MILITARY FACTOR AS A KEY IN STRUGGLE FOR ENERGY RESOURCES

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Nowadays, the struggle for energy resources sets basis for modern international and political relations. This is an important issue of global scale and complex nature, where economic, geopolitical, military and other aspects have been intertwined. If one highlights the largest energy consumer and producer countries on the modern map, the existing imbalance will manifest itself immediately. At the same time, it is a well-known fact that consumption of energy resources, especially that of natural gas, grows rapidly.

As a result of this situation, many countries have politicized and securitized the issue of energy security. Given the fact that the energy security is one of the main concerns of every government from the perspective of economic and political development of their countries, they allocate significant resources or even take emergency steps for ensuring stable supply of traditional and non-traditional sources of energy.

As claimed by the Copenhagen school of security studies, any specific matter can be non-politicized, politicized or securitized. An issue is non-politicized when it is not a matter for state action and is not included in public debate. An issue becomes politicized when it is managed within the standard political system. A politicized issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resources allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance. Finally, an issue is plotted at the securitized end of the spectrum, when it requires emergency actions beyond the state’s standard political procedures.\(^1\)

The processes which take place in the South Caucasus and in the Caspian Region largely reflect the common struggle for the world’s resources, in particular for oil and gas. Even now, at the beginning of the 21st century, when people talk more and more about the negotiations processes and civilized resolution of conflicts, there are direct military confrontations and extremely tense situations all over the world, which can lead to clashes between the leading powers, as the reserves of the world energy deplete.

When basing the arguments on the theory of Barry Buzan, one can assume that humanity today has reached a maximum level of resistance against the background of common struggle for energy resources. Buzan considers the second half of the 20th century, when the world faced a threat of a nuclear war between the USSR and the U.S., as a period of macro-securitization. By macro-securitization Buzan means a securitization aimed at, and up to a point succeeding, in framing security issues, agendas and relationships on a system-wide basis. Macro securitizations are based on Universalist constructions of

threats and/or referent objects. The Cold War is the most typical example of a
durable macro-securitization, where the referent objects were not just the
national securities of the U.S. and the Soviet Union, but also the future of
humankind from the perspective of principles governing the political economy
of industrial and post-industrial society. In this sense, the concerns of citizens
about the great geopolitical rival could be used for identification of local war,
military build-up, and promotion of the interests globally, including in the
energy sector. Once the confrontation between the two powers present during
the Cold War disappeared, an empty space, a certain void appeared that could
not remain blank for a long time².

If we look at the Cold War and the whole international community as a large
mass of people and systems fighting with each other for a warm place under the
sun, we can identify the only component that can bring people together, which
is the solution of ecological problems and the need to preserve the
environment³. Only then a common position could be adopted. However, the
confrontation between the superpowers like the USSR and the U.S., which
could destroy each other and the whole world for resources and other benefits,
shows how close people can come to the brink.

It is a well known fact that the USSR possessed huge reserves of oil and gas.
These were not only energy resources of modern Russia, but also the deposits in
the countries of Central Asia and the energy routes of the South Caucasus.
However, the fact that the world’s largest energy potential is under the disposal
of one of the sides does not automatically turn it into an undisputed world
leader. There are some difficulties associated with the process, including the
need to realize the product. In order to do so, one should be able to affect the
global economy, energy prices, and the political preferences of other union or
non-union states. Therefore, the myth about the triumph of international
proletariat could be a necessary part in the process of macro- securitization,
when a certain system of values is introduced for the achievement of specific
geopolitical objectives.

End of the Cold War led to desecuritization. While the USSR lost its great
mission to transform the world in accordance with the socialist ideology, the
West got relieved of the Soviet threat of “Ivan”, with thousands of nuclear
missiles and hungry masses of people behind his back. Therefore, a need arose
to find new values and new enemies. For this, the U.S. used the threat of
terrorism and supreme goals of society democratization.

According to the author of a number of works on nationalism Liz Fekete, the
sad events of September 11, 2001 instilled a huge fear of terrorism in the U.S.
society and increased Islamophobic sentiments of the population. People beca-

² Buzan B., “The ‘War on Terrorism’ as the new ‘macro-securitisation’?”, Oslo Workshop
³ Filip Ej dus. “Dangerous Liaisons: Securitization Theory and Schmittian Legacy” Western
Balkans Security Observer, Journal of the Belgrade School of Security Studies, Year 4, Nr. 13,
me very suspicious of migrants from Muslim countries and started fearing that Western values would be infected by Islamic moods. In the situation, of enjoying large support of the society, one can easily declare war on international terror. Here, one can again bring the example of securitization, which in its macro form is a very attractive tool for the states, and it is nearly impossible to refrain from using it. This tool has been successfully used by the Americans in the countries, which have allegedly supported terrorism. The Western military interventions in the East and Africa have primarily represented concrete and local securitization. At the same time, it is hard to talk of real securitization, since these were mostly securitizing moves, the response to which were the discussions about the legal, practical and moral side of employing military means to protect human rights.

The same tools of securitization could be applied to the fight against xenophobia and nationalism. In the early 20th century, nationalism started getting promoted as a result of multiple contacts and cultural diversity, leading to such manifestations as xenophobia and chauvinism.

This scenario is also quite applicable to the countries of the South Caucasus, each of which faces the problems of disputed territories, namely Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Nagorno-Karabakh. Securitization does not exclude the model of involvement of peacekeeping forces or armament in this region. The strategic partnership between Russia and Armenia or the armament of Georgia by the Western countries can be a component of such securitization.

If in case of Iraq, a military option was applied, then in case of the South Caucasus it is quite possible to promote the scenario of supporting the democratic reforms in the countries, which have the energy and transit potential, namely Georgia and Azerbaijan. One could also not exclude the involvement of the citizens with nationalistic moods with the purpose of returning Abkhazia and South Ossetia or resuming the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. Currently, there is a special interest in the issue of promoting reforms and maintaining stability for the sake of safe investments and implementation of major energy and transport projects like Nabucco pipeline or Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. It is obvious that the masks change, but the targets remain the same.

Regarding non-politicized issues, which are also discussed by Barry Buzan, one can note that, most probably, they become part of private structures and not objects of certain actions or policies of a state. Here, one can refer to foreign investors, who can invest in such countries as Azerbaijan, Georgia or Armenia without following a specific state mission. They cannot pose a serious threat to the energy sector, let’s say that of Azerbaijan, since they are involved in a certain type of business activity simply with the purpose of receiving profits.

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5 http://www.geopolitica.ru/Articles/1406/, Retrieved 08.01.2013
6 Filip Ejdus, pp. 42-43.
7 Alan Collins, p. 112.
However, they also depend on politicized and securitized issues. For example, under the condition of Cold War, one could hardly imagine MacDonald’s operating on the territory of the Soviet Union, somewhere in Baku, Tbilisi or Yerevan.

Nevertheless, certain actions can also be implemented in a desecuritized manner, when the execution of a strategy reaches some elements of the political routine, and achievement of the goals is not aimed at ensuring protection from an essential threat.8 The policy of the EU in the South Caucasus and particularly in each of the states can be attributed to such way of thinking and vision of a problem. A specific action plan for promoting political, economic and social reforms for European integration is selected. During the formal meetings, participants engage in discussions at the level of officials and experts and define the circle of issues, which should be addressed with the purpose of accomplishing certain goals related to the issue of integration of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia with the European community. These issues are fight against corruption, political stability, investment flows in the region, development of transport, communications and energy infrastructure, protection of human rights, freedom of the media and judicial system. These tools are used by the EU in order to subsequently make a deal with a more predictable partner.

There are also some other methods, which the West or Russia could apply towards Azerbaijan. For example, using the environmental sector, which defines the welfare of the environment. The issue of global warming might not seem so significant, as compared to war and terrorism, but one can achieve similar goals by using it. The advantage is seen in the greater success probability of securitization, considering unobvious connection to the political and military threats. The application of this geopolitical tool may result in the situation, when the wide strata of population can voluntarily support a phenomenon, which is negative for them, e.g. the deterioration of their living standards. Without any objective reason and being simply based on the decision of governing elites, it could have resulted in the strikes, protests or even massive clashes. The recent UN report on global warming justifies the necessity and request to allocate significant funding (12 percent of the global GDP) in order to prevent the “harmful effects of climate changes”. According to estimates, the implementation of the UN recommendations on reducing the emissions to atmosphere would annually constitute about 2750 dollars per one family at the present level of energy prices. Clearly realizing that they gradually lose control over the world, the globalists can continue imposing and reinforcing this control by making similar arguments. This logic is spread by the U.S. on such environmental problem, as global warming9.

9 http://www.geopolitica.ru/Articles/1406/, Retrieved 08.01.2013
The same arguments of environmental character can be used, for example, to freeze a certain energy project. In case of Azerbaijan, one can use the argument of struggle for a better environment through temporarily suspending the exploitation of Shah Deniz deposit in the Azerbaijani sector of Caspian Sea. It seems that this issue concerns only Azerbaijan, but in fact, the pollution affects the whole Caspian Sea. Russia and Iran, are ardent opponents of exploitation of this deposit for the promotion of large-scale geopolitical projects (e.g. Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum), limiting the value of these two countries. Following the initiative of Moscow and Tehran, there may be formed an entire committee of international experts, which will come up with a verdict regarding the pollution of the Caspian Sea by Azerbaijani operators. Even if the works do not get suspended permanently, they will be at least frozen temporarily through the litigation at Hague Court.

The methods of influence on a certain object are quite diverse and depend on the activity field. In case of military component, some offensive actions are usually taken, whereas in case of ecology, the measures involved are of economic or legal nature.

Depending on the area of application of securitization methods, the Copenhagen School of International Relations defines five general categories of security, namely:
1. Military/state;
2. Political;
3. Societal;
4. Economic;
5. Environmental10.

The logic of security and survival therein also contains four other security categories, which are far beyond the military or state security fields. Therefore, not only military methods can be used during the clash of interests of more or less powerful players like Russia, U.S., EU, Turkey, and Iran. On top of this, one should mention the interwoven diverse interests in the South Caucasus, related not only to oil and gas, but also to the transportation routes, political situation, fueled by ethnic conflicts, etc.

Despite the criticism of the theory of Barry Buzan and his colleagues from the Copenhagen School, which relates to the underutilization of schemes and the necessity of adding the cognitive inclination of audience to its fourth point, which may or may not coincide with the attempt of securitization, the theory itself is quite effective in the deconstruction of the problem of security and its every aspect with the purpose of revealing the complex and versatile nature of this concept. The question asked by traditional approaches is: “How do we

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become more secure?" The theory of securitization addresses the issue of how a problem turns into security problem 11.

The consideration of national component is an important aspect of this theory, which is particularly applicable to Eastern Europe and former Soviet Republics. There, the conflicts are of ethnic character, even though some of them may be created artificially by means of the same securitization. The issues related to Kosovo are often discussed from this perspective, and the recognition of the independence of this province was viewed by Serbia as a direct threat to its security 12. In this case, the military category of securitization was used, which is peculiar to the regions with unresolved ethnic and territorial conflicts.

The same relates to the South Caucasus. New spark of ethnic hatred can flare up at any moment, and then the policy of big geopolitical players, which imply new investments, political stability, promotion of reforms and diversification of transport and energy routes, may gain military connotation of securitization.

As long as there are resources, the fight for them will never end. Given the diversity of existing methods of struggle, one can expect everything, from hypocritical shaking of hands to real nuclear confrontation. The 20th century is a clear proof of the fact that the humanity will be in a constant struggle. According to Buzan, during the Cold War, the macro-securitisations reached their maximum. At least he is positive about the fact that they did not exist in Westphalia era of international relations from 1648 to 1945 13.

The moment when the Second World War ended was just a beginning of the new stage of macro-securitization. The struggle for energy resources acquired new character and new dimension. Although the clashes of interests took form of local wars, there are two aspects, which allow securitization to reach its highest level: nuclear threat and limited energy resources.

There was a global war in the 20th century, which did not end even in the 21st century. In my opinion, it can be called a Century-Long World War for Oil. It seems that everybody knows about it, but at the same time it remains hidden, since none of the participant countries is interested in uncovering its real reasons. Of course, they declare fight for high ideals, freedom, rights of oppressed people, human rights and never for black gold, which feeds the economic and military strengths of superpowers. The history provides such examples. The operation “Fall Blau” in 1942, during the World War II, had two objectives. The first one was the seizure of Baku oil deposits in the Caucasus region, and the second, the seizure of Stalingrad, which had a strategic location on the Volga River and thus had to be taken first in order to secure the left flank of Army Group South on their way to the Caucasus 14. During this campaign,

11 http://www.geopolitica.ru/Articles/1406/, Retrieved 08.01.2013
Hitler realized that his generals were not aware of the economic reasons of the war, since this information was only available to a small number of politicians and leading figures in the field of finance.

Today, the world’s leading countries, which do not possess enough energy to maintain their sustainable development, fight for establishing control over the main energy deposits and transportation routes. Anyway, the creation and support of the energy flows that would link the oil and gas deposits with consumer countries is not a sufficient measure for a secure transportation of energy. Very often, not being able to reach a consensus on energy related issues, the conflicting sides resort to force. This is the reason why the military build-up of supplier and transit countries is a necessary condition for ensuring safe transit of energy resources.

ВОЕННЫЙ ФАКТОР
В БОРЬБЕ ЗА ЭНЕРГОРЕСУРСЫ

АБИСОГОМОНЯН Р. В.

Резюме

В настоящее время энергетические ресурсы являются главным объектом борьбы между сверхдержавами. Рост объемов потребления природного газа и нефти в условиях дефицита или отсутствия возобновляемых источников энергии в некоторых странах приводит к кризису, который, в свою очередь, может привести к глобальной войне.