

USA, RUSSIA AND THE GEOPOLITICAL THEATRE IN THE SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE: THE PLACE OF ROMANIA

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“With America - given the contradictory roles it plays in the world - fated to be the catalyst either for a global community or for global chaos, Americans have the unique historical responsibility to determine which of the two will come to pass. Our choice is between dominating the world and leading it”¹.

Zbigniew Brzezinski

Rezumat: *Problemele de bază tratate în acest articol sunt: amenințările existente la adresa intereselor geopolitice și geostrategice ale SUA, în special în sud-estul Europei; resursele de care dispune statul american pentru apărarea acestor interese; principalele caracteristici (elemente) geopolitice ale României; importanța pentru România a alianței cu SUA. Singurele state sau grupuri de state care pot amenința interesele economice sau militare ale SUA provin din Eurasia: China, Rusia, Organizația de cooperare de la Shanghai, Uniunea Europeană. Principalul oponent al SUA în sud-estul Europei este Rusia. Interesul geostrategic fundamental al Rusiei rămâne încercarea de a diviza alianța NATO (în special prin oferirea de avantaje economice Germaniei și Franței) și de a izola Europa de est. În acest fel, prezența militară a SUA în Europa ar deveni problematică. În prezent, SUA dispune de mijloace militare și economice suficiente pentru a evita această situație.*

Problemele geopolitice și geostrategice ale României sunt de două feluri: externe și interne. În plan extern, România are neînțelegeri diplomatice cu Ucraina. Totodată, România nu a putut rezolva, în maniera fostei Republici Federale Germania, o consecință teritorială a celui de-al doilea război mondial: unificarea cu Republica Moldova, stat creat artificial de fosta URSS după cel de-al doilea război mondial. În plan intern, principalele probleme geopolitice ale României sunt următoarele: subdezvoltarea și lipsa de competitivitate economică reală a industriei și agriculturii, scăderea demografică, scăderea nivelului de trai al populației, dotarea necorespunzătoare a forțelor armate (mai ales în materie de aviație).

În lipsa sprijinului SUA pentru România, această țară își va spori gradul de dependență economică față de Rusia.

Abstract: *Core issues addressed in this article are: the existing threats to address the interests of the US geopolitical and geostrategical, particularly in South-Eastern Europe; the resources available to the American State for the protection of those interests; main features (elements) geopolitical of Romania; importance for Romania's Alliance with US. Only states or groups of states that may threaten the economic interests of the U.S. military are originated*

¹ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership*, New York, Basic Books, 2004, p. XIII.

from Eurasia: China, Russia, the Organization of Shanghai cooperation, the European Union. The main opponent of the U.S. in South-Eastern Europe is Russia. Geostrategical interests of Russia remains fundamentally the attempt to divide alliance NATO (in particular by providing the economic benefits of Germany and France) and isolate Eastern Europe; in this way, the US military presence in Europe would become problematic. Currently, the US has enough economic and military means in order to avoid this situation.

Geopolitical and geostrategical problems of Romania are of two kinds: external and internal. Externally, Romania has some diplomatic disagreements with Ukraine. At the same time, Romania was not able to resolve in the manner of the former Federal Republic of Germany, a consequence of the Second World War: the unification with the Republic of Moldova, the State created artificially by former USSR after the Second World War. Internally, the main geopolitical problems of Romania are the following: underdevelopment and the absence of real economic competitiveness of industry and agriculture; the demographic decline, lowering the standard of living of population. In the absence of support of the USA for Romania, this country will increase the degree of economic dependence towards Russia.

Résumé: *Les problèmes de base traités dans l'article ci-joint sont: les menaces existantes à l'adresse des intérêts géopolitiques et géostratégiques des Etats Unis de l'Amérique, spécialement au sud-est de l'Europe; les ressources dont dispose l'Etat américain pour défendre ces intérêts; les principales caractéristiques (éléments) géopolitiques de la Roumanie; l'importance pour la Roumanie de l'alliance avec les Etats Unis de l'Amérique. Les seuls Etats ou groupes d'Etats qui peuvent menacer les intérêts économiques ou militaires des Etats Unis de l'Amérique proviennent de l'Eurasie : la Chine, la Russie, l'Organisation de coopération de Shanghai, l'Union Européenne. Le principal adversaire des Etats Unis de l'Amérique dans le sud-est de l'Europe est la Russie. L'intérêt géostratégique fondamental de la Russie reste l'essai de déstabiliser l'alliance OTAN (en spécial par l'offre d'avantages économiques à l'Allemagne et à la France) et d'isoler l'Europe d'est. De cette manière, la présence militaire des Etats Unis de l'Amérique en Europe deviendrait problématique. En présent, les Etats Unis de l'Amérique disposent de moyens militaires et économiques suffisants pour éluder cette situation.*

Les problèmes géopolitiques et géostratégiques de la Roumanie sont de deux types: externes et internes. Sur le plan externe, la Roumanie a des diplomatiques problèmes avec l'Ukraine. En même temps, la Roumanie n'a pas pu résoudre à la manière de l'ancienne République Fédérale Allemagne, une conséquence territoriale de la seconde guerre mondiale: l'union avec la République Moldavie, Etat créé artificiellement par l'ancienne URSS après la seconde guerre mondiale. Sur plan interne, les principaux problèmes géopolitiques de la Roumanie sont les suivants: le sous-développement et le manque de compétitivité économique réelle de l'industrie et de l'agriculture, la diminution démographique, la diminution du niveau de vivre de la population, la dotation inappropriée des forces armées (surtout en matière d'aviation). Faute d'appui des Etats Unis de l'Amérique pour la Roumanie, ce pays augmentera le degré de dépendance économique envers la Russie.

Keywords: *USA, Russia, Romania, South-Eastern Europe, geopolitics, geostrategy.*

The influential American geopolitician (i.e. Zbigniew Brzezinski) is undoubtedly right considering that, in the complex international context at the beginning of the XXI century, the U.S. has a fundamental role in the global security.

Self-isolation², the conquest of this superpower by any military-political or economic coalition or its abandonment to the „American credo” and Western values³, may lead the world to a drastic reduction of the Western civilization influence⁴, and thus, to chaos. Starting from this situation, the basic issues addressed in this article will be the following: the existing threats to the geopolitical and geostrategic interests of the U.S., especially in South – Eastern Europe; the resources possessed by the U.S. in order to defend these interests; geopolitical and geostrategic issues of Romania, a South East European state. The article will be accompanied by a series of final conclusions and consistent judgments of value.

Being yet the only military superpower of the world, the U.S. enjoys, naturally, such likes and dislikes. In the geopolitical and geostrategic plan, the U.S. enjoys all the advantages and disadvantages of a marine power. Eurasia is the main (in fact, the only) region of the world that could threaten the U.S. interests. This vast geographic region is the richest area (natural resources, companies etc.) and the most populated region of the world (about 75% of the world population). Except from the U.S., all declared and undeclared nuclear powers of the world are located here. From the same area come the only entities which are at the opposite pole and that could threaten the U.S. economy and military supremacy: the European Union, Russia, China and Japan⁵.

This situation is described, empirically, by Henry Kissinger: „Geopolitically, America is an island off the shores of the large landmass of Eurasia, whose resources and population far exceed those of the United States. The domination by a single power of either of Eurasia’s two principal spheres – Europe or Asia – remains a good definition of strategic danger for America, Cold War or no Cold War. For such a grouping would have the capacity to outstrip America economically and, in the end, military. That danger would have to be resisted even were the dominant power apparently benevolent, for if the intentions ever changed, America would find itself

² *Ibidem*, “But the potential self-isolation of the only superpower could plunge the world into escalating anarchy, made all the more ominous by the dissemination of weaponry of mass destruction”

³ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order*, London, New York et al., Touchstone Books, 1998, p. 305: “Historically American national identity has been defined culturally by the heritage of Western civilization and politically by the principles of the American Creed of which Americans overwhelmingly agree: liberty, democracy, individualism, equality before the law, constitutionalism, private property. In the late twentieth century both components of American identity have come under concentrated and sustained onslaught from a small but influential number of intellectuals and publicists”.

⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 306-307: “Rejection of the Creed and of Western civilization means the end of the United States of America as we have known it. It also means effectively the end of Western civilization. If the United States is de-Westernized, the West is reduced to Europe and a few lightly populated overseas European settler countries. Without the United States the West becomes a minuscule and declining part of the world’s population on a small and inconsequential peninsula at the extremity of the Eurasian land mass”

⁵ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard. American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York, Basic Books, 1997, p. 31.

with a grossly diminished capacity for effective resistance and a growing inability to shape events”⁶.

The main U.S. opponents in Eurasia, at the moment, are Russia and China. These states have managed to overcome, at a formal level, the territorial divergences which separate them (the 21st of July 2008 Treaty)⁷, situation which is in measure to contribute to the enforcement of the Organization for Cooperation from Shanghai (created on the 15th of June, 2001). Among the members are included: Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The aggregated surface of these states represents about 3/5 of the Asian continent, while their population (1.5 billion people) represent about a third of the world’s population. India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan have the status of „observer” in this forum, meanwhile Belarus and Sri Lanka are only „dialogue partners”. Although the declared purposes of the Organization for Cooperation from Shanghai make reference mainly to economical cooperation, fight against terrorism and insurance of a „peaceful, secure and stable” climate in the region⁸, the anti-American potential (at least at the economic level) of this coalition cannot be neglected.

At present, the Chinese economy has become the world’s second economy, after the U.S. The fact itself constitutes a geo-economic threat which could be transformed into a geostrategic one. The creator of „the offensive realism” in International Relationship Theory considers that, in case China becomes a gigantic Hong Kong, it could obtain a „latent power” three times higher than the one of the U.S. This could later facilitate the getting of a decisive military advantage in North – Eastern Asia⁹. The same author (i.e. John J. Mearsheimer), although, considers that both Russia and China do not possess yet a significant capacity in designing power (the possibility of sending military forces outside their national borders). For this particularly reason, these countries „find it hard” to develop an aggressive policy towards other states from that area (i.e. North – Eastern Asia)¹⁰.

Due to the superiority of uncontested, economic dynamism, military, scientific and technological knowledge of American society, there is currently no country of the world able to military confront the U.S.(with real chances of success). Confronting this situation, George Friedman, STRATFOR general director, considers that in the first half of the 21st century there will be attempts to form "coalitions of secondary powers which will try to control the United States". Naturally, the US will try to prevent the formation of this type of coalition¹¹.

⁶ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, New York et al., Simon & Schuster, 1994, p. 813.

⁷ John Chan, *Russia and China settle longstanding territorial disputes*, 2008, in <http://www.countercurrents.org/chan140808.htm>. Accessed in 28.11.2010

⁸ <http://www.sectsc.org/EN/brief.asp> Accessed in 28.11.2010

⁹ John J. Mearsheimer, *Tragedia politicii de forță. Realismul ofensiv și lupta pentru putere*, Filipeștii de Târg (Prahova), Editura Antet XX Press, 2003, p. 283. The original edition: *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York, W.W. Norton, 2001.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 271.

¹¹ George Friedman, *Următorii 100 de ani. Previziuni pentru secolul XXI*, traducere din limba engleză Valentina Georgescu, București, Editura Litera, 2009, p. 14. The original edition:

On the European theater, the main threat to the US interests remains Russia, especially after the year 2001, trying to regain its status of former superpower. We believe that the essence of geopolitical strategy (and geo-economic conditions) of Russia on the European theatre was best revealed and (or) surprised by George Friedman: "the basic strategy of Russia will consist in seeking to dissolve NATO and to isolate Eastern Europe. The key of success will be the Germans, followed by the French. Neither of them wants a new confrontation with Russia. They are isolated nations, and Germany is dependent on Russia for natural gas. The Germans try to reduce this dependency and maybe even succeed to some extent, but they will continue to depend on the supply of a substantial quantity of natural gas, without which they cannot manage"¹².

Geostrategically thinking, the European "theater" has a special importance because, intrinsically, the U.S. military interests are related to the NATO interests. In this context, Russia may not endanger the U.S. interests' without endangering the NATO interests. Therefore, Russia logically follows a division policy of NATO.

Russia may divide the NATO'S European allies using on the one hand the anti-Americanism with cultural roots¹³ felt by a part of the elite in Western Europe, and on the other hand providing economic benefits or using various economic pressure types. In addition, we cannot underestimate the systematic subversion undertaken by Russian secret services¹⁴ (post 2002, amplified in the period of ex-President and the current premier Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin)¹⁵ against the U.S. interests in Europe.

In the framework of the economic pressures of the Kremlin, directed against the allies of the U.S., the hydrocarbons play a fundamental role. "Nevazisimaia Gazeta" published in 2006 statistics data on the countries dependent on foreign oil and gas from Russia. In accordance with this statistics, the countries in question were classified into three categories:

1. Energy Satellites of Russia – Ukraine, Moldova, Poland, the Czech Republic, Finland, Bulgaria and the Balkan States.
2. "Relatively independent" countries – Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Romania, Greece, Kazakhstan and Belarus.
3. Energy independent Countries of Russia – Norway, the Netherlands,

The Next 100 Years. A Forecast for the Twenty-first Century, New York, Doubleday Publishing Group, 2009.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 106.

¹³ Russell A. Berman, *Anti-Americanism in Europe. A cultural problem*, Stanford University, Hoover Institution Press publication, no. 527, 2004, passim.

¹⁴ Harry Chapman Pincher, *Treachery. Betrayals, Blunders, and Cover-ups: Six Decades of Espionage Against America and Great Britain*, New York, Random House Publishing Group, 2009, passim

¹⁵ Thierry Wolton, *Le KGB au pouvoir, le système Poutine*, Paris, Buchet-Chastel, 2008, passim.

Denmark, Spain, the United Kingdom, Japan, India, China and the USA¹⁶.

Overall, Europe depends in a 35-40% ratio on the Russian gas¹⁷. Finland depends 100% on the natural gas supplied by Gazprom, Austria in the ratio of 75% and Germany in the proportion of 45%¹⁸. At the level of the year 2006, the EU economy depended in the ratio of 52% on resources import. It is expected that this dependence will have reached 77% by 2020¹⁹. This weakens considerably the EU position in the negotiations for the price of oil and natural gas imported from Russia.

In economic matters, Russia practically uses the so-called technique of "invisible actions", described by Curzio Malaparte (the literary pseudonym of Kurt Erich Suckert) in *Tecnica del colpo di Stato* translated in English as *Coup D'état: The Technique of revolution*. Thus, Russia infiltrates itself in the economies of the east, center and west of Europe. As long as the legislation regarding trading and the activity of the NGOs in the Russian Federation is significantly different from that the occidental one, this state can emit a decree at any time and cancel all the economical advantages of the western firms or NGOs (including the American ones) from its territory.

In the military circle though, Russia isn't as well placed as in the economic one. With all the modernization measures taken by Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin and Dimitri Anatolievici Medvedev, the Russian army can't (yet!) present itself as a lethal adversary for NATO and the USA, but it can be a serious adversary. In the present, the Russian army is trying to recuperate the technological disadvantage registered compared to the USA army. Thus, the news agency RIA NOVOSTI was announcing on the 23th of September 2010 that Russia wanted to create an agency for the development of innovations in military technology, similar to the famous *Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)*. But we point out that this American agency was created in 1958! DARPA has for the year 2011 a budget of 3.1 billion dollars²⁰.

The aggressive actions of Russia in the economic circle (blackmail with cutting the gas supply for Europe) and in military one (to be seen in the Cecen and Georgian wars) are favoured by the perpetuation of the imperial Russia idea. The imperial Russian ideology is in the present the only ideology with a planetary vocation (conquering "everything from under the sun" - Sun Tzu, Art of War). The situation in the Caucaz denotes the fact that Russia hasn't given up the imperial politics of the

¹⁶ Vasile Nazare, *De la geopolitica forței la geopolitica petrolului* [From the force geopolitics towards the oil geopolitics], in "GeoPolitica. Revistă de Geografie Politică, GeoPolitică și GeoStrategie", anul IV, nr. 16-17, Bucharest, 2006, pp. 179-180.

¹⁷ Valeri Paniușkin, Mihail Zigar, Irina Reznik, *Gazprom. Noua armă a Rusiei* [Gazprom. The new weapon of Russia], translated from Russian into Romanian by Marina Vraciu, Leonte Ivanov and Daria Bighiu, Bucharest, Curtea Veche Publishing House, 2008, p. 294

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 7.

¹⁹ Geantă, Nicoale, *Spațiul ex-sovietic și geopolitica conductelor* [The former Soviet space and the geopolitics of pipelines], în "GeoPolitica. Revistă de Geografie Politică, GeoPolitică și GeoStrategie", anul IV, nr. 16-17, Bucharest, 2006, p. 198.

²⁰ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/russia/2010/russia-100923-rianovosti03.htm> Accessed in 02.12.2010

XIX century, not being ready to become a British type of Commonwealth, capable to understand the legitimate interests of the former colonies/semi-colonies. In the current situation, Russia will still search to export the imperial idea, in order to offer its population a reason of satisfaction, in the presence of some acute internal problems (the demographic crisis, the aging of the population, Islam's provocations).

At present, there are a few chances that Russia will give up the imperial idea. We should mention in this sense the type of geopolitics professed by Aleksandr Dugin (www.geopolitika.ru, www.arktogeia.ru). Thanks to its imperial experience, Russia can mobilize in case of need against the West (at least at an ideological level) a multitude of populations more or less undeveloped inside its borders. This fact can be extended upon the Central Asian states, which are about to rejoin its circle of influence. The populations in cause (from the inside the Russian Federation and Central Asia) cultivate Islamic anti-occidental customs and, besides, have instincts and multi secular war customs. In the military plan though, Russia can't try anything serious against the West (and, implicitly, the USA) as long as NATO remains in its current state.

Anyway, the study of military history of the 19th-20th centuries proves the fact that Russia or the USSR couldn't fight with much success against the western military powers without the support of other eastern military powers. The Napoleon wars, the Crimea War (1854-1856) and the two world wars are illustrative examples in this aspect. At present, NATO represents an alliance of western military powers (the most powerful alliance in history!), which have the best military customs and the advanced weapons in the world. Because of this, without the fall of NATO, Russia can't find any western power with which to forge an eventual alliance. In this context, the American strategy with a view to counterattacking the aggressive geopolitical intentions of Russia in Eastern Europe remains to keep NATO in this part of the continent.

Nevertheless, the USA possesses consistent resources - situated outside NATO - to be able to face these threats. The USA has its own military and economic potential, still and has the most powerful economy in the world (strongly followed by the Chinese economy) and still is the only military superpower.

At the economic level, the differences between Russia and the USA are, categorically, in favor of the USA. So, in compliance with the data offered by The Global Competitiveness Index 2010-2011 (made by the World Economic Forum), in a classification made by us for five states with significant economic systems, Sweden takes the 2nd place (score: 5.56), the USA takes the 4th place (score: 5.43), Germany the 5th place (score: 5.39), China the 27th place (score: 4.84), the Russian Federation the 63rd place (score: 4.24)²¹.

At a military plan though, the results are also, net in favor of the USA (in comparison with Russia). George Friedman shows that the military fleet of the USA controls all the world's oceans and all the world's military fleets united are dwarfed by the USA's fleet²². Therewith, the military expenses of the USA are ten times larger

²¹ <http://gcr.weforum.org/gcr2010/> Accessed in 02.12.2010

²² Friedman, George, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

that those of Russia. In compliance with the appreciations of SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute), the USA spent in 2009 in the military field 661,041 million dollars (4.3% of GDP, 2008), meanwhile Russia spent in the same year 1,693 billion rubles (61.000 million dollars), representing 3.5% of its GDP (2008)²³.

Leaving behind a part of the economic and military elements of the American power, the most important allies to the USA from Eastern Europe (Poland and Romania) dispose of significant demographic and economic resources.

Thus, Russia had in 2010 a population of 140,041,247 people, holding in this aspect the 9th place in the world. At this index, we point out that Nigeria is on the 8th place and Japan on the 10th place in the world. The growth rate of Russia's population is negative (-0.467%, the 224th place in the world in 2010)²⁴. Poland had in July 2010 a population of 38,482,919 (35th place in the world, on the 34th place being Kenya and on the 36th place Algeria). The growth rate of the population in this state was negative in 2010 (-0,047, 208th place in the world)²⁵. Romania had in July 2010 a population of 22,215,421 people (the 52nd place in the world, right after North Korea and a place in front of Syria). The growth rate of the population was negative that year, -0.147% (215th in the world)²⁶.

Poland and Romania have a significant economic potential. In matters of GDP (the indicator “purchasing power parity”), Poland was placed in 2009 on the 21st place in the world, with 688,300,000,000 USA \$, and Romania was ranged as occupying the 43th place in the world with 254,400,000,000 USA \$. For comparison, No.1 in the world at the same index (level 2009) – the UE is ranked first with 14,430,000,000,000 USA \$, **SUA is the second with 14,120,000,000,000 USA \$**, 3rd is China with 8,818,000,000,000 USA \$, Japan is on the 4th with 4,149,000,000,000 USA \$, India ranks 5 with 3,680,000,000,000 USA \$, Germany on the 6th place with 2,815,000,000,000 USA \$, the UK on the 7th place with 2,123,000,000,000 USA \$, **Russia occupies the 8th place with 2,116,000,000,000 USA \$** and France the 9th place with 2,094,000,000,000 USA \$²⁷.

Aided by the U.S. technology and financial resources, Romania and Poland can develop modern armies, able to withstand successfully to any Russian military challenges. The demographic resources of these countries, together with a possible transfer of American military technology (but also “civil” technology), would create a serious barrier to the eventual military advance of Russia in the area.

²³ <http://milexdata.sipri.org/result.php4> Accessed in 02.12.2010

²⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rs.html> Accessed in 02.12.2010

²⁵ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pl.html> Accessed in 02.12.2010

²⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ro.html> Accessed in 02.12.2010

²⁷ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2001rank.html?countryName=Poland&countryCode=pl®ionCode=eu&rank=21#pl> Accessed in 02.12.2010

Poland has two strings to one's bow: a true market economy and law institutions which function properly. In Romania, however, these things are still just a goal. Within this context, the U.S. would help Romania in the process of creating a functioning market economy (economic investments included) and in the better functioning of the State. Only in this way, Romania can become a reliable and stable ally for the U.S.

A geopolitical issue not at all insignificant has been represented until now by the special Russian experience after the 1945 into the Romanian problems (*intelligence* matters included). The lower experience in Romanian matters of the United States and NATO can cause considerable slowdown of the process of Romania's integration into NATO structures.

On short and medium term, Romania could provide the U.S. a few inherent advantages. **First**, by controlling Dobrudja (i.e. a province of Romania), NATO restricts the field of action for the military-industrial complex of the Sevastopol (Crimea Peninsula), controlled by Russia²⁸.

Romania has proved over time that is inhabited by a population that has cultural figures representative of humanity (inventors and intellectuals), which have acted as a bridge between the Eastern and Western type civilizations. Well managed, this country can modernize and become a bulwark of Western defense in front of any Russian geopolitical and geo-economical threat. Summarized, geopolitical and geostrategic issues in Romania are of two types: external and internal.

Externally, Romania's geopolitics and geostrategy are decisively influenced by its location at the intersection between the influence spheres of NATO, EU and The Russian Federation. In addition, Romania has a policy of special relations with the Republic of Moldova. Romania has some diplomatic disputes with Ukraine. Moreover, Romania could not solve, in the manner of the former Federal Republic of Germany, a consequence of the Second World War: unification with the Republic of Moldova (the eastern part of the Romanian historical province with the same name), an artificial state created by the former USSR after the Second World War.

Internally speaking, geopolitics in Romania is influenced by a number of parameters regarding to geography, ethnicity, demography, economy, military, culture and religion. Romania's main geopolitical problems are the following: underdevelopment and lack of real economic competitiveness of industry and agriculture; population decline; declining living standards; inadequate equipment of the armed forces (especially in the field of aviation).

Romania is the largest state in South-Eastern Europe – 238,391km², 12th place in Europe²⁹ and 82 in the world³⁰. Most known experts believe that "the Romanian

²⁸ Florin Pintescu, *Geopolitica și geostrategia pontică românească între tradiție și actualitate* [Sea Romanian geopolitics between tradition and actuality], in "GeoPolitica. Revistă de Geografie Politică, GeoPolitică și GeoStrategie", anul III, nr. 14-15, Bucharest, 2005, p. 89.

²⁹ <http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/pdf/ro/cap1.pdf> Accessed in 10.12.2010

³⁰ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2147rank.html?countryName=Romania&countryCode=ro®ionCode=eu&rank=82#ro> Accessed in 02.12.2010

geopolitical system" included three elements: The Carpathian Mountains, The Danube and The Black Sea³¹. The Carpathian Mountains provide a great economic value (mineral resources, forests, mineral waters etc.). Unfortunately, they have a relative military value because they do not represent a natural barrier for an attacker, because they are placed in the center of the country. If necessary, however, the Carpathians from Romania can be successfully used in the defense military actions. The Danube River in Romania has an important economic and commercial value, and the Black Sea is the only "gate" out of Romania to the open seas and oceans.

Currently, the Romanian economy is typical for a state economy underdeveloped, with a poorly developed industry and agriculture, adversely affected by the current economic crisis. In the industrial sector, Romania has many natural resources, most of them being not sufficient for the national economy: oil, coal (lignite, brown coal), gold, silver, copper and bauxite. However, Romania has over 2,000 mineral water springs, with valences Consumption and Medical Treatment. In addition, Romania has significant reserves of methane gas and salt³².

In terms of land for agriculture, show that 64.1% of them are arable land, 22.6 pastures, 10.4% hayfields and 2.9% vineyards and orchards³³. Although it has very good land for farming, Romania failed to gain significant positions in the world's major exporters of food. Currently, Romania has a population decline (see note 26, above). Proportion of population (0-14 years) decreased from 18.3% in 2000 to 15.3% in 2007. In contrast, the share of elderly increased (65 years and over) from 13.3% in 2000 to 14.9% in 2007³⁴.

The standard of living of the population has experienced since 1990, an almost constant decline. In accordance with data held at UN level (i.e. United Nations Development Program), Human Development Index places Romania on 50th place in the world. Note that this index has three components: life expectancy and health system ("health and long life"), level of education ("knowledge") and the "decent standard of living"³⁵. According to Multidimensional Poverty Index, Romania was in 2008 on the 50th place in the world. For comparison, Norway was placed on the 1st position in the world, Australia on the 2nd, New Zealand 3rd, **USA on the 4th**, Russian Federation on the 65th place³⁶.

The Romanian army is poorly equipped with weapons (especially aviation) for the purposes of fighting carried on a modern battlefield. Romania could - theoretically - buy Gripen aircraft, the Eurofighter or F-16 (the last type is already obsolete). As George Friedman show, currently Romania's problem is that it does not seem able to

³¹ Grigore Posea, *Geopolitica și geopolitică românească* [Geopolitics and Romanian Geopolitics], în Emil I. Emandi, Gh. Buzatu, Vasile S. Cucu (editori), *Geopolitica*, vol. I, Iassy, Glasul Bucovinei Printing House, 1994, pp. 347-348.

³² Vasile Simileanu, Radu Săgeată, *Geopolitica României* (Romania's Geopolitics), Bucharest, Top Form Printing House, 2009, p. 131.

³³ <http://www.INSSE.ro/cms/files/pdf/ro/cap14.pdf> Accessed in 10.12.2010

³⁴ Vasile Simileanu, Radu Săgeată, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

³⁵ <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/ROU.html> Accessed in 10.12.2010

³⁶ <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/38406.html> Accessed in 10.12.2010

afford to buy - for financial reasons - not even 24 F-16, let alone the purchase of modern military vessels³⁷. Given the geopolitical problems of Romania, the alliance with the U.S. is now a *sine qua non* condition for maintaining its problematic independence. As a part of the final conclusion of this study on the geopolitical and geostrategic interests of the U.S. and Romania in south-eastern Europe, we insert Paul Kennedy's assertions regarding the permanent character of the rivalry between great powers and the balance of power's relativity, which may change often. At the end of a famous work, the American writer states: „so far as the international system is concerned, wealth and power, or economic strength and military strength, are always relative and should be seen as such. Since they are relative, and since all societies are subject to the inexorable tendency to change, then the international balances can *never* be still, and it is a folly of statesmanship to assume that they ever would be”³⁸.

Any loss by the U.S. in the geopolitical and geostrategic competition for the control of the south-eastern Europe can produce on a short and medium term (up to 10 years) confusion in the American elites (and those from the countries that rely on the U.S.' support), the cooling of relations with the allies in Western Europe and the strengthening of Russia's power. For the long term, however, these effects would mean for the U.S. a nightmare for the American geopoliticians and experts in strategy: the domination of Europe by a single power and the removal of the U.S. economic and military influence on the old continent.

The hypothesis is not fantastic taking into consideration the demographic and economic regress and of the decadence of the culturally assertive Western society, plus a latent anti-Americanism fueled by a non-conformist and (often) unconscious intelligentsia.

In this context it is more suitable for the USA to sustain Poland and Romania in the geopolitical and geostrategy *cordon sanitaire* field, at least until Russia will clarify its intentions: imperialism or democracy? NATO outposts, these countries should play in case of necessity – according to the intrinsic logic of geopolitics and geostrategies – an effective role (not a theoretical one, at the level of the political statements "in principle") at the south-eastern border of this European organization. In any case, Poland and Romania have had many negative historical experiences with Russia, which is why they are vitally interested in the future positive alliance with NATO (and by implication, the U.S.).

The advantages obtained by the U.S. for supporting Poland, a state which is economically consolidated, with political stability, with long cultural and military traditions, with a significant Diaspora in the U.S. are obvious to everyone. The U.S. advantages for supporting Romania are less evident, because this state does not yet

³⁷<http://www.ziuaveche.ro/politica/geopolitica/8085-razboiul-ce-va-sa-vie-optiunea-geopolitica-a-romaniei.html> Accessed in 10.12.2010

³⁸ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers. Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, New York, Vintage Books, 1989, p. 536.

have a market economy worthy of the name, capabilities and military and cultural traditions like Poland.

However, Romania remains in the sphere of Russia's economic influence and intelligence without effective U.S. countermeasures, contrary to the U.S. geopolitical and geostrategic interests. This policy would remove the geographic and geostrategic policy and would extend the *cordon sanitaire* of Russia's geopolitical and geoeconomical future actions. The fact itself would simply become dangerous after reincluding Ukraine and Moldova in its sphere of influence, negating much of the results of the last two decades of the U.S. policy and diplomacy in Romania. In addition, Romania has direct borders with Serbia, a state with which Russia has had since the nineteenth century historical and cultural links that show the obvious public sympathy for Russia. The U.S.'s loss towards geopolitical and geostrategic competition in the south-eastern Europe is tantamount to a disaster for Romania (perhaps irreparably) in the short, medium and long term.

The pathological corruption, the failure (involuntary or interested!) of almost every action *pro bono publico* and intellectual sterility of the Romanian political class action in the past 20 years, made Romania ALMOST "failed" in politico-economic terms of. From the geopolitical point of view, this expression is manifested by loss of control over their strategic economic resources, the existence of an army poorly trained and equipped for the needs of the modern battlefield and an impoverished population and total lack of prospects for a decent living (taking into account western parameters) on short and medium terms. Taking into account this situation, Romania is now a defeated state on the whole line.

History demonstrates that the losers who have no assets cannot even determine friends - let alone the winners - to negotiate with them, being forced to accept unconditional surrender. While currently lacking any advantages, Romania can not seriously negotiate anything, neither with EU nor with Russia.

Lacking the intervention of the "overseas balancer" – the USA (in the opinion of John. J. Mearsheimer), the EU-Russia condominium actions (already virtually present in the country's economy) would place Romania in a delicate situation. Its geopolitical interests (and geo-economic as well) could be neglected by the EU in favor of Russia in exchange for Russian gas and economic resources. Russia (based on the tacit agreement of the EU) will maintain its sphere of influence in the Republic of Moldova, the Romanian historical province. Not to mention here of the fate of the Romanian territory now belonging to Ukraine, lost in favor of the former USSR, northern Bukovina, Hertza land, the former districts of southern Bessarabia. In case this scenario takes place, Romania can not lead an effective state, becoming a mere colony of the EU and (or) of Russia.

In case this scenario took place – which is very likely and possible if the Americans fail in the south-eastern geopolitics of Europe - the real elite of this neo-Latin state (not the political pseudo-elite!) would have only to think for a long time upon the tragic of the Latin proverb *vae victis!*