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**РОЛЬ ПРОЕКТОВ РОССИЙСКИХ НЕФТЕГАЗОВЫХ КОМПАНИЙ В
РЕАЛИЗАЦИИ ИДЕИ «БОЛЬШОГО ЕВРАЗИЙСКОГО ПАРТНЕРСТВА» В
СОВРЕМЕННОЙ МИРОВОЙ ПОЛИТИКЕ**

**THE ROLE OF PROJECTS OF RUSSIAN OIL AND GAS COMPANIES IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IDEA OF "GREATER EURASIAN PARTNERSHIP" IN
THE MODERN WORLD POLITICS**

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Introduction

The size and geographical position make Russia a link between Europe and Asia. Based on her contribution to world culture and interfaith dialogue, history, the unique experience of building various economic structures, and the status of a permanent member of the UN Security Council, she wants to play a constructive unifying role in Eurasia. The sources of its philosophical, political and cultural justification can be found in the positive part of the ideologies of classical and modern Eurasianism. In order for Moscow to take it upon itself, as the leaders of the Russian expert community substantiate, the necessary prerequisites have arisen. Centripetal trends prevailed everywhere. The era of individualism and isolation is passing. The craving for integration and regionalization is growing. Supporting international organizations have been created with the participation of Russia, China, India and Kazakhstan. They add in influence. The cooperation of the participating countries paves the way for the implementation of the Greater Eurasia project.

The approach that has been chosen for the nascent integration processes is healthy conservatism; in this case, it means cooperation while respecting the rule of law and what the states agreed upon, creating a modern world order, it is upheld by Russia, China, and other BRICS participants. They proceed from the fact that the Charter of the World Security Organization, which sanctifies non-interference in internal affairs and the sovereign equality of states, must be strictly observed. Actions bypassing the UN Security Council are unacceptable. Any coercive measures can be introduced only on the basis of its decisions. Nobody should encroach on the right of peoples to determine the trajectory of their movement towards freedom and a fair government. To sacrifice their destinies, to abstract speculative ideals is criminal and impermissible. Russia is guided by this approach, building its development assistance policy. It is the basis of the Eurasian geopolitical project.

Only an unconditional positive balance could encourage the founding countries to create a Customs Union and Common Economic Space, and then force

their transformation into the EAEU. As soon as possible, the EAEU and the member states concluded a pioneer agreement on a free trade zone with Vietnam, the most dynamically developing country in Southeast Asia. And this construct was built despite the economic downturn in Russia and the ongoing sanctions war.

Naturally, idealizing cooperation within the EAEU is not the goal of this work. Obviously, when launching a new large-scale integration project, a large number of structural problems have to be overcome. They are connected with the already deep-rooted habit of primarily focusing on the promotion of own national interests, the different state and level of development of economic mechanisms, and intense competition between various groups of lobbyists. They are overlaid with another set of problems: instability of national currencies, falling prices for goods and services of traditional exports, market volatility, deterioration of relations with external partners, etc. However, the point is not the severity of individual problems, but the participants' systematic assessment of the overall balance of pros and cons.

Since the time of the 1990s, the leadership of Kazakhstan has become the most authoritative lobbyist of the economic union between the countries that emerged on the territory of the former USSR. The leading and most authoritative theorist of the inevitability of integration in the vastness of Eurasia was the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev. He has built the bridge between classical Eurasianism and modernity. He took from Eurasianism the tremendous positive political charge contained in it. He did a lot to understand how closely the peoples of Eurasia are interconnected. He substantiated that their rapprochement and integration within the framework of a common integration project is objective. He proposed a concrete vision of how it should be implemented [45].

However, until the beginning of the 2010s, the prerequisites necessary for the success of an ambitious Eurasian project were absent. Centrifugal tendencies dominated the former USSR. Even the Union State created by Russia and Belarus remained for them mainly on paper. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) provided, rather, a “civilized divorce” of parts of the once united country,

rather than deepening cooperation between them. According to a wide circle of researchers, such an image best describes the situation prevailing at that time. It is resorted to, among other things, by Corey Welt and Henry Hale of George Washington University in the preface to one of the most systematic recent work on the challenges that Eurasia is facing [11]. They write: the CIS “served as a more stringent divorce mechanism than the basis for new forms of integration” [11].

Departing from classical forms of Eurasian integration the Russian political, entrepreneurial and intellectual elite started to look from a multipolar viewpoint of the world. It began to build equal, close, friendly relations with the leading rising powers of the planet and the corresponding regions - China, India, Brazil, South Africa. Russia relied on coordinating its conditions with them with regard to economic construction and foreign policy. Thus, the Russian-Chinese-Indian consultative mechanism and the BRICS were born.

From an abstract conjuncture scheme invented by scientists, BRICS has become one of the supporting international structures of the modern world, which has a growing influence on global processes. Within its framework, dozens of dialogues have been established at all levels, including regular meetings of industry ministers. Opportunities are widely used for consultations and reconciliations on the eve of and on the sidelines of international forums and meetings of bodies of international organizations of a wide composition. BRICS is especially active in the financial field. The BRICS summits give a great impetus to coordinating positions on key issues on the world agenda and building up practical cooperation.

SCO is another supporting organization, on which not only its members, but also neighboring countries have high hopes. One of the most important topics within is to combine the large-scale Chinese program for the economic revival of the Silk Road and the activities of the EAEU. Chinese commentators wrote about it as shaping a new reality in Asia [64]. It was rated as a breakthrough by the Russian expert community. In their opinion, it creates a political basis for the integration of integrations across Eurasia [86].

The unification of the potentials of China and the EAEU for the implementation of large projects has a great future. Now the economic centers of attraction for Asian countries are the second and third economies of the world - China and Japan. If the current trends of the fast and dynamic formation of the EAEU continue, the new integration association will most likely join them.

In order to reinforce positive role that it could play in Eurasia Russia is ready to actively contribute to pooling efforts not only in the economic field, but also in soft and hard security. This is a joint fight against drug trafficking, organized crime, smuggling of migrants and refugees, money laundering. One of the initiatives also includes the formation and strengthening of an anti-terrorist front. The creation of a full-fledged collective security system is an end goal, one of the guarantors of which Russia could become.

Another extremely important resource that Russia could share with the countries and peoples of the superregion is energy. In this area, Moscow is a recognized leader. A large-scale construction of the most advanced nuclear power plants and a stable supply of hydrocarbons - this is what everyone needs. Taking into account the acuteness of the problem of energy security, the influence of Russia, which has huge oil and gas reserves [20] and built infrastructure of energy supplies, in this sector becomes obvious. Impact of Russian gas and oil projects in the region on the Greater Eurasia is the central focus of the study. At the moment this topic is not researched enough. As Alexey Masterpanov, academician of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, head of the Analytical Center for Energy Policy and Security of the Institute of Oil and Gas Problems of the Russian Academy of Sciences, member of the Board of Directors of the Institute of Energy Strategy, notes on the current most influential work in the field of Greater Eurasia studies, the report of the Valdai International Discussion Club “Towards the Great Ocean - 5: From Turn to the East to Greater Eurasia”, “While supporting in general the idea of Greater Eurasia and agreeing with the proposed principles, goals and objectives of its formation, it should, however, be said that one of the most important problems of our time - the problem of ensuring energy security - has

remained outside of their framework.” [41] This empty tile has to be filled, however the research does pretend to completely cover the whole section, as there are a lot of themes that could potentially be discussed. Instead it concentrates on the “Russia’s play in this game”, building up a research base for the further development of the Greater Eurasia studies in this field. For the purpose of this research it was chosen to identify Greater Eurasian Partnership as Greater Eurasia and do not go into deep analysis of integration processes of organizations and initiatives within the framework as it is a topic that could possibly distract the work from its focus and most likely both would stay not covered enough being limited by the volume of the paper.

Novelty of the study is in the approach that was taken. Of course, there are a lot of respectable studies on Russian energy politics. The latest paper that was found during literature revision is “Russia’s Energy Politics and Its Relevance for the European Union” by Mark Pierini [72], a visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe, which focus was mainly, on the EU-Russian partnership and points of pressure in this industry. Other sources were rather outdated and did not cover the current state of affairs in the topic [16] [68]. The research takes out the Russian oil and gas exports from the common economic and classical political framework of the pressure instrument and puts it into the comparably new Greater Eurasia one as a bridge for cooperation.

The significance of the research is in its potentiality to become first in the chain for Greater Eurasian studies and create a basis for further developments in this direction of thinking through works of scholars which will take this paper as a start point of their own research. Greater Eurasia project needs as many background scientific works as possible at the current state. This one provides the analysis of a portion of Greater Eurasia energy security issue – the Russian gas and oil projects and their impact on the idea.

The problem of the study: what role does Russian oil and gas companies’ projects play in the implantation of the idea of Greater Eurasia?

The goal of the study is to identify the possible influence of Russian hydrocarbon exporting firms' projects (specifying: oil and gas only) on the Greater Eurasia venture.

To achieve the set goal it is necessary to complete a number of objectives:

1. To conduct an analysis of the frame where the research is put – Greater Eurasia concept.
2. To highlight the potential projects-influencers within the set framework.
3. To analyze the possibility of impact on the feasibility of the Greater Eurasia concept.

The object of the study is the projects of Russian oil and gas companies within Greater Eurasian Partnership frame.

The subject of the study is the impact that Russian oil and gas companies have on the feasibility of the Greater Eurasian Partnership.

Research hypothesis – the success or fail of Russian oil and gas companies' have direct effect on the implementation of Greater Eurasia concept.

The study on the Greater Eurasia is based of works of a great amount of authors both Russian and foreign to not fall into idealization of the concept from one side and baseless critique from another. Especially valuable for the research were works of Russian authors: S. Karaganov, A. Masterpanov, Yu. Shafranik, T. Bordachev, D. Trenin, S. Luzyanin and A. Lukin.

The works of foreign authors brought new interesting perspectives on the researched topics. Particularly insightful were papers of B. Mações, M. Kaczmariski, Cl. Mandil and B.Lo.

The included in the study statistical data which helped to highlight certain aspects of the world gas and oil trade tendencies was provided by the reports of BP, EIA and OPEC.

For the purpose of research various data from electronic sources was used. Main sources of information on gas and oil projects are official webpages of Gazprom and Transneft. Online news sources, such as RIA, RG and Regnum helped to enrich the research with fresh facts.

The theoretical basis of the research was the works and concepts formed in the works of domestic and foreign researchers and devoted to the ideas of Greater Eurasia.

The methodology that was used in the study includes scientific abstraction, analysis, deduction, forecasting and economic and statistical analysis methods.

Chapter 1. Greater Eurasia concept

The last three or four years have become a time of unprecedented surge in interest in Eurasian issues. The Russian initiative to create Greater Eurasia Partnership or Greater Eurasia, which is seen as the main conceptual framework for promoting various cooperation projects in the region, is often criticized for the lack of concrete content for its implementation. Given the growing number of regional initiatives, including those from China and India, Russia needs not only to formulate an attractive idea, but also to show its relevance and effectiveness.

The concept of Greater Eurasia, despite the lack of objective historical conditions for its implementation, can become a rational practical embodiment of a wide range of development and security priorities for a wide group of countries in the region. The concept's problem is the lack of objective historical prerequisites for the creation of Greater Eurasia in the presence of a wide range of subjective reasons. At the beginning of the chapter, the prerequisites for the emergence of Greater Eurasia are analyzed, as well as various ways of perceiving and political interpretation of the Eurasian space. For historical reasons, projects for the consolidation of Eurasia mainly remained on paper, but current regional and global trends create suitable conditions for their implementation in practice.

The study analyzes the content of Eurasian integration and possible formats of cooperation. Particular emphasis is placed on security issues, economic cooperation, as well as the development of institutions in the Eurasian space. Special attention is paid to relations with potential participants in Greater Eurasia (including European countries) and non-regional actors, as well as to the use of European integration experience for the development of the Eurasian space. The necessity of greater attention to the issue of state sovereignty during cooperation within the EAEU (similar to the European experience of representatives and expert groups), as well as strengthening the institutional capacity of the EAEU, is emphasized. Particular attention is paid to the challenges and barriers to implementing the concept of Greater Eurasia.

1. Defining the concept of Greater Eurasia

The Polish researcher Marcin Kaczmarek says that “Russia lacks a clear vision for ‘Greater Eurasia’, which remains a vague and loosely defined concept.”[15, p. 1373] Trying to understand this poses several problems first of which is the large amount of possible definitions and understanding of the term. Does it bring the meaning of primarily a geographical construct or economic framework, geopolitical mechanism or the concept for the new world order? Also there is a problem in distinguishing (or not connecting to) the concept of Greater Eurasia from existing Russian foreign policy ventures (Eurasian Economic Union, “Turn to the East”)

In some aspects Greater Eurasia is an improved or expanded version of the Eurasian Economic Union. President Putin hinted towards this when he officially presented the idea of Greater Eurasian at the 2016 St. Petersburg Economic Forum: Our partners and we think that the [Eurasian Economic Union] can become one of the centers of a greater emergent integration area ... Now we propose considering the prospects for a more extensive Eurasian partnership involving the [EEU] and countries in which we already have close partnership—China, India, Pakistan and Iran—and certainly our CIS partners...” [29]

Unsurprisingly, the launch of Putin’s Greater Eurasia venture was not filled with details. Subsequent explanations, unfortunately, did not bring clarity and, in fact, brought more confusion. Some commentators believe that the main goal of Greater Eurasia is essentially regional: to give new life to the flagging EEU [42] and position it as "the central unifying structure in the regional Eurasian integration network." [88] Such views are shared by Chinese scholars who view Greater Eurasia and the EAEU as a “logical continuation of the Soviet past of Russia” and as a clear geopolitical initiative aimed at “restoring the leading role of Russia [in Eurasia] as to how it was in [the] time of the USSR.” [40] But for other observers, the scope of Greater Eurasia is more global than regional. Dmitry Trenin, director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, writes about “the self-image of a lone, great power in a global world; outreach to Asian partners to create a continental order

free from the dominance of the United States; and calculated patience toward Western Europe.” [49]

Most importantly, the concept of Greater Eurasia is identified with ambitious global governance plans, as stated in the 2017 Valdai Club report, “Toward the Great Ocean—5: From The Turn to the East to Greater Eurasia”. This report, compiled under the leadership of Sergey Karaganov, speaks of “Eurasia’s transformation into a world economic and political center”, with a prospective membership encompassing “East, Southeast and South Asian countries, central Eurasian countries, Russia, and ...increasingly countries in the European subcontinent and their associations.” [81, pp. 24-25]

The project of Greater Eurasia has also become synonymous with Moscow’s Turn to the East. Both initiatives are aimed at shifting Russia's foreign policy from its traditional Westerncentrism to closer interaction with Asia. Both challenge the primacy of a liberal world order. Both include a vision of Russia as an independent center of world power. And both projects are focused on Sino-Russian partnership.

In principle, the Turn to the East is more oriented to the Asia-Pacific region, while Greater Eurasia is primarily oriented to the post-Soviet space. But this difference has become blurred. China's expansion into Eurasia under the auspices of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); emphasis in Moscow on aspects of global governance of Greater Eurasia concept; and the definition of the United States stating that the differences between the two concepts are more theoretical than substantive.

Greater Eurasia, therefore, is at once a regional, extra-regional and global project. It is regional in the sense that it is a means of promoting Russian interests and influence throughout the post-Soviet space. This is an extra-regional project in the aspirations towards the Asia-Pacific region, South Asia and Europe. And it is global in that it envisages a recasting of the world order, from one dominated by the United States, to one in which Russia is a pivotal player—literally so since a Greater Eurasia-centered world would turn on the Russian axis.

2. Predecessors and prerequisites to Greater Eurasia

In addition to strategic foreign policy advantages, Russia's turn to the East, conceived in the second half of the 2000s in response to the rise of Asia, makes it possible to “transform the Trans-Urals, the Far East from a predominantly imperial burden — or the rear in confrontation with the West, sometimes the front in rivalry with Japan or China — into a potential development area for the whole country” [83]. It received an additional impetus due to the conflict with the West and successfully coincided with the new geo-economic initiatives of China [4, pp. 573–589], which proposed in 2013 a large-scale plan of cooperation under the flag of the revival of the Great Silk Road. The idea of connecting Europe and Asia by land routes, using the historical connotation with the Silk Road [10], gives the Chinese initiative a special tone, positioning China as a proactive player whose initiatives are aimed at positive changes in the region, and also indicates its desire to combine participation in initiative with national development priorities. The Chinese initiative, combining the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) and the 21st Century Sea Silk Road, the practical implementation of which since 2013 remains the subject of wide discussion not only within the China, but also beyond its borders, gradually began to take on a sharper outline. The institutional base was laid down for the project: in December 2014, the Silk Road Fund (\$ 40 billion) was launched, in December 2015 - the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank with a capital of \$ 100 billion. In May 2017, the first forum “One Belt, One Way” was held, which was attended by the heads of 29 states from Asia, Europe, Latin America (a total of about 100 countries were represented) [58]. In this sense, a positive perception of this initiative of Greater Eurasia in China facilitates further collaboration in the region. At the moment, the Russian turn to the East is developing in the framework of the Eurasian direction of the country's foreign policy. The Eurasian theme is present in all international forums and is a mandatory part of public speaking. It is noteworthy that the growing interest in this topic can be observed not only among Russian authors (in particular, on the example of B. Mações's reflections on the possibility of the formation of a Eurasian supercontinent [9]). Politically, the

evolution of the Eurasian concept, for Russia in the first place, has gone from the humble idea of pairing the Eurasian Economic Union and the Silk Road Economic Belt (2015) to the much larger strategy of the Greater Eurasian Partnership (GEP) [84]. Other countries in the region, including Kazakhstan's homeland of modern Eurasianism, are trying to single out precisely the pragmatic aspects of regional cooperation.

Moreover, the word "Russia" is the key word in the phrase "Russia's turn to the East" [89]. The growing attention of Russia to the eastern direction of its foreign policy is a logical consequence of a shift in the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region and increase in its economic and political significance on a global scale.

Russia has already begun to take advantage of the rise of Asia to balance the imbalance in favor of the long prevailing Western vector of foreign policy. So, A.S. Galushka noted that 26% of all came to Russia in 2017 Foreign investments were directed to the Far East: "The Far East as a whole showed an increase in investment of more than 17% in 2017, which amounted to 117.1%, when the average for Russia this indicator was 104.4%. In the Far East - the best indicator in the country. Moreover, of the 17% growth, more than half were investments by residents of the territories of advanced development and the free port, including foreign ones "[24]. More and more attention is being paid to building constructive relations with partners in Eurasia. The EAEU is the most important part of the Eurasian strategy of Russia. Recently, the ECE has developed a system of indicators showing the level of integration and also taking into account the UN SDG indicators. According to studies, the level of integration in the EAEU is second only to the EU, ahead of, in particular, MERCOSUR and ASEAN, whose history has more than 30 and 50 years, respectively. At the same time, the EAEU is not confined to itself, on the contrary, it seeks to build interaction with foreign states (among potential partners are Singapore, Iran, India, the Republic of Korea, Egypt, Israel, Serbia, etc.). In this sense, the experience of concluding the EAEU FTA with Vietnam reflects Russia's desire to diversify cooperation with Asian

partners. Despite the shortcomings, one can note the positive dynamics of trade: the trade between the EAEU countries and Vietnam since the agreement came into force - from October 2016 to June 2017 - increased by 11.8% compared to the same period in 2015-2016. [75]. In accordance with the agreement, states are obligated to reduce customs duties by 88% of goods; 59% of them were reduced immediately, the rest in 5–10 years.

Despite certain successes, Russia's turn to the East in the international community is still perceived ambiguously. In particular, J. Spanger notes that “with a delay of three years, Moscow followed Washington’s example and now“ steers ”towards Asia, but in fact towards China” [62]. At the same time, China is turning to the West [62]. The Russian initiative to create Greater Eurasia, which is seen as the main conceptual framework for promoting various cooperation projects in the region, is often criticized for the lack of specific content or a “roadmap” for its implementation: “Almost two years after the first reports about it in public space there was no program document or public speech at any high level, which would describe the specific content or at least the clear format of this new big idea” [43]. Thus, the concept of Greater Eurasia, despite the lack of objective historical conditions for its implementation, can become a rational practical embodiment of a wide range of development and security priorities for a wide group of countries in the region. The research problem is the lack of objective historical prerequisites for the creation of Greater Eurasia in the presence of a wide range of subjective reasons. The hypothesis of the study is that the concept of Greater Eurasia can be considered as a consolidating form of the new global strategy of Russia, on the basis of which the most important foreign policy priorities are determined.

In this regard, in this study it seems necessary to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the initiative to create Greater Eurasia, as well as possible formats for its further development (including taking into account the analysis of the EU experience as a case study).

In the context of the crisis of the Western model of the world, a number of non-Western centers of power offer their vision of a regional and international

order. The Chinese Belt and road initiative is valuable not only for the possibility of implementing specific projects, but also for its conceptual design (a historical link and a single framework for implementing regional initiatives). India, in turn, began to actively promote the concept of development of the Indo-Pacific region. Political regional initiatives also include the EAEU, the ASEAN General Interconnection and Exchange Program, the Steppe Route of Mongolia, the Bright Path of Kazakhstan, the Central Corridor of Turkey, the Amber Route of Poland, UK Northern Powerhouse, etc.

Such a wide variety of regional development programs, on the one hand, fills the gap in the global vacuum of ideas in the context of the crisis of the Western development model. At the same time, this process aggravates competition between various regional actors and actualizes the question of the future model of the world, the formats of interaction and the coexistence of various approaches to maintaining international stability. The development of the idea of Greater Eurasia is closely related to the described processes. Russian political exaltation around Eurasian themes is natural and explicable. It is seen by many as a manifestation of an attempt to break out of the historically established doom of the endless choice between Europe and “non-Europe,” respectively, the idea of Greater Eurasia is perceived as a kind of reincarnation of Greater Europe [87, pp. 61–63].

In addition, the states of Eurasia (and Russia is no exception) remain extremely susceptible to narratives introduced from outside [54, p. 191–199], often based on fairly pragmatic considerations and in search of a national good, but forgetting that due to the objective laws of international politics, for any extra-regional player, the fate of distant states is only a way to achieve their own national interests. Therefore, the Eurasian narrative is now perhaps one of the most “trashy” of ideas and geopolitical constructions introduced from outside.

The Greater Eurasian continent has always remained a concept, rather metaphysical than political or economic. The blurring of physical boundaries has historically been accompanied by the blurring of conceptual boundaries - the inability to define Eurasia as a unit on the political mental map. This is the most

important component of the “Eurasian curse” - the region’s inability to comprehend itself in the categories of common values, cooperation, and the common good and, as a result, to identify itself as an integral element of the world’s structure.

3. The agendas of Greater Eurasia

3.1 Economic sphere

At the most specific level, the Greater Eurasia venture is called upon to assist the diversification of Russia's foreign trade. This entails entry into Asian markets in areas where Russia has comparative advantages: weapons, energy and infrastructure, nuclear technology, food and water security. Moscow's logic is simple: most Asian economies are still developing, and Russia has the goods and services that they need. Such complementarity is not only mutually beneficial, but also potentially short-lived, given the rapid growth rates of many Asian economies. There are also additional benefits. If Russia can open up new markets, it will be less dependent on its traditional European trading partners and, therefore, will have a stronger negotiating position with them on a number of issues, both political and economic. Among other benefits, this will reinforce the idea that Western sanctions are no longer suitable for this purpose. [5, p. 35]

Moscow views Greater Eurasia as a means of positioning Russia in the center, or at least in the main direction, of expanding trade routes between Europe and Asia. Given how quickly BRI unfolds, it makes sense to connect Russia to this movement. This increases the chances of attracting significant direct investment for large projects such as Yamal LNG, in which the Beijing Silk Road Fund bought a 9.9% stake. Moscow is also interested in the main Eurasian transport routes passing through Russia, so that it is not marginalized as the BRI spreads. The promotion of Greater Eurasia is an attempt to seize the initiative, rather than remain a mere spectator of Chinese projects.

All this raises the question of Greater Eurasia as a geo-economic "space", an idea that borrows from the "common spaces" of the EU. Although Greater Eurasia is much less directive, it nevertheless supports the basic premise of the EU that a

single integrated trading space is inherently beneficial, with a multiplier effect for the economies of the participating countries. Moscow hopes that existing non-Western multilateral structures, such as the SCO, BRICS and the EAEU, can unite within the framework of Greater Eurasia to create “one powerful economic “engine”: an organization with a common economic zone ... a powerful economic union without equals in the world.” [35] Even if it is a highly optimistic vision does not come true, Russia would still have the feeling of being a leading member of the “emerging geoeconomic community”, which helps to protect it from the effects of globalization under the leadership of the West, and also increases its international respectability. [71, p. 4]

Finally, the vision of Greater Eurasia covers specific regional economic goals, such as the development of the Russian Far East (RFE). Moscow's opinion here has changed slightly since the 1990s. Today, as then, Russia considers the leading Asian economies as potential sources of unforeseen investments, which is the key to the revival of the region. And Moscow still believes in Special Economic Zones (now called Advanced Special Economic Zones – ASEZs), while promoting ambitious development plans. However, the wider context of Russian foreign policy has changed. The previous emphasis on cooperation with the West has given way to the Turn to the East, Greater Eurasia and the “strategic partnership” with China. Moscow believes that the prospects for using the economic dynamism of the Asia-Pacific region are now better than decades ago. The annual Eastern Economic Forum (EEF), which Putin has chaired since its founding in 2015, reflects this belief. Announcing that the RFE and Eastern Siberia are open for business, the Forum declares Moscow's full commitment to enhanced cooperation with Asia. [23]

3.2 The security aspect

Although comparatively little attention is paid to the development of Greater Eurasia as an exercise in the field of strengthening security, it is of particular importance for Moscow. This is partly due to concerns about various threats: the potential instability of the regime in the former Soviet Central Asia, the growth of

Islamic extremism and the consequences for the region as a result of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. Moscow is also preoccupied with information security issues and the hidden threat of mass democratic movements.

Nevertheless, the true significance of the security aspect in the framework of the Greater Eurasia project lies not so much in counteracting specific threats as in creating a more general framework - the "rules of the game" - to strengthen security. The security sector is that area in relations between Russia and China, where Moscow is undoubtedly a leading player and is likely to remain so for several more years. This is important not only in itself, but also from the point of view of a wider picture of Greater Eurasia and Russian foreign policy. Being able to have a title of the primary security provider allows Russia to position itself as an independent power, on the same level with China. [5, p. 30] Consequently, much is said about the "division of labor", in which China places emphasis on trade and economic development, and Russia cares about security both at its own expense and through mechanisms such as the CSTO. The "division of labor" sends a message that the Sino-Russian partnership is a mutually beneficial relationship between equals, albeit with different advantages, and gives weight to the idea of «win-win» relations within Greater Eurasia.

Moscow is very actively promoting the powers of Russia to ensure local security. This greatly expanded the capabilities of the Russian armed forces thanks to a comprehensive and sustainable military modernization program. The consequences of this were underlined by the success of Russian armed operations in Ukraine and the Middle East. Moscow, to the shock and confusion of the West, has shown that it is ready and able to use force to achieve its goals. The demonstration effect extends to Eurasia. As one commentator said, "Russia's contribution to the fight against Islamic terrorist networks and the liberation of parts of Syria and Iraq can be seen as a kind of test for the role of sheriff in the Greater Eurasia." [50]

The military potential of Russia was further recognized thanks to its active participation in various large-scale exercises: the annual naval operations "Joint

Sea" with the Chinese; series "Peace Mission" in the framework of the SCO; and, most strikingly, Vostok-2018, the largest Russian teaching in almost four decades. [80] Such demonstrations serve several purposes. They reflect the Kremlin's narrative of Russia as a resurgent, confident, and decisive world power. They make the West nervous - a reaction that Moscow finds pleasant at a time when relations are very difficult. And they remind Russia's neighbors - both large ambitious powers such as China and the former Soviet republics - that it still leads Central Eurasia when it comes to military power.

However, Moscow recognizes that playing the role of a major security provider cannot rely solely on hard power, but must be complemented by "softer" means. Russia stepped up high-level military exchanges with China, increased arms sales to Asian markets, and strengthened its base in Central Asia. It also took a more flexible approach to organizations such as the SCO. For a long time, Moscow was ambivalent towards this organization: on the one hand, hoping that it could become counter-NATO; on the other hand, fearing that the Chinese would use it as a Trojan horse to expand their influence in Central Asia at the expense of Russia.

Recently, however, it has begun to focus on how the SCO can be credited to serve the Greater Eurasia project. As one of the architects of the latter, Timofei Bordachev, notes, "The SCO...is being "reset" as a large-scale Eurasian organization focused on macro-regional development, rather than a narrow regional organization." [90] Similarly, scientist Dmitry Efremenko believes that "the SCO could act as an incubator for a wide range of agreements and initiatives," which over time could form the basis of the "community of Greater Eurasia." Although such ideas are still emerging, they nevertheless testify to a more confident attitude towards strengthening security in Eurasia and Russia's role in this. Whether through projection of hard power, arms sales, defense ties or regional multilateralism Greater Eurasia is designed to convey the image of a prosperous and increasingly capable Russia. [51]

3.3 The ideological aspect

It is often claimed that Russian foreign policy is not ideological, but “pragmatic.” In fact, this statement does not reflect the state of affairs in this particular aspect. Thus, Valdai’s 2017 report “From Turn to the East to Greater Eurasia” describes Greater Eurasia as “framework for geopolitical, geoeconomic and geoideological thinking”. [5, p. 24] The main author of this report, Sergey Karaganov, is even more unequivocal in other places. In an article entitled “Russia's Victory, new Concert of Nations,” he quotes Greater Eurasia in support of his thesis that “authoritarian countries with their managed incomplete democracies can be better prepared to compete and govern in the growingly volatile world.” He further claims that “Russia ... has placed itself on the “right side of history”, emphasizing not postmodern, but modern or post-post-modern values: national sovereignty, freedom of political and cultural choice for all countries and peoples, personal and national dignity ...- old human values." [85]

From this point of view, Greater Eurasia embodies a new ideological struggle against Western universalism and globalization, advocating what has been described as “positive authoritarianism”. Ironically, this point of view tends to support the fashionable view of the United States on Sino-Russian partnership as an authoritarian arrangement aimed at undermining the interests of US and the liberal world order.

Much of the ideology surrounding the concept of Greater Eurasia is more presentation than inspirational. This provides the appearance of a cultural-civilizational unity of what is actually the sum of ideas, few of which were duly thought out. But Karaganov’s comments also reflect the deep sentiments of Putin’s elite. Many of them consider pragmatic authoritarianism more suitable than democracy, taking into account the history of Russia and the “special” characteristics. They remain ideologically and geopolitically opposed to the liberal world order - the opposition, which finds a natural home in the idealized vision of Greater Eurasia with its own norms and values.

However, this vision is completely different from the mystical and often racist neo-Eurasianism promoted by people like Lev Gumilev (1912-92) and later Alexander Dugin. Instead of looking back at the mystical (and mythical) Russian past, today's edition of Greater Eurasia is about embodying the emerging post-Western and post-liberal regulatory consensus.

3.4 A new world order ambitions

According to some Russian scientists, Greater Eurasia is the basis of a new fairer world orders instead the old almost destroyed one. [82] There is a question which follows the Greater Eurasia concept: why would Russia go down this path and not rely on the BRICS framework, which already exists more than ten years and which Russia has done more than any other side for development?

On the one hand, the emphasis on Greater Eurasia does not imply a rejection of the BRICS. The more non-Western structures and mechanisms there are, the higher the chances of building a post-American world order. Greater Eurasia is just one of many components of a multidimensional approach to global governance.

Secondly, the narrower task of Greater Eurasia contributes to a more focused and unified approach to global issues. BRICS is a geographically and politically fragmented body, a factor that greatly limited its effectiveness, much to Moscow's dismay. For example, India's presence prevented an agreement on "information security" and Internet regulation, and China's support for Pakistan ensured that there was no significant consensus on counter-terrorism. More generally, Sino-Indian strategic tensions and India's close ties with US mean that the BRICS will not come close to becoming the basis of an alternative world order, as Moscow had originally hoped.

Greater Eurasia is largely free from such restrictions. Focused on Sino-Russian partnerships, it creates a more convincing impression of a common goal. Therefore, it seems to have better prospects than a body whose members have completely different points of view and priorities. BRICS cannot have a "geo-ideological" community as it currently exists, while the developing Greater Eurasia

offers at least a sporting chance for some kind of authoritarian consensus. [63, p. 27]

4. Challenges on the way of Greater Eurasia

4.1 Competing interests of state-actors

“The most significant obstacle to the success of the grandiose project of Moscow arises from the different and often competing interests of other actors”. [63, p. 29] Although the Russia speaks of rapprochement, Greater Eurasia is a field that is more disaggregated than ever.

China: The Sino-Russian partnership is closer and more significant than ever. However, there are areas where the two sides diverge substantially. One of them is in their view of the concept of Greater Eurasia and how it should be implemented. It is easy enough to agree that Eurasian cooperation is desirable; it is much more difficult to establish the basis on which this can be implemented. The Chinese view Greater Eurasia primarily as a means of expanding economic ties, which is part of their greater commitment to globalization under Chinese conditions. Beijing's approach reflects an ambitious and confident worldview. The Eurasian continent is an “open” territory, ready for development by any party that has the means and the desire to complete the task. In practice, this means the dominant role of China as a leading economic power in Eurasia.

The Kremlin's agenda is remarkably different from Beijing's. Moscow is not interested in opening Eurasia to other major players, with the exception of very narrow and privileged conditions (for example, foreign direct investment in Russia). It was hard enough to stop China's economic growth and limit the sovereign aspirations of the former Soviet republics. But the emergence of a more volatile and competitive strategic environment in Eurasia is one more obstacle for Moscow. Instead, its priority is to manage Greater Eurasia in such a way that it becomes, if not the exclusive Russian space, then at least at the head and direction of Russia and China. That is why the previously mentioned “division of labor” is so important. According to such an agreement, Moscow can rationalize China's economic superiority by pretending to be offset by Russia's superiority in regional

political and security matters. Such an illusion, however, is unlikely to be sustainable if Great Eurasia, however defined, becomes free for all.

The Beijing Unification Agenda may, in certain circumstances, support Russia's interests. In the end, there is a long tradition of turning Russia into an economic and civilizational bridge between Europe and Asia. But in reality, everything is not so simple. It is important to note that there is no single “Silk Road”, but there are several routes, of which the one that passes through Russia (the China-Mongolia-Russia economic corridor) is by no means the most important. The danger is that as the Belt and Road Initiative unfolds, Russia may become increasingly marginalized, a B-road along the Chinese road to the west. It is also doubtful that it would be simple transit country. [51] In general, Russia is not ready for an “open liberal trading environment” in Eurasia, as stated in the 2017 Valdai report. Such a result would be good for Chinese manufacturing exporters, but would risk provoking an internal reaction from Russian manufacturers trying to counter foreign competition.

In addition, there is a gap between the ideas of Russia and China about the place of Greater Eurasia in global governance. The Kremlin sees in Greater Eurasia the basis of an alternative, post-Western international order. Beijing, however, seeks to preserve the existing international system in one form or another, even in the face of the aggravation of political and trade tensions in relations with US. Russian politicians and thinkers emphasize the role of Greater Eurasia in terms of global geopolitical shifts, while their Chinese colleagues attach much more importance primarily to the economic goals of connecting and developing infrastructure.

These divergences directly affect Sino-Russian cooperation in Eurasia. For example, the widely publicized agreement in May 2015 between the EAEU and the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) reached very little, and the Chinese rejected a number of project proposals from the EAEU because of commercial insolvency. [39] The only signal of success, the Silk Road Fund's purchase of a 9.9 percent stake in the Yamal LNG project, had little in common with Greater Eurasia as

such. It was an investment designed to strengthen China's position in the Russian energy sector and in the Arctic, as well as secure the support of Putin by supporting his closest partners. In other words, it was a two-way, even personalized deal, and not a product of a common transcontinental vision. [39]

Moscow and Beijing did not allow differences in approaches to Greater Eurasia to spoil their relationship. As noted by Kaczmarek, the Chinese have shown "strategic self-restraint," demonstrated "respect" for the Kremlin's idea of Greater Eurasia, and expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the Sino-Russian partnership is equal. [71, p. 5] But it is evident that can both sides suspend mistrust about the erosion of the "division of labor". It is crazy to imagine a continuing clear-cut distinction between economic dominance and geopolitical primacy, or a future in which Beijing is only concerned with making money, and not with the wider consequences of its economic recovery. Until now, Moscow has calmly reacted to China's growing presence in the political and security fields in Eurasia, a striking example of which is the four-way mechanism of cooperation and coordination with Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. But sooner or later China will move from these humble beginnings to a more ambitious and multifaceted role in Eurasian affairs. Russia most likely will not accept the position of passive acceptance.

It is significant that amid the public warmth of the Sino-Russian partnership, the establishment in Moscow, however, is worried about the future. Karaganov warns of the consequences of losing momentum in the Greater Eurasian Project: "Beijing is moving towards creating a Sinocentric system in Asia. We risk remaining on the periphery, albeit friendly, unless we propose our own ideas." It is interesting that he refers to several warnings, referring to the Sino-Russian partnership itself: "... if China does not embark on a path of hegemony, inherently built into the Middle Kingdom concept, but becomes first among equals in Greater Eurasia and immerses itself into its institutions, and remains committed to maintaining the state of equilibrium, [Russia and China] will keep up a close relationship..." This highly conditional statement reflects the view, more clearly

expressed two years earlier, that Russia should act as a “a friendly and constructive counterbalance to China to make sure it does not become ‘too strong’ or turn into a potential hegemon scaring its neighbors.” [84]

Other regional powers: China's growing opportunities and ambitions are the biggest challenge in the Kremlin vision of Greater Eurasia. However, the challenge facing Moscow is not to force China to the side road; other actors will also play influential roles, in particular regional powers such as India, Japan and the European Union.

India presents a particular problem in that there are no direct discord between Moscow and New Delhi. If the fate of Greater Eurasia depended solely on the state of Russian-Indian relations, the Kremlin would have good reasons for optimism. The difficulty, however, is that New Delhi is strongly opposed to the BRI, which it sees as an instrument of China’s strategic dominance over Eurasia and a threat to India’s main security interests in South Asia. [47] In particular, the Sino-Pakistan Economic Cooperation Corridor (CPEC), if fully implemented, could transform the geopolitics and geoeconomics of the subregion.

While Russia does not have a great influence in the CPEC, its paramount importance in the BRI has obvious significance for Greater Eurasia, which focuses on Sino-Russian partnerships. The Kremlin can hope to convince other parties that it will not promote Beijing's ambitions at their expense. But there is no clear way to demonstrate this, given the assertiveness of Xi Jinping’s foreign policy, the steady strategic tension between New Delhi and Beijing, and the warmth of US-Indian ties. Meanwhile, the entry of India and Pakistan into the SCO complicates efforts to use this organization as a coordination base for multilateral cooperation under Greater Eurasia.

Like India, Japan reveals a geopolitical interest in countering or containing the expansion of Chinese influence in Eurasia. Indeed, one of the main factors, prompted by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, to draw closer to the Kremlin in recent years was Russia's excommunication from China. However, Greater Eurasia intends to do the exact opposite - to strengthen the Sino-Russian partnership. Abe's

visit to China in October 2018, first Japan prime minister's visit in seven years, suggests that relations between Tokyo and Beijing could improve. But even if this positive trend continues - at best an uncertain prospect - it will not eliminate the broader logic of Japan's security alliance with the United States, Tokyo's suspicions about China's long-term intentions and discomfort due to the closeness of Sino-Russian relations. [60]

The ongoing crisis in Russia's relations with Europe means that Greater Eurasia is most likely not a supported idea in key countries such as France and Germany. Moscow's previous proposal to combine two integration projects, the EEU and the EU, provoked little positive response in Europe or even in Russia. In 2015, liberal commentator Vladislav Inozemtsev sharply remarked that "there is the EU with its order and there is the Eurasian New-Asia with its own. Only people with a vivid imagination could expect amazing results from a combination of order and chaos, the original and the forgery." [95] On the other hand, if the EU begins to break up in the coming years, as some experts predict, Russia is unlikely to find the EEU-EU integration attractive. It may be true that "Russia's grand Eurasia strategy would not be complete without the eventual rehabilitation of relations with Europe" [6], but such "rehabilitation" seems more unachievable than ever, considering the enlarging gap between Russia and the West. Once again, the China factor raises more worries. Europe's growing concern about the consequences of BRI for good governance is growing into considerable disbelief towards Greater Eurasia, based, according to many people, on authoritarian norms and ideas.

Former Soviet Republics: Difference to Russian view of Greater Eurasia is also evident among the former Soviet republics. Putin declares his common goal with leaders such as Nursultan Nazarbayev, former president of Kazakhstan, especially noting that the latter came up with the original idea of Eurasian integration back in 1994. Nevertheless, there is a gap between Nazarbayev's vision of post-Soviet integration and the Kremlin's Greater Eurasia project. The first is mainly determined by the economic agenda: to maintain existing trade relations with Russia (and other former Soviet republics), as well as significantly expand

cooperation with China, the leading Asian economies and Europe. On the contrary, Putin is much more interested in political integration, understood as a strict coordination of politics. However, the current president of Kazakhstan – Kasym-Zhomart Tokaev notes the positive perspectives of the project. During his first visit in Russia as a president he remarks that “the idea of Greater Eurasia - in the broad sense of the term - opens up horizons for enhancing the economic ties between Asia and Europe, and can also become the foundation for the formation of a new system of international relations in the Eurasian space. The processes taking place on our megacontinent, in my opinion, form new geopolitical realities”. [92] This puts him in line with Russian perception of Greater Eurasia, at least not at a completely different side. What reaps him apart from Russian view is that he emphasizes the existing frameworks for such a concept, especially SCO. [92]

4.2 Capacity Problem

Another no less serious obstacle to the creation of Greater Eurasia is the inadequacy of means that Russia holds. Once again, it has become a formidable military power and possesses the natural resources and goods (such as weapons) that other countries desire. However, it remains a weak force in other respects. It used the weaknesses of the world order led by the United States, but has not yet proved that it can become a reliable supplier of global goods in US place. Russia probably cannot compete with China and the EU in providing trade and financial incentives. A simple public appearance cannot compensate for a lack of substance, especially when the Beijing Belt and Road initiative is spreading in many directions.

The problems of the EEU illustrate the difficulties. Despite Russia's dominance in the organization and historical ties between its member states, trade within the EEU is modest and fragile - for example, the EEU accounts for only 8 percent of Russia's total trade. [21] Kazakhstan, the most significant member of the EEU after Russia, trades with the EU more than twice as much as with Russia, while Western countries prevail in its domestic investment flows. The reduction of the Russian economy in 2013, amid the annexation of Crimea by Moscow,

severely undermined the economic and political authority of Moscow-inspired integration projects.

In these conditions, Russia has limited opportunities. Conventional methods of political pressure, cultivating trans-elite interests, intimidation of Western liberal influences, or China's dominance are unlikely to work in the more complex context of Greater Eurasia. If Moscow cannot even drive out the weak former Soviet republics, it will not be able to recruit states that have a much larger sovereign choice. In the end, the EEU's inability to provide real benefits to Kazakhstan (in particular) is hardly a compelling advertisement for the virtues of Russia-led Greater Eurasia.

4.3 Turns in Russian vectors of politics

It is unclear how devoted Russia is to the implementation of the Greater Eurasia project. “This may be only the last in a long line of quasimultilateral enterprises - the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Customs Union, and the EAEU - whose main goal was to promote Russia as a dominant force in Eurasia. Such mechanisms are only valued as long as they serve this purpose and then discarded.” [63, p. 36] Elaborating the topic, at the start of his presidency Putin acknowledged that the CIS has “served its purpose”; soon after, it was marginalized, although formally it existed. Subsequently, the Customs Union became the flagship of Eurasian integration, but it also lost momentum and therefore was included in the EEU, which, in turn, may face a similar fate in relation to Greater Eurasia.

The prosperity of the Greater Eurasia enterprise will depend on the Kremlin's persistence in the face of the periodically conflicting agendas of other actors, the restrictions of the Russian government and the historical Westerncentrism of the Russian elite. On all these points there is room for serious doubt. Given the difficulties, Moscow may be tempted to manage the Greater Eurasia project in much the same way as it did in the BRICS, namely as a general structure in which the true emphasis is on managing key bilateral relations and counterweighing the West.

Continued Russia support for the Greater Eurasia project will depend on many factors: from the level of interest shown by other subjects of Eurasia to the state of relations between Russia and the West, in particular with Europe. Much will also depend on specific events, such as the flow - or lack of - of Asian investment in the Russian Far East. Whatever happens, the need for more details in the project is already obvious even to the loudest proponents of Greater Eurasia. Karaganov warned that this could “end up in much the same way as many of our other undertakings have, such as the initiatives to turn the OSCE into a pan-European security system and sign a European security treaty.” [84]

Conclusion to the first chapter

There are a lot of things that need to be considered while speaking about Greater Eurasia concept and its feasibility. In order to understand what rational foundations it can be built on, it is needed to study its past, find ideas and narratives in the region that cannot divide but unite the peoples of macroregion, evaluate the development goals of the Eurasian peoples, understand where they intersect, where they can come into conflict with each other and need to be coordinated, and where they complement each other, and also highlight those goals that can be achieved jointly, with coordination of efforts at the interstate level.

It is necessary to study modern types of collective security systems and understand what experience is most applicable to modern Eurasia. It is necessary to try to determine the set of basic values of internal structure and international communication shared by all the peoples of the region. Among them, it is especially important to identify those values that may play a future role in the spiritual and value cohesion of the Eurasian peoples - in creating their collective identification.

It is generally necessary to assess the degree of applicability of the most well-established concepts and rules of international communication to the Eurasian political and cultural environment, to understand how these concepts and rules are refracted in Eurasian conditions. The most effective mechanisms and ways of cooperation arose on the western periphery of Eurasia - in Europe, where they are

based on a different political tradition. The tradition of cooperation - as a result of rational choice - can and should be applicable in Eurasian conditions, but it should not only be introduced from outside, but rethought under new acceptable conditions.

It is necessary to look at the strategic prospects and motivation of each of the most important Eurasian players. China is the largest Eurasian state. It is almost self-sufficient due to its unique demography and economic power and, at first glance, does not need to merge into wider communities. But even China cannot return to the policy of closeness and, in fact, desires to be global player (on Chinese conditions). Russia also due to its demography and other obstacles cannot be self-sufficient and therefore must create international communities, the rules of communication within which will be more advanced and whose participants will be able to share a set of common values. The states of Central Asia, like Mongolia, are trying to formulate their development goals based on the need to preserve themselves as independent and existing units of international relations. They are trying to bet on interaction with large regional and extra-regional players, to balance their powerful neighbors. As for the functioning of institutions in Greater Eurasia (in particular, the EAEU), it is necessary to create optimal conditions for effective intergovernmental interaction.

Departing from analysis of Greater Eurasia concept, this research narrows down its agenda from to-be-all-aspect description to the projects of Russian oil and gas companies and their impact on the feasibility of the concept.

Chapter 2. Energy security. Russian oil and gas companies' projects within the frame of Greater Eurasia

The possession of powerful hydrocarbon resources, sufficient to cover their own needs and large supplies abroad, brings income to the oil and natural gas exporting countries to set and solve important economic, social and political problems. Such opportunities especially increase during periods of favorable conjuncture of world prices. Many suppliers to the world oil and gas market, through foreign exchange earnings from their exports, make significant investments in the economy, demonstrating phenomenal development dynamics.

Within the frame of Greater Eurasia, Russia stands out with its enormous reserves of hydrocarbon resources. It is important to understand the vectors for future analysis of influence which Russian oil and gas companies hold in the region reviewing the industry as a whole and projects in particular.

1. Energy security of Greater Eurasia

For understanding of the trends in dealing with energy sector of a country it is important to understand its viewpoint on energy security. Basically in the strategies that defend the countries' on the energy front can be seen the level of dependence of the state from hydrocarbons be it an importing or an exporting player.

In its most general form, the problem of energy security is predetermined by the uneven distribution of natural fuel and energy resources across the Earth and the territorial mismatch of the main energy-consuming and energy-producing countries and regions in the specific socio-economic conditions of human development. This leads to the scarcity of a country (territory) in fuel and energy and its dependence on countries or regions exporting energy resources.

In recent years, under the influence of globalization, a new technological revolution and changes in the socio-political situation in the world, energy security has acquired a new – global – dimension and has become one of the most relevant components of global security. At the same time, the content of the concept of “energy security” began to change, which expanded significantly, since energy

aspects permeate almost all aspects of human activity, and includes security in the political, environmental and infrastructural fields and even the problems of terrorism and climate change, which is, in the opinion a number of specialists, a kind of “public good” [46] [67]. Moreover, according to the IEA, the problem of energy security is no longer the lack of energy resources as such, but the provision of access to these resources. Accordingly, from this follows the intensification of world competition for the rights and conditions of this access.

There are several reasons for changing the approach to energy security: political instability in certain regions of the planet, lack of universally recognized regulatory international legal mechanisms, imperfect infrastructure and one-sided geography of pipeline routes with an underdeveloped system of maritime transportation of natural gas in an environment where gas is becoming increasingly important in energy supply of humanity. Moreover, today the problems of national, regional, and global energy security are becoming more complicated: competition for access to energy resources is tightening; state regulation and control are strengthening both on energy markets and energy transportation routes, and the degree of inadequate response to threats to energy security by some governments developed countries, primarily the USA [61, pp. 20-37].

This “revision” of the concept of global energy security is also based on the turning point in energy philosophy, which has led to dramatic changes in the geopolitical situation in the world and the transition from a policy of international energy cooperation to a policy of energy self-sufficiency of the main (or many) consumer countries. Thus, the problem of global energy security, which was on the agenda of the Group of Eight Summit in St. Petersburg back in 2006, clearly faded into the background. At the same time, energy security began to act both as a technical and as an economic, political and philosophical category.

Comprehensive consideration of energy security issues during the formation of Greater Eurasia seems especially necessary due to the fact that at present in different parts of Eurasia the problem of energy security is understood and interpreted in different ways. And these differences are caused not only by the fact

that with respect to energy resources, some countries act as their exporters and others as importers. The nature of understanding the problem is influenced by many factors, including the fact that in modern conditions, as noted above, the concept of "energy security" has expanded significantly. Moreover, at present, such basic structures of the future Greater Eurasia as the EAEU and the SCO do not have an official position on ensuring energy security.

In the western part of Eurasia, in the EU and other European countries-importers of energy resources, energy security is understood, first of all, as an uninterrupted and stable supply of energy resources for the needs of their economies. Moreover, from the point of view of general conceptual approaches, American and European views on energy security are similar. American and European documents formulate the ambitious goal of drastically reducing hydrocarbon dependence and building a long-term hydrocarbon-free economy. In the medium term, the following tasks are set: to expand access to hydrocarbons and the geography of their supplies; contribute to an increase in hydrocarbon production and the introduction of the maximum amount to the market; disseminate energy-saving technologies in the world. The initial premise of American and European politicians is to reduce dependence on hydrocarbon suppliers and have a wide geography of supplies [67]

The EU countries have traditionally considered the main threats to their energy security to be significant dependence on energy imports, as well as high oil prices and their fluctuations. Accordingly, the necessary conditions for ensuring energy security were called “predictable and stable [political] regimes [in energy exporting countries], a stable and clear tax system”, and the absence of “unfair administrative barriers”. From this understanding, security measures also ensued: to open the markets of resource countries for investment, remove any restrictions on the export of energy resources, provide complete information on oil reserves, and make transparent the process of managing state revenues from the sale of energy resources [3]. At the same time, the process of realizing that the solution to the problem of energy security was on the path of economic cooperation.

In general, over the past 20 years, the main directions of the EU energy security strategy have been the development of the domestic energy market and energy efficiency, the increase in national production of renewable energy and diversification of energy supplies.

However, after the “first Russian-Ukrainian gas war” (2006), dependence on Russian energy supplies, especially natural gas, became more and more considered the main threat to the EU’s energy security. After the crisis and the coup d'etat of 2014 in Ukraine and a new round of tension in relations with Russia, the thesis about the need to diversify gas supplies and reduce dependence on Russia sounded with renewed vigor. Moreover, there are three diversification strategies: diversification of imported natural gas sources, diversification of natural gas supply routes and diversification of energy sources as such [49]. To develop the thesis on diversification, the idea of creating the EU Energy Union was put forward, implying that its members (EU countries) will negotiate with energy suppliers as a single block.

In the eastern part of Eurasia, the picture with energy security is heterogeneous. Thus, OECD countries (in particular, R. Korea and Japan) mainly interpret energy security problems and measures to ensure it in the same way as the EU and the USA. In particular, there is also a growing understanding that the global threat to energy security is the excessive consumption of energy-intensive material goods, leading to an unreasonable increase in demand for energy resources. However, the main energy resource that can ensure the non-volatility in Korea and Japan is considered to be not renewable energy source, but gas hydrates [7]. It is also reasonable to note that in terms of ensuring energy security, these countries are oriented, first of all, towards cooperation not with the neighboring states of Northeast Asia, but with the USA and Canada [61].

Almost completely dependent on the external resources of hydrocarbons, the OECD Asian countries are making great efforts both to diversify the sources of imported oil and gas, which opens up additional opportunities for the development of energy cooperation between these countries and Russia, as well as for the

development of appropriate infrastructure. The latter becomes particularly relevant with increasing imports of liquefied natural gas and trends towards a convergence of gas prices in its main regional markets. [Appendix 1]

The above said shows that in recent years there has been not only a significant drop in LNG prices while maintaining their rather high volatility, but also the loss of the “premium” label by the gas market of Northeast Asia. Understanding the need for a price index that is relevant to the Asian market, the leadership and business of many countries in the region, including China, Indonesia, etc., are working on creating their own gas hubs. In the near future, these measures can not only provide greater flexibility of contracts in the interests of consumers and producers, but also increase the reliability of LNG supplies.

Developing Asian countries, consumers of energy resources, especially the poorest, need access to relatively cheap energy, they need confidence that the world's oil and gas production will grow, and they can always purchase them in the required quantities. Moreover, for those of them that have entered the phase of catch-up development, primarily for China and India, a shortage of energy resources can erase the very prospect of economic growth and the achievement of at least a minimum level of well-being for their population. Hence their desire to quickly adapt to a new dependence on world energy markets, which indicates a departure from the previous desire for self-sufficiency. There is also a growing understanding that the global energy security threat is the low energy efficiency of their economies. Accordingly, such countries see the solution to their energy security problems, first of all, in international energy cooperation, which provides them not only with direct access to energy resources, but also with technologies that make it possible to involve local non-traditional energy sources in operation.

In particular, China began to pay great attention to ensuring energy security in recent decades, since the most serious structural problems of Chinese energy are the predominance of coal in energy consumption (70%) and dependence on external hydrocarbon supplies. So, in 2016, China's dependence on imported oil reached 65% (in 2000 - 32%, in 2005 - 41%, in 2010 - 55%, in 2015 - 60.6%).

Significant dependence of China is also observed on imports of natural gas, which amounted to 32.2% in 2014, and in mid-2016 - over 35% [17].

Based on the existing and predicted threats in the energy sector, the State Council of the PRC in 2004 adopted a “Plan for the Long-Term Development of the Energy Sector”, designed for 20 years. The plan contains five key strategic objectives, one of which is ensuring energy security. And by 2010, China had formulated the main tasks of internal and external energy policy, which remain relevant to the present. Among the main tasks of foreign energy policy is the diversification of energy cooperation and the search for new markets; safety of transportation of imported energy resources; attracting foreign investment in the development of Chinese energy; cooperation with other countries to create and implement advanced energy technologies; diversification of imported types of energy, etc. In order to implement the strategy for ensuring the country's energy security, the Chinese leadership seeks to use the full range of economic and political instruments. Since the mid-1990s, following the example of the United States and several European countries, the PRC government began to discuss the possibility of forming strategic oil reserves. However, practical work in this area came to the fore only in 2002 after the invasion of US troops in Iraq. Somewhat later, \$ 1.6 billion was allocated from the state budget for these purposes and the work “began to boil”: in 2004, the construction of the first strategic oil reserves was launched in the provinces of Liaoning, Shandong and Zhejiang. It was planned to complete these works by 2020, bringing the storage capacity to 720 million barrels. oil, which is equivalent to the volume of its imports for 90 days. Currently, according to ICIS estimates, storage capacity is about 683 million barrels. [13]

An important mechanism for ensuring security, establishing close political contacts with the countries of Central Asia, and, in particular, implementing the strategy of its own energy supply in the region, has become the Shanghai Cooperation Organization for China. And, of course, a special place in China's foreign economic policy in recent years has been occupied by the Silk Road Economic Belt project, recently renamed the One Belt - One Road project [17].

Energy exporting countries and, most of all, Middle East countries, which also need stable and predictable energy markets, need stable and/or predictable energy prices that ensure their efficient export, are interested in increased oil and gas production and high prices for them. However, the inconsistency and a certain duality of the positions of the EU and other OECD countries on energy security [67, pp. 20-37] is also visible in their approach to the energy policy of oil and gas exporting countries. Thus, speaking in words about the recognition of the interdependence of producers and consumers of energy resources, against the use of energy as an instrument of political blackmail, both the EU and the IEA obstruct all that is connected with the so-called “gas OPEC”. For example, on the eve of the Ministerial Conference of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) of the 14 GECF member countries, which was held in Doha, Qatar on April 9-10, 2007, another wave of condemnation of the energy policy of world energy exporters was raised in the world [44].

In Russia, based on the fact that energy security is an essential component of the entire energy policy and national security of the leading states of the world, they share the generally accepted understanding of this security as a reliable and uninterrupted supply of fuel and energy to consumers in the required volumes and quality at economically reasonable prices. However, in recent years there has been a certain refinement of the very concept of "energy security". So, in the Energy Strategy of Russia for the period until 2030 (ES-2030), adopted in November 2009, energy security is defined as “the state of protection of the country, its citizens, society, the state, the economy from threats to reliable fuel and energy supply”. A few years ago, in the Energy Strategy for the period until 2020, energy security was understood as “... full and reliable provision of the population and the country's economy with energy resources at affordable and at the same time stimulating energy saving prices, reducing risks and preventing the development of crisis situations in the country's energy supply” [1], [2].

At the same time, Russia believes that one of the most important components of energy security is a fair sharing of risks between all participants in

the energy chain, a balance of interests not only of producers and consumers of energy resources, but also of transit countries. Such a balance of interests is ensured by the energy security model based on the principles of interdependence and interpenetration. This model, implemented through the mutual exchange of assets, has established itself well in relations with European, especially German, partners in the gas industry, with whom strategic cooperation has been linked to Russia for many decades.

The long-term goal of Russia's energy policy is to maintain a balance with all the main geopolitical centers of power: Europe, China and the USA, and to develop cooperation with them. This principle of Russia's energy policy reflects its role as a central Eurasian power in the subcontinent, affecting, not least, the sustainable development of mankind. Russia sees its task not in contrasting cooperation with Europe to cooperation with Asia, but in manifesting its special role on the continent, due to its geographic location and energy potential, the historical mentality of the peoples inhabiting the country.

As was noted above, experience in solving energy security problems in the EU, the USA, and other countries and regions of the world shows that energy security is a global problem, that it is impossible to solve it not only on the one-sided, but even on the bilateral basis. And since humanity in the 21st century lives in a globally interdependent world, the energy security system is designed to ensure the reliability of energy supplies in the common interests of the global economy, and each country, and consumers, and energy producers. Moreover, this system should be transparent, based on international law and a responsible policy regarding the supply and demand of energy resources. Achieving this “quota” of energy security requirements within the Greater Eurasia frame can help to push forward the concept as a whole. In this sense it is important to research oil and gas projects of the one of the biggest players on the market – Russia.

2. Projects of Russian oil and gas companies in the framework of Greater Eurasia energy security

2.1 European projects

Europe is highly dependent on energy import from third parties. “For its own consumption, the EU also needs energy which is imported from third countries. In 2018, the main imported energy product was petroleum products (including crude oil, which is the main component), accounting for almost two thirds of energy imports into the EU, followed by gas (24 %) and solid fossil fuels (8 %). Russia is the main EU supplier of crude oil, natural gas and solid fossil fuels. The stability of the EU’s energy supply may be threatened if a high proportion of imports are concentrated among relatively few external partners. In 2018, almost two thirds of the extra-EU’s crude oil imports came from Russia (30 %), Iraq (9 %) and Saudi Arabia, Norway, Kazakhstan and Nigeria (7 % each). A similar analysis shows that almost three quarters of the EU’s imports of natural gas came from Russia (40 %), Norway (18 %) and Algeria (11 %), while almost three quarters of solid fuel (mostly coal) imports originated from Russia (42 %), the United States (18 %) and Colombia (13 %).” [33]

In the same sense as Europe is dependent on Russian energy, Moscow is dependent on revenues from successful supplies of gas and oil to its partners. This interdependency is the cornerstone of the success of projects be it a new pipeline infrastructure construction or regular supplies.

Remarks: for the purpose of research joint projects with Turkey will also be included in this section as they fall in the frame of Greater Eurasia. The effects of the projects will be analyzed in chapter 3 of this paper.

Yamal-Europe pipeline

The transnational gas pipeline Yamal - Europe runs through four countries - Russia, Belarus, Poland and Germany. The new export corridor has increased the flexibility and reliability of Russian gas supplies to Western Europe. The European Union has classified the Yamal-Europe project as a priority investment project implemented within the Trans-European Network (TEN, Trans-European Networks).

The construction of the gas pipeline began in 1994, and with the commissioning of the last compressor station in 2006, the Yamal-Europe gas

pipeline reached its design capacity of 32.9 billion cubic meters. m per year. The number of compressor stations on the gas pipeline is 14, the diameter of the pipes is 1420 mm, and the total length is more than 2 thousand km.

The main line originates from the Torzhok gas transmission hub in the Tver region, where it receives gas from the Northern Regions of the Tyumen Region (SRTO) - Torzhok gas pipeline. The Russian section is 402 km long with three compressor stations: Rzhevskaya, Kholm-Zhirkovskaya and Smolenskaya. 575 km of the gas pipeline pass through Belarus, 5 compressor stations have been built here: Nesvizhskaya, Krupskaya, Slonimskaya, Minskaya and Orshanskaya. Gazprom is the sole owner of the Belarusian section of the gas pipeline. The Polish section includes 683 km of the linear part and 5 compressor stations: Chehanuv, Shamotuly, Zambrow, Wloclawek, Kondratki. The Polish section of the gas pipeline is owned by EuRoPol Gaz. The westernmost point of the gas pipeline is the Malnov compressor station in the Frankfurt an der Oder region near the German-Polish border, where the gas pipeline connects to the YAGAL-Nord gas transmission system, which, in turn, connects it to the STEGAL-MIDAL-UGS gas transmission system Reden. The German section of the pipeline is owned by WINGAS. [38] [Appendix 2]

Nord stream

Nord Stream is an export gas pipeline from Russia to Europe through the Baltic Sea. It directly connects Gazprom and European consumers, bypassing transit states. Nord Stream ensures high reliability of Russian gas supplies to Europe.

In December 2000, by the decision of the European Commission, the Nord Stream project was given the status of TEN (Trans-European Networks), which was confirmed in 2006. This means that Nord Stream is key to ensuring the sustainable development and energy security of Europe. In April 2010, construction of the Nord Stream gas pipeline began in the Baltic Sea. In November 2011, the first string of the Nord Stream was put into operation; in October 2012, the second string. [26] [Appendix 3]

Prior to the EU decision to expand Gazprom's access to the German OPAL gas pipeline system in 2015, it was connected only to the OPAL line leading to the Czech Republic; at the same time, approximately half (25 billion m³ / year) of the design capacity of the gas pipeline is used, which is divided equally between consumers in Germany and the Czech Republic. On September 4, 2015 Gazprom, BASF, ENGIE, E.On, Shell, and OMV, as co-founders, signed an agreement to expand the Nord Stream capacities (the Nord Stream-2 project). [70] This project provides for the construction of two more pipelines of the gas pipeline, which will increase the full capacity of the existing Nord Stream by 2 times. Germany and Russia are trying to remove the OPAL gas pipeline from the EU's Third Energy Package, according to which 50% of the gas pipeline should belong to third parties, to which Russia fundamentally, he cannot agree because Gazprom is the only natural supplier of the Nord Stream gas pipeline, which in turn fills OPAL. Efficient use of OPAL capacities would mean a decrease in the role of Ukraine as a transit country, and the commissioning of the Nord Stream 2 and Turkish Stream pipelines would mean a complete cessation of transit through its territory. On October 28, 2016, information appeared on the achievement of a solution to this issue in favor of the withdrawal of the OPAL gas pipeline from under the norms of the third energy package until 2033. On December 23, 2016, the European Court suspended the decision of the European Commission on the access of Russian Gazprom to the OPAL pipeline, as an interim measure for the period of the trial. The decision was made at the suit of the Polish company PGNiG and the Polish government. In June 2017, the European Court refused to admit Gazprom as a third party in the case, and in July of the same year removed the interim measure established on December 23, 2016. On August 3, 2017, it was reported that after the ban on the use of 40% of the OPAL pipeline's capacities was lifted, Gazprom increased transit through it, the pipeline load increased by more than a quarter due to a reduction in gas transit through Ukraine. On September 10, 2019, the European Court overturned the decision of the European Commission on a change

in the use of the OPAL gas pipeline as adopted in violation of the principle of energy solidarity. [53]

Nord stream 2

Nord Stream 2 is a new gas export pipeline from Russia to Europe via the Baltic Sea. The decision to create the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline is based on successful experience in the construction and operation of the Nord Stream gas pipeline. The new gas pipeline, as well as the existing one, will directly connect Gazprom and European consumers and ensure high reliability of Russian gas supplies to Europe.

This is especially important in the face of falling gas production in Europe and growing demand for its imports. The Nord Stream 2 project is implemented by the Nord Stream 2 AG project company. The entry point of the Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline to the Baltic Sea will be the Ust-Luga region of the Leningrad Region, and then the gas pipeline will pass along the bottom of the Baltic Sea and will reach Germany in the Greifswald area, not far from the Nord Stream exit point. [A The length of the route is more than 1200 km. The total capacity of the two Nord Stream 2 strings is 55 billion cubic meters. m of gas per year. Thus, the total design capacity of Nord Stream and Nord Stream 2 is 110 billion cubic meters. m of gas per year.

In October 2012, Nord Stream shareholders reviewed the preliminary results of a feasibility study on the construction of the third and fourth pipelines and decided that their construction was economically feasible and technically feasible. Later, the project for the construction of the third and fourth threads was called “Nord Stream - 2”. [31] [Appendix 3]

In April 2017, Nord Stream 2 AG signed an agreement with ENGIE, OMV, Royal Dutch Shell, Uniper and Wintershall to finance the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project. Five European companies will provide long-term financing in the amount of 50% of the total project cost. In September 2018, the laying of a gas pipeline in the Baltic Sea began. Pipe laying was planned to be completed no later than the fourth quarter of 2019. These plans could not be implemented in

connection with the position of Denmark, which did not give permission to lay the pipeline through its exclusive economic zone. In December 2019, the construction of the submarine pipeline, with a readiness of 93.5%, was suspended due to U.S. sanctions.

Although foreign partners verbally support Nord Stream 2, which has come under American sanctions, Russia will have to complete the gas pipeline on its own, without foreign partners. Russia has two pipe-laying vessels at its disposal: the first is a large Fortuna pipe-laying barge owned by Mezhrefiontruboprovodstroy OJSC (which, however, does not have a dynamic positioning system and, due to technical restrictions, cannot lay more than 1.5 km of pipes per day) and the second is the Akademik Chersky pipe-laying vessel, owned by Gazprom, which was involved in the Sea of Okhotsk at the time of the imposition of sanctions. In January 2020, Russian President Vladimir Putin, following talks with Angela Merkel, expressed the hope that work would be completed by the end of 2020 or in the first quarter of 2021 and the gas pipeline would work [66].

Despite the incompleteness of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, from January 1, 2020, Russian gas went along the first line of the EUGAL gas pipeline (it is a continuation of Nord Stream 2 through the territory of Germany to the Czech border, was commissioned at the end of 2019) ; this gas comes from the existing Nord Stream [55].

Nord Stream 2 is facing new challenges, now in Germany. On Friday, May 15, the Federal Networks Agency (Bundesnetzagentur) refused to allow Nord Stream 2 AG, the project operator, to exempt the gas pipeline under construction from complying with the EU Third Energy Package. The EU Gas Directive (part of the Third Energy Package) provides for the exemption from its rules of gas pipelines from third countries that were “ready” on May 23, 2019. Since Nord Stream-2 was not completely laid at that time, the German Federal Network Agency rejected Nord Stream 2 AG's request for exemption from the directive.

Thus, Nord Stream-2 will be complying with German law and European standards of unbundling, access to the pipeline and tariff.

Turkish stream

Turkish Stream is a new export gas pipeline from Russia to Turkey through the Black Sea. The first of the two pipelines is intended for gas supplies to Turkish consumers, the second - for gas supply to the countries of Southern and Southeast Europe. The total capacity of Turkish Stream is 31.5 billion cubic meters. m (15.75 billion cubic meters each thread). The starting point for the gas supply to the Turkish Stream is the Russkaya compressor station (CS), which is part of the UGSS of Russia and was built in the region of Anapa. It provides the necessary pressure for transporting gas through two lines of the pipeline to a distance of more than 930 km to the coast of Turkey, where gas flows to the receiving terminal. [37] [Appendix 4]

On December 1, 2014, Gazprom and the Botas Petroleum Pipeline Corporation signed a memorandum of understanding on the construction of a gas pipeline through the Black Sea in the direction of Turkey. In September 2016, Gazprom received the first permits of the authorities of the Republic of Turkey for the implementation of the Turkish Stream. On October 10, 2016, an Agreement was signed between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Turkey on the Turkish Stream project. In December 2016, a contract was signed between South Stream Transport B.V. and Allseas Group S.A. for the construction of the first string of the offshore section of the Turkish Stream gas pipeline with the option to lay the second string. In February 2017, South Stream Transport B.V. concluded a contract with Allseas Group for the construction of the second string of the offshore section of the Turkish Stream gas pipeline. On May 7, 2017, the construction of the Turkish Stream gas pipeline began in the Black Sea. Work started off the Russian coast. On November 19, 2018, the laying of a gas pipeline in the Black Sea was completed. As of January 27, 2020 first billion cubic meters of gas delivered via Turkish

Stream. About 54% of this volume was delivered to the Turkish gas market, about 46% - to the Turkish-Bulgarian border. [37]

Blue stream

The Blue Stream gas pipeline is designed to supply Russian natural gas to Turkey through the Black Sea, bypassing third countries. Blue Stream supplements the gas transmission corridor from Russia to Turkey, which passes through the territory of Ukraine, Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria. Blue Stream significantly increased the reliability of gas supplies to Turkey, and also contributes to the development of the gas market and gas infrastructure of this country. [Appendix 8] [19]

On December 15, 1997, an intergovernmental agreement was signed between Russia and Turkey. Under this agreement, Gazprom entered into a commercial contract with the Turkish company Botas for the supply of 365 billion cubic meters of gas to Turkey via the Blue Stream gas pipeline for 25 years. In February 1999, Gazprom and the Italian company Eni signed a Memorandum of Understanding on joint participation in the implementation of the Blue Stream project. On November 16, 1999, Gazprom (PJSC Gazprom from July 17, 2015) and Eni registered the Russian-Italian special-purpose company Blue Stream Pipeline Company BV in the Netherlands on an equal footing. Now this company is the owner of the offshore section of the gas pipeline, including the compressor Station "Coastal". The owner and operator of the onshore section of the gas pipeline is PJSC Gazprom. The construction of the 396 km long Blue Stream offshore section began in September 2001 and was completed in May 2002. On December 30, 2002, the Blue Stream gas pipeline was commissioned. Industrial gas supplies through the gas pipeline began in February 2003. [19]

It is worth noting that at the request of the Turkish side in certain periods the daily volumes supplied through the Blue Stream gas pipeline correspond to the level of its design capacity. This is due to the fact that Turkey faces non-fulfillment of supply obligations by Iran, and Gazprom, meeting the Turkish colleagues, compensates for these shortages. [19]

2.2 Asian projects

In this section will mostly be told about projects with China as a one of the most important players for Greater Eurasia. China is the largest oil and gas importer in the world. [Appendix 5] [59] “This is a really big deal for other consumers: oil and gas supply over 60% of the world’s energy. China has 1.4 billion people, a government obsessed with economic growth, energy usage that accounts for 25% of the world’s total, and an ever-extending global reach that has procuring energy supplies at its core, namely oil and gas in any area, any country at any time. Oil and gas constitute a rising 30% of China’s total energy demand.” [59] Other than Russia-Chinese projects, “talks” on project with South Korea will be covered.

Pipeline system "Eastern Siberia - Pacific Ocean"

East Pipeline is an oil pipeline running from Taishet (Irkutsk Region) to the Kozmino oil port in Nakhodka Bay. It connects the fields of Western and Eastern Siberia with the markets of Asia and the USA. The length is 4,740 km. The operator of the pipeline is the state-owned Transneft Company. The grade of oil supplied to the world market through ESPO is called ESPO. The development of the project and the construction of the pipeline are carried out on the basis of the order of the Government of the Russian Federation dated December 31, 2004 No. 1737-r. [Appendix 6] [28]

In January 2006, the project developed by Transneft did not pass the state environmental review, as it provided for the construction of an oil pipeline in a seismically dangerous zone at a distance of 700-800 m from the northern tip of Lake Baikal. Rostekhnadzor also rejected the proposal to use Perevoznaya Bay as the end point of the pipeline: this bay cannot accept deep-sea vessels, and the Far Eastern Marine Reserve is located next to it. However, after President Putin’s visit to China in early 2006 and as a result of massive pressure on expert organizations, the project was soon approved (March 1, 2006). At the same time, the issue of the ESPO endpoint was decided to be re-examined during 2006. On March 22 and April 5, 2006, the State Duma, adopting the Water Code in the second and third

reading, respectively, introduced (at the suggestion of deputies from the Irkutsk region) the provision that the water protection zone of Lake Baikal includes deltas of rivers flowing into the lake and runs along the tops of the ranges, the slopes of which are adjacent to the lake. In other words, a ban was imposed on any construction 20 km from the shoreline of Lake Baikal. On April 12, 2006, the State Duma unexpectedly returned to the discussion of the already adopted Water Code and adopted an important amendment that removes legislative restrictions on construction near Lake Baikal. Thereby, Transneft's intentions to hold an oil pipeline in the immediate vicinity of the lake were supported. In March - April 2006, protest rallies were held in Irkutsk, Tomsk, Moscow, Yekaterinburg and other cities. In addition to environmentalists, the governor of the Irkutsk region, Alexander Tishanin, and the envoy to the Siberian Federal District, Anatoly Kvashnin, also defended the lake. Ecological organizations Greenpeace and WWF tried to prevent the laying of the oil pipeline in the immediate vicinity of Lake Baikal. Residents of the Khabarovsk Territory and local organizations filed a lawsuit in the Supreme Court to annul the order on the construction of the ESPO, but were defeated. On April 26, 2006, during a meeting with Siberian governors in Tomsk, President Putin unexpectedly announced the need to revise the project in order to draw an oil pipeline no closer than 40 kilometers from the northern coast of Lake Baikal. According to experts, changing the route was supposed to significantly increase the cost of the project and the construction time of the pipe. But at the same time, the ESPO in the new version of the route approached the largest oil and gas fields in the north of the Irkutsk region and Yakutia (Talakansky, Verkhnechonsky, Chayandinsky, Srednebotuobinsky and others), making it possible to reduce the cost of the construction of supply pipelines and infrastructure. On April 28, 2006 in Taishet, the first joints of the laid pipes of the oil pipeline were welded - the construction of the ESPO began. In early May 2008, it was reported that Transneft terminated relations with the general contractor Krasnodarstroytransgaz and decided to hold a new tender for the construction of the Aldan - Tynda oil pipeline. On October 4, 2008, part of the oil pipeline from

the Talakanskoye oil field to Tayshet with a length of 1,105 km was put into operation in reverse mode. On October 15, 2008, the Verkhnechonskoye oil field in the Irkutsk region was connected to the pipeline. Deliveries from it will also so far be carried out in reverse. On April 27, 2009, Transneft completed welding of the linear part of the first stage of ESPO. On April 27, 2009, construction began on a branch from ESPO to China in Russia. During the ceremony of welding the first seam, an act was signed to begin work. In May 2009, construction of a branch in the Chinese section began in Heilongjiang Province. On July 20, 2009, the government of the Russian Federation adopted a resolution on zeroing customs duties on oil exports from 13 fields in Eastern Siberia. This measure is designed to enhance the development of the region's subsoil, which serves as a resource base for filling the ESPO pipeline. On October 24, 2009, at 2 hours Moscow time, the last, 2757 km of the linear part of the East Siberia-Pacific Ocean pipeline system (ESPO I) was filled with oil. On December 28, 2009, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin launched the first phase of ESPO, launching the shipment of oil to a tanker bound for Hong Kong. Total costs for the construction of the first phase of the pipeline amounted to 378 billion rubles, and another 60 billion rubles. - for the construction of the port of Kozmino. On September 27, 2010, completion of the allotment from ESPO to China was announced. In November 2010, the Government of the Russian Federation expressed gratitude to Transneft with the wording "for the great contribution to the development of cooperation in the field of energy between the Russian Federation and China, as well as in connection with the completion of the construction of the Skovorodino-Chinese border with the oil pipeline". In July 2012, Transneft began to fill with oil the second stage of the pipeline (ESPO-2). In December 2012, the ESPO-2 oil pipeline was commissioned. On December 15, 2014, three oil pumping stations (pump stations No. 11, 15 and 19) were put into operation, built as part of the ESPO-1 expansion project, which made it possible to increase the capacity of ESPO-1 to 58 million tons of oil per year. On November 27, 2019, Transneft PJSC brought the Eastern Siberia-Pacific Ocean pipeline system (TSO ESPO) to maximum capacity. The

official ceremony took place during a meeting of the company's board of directors in Moscow in the form of a telebridge with Bratsk and Khabarovsk, where control centers for pipeline sections are located, as well as the port of Kozmino, the final point of the ESPO. Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation A.V. Novak and President of the company N.P. Tokarev was given the command to launch the constructed oil pumping stations to put the Eastern Siberia-Pacific Ocean TS into operation at maximum capacity. The heads of Transneft-Vostok LLC and Transneft-Far East LLC reported on the successful launch of new production facilities, reporting that ESPO-1 was brought to its maximum capacity of 80 million tons and ESPO-2 to 50 million tons of oil per year. The port of Kozmino, which is the final destination of the main oil pipeline, confirmed its readiness to start accepting increased volumes of Russian ESPO oil. [28]

The completion of the construction and commissioning of the oil pipeline made it possible to reduce the costs of the construction and energy supply of the Power of Siberia gas pipeline. [31]

Power of Siberia

Power of Siberia is the largest gas transportation system in the east of Russia. At present, the Power of Siberia gas pipeline (the “eastern” route) transports gas from the Chayandinskoye field - the base for the Yakutia gas production center - to Russian consumers in the Far East and to China. At the end of 2022, gas supply to the Power of Siberia will begin with another field - the Kovyktinsky, on the basis of which the Irkutsk gas production center is formed. [Appendix 7] [31]

In May 2014, Gazprom and the China National Oil and Gas Corporation (CNPC) signed an Agreement on the sale of Russian gas via the eastern route (Power of Siberia gas pipeline). The contract is concluded for a period of 30 years and involves the supply of 38 billion cubic meters to the PRC. m of gas per year. In September 2014, Gazprom began construction of the first section of the Power of Siberia gas pipeline, from the Chayandinskoye field in Yakutia to Blagoveshchensk (border with China), with a length of about 2,200 km. At the

second stage, a section will be built from the Kovykta field in the Irkutsk region to Chayandinsky - about 800 km. It is planned that the field will be commissioned at the end of 2022. The third stage is the expansion of gas transmission capacities in the area from the Chayandinskoye field to Blagoveshchensk. In September 2016, Gazprom and CNPC signed an EPC contract for the construction of an underwater crossing of the Power of Siberia cross-border section across the Amur River. The construction of the crossing from the Chinese side began in April 2017, and in May, a temporary bilateral checkpoint across the Russian-Chinese border was opened to provide access and unhindered work of construction equipment and personnel in the border zone. On December 2, 2019, the Power of Siberia gas pipeline was put into operation. The first ever pipeline deliveries of Russian gas to China have begun. [30]

Power of Siberia 2 (Altai)

The Power of Siberia - 2 (formerly Altai) is planned as the main gas pipeline between the gas fields of Western Siberia and the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in western China. There, it can connect with the Chinese West-East gas pipeline, through which gas will reach Shanghai. The planned length of the pipeline is about 6,700 km, of which 2,700 km must pass through the territory of Russia. [Appendix 9] The estimated diameter of the pipes is 1420 mm. The resource base of the gas pipeline is the new large Chayandinskoye field; in 2022, another new and larger one, the Kovykta field, should be connected to the gas pipeline. The preliminary project cost is, according to various estimates, from 4.5-5 billion rubles up to 10-13.6 billion US dollars. [5]

In the spring of 2006, during a visit to China, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that in 2011 an export gas pipeline would be built from Russia to this country, through which up to 80 billion m³ of natural gas would be transported per year. According to Putin, gas will go to China through two routes - from Western and Eastern Siberia. In October 2008, numerous Russian media outlets, citing an official report allegedly circulated by the Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, announced that, due to their uncompetitiveness and economic

inexpediency, the Altai gas pipeline project was taken out of the general scheme for the development of the Russian gas industry until 2030 [91], in this connection, the Ministry of Energy was forced to state that it did not disseminate such official messages and that the “General Scheme for the Development of the Gas Industry for the Period until 2030” is still at the design and review stage, and the economic and other risks associated with the implementation the Altai project, are taken into account by Gazprom and the Ministry of Energy, and, according to the preliminary version of the General Scheme, the final decision on the project will be made after conducting a feasibility study for the construction.[77] At the APEC 2014 summit held in Beijing in November 2014, along with the signed agreement in May 2014 on gas supplies to China via the eastern route “Power of Siberia”, a memorandum and framework agreement was signed to almost double the gas supply to China, due to the capacity of the western route "Altai".

In early February 2020, the Minister of Energy of Kazakhstan, Nurlan Nogaev, renewed interest in negotiations on the possibility of passing the Power of Siberia-2 gas pipeline through the republic with further accession to the West-East Chinese gas pipeline system. At the same time, the head of the Ministry of Energy, Alexander Novak, announced the start of work on assessing the possibility of Russian gas supplies to China through the “Power of Siberia-2” through Mongolia. He also did not rule out the possibility of gasification of the Pavlodar region of Kazakhstan due to this gas pipeline. May 18, 2020 Gazprom began designing a gas pipeline through Mongolia to China. The estimated capacity of the pipe will be 50 billion cubic meters of gas per year [56].

“Talks” on Trans-Korean gas pipeline project

A gas pipeline running from the Russian Far East through the Korean peninsula to supply both Koreas with Russian gas was first proposed in 1991, and Gazprom, South Korea, and North Korea signed a preliminary agreement to construct such a pipeline in 2011. Initial estimates suggested that the 12 billion cubic meters annually (bcma) pipeline would cost around \$6.3 billion to construct. To secure North Korean support for the project, Russia suggested that the North

would receive \$100 million per year in transit payments if it allowed construction, and forgave 90 percent of the North's debt in 2014.

Though there have been no recent statements reassessing the viability of this project, there is obvious political complexity involved in delivering energy to South Korea via its northern rival. Until now, North Korea's impassability has made the South into an energy "island" like Japan, making coastal LNG import terminals a much less risky gas importation option.

Commenting on the general situation, the Director of the Institute of Economics and Energy of Korea, Cho Yong Sung, noted that a situation conducive to cooperation in the field of pipeline gas supplies is being formed in Northeast Asia. "Russia is pursuing a policy aimed at actively increasing gas supplies to Asia, compensating for excessive dependence on European customers ... In East Asia itself, demand for gas is growing. For example, in our Republic of Korea (RK), a number of major contracts expire in 2025. For gas imports from Oman, Malaysia, Qatar and other countries, and therefore we need to think about new suppliers, about new contracts," he said. [76]

Lee Song-gyu, head of the North-East Energy Cooperation Division at the Institute of Economics and Energy of Korea, predicted that by 2040, Europe's share of Russian gas exports will decrease from the current 90 to 60 percent, while the share of Asia-Pacific will increase from 7 to 40 percent. [76]

As a possible area of cooperation, Cho Yong Song pointed to a rather long-discussed project for laying a gas pipeline from Russia to South Korea through the territory of the DPRK. He acknowledged that the project has enough risks, but both this cooperation and the other in the gas sector with the involvement of surrounding powers has good prospects for implementation. "Pipeline cooperation, based on economic mutual benefit and connecting the Russian Federation, China, Japan, South, North Korea, will contribute to the creation of a lasting peace system in Northeast Asia. This is exactly what happened with the cooperation between the USSR and Western Europe in the gas sector, which started during the Cold War

years, it successfully passed through this period of confrontation and continues to be implemented now, "the Korean expert noted. [76]

Professor of Kunming University (Seoul) Andrei Lankov pointed out that such ambitious projects are primarily hindered by political risks that are present both from North Korea, and South Korea, the United States and other powers. "The economic benefits of the same project for laying a gas pipeline from Russia through the DPRK to South Korea are obvious, but I have to be realistic. So far there are too many political obstacles to implementation - from the DPRK nuclear issue, to sanctions against Russia, North Korea and the variability of the South leadership's approach regarding cooperation with Pyongyang. I think a lot of time will pass before our dreams become reality, "the scientist said. [76]

The first vice-rector of the Samara National Research University, Roman Samsonov, pointed to various possible ways of delivering gas from Russia to South Korea, including laying a pipe through North Korea, as well as continuing the gas pipeline from China through the Yellow Sea. Samsonov also emphasized that gas deliveries through a pipe are usually cheaper than in a liquefied form. [76]

A well-known energy expert, President of the Korea Natural Gas Forum Ryu Zhi Chol, emphasizing the great potential economic and political benefits of cooperation in the supply of gas from Russia to Kazakhstan, pointed out the necessary preliminary conditions for the implementation of this project. In his opinion, this will become possible when the DPRK abandons the nuclear program and begins to separate issues of energy cooperation from possible political differences. [76]

The head of the North-East Energy Cooperation Division of the Institute of Economics and Energy of Korea, Lee Song Gyu, pointed out the need for joint efforts by all interested parties to strengthen mutual trust, as well as readiness to resolve all possible conflicts and differences in a constructive manner. [76]

Conclusion to the second chapter

There are a lot of potentially promising projects that fall in the frame of the transforming issue of energy security of Greater Eurasia. This can become or more

likely has already become a big opportunity for Russia to connect its Eurasian partners not only on the level actively discussed The Belt and Road initiative and within the borders of EAEU but on the base of gas and oil projects.

Firstly, in the current agenda of Russia in the sector of energy security is to bypass the transit countries and achieve its energy export independence. From the projects it is seen that many of them, speaking about European projects, create a workaround sidestepping the “problem zones” (Belarus, Ukraine and Bulgaria). This will be researched more thorough in the Chapter 3 of this paper.

Secondly, the gas market in Asia is still comparably new for Russian companies. It makes inevitable for Russia to meet expectations and promised numbers to win over the new customers and diversify its export structure of natural gas to Asian countries.

Chapter 3. Oil and gas power as the instrument of influence in Greater Eurasia frame

Since 2000, Russia has gradually begun to abandon the old Soviet approach, which emphasized the need to maintain and deploy its military power to ensure its geopolitical position. Instead, Moscow has gone in the direction of initial build-up and started to use its economic resources to encourage neighboring states to work more closely with its regional policies.

Russia may not be able to compete with the United States in the nature and global scale of its “soft power”. Harvard professor Joseph Nye defines this in his work on changing the nature of state power, based on three sources: “the culture [of the state] (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (where they correspond to them”) inside country and abroad) and its foreign policy (where they are regarded as legal and possessing moral authority)” [14, p. 11].

Ultimately, the opportunity for Russia to change modalities in Eurasia directly returns to energy. Russia's ability to use soft power resources and expand its economic and political influence stems from its oil and gas power. The growth of the unforeseen situation with high oil and gas prices since 1999 stimulated Russia's economic growth, allowed it to carry out some important reforms and gave it the opportunity to become the “new Russia” in the country and abroad, including far beyond the borders of the CIS. Oil and gas have made Russia something indispensable on the modern world stage.

The real energy potential for Russia may lie in gas, and not in oil. An increase in energy demand in Asia, especially in the static energy sector, is driving up demand for natural gas. China is particularly keen to increase gas imports [Appendix 5], given its previous policy to shift from coal to gas. China and South Korea would like to meet their future energy needs by increasing gas consumption to ease dependence on Middle Eastern oil. Global gas markets are changing in response. Currently, gas is the fastest growing resource in terms of energy consumption looking at the tendencies in the world [Appendix 10]. Domestic energy sectors in many countries still need major structural changes and large-scale

infrastructure development to move towards a greater use of gas. More than a quarter of the world's gas consumption crosses international borders, either by pipeline or in the form of LNG. In particular, LNG and its transportability beyond regional borders imply great long-term potential for Russia. Russia overshadows Saudi Arabia and other gas producing countries. Its gas reserves, which make up slightly less than a quarter of the total proven reserves in the world, far exceed the reserves of any other country. And Gazprom, as a company, alone owns around 17 to 20 percent of the world's gas reserves (different sources give different statistics) [see 20, 23, 36]. Russia through Gazprom is already the dominant global exporter of gas. If current trends in gas consumption in Europe continue, Russia undoubtedly is becoming the main supplier of gas - if not in general - energy - to Europe in the next few decades. [Appendix 11] [Appendix 12] Russia is better prepared to enter the markets in Asia for natural gas than for oil that is from the fact that most of the new projects in the energy sector are gas related as seen in Chapter 2 of this paper.

1. Impact on Europe

Currently Europe is in energy dependant on third supplier, largest of which is Russia, according to Eurostat statistics [33]. Six years ago, the rhetoric of the statements of the Bundestag deputies clearly defined the essence of the common position of Berlin in relation to the United States, Russia and its gas. In a conversation with Russian journalists, they noted that they support the imposition of sanctions, welcome fuel competition and fear Moscow's gas weapons. But as time goes the shifts in opinions and sayings are quite noticeable: "Germany is not a US colony, and Nord Stream-2 is a source of secure supplies to Europe, which is also needed to solve problems in the sphere of economy and energy reform". [12, p. 5]

At the Berlin Conference "Prospects for Energy Cooperation between Russia and the European Union. The Gas Aspect" Klaus Ernst, Chairman of the Bundestag Committee on Economics and Energy, said that today the United States is practically imposing its opinion on Europe's energy supply. According to Ernst,

the United States wants to sell its gas on the European market, but the methods by which they achieve this are not always acceptable. Moreover, they are directed not only against the Russians, but also against the European companies involved in the construction of the Nord Stream-2. “The actions of the American ambassador to the FRG are simply unacceptable at present, it seems that we are a US colony,” he said. Klaus Ernst emphasized that for environmental reasons, natural gas from Russia is more attractive to Germany than liquefied gas from America. “When it comes to gas prices, American gas is also uncompetitive,” he added. [22]

Hugo Daiggraaf, a member of the board and technical director of the German company Wintershall, which is Gazprom’s Nord Stream 2 partner, was of the same opinion. He is sure that the EU needs Russian gas to solve environmental problems, as well as for energy reform in Germany. "We will not be able to solve the tasks of protecting the environment, to get out of coal energy without Russian gas," said Wintershall technical director, adding that "the EU and Russia should have a constructive dialogue in this regard." [22]

“The Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline under construction is important for Europe, as it will allow more gas to be received, and US extraterritorial sanctions in this context are unacceptable and require retaliatory measures.” This was a statement to a Russian media correspondent by the head of the Bundestag committee on economics and energy, Klaus Ernst. [65]

“Nord Stream 2 is important if only because it can deliver additional volumes of gas to Europe. It's up to Germany and Europe to decide from whom to buy gas, and this doesn't depend on the crisis around the coronavirus. The extraterritorial sanctions of the USA against enterprises, including European ones, which are involved in the construction of the project, are unacceptable and require tough response from Europe. For example, sanctions against American fracking gas", Ernst said. [65]

In his opinion, restrictive measures are detrimental to economic relations between Russia and the EU countries. This leads to the fact that the Russian Federation replaces imported goods with its own production, or enhances trade

with China. According to Ernst, this does not meet the interests of Europe, because "a strong Europe can only be with the involvement of Russia". [65]

These statements show the overall dynamic in shifting towards partnership (at least in the energy sector), despite sanctions imposed. Of course it does not show pinpoint tendency in every European country, but Germany is the largest importer of Russian gas in Europe and a big player in EU. Going deeper into the whole geopolitical situation between Europe and Russia, the first thing that should be said is that the market should not worry about "political colors and shades," since profit is always in the first place. Theoretically, that is how it should be. In fact, for decades the energy wars were observant, putting politics above the economy and decreasing its development speed. Although, speaking objectively, Russian energy resources remain the best offer on the European energy market. The fact that the economic competitiveness of any country, including any European one, depends on the cost of energy, is clear to everyone. The fact, that the new energy development tendencies in the European region start to shift towards "going green" policies, opens a question on the relevancy of energy wars nowadays.

As stated above the rhetoric that was predominant five-six years ago is "Russia is aggressor: geopolitics is more important than economy" and to some extent this rhetoric holds truth: Russia's policy was not always similar to that of the European Union, but Donald Trump, the current president of the United States also adopted a protectionist policy, starting trade wars with both Europe and China [93]. Although the confrontation with Beijing can be defined as geopolitical, it is unclear what civilizational differences could arise in NATO.

While US seek to enter a new technological cycle, Europe is captured by its geopolitics. Europe itself lacks unity: Germany, France and Italy are looking for ways to build relations with Russia, at least in the economic sphere (progress in some areas, and projects in others). At the same time, the Polish leadership says that liquefied gas from the United States will cost 20-30 percent cheaper than Russian gas transported through pipelines. [79] This is only possible if the United

States subsidizes LNG supplies. This is another example where geopolitics prevails over the economy. The United States is clearly not going to subsidize LNG supplies to Germany and France. Funds should flow - but in a completely different direction.

On the other hand, Moscow has always been pursuing an active energy policy. However, as the successor to the Soviet Union, Russia inherited a gas transportation system oriented almost exclusively to Europe, which by the beginning of the 2000s did not correspond to the country's new ambitions in the new geopolitical conditions. The ongoing gas wars with Ukraine have repeatedly proved the simple fact that the infrastructure could not provide a sufficient level of diversification. Therefore, Russia decided with the help of its gas and oil companies to develop an extensive network of new gas transportation routes, such as Blue Stream, Nord Stream, Power of Siberia and other projects. All this is based on the same idea that there should be no transit countries that could potentially interfere with Russian gas supplies. This conclusion was reached by the authoritative American agency Bloomberg at the end of 2019 [69]. But in accordance with the not sophisticated formula so popular in US, the emphasis was on the idea that the Kremlin uses its energy sources to pursue its "aggressive and expansionist policies."

Czech journalists offer a slightly more objective picture of Russian energy projects. He supposes that Russia, like US, uses energy cooperation as a lever of pressure for its partners. But the Czechs can somewhat understand the logic of the Kremlin's energy geopolitics and their desire to protect their supplies from militantly anti-Russian Poland and Ukraine.[73] Czech Republic, which is far from the world Russophile capital, believes that Moscow makes a distinction between NATO and the EU in its political understanding. Thinking of the former as a direct threat [74], Russia considers the EU as a strategic partner for multifaceted cooperation [57].

It should be noticed that for a fairly long time, the United States, with varying degrees of success, impeded the implementation of Russian energy

projects on the continent. Germany “withstood” Washington’s strike in the Baltic States and did not abandon Nord Stream 2: even the suspension of the 93 percent completed project at the end of 2019 due to US sanctions did not shake the Germans’ political determination to bring it to an end, to its logical conclusion [65].

At the end of 2014, under pressure Bulgaria unexpectedly abandoned the South Stream project, which at that time was a heavy blow for the Russia, since several billion euros had already been invested in developing the infrastructure in southern Russia needed for the gas pipeline. In 2015, Turkey expressed interest in the energy project, prompting the transformation of the South Stream into the Turkish Stream. Thus, Russia has a fairly clear political goal - to spread its influence in European countries; therefore, the pipeline had to get to the Balkans one way or another. But, in addition to politics, it is about diversifying the economy: although Brussels, in the name of the EU, announces its intention to cease its dependence on Russian gas, Moscow does basically the same thing under the radar, gradually increasing the number of its partners.

While the European energy market is being redistributed, despite the West’s policy of sanctions and restrictions against Russia and the unfair game of the United States with competitors in the market, Russia in its policy continues to strive to create additional gas routes from Russia to Europe. Of course, the European market is a source of income for many billions of euros for Russia, but, implementing new energy projects, Moscow also has long-term plans. In fact, it was the President of Russia over the years who strove to establish closer ties between Russia and Europe, while his idea of creating a common space from Lisbon to Vladivostok was central to Russian foreign policy until 2014. Now the tendencies of a kind of “resurrection” of this idea are seen in the Greater Eurasia concept but from other side with support of strong China.

As final words of this section it is also worthwhile mentioning the statement from a recent article of an international journalist, Theodor Zima, on European website devoted to diplomacy studies: “We are entering a new era in which the

West is no longer the world's only pole, so what we need is the consolidation in the face of rapidly developing South-East Asian countries. As far as Russia is concerned, so long as Vladimir Putin is its leader, this "window of opportunity" remains open, although not as wide open as it was before 2014. If the opponents of cooperation with Europe prevail in the Russian authorities, the only thing left to us will be to feel how wrong the policy of discrimination against Russia has been. And all the bitterness of disappointment. Yet time will be foolishly and irreversibly lost." [94]

2. Impact on Asia

It is impactful to mention that the main focus of the section will be on Russian-Chinese connections for the reason that, as of now, there is no particular impact from the "talks", which were, for example, mentioned in Chapter 2, but it would be worthwhile to picture prospects for such kind of initiative. The section will also cover the potentially one of the most promising for Russian LNG industry projects, Novatek, Russia's largest independent natural gas producer [18], plans to create a sea transshipment terminal in the bay of Bechevinsky.

In 2019 Russia became the largest exporter of oil to China outside the circle of OPEC countries. [Appendix 13] Russia managed to occupy a 15% stake in Chinese oil imports, the report said. Based on EIA data, it can be concluded that total oil supplies from Russia to China last year amounted to about 584 million barrels (almost 80.2 million tons). Earlier, the FCS of the Russian Federation reported that the physical volume of Russian oil exports to all countries in 2019 increased by 2.7% - up to 267.46 million tons compared to 2018. Thus, taking into account the EIA data, supplies to China accounted for almost 30% of Russian oil exports in 2019.

In November 2019, Russian Minister of Energy Alexander Novak noted that Russia occupies a leading position in the export of crude oil to the PRC, increasing its supply by 27.4% in 2018, and is also a leader in the export of electricity. In his opinion, there is every reason to talk about "the formation of the Russian-Chinese energy alliance."

On the Chinese gas market, however, Russian companies are comparably new. The Power of Siberia gas pipeline from Russia to China was launched on December 2 of last year. Its length is about three thousand kilometers. This is the first gas pipeline from Russia to the Asia-Pacific countries. This year it is planned to deliver to China, at least five billion cubic meters of gas, in 2021 - 10 billion, in 2022 - 15. The maximum capacity that the pipeline should reach is 38 billion cubic meters of gas per year. The company expects to achieve such pumping volumes in 2025. Further expansion of pipeline capacities to 60 billion cubic meters per year is also envisaged.

Nevertheless, according to research of Russian news agency, there are big problems that can threaten the success of the whole Power of Siberia project. In an investigation, Lenta.ru writes about this with reference to the company's internal documents: an appeal to Gazprom's top management and a report by the gas giant, which was prepared by Gazprom dobycha Noyabrsk, Gazprom's subsidiary responsible for development of the Chayandinsky oil and gas condensate field.[48]

“Documents indicate numerous violations in the development of the field, connivance of the management of Gazprom and Gazprom Dobycha Noyabrsk, patronage and intentional suppression of the scale of problems with the development of the field, which serves as the resource base of the Power of Siberia. And because of problems on which the entire project runs the risk of being in jeopardy,” the publication said. According to Lenta.ru estimates, Gazprom and its subsidiaries spent about 982 million rubles on geological exploration of the Chayandinskoye field located in the untouched part of Siberia. For this, 20 government procurements were carried out, information about which was closed. At the same time, the press service of Gazprom assured that the company does not conduct secret purchases.[48]

The publication links the concealment of information on tenders from public access with the internal report of Gazprom's leading engineers working at the Chayandinskoye field. The report said that the reserves of the field are not enough for the planned filling of the Power of Siberia gas pipeline, Lenta.ru claims.

As journalists say, “Since 2014, according to official data, Chayanda’s reserves have already been revised in favor of a decrease: from 1.45 trillion cubic meters of gas to 1.2 trillion, and the number of planned wells has fallen from 335 to about 278 units.”[48]

The Gazprom press service, in response to allegations of a reduction in wells, said that this information was false and the plan still cost 335 wells. According to Andrei Filippov, deputy head of the 307th department (responsible for all production at the company), the main problem of the field was that it was not ready for development due to the fact that it was in the exploration stage. The decision to start work was made in a narrow circle of top managers of the natural gas monopoly. But at that time, the leadership did not have the exact data of geological exploration on hand in order to correctly assess the situation. “Partly, Miller put pressure on those attending that meeting. One of the most expensive top managers in Russia insisted that if Russia doesn’t enter the growing Chinese market, then “the Americans will go there with their liquefied natural gas (LNG),” notes Lenta.ru.

According to Filippov, Similar problems are noted at the other resource point of the Power of Siberia - Kovykta field. There, according to the interlocutors of the publication, the estimated reserves were not confirmed. The publication, referring to the company's internal documents, claims that Andrei Filippov, deputy head of Gazprom’s 307 department, and Dmitry Izosimov, chief geologist at Gazprom dobycha Noyabrsk, tried to deceive the state and Gazprom’s leadership in order to conceal the extent of the problems associated with the development of the Chayandinskoye field. This is evidenced by the company’s internal documents, copies of which are available to Lenta.ru. [48]

The total losses of the state-owned company Gazprom due to difficulties in developing the Chayandinskoye field may amount to more than 1.5 trillion rubles. This amount includes costs from 34 “dry” (not confirmed) wells, which are estimated at about 500 billion rubles lost profits for the entire duration of the Russian-Chinese contract. [48]

Now at the very start of Russia's entry into the Asia-Pacific gas market, it is more important than ever to meet the standards and supplies volumes specified in the contract. The disruption of the Power of Siberia project can lead to the collapse of the adjacent Power of Siberia 2 project. Then, conversations about the reorientation of the Russian gas market from Europe to Asia will not begin soon.

Violations of contractual obligations threaten the loss of confidence in the energy sector of Russia by the Asian partners. The Gazpromneft press service said that the investigation provided false information and that the project is proceeding at its intended course.

In addition to economic losses, political losses are possible. The general credibility and respect can be questioned. Russia cannot afford such kind fail as it will only harden one of the obstacles on the way of Greater Eurasia discussed in the First Chapter of the paper – lack of capabilities. It also will stay away the partners from Greater Eurasian partnership initiative in the field of one of the most important issues in the world – energy security. Potential influence of this project on the feasibility of Greater Eurasian concept is colossal.

In the face of such crisis, parallel projects in the region have also their own problems. Trans-Korean pipeline, which is only on paper, as mentioned in the second chapter, faces political problem of North Korea, but holds a great opportunity for Russian gas companies. South Korea is dependent on imports of energy resources. About 98% of internal fuel consumption is supplied by third parties. Republic Korea wants Russian prices for gas; Russia wants to diversify consumers in the region. It could be potentially “win-win” cooperation. Moscow would strengthen its presence in the Asia-Pacific; Korea would satisfy its internal consumption demand at a lower price, becoming a large customer for Russian gas in Asia.

On 5 September 2019 Novatek and the Japanese company Saibu Gas Co., Ltd. signed the basic terms of the agreement. In accordance with the signed Agreement, the parties plan to create a joint venture, the tasks of which will be the sale of LNG and natural gas to end consumers, the development of bunkering and

electricity generating capacities on natural gas in Japan and the countries of the Asian region, as well as the construction and operation of a new LNG storage tank in the territory Hibiki LNG terminal. “We have taken one more step in implementing our strategy of entering the market of end consumers of key gas importing countries, among which Japan is one of the largest markets,” said Leonid Mikhelson, Chairman of the Board of Novatek. “The creation of a joint venture will allow us to increase supply flexibility and create additional opportunities for the implementation of LNG in this region.” In summer 2019 the first batch of liquefied natural gas produced at the Yamal LNG plant was unloaded at the terminal of the port of Tobata. “The start of LNG shipments to the Japanese market is a very important event for our company,” said Leonid Mikhelson, chairman of the board of Novatek, Russia's largest natural gas company. “Japan today represents a very significant market for liquefied natural gas and one of the priority areas of marketing Novatek’s strategy: Further development of the supply chain using the Northern Sea Route and the transshipment terminal in Kamchatka will help expand LNG supplies to Japan and strengthen trade and economic ties between our countries.” [51]

After, another important event occurred in Osaka. Novatek, a consortium of Mitsui & Co, and the Japan National Oil, Gas, and Metals Corporation JOGMEC signed a sales agreement for a 10 percent stake in the Arctic LNG 2 project. Arctic LNG 2 is another new ambitious Russian project for the production of liquefied natural gas in the Arctic along with the Yamal LNG project, which is already operating. It provides for the construction of three phases for the production of liquefied natural gas with a capacity of 6.6 million tons per year in each. The project is being implemented on the basis of the richest Morning Field on the Yamal Peninsula. As of December 31, 2018, the proven and probable reserves of this field according to PRMS standards amounted to 1,138 billion cubic meters of natural gas and 57 million tons of liquid hydrocarbons. According to the Russian classification, the field’s reserves amounted to 1978 billion cubic meters of natural gas and 105 million tons of liquid hydrocarbons. The LNG terminal in the port of

Tobata where the first shipment of gas from the Russian Arctic arrived is located almost next to another Japanese LNG terminal – Hibiki, which is strategically very important for Russian producers of natural gas. At the end of 2018, the Russian company and the Japanese Saibu Gas signed a memorandum of understanding regarding the optimization of LNG supplies to the countries of the Asia-Pacific region through the use of the capacity of the Hibiki LNG terminal. [52]

This terminal is even larger than the terminal in the port of Tobata - its capacity is 7.5 million tons per year. It will just supplement the Novatek transshipment terminal in Kamchatka. The company plans to build an offshore LNG transshipment complex in Bechevinsky Bay, where LNG from Arc7 ice-class gas tankers will be loaded onto lower-class tankers. This will allow the Russian company to optimize the movement routes of high-class gas tankers, using them only on the Northern Sea Route. And the transshipment terminal in Kamchatka and the Japanese Hibiki reception terminal will create a logistically very convenient route for delivering liquefied natural gas to the countries of the Asia-Pacific region.

The entrance to Japanese market means a lot in the frame of Greater Eurasia. Strengthening ties with the ally of geopolitical opponent, the US, and widening LNG export opportunities in Japan can help to reorient Russian export of LNG from traditional markets and make it less dependable on revenues from export to Europe.

Conclusion to the third chapter

Overall projects of Russian gas and oil companies hold great influence over the Greater Eurasia concept. In Europe there is a tendency to refute sanctions imposed by US as energy security and supply is much more important when the national industries and new environmental policies are at stake. Moreover, work on projects that will redirect gas supplies from transit countries directly to the consumers allow to geopolitically choose the allies not relying on inconsistent in their policies transit countries.

Asian, especially Chinese, projects' results will probably show if it is even possible to create cooperative Greater Eurasia and not just become the “bones”

under The Belt and Road initiative. New strategic partners in Asia-Pacific region will allow diversifying the cooperation circle and not being exclusively Chinese partner in the field of energy security in Asia but to widen and develop new routes of supplies. Potentially these projects can help Russia to uphold a position of not just energy resources supplier but energy security supplier within the forming Greater Eurasia.

Conclusion

In the first chapter of the research the Greater Eurasia concept was “put on the bench”. This chapter described what overall is Greater Eurasia, current state of affairs, agenda that is in front of the integration and obstacles and barriers on the way of implementation. Main conclusions of the chapter:

1. Greater Eurasia is at the same time regional, extra-regional and global project. It holds grand ambitions on all levels of cooperation: post-Soviet space as regional component; Asia-Pacific, South Asia and Europe as extra-regional component; new world order characteristics as global component.

2. There are numerous purposes that Greater Eurasia can serve: economic – Russia has ambition to diversify its markets with countries of Asia-Pacific and South Asia regions, building mutually beneficial cooperation; yet another important side of question is to build a new security frame within region; ideological confrontation to failing Liberal world order.

3. Barriers and obstacles on the way of such grandiose integration project are as large. The difference in the agendas of key players, lack of capacities and unclear future fate of the project in terms of political will sophisticate the implementation of the Greater Eurasia idea.

The second chapter highlighted the energy security issue within Greater Eurasia and distinguished the main projects of oil and gas companies on both European and Asian markets. Main conclusions of the chapter:

1. Energy security is a transforming construct that stand as an issue in almost every county in the world.

2. There are certain standards which apply to the “healthy” energy security system: it is designed to ensure the reliability of energy supplies in the common interests of the global economy, and each country, and consumers, and energy producers. Moreover, this system should be transparent, based on international law and a responsible policy regarding the supply and demand of energy resources.

3. The projects of Russian oil and gas companies have numerous instances both on Asian and European side. They hold great ambitions of diversifying Russian market making Russia Eurasian player.

The effects which projects can potentially bring in the Greater Eurasia concept were analyzed in the third chapter of this paper. The main conclusions of the chapter:

1. The influence which Russia holds on the European mostly gas market can change the current views of Europeans, especially with the US trade war background. Strengthening the cooperation via supplies and new projects can contribute to widening of the frame of Greater Eurasia.

2. The Asian market is new to Russian companies. On the success of current projects can and will be built the future cooperation.

3. At stake is one of the more sensitive topics for every country – energy security. Successful projects can give Russia an opportunity to become energy security supplier within Eurasia.

All the objectives set in the introduction were completed in the current research. The analysis of the Greater Eurasia concept has shown that the idea is far from being fully built up. It is the reason why the field of Eurasian studies has to be widened and new scholars have to be invited with the fresh vision of potential construct of such a grandiose integration project. The research also revealed the difficulties on the way which are yet to be solved on the way to Greater Eurasian cooperation. The paper successfully distinguished the Russian oil and projects-headliners in the region. The analysis of possibility of impact of such projects on Greater Eurasia feasibility has shown that there are serious effects on the integration project, both in case of success and fail.

The results of the research provided in this paper can be applied to the future PhD thesis widening the topic with thorough economic analysis with the new data of the future years; especially the on the Asian market, as of now there is no widespread statistics on economic effects of Russian gas supplies to China. The research can also be helpful for the Eurasian studies scholars as the start point of

the new research on Russian gas and oil projects and energy security of Eurasia. The work helps to diversify the monotone background of Greater Eurasia studies.

Russian companies' oil and gas projects serve not only economic purpose but also political, promoting the interests of Russia in tight cooperation and establishing a new integration construct Greater Eurasia. The projects are no one-sided. They build new interdependency, increasing the list of probable partners that will be a part of Greater Eurasia.

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Appendix

Appendix 1

Динамика спотовых цен на СПГ в различных районах мира,
долл./млн. брит. тепл. единиц (\$US/MMBtu)

	2014 г.			2015 г.			2016 г.			2017 г.		
	март	июль	окт.	март	авг.	дек.	март	авг.	окт.	фев.	май	окт.
Р. Корея	20,00	13,25	14,01	4,35	7,80	7,16	7,71	5,53	6,41	6,79	5,64	8,94
Япония	20,00	13,25	14,01	4,35	7,80	7,16	7,71	5,53	6,41	6,79	5,64	...
Китай	19,60	12,85	13,61	4,20	7,65	7,01	7,43	5,38	6,26	6,64	5,49	8,85
Индия	17,63	12,80	13,42	4,38	7,82	7,16	7,51	5,63	6,44	6,55	5,61	8,88
Бельгия	17,57	7,38	8,73	3,90	6,25	5,17	6,73	4,41	5,59	6,18	4,91	8,85
Бразилия	9,89	13,73	13,36	4,57	7,96	7,18	7,61	5,81	6,26	7,01	5,33	...

Primary source: OE Energy Market Snapshot. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 2014-2047. – <https://www.ferc.gov/market-oversight/mkt-snp-sht/>

Secondary source: A. Mastepanov, “Energy Security in Big Eurasia: Different Players - Different Approaches to Solving the Problem”, Greater Eurasia: Development, Security, Cooperation, 2018, p. 114

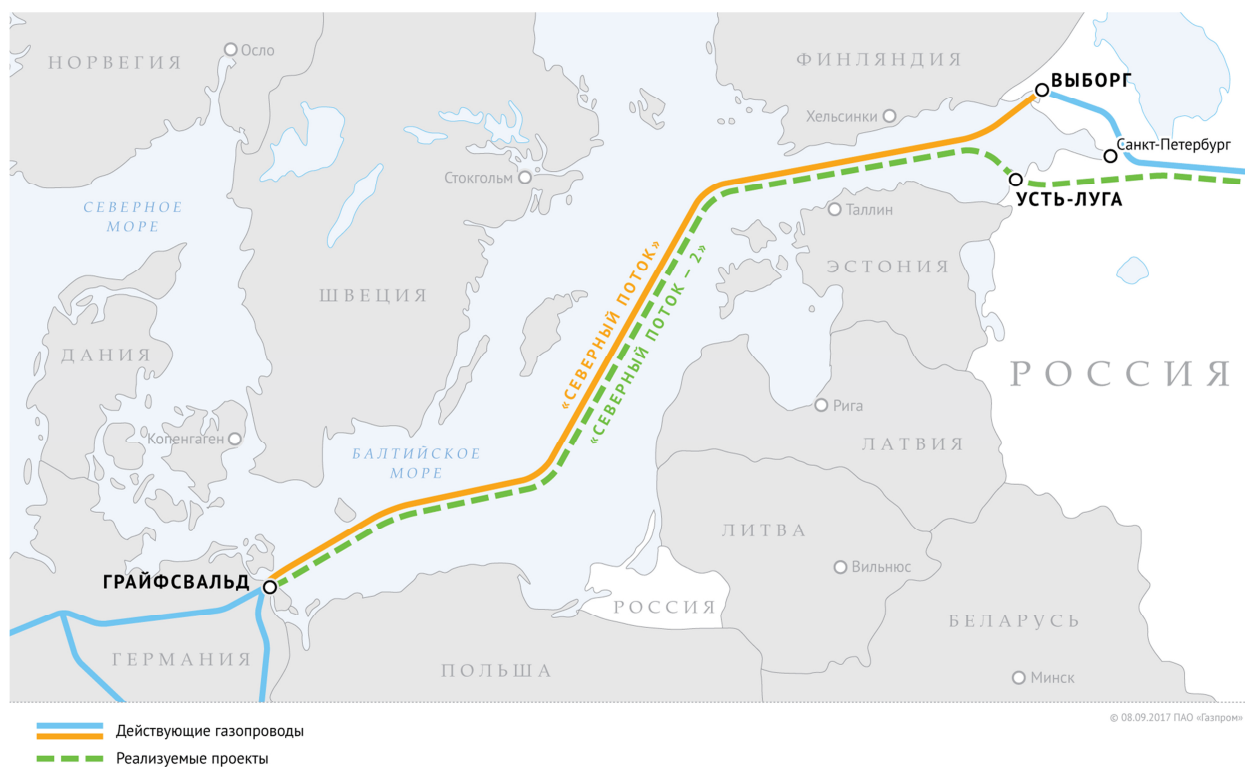
Appendix 2



Source: “Yamal-Europe” pipeline, official Gazprom webpage, available at:

<https://www.gazprom.ru/projects/yamal-europe/>

Appendix 3



Source: “Nord stream”, official Gazprom webpage, available at:

<https://www.gazprom.ru/projects/nord-stream/>

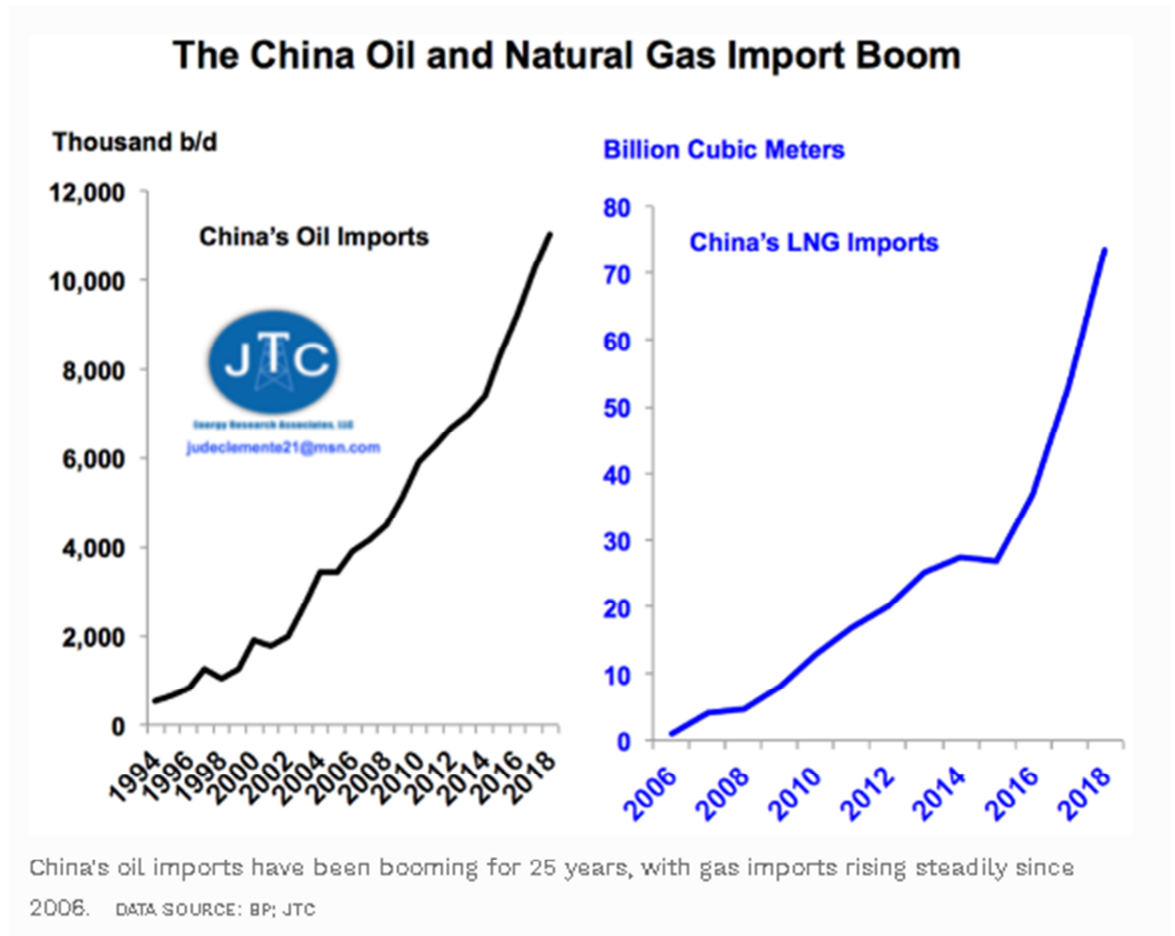
Appendix 4



Source: “Turkish stream”, official Gazprom webpage, available at:

<https://www.gazprom.ru/projects/turk-stream/>

Appendix 5



Sorce: J. Clemente, "China Is the World's Largest Oil & Gas Importer", Forbes, 17 October 2019, available at:

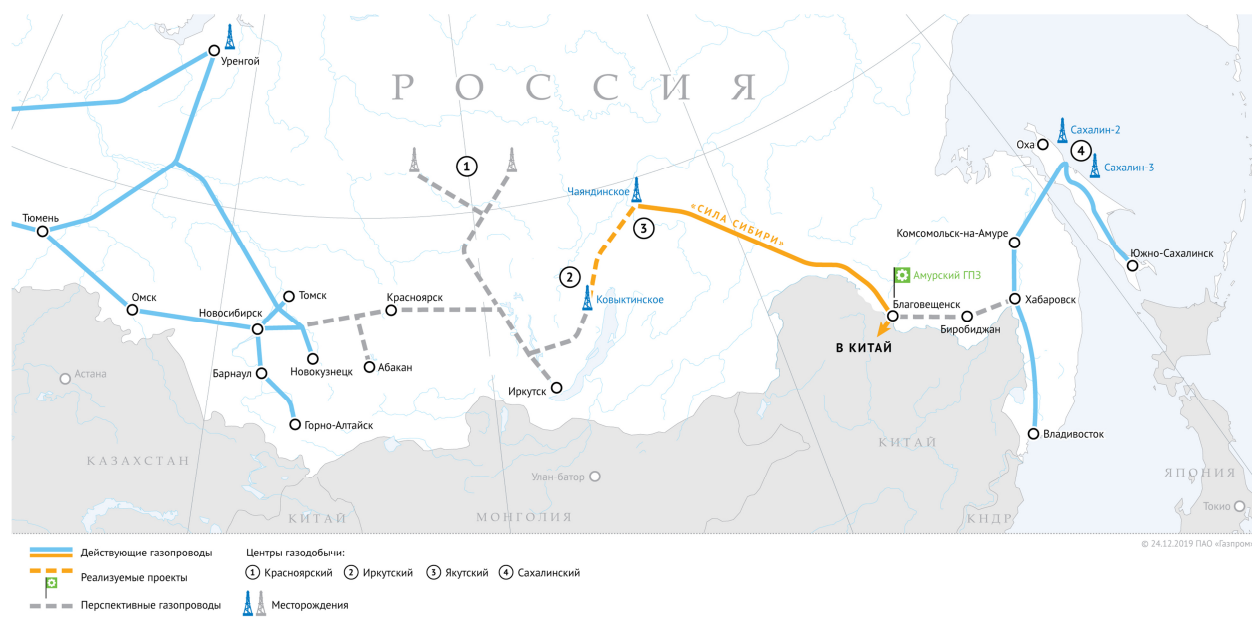
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/judeclements/2019/10/17/china-is-the-worlds-largest-oil--gas-importer/#21dbebb45441>

Appendix 6



Source: Official Transneft webpage, available at: <https://www.transneft.ru/>

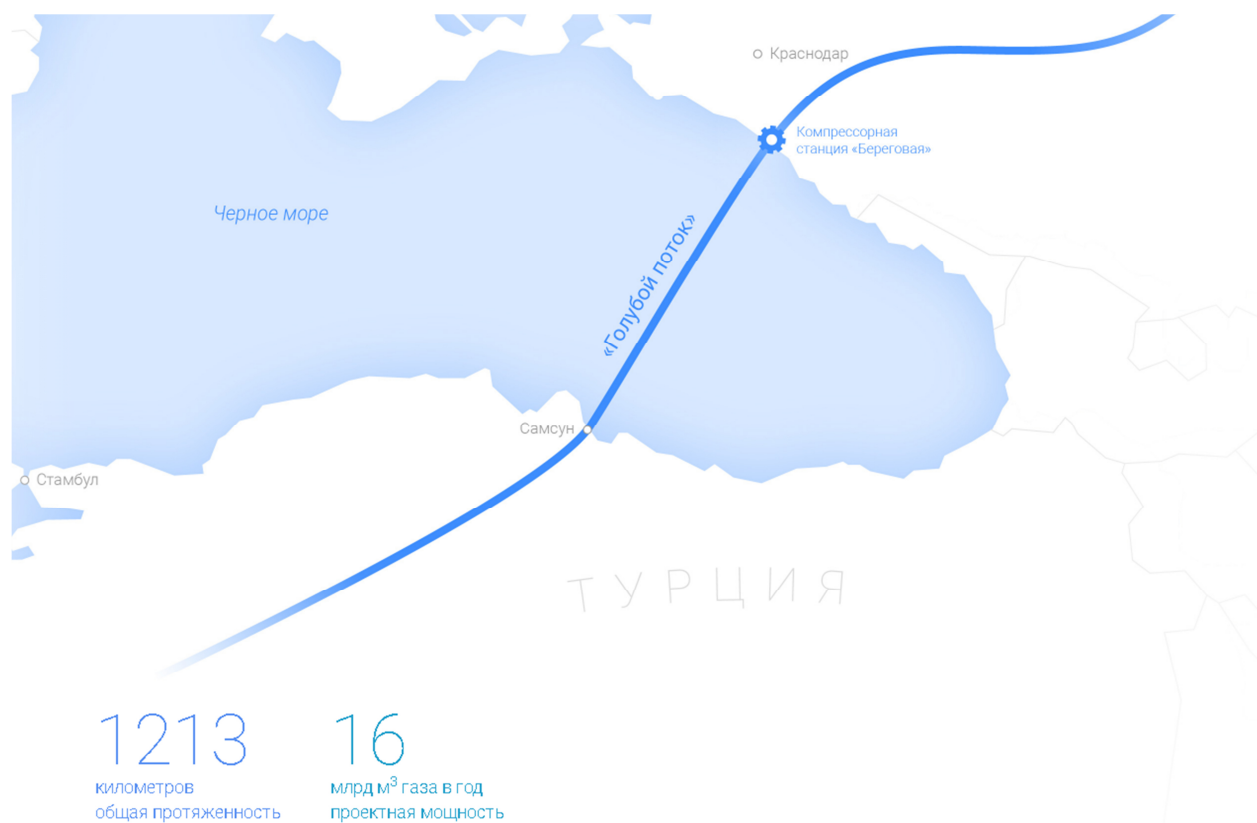
Appendix 7



Source: “Power of Siberia”, Official Gazprom webpage, available at:

<https://www.gazprom.ru/projects/power-of-siberia/>

Appendix 8



Source: “Blue stream”, Official Gazprom webpage, available at:

<https://www.gazprom.ru/projects/blue-stream/>

Appendix 9

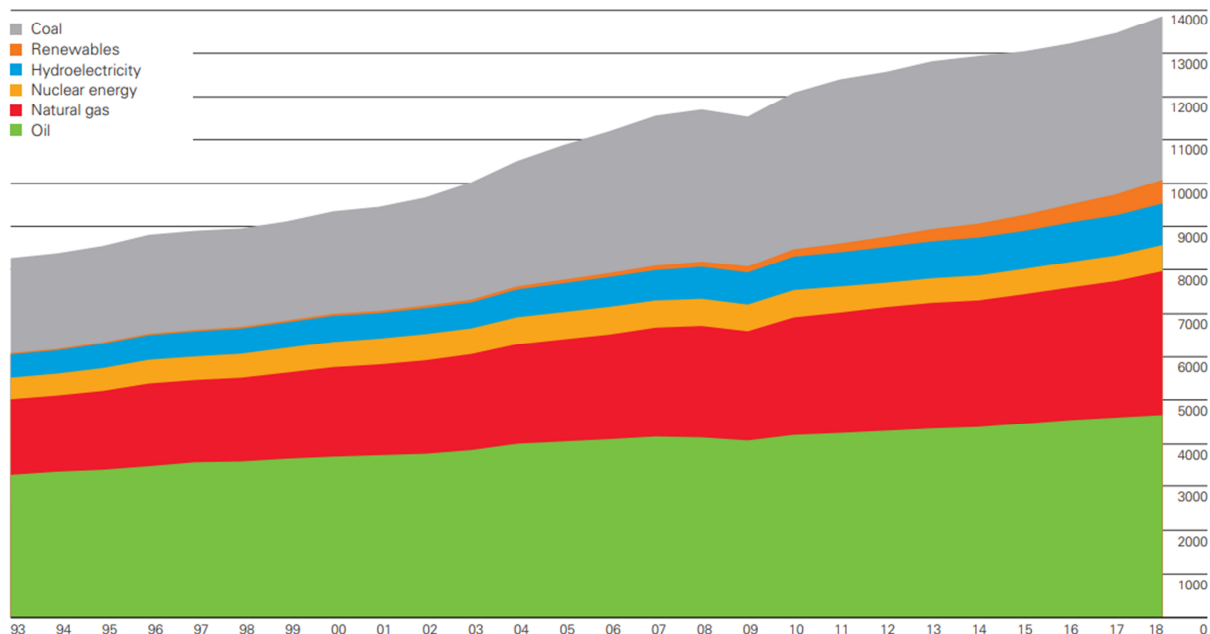


Source: “There is a confirmation! Gazprom has already started working out the issue of building the Power of Siberia-2 gas pipeline through Mongolia”, Neftegaz, 5 December 2019, available at: <https://neftegaz.ru/news/transport-and-storage/511590-gazprom-uzhe-podklyuchilsya-k-prorabotke-voprosa-stroitelstva-sily-sibiri-2-cherez-mongoliyu/>

Appendix 10

World consumption

Million tonnes oil equivalent



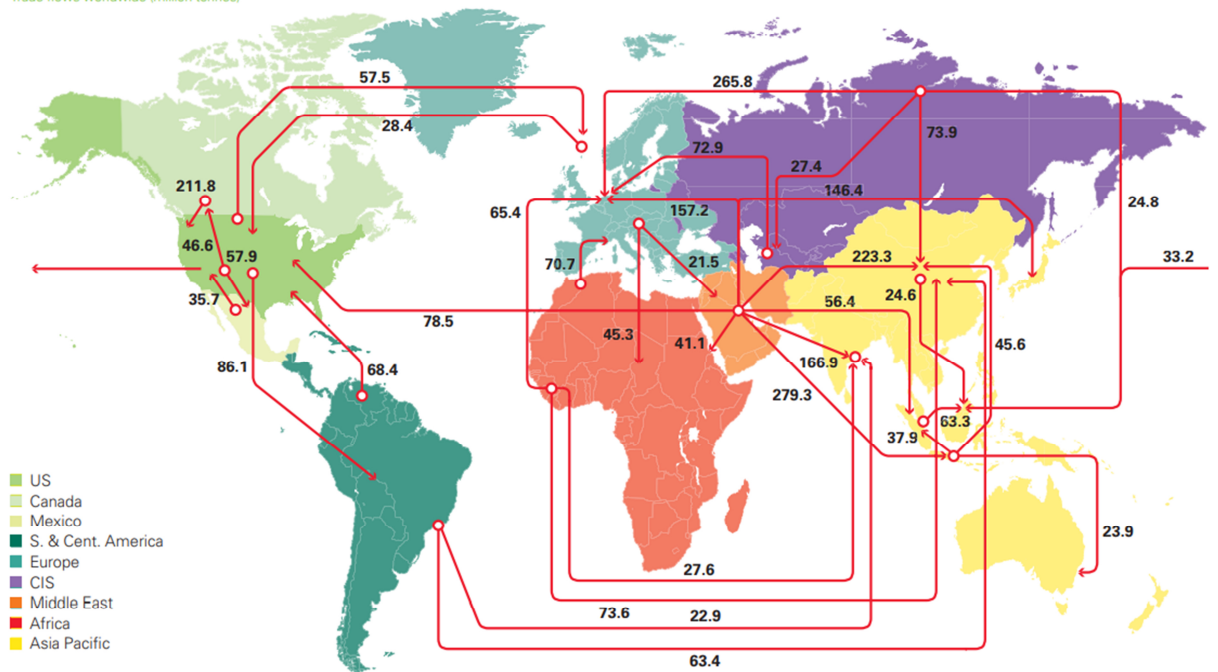
Global energy consumption increased by 2.9% in 2018. Growth was the strongest since 2010 and almost double the 10-year average. The demand for all fuels increased but growth was particularly strong in the case of gas (168 mtoe, accounting for 43% of the global increase) and renewables (71 mtoe, 18% of the global increase). In the OECD, energy demand increased by 82 mtoe on the back of strong gas demand growth (70 mtoe). In the non-OECD, energy demand growth (308 mtoe) was more evenly distributed with gas (98 mtoe), coal (85 mtoe) and oil (47 mtoe) accounting for most of the growth.

Source: “BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2019 | 68th edition”,
available at: <https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2019-full-report.pdf>

Appendix 11

Comment: statistics is for oil

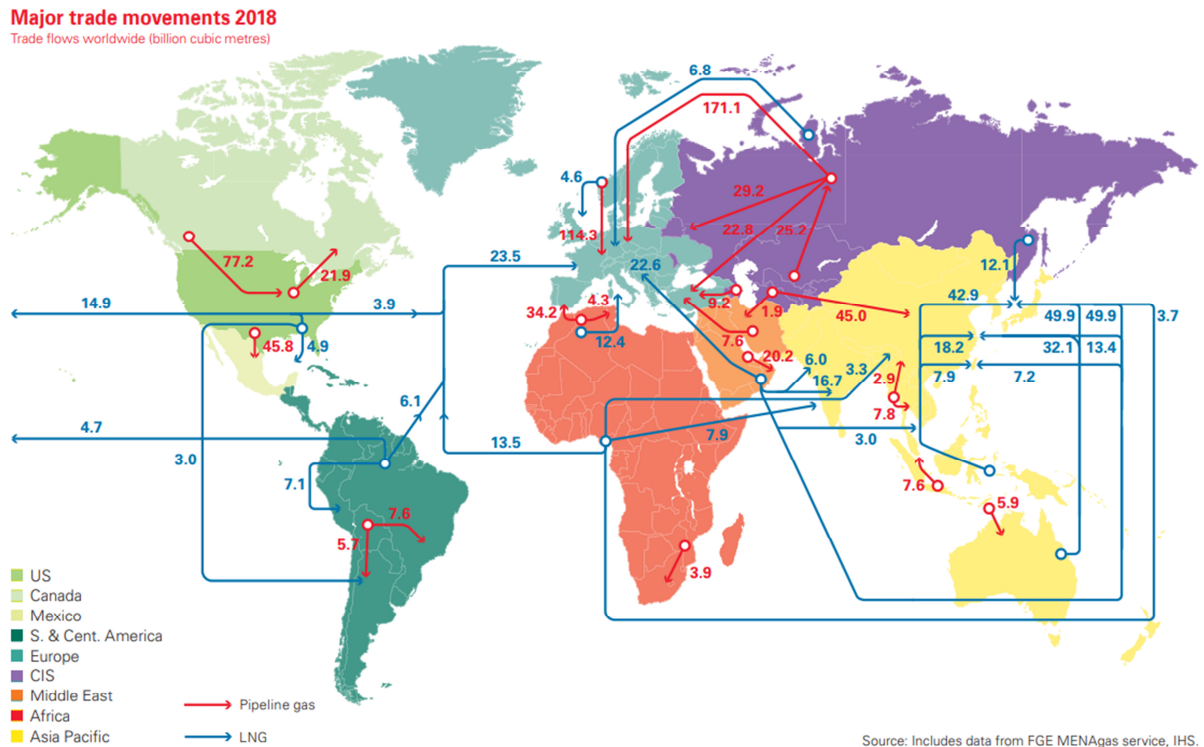
Major trade movements 2018
Trade flows worldwide (million tonnes)



Source: “BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2019 | 68th edition”,
available at: <https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2019-full-report.pdf>

Appendix 12

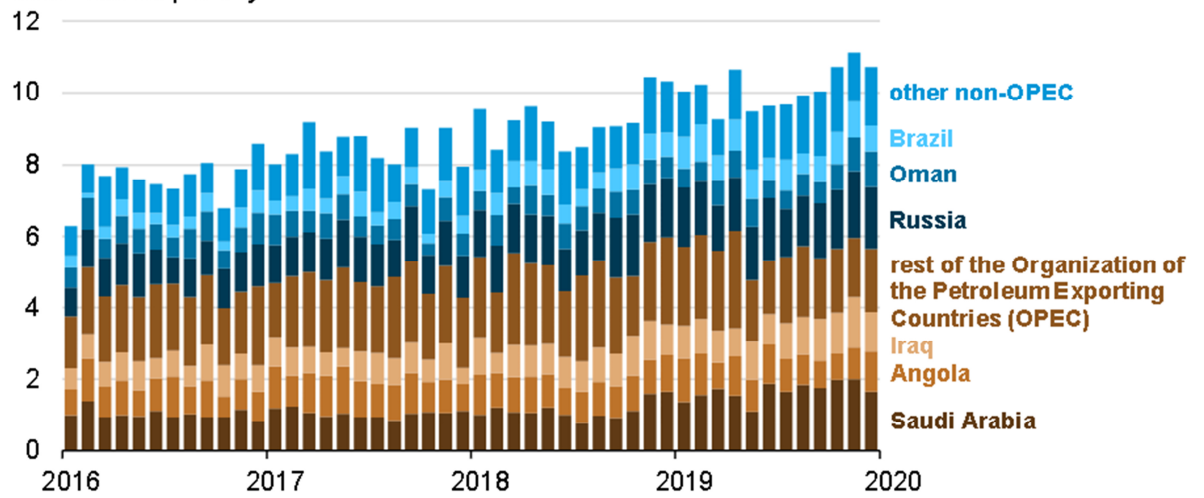
Comment: statistics is for natural gas



Source: “BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2019 | 68th edition”,
available at: <https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2019-full-report.pdf>

Appendix 13

China monthly crude oil imports by source (January 2016-December 2019)
million barrels per day



Source: “China’s crude oil imports surpassed 10 million barrels per day in 2019”, U.S. Energy Information Administration, available at: <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=43216>