

Reflections on the End of Cold War

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Abstract: The objective of our research is to point out some aspects on the context and the main causes that led to the reconfiguration of Europe after the fall of communism on this continent. Today, Europe as a whole coincides approximately with the geographical Europe. There never was one Europe: since old times, there has been more than one Europe, between them the divider lines have varied widely. Our intention is to present some approaches from some well-known historians, marking the context of historical evolution of a European space which included major players in the conflict generated by the Cold War. The results of our research are focused on the last part of the paper. These findings highlight the Soviets being more skillful, and they have won in some places, often in situations of incredible inferiority compared to the free world, which did not know or did not want to exploit the advantages. Finally we conclude that the history of this continent, although the smallest of them all, interested the history in its universal resorts, as it had an impact truly decisive on other continents, either by implantation which gave rise to the new “Europe” either require to other nations through the exercised domination, its structures and ways of thinking and its economic policy organization.

Keywords: Europe; history; conflicts; international actors

1. Introduction

Was there ever Europe as such? Its boundaries have varied all the time: either expanded or reduced, and even contracted. Thus, between calling Asia and the attraction that Europe exercised over it, Russia hesitated for a long time. One thing is for sure over these overviews of several millennia is that it has never existed only one Europe: since old times there has always been more than one Europe, its boundaries varied widely: separating North of South - Celtic and Germanic peoples of Latin world, or, much later, the Reform Europe remaining under the obedience of Rome - when divided the continent after a border that went from north to south -

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splitting an East, heir of Greek culture and marked by Slavonic languages of the West influenced by the meeting between the Latin culture and the German contribution – and not long ago, the Iron Curtain separating completely the Europe's pluralistic democracies of communist Europe. (Carpentier & Lebrun, 1997, p. 7)

In this space, the centers of gravity have suffered a continuous movement: all the people have exercised for a while the domination (imperium) over a territory far beyond their own natural and historical limits; by turns, Spain, France, Austria, England, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Russia and other countries have held a hegemonic role. Within this division of the continent between several separate units, opposing, unevenly developed, the primacy has not always been held by the same side of Europe: contrary of one might think after a historical analysis for a short period, it has not always been a Europe meant prosperity and another condemned to poverty: in the first millennium BC, eastern Europe is the heir of the glorious past of Rome, the most cultivated and developed; while the Western Europe, where the history of past centuries makes us established the point of convergence of the most advanced economies, the most powerful states and the brightest civilizations delay to appear in the rustic barbarism. After which the report was reversed.

Immediately after 1989-1991, bipolarism in the international relations was replaced by unipolarism expressed by the prestige and existence of a single power, creating the danger of "unbridled global action". Zbigniew Brezezinski highlighted that the collapse of the Soviet bloc puts the United States in a situation without precedent. The States became the first and the only true global power. (Brezezinski, 2005) This may entail negative consequences as Samuel Huntington outlines. He has analyzed since 1997 the danger for the US action to rule alone the world, warning that "loneliness" has the major consequence of projecting the global responsibility over one country. Based on the lucid assessment of international reports, the American author is of the opinion that after a "moment of unipolarity", the world will cross a few decades to multipolarism, following that the twenty-first century to be par excellence a century of multipolarism. (Huntington, 1998, p. 245) Reality has shown that unipolarity could not be a lasting solution to mankind. As seen, correctly by Henry Kissinger, what is new about the new international order what is about to be born is that "US can neither retreat from the world nor dominate it". (Kissinger, 2003, p. 727) With an economic, social, cultural diversity and complexity, today's world can only exist by the express manifestation of well

acknowledged and joint efforts. "The imaginary war", as it was considered the Cold War by Mary Kaldor remains an important source of research, it is a subject that will not run out anytime soon, even more as the end of the Cold War set the tone for a new world configuration which seems to be valid nowadays as well.¹

2. Cold War - Beginnings and Evolution

"Cold War" is a diplomatic and strategic expression. Or, the decisive weakening of communism was due or not to way the West led its foreign policy. This strategic timidity of democratic governments would persist, moreover, during Gorbaciov, for example when it proclaimed independence, according to the international law, Lithuania, Estonia, and then Latvia in March and April 1990.

According to the revision thesis the Soviet Union cannot be held responsible for the beginning of the Cold War as during the Second World War it barely escaped from a military catastrophe and suffered huge losses in men and resources, so at the end of the war it remained vulnerable in the face of economically prosperous states and traditionally anti-Soviet countries and also in the face of world power, United States, that now owned the atomic weapons monopoly. (Loch, 2002, p. 13)

This thesis completes the refusal of the USSR and the countries of Eastern Europe to collaborate on Western economic union (the Marshall Plan) which would have determined the Americans to start an arms race against the Soviet Union and the communist body. Another answer to the same question is that the USSR started the Cold War (this is the traditionalist thesis) for the need to acquire resources, to weaken the non-Communist space and to expand the dominance of communist ideology from Moscow. (Loch, 2002, p. 10)

A thesis as interesting as the previous one is of Kenneth Waltz. In one of his article he contested the end of bipolarity and his essential argument was that Russia (the main heir of the Soviet Empire) maintains its capabilities of nuclear counter-blow. Waltz was wondering: "In what way it was affected the international political structure by the weakness state of Russia?, and the answer that the author gave was that "bipolarity maintains, but in a modified state. Bipolarity continues as from the military point of view Russia can take care of itself and also because other big powers had not risen yet." (Waltz, 2006, p. 17) Waltz's thesis varies, as in another

¹ <http://www.rasfoiesc.com/educatie/istorie/Sfarsitul-razboiului-rece-si-n69.php>.

article he will refer to the growing inequalities between states and at the end of bipolarity, admitting that after the collapse of the USSR the international political system became unipolar. In another article by the same author he reveals another side of the international system after the 90's suggesting that unipolarity will not last long, and that it will be replaced by a multipolar structure. China, Japan and to a lesser extent Germany are candidates for the high power status. There are also theories that say that the Cold War has not ended, it has just changed its shape.

The Cold War began when America was expecting an era of peace and ended at a time when America was preparing for a new era of prolonged conflict. The Soviet Empire collapsed even more sharply than it broken out between its borders, with the same rapidity, America had completely changed the attitude towards Russia, moving in quite a few months from hostility to friendship. (Kissinger, 2003, p. 664)

In reality, the decisive weakening of communism followed from its intern failure, the economy, above all, and well beyond the economic. However, this failure has long been obvious to everyone, the West not only did not believe it possible, or that it thought possible, or that it believed to be something temporary and superficial, but it has also tried several times to remedy it! Without Western economic aid, without the Western indulgence on the worst the political repressions, in short, without the incapacity of the West to speculate the inherent fragility of communist systems, their collapse would have occurred much earlier. Only the West - often even in its segments of opinion called conservative, or rightmost located, was almost always ready for reverse hypothesis: that in order to ease the transition from communism to democracy it should be first artificially increased the prosperity of socialist countries, massively injecting them with financial loans, investing and giving them innovative technology, enabling them to "modernize". A persistent illusion, based on the assumption that the socialist economy was fundamentally viable and that it only accidentally paralyzed. In itself, the supposition was based on figures provided by the concerned statistics, figures that even minimized by "the specialists of the West" were still three or four times more bombastic than the real ones, which have not prevented them to become safe references in numerous scholarly treaties, in journal articles and even in the Western textbooks. The adoption of *glasnost policy* would demonstrate, inter alia, that, on the contrary, only the consciousness of an imminent irreparable economic disaster could have push the communism on the path of liberalization, i.e. its disappearance. The demonstration regarding the communist past was not yet well understood by all,

because in the West there are still the numerous followers of cooperation with China, even after 1989 in order to “modernize it” and “to become a democracy”. (Revel, 1995, p. 100)

The 1947-1989 resulted in a long period of smoldering conflict, marked by several violent crises (the Cuban missile crisis, the Vietnam War, the invasion of Afghanistan, etc.), to which it was given the name of “Cold War”. The “Cold War” term appeared for the first time in the United States in 1947, through the man of Finance Bernard Baruch who, in a speech held at the unveiling of his portrait in his home in South Carolina, used the term of “Cold War” in order to describe the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.¹

The limits of “Cold War” vary, according to the historians. Andre Fontaine, for example, believed that it began immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution and ended once the “missile crisis” in 1962. For most historians, it broke after the World War II, it had a tense phase between 1947 and 1953 and a subdued one until the mid ‘60s. Refreezing the international relations in the years 1978-1980 has led some researchers to reintroduce the concept of “Cold War” (it was also discussed about “warm peace”) to characterize the period that followed the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. Whatever the correct version, the collapse of the Eastern body and the disappearance of the USSR as a superpower put, it seems, an end forever of the Cold War.²

If we were to give a classic definition of the cold war it can be noticed that it this is an open confrontation, nonmilitary and limited that developed after the Second World War between the two groups of countries that had diametrically opposed ideological and political systems. In a group there were the Soviet Union and its allies, the Eastern Body, and the second group was made up of the United States and its allies called the Occidental Body. The confrontation between the two bodies manifested on several levels. At political military level it was a confrontation between NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and the Warsaw Pact. On the economic level, there was a confrontation between capitalism and socialism. At the ideological-political level it was a confrontation between Western liberal democracies (the so-called “free world”, “open society”) and Communist totalitarian regimes (the so-called “closed society”). The clash of the two bodies

¹ <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history.do?action=Article&id=2639>.

² http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:jlod_fwExDcJ:forum.portal.edu.ro/index.

was called the “Cold War” as it had reached to the direct military confrontation between the superpowers (it had not reached to the “hot” war).¹

The major concern of the US and its allies during the Cold War was that the USSR could gain control over the Western Europe, either by invasion or through the persuasiveness of communism in the western countries exhausted and impoverished by war. This would have put “the whole industrial base of the Eurasian regional mass (from Europe to Siberia) under the control of a single state.” The answer to these concerns was provided by the *Marshall Plan* - the US financial aid to rebuild European economies and the *NATO Marshall Plan* included economic aid worth \$ 17 billion to the European peoples for them “to gain economic health by draining poverty and misery”. The countries in the Western Europe immediately accepted the implementation of the plan, unlike the USSR and states under Soviet occupation, which they rejected “with indignation, considering it as a weapon to undermine the sovereignty and communist system.”²

From the *political* point of view, the East-West confrontation was a confrontation between the “two socio-economic systems, i.e. between two types of social order”. The US and its allies were a democratic organization based on political pluralism and a market economy, while the Soviet body was made up of “totalitarian, authoritarian states, one-party system that dominated and a command economy.” (Ralf, 1993, p. 19)

3. The Collapse of the USSR a Consequence of the Cold War

In 1985 Mihail Gorbaciov became president of the USSR, with decisive consequences of the cold war. Concentrated on the internal reform, Gorbaciov realized that the Soviet Union could no longer cope burdening the arms race. In 1987, after accepting some important concessions, secured first the nuclear arms reduction. With the Soviet economy in a rapid decline, Gorbaciov decided to terminate the granted aid and the withdrawal of the political support of the Eastern Europe communist regimes of, which in 1989 began to collapse.

The Soviet Union on the road to democracy had taken control of the Communist Party which became weaker and the economy was down, the Soviet Union had to

¹ <http://www.rasfoiesc.com/educatie/istorie/Sfarsitul-razboiului-rece-si-n69.php>

² <http://www.romanialibera.ro/a37019/razboiul-rece-si-cortina-de-fier-cosmarul-tarilor-supuse-moscovei.html>.

become a friend that needed to help, in December 1989 it was announced the end of the Cold War by Gorbaciov and George Bush.

At the beginning of his career very little indicated that Mihail Sergheievici Gorbaciov would become the leader who would disintegrate the Soviet Empire. He was born into a peasant family near Stavropol, in south-western Russia, in 1931. He joined the Communist Party and drove a combine in a state farm for four years before leaving for Moscow, where he graduated law at State University. He gradually climbed in the party system in his native Stavropol region, under the wing of two older members of the Political Bureau, Mihail Suslov and Iuri Andropov, he was elected in the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1971. Seven years later in 1978, he was put in charge of the Ministry of Agriculture. He knew very well the inefficiency of cooperative system from personal his experience and his family and he got into a position to fight for it.

In 1980, Gorbaciov became a full member of the of the Political Bureau, the highest political body in the Soviet Union and, two years later, his mentor, Andropov, succeeded to Leonid Bejnev take the leadership of the state. Andropov continued to support Gorbaciov, how now created a reputation for fighting against corruption and inefficiency. Full of confidence, Gorbachiov took over the Communist Party in March 1985, and in 1988 became president of the USSR.

It was always said that basically most dangerous moment of a candidature is when it begins to liberalize and Gorbaciov found himself caught between the Party apparatus, which saw its privileges threatened by the existence of a free press and choice, and reforms specific to an economy market and the radicals who wanted to go through all those steps at once, to immediately disappear the unique party system and the ordered economy. Gorbachiov introduced in the new parliament, elected in part, the Congress of People's Deputies and in 1989, he was chosen as president of this body. But he never dared to go all the way and release the economy under the state control. In the chaos and confusion that followed, Gorbaciov almost escaped things under control internally. His actions had also unleashed the nationalist forces in the Baltic States and other former Soviet republics, forces that would prove to be unstoppable. The successes achieved in the negotiations concerning the policies at arms, in treaties with the United States and the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan led to a peaceful disintegration of the Soviet Empire, to a detachment of the former communist countries in Asia and Eastern Europe by the Soviet body and German reunification.

All these were received in the West as the beginning of a new era. At home, in the eyes of traditionalist communists, it looked as a betrayal.

Conservatives and their supporters fought back from in August 1991 by organizing a coup d'état, while Gorbaciov was on vacation in Crimea. The coup failed, such failure was mostly due to the bravery of the Moscow demonstrators and Boris Elțin. Gorbaciov was reinstated but had no more power. Power now belonged to the leaders of different republics and especially Elțin. In December 25th, 1991 Gorbaciov resigned and the Soviet Union ceased to exist. He had changed the world, but had lost his own country. (Revel, 1995, p. 101) "Mihail Gorbaciov changed the world, but while doing so he lost his own country." The famous perestroika (restructuring) of Gorbaciov had opened the state-owned economy of private employers, guiding the transition to a freer market economy. But the economy resulting from this radical and rapid transition was not able to sustain the USSR. Problems with rampant spread of poverty and lack of food sickened the country.

These problems may have had less effect on the disintegration of the USSR, if it was not the major reform of Gorbaciov. "Glasnost" (freedom) reversed to initial brutal totalitarian Soviet policies government, the suppression of criticism and freedom of expression. Under the glasnost, the workers could go on strike, journalists could have published their opposition editorials to the Kremlin, and the protesters could express freely. The combination between the political and economic reform brought by perestroika and social freedom granted by the glasnost have contributed to the revolution in the rural areas of the USSR, which led to the replacement of a communist totalitarian system to a democratic pluralist one, at least in theory.¹

What America must master is the transitioning from an era where all the choices seemed open to a period in which it can still achieve more than any other society, but only if it manages to know its limits. Establishing new world order raised a number of questions that are still valid today: Will the Americans want to intervene wherever there is a conflict in the world, are they willing to become the "watchdogs" of the world? This involves great and expensive responsibility. It is hard to say what the future holds, the fact is that currently NATO continues to exist and it even expands with new members, but Russia should not be overlooked, its

¹ Alexandru Safta (2009). *Cine a castigat, de fapt, Razboiul Rece/Who has actually won the Cold War*, <http://www.descopera.ro/cultura/3939016-cine-a-castigat-de-fapt-razboiul-rece>.

influence is becoming increasingly important. The question that exists today still, which is difficult to answer: "Is the Cold War over?"

The Cold War dominated the US and the USSR foreign policy since 1947 when it used first the term, until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. In theory the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet and communist regimes of the USSR and the world which remained is dominated by a sole superpower (condition described by specialists in international politics as US global hegemony in a multipolar world).

According to Martin McCauley, the end of Cold War can be viewed from two perspectives. In light of those that see the Cold War just as another term in defining the competition between the superpowers. Russia and America will say that it ended in 1990, when Gorbaciov declared it finished. From another perspective, those whom consider it as a systematic confrontation between capitalism and communism, between democracy and authoritarianism will say 1991, the year when the Soviet Union ceased to exist. The same McCauley says that the analysis of any problem of international relations in the years 1945-1991 cannot avoid crossing the implications of the Cold War and the reason is that the Cold War characterizes a stage of international relations system: it is a way of being of this system. The Cold War ended when both superpowers recognized the absurdity of the race at arms and when one of them or both believed in the sincerity of the other. Others will say that the Cold War has not ended even today, only moving its center of gravity.

According to Duroselle "history shows that every empire will perish" (Duroselle & Kaspi, 2006, p. 274), this happened with URSS. The same Duroselle identifies three factors that led to this phenomenon: the failure of Marxism-Leninism, the failure of Gorbaciov-glasnost reforms (political openness - transparency) and perestroika (economic reconstruction) have weakened the USSR instead of help it to redefine the empire. Gorbaciov destroyed the communist party, which had been organized specifically to seize power and to maintain it and it actually controlled every aspect of Soviet life. Gorbaciov left the crumps of an empire which had been assembled with great effort over the entire centuries. He wanted to bring modernization, not freedom; he tried to make significant the Communist Party to the world outside; instead he opened the way to the system collapse which actually formed him and to whom he owed the position he had. (Kissinger, 2003, p. 685)

Adam Michnik said: "There is no ruling communism without being totalitarian. Either it becomes totalitarian or ceases to be communism".

4. German Reunification

By the opposition East / West Europe remained divided into two enemy camps for more than four decades. In a special way, however, they were affected by this situation of Germany and the German people, who paid a high price for the created disruption by nationalism - socialism and for opening the worst war in human history. A nation was divided into two states, very much related to opposing political systems. In the German Democratic Republic, this link was characterized by a pronounced repressive system which by the Berlin Wall showed clearly the entire inhumane side. When the West was decided to integrate the German Federal Republic in its structures, many remained skeptical and asked continuously for proof of loyalty to its German ally and its democratic orientation, pro-Western. The most important factor in the inclusion of Germany in Western structures had become, along with NATO membership, the European integration process. The basic idea of European unification was the reconciliation between Germany and its western opponents during the war, especially France.

It was brilliant Jean Monnet's idea for France and Germany jointly manage key industries of that time, of weapons, coal and steel, to establish peace between the two historic opponents. Over the years, it has been applied to almost the entire economy. In the economic field, the overall Western structures, such as the OECD, were quickly exceeded in importance by the European Community (EC). But in the political and military domain the dependence on the center of power of the West, namely the United States of America was so big and important that it was impossible to impose purely by European military structures. Therefore, the European Defence Community, and all subsequent attempts to achieve a political union was yet doomed to failure. NATO remained the dominant element. Despite the tight incorporation of the Bonn republic in the Western system, the Germans could not nor wanted, from the beginning to renounce to only three days, 15 000 East Germans used this possibility to reach the West. In Czechoslovakia, where the Iron Curtain was not lifted, the East German tourists fled to RFG's embassy in Prague. When the situation at embassy became unbearable because of agglomeration the GDR leadership allowed the tourists from the embassy the official exit to West Germany. Refugees, following the instructions of the GDR

management, were transported in special trains through the territory of the GDR to the FRG. In the stations on the territory of the GDR incidents often occurred.

Foreign affairs Minister Genscher remembers the hours spent in the FRG's embassy in Prague as the most hectic moments of his life. It then became clear to him that historical events will occur: "the GDR collapses, what happens here is actually the collapse of the GDR from inside and from bottom. The end of Berlin Wall is approaching: leaving Hungary was conducted with the violent protest of the leadership of East Berlin; 20 days later, people were leaving the Embassy in Prague with the East German government's permission. The flow of refugees turned into a river of history".

Encouraged by the evolution of events, the population of the GDR has asked more vehemently changes. They became known in this context, the so-called demonstrations on Monday in Leipzig, which later expanded more and more. Ubiquitous slogan was "We are the people". On the fortieth anniversary of the GDR, in early October, Mikhail Gorbaciov came to Berlin. He summoned Erich Honecker with the now well-known words: "Life punishes the one who delays".

Two weeks later, Honecker was replaced by a pro-reformist faction, led by Egon Grenz. For SED it was already too late. After about 10 000 people were leaving every day the GDR and at the demonstrations attended hundreds of thousands of people, the Central Committee of the SED was forced, on 9 November 1989 to decide drafting a regulation in liberal spirit of the right to travel. As the release of the press conference was given too quickly by Schabowski, a member of the Central Committee, thousands of residents of East Berlin tested the veracity of this notice, besieging Berlin Wall. In a few days the wall was broken and demolished in several places. Soon, pieces of the wall would have become highly sought souvenir. The day after the Wall fell, leaders of West Germany held a demonstration in front of Schöneberger City Hall in West Berlin. The Honorary President of the SPD, Willy Brandt, said a sentence quoted by many: "Now what belongs together will grow together". During the 1989 winter and 1990 spring, the GDR population pressure in favor of unification increased. The demonstrations' slogan changed from "We are the people" into "We are one people". In March 1990, East Germany held free parliamentary elections. The President of the East CDU, Lothar de Maizière, become head of government. (Busek & Mikulitsch, 2005, pp. 25-27)

The historians who believe that the United States won the Cold War are in agreement that the American victory was guaranteed in particular by the financial resources of "Uncle Sam". The US dynamited the monetary resorts of the Soviet by delegated wars and by the nuclear arms race. As a result of this frenzy of domination over the other, the competition between East and West has led the world closer than ever to a nuclear war in late 1962, in the episode called by historians "Cuban crisis missiles". Part of the monetary collapse of the USSR has come also from the huge funds flowing into a bottomless pit: Afghanistan. In 1979, the Soviets invaded and occupied the country, so that the US responded by secretly supporting and training the mujahedeen, insurgent rebels, who have mobilized against the Soviets in Afghanistan. The USA have supported massively the Mujahideen, and the Russian invasion prolonged and it became increasingly expensive. Finally, Afghans defeated the Soviet Union, and the Soviets withdrew in 1989.

Some historians believe that the USSR ended its natural life cycle and that the US was only a witness of its death. There are theories that claim that the communist regime is simply unbearable in the long term, to a large scale - an impossible and artificial construction which at some point collapses. As such, the USSR's decline was inevitable.

Some historians believe the US prolonged the Cold War at least a decade, preferring an aggressive rhetoric against USSR instead of concrete actions. And the administration of George Bush (senior) brings some evidence in supporting the theory. As the USSR seemed to fall apart, everyone was expecting Washington to give him the coup de grace. But Bush was reserved. While some critics wonder why it has not taken the opportunity to hit fatally the USSR, others understand his reserve, saying that the US President adopted a very wise strategy and allowed the Soviet Union to die naturally. With no other interventions of the US, Bush avoided pushing the Soviet Union the desperate acts and thus, under its administration, the Soviet Union disintegrated without having to surrender before a devastating nuclear fight.

Even those who believe that the US brought death to USSR (as Reagan was largely responsible for this "performance") must accept that in the absence of Mikhail Gorbaciov and his reformist perestroika policy, the dissolution of the Soviet Union could have lasted much longer. Gorbaciov, who was Reagan's opponent in the Cold

War, introduced rushing reforms which have alternated fundamentally social, political and economic development of the USSR.

5. Conclusion

Has it really the US won the Cold War? The fact is that the Soviet empire and its entire political system collapsed, and the end of the 40 years of tensions led to structural changes of the international system. Usually when someone wins a victory has a plan, a strategy on the order which is to establish after the end of the conflict. However the West was seized by its own victory, it recovered difficultly, it had to pass a considerable time to give to countries, which have opted for a market economy, a convenient strategy. So if the USSR had died of natural causes or committed suicide, who deserves the title of winning the Cold War? There were actually more winners. Clearly, the democracy has won as it replaced communism not only in the USSR but also in the Soviet satellites. The market freedom had also to gain, just as transnational corporations have won millions of customers in addition after the fall of the Soviet Union. And ultimately, everyone won as they emerged from the Cold War without suffering nuclear annihilation.¹

“When elephants fight, the grass is trampled,” says a wise proverb of the African Swahili people. For over 45 years, the world's superpowers, the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the United States of America (USA) fought deadily in the arena of global proportions of the Cold War. Today, some historians and political analysts say that the “grass” flattened by these giants was represented by the rest of the world's peoples.² The constant tension that characterized the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, which transformed and reformed, becoming Russia. This collapse was preceded by revolutions in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet states. But the Cold War emerged so steep that even ten years later the surrendering distrust still haunted the West. Was it the inevitable collapse of the USSR, or America stimulated its disintegration? Or, as Robert Gates said, a former CIA director and Soviet space expert, “Have we won, or just the Soviets lost?”

¹ <http://www.descopera.ro/cultura/3939016-cine-a-castigat-de-fapt-razboiul-rece>.

² Alexandru Safta (2009). *Cine a castigat, de fapt, Razboiul Rece/Who has actually won the Cold War*, <http://www.descopera.ro/cultura/3939016-cine-a-castigat-de-fapt-razboiul-rece>.

The Europe today is an empty world surrounded by full worlds, as itself was once a world too full, dominating the wide world. The interrogation in the future of our continent cannot be separated from the one related to its demographic situation. In comparison, there is a profound originality of the unifying approach that the Western Europe has been engaged: all previous attempts were led by a nation that aspired to hegemony and imposed by constraint an arbitrary unity. The absolute novelty of the contemporary system is that it builds empirically, gradually, based on the diversity of nations, through free negotiation between countries, on the basis of equality between all partners, with the approval of the parliaments and public opinion adherence, by the suffrage of all.” (Carpentier & Lebrun, 1997, p. 9)

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