamental global security crisis.

The security situation has been exacerbated by the latest military-technical trends, with many new strategic or nearly strategic weapons being deployed. Cyberweapons are apparently acquiring a strategic nature as they could possibly destroy whole societies and countries (Action, 2017). As more countries and non-state actors acquire nuclear weapons, probability of a nuclear conflict grows. The nuclear non-proliferation regime is half-scrapped. Old arms limitation regimes, which made the situation more predictable and transparent, are falling apart.

But what is most important is that nuclear superpowers, Russia and the United States, are not only blocking the remaining channels of communication but are experiencing a critical lack of mutual trust. The U.S. elites have worked themselves up to a state close to hatred toward Russia. The prevailing attitude toward the U.S. among the Russian elites is close to contempt. Attitudes of the ordinary people both in the United States and Russia also demonstrate emerging mistrust on people-to-people level (Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2018). This is an extremely bad psycholog-

ical background for strategic stability, an indicator of a possible global catastrophe.

Looking at the new Cold War as a bipolar confrontation like its “classic” antecedent, its relative instability derives largely from the structure and internal composition of its constituent poles. An analysis of the state of these poles, their internal problems and the processes guiding their development, is the key to understanding the nature of the new Cold War, stabilizing it, and minimizing the danger it poses.

### 3. The Western pole: Decline and resistance

In ideological dimension the West has, or had, product to export – liberal democracy. But this commodity lost a lot of its luster after Iraq, Libya, a series of abortive attempts to extend it to other countries. The West got into trouble after the Arab Spring, results of Iraqi and Libyan invasions, failure of Ukraine, but most importantly, because of obvious problems with democracy in many Western countries, primarily the United States (Lukin, 2016a). Public opinion polls show a decline in the readiness of non-Western countries to accept and recognize U.S. leadership – only 30% in 2018 compared to 47% in 2016 (Wike et al., 2017). At the beginning of the 21st century the level of support of the U.S. policy used to be higher than 60% in most of the countries, and more than 80% in Europe (Pew Research Center, 2008).

This irritates the old West and weakens its positions further, but this is not the root cause of the new Cold War. Over the past fifteen years most countries in the old West have been facing growing social problems. The middle class foresees hard times ahead and is shrinking rapidly. Inequality is growing. These are the consequences of globalization as we know it. Elites benefitting from it did not want to listen to society’s signals and condemned protests as populism and almost fascism (See: Stiglitz, 2017).

In the meantime, modern social media helped to take political processes from under the control of elites that had already drifted away from society. Masses and non-elite politicians (Donald Trump is a vivid example) got a chance to bypass old political systems and mass media controlled by elites. Revolts of the masses, which previously had been canalized into traditional forms or suppressed, began to win (Mead, 2017). This is probably one of the main causes of the current Cold War and anti-Russian hysteria over Russian hackers’ alleged interference in the internal affairs of the United States and European countries. Russia has been accused not only of allowing its hackers to help Trump win the election, but also of inciting separatism in Catalonia (Emmott, 2017) and Brexit (Adam & Booth, 2017) and dozens of others. These accusations, aimed at ideological consolidation of the West, in some way serve as a sign that in the ideological dimension the Western countries really moved from expansion to defense.

In economic sphere the global GDP has been shifting toward new centers of development, particularly Asia, where China, India, and ASEAN countries have made a gigantic leap forward. The EU has entered a systemic, and irreversible so far, crisis of integration institutions and economic growth model. The U.S. has sunk into a deep political crisis, which is unlikely to be resolved until the end of the current

political cycle. A series of political defeats suffered by the U.S. and NATO in the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya, as well as decline of the American economic supremacy dispeled the prevailing views about a “unipolar world” (Layne, 2012). The economic crisis of 2007–2009 clearly showed the ineffectiveness of the economic model the Washington Consensus was trying to impose upon other countries. On the contrary, China is pulling ahead to become a world economic, and before long, political leader, that makes it a natural challenger to the U.S. supremacy (Allison, 2017).

Along with relative economic weakening we witness dissolution of West-centered global governance, especially in the sphere of economic regulation. Almost all of the global governance systems created and dominated by the West are crumbling. With its competitive positions growing weaker, the U.S. tends to scabble the liberal economic system it created in Bretton Woods. The wave of protectionism, coming from the U.S. in the first place, is gaining momentum. International economic relations are being politicized or even militarized, and sanctions are becoming a new norm (See: Blackwill & Harris, 2016).

Finally, we witness the decline of military supremacy Europe, and subsequently the West in general, had enjoyed approximately since the 16th–17th centuries. The best cannons, warships, and military organization allowed Europe, and later together with the United States, to impose its economic and political orders, culture, and ideology and redirect the world wealth in their favor. European and American historians and politicians dictated the historical narrative as victors. Asia, which had made most of the crucial inventions and discoveries well before the 16th century, was portrayed in that narrative as backward and filthy. For example, the Byzantine Empire became a synonym of backwardness and intrigues. However, Byzantine, also known as the Eastern Roman Empire, preserved the best of European cultural practices in the 6th–14th centuries, combining them with Arab and Asian ones. Byzantine was part of the Silk Road by which not only goods but also cultural and scientific achievements were exchanged. In those years Europe was living through a dark age and could barely enrich mankind. Byzantium fell in 1454 after being weakened by several crusades wrapped in religious garb but aimed at plundering the wealthier East (Luttwak, 2011, p. 3).

Military supremacy allowed the West to create empires by force in order to impose colonial or semi-colonial relations and redistribute the global GDP for its own benefit. Russia was largely part of the West in this respect. Its incredibly rapid expansion in Siberia in the 16th and 17th centuries and later toward the Pacific became possible not only due to its Cossacks’ bravery or their desire to escape oppression, but also because its cannons and rifles overshoot the spears and arrows used by local tribes. This largely explains the success of the Russian expansion in the Caucasus and Central Asia in the 18th–19th centuries, too. It is true though that Russians were building an empire that often was a donor for its “colonies” as was the case with Central Asia in imperial and Soviet times. Local elites were actively integrated to form multiethnic elite in the Russian Empire (Etkind, 2011). In fact, large part of the nobility in tsarist Russia and of the Soviet leadership came from colonized peripheral provinces. Russia might have been following

in the footsteps of the Mongol Empire and its fragment – the Golden Horde, of which ancient Rus used to be a semi-colony for almost 250 years. Russians did not impose their religion and peacefully lived side by side with Islam, but constantly fought messianic Catholicism (Guo, 2018; Karaganov, 2018).

The Western hegemony based on the power of weapons began to wane in the 1920s when external forces, emaciated by the Great War, could not prevent the strengthening of Soviet power which led Russia out of what can relatively be called the Greater West and put it in opposition. In the 1940s and afterward the Soviet Union was joined by China, socialist countries in Eastern Europe, and subsequently by several East and Southeast Asian states. The Western hegemony shrank in almost half of the world.

Critical changes occurred after the Soviet Union, and later China, had created nuclear weapons. This was perhaps the main factor that accelerated the beginning of the West’s decline. Big wars that could escalate into a nuclear conflict started to be viewed as prohibitively costly, and the U.S. could not win the war in Korea and lost the war in Vietnam.

In the 1980s, when the Soviet Union collapsed because of the ineffective socialist economy, and China was still weak, the West seemed to have regained supremacy for a historical second, for about fifteen years or so, what allowed some of the scholars to proclaimed the age of unipolarity (See: Krauthammer, 2004). But because of the euphoria from its victory and short-sightedness, the West made two overlapping strategic mistakes. First, in the 1990s it rejected the Russian elites’ aspirations to become part of the West and integrate into it, albeit as a relatively independent and sovereign subject. Second, the West broke its promise and enlarged NATO, which made the first mistake even worse (Karaganov, 2015).

As a result, Russia, with its military-industrial potential, the experience of military protection of its interests, and enormous nuclear capabilities, became a key element of the non-West, and, foreseeing the danger of war, carried out successful military reforms and created an excellently trained and efficient army. Moreover, no longer trusting its Western partners, Russia has created a number of high-tech strategic systems such as nuclear-powered cruise missiles and torpedoes, a super heavy missile capable of striking from any direction, hypersonic missiles and warheads that make the American quest for supremacy senseless and could only drain its resources. President Vladimir Putin announced the creation of these systems on March 1, 2018 (President of Russia, 2018). It can be called Russia’s strategy of “preventive deterrence” to ward off an arms race and make the quest for supremacy a mere pipe dream. It clearly states that the West will never regain its military superiority. Creation of political confrontation to support this quest was one of the main reasons for starting a new – round of the Cold War (See: Karaganov, 2018).

This inevitability means that most countries will retain the chance for independent and free development. The global GDP and political and moral capital will continue to move to the non-West. Eurasia will continue to rise and will most likely become then global economic and political center.

With China's support, Russia has begun building this center of global development by creating the Comprehensive Eurasian Partnership (President of Russia, 2018). Other countries, including South Korea, have also announced their Eurasian strategies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea, 2013).

In the late days of the previous Cold War, China and the Soviet Union were antagonists. Now they stand together. The Russian–Chinese alliance is becoming an objective reality even though it has not been formalized. In this relationship Russia and China complement each other (Lukin, 2016c). China has already surpassed the U.S. in terms of GDP based on purchasing power parity and will soon become the world's number one economy (OECD, 2017). Russia is one of the two leading military powers in the world. It is smaller than the Soviet Union was in terms of territory and population, but it no longer needs to subsidize almost all of the former Soviet republics, socialist countries in Eastern Europe, and socialist-leaning countries in the Third World. Soviet aid to those countries outweighed assistance to the rest of the world, thus eating up as much a large share of Soviet GNP, hugely weakening the Soviet economy (Gaidar, 2007). Russia has also got rid of the military machine that strangled the Soviet Union and devoured up to almost quarter of its GNP (Gaidar, 2007, pp. 111–12). Russia's army is now much smaller but quite efficient, as the operation in Syria has shown, and the share of the military budget in the GNP is about one-fifth of what it was in Soviet times.

But the most important changes have taken place inside the country. People in the Soviet Union experienced constant shortages of food, believed in the advantages of capitalism, lost faith in their country, and were disunited. Modern Russia not only provides itself with food but is the biggest grain exporter in the world; society and most of the elites are united, patriotic-minded, consider themselves morally right, and feel proud for their country. At the same time, Russia has no intention to get involved in the arms race the U.S. is trying to impose, as Russian leaders have repeatedly stated (Osborn & Lowe, 2018).

The failures of the past decade appeared to be particularly bitter after the euphoria over “the end of history” which had swept the West after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and what seemed to be the final victory of Western-type liberal capitalism and democracy (Fukuyama, 1992). At the same time, the Western pole's resistance to the weakening of its strategic position stimulates the formation and consolidation of an alternative pole.

#### 4. Emergence of Greater Eurasia and its structural implications

For the last several years we can observe emergence of a geo-economic center in Eurasia amid the ongoing new Cold War. Emerging around Russia and China, it is not just a “defensive alliance” but rather a new center of development, aiming to become an alternative to the Euro-Atlantic one (See: Diesen, 2018). As an insightful thinker, Former Portuguese Foreign Minister Bruno Macaes has rightfully noted in his book that while forty or fifty years ago the relative center of the global geo-economic activity was somewhere in the Atlantic west of Great Britain, now it is in

Turkey and will be on the Chinese–Indian border in 11–15 years (Macaes, 2018). Naturally, the creation of this center may be upset by unwise policies of the key states and even more so by a big war. But China, other leading Asian countries and especially Russia, which has once again taken on the burden of the main supplier of international security in this region, are tending to block any attempts to reverse history through forceful revenge.

A massive redistribution of power is also taking place in the ideological and cultural spheres. The historical narrative will be different in 20–30 years from now and will drift away from the Euro-centric tradition. The founders of modern strategy and political science will include not only Thucydides, Aristotle or Machiavelli, but also Sun Tzu of China and Kautilya (or Vishnugupta) of India. Mankind will know not only the Houses of Stuart, Bourbon, Habsburg or Romanov but also Chinese, Korean, Indian and Japanese royal dynasties.

There are several geo-economic and geopolitical factors (apart from the rise of China, India, etc.) that will facilitate the formation of a new leading center in Eurasia. The “Asia for Asia” trend is gaining momentum and supplanting the previous one known as “Asia for the world” (Bordachev, Likhacheva, & Xin, 2015). Asia is producing more and more for its internal markets rather than for outside exports.

This and the growing American policy of containment have made China turn west through One Belt, One Road initiative which not only encompasses new transport corridors but also envisages the creation of economic development clusters and restoration of direct interaction between Eurasian cultures. The One Belt, One Road project is aimed to help build the logistic and economic framework for Greater Eurasia. Part of this framework will involve Indian Ocean ports, part will use the Arctic Sea Route, but the growing part will go through continental Eurasia, including Russia. Work is underway to build meridional logistic corridors to interconnect Eurasia from North to South, too. Faced with growing American protectionism and new rapidly rising markets, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and ASEAN countries will most likely pay more attention to the Eurasian vector of their development.

Having received all the benefits Europe could give and having hesitated geostrategically for a while, Turkey is also turning toward Asian economic and political markets. Iran is almost destined to become a dynamic center of the new supercontinent, unless it falls victim to new aggression. In fact, Iran can connect the Persian Gulf and India with the north of the continent. India is hesitating and trying to balance, fearing China's growing power. Being inconveniently locked in-between China, hostile Pakistan, and Afghanistan, India is playing with the Indo-Pacific strategy intended to counterbalance China (Swaine, 2018). But it, too, will inevitably move northward toward Eurasia. Egypt, some of the developed Middle Eastern states, and even Israel are also gravitating toward the new Eurasia and its organizations. It is quite possible that war-torn Syria and Iraq will be rebuilt in the coming decades by Eurasian countries – China, India, Russia, Turkey, Iran, South Korea, and Japan. The new Silk Road will stretch all the way to the Mediterranean.

Russia's pivot to the East is giving a strong boost to the creation of the Eurasian geopolitical, geo-economic, and cultural community. The pivot was conceived in 2008–2009 as a belated but necessary turn toward growing Asian markets, using Russia's competitive advantages. But the real turn began only in 2011–2012, with its foreign policy and ideological dimensions strengthened and enhanced as relations with the U.S. and Europe kept deteriorating and worsened dramatically in 2014 (Lukin, 2016b).

The standoff played a positive role not only by accelerating Russia's economic and geopolitical reorientation, but also by helping to mend its economy and improve foreign economic relations. The country launched an import-substitution program. The share of oil and gas in its foreign trade turnover dropped from 60% in 2014 to 40% in 2017 (WTO, 2017). Relatively expensive European goods are being replaced with more economically effective ones from Asia.

A widely read policy report published in 2017 stated that Russia had made a political turn to the East and its economic pivot had started gaining momentum (Karaganov et al., 2017). The Pacific part of Russia may be expected to develop two or three times faster than the rest of the country from the end of the current decade, even though plans are being made to accelerate the development of other regions as well. But perhaps the most important changes have occurred in the outlook of the upper crust of the Russian elite. After more than 300 years of feeling themselves as a European periphery and willing to pay for getting closer to the center (senseless concessions made in the 1980s–1990s are the best example), the Russian elite realized it was in the center and the north of growing Eurasia. Culturally, it remains largely European, as Russia has always been throughout its millennium-long history. But having taken all the best Europe and the West could offer and having changed within, it does not want to keep moving along the Western path anymore and considers it disadvantageous. Instead, having teamed up with Asian neighbors, it has started building a new, future-oriented geopolitical, geo-economic, and civilizational (or geo-ideological) project that absorbs current and new tendencies – Greater Eurasian Partnership.

In modern Russian mentality, Greater Eurasia differs substantially from Russia's Eurasian projects of the 1920s and even the early 21st century. Those were anti-European projects. Greater Eurasia undoubtedly includes Europe or at least that part of it which may be willing and able geopolitically and geo-economically to join the Greater Eurasian Partnership.

In the global geopolitical context, Greater Eurasia will most likely exist along with another center which can be tentatively called Greater America as the main pillars of the future world. Given the European Union's development vector after its refusal to create a common space with Russia, there will hardly be an independent European center. Europe is likely to be part of the other two centers in various configurations but will remain a large market and one of the main cultural centers on the planet.

The partnership or community of Greater Eurasia is, first of all, a conceptual framework that sets the direction for interaction among states on the continent. It should be

committed to promoting joint economic, political, and cultural revival and development of dozens of Eurasian countries, backward or oppressed in the past, and turning Eurasia into the global economic and political center.

It will also include East, Southeast and South Asian countries, the central part of the continent, Russia, and most likely many countries located on the European subcontinent and their organizations to the extent to which they will be prepared and able to develop constructive cooperation.

Second, Greater Eurasia is an emerging geo-economic community brought into existence by the “Asia for Asia” trend, China's pivot to the West, its integration with the Eurasian Union, and Russia's turn to the East.

Third, this is a space of civilizational cooperation, which is being restored after centuries of oblivion and which was previously embodied in the cultural aspect of the Great Silk Road that incorporated and connected civilizations in China, East Asia, India, Persia, and the Arab Near East with Europe through the Eastern Roman Empire, Venice, and Spain.

Fourth, Greater Eurasia means a movement toward a new geostrategic community – pan-Eurasian space of development, cooperation, peace, and security, called upon to overcome the rifts left by the previous Cold War, prevent new ones, and regulate disagreements and contradictions between members of the partnership. One of its fundamental potential functions is to “immerse” China in connections, cooperative ties, balances, and agreements in order to keep it from being seen a potential hegemon to be inevitably opposed by other Asian countries which will also invite external balancers, less interested in stability and peace on the continent, to join in. At the same time, Greater Eurasia should be open to the rest of the world and its other key center evolving around the United States, and should engage with APEC and similar forums, Atlantic structures, and the trilateral dialogue which we advise Russia, China, and the U.S. to conduct in order to discuss global issues and international strategic stability (Karaganov, 2017).

The partnership of Greater Eurasia should be based on the traditional postulates of international law and international coexistence, and rejection of all forms of universalism, supremacy of certain values over others, and one's a priori rightness or hegemony.

The principles upon which Greater Eurasia should be built (ideally, international relations in general), which have been falling out of focus in the past several decades, include the following:

- Unconditional respect for political pluralism, the freedom of countries of the continent to make their political choice, refusal to interfere in each other's internal affairs;
- Economic openness, reduction of barriers in international trade and investments, rejection of politicization in economic relations as detrimental to interdependence; economic interaction based on the “plus-plus” and “win-win” principles;
- Unconditional respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, rejection of hegemony, diktat, and threats; mutual efforts to maintain peace and stability under the UN auspices;
- Refusal to create new military unions or expand the existing ones; support for the principle of neutrality and

non-alignment; security guarantees to the states that have made this choice;

- Commitment to building a pan-continental system of development, cooperation and security from Jakarta (or Tokyo, or Seoul) to Lisbon, which would, among other things, make up for the abortive pan-European security project and provide a new format for resolving disagreements in Europe, along China's perimeter, on the Korean Peninsula, and in the Middle East;
- Commitment to supporting and developing the diversity of cultures, creating new and restoring historical cultural ties; moving toward peace, cooperation and mutual enrichment through the dialogue of civilizations;
- Protection of human rights as inseparable from the rights of the state and society.

The Greater Eurasian Partnership is also a conceptual framework for Russia's future geostrategic and geo-economic self-identification as the center and the north of the rising continent and one of its key transportation and economic links, but most importantly, as a key security provider. Due to the centuries-old experience of interaction with both the West and the East, peaceful coexistence of many religions, and open culture, Russia should play an important role in developing and restoring cultural cooperation in Eurasia.

The partnership of Greater Eurasia provides a conceptual framework for a joint project, to be more precise many projects, undertaken by member states and their organizations, which are prepared to pursue a common goal of building a continent of development, peace, and close cooperation. At the initial stage, the Russia–China tandem should lead the way. Their leaders have officially expressed their support for the Greater Eurasian Partnership concept (President of Russia, 2016). But it needs to be specified and developed further through multilateral dialogue.

The conceptual framework makes it possible to use current trends in order to direct the activities of states, organizations and dialogue formats toward forming and formalizing a new geo-economic, geopolitical, and geocultural space – at first a partnership, and eventually community, of Greater Eurasia. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) looks like a natural platform for such partnership. It though needs to be more energetic and open, and turn from a purely regional organization into an organization of organizations. Dialogue between the SCO and the EU, between the EAEU and the EU, and certainly between the SCO and ASEAN, and between the SCO and Northeast Asian countries could be quite useful as well. An expert forum could be the first step, to be followed by an expert-political forum of Eurasian development, cooperation, and security. Clearly, if an expanded SCO becomes the central organization of Greater Eurasia, its charter will have to be revised to change the existing consensus-based decision-making.

Naturally, the transformation of the SCO (expanded and developed) into a new structure will require joint efforts of all its members, primarily Russia and China, whose actions in the SCO were previously restricted by attempts to limit each other's economic (Russia was apparently wary of China's dominance) and security (China by all appearances did not want Russia to take leading positions)

influence. At present, development is impeded by discord between China and India. It is necessary to create a new format that would resolve old disagreements. This can be done by enlarging the SCO and amending its charter in order to facilitate joint movement toward the partnership of Greater Eurasia which requires all countries to pool their efforts and competitive advantages for the benefit of all people.

And of course, Greater Eurasia should be effectively protected from new outbreaks of the Cold War.

## 5. Conclusion

The new Cold War is a more complex and broader phenomenon than the clash between Russia and the West over Ukraine, or even the more general problems of European security, arms control, and other issues on which observers usually focus. Structurally, Cold War II is a manifestation of the confrontation between the West and the non-West that is taking shape within the framework of Greater Eurasia, the “Belt and Road” initiative, and BRICS.

The complexity as well as the main challenge of the new Cold War lies in the fact that it lacks a rigid ideological confrontation that could lend it structure and that it occurs during a fundamental shift in the global balance of power. The Western pole had already weakened to some extent by 2010, and that process continues today. A second pole in non-Western Eurasia is emerging and establishing its institutions.

At the same time, the actual and potential conflicts within each pole make the overall confrontation less stable and predictable than the “classic” bipolar confrontation of the second half of the 20th century.

The relative weakening of the Western pole and its desire to slow down or stop the emergence of a new power center in Eurasia is the main cause of international instability. This has resulted in a certain strategic frivolity – a problem that it appears will only increase with time. Under these circumstances, other great powers – Russia and China – will have to prepare for the worst and take the responsibility for international stability into their own hands. This policy should not take the form of a unilateral filling of the vacuum that might result from a possible U.S. withdrawal from certain geographical and political areas of activity. Russia and China need to form and serve as the center of an international structure that would neutralize and, to a certain extent, structure the negative effects of U.S. policy, acting as an external stabilizer of their actions in the international arena – as occurred in a more extreme form during the original “Cold War.” In practice, this would require them to take tough positions and even confront the U.S. directly on certain sensitive international issues.

The most positive scenario for Russia would be a return of Kissinger-era realism and the formulation of a new U.S. strategy for striking a balance of power with a broader array of states based on a non-ideological foreign policy. This scenario is also the least likely due to the peculiarities of the political and ideological foundations of the American state. However, even an improvement in the existing foreign policy could open up opportunities for serious discussion about

new rules for safe international relations – or rather, safe international coexistence.

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