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THE TRANSATLANTIC UNION 1991-2004

Transformation of the U.S.–European Partnership in the Post-Bipolar World

By **Mikhail Troitski**

Summary

The book discusses the adaptation of the U.S.-European alliance to the post-bipolar international realities.

Over the last fifteen years, the unity between the two sides of the Atlantic has faced a triple challenge of the diminishing common threat, the emergence of the European Union as a major international power center and the growing inclination towards unilateralism on the part of U.S. administrations.

In the 1990s, the United States took the leading role in reshaping the partnership between Washington and its NATO allies in Europe. The Clinton Administration responded with a “programming” policy towards the European allies in 1994-1999. This policy was aimed at restricting the scope of European autonomous foreign policy and defense activities which, with time, could make the United States less able to harness European resources in pursuit of U.S. foreign policy goals. “Programming leadership” implied promoting U.S.-European joint projects that were meant to consolidate the transatlantic unity and prevent American and European strategies from diverging. These projects included NATO’s eastward enlargement, development of the concept of “out-of-area” operations by the Alliance and NATO’s involvement in humanitarian missions in Europe and beyond.

Cooperation between the United States and its European allies was boosted by the rise of terrorist threat after 9/11. Yet the unwillingness of the Bush Administration to prioritize transatlantic partnership over its immediate policy goals and the consequent rift over Iraq in 2002-2003 dealt a new blow to the U.S.-European partnership. In the wake of the 2003 military campaign in Iraq, the United States and Europe confront a common agenda of stabilizing the Middle East and Central Asia while continuing to expand the Euro-Atlantic community to the East and South-East of Europe.

Сведения об авторе

Троицкий Михаил Алексеевич (1977 г.р.) – кандидат политических наук [«Эволюция евроатлантической политики США после распада bipolarности (1992-2002)», Институт США и Канады РАН, 2003]. Окончил факультет международных отношений Санкт-Петербургского государственного университета в 1999 г. и аспирантуру Института США и Канады РАН в 2003 году. С 2003 г. – старший преподаватель Московского государственного института международных отношений (Университета) МИД России. В 2001-2003 гг. преподавал историю международных отношений на факультете мировой политики Государственного университета гуманитарных наук (на базе Института США и Канады РАН). С 2000 г. – младший научный сотрудник Института США и Канады РАН. С 2000 г. – координатор, заместитель директора Научно-образовательного форума по международным отношениям. В 2000-2001 гг. – аналитик еженедельной газеты «Век». В феврале-июне 2001 г. стажировался в Женевском центре политики безопасности (Швейцария).

Автор 18 научных публикаций общим объемом более 20 а.л.

About the Author

Mikhail Troitski was born in St. Petersburg (Leningrad) in 1977. He holds an MA from the School of International Relations, St. Petersburg State University (1999), and a Ph.D. from the Institute for U.S. and Canadian Studies (ISKRAN), Russian Academy of Sciences (2003). Mikhail Troitski has been teaching History of International Relations, Russian Foreign Policy and International Security courses at Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO-University) since 2003. In 2001-2003, he taught History of International Relations at the School of World Politics based in ISKRAN. Since 2000, Mikhail Troitski has been working at ISKRAN as junior research fellow. In 2000-2001 he was a staff writer at the “Vek” Weekly (Moscow). In February-June 2001, he worked as an intern at Geneva Centre for Security Policy. Since September 2001, Mikhail Troitski is deputy director of the Academic Educational Forum on International Relations.

Mikhail Troitski has published articles on U.S. foreign policy, EU external affairs, transatlantic relations and Russian foreign and domestic policies.