

REGULAR PAPERS

STRATEGIC AND THEORETICAL DIMENSION OF MAD CONCEPT

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*“A strange game.
The only winning move is not to play.
How about a nice game of chess?”*

Abstract

The principal aim of the study is to examine the broader role of the mutually assured destruction (MAD) concept formed and in operation in the second half of 20th century. Via theoretical perspectives on the nuclear weapon such as philosophical, ethical, or the security one, it is not only to provide an extended

definition of the concept while utilizing categories of the broadly accepted game-theoretic approach to mutually assured destruction in the theoretical premises of humanistic - liberal conceptions, but also to figure out whether the ethical implications of the state of nuclear strategic balance of power empirically examined within the effect of deterrence can even be reconciled with the Kantian liberal conception of perpetual peace.

Key words: *MAD, perpetual peace, game theory, prisoner's dilemma, humanistic - liberal conceptions level of analysis*

INTRODUCTION

Nuclear weapons and theoretical systems which rather naturally occur as a functional frame of their potential use, amount to a complex subject of academic research. To some extent this fact results from the contention between authors' commitments to a human approach to the subject of research and the effort to achieve academic integrity of the outcome, which in the context of international relations presupposes the preference of Realist conceptions as an intellectual premise of further academic research. The contemporary body of theoretical perspectives on the nuclear weapon can be characterised as relatively broad, owing to its many dimensions, e. g. philosophical, ethical, or the security dimension. In a more comprehensive perspective, this serves to reflect the relevance of this concept for the reality of international relations at the global level. Political Realism as the theory of international relations reflects the study of power phenomenon ever present within the issue of nuclear weapons. This premise of research does not, however, necessarily reflect the Kantian view on the need for balance of power in terms of the criteria of "perpetual peace", a perspective central to ethical inquiries in international politics. Consequently, there arises a question of whether the balance of power empirically examined within the effect of deterrence can even be reconciled with the Kantian liberal conception of perpetual peace.

The goal of this study is to prove the relevance of the humanistic perspective in case of approaching the study of the mass destruction element and its synthesis with the premises of international issues interpreted by political realists, all in a fashion that avoids downplaying the positive aspects or intellectual premises in either of these "*grand narratives*". The study attempts to maintain continuity with the already existing standard of academic distinction and intellectual consistency in the as yet published works on the functionality of nuclear deterrence and the issue of Mutual Assured Destruction¹ (hereafter be cited as MAD).

A relatively narrow specification of the topic also determines the main ambition that is to decide whether it is still possible to consider the occurrence of the concept of

¹Based on the theory of deterrence, MAD (mutually assured destruction) is a doctrine of national security policy in which a full-scale use of weapons of mass destruction by two or more opposing sides would result in the complete annihilation of participants, i.e. of the attacker as well as the defender. MAD accounts for a form of Nash equilibrium in which neither side to the conflict has any incentive either to disarm or to initiate a conflict.

MAD in relations between the USA and the Russian Federation to be a representative model of MAD, even with the effective nuclear bipolarity effectively over. In other words, it is an attempt to provide the answer if the analysis of the MAD concept in case of the US and Russia can transcend its original significance as a case study and, by means of formulas identified in this interaction, and whether it is able to serve as a relevant reference for other cases of nuclear antagonism with similar characteristics. When identifying the key characteristics of nuclear rivalry between USA and the Russian Federation or, formerly, the Soviet Union, the implications of this rivalry for the world security environment and the ethical dimension of its possible application must not be left out. This is because of the situation when a weapon of mass destruction has become a variable within a scheme whose logical result is an unstable, localised, but at the same time effective peace. This fact not only creates a remarkable deficit in the theoretical premises of humanistic - liberal conceptions, but it is also an expression of a reality where the level of nuclear balance is the category of a new security agenda. One of the secondary but highly consequential ambitions of the study is to identify selected factors which could strengthen the ethical dimension of the discussed issue.

The analytical and synthetic component of the applied methodology is justified by an effort to interconnect the already existing standard of academic knowledge of MAD; its application allows to guarantee diversity as well as continuity of academic sources related to the reality of nuclear deterrence. The chosen research methodology tends to refer to the strategic balance formed by means of the nuclear deterrence during the Cold War. The motivation for the research of the issue at hand is largely related to the fact that the existence of nuclear weapons creates a completely new dynamic not only in the world of politics, but, more specifically, in approaches used by the science of international relations as such. This attitude can be argued to constitute a further dimension of the authors' commitment to the social relevance of the above presented research.

1. STRATEGIC DIMENSION OF MAD CONCEPT IN THE LIGHT OF GAME THEORY

The categorisation of the MAD concept into the larger context of the science of international relations is a specific task. At the level of international relations science itself, this aspect of the study requires particular attention in regard to the nuclear weapon, that is, in many respects an unprecedented technology through which the concept of MAD is defined. Owing to the nuclear weapon technology, a new dimension could be identified not only in the reality of international politics *per se*, but also in the content of foreign policy and security doctrines of countries – either of the nuclear-weapon states (NWS) or the states in the diapason of power impact of those nuclear-states. The American school of political realism at the beginning of the *Nuclear Age* provided, in a highly perceptive manner, a description of this new dimension as having resulted from the characteristics of the nuclear weapon, which represented a revolutionary shift when compared to the yet analysed and generally known standard of military technology and strategy that saw use in the European campaigns of WWII. Under the circumstances of the existence of nuclear weapons and “*in a modern war the first battle might decide the outcome of*

the entire conflict“ [Possony 1954:220], which is in a similar contradiction to the Late Modern Era conception of military conflict as the fact that *“future wars hardly will be fought with weapons ordered and produced after the start of hostilities (...) war potentials have lost much of their significance, while forces in being and weapons stockpiles have become of crucial importance“* [Possony 1954: 220].

The key points identified by Possony help to illustrate that the occurrence and proliferation of nuclear weapons impacts another – the methodological level of the scientific field of international relations. The reality of the course of a potential nuclear war, especially in the context of the technological availability of intercontinental ballistic missiles (*ICBM*), diminishes the relevance of since then existed essential components of a military strategy such as physical geography, war potential or the sustainability of a country after the outbreak of war, and it takes a direct, mechanical character which shifts closer to specialised disciplines of mathematical programming. The outcome of this situation is that the concept of MAD as a tool to grasp the reality of nuclear antagonism, takes position at a crosssection of political science and game theory as a discipline examining models of rational behaviour of actors in largely applicable modelled situations. [Plous 1993] Thus the characteristics of the MAD model are similar to other model situations in game theory: its ambition is, as in other contexts, to enable research of the given complex situation via a transparent model with a relatively low number of variables, while refraining from reducing or neglecting any of the essential aspects of the situation. *Mutually Assured Destruction – MAD* in the context of the possession of a nuclear weapon by both sides - is consequently defined as a state in which neither side can initiate a nuclear attack while, at the same time, avoiding a devastating retaliation from its opponent’s side. In case that both sides to the conflict are positioned in a thus defined equilibrium, a nuclear attack initiated by any of these sides results in a complete obliteration of both of them – a *nuclear holocaust* [Plous 1994]. An effort of the nuclear power state in its relation towards its opponent to achieve such mutual standoff, in fact, amounts to guaranteeing temporary peace in a situation when nuclear weapons are available at a grand strategy level: neither side launches the first strike inasmuch as there is no benefit to it. *The only winning move is not to play*. It is, therefore, the effort to figure out to what extent the game theory method reflects the reality of nuclear deterrence, that brings us to the first task - the illustration of MAD concept in the contemporary nuclear strategic balance created by the US and Russia.

Within the dynamics of the nuclear rivalry in the Cold War, the game theory became a methodological premise for the MAD concept as well as for the larger reality of nuclear deterrence and nuclear arms race between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. [Terem 2017] In case of the MAD, the preference of international relations specialists towards game theory can be ascribed to its own definition which retains its relative one-dimensionality and simple quantifiability which enable it to operate with simple categories of term logic. In the nuclear arms race, nuclear deterrence and other categories of nuclear bipolarity, it is possible to observe a certain connection similar to a mutual causality: the application of game theory to these concepts was a reaction to the relative quantifiability of factors that enter into their procedures, and the subsequent successes with the use of the game theory method further redeem its use and highlight its merits. The nuclear arms race in particular is reflected via one of the subsets of game theory, i.e. the model of *prisoner’s*

dilemma. [Plous 1993] This model describes a situation in which two actors to a conflict situation achieve the best possible result if they decide themselves to cooperate. The players are not, however, directly in contact and, at the same time, each tries to avoid a situation in which they aid the opponent while the latter decides to deceive them. Inevitably, this results in a situation when both sides decide to act not in favour of their respective opponent, achieving a worse result than should both sides have decided to cooperate. Thus the outcome of prisoner's dilemma is suboptimal. [Plous 1993] Values of the outcome matrix between the United States and the Soviet Union, now the Russian Federation, as those of players in a nuclear arms race, might differ depending on the author's methodological license, which side it is more beneficial to continue in the competition for, or on the way the actor decides to conceptualize the variables entering the variation of the prisoner's dilemma. [Plous 1993] In most cases they are rounded to illustrative values in order to be transparent and comprehensible. The reality of nuclear rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union, in the contemporary period the Russian Federation, as Plous comments on it, can be tractable by the following result matrix (so far not taking into consideration further variables, thus explaining the Russian-American rivalry *per se* as a logical construction):

Table 1

	RF disarmament	RF armament
US disarmament	3.3	1.4
US armament	4.1	2.2

As previously stressed, thanks to this model it is possible to interpret the American-Russian competition in a nuclear armament in particular categories. The most advantageous for both sides is the situation when both sides decide to reduce their nuclear capacities (figure 3 for the US and 3 for Russia). This situation does not, however, occur in the default version of the prisoner's dilemma since neither side can be sure of the intentions of its opponent and wants to avoid a unilateral disarmament. At the same time, both sides are attracted by the possibility to arm while the opponent unilaterally disarms (in each case figure 4 for the side which is arms, figure 1 for the side that disarms). Both sides thus inevitably arm (figure 2 for the US, 2 for Russia). On the other hand, the possibility arises of a situation when both sides decide, via cooperation, to reduce their nuclear potentials, i.e. a state when both sides either intentionally or under particular conditions accept the existence of nuclear parity or have no reason to continue with nuclear competition hence subsequently forming a consensual state of a potential MAD. According to the above given definition, this situation deviates from the definition of *prisoner's dilemma* as such, and has to be considered by another model of game theory, in this particular case, by a larger game theory concept to which prisoner's dilemma is a subset.

This situation can be accounted for by means of the *Nash equilibrium*. [Holt, Roth 2004] This model is defined in terms of competing actors while each of them makes

the best possible decision in regards to the position of their respective opponent; simply put, a situation when, with the B-side's decisions taken into consideration by the A-side, the latter cannot improve its own position by any unilateral action [Plous 1993]. This model in relation to the result-wise more limited prisoner's dilemma is advantageous insofar as it permits to grasp, via the outcome matrix, the situation when nuclear rivalry – conversely - leads to a mutual cooperation of nuclear powers. In the presently researched context, this cooperation takes the form of bilateral disarmament, or specifically, to contractual commitments resulting in the conservation of the state of a potential MAD. This situation can be illustrated by the draft of another version of the result matrix:

Table 2

	RF disarmament	RF armament
US disarmament	3.3	1.2
US armament	2.1	1.1

This version corresponds to the defining characteristics of MAD doctrine; the best unilateral solution is for either actor to refrain from nuclear armament, and in the case that an actor decides not to reduce its nuclear arsenal, it at least sets the maximum amount of nuclear arsenal that is consistent with its current state (the outcome of the first SALT agreement) [Odom 2007]. A thus defined outcome matrix is a simple variation on the previous version of Prisoner's dilemma; there arises a fact that the state of a potential MAD is possible to be observed by adding a modifier variable in the position of coefficient with the values that mark the outcome of armament on one or the other side:

Table 3

	RF disarmament	RF armament
US disarmament	3.3	1.4 <i>mrf</i>
US armament	4 <i>mus</i> .1	2 <i>mus</i> .2 <i>mrf</i>

; *mus* = 0.5, *mrf* = 0.5

where variables *mus* a *mrf* are modifiers of an outcome that is achieved by the US and Russia, respectively, on the level of the outcome matrix, in case that any of them decides to continue in armament. In such a designed model, it can be stated that the higher the value of a modifier is (which in regards to the logic of nuclear competition increases the value of the other), the more closely the reality of nuclear competition approaches a nuclear arms race; in contrast, the lower the value of the modifier of one side (with an analogical outcome for the opponent's modifier), the greater interest both sides will have in maintaining a nuclear rivalry in the state of a potential MAD – in other words, into the relation which in the long run guarantees mutual nuclear deterrence without a need for large investments in offensive or

defensive capacities on either side. [Krepon 2004]. So the modifiers *mus* and *mrf*, similarly, as other components of the outcome matrix, amount, to a certain extent, to a reduction of events of nuclear rivalry into a form in which it is possible to grasp them via a mathematical model in regards to a multidimensional reality of nuclear rivalry. No attempt at quantification can possibly transcend its essence as a means of illustration. On the other hand, this does not rule out the ambition to try at a synthesis of the already achieved knowledge of the patterns of nuclear rivalry and to draft a classification of the factors which – with no regard to their level of quantification - enter the above described version of the outcome matrix in the role of a modifier; these factors can subsequently function as premises for the assessment of the prospects of any international nuclear regime. Factors entering the model of the Prisoner's dilemma in the capacity of modifiers are identified on the following levels. All of these levels account for a theoretical dimension of the MAD concept.

2. THEORETICAL DIMENSION OF MAD CONCEPT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PARTICULARLY SELECTED ANALYTICAL LEVELS

The economical level. In a free market environment and circumstances approaching a potential MAD, the economic dimension of further armament is evident: the actor who decides to disarm does not have to invest in the production of new nuclear warheads and missile carriers, and as such it saves money required for their maintenance. This dimension could, however, be ambiguous due to divergent roles of arms industry in the GDP of the respective nuclear powers. If the nuclear potential of a country depends on import, or specifically, if expenses for the production and maintenance of nuclear weapons are higher than contributions from the arms industry to GDP, the modifier value for the respective country is decreased and the state of nuclear rivalry is shifted closer to a potential MAD. If a substantial percentage of the national industry of a given country depends on the effective functioning of arms industry, the government is economically motivated to continue with nuclear armament. This dynamic was even stressed in the former Soviet centrally planned economy where, in order to maintain the zero unemployment rate, a stable percentage of workers employed in the engineering industry was preserved. [Liakhovskii 2007]

The liberalistic level. The tension that exists between the existence and political functionality of nuclear weapons and the need for their redemption vis-à-vis liberal democracy, human rights and international law was already mentioned in the introductory part. The dialectic created by nuclear weapons as a means of maintaining peace is rather problematic for any effort of its integration into the discourse on a democracy-based international community: *“The situation becomes more complicated when you consider the value patterns of democratic societies. In these patterns, human life and human dignity are given high priority; nuclear weapons are weapons of mass destruction and genocide and should therefore meet with disapproval among citizens. We would expect the result of these inconsistent impulses to be such that democracies would be in favour of nuclear deterrence, but, instead they suffer from the dilemma of the noble objective of avoiding war, on the one hand, and the genocidal character*

of the weapons, on the other.“ [Müller, Schaper 2004:1]. The implied ambiguity of the reasoning on nuclear weapons in the categories of legal state and liberal democracy, apart from the completely obvious contradiction of nuclear weapons with the basic premises of these concepts, can be traced back to the democratic peace theory which in its original formulation can be ascribed to Immanuel Kant; characteristics of democracy as such embody a fact that democracies will be unwilling to wage war on each other. [Müller, Schaper 2004]. This point is further elaborated in the more recent Social Constructivist research which has concluded that some level of collective identity shared by all parties is necessary for a functional international security environment [Pouliot 2007]. Within our model, the modifier also depends on an emphasis that the nuclear powers be prepared to commit themselves to their own citizens, to the international community, as well as to their own essence as the continuation of the liberal democratic state tradition. Admittedly, at the same time, the inclusion of liberalistic conceptions among the factors influencing the standard of nuclear armament is contradictory to the findings of American political realism representatives who consider this variable to be at least trivial, if not negligible [Possony 1954]. Furthermore, recent events have shown that an excessive reliance on Liberal logic by Western leaders may well be downright dangerous for peace. The point made by some Realist authors is that a continuous enlargement of an ideologically liberal-democratic security environment epitomized by NATO and the EU, which is the consequence of Liberal thought, will inevitably be seen as aggressive expansion in the competing Realist optic. One result of such clash of narratives, Mearsheimer argues, is the ongoing conventional invasion of Ukraine which is the Russian response to the expansionist nature of the Western Liberal foreign policies [Mearsheimer 2014]. Mearsheimer's methodology here seems to be that of an interpretative case study which, while admittedly selecting a case precisely because of its Realist merit, well illustrates why a decidedly Realist approach to International Relations will oppose the inclusion of Liberalistic variables among the modifiers of the values of our proposed outcome matrix.

On the other hand, authors adhering to a different theoretical complex of the science of international relations - the English School of international relations theory - utilise the characteristics of international liberalism and formulate a specific central premise that, from their perspective, is the most noticeable characteristic of the contemporary functioning of international relations [Lasicová, Ušiak 2012]. From the realistic conceptions, the statement is adopted that in regard to the absence of a supranational authority, the relation among nation-states is inherently anarchic; on the other hand, the number, intensity and nature of conflicts are all significantly milder to those of a hypothetical collapse of the central authority at the intra-national level. This collapse would have, inside a failing state, resulted in a Hobbesian *bellum omnium contra omnes*, as is continuously proven within the context of coups d'état, revolutions, and third-world countries. In contrast, states, the entities whose role is that of formally equal actors within an anarchic environment, act with a surprisingly high measure of mutual cooperation. This fact leads the scientists of the English school to the conclusion that the international society or, by extension, the states it is formed by, create a specific frame of reference for relationships that is unique to the international environment, and as such they are conceptually and methodologically different from the terms that are

analogous to them in the intra-national sphere (i. e. society and state citizens). From this perspective, it is possible to make the assumption that the specific quality of relations among states illustrated in works of the English school is another potential and essential modifier entering the dilemma between the maintenance of strategic balance and a relapse into nuclear arms race [Kazanský 2015: 28].

In addition to the pressure that ideological liberalism, hypothetically, exerts on the outcome matrix when projected into international politics, another dynamic with a similar potential is created within each of the respective nuclear powers' systems largely due to the liberal nature of their constitutions, either actual or nominal. Active citizens in liberal countries will inevitably work to formulate and communicate their views on any change in nuclear policy via civil society networks, yet the capacity of civil society to actively influence its nation's foreign policy will depend on how closely it adheres to its now-traditional definition: „*The dominant conceptualization of civil society is based on the Tocquevilian idea of freedom of association (...) making civil society a space situated between the state, the market and the individual*“, which might be, admittedly, a „*romanticised western model*“ [Ljubownikov et al., 2013:154]. Indeed, Putnam makes a strong case that the effectiveness of representational government, at least on a regional level, correlates with the abundance of *social capital* that itself results in a widespread civic membership in voluntary associations. [Putnam 1995]. This fact might even serve to reconcile the Toquevillian concept with the valid remark by Evers and Laville that „*(it) neglects the economic dimension of civil society and overtly focuses on the autonomy of civil society rather than its intermediary nature*“ [Ljubownikov et al., 2013:154] While certain non-governmental organisations, as part of the third sector, did indeed work to influence the United States nuclear policy [Wang 2010], Putnam argues that these organisations are distinct from the voluntary associations of the Tocquevilian type; even though they claim a part of the political power, they are not directly descended from civic social capital [Putnam 1995]. Therefore, whether or not they can possibly serve to communicate the actual political will of the individual to the government, especially in relation to nuclear policy, is dubious.

The Postmodernistic level. Considering from what point in history onwards the nuclear antagonism takes place, some responsibility for its interpretation will inevitably be placed on the late-20th century Postmodernist thought whose main thesis is that of a qualitative divergence of the contemporary Western world from the period in which the economic, political and social reality could have been conveyed via the modernistic categories of liberalism, democracy and the rule of law. The characteristic of the *postmodern state* by proponents of modernism as ideology [Lyotard 1979] is the fact that the global standard of information and knowledge, whose internal consistency was emphasised by the Late Modern thought, has disintegrated. The legitimization of a given social phenomenon, concept and policy, does not occur implicitly, but via a metanarrative chosen by communicators: the media and political actors. Therefore, in a manner similar to all other spheres of public life, the nuclear policy is legitimised on the level of linguistic-psychological games to which the subjects are political and economic elites, multinational corporations, proponents of technological and scientific

innovations, and the civil society. Orwell, ever the dystopian visionary of the waning days of the Late Modern period, warns that a perceived acceptability of nuclear conflict and other commonly invoked categories of the modern world could be a function of the used language: “*Writing that aims at glorifying war usually takes on an archaic colour (...) The words democracy, socialism, freedom, patriotic, realistic, justice, have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with one another. In the case of a word like democracy, not only is there no agreed definition, but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides*“[Orwell 2013 : 8-9]. The postmodern state in contrast to the modern one makes higher demands on the civic control of a state, pressure from the media and critical approach towards the standard of political communication. By this same token, the nuclear policies of the postmodern state will inevitably be affected by the capacity of the civil society to submit them for a critical and informed scrutiny, free of confirmation bias, conspiratorial thought and – perhaps most critically – illiberal state propaganda. It can be hypothesized that such practice will correlate with an increased capacity to accurately interpret political language across the whole society, which is then reflected in a more responsible approach to regulating the strategic nuclear balance.

3. A RETURN TO TRADITION AS A NEW POLITICAL DISCOURSE

The history of the foreign policy of the United States of America was prominently framed by its historical tradition of Wilsonian idealism that guaranteed them international respect following the end of WWI. The momentum lasted well into the 20th century until the 1960s when the so-called McCarthyism, the new geo-political concept of the era started to be dominant (which accounted for not only strategic, but also for economic connotations of the arms race). Through the agenda of Woodrow Wilson, the values of the American Founding Fathers became realistic and “matured“. These had a stabilising effect even at such harsh times as the Great Depression, the attack on the Pearl Harbor, or when the US joined the Allied coalition during WWII. At the same time, the Wilsonian values helped shape, for at least half the century following WWII., a still not academically thoroughly processed, comprehended, and fully appreciated period; one during which the US became the leader and proponent of the dominating lineage within foreign policy of the world’s states. Yet a misunderstanding was present at those times. For W. Wilson, the only conceivable result of the US hegemony was the creation of a balance of power via the spread of democracy. W. Wilson formulated these very principles of the US foreign policy as follows: 1. harmony in international relations 2. a legal way of achieving changes, i.e. via international law 3. the so-called Wilsonian theory of democracy, in the sense that states accepting the first two principles will never resort to war as a means to settle international disputes. [Krejčí 2009] The above mentioned misunderstanding devolved into cynicism at the beginning of the 1960s. The distrust of Wilsonian agenda was further researched by the foremost American theoretician N. Chomsky who, at the beginning of the 1990s, expressed his opinion on the misunderstanding of goals from the side of USA and Europe (i.e. also from the side of the Soviet Union and later Russia). The gist of his argument is that Europe has never got rid of cynicism (due to its historical

development), which particularly precludes Europe from the thorough understanding and judgement of generous American projects as being just, and thus realisable only thanks to American enthusiasm. [Reid 2005] H. Kissinger in his work *Does America need a foreign policy. Toward Diplomacy for 21st Century*, points out that the erosion of American values was not only caused by European cynicism, but also by a series of turbulent events in the devastated economies of Latin American and African states, which led to moral problems in the development of these territories such as human rights suppression, the rise of poverty, unemployment, the inadequate performance of local governments unable to maintain order in the crisis regions. For all these negative phenomena, as Kissinger holds, the American trend towards globalisation was riddled with moral guilt, leading to and causing a devastation of weak economies. Accordingly, it is possible to conclude that the problem related to the evaluation of MAD had also, along with the strategic level, a moral one. On the one hand, there is armament: the development in this sphere always brings about economic bonuses; on the other hand, it becomes a counterproductive agenda for superpowers that were and are actors to international treaties on armament control. This discrepancy has even brought back ethical concepts into American as well as Russian foreign policy. This trend was represented by B. Obama in the US, and partially by D. Medvedev and V. Putin in Russia. [Solik, Baar 2016] The development of given events has brought new personalities on the international scene not only from the US perspective, but also from the perspective of the EU states. The recent period of searching for a productive and ethically controlled foreign policy of most powerful actors within global politics creates a new trend, one of increased international cooperation in security policy. However, this trend has already had new, historically proved and functioning models. Examples of these models include the European cooperation between France and Germany, a renaissance of good relations between Spain and Latin-American countries, the rise of importance of the Central European states as neighbours of Russia and Ukraine, but mainly the coordination of strategic and defence initiatives of states - having not a voluntary role as it was during the operation of MAD system, but as looking for a compromise and consensus on the rules within the existing organisations, especially NATO and the EU.

CONCLUSION

Reflexion of the contemporary standard of the US and Russian nuclear doctrine makes it possible to sum up ideal conditions to maintain MAD over the course of the next decades. Particularly the US should avoid the construction of new industrial complexes and, overall, prevent all possibility of finding itself in a situation where the production of more nuclear warheads could be seen as beneficial. The US as well as Russia are supposed to be open in a discussion on a future of the US anti-ballistic defence in Europe, including the possibility that this project will be realised. At the same time, the US ought to initiate a discussion on drafting an international treaty that would be a replacement for the ABM Treaty², and which would take into consideration the end of US - Russian nuclear

² The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty signed in 1972 was a treaty on the limitation of the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems used in defending areas against ballistic missile-delivered

parity in preservation of the logic of mutual deterrence. The liberal dimension of the approach to nuclear regime, which undisputably bears the attributes of Kantian „perpetual peace“(democracy, equality of states, parity of interests via non-military activities, civic participation), presupposes on the side of the Russian Federation a significant improvement in the quality of democracy. Russian civic movements could then indirectly participate on international politics or, at least, increase the transparency of nuclear policy in Russia. The necessity of a stronger and more broadly applied civic control, however, extends to the US; this being in the interest of a thorough reduction of the influence of multinational corporations on a federal level, along with decisions related to foreign policy.

One of the subjects of inquiry defined in the introductory part were the ethical implications of the state of nuclear strategic balance. In this respect, the precondition of success is a thorough comprehension, by relevant authors, of the sphere of the theory of ethics, history of political liberalism, but also an ability to effectively transcend these concepts. Such effort could well be rewarded by an oxymoron made real: a moral climax inherent to the concept of the nuclear weapon. In this light, our conclusions are represented by the following observation by Possony that appears to call for a responsible management of international nuclear reality while implicitly dismissing the idealism of the global zero: *„However distasteful it may be, nuclear weapons of the fission and fusion types have come to stay. Henceforth, they will be as much a part of human existence as rain and snow, morality and crime, the telephone and the airplane, pacifism and aggressiveness, freedom and tyranny, stupidity and wisdom“*[Possony 1954:211]. A similar conclusion is achieved by contemporary theoreticians who, especially in the context of Obama's ambitions of heading towards the global zero, express skepticism in regards to the standard of deterrence after a hypothetical disappearance of nuclear weapons. In relation to the fact that nuclear weapons have been shown to be technologically feasible, a world in which no country officially has the nuclear deterrent at its disposal would become grotesquely vulnerable to any one, however clandestine, effort to bring it back into existence. The world security environment, defined in part by its uneasy, unlikely, yet well-researched stability, would stop serving its purpose, since shifting the security balance overwhelmingly to one side would become a mere economical stunt. From the perspective of this *nervous world* [Joffe, Davis 2011], it is necessary to accept a further continuation of the contemporary standard of nuclear deterrence in regards of the persistent and memetically indestructible nuclear weapon under the circumstances of consecutive, contractually guaranteed and smartly conducted reduction of the nuclear countries' arsenals as a tool of prevention of a relapse into the nuclear arms race.

The activity of the Russian Federation in the sphere of the world nuclear control, coming to terms with the Russian portion of responsibility for a nuclear war prevention, as well as its contractual cooperation with the US and other NATO countries in maintaining mutual nuclear deterrence are all dimensions of what is

nuclear weapons between the Soviet Union and the United States. Under its the terms, each party was limited to two ABM complexes, each of which was to be limited to 100 anti-ballistic missiles. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, in 1997 the United States and four former Soviet republics agreed to succeed to the treaty. The US withdrew from the treaty In June 2002, which eventually led to its termination.

decidedly in continuity with the Cold War Soviet nuclear doctrine, save for a certain capacity for compromise that is necessary for a post-bipolar era nuclear regime. All of these behaviors, however, are also in line with the Russian Federation's continued insistence at being regarded as an important geopolitical player. [Kotkin 2016] Some authors, however, identify in the foreign policy of Russian federation a tendency with a felicitous term *potemkinization* [Lo 2002], the essence of which is to camouflage, via a declaratory and, in many points, vague content of foreign or military doctrine, a deficit in internal consistency of political life that is characterized by a longstanding conflict between political movements, the elitarian political culture and the crisis of identity which arose after the fall of the Iron Curtain and to which the premise is a determination to uncompromisingly approach Russia as if it were a world power - *deržava*, regardless of any changes in the power potential of Russia [Lo 2002]. Some of the studies that adhere to Social Constructivism have attempted to link the emergence of an international security community to the precondition of collective identification [Pouliot 2007]. From this perspective, the feasibility of a global zero might well depend on Russia's willingness to abandon the narrative of *deržava*, as well as on the reconsidering, by the West, of the Liberal approach that Mearsheimer believes now governs the United States' foreign policy [Mearsheimer 2014]. This, along with an analogous departure from authoritarianism in Russian political life, whether caused by generational exchange or more prominent civic control, would have the potential to result in a more realistic openness to a mutual dialogue on the global nuclear regime with the United States.

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