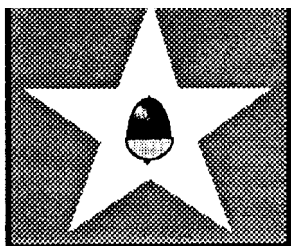


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**Black Sea Geopolitics:
Dilemmas, Obstacles & Prospects**

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Introduction

The rigid Cold War geopolitical order shattered in 1989 with the disintegration of communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Ten years on the Kosovo campaign in 1999 has proved a catalyst in the reshaping of international security for the new century. Issues of humanitarian intervention and human rights have brushed up against older notions of state sovereignty and the primacy of internal, domestic jurisdiction and fixed territorial borders. The post-Cold war tension between rights of self-determination and the obligations of states to uphold their territorial integrity were brought sharply into focus by this conflict. It has provided a marker for those seeking to analyse the evolution of international security and is playing a key role in the reshaping of a new European security order.

It is within this context that this article seeks to explore the relationship between the Black Sea region and the European security order. The core of the Black Sea region consists of the littoral states of Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria and Romania – Armenia, Azerbaijan and Moldova, although not sharing a common coastline, are linked by history, ‘frozen conflict’ resolution and a shared Soviet history. However, the interaction of states that are located within this region cannot be analysed in isolation, but rather alongside the important institutional and economic developments that are occurring in adjacent areas. To this end, an ‘extended concept’ of security is best applied to this region. Here intra-state and inter-state security issues are inter-linked and shaped by four key security dynamics: integration into western security structures; the sustainability of Black Sea transition projects; the competitive influence of regional hegemony; and the role of the region in transporting energy from the Caucasus, Caspian and Central Asia.

This article provides an analysis of each of the main dynamics in reshaping the new geopolitics of European security in the Black Sea region. It firstly identifies some of the key obstacles and dilemmas facing the region in its attempts to define its relationship to the dynamic and systemic process of democratic security building, exemplified by the dual enlargement of the EU and NATO. Secondly, it charts the impact of divergent experiences of post-Soviet and post-Communist transition on the ability and capacity of Black Sea littoral states to adapt to the new European security order. Thirdly, it analyses the role of the regional hegemony – Russia, Ukraine and Turkey. Do they act in concert to underpin regional stability or rather to advance their own short-term state interests that are at odds with the large European security-building project? Lastly, it examines the longer-term impact of geo-economics in terms of energy competition and transit corridors that link the Mediterranean, Black Sea, Caspian and Central Asia. It concludes by attempting to outline the contours of an emergent research agenda; it stresses the enduring systemic influence of historical evolution as the key factor in shaping the region's relationship with the rest of Europe.

Dual Enlargement and the European Security Order

The Warsaw Treaty Organisation collapsed with the ending of the Cold War and the strategic withdrawal of Soviet forces from Central and Eastern Europe completely transformed the Euro-Atlantic geopolitical environment. This dramatic implosion of a regional security structure presented a clear challenge to both the littoral states of the Black Sea region and NATO – it highlighted the need for strategic reorientation. It questioned NATO's *raison d'être*, core competence, missions and duties.

Throughout the 1990s NATO has continually adapted to the new security environment, particularly in its relationship with Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The 1997 NATO Madrid Summit addressed the issue of enlargement, agreeing that Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic be incorporated into NATO, with US and UK resisting pressures to incorporate Bulgaria, Slovenia and Romania. The criteria for enlargement – the institutionalisation of democratic values, a free market, the resolution of disputes with neighbours, democratic civil-military relations and an ability to contribute to NATO's military effectiveness – was underpinned by NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme. Here the preservation of democratic societies and maintenance of the principles of international law – NATO's metaphysical aspect – were joined to its operational features. Issues of interoperability, transparency (what decisions are taken, where decisions are taken, by whom decisions are taken), and co-operative military exercises had a multiple function. The PfP agenda provided the means to render enlargement bearable, and to erode barriers between members and non-members by building networks of trust at the national and multinational level.

PfP continued to provide a forum to discuss security issues and defence collaboration, including the issue of civil emergency. This issue is of great importance in the post-Soviet context due to an absence of transparency and trust in the sphere of civil-military relations. In the Soviet period, the armed forces were maintained to protect the party as opposed to society. This Soviet heritage, coupled to the possibility of a major post-Soviet industrial accident, or the collapse of the banking system, increases the potential for the escalation of a civil emergency. Such escalation would proceed vertically in power structures and horizontally in society, so becoming the catalyst for a radical undemocratic reorientation of a state's systemic transformation [Sherr, 1999]. The 1997 Ukraine Defence Concept, for example, acknowledges this risk. Individual Partnership Programmes, the Partnership and Review Process, and Partnership Co-ordination Cells (PCC) in Mons, all represent the extent of NATO's outreach and integration of security space in the east. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), launched on 30 May 1997, further strengthened links between NATO integration and the accession process and provided an overarching framework for security partnership in the region. [Rotfeld 1998]

This was reinforced at the NATO Washington Summit (April 1999); the Membership Action Plan (MAP) created an 'open door policy' to enlargement, buttressed by feedback mechanisms and a review process. [Klaiber 1999] NATO's new Strategic Concept (SC) was also unveiled in Washington. This brought into sharper focus some of the obstacles and dilemmas for further enlargement in the Black Sea region. The new SC placed an emphasis on collective defence and collective security – therefore the ability of potential member states to contribute to peace-making arguably has become more important than their ability to conform to PfP agreements. PfP has become more of an end in itself following the Washington Summit. Further enlargement was not directly mentioned in the text (the 1997 Madrid NATO Summit

named actual contenders). There appeared no locomotive for second wave enlargement (Germany was the 'engine' for first wave integration), and Sweden and Finland are strongly pushing for EAPC regionalisation, so blurring the lines between membership/non-membership.

Second echelon NATO enlargement appears now to be characterised by a policy of 'disjointed incrementalism' rather than the adoption of a strategic blueprint to shape the process. However, 'disjointed incrementalism', whilst boasting the virtues of flexibility and responsiveness within a very fluid security environment, suffers from the vices of ambiguity, ambivalence and uncertainty. The Kosovo campaign highlighted several security-related issues that this approach has yet to address. Firstly, will PfP territory be defended by NATO states? What kind of security guarantees or commitments does PfP membership bring? NATO is committed to defending democratic values and culture 'in and around Europe'; values and cultures as defined by the OSCE. Two dangers are immediately apparent. Will NATO become the de facto military wing of the OSCE? Furthermore, a basic tension emerges between the idea of 'in and around Europe' and the classical concept of 'spheres of influence'. We will see this latent tension most clearly in potential 'Kosovo-type' conflicts in Transdniestria, South Osetia and Abkhazia. Indeed, in late 1999 and early 2000, the Second Chechen War and the risk of instability proliferating beyond 'Russian' borders into the South Caucasus has brought this issue to the forefront of NATO's 'enlargement' agenda. It highlights the need for a stability pact within the South Caucasus in the future, and the question of NATO's role within this potential pact. Do the de facto NATO protectorates of Kosovo, FYROM and Bosnia represent templates of containment and conflict management that can be transferred to Europe's dependent Eastern periphery?

Secondly, the prospect of a new wave of NATO entrants has raised the perennial question of the geographical limits of the new European security order and so the extent of the integration processes. The Council of Europe admitted Azerbaijan to full membership (29 June 2000), but does this signal that Azerbaijan is to be considered a possible EU and/or NATO member state? The underdevelopment of the capacity and capability of internal administrative and institutional structures of South Caucasus states, and their inability to generate an external military contribution places NATO integration beyond reach. It raises the question: will PfP-II echelon states lack both the military capability and the economic strength to carry out collective security operations? Kosovo has placed greater stress on the asymmetric role of PfP within post-Soviet states. Georgia and Azerbaijan have both now stated that they perceive PfP as a stepping stone to full NATO membership. Russia and Ukraine have signed separate 'Strategic Partnership' Agreements with NATO, whilst Moldova remains neutral, perceiving limited PfP cooperation as an end in itself. Post-Kosovo, the integration process has brought into sharper focus an underlying tension between the rhetoric and reality of integration and it has refocused attention upon the challenges posed by latent or 'frozen conflicts' within the Black Sea region.

Thirdly, in the Black Sea region geopolitical certainties are more elusive and there are many emergent and existent security threats that neither current NATO membership, the application of its doctrine (still wedded to traditional politico-military threats) or the process of NATO integration fully address. These security threats are numerous – to name a few: criminality; unemployment; weaknesses in civil society; the horizontal proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons technology; small arms transfers; 'warlordism'; collapsed 'statelets' and regions; globalisation; and environmental insecurity. The flow of illegal Chinese migrants to the Russian Federation, for example, is estimated to make 2 million in 2000

according to the Federal Migration Service - 50,000 of which are calculated to travel on to Europe. [*ITAR-TASS news agency, Moscow, 27 June 2000*]

Internal migration within states also has security implications. Officials in Russia's Krasnodar Territory are concerned at the rising number of Armenians on Russia's 'strategically important' Black Sea coast, particularly the town of Sochi where the Armenian population is now at 38% and constitutes the second largest ethnic community after the Russians. According to the deputy head of the administration of Krasnodar, Nikolay Kharchenko, an 'Armenian problem' has emerged. He accused Armenian leaders and 'criminals' of propagating the idea of creating 'an Armenian national and territorial district' in Alder (South Sochi), so promoting the 'alteration of the historically established ethnic and demographic balance.' [*Mediamax news agency, Yerevan, 23 July 2000*] Indeed, 'Every state in the area have minorities, often large ones, that are often seen as a potential or actual security problem: Kurds in Turkey, Turks in Bulgaria, Hungarians in Romania, Russians and Ukrainians in Moldova, Russians in Ukraine, several groups in Russia and Abkhazians and Osetians in Georgia.' [Wæver & Wiberg, 1995: 216] It is clear that the EU, the second pillar of the new European security order, will be critical to the management, if not resolution, of these types of 'internal' and 'soft' security threats.

The EU's response to a rapidly evolving security environment has been a feature of the late 1990s. The December 1999 Franco-British St. Malo declaration (adopted after the EU Cologne meeting in May 1999) has great significance for the Black Sea region. The EU intends to have the means and capability for 'a common European defence policy' and 'European defence capability identity'. This will allow the EU a full role in security matters in Europe, as it will possess a 'capacity for autonomous action backed by credible military forces and the means to do so'. The 1992 St. Petersburg tasks of 'search and rescue', conflict prevention and crisis management and peacekeeping provide a foundation to build upon. Moreover, a realisation that EU militaries lack command, control, communication and intelligence gathering capability, the deep trauma of Bosnia and the Serb-Croatian war (particularly NATO's arming of the Croatian Grand Offensive against Serbia), have all contributed to the EU predisposition to be proactive and decisive in democratic security-building [Lyndley-French, 1999]. However, such a strengthening of the EU's military role raises the issue of a closer relationship between the dual enlargement strategies of the EU and NATO. Could EU integration now precede that of NATO in order to prepare economies to deal with the cost of NATO integration? What of the potential for enlargement under these conditions to exacerbate regional divisions? EU-integration competition between Bulgaria and Romania, for example, has hitherto limited co-operation on a regional strategy in Southeastern Europe; this phenomenon - the promotion of bilateral ties with the EU at the expense of a sub-regional co-operation, has been a notable feature of EU integration.

The December 1999 EU Helsinki Summit, particularly the decision taken to make Turkey a candidate for EU accession, has had a profound impact on Black Sea geopolitics. As Agenda 2000 (the Commission's name for the process preparing for enlargement) stated: 'the enlargement changes the geopolitical situation of the Union and brings it closer to the critical areas of East and South-East Europe.' These areas are critical because 'controlling the external boundaries and compliance with international norms in visa and immigration matters, for example, brings in a new dimension to the issue. The geographical location of some of the applicant states exposes them to problems from neighbouring countries.' [Moisis 2000] Ironically, it has also fostered and consolidated reconciliation between former adversaries; the EU has created (in the words of the Greek Defence Minister)

'new parameters and new conditions' for Greek-Turkish relations. [Tsohatzopoulos, 2000]. For the first time in the post-Cold War era, Turkey is now firmly anchored militarily (NATO), economically (market economy) *and* politically (EU accession process) to Europe. Moreover, with the first echelon of EU applicants formally named in 1997 (Estonia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Cyprus), the inclusion in 1999 of Bulgaria and Romania has created a potential second echelon of post-communist EU members. This in turn delineates a de facto third potential echelon of Black Sea EU members - the post-Soviet states of Moldova, Ukraine, Russian Federation and Georgia.

The Iberian peninsula was integrated into the EU eleven years after the fall of Franco, but eleven years after the fall of the Berlin Wall not even one former communist state has yet been integrated. The impact of 70 years of Sovietization has posed unique challenges to integration and has dramatically lengthened the negotiation process for the post-Soviet states, should they even be invited to travel the path to accession. Their legal, financial systems and labour legislation were artificially harmonised in the Soviet period. As a result of 'deep' Sovietization, these states face additional steep barriers to EU integration, compared to Europe's post-Communist second EU accession echelon. The common difficulty shared by all accession states in chasing a moving target as the EU becomes more integrated all the time will only be exacerbated for post-Soviet potential members.

Although the EU is attempting to erode barriers, it also aims for deeper integration of its members through the institutionalisation of intensive multilateralism, the integration of production, and the development of sub-national and European-level governance. [Wallace, 1999: 206-210] As a result, a real danger arises that the former Soviet border could evolve into the economic and bureaucratic equivalent of a new Berlin wall (sometimes referred to as the 'silver' or 'paper curtain'). The Schengen agreement, for example, has important consequences for Polish-Ukrainian relations as 2 million people (shuttle-traders) travel across this border every month. If the Ukrainian economy is strengthened, the role of organised crime diminishes, and unemployment is reduced, then it is highly likely that a semitransparent border will emerge. However, if prostitution, drug transit and other criminal activity prevail and predominate, then the EU's eastern frontiers will be 'hard' and impermeable [Sherr, 1999]. This will have a profound impact on Russian-Ukrainian relations - they will be much closer - and consequently the integration of former Soviet space into 'Fortress Europe'.

Already the differentiated process of EU integration has impacted upon stability in potential third echelon states. In Moldova, for example, citizens are now required to purchase visas for Bulgaria and Czech Republic. These visa restrictions have contributed to a dramatic increase in the number of Moldovans acquiring dual citizenship with Romania (approximately 400,000 or 10% of the total population). This has violated the Moldovan Constitution, which does not recognise dual citizenship, and so an unintended consequence of the EU enlargement process has undermined the integrity of the Moldova's constitution and so by extension the Moldovan state. [Serebrian 2000] As a response to these pressures, on 1 March 2000 Moldova joined the international citizenship convention with the result that 'certain categories of Moldovan citizens may be granted a second citizenship.' [*Basapress news agency*, Chisinau, 4 July 2000] The implications of this policy upon the citizenship choices of ethnic Russians in Transdniestria has yet to emerge.

The consolidation of Russia's relationship with an enlarging EU will prove central to stability in the Black Sea region. Vladimir Putin has argued that: "The fundamental principles which unite Europe are also the basis of policy of the Russian Federation.

Russia has always been, is and will continue to be a European country in terms of its location, culture and level of economic integration.' [*Russian Public TV*, Moscow, 29 May 2000] However, beneath the rhetoric, Russian perceptions of the EU are at a crossroads; it remains to be seen whether Russia and the EU will develop a constructive or antagonistic relationship. The EU and the question of EU enlargement has yet to be 'politicised' or 'securitized' within the Russian Federation, but the preconditions are now emergent. Is there an identifiable broad spectrum of long term-shared interests between the EU and Russian Federation underpinned by a high degree of mutual confidence and understanding? Or will the EU lose Russia to diverging conceptions of European security, allowing the 'strategic partnership' to consist of limited foreign policy co-ordination outside of energy and raw material exports?

The process of integrating Russia into a new European security order will largely stand or fall on a myriad of inter-linked issues that are generated by the process of enlargement. What will be the position of a Russian diaspora should the EU integrate post-Soviet Black Sea states? What will be the impact of EU Schengen borders on the broader access of Russian exports (particularly agricultural goods and energy) to EU markets? How will Moscow and Brussels manage the status of Kaliningrad - Putin's so-called 'pilot project' or litmus test of Russian-EU co-operative capacity? What will be the nature of Russia's role within a rapidly evolving ESDI and CFSP and the scope of Russia's participation in regional defence projects following the EU Helsinki 1999 summit? Will Putin's Russia undertake structural reform, generate an improved investment environment and more effectively fulfil adopted decisions? The threat of large-scale EU sanctions against Russia over its conduct in Chechnya provides one dynamic capable of increasing anti-EU perceptions amongst the elite - only 2 per cent of 1,500 Russian citizens polled in April 2000 'totally trust the European Union'. [*ITAR-TASS news agency*, Moscow, 13 April 2000] In the context of Russia's expulsion from the Council of Europe and high levels of anti-NATO attitudes after Kosovo, could general anti-westernism and a growing pro-isolation mentality spill over into an anti-EU sentiment?

The role of the OSCE post-Kosovo has also been re-examined. How effective is this organisation in the Black Sea region? The OSCE is active in the Black Sea region and has proved able to have some success - but only under particular circumstances. For example, in Abkhazia and Chechnya the OSCE began work late - several years after the collapse of the FSU and only following the outbreak of violence in these peripheral regions. Both breakaway regions provide a clear example of how interstate interest - Georgia and Russia had a national security interest in both conflicts - renders OSCE conflict resolution efforts ineffective. Conversely, the OSCE's role in Crimea was deemed a success. In this example, the national interests of Ukraine were not directly set against those of another state. This success was complemented by greater stability in Nagorno-Karabakh following the December 1994 OSCE Budapest Summit; the OSCE is currently exploring the possibility of resuming the negotiation process under the framework of the OSCE-Minsk process. [*Snark news agency*, Yerevan, 4 July 2000] More typically, OSCE activity in Belarus and Chechnya in 1999 reveals the extent to which the mandate of the mission has a critical impact in constraining the OSCE; the limited mandate provides pre-requisites for its own ineffectiveness. For example, Russia agreed at the OSCE Istanbul summit (November 1999) to the unconditional withdrawal of troops from Transdniestria by 2002, but has yet to begin the process of compliance. The OSCE lacks enforcement mechanisms (it is not a military organisation) and it is

clear that it is only effective where both sides are willing to compromise – arguably, then, only effective in regions where disputes are not fully securitized.

Competing or Co-operative Paths to Europe?

There are a multiplicity of competing paths to European identity and the Black Sea region asserts a dual function as both the bridge to and from Europe, and as the ‘gatekeeper’ of European identity, the filter through which the core identity is challenged and changed. One key dynamic in creating a new European security order has been the rapid evolution and restructuring of alliances, security organisations and the elaboration of democratic security building concepts and practices following the implosion of Soviet power and control mechanisms in 1989/1990. However, the perception in the early 1990s that the proliferation of ‘democratic peace’ eastwards was to occur in a relatively short time frame and with an almost Marxist ‘inevitability’ has proved too idealistic. Ten years into transition, it is clear that other factors are also critical to the quality of democratic security within the region. We must assess the extent to which states and societies in the Black Sea region have responded to the possibility of strategic reorientation westwards. How is the Black Sea region fitting into this emergent security order? To what extent do these newly independent ‘security consumers’ shape the engagement and enlargement dynamic managed by ‘security producers’?

An underlying influence upon security geopolitics has been the impact of historical conceptions of state development, factors relating to the formation of a contemporary national identity which influence foreign policy and security strategies. History and national or orthodox historical narratives have proved a powerful mode of legitimisation in the transition periods of small weak states, of greater importance than within consolidated states. The Black Sea region is one within which the genesis of competing historical visions of a European order can be traced. Kiev, as the birthplace of Slavic culture, is considered to have attained statehood for Kievan Rus in 988. Here concepts of ‘statehood’ and the ‘nation’ were forged, based initially upon notions of a ‘collegiate cousinhood’ or ‘cultural kinship’ [Franklin & Shepherd, 1996: 265, 275, 369-71]. With Mongol and Tatar invasions of the 12th century, feudal notions and ideas of tribute and vassal states were reinforced. The Byzantine clan system contributed an imperial dimension. Centralising tendencies within the state were consolidated, military power was projected as critical to state survival, and frontier mentalities on borderland areas were promoted.

All these features have resonance in contemporary notions of governance within states and inter-state relations in the Black Sea region. We can see the relevance to contemporary internal governance most clearly in Ukraine. Here ethno-political aspects influence Ukrainian state-building policies. In 1992 Ukrainian citizens were deemed to be those who lived in Ukraine in independence; an inclusive civic rather than ethno-nationalism was the preferred state-building strategy. However, it is clear that there are ethnic and political Ukrainians consisting of the West, Centre Dnepr, and East. The divergences in religion between west and east Christian, in values and political orientation of the peoples are very marked.

The question of ‘European’ identity – understood in terms of a cultural and civilizational homeland – also provides a compelling dynamic that affects the strategic orientation of the newly independent states. The ‘Central European’ states of the Visegrad group were particularly successful in creating an effective identity politics strategy which associated them with the West. Milan Kundera’s essay *A*

Kidnapped West: The Tragedy of Central Europe captured the essence of Central Europe as the West's 'vital centre of gravity'. [Neumann, 1998: 402] Unlike 'Central Europe' the Black Sea region has always provided the canvas upon which competition over divergent paths to Europe and Asia has stretched. For example, we can note the differing and clashing zones of religious and ideological competition between Turkic/Islamic areas in the West Black Sea region, the Byzantine periphery and orthodox Eastern Slavs.

Russia's relationship with Europe has always been contentious and the question of Russian identity - 'who are we and where are we going?' - has been continuously reinterpreted by Russian elites in response to challenges emanating from the West. Europe has proved instrumental in shaping Russian political culture; invasions from the west in the medieval and early modern period helped forge a centralized, bureaucratic, xenophobic and patriotic political elite, that thought in terms of service, great power status and placed a premium on conservatism and constancy. In this period Russia lay on the periphery of European cultural consciousness, and as Russia entered the mainstream of European international relations in the early 18th century under Peter the Great (1672-1725), she also expanded eastwards, rapidly colonising Siberia and the 'Russian' Far East. With Russia straddling two strategic axes from Kaliningrad in the West to Vladivostok in the Far East, a basic tension between the 'European' and 'Eurasian' identity of Russia dominates this disruptive dynamic. Three quarters of her population and one quarter of her territory lay in 'European Russia', her populations were Christian and the Russian elite adopted European-style court systems and was universally recognised after the defeat of Sweden as a European Great Power.

Russian response to invasion from the West was instrumental in shaping the European political system in the 19th and 20th centuries, following the defeat of Napoleon. The Moscow 'percentage agreements' (1944), and the conferences of Yalta and Potsdam of 1945 shaped international relations for the duration of the Cold War. It was critical in facilitating the Soviet sphere of influence over CEE after the rapid Stalinization (1946-49) of what were to become satellite states within a Soviet bloc that lay behind a Berlin Wall. The victory of the Red Army during the Great Patriotic War (1941-45) helped re-legitimise Marxist-Leninist ideology (an ideology that was imported from the West) and so provided an ideological mainstay to Cold War superpower rivalry. An arms race and the creation of opposing alliance structures (NATO and WTO) was complemented by Brezhnev's doctrine of 'limited sovereignty' and economic (exemplified by space technology of Sputnik) and cultural competition between a Euro-Atlantic 'first world' and communist 'second world'.

During the Cold War the borders and boundaries of 'Europe' were not considered an issue; Europe as a political concept only referred to Western Europe. The Iron Curtain and WTO delimited European enlargement to the East, so allowing the consolidation of the EU around 6 states - France, Germany, Benelux and Italy. However, as the Cold War drew to a close, it was clear that the desire of CEE states to 'return to Europe' and discard their communist-type regimes in 1989 was a prime factor in legitimising republican assertiveness on Russia's European periphery - particularly in the Baltic states and South Caucasus. Gorbachev's rhetoric of a 'common European homeland' impacted in the heart of Europe. Perhaps Vladimir Putin has best expressed the ambiguity at the heart of Russia's relationship with Europe: 'Russia's position is unique. It is a Eurasian country but actually, it is more of a European state.' [*Interfax news agency, Moscow, 11 March 2000*]

In the Cold War era Turkey appeared to be firmly anchored to Europe in economic and politico-military terms. As a pillar of the NATO alliance in a highly sensitive and strategically important region, it was considered to be an essential and stable strategic partner and as a market economy, it provided an alternative model to the centrally planned top-down economies of COMECON. Turkey's geopolitical environment underwent rapid and extensive changes in the post-Cold War era. The disintegration of the Soviet Union eliminated a century-old common border with a centralised Russian state and seemed to transform Turkey's strategic situation. The emergence of newly independent states of Turkic and Islamic heritage in Central Asia and the Caucasus created a new field of interest for Turkish foreign policy and gave rise to considerable enthusiasm and optimism concerning the Turkish mission among the 'lost cousins' of Turkestan [Bal, 1998: 6].

The 'Turkish model' of statehood based on a vibrant market economy, secularism, a multi-party system, and western-orientation provided a positive alternative for the Central Asian republics. The combination of cultural ties such as ethnic origin (Azeris, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and Turkmen - are from the same origins as the Turkic people) and religion (Islam) formed a key factor that encouraged the attractiveness of the Turkish model [Apostolou, 1992:5-6]. As Frank has pointed out, ethnicity cannot be separated from political and economic relations, either at the level of the nation state or internationally [Frank, 1992:22-23]. The important impact of common culture and ethnicity have been highlighted in various statements from the Presidents of the Turkic Republics, particularly in the early 1990s. For example, the former President of Azerbaijan, Ebulfez Elchibey, stated that: 'We have fifty million Turkish brothers in Anatolia... we have chosen Turkey as a model for our state.' Islam Karimov, the President of Uzbekistan, stated: 'Our example is Turkey, we will establish our state according to this example'. The President of Kyrgystan, Askar Akayev, in a speech explained that: 'Turkey is a morning star that shows the true path to other Turks' [Bal, 1998:6]. The President of Turkmenistan has expressed similar sentiments.

The active involvement of Turkey in Central Asia was highlighted by the Turkish participation in several initiatives in post-Soviet Central Asia, facilitated by the establishment of the Turkish International Co-operation Agency (TIKA) in early 1992 to improve and expand political and economic relations with the Turkic Republics [Bilge, 1997:7]. Subsequently Turkey signed over 160 protocols and co-operative agreements with the six former Soviet republics of Muslim heritage and pledged more than \$886 million in Eximbank credits to the region, one-third of which has been used. Furthermore, it has collaborated in infrastructure and telecommunications projects, extended financial and business contacts, and reinforced cultural ties by developing scholarship and student exchange programmes [Nation, 1996:105].

Three other 'push' factors also underpinned this Turkish strategy. Firstly, the 'geopolitical vacuum' left behind by the decline of Russian/Soviet power had to be filled. This security vacuum could be filled by an anti-western and revolutionary kind of Iranian Islam or with a possible threat of Russian neo-imperialism. Secondly, geo-economics had a role to play. The realisation that Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan are rich in oil, natural gas and uranium had turned the South Caucasus and Central Asia into an object of major political and strategic interest. Lastly, Turkish relationships with the European Union led to frustration as accession negotiations were delayed until 1999, and the opportunity to assert a leadership role in a major world region was perceived as a compensatory alternative. Turkey sought to emphasise its capacity to play the role of bridge between East and West [Fuller & Lesser, 1993:66-76].

The Caucasus region, subdivided into the North (regions and republics in the Russian Federation) and South Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan), interposed between the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea on the one hand, and the Caspian on the other, possesses geostrategic significance. It not only serves as a meeting place between East and West, namely Central Asia and Europe, but more importantly lies on a crucial North-South axis. The land corridor of Transcaucasia accommodates contact or confrontation between European Russia and the southern regional powers of Turkey and Iran. The same axis is demarcated by a division of influence between Christianity in its various forms, Russian, Orthodox, Catholic, Armenian and Georgian Churches and Islam with Muslim (Hanafi and Shafi'i schools) and Shi'i Muslim branches [Blandy, 1998:1]. In other sub-regions, for example Transylvania, the issue is not about which state controls the territory – Hungary or Romania – but the identity of the region – whether Transylvania is Central European or Balkan. Here we see that competing societal collective identities are underpinned by regional Balkan, Central & Eastern Europe, Black Sea, Caucasus/Caspian identity clashes.

'Transition Projects' and European Security

These historical experiences of competition over identity and the use of European identity as a legitimising factor in state building are given a new dimension in the post-Cold War era. Notions of market-democratic transition frame the new post-communist security paradigm – successful transition is the key contemporary litmus test of 'Europeanness'. Thus, the littoral states of the Black Sea region are faced with challenges to overcome in order to consolidate systemic transformation from Soviet to post-Soviet space. This conception (transition = security) is reinforced by another – the idea that modernity (and now post-modernity) is based on market-democratic development and represents post-Soviet security and stability, and that conversely 'Soviet' was thus indicative of mis-modernisation projects and instability. This dichotomy between past and present, instability and stability is proving to be a false one. The 'transition trap' and the growth of hybrid models of development ('oligarchic capitalism', 'nomenklatura capitalism' and 'illiberal democracies') will necessarily complicate attitudes and perceptions within the region to the new European security order. These models negate Fukuyama's contention that: 'Liberal democracy and market-orientated economic models are the only viable options for modern societies' [*The Economist*, 1999:4]. Thus, it is important to examine the extent to which the experience of transition projects have undermined or reinforced the ability of Black Sea states to integrate into this emergent European security order.

The process of Ukrainian transition provides an illuminating example. Several years have passed since independence and start of market transition. However, 60 per cent of Ukrainian foreign trade remains with the Russian Federation. Not, as might be supposed, because of the centrally planned Soviet template of economic links between the heavy industry sector and Military Industrial Complex (MIC) – these sectors are in a very poor state and the old ties between processing industries and enterprises have diminished in the post-Soviet period. Indeed, currently Ukraine purchases \$5bn of energy from Russia per annum at world prices, whilst exporting only \$1bn (in the Soviet period Ukraine had a positive balance of trade with Russia) [Piliaiv, 1999]. Rather, we can look to the impact of geographical proximity and interconnected historical development as an explanation. From the birth of Kievan Rus, the growth of Moscow State, and expansion of the Russian Empire to Soviet Union, Ukraine and Russia have been united within a macro-political system. The linkages, for example, between the oil and gas sectors and iron ore and coal-fields

were of critical significance in the Soviet period. Ukraine is primarily a heavy industrial producer and this role cannot be quickly restructured, particularly in the context of limited western investments and the poor prospects for NATO or EU membership. Post-Soviet transition may include a new Union with Belarus and Russia – a Slavic brotherhood – as one possible response to the geopolitical realities of successful but exclusive integration projects on Ukraine's western borders.

Romania is perceived to represent a state with the capacity to overcome potential transition traps. It has stressed its pre-existing links with Europe and its ability to contribute to the new European security order; strong relations with both Greece and Turkey allow Romania to fulfil the function of a bridge into Europe and a forum for dialogue. It is a good example of a state that has solved security issues with neighbours (trilateral and bilateral agreements) and minorities. Romania's support for the new Southeast European Stability Pact (framework for promoting peace and stability) launched in Sarajevo in late July 1999 allows Romania to effectively project itself as a stability pillar within the region. It has participated in the post conflict management process with a field hospital and engineering unit [Hombach, 1999:20-23]. Indeed, its role during the Kosovo crisis is utilised as evidence: Romania was on the OSCE *troika* during Yugoslavia crisis and as with FYROM and Albania, Romania provided a strategic contribution to NATO. Moreover, Romania's participation in peacekeeping operations is evident. A Balkan rapid-reaction brigade, created in 1999, has become operational in 2000. This is primarily a confidence building measure and represents the first multinational arrangement in Southeastern Europe to be utilised by the WEU and NATO to increase security.

Economically, Romania is of strategic importance as the proposed Caspian Sea pipeline outlet at Constanza provides the potential to link Poti to Trieste (although it may be now re-routed around Kosovo). Romania represents a 23 million person market and already 60 per cent of external trade is with the EU; it is committed to have 60 per cent of GDP from the private sector. Moreover, Romania is a key member of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation zone – an important element of the European integrative process [Maties, 1999]. However, it could also be argued that if western integration does not occur in the near future then Romania would remain isolated from Euro-Atlantic structures. This renders it prone to internal destabilisation and economic stagnation. The defence budget is a mere \$800m, and human resources are very limited, raising the spectre of a transition trap that places Romania sandwiched between a Slav union of Yugoslavia, Belarus and the Russian Federation.

The Black Sea region provides many examples of societies and regions that are suffering the security fallout associated with failed or stalled transition projects. For many such entities, secession and independence are the goals. Whilst the idea of a Greater Bulgaria or Romania is no longer prevalent, the possible collapse of Montenegro could further destabilise Kosovo and FYROM, so drawing in Greece, Albania, Bulgaria and Turkey into the Balkan quagmire. The causes of conflicts around the Black Sea basin are multi-dimensional. Ethnic diversity in the North Caucasus, for example, coupled to competition for resources and frontier territory has exacerbated conflicts in Chechnya and Abkhazia. Other potential causes include Turkey and Iran as traditional rivals for power, the economic importance of pipeline routes and the re-emergence of ongoing unresolved historical disputes and contemporary state building strategies.

The consequences of Soviet policies towards ethnic groups and nationalities is particularly striking in both Transdnister and Abkhazia, as is the role of former Soviet elites in 'statelet-building'. Moldova, with no experience of independent

statehood, faces a national identity problem – ‘who are the Moldovans’? Dual or triple identities have been created, with no historical first republic that can create a consensus or foundation stone upon which to rest a consolidated identity. This has led to the problem of territorial separation. In the Gagauz Yeri (Comrat is the ‘capital’) – of a Turkic Christian people numbering 153,000 – jurisdiction is now shared with Chisinau, but the potential for separatism was high in the early 1990s. Transdniestria, by contrast, has emerged with a quasi-state administration in Tiraspol, its capital. Like Chechnya and Abkhazia, it lacks the status of a state in international law, but the local administration receives oil and gas free of charge from Moscow (over \$400 million worth through the 1990s) and a currency printed in Russia. [Roman 2000] It is clear that the manipulation and consolidation of ethnic identities by vested interests has proved very successful in securing internal sovereignty in these destabilised zones, in the process providing Russia with levers of influence over Moldova and Georgia. In June 2000 the Moldovan President Petru Lucinschi told Vladimir Putin: ‘It’s time to get rid of the stereotype that Russia has special geopolitical interests in Moldova and that it would like to strengthen its base here.’ [*Basapress news agency*, Chisinau, 17 June 2000] Moreover, in all these regions the issue of arms control (especially proliferation of small arms transfers) and criminality are key factors contributing towards full to overflowing regional security agendas.

Having stressed the breakdown of states and societies as a key challenge to the proliferation of democratic security within the region, the recent evolution of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation Zone (BSEC) points to indigenous mechanisms that help stabilise the region. The BSEC Programmes’s objective was to create favourable conditions for the development and diversification of economic relations between the Black Sea countries [Stojevic, 1998:1-6]. After a series of talks and conferences that took place in the early 1990s, a meeting of the heads of state or government of 11 interested countries announced a Declaration on Black Sea Economic Co-operation (25 June 1992). Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine laid the foundations for a new process of integration in the region. At the same Istanbul meeting, the eleven BSEC leaders also adopted the ‘Bosphorus Statement’ [BSEC Handbook of Documents, 1995:9-10] that sets forth their political objectives.

At the BSEC Yalta Summit of 4-5 June 1998, the participating countries decided to convert the BSEC project into a regional organisation and signed the BSEC Charter to that end. A brief analysis of this reveals some interesting points. First, one of its main objectives is to ensure that the Black Sea develops into a region of peace, stability and prosperity, encouraging friendly and good-neighbourly relations. Second, BSEC has introduced a new concept of multilateralism in economic relations among its members and in a region where economic activities were previously bilateral and state-orientated. BSEC principally relies on the inner dynamics of the private sector for its development and diversification. Third, BSEC does not preclude EU membership, or the establishment of any other relationship for that matter. On the contrary, it provides incentives for the EU to contribute and be involved in areas of transport, energy, trade, and investment through joint undertakings. Furthermore, BSEC is considered as a preparation ground for integration with a larger Europe. Finally, the BSEC charter is based on the principles laid down in the Helsinki Final Act, the OSCE documents and on shared international values such as democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms. BSEC has succeeded in having member states that are in conflict, sit side by side at one table, and take common decisions for their mutual economic good.

From the Turkish point of view, BSEC constitutes a unique attempt to integrate the economies of Southeastern Europe, the Transcaucasus, and Turkey. By focusing on its historical and cultural ties with other states, Turkey aims to capitalise the full potential for trade and other economic links with all countries in these regions. The realisation that close co-operation in the Black Sea region will bring together a vast economic space from the Adriatic to the Pacific with a population of 325 million people, was perceived as an important objective for Turkey since she was seeking in the early 1990s to explore alternatives to a seemingly inevitable exclusion from the European Union [Demirel, 1992]. Furthermore, BSEC has evolved into an important instrument of Turkish policy vis-à-vis Iran and the CIS. Turkey considers Iran as a potential rival due to the latter's attempt to exert influence in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia and as a potential conduit of energy from the region to global markets. However, in an attempt to counterbalance Turkey's influence in the region, Iran and four former Soviet republics, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan, formed the Caspian Sea Co-operation Council (CSCC) in 1992.

Although, it is seven years since BSEC was formed, only limited progress is evident. Despite the institutionalisation of the organisation, it lacks substance. Although a number of infrastructure projects and some private capital (mainly from Greece and Turkey) have been invested into joint projects with Ukraine, Bulgaria, Romania, and the South Caucasus, a unified economic area has not been achieved. Moreover, although Greece is a member of BSEC and the EU, BSEC-EU relations have barely developed – indeed, Bulgaria's initial reluctance to join BSEC reflected a fear that membership would undermine its EU aspirations. [Valinakis 1999] The reasons for the general ineffectiveness of BSEC as a security producing dynamic within the region are primary political in nature. The lack of objective possibilities in resolving or managing regional conflicts efficiently, as well as in the lack of a greater degree of trust among the countries which are playing a leading role in BSEC, Russia, Turkey and Greece, must also be highlighted. [Valinakis *et al*, 1998:243-291, Vlachoutsikos *et al*, 1998: 293-330]

Geography links the region and provides two models of international relations that knit the regional security issues together – the balance of national interests with the necessity of sustainable development. The relationship between economic and environmental security is of central importance in this region. The Dnepr and Danube rivers are in a critical state. The Dnepr, for example, is no longer a river but a system of artificial lakes and hydro-stations. Whilst Ukrainian contemporary industrial decline has cut down on pollution, it has also deprived the state of money to clean up previously polluted regions. The Black Sea Fleet and associated coastal facilities contaminate 370,000 cubic km of water every year; Odessa, for example, pumps raw sewage directly into the sea. In the Black Sea, oil is 10 times above allowable norms, sometimes 500 times more, and it is estimated that \$18bn is needed to restore the Black Sea [Verkhovna Rada, 1999]. Sturgeon catches in the Caspian and Azov basins, a reliable indicator of environmental pollution, are calculated to be 80-84% below quotas in 2000. [Interfax news agency, Moscow, 29 June 2000]

The Danube River, blockaded for transport of goods during the Kosovo crisis, continues to suffer from chemical and industrial waste spillages. In combination, the Danube, Dnepr, Don, Kuban, Yuzhnyy and Belaya rivers have helped create 'one of the most degraded marine eco-systems in the world' – the Black Sea itself. Whilst the Europe-Asia transport corridor, proposed energy pipelines (for example, the 'Blue Stream' gas pipeline) and other economic instruments are promoted to enhance economic stability and integrate Central Asia, the Caspian, Black Sea and

the Danube, these economic developments pose a serious danger to the environmental security of the region. An emergent paradox arises: the one security sector where inter-state co-operation has been weakest is the one sector that most unites states and societies within the region, and gives the region its definitional distinctiveness – environmental security in the Black Sea region.

The Role of Black Sea Regional Hegemons

The organisational, institutional and integrative policies of western security structures in Europe, pre-existing systemic factors, and the experience of transition have all influenced the relationship between a new European security order and the Black Sea region. However, we should also examine the foreign and security policies of the three key regional ‘superpowers’ – the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Turkey. They have the key ability to shape the security environment within the region, and in this respect they have the capacity to both contribute to security building and detract from regional stability.

The Soviet Union, with the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic at its heart, was perceived to represent the main threat to European security in the Cold War. In the post-Cold War era, the Russian Federation as legal Successor State, is now the largest European State and it is clear that Europe cannot have an effective and stable security order without Russian participation. However, there are a series of identifiable obstacles that hinder or render Russian participation problematic. Russia has promoted the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) as a collective security alliance of all the former Soviet Republics, excepting the Baltic States. Throughout the 1990s there has been a fundamental tension between the role of the Russian military bases and leadership of ‘CIS’ peacekeepers in the CIS (particularly Abkhazia and Tajikistan) and Russia’s foreign and security policies towards the ‘Near Abroad’. Has Russia utilised the CIS instrumentally, as a tool for reintegrating the former Soviet states or does the CIS represent an ineffective post-imperial burden, with Russian economic and energy debts remaining unpaid by CIS energy consumers? The breakdown in the CIS Collective Security Agreement (1992 Tashkent Agreement) and the creation of GUUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Armenia and Moldova) in late 1998 has highlighted the relative weakness of post-Soviet alliance structures. The stated intention in creating GUUAM was to produce a ‘positive union’ in the sense that its explicit aim was to unite post-Soviet CIS states around common geo-economic interests, rather than to undermine the integrity and rationale of the CIS. It remains to be seen if GUUAM is to be institutionalised, made legally binding and create a counter-balance to Russian domination of the CIS. Will it resemble PfP of the early 1990s – rather than a stepping stone to NATO, does it represent a means through which to escape Russian influence?

The January and June 2000 CIS summits have helped characterise Putin’s new approach to the CIS. Two key changes are apparent: the emphasis on bilateral relations between Moscow and individual CIS states, as opposed to the multilateralism of the Yel’tsin years, and the promotion of Russian-led sub-regional groups, such as the newly created ‘Caucasus Four’ – Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russian Federation. Putin’s Russia increasingly views the CIS through the prism of military and security objectives. This is reflected in its ‘militarization’ of CIS policy-making personnel, most notably the appointment of the former director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), Vyacheslav Trubnikov, as special presidential envoy to the CIS states. The revised concept of Russia’s foreign policy, approved on 30 June 2000, appears to upgrade the ‘defence of compatriots in the

Near Abroad' to a foreign policy priority and provides for 'enlarging the role of intelligence services in shaping Russia's policies'.

Moreover, in a move that complements the militarization of the CIS, Moscow has pushed to exclude or minimise the role of the US, EU and Turkey in the creation of a Stability Pact for the South Caucasus. She has also attempted to create high-level Russian governmental commissions to mediate the settlement of the Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Osetia conflicts. Although such a commission under former Russian Prime Minister Yevgeniy Primakov has been created for Transdniestria, success eludes Russia in the South Caucasus. These efforts are indicative of Russia's attempt to maintain the leading role in shaping the geopolitics and geo-economics of the Black Sea region.

Contemporary Russian weakness presents residual threats to the whole region. Throughout the 1990s Russian decentralisation appeared to be leading to the so-called 'hollowing out of the state' and the growth of a state-criminal complex. Vladimir Putin, in his first state-of-the-nation address, stated that for the first time in decades Russia 'faces forces whose goal is a geopolitical reshuffle.' [*Interfax news agency*, Moscow, 6 July 2000] As Russia's troubled transformation continues, there are growing dangers that state or quasi-state structures could destabilise the Black Sea region. Under such circumstances, Russia, or predominant sectoral interests could organise subversion, carry out espionage, conduct terrorist training, deploy out of area forces, and utilise its satellite and communication competitive advantage to the detriment of other neighbouring states. Russian transition has highlighted the failure of western models of economic and institutional reform and deeply entrenched legacy of Sovietization upon the political culture and behaviour of the elite.

The Second Chechen War has impacted on every sector of security within the region. The de-Russification of the North Caucasus, the destabilisation of Georgia, and the cost of the war in environmental, societal, military, political and above all, economic terms provide sources of insecurity for a destabilised Russian Federation. Chechnya provides a Russia keen to consolidate its democratic transition with an insoluble geo-political problem: 'failure is not an option; victory is not possible'. It has forced Russia's new president, Vladimir Putin, to stress the primacy of domestic affairs over foreign policy and to reorganize the principles of Federal centre-periphery relations. It is too early to pronounce on the effectiveness of such power distribution, but it is clear that 'internal' and 'domestic' Russian reform will continue to have transnational and international security implications for the stability of the Black Sea region.

Looking to the future following an economic recovery, Russian influence in the region will continue to be large. Russia is the largest gas and oil exporter to CEE. The shared energy infrastructure with Ukraine creates a source of tension but it also binds the two states together through common interests in energy and transit goods. These ties of interdependency affect Ukraine's ability to project an effective independent foreign policy without Russian sanction. Ukraine is consequently poised between Russia and the west. This is reflected in its multi-polar security policy in which the belief that the future European security system should be based on an enlarged NATO but also include Russia and the CIS states is central.

For Ukraine a central dilemma emerges. The strengthening of a strategic partnership with Russia and closer relations with NATO are harder to combine post-Kosovo. Ukraine seeks to balance a special NATO partnership (rather than full membership) with CIS membership. As President Kuchma noted: 'I would like to

single out one such principally important axiom for Ukraine's international policy: our European future is indivisible from a strategic partnership with Russia' [*Kuryer U*, Kiev, 22 January 2000, p. 3]. To square this particular circle, Ukraine must both implement an effective internal reform programme to satisfy the EU and NATO and remain dependent upon the quality of Russia's 'Ukrainian policy' (a policy over which Ukraine has little leverage) and which Russia is determined to shape. As Aleksandr Avdeyev, Russia's First Deputy Foreign Minister noted: 'According to our estimates, the scope of Ukraine's co-operation with NATO is double that of military co-operation between Russia and Ukraine. Last year Kiev did not protest against NATO's aggression in the Balkans. It did not freeze co-operation with the Alliance, following our example. Moreover a programme of co-operation between Ukraine and NATO for 2000 and 2001 was officially adopted.' [*Russia TV channel*, Moscow, 21 May 2000]

The difficulties of fulfilling this 'axiom' are apparent. Ukraine currently has 3 military districts, with 726,000 troops, 176 ballistic missiles, 550 cruise missiles (the third largest in the world). It has had to create a new modern army with reduced personnel levels in response to severe economic constraints. Ukraine has adopted a non-nuclear status, but as control over the Black Sea Fleet is compromised, this status is problematic; there are no mechanisms to ensure adherence, thus Ukraine not really non-nuclear [Bondarenko, 1999]. Moreover, as it is doubtful whether Russia can develop Novorossisk within twenty years, Russian naval nuclear presence will remain in Crimea. Formally, Ukraine is a neutral, with no state considered the enemy. This raises the question as to what type of military force ought it to construct and what is their role? The Black Sea Fleet, for example, represented a Soviet strategic asset, able to project Soviet power into the Mediterranean and Atlantic, but this function is no longer appropriate.

As with Russia and Ukraine, rapid changes in the external environment confronted Turkey in the post-Cold War era that have promoted the abandonment of its traditionally conservative approach on foreign and security policy [Lesser, 1993:86-103]. An active but clandestine economic and military support for Azerbaijan in the dispute with Armenia over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and Chechen rebels in a war against Russia transformed Turkey into a 'regional arbiter' as part of her own security interests [Bolukbasi, 1997; Bennett, 1998; Olson, 1996]. Indeed, since the end of the Cold War, Turkey has taken a lead amongst other NATO states in developing strong links with its 'Near Abroad' in the South Caucasus region, driven by its aspiration to exploit the transit fees of hydrocarbon and mineral deposit in the Caspian basin. The South Caucasus has emerged as a highly complex and problematic region. The oil factor, the future economic opportunities that would follow with it and the benefits for western companies, created a great deal of tension both in terms of politics and economics in this region [Forsythe, 1996].

Although the South Caucasus still remains an area of direct and vital concern to Moscow, the region has witnessed the intense interest of the southern regional powers such as Turkey and Iran. The strategic importance of the South Caucasus attains weight not only from the scale of oil in the Caspian basin (according to some estimates Turkmenistan is regarded as a 'Second Kuwait'), but because oil from the Caspian Basin or from the Central Asian oilfields has to pass through the region or adjacent parts of the Russian Federation on its way to world markets. According to *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 'in the next century, the Caspian Sea and the regions adjoining it could become the largest supplier of oil and gas in Asia and Europe. According to different evaluations, oil reserves in the bowels of the Caspian amount to more than 13 milliard tonnes'. [Kalandarov, 1997].

Given the vast resources of oil in the Caspian Sea, the growing American need for oil, and the thinning American reserves, the viability of this region becomes more accentuated and the competition for it will certainly become fiercer. The average consumption per capita is 53 barrels per year in the US. In Germany it is 30 barrels, while in China it is only 5. If China doubled consumption to 10 barrels per capita per year, an unremarkable possibility given its high economic growth rates, it would greatly augment the demand for oil in the international market [Osakanian, 1998:34]. Hence, although there are greater quantities of oil in the Gulf, it is cheaper and easier to transport, and can displace Caspian oil in Far East markets, the economic and political value of Caspian oil is extremely important for the Black Sea region. Moreover, the United States *via* Turkey is striving to ensure the safe flow of oil to western markets in order to reduce American reliance on the Persian Gulf area.

If control over production is one aspect of this geopolitical game, transport is another. A fierce competition is currently underway to determine the routes that will bring the gas and oil of the Caspian Sea basin to the industrialised world. The states traversed by oil pipelines will be guaranteed a secure energy supply as well as income. [Hill, 1996] But the political and economic influence likely to flow along the pipeline route is even more attractive to the countries concerned. This has created strong competition between Russia, Turkey and Iran. Although some political analysts discount Iran as a viable candidate in the transit game due to the nature of its regime and its relations with the West [Ehteshami, 1999], ongoing power struggles between Iranian reformers and conservatives remain to be resolved and will prove critical to this question. Nevertheless, Russia considers Iran as an alliance partner in efforts to control the Central Asian republics, a counterbalance against Turkey, and as an ally against, as it perceives, the challenge of unipolar world politics dominated by the United States [Goetz, 1997:263].

This leaves Russia and Turkey jousting for the coveted prize. Russia already has an existing pipeline network running from Azerbaijan to the Black Sea while Turkey wants to re-route the Caspian's oil and gas reserves towards Ceyhan, a Mediterranean port situated in the country's south-east corner. A significant drawback is the high cost of building a Caspian pipeline (estimated around \$2 - \$3 billion) which means financing will have to come from international financial institutions and major investment banks [Cosmos, 1995:2]. There are a number of options for long-term pipeline routes. However, as conflict (latent or otherwise) of one kind or another is present throughout the region (Chechnya-Dagestan, Nakhichevan, Nagorno-Karabakh), the construction of some possible pipeline routes is contingent upon the success of conflict resolution. For other options, the economic implications of long transport routes hinder development, whilst for still others the potential environmental costs are high.

The participation of Central Asian republics in world politics as independent states has led to the emergence of various views and arguments on the future of the region. The Russian Federation views Turkey as a geopolitical rival in the Transcaucasian and Central Asian regions and regards Turkey as a 'spearhead' of the West. Moscow perceives the Caspian Sea as part of Russia's sphere of influence, and it has stated that exploitation of the Caspian Sea resources should be subject to the agreement of all coastal states [Loyd & LeVine, 1994: 2]. Russia's policy of protecting its 'Near Abroad' interests in the South Caucasus and Central Asia clashes with Turkey's efforts to build a special relationship with Azerbaijan and the other states of Central Asia, based on cultural and linguistic ties. Zbigniew Brzezinski has argued that regional great powers will compete for oil and gas access in the 'Eurasian Balkans', and that the lack of shared religious, cultural and

historical experiences and traditions renders conflict more likely in the new century [Brzezinski, 1997].

Conclusions: Security within a Black Sea Eurasian Balkans?

Many states within the Black Sea region are currently dissatisfied, as levels of effective security co-operation in the late 1990s have fallen well below expectations generated by the euphoria of the early 1990s. What was presented as a geopolitical inevitability is now subject to heavy questioning, with contradictory tendencies, obstacles and dilemmas receiving greater attention?

Internal state stability is the critical factor in the ability of states to co-operate externally; internal state security projects differ so widely throughout the region that differentiation, realised in terms of state expectations, capacities, and foreign policy objectives becomes the factor determining the quality of regional security. There is a real danger that whilst some states are consolidating their democratisation projects, others' have been mismanaged and have stalled, peripheralized and fragmented under the external pressures of dual enlargement and an internal inability to institutionalise democratic culture into governance. Former communist officials are currently working in national governments, and whilst they have technocratic and management experience, their socialisation has not been based on democratic values and contributes to the consolidation of a 'democratic deficit'. The social costs of the 'dash to the market' have proved politically decisive; the economic 'veil of tears' has buttressed the power and authority of old unreconstructed elites within the region and provided a benign environment for organised criminal groups to flourish.

At a more fundamental and systemic level, can we identify an overarching security framework that gathers together all Black Sea states and societies into a new European order – so strengthening its coherence as a region and combating threats to undermine its stability? The Black Sea region is proving to be a litmus test for many of the underlying assumptions and concepts that underpinned the evolution of the European security order in the 1990s. Successful Euro-Atlantic integration eastwards underscored the integrity of 'democratic peace' theory and 'liberal institutionalism', which in turn demonstrated the applicability of transition and democratization theory in CEE. This in turn has legitimised the strategic goal of the 21st century: the marriage of Caspian and Central Asian energy resources to European markets. This drive is exemplified by the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transport corridor project (TRACECA), 'the Great Silk Road' that is set to concentrate hydrocarbon pipelines, fibre optic networks and international financial flows along this Eurasian trade corridor.

Each of these interlinked building blocks of the European security order are encountering their first serious challenge in the Black Sea region. Challenges, obstacles and dilemmas are more pronounced within this region than ever they were with first echelon NATO states (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland) in the 1990s. Black Sea states are economically weaker, the principles of governance are more contested, transitions have been slower and conflict more apparent. Consequently this region will be the proving ground for managing and judging the effectiveness of the new European security order. Russia's determination to maintain its influence within the region has spawned a paradoxical self-sustaining dynamic: the stronger Russian claims to hegemony, the greater the Black Sea state pressure for westwards strategic reorientation and integration; the greater the necessity of a coherent CFSP and NATO-Russia rapprochement, the stronger Russian opposition to enlargement.

However, should Russian pretensions to hegemony, influence and dominance wane, would EU and NATO enlargement stall? To what extent is the dynamic process of dual enlargement predicated upon a conflict of the ideas of Europe and a fixed boundary that clearly denotes the territorial confines of a 'European' geopolitical space? The wars in Kosovo and Chechnya have helped delineate the nature of the new geopolitics, generated now by the impulse of innovative military technology, traditional competition for contested territory and television (the 'CNN-effect'/'information warfare'). These factors - a mix of the old and the new - are set to predominate within this fragmented region. The comparatively large territories, high populations and vast natural resources of the Black Sea hegemony - particularly Russia - are no longer advantages in the geopolitics of the 21st century, but rather hindrances to influence and dominance along traditional geopolitical lines.

The European security order faces a geopolitical dilemma in its relationship with the Black Sea region: failure to integrate them fully undermines the integrity and *raison d'être* of the dual enlargement project of the 1990s; full integration according to current understanding and practices is not possible in the new millennium. The post-Westphalian paradigm, brought into sharp focus by the experience of the war in Kosovo, could well be replaced by 'West-failure'. Will the European security order adapt to these new geopolitical realities and manage an integration process that creates stability rather than exacerbate disruptive contradictions in the Black Sea region?

Although competing models of security will continue to create dividing lines, the necessity to continue economic integration and the problem of environmental spill-over may well provide unifying and integratory pressures that will shape the geopolitics of the Black Sea region into the middle of the 21st century. Europe's response to democratic security building in the Black Sea region will provide the litmus test for the viability and sustainability of the new European security order. In turn, it is increasingly clear that the challenges, obstacles and dilemmas posed to the European security order by the Black Sea region have a greater utility - Europe's response will ultimately determine the nature and effectiveness of Europe's geopolitical role within the global international system.

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