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Demarcation versus Cooperation

**Peculiarities of Western
Democracy Promotion in Russia**

PRIF Reports No. 61



**Peace
Research
Institute
Frankfurt**

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Translation: Dr Diane Spiedel, Edge Translations, Manchester

ISBN: 3-933293-63-4

€ 10,-

Summary

The failure of the West to bring democracy to Russia has become a daily lament. This lament has also grown to be the main justification for policies keeping Russia at a distance. Democratisation, as an aim of interference and conditionality, have been joined in way that can, at best, be characterised as tense, and at worst, appears to be counter-productive.

The introduction of democratic systems and their promotion is a relatively new international endeavour. In Germany, it is only since the early nineties that these objectives have given rise to programmes and projects in official development assistance and in the support of transformation processes in Eastern Europe. Moreover, such experience is of little relevance to Russia, the “evil empire” that for seventy years fought off democracy with military strength. Thus the experimental nature of current practise might explain the mistakes that have been made. On the other hand, when considering foreign policy, which makes democratisation a condition of cooperation, this excuse cannot be made – Russia has been a leading European power for more than two hundred years. It is obvious, however, that such policy must adapt to the changed international rules that have emerged following the end of the Cold War, as characterised by the partial substitution of the logic of the Cold War by the logic of the concert of power.

A coherent policy of democratic conditionality, which has the aim of democratising Russia and, therefore, of creating internal conditions that could be the basis of a lasting and stable cooperation, does not exist in the West. The example of Germany illustrates how values and interests, idealism and realism fail to complement one another, as is called for in the politics of Western democracy promotion. Rather, they get in each other’s way. German foreign policy towards Russia oscillates between arrogance and respect: Arrogance arising from their sense of cultural supremacy, fed by the potential for chaos within Russia as by either its domestic instability or its authoritarianism; and a less clearly defined respect for its still impressive political and military might. This indecisiveness results from the dual asymmetry created by German superiority, in terms of culture, and Russian superiority, in terms of military might, that has coloured the relationship between the two countries for more than two centuries.

While Russia’s power base has been weakened to a point where it no longer dominates Germany’s foreign policy agenda, the message that is so being sent remains clear: If Russia wants to be accepted as serious partner, then it has to clean up its internal mess and complete the transformation process. It is sometimes openly stated that Russia should “civilise” itself. Compliance would not, however, automatically give access to those exclusive associations that are the political manifestations of the Western community and its values. Yet such access in itself, in particular membership of NATO, could be crucial, on a symbolic as well as practical level, in creating an international environment that would support the required internal democratisation process.

The direct promotion of democracy, through technical assistance, is as half-hearted as democratic conditionality of foreign policy has proved questionable. That this is the case has been justified by the idea that the introduction of democracy and of a market economy must coincide, as one reinforces the other. Therefore, Western donors have

needed no excuses for concentrating their material and intellectual support in a field where direct economic gain can be expected – the promotion of market economy. These contributions increased the contradiction between democratic inclusion and economic exclusion, between formally demanded equality and growing material inequality.

There is no doubt that economic and social welfare is a basic precondition of stable political systems. Therefore, cushioning the drastic consequences of the transformation process on such welfare should have been an essential component of democracy promotion in Russia. This did not happen. It turned out to be even more disastrous that in conditions of lacking democratic control and appropriate institutions the forced economic transformation led to a redistribution of wealth such that new centres of power were formed, which were unfavourable both for democratic participation and for the development of the economy. Western advisers to the new Russian leadership bear considerable responsibility for this situation.

In the ten years since the foundation of the Russian Federation, on 1st January 1992, direct democracy promotion, by the US, Germany, and the European Union, amounted to between 200 million and 1 billion US dollars, depending on the definition used. This entails classical objectives of democracy promotion such as the formation of democratic institutions, either through political advice or by organising and monitoring elections. An additional aim is to strengthen civil society, by promoting independent media, political parties and non-governmental organisations, and to strengthen the rule of law by consolidating and modernising the judiciary. These are the fields in which Western democratisers have been active in Russia.

Apart from isolated external and internal evaluations, a comprehensive analysis of these activities has not yet been presented. As might be expected, the evaluations that have been undertaken have reached varied conclusions regarding the record of the last ten years: In terms of individual projects, the verdict is predominantly positive. This does not, however, indicate that the major objective of a consolidation of democracy in Russia has been advanced in any significant way. One explanation is that the funds available are insufficient to have more than a token effect. Also, it is commonly complained that efforts are met with a cool reception from the domestic audience. Besides which, some have fundamental doubts.

Democracy promotion can be characterised by a direct intervention in established political systems that contrasts with classic technical assistance. Evidently, Russia has increasingly narrowed down the room of manoeuvre, so producing a variety of reactions in the West. In particular American democracy promotion is being advised to move towards supporting civil society, in order to win back ground from the new political elites. This, however, reinforces the attempt at replacing the legitimate aim of establishing widely accepted democratic procedures with the very problematic aim of trying to reach a certain political goal, defined by one's own criteria. In any case, the question arises as to whether such an interventionist concept of democracy promotion is still appropriate in today's Russia. It should, rather, be replaced by broader financial support for exchange programmes, including town twinnings and partnerships between organisations, and encouragement of mutual study visits.

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*The era for propagating democratic ideas within Russian society has just begun!*¹

In the relationship between Russia and the West, democracy plays a dual role: as a target and as an obstacle. Even ten years after the beginning of the democratic transformation process in the then Soviet Union, the West still complains that, at best, an 'electoral democracy' has been established in Russia which possesses only a varnish of democracy and which merely pretends to have democratic decision-making processes. This was reflected by the first Russian president, Boris Yeltsin, who was praised as a symbol for Russian democratisation, as well as snubbed as its main impediment. Since he resigned and Vladimir Putin entered office, with his 'dictatorship of law', which triggers thoughts of other dictatorial 'genitives', the aim of achieving democracy has gained in importance. And the more this aim appears unobtainable, the more it grows to be the determining factor in Western relations to this country, a *conditio sine qua non* with which the democratic deficit develops into the main impediment in the cooperative shaping of these relations.

If Russia really were a "Burkina Faso with missiles", as was said of the Soviet Union, then the inconsistency of Western policy, varying between active intervention to promote democracy and the use of conditionality in foreign policy, would not be so striking. However, from a geographical, demographic and military point of view, Russia remains the largest power in Europe, the most important supplier of strategic resources, one of the largest markets for the European Union and, last but not least, the traditional European power broker. As such, it plays a decisive role, constructively as well as destructively, in both current and potential trouble spots, both within Europe and in neighbouring regions. Therefore, a coherent relationship with this country is of vital importance. This is especially true for Germany and, in particular, for the characteristic way in which the dominant political model is dealt with, a model which, at the end of the Cold War, was supposed to bring about an end to history: democracy.

That Western attempts to bring democracy to Russia have failed to meet both hopes and expectations has become a daily lament in the West. Given this self-centred perspective, it is easy to lose sight of how such activities are viewed in Russia itself. Clearly, the majority of Russian people subscribe to the views of Noam Chomsky, according to whom democracy may be a nice idea "but [one] to be judged by outcome, not process".² Given that the introduction of democracy in Russia has coincided with a spectacular decline in the economy, accompanied by social unrest, rising crime and a partial collapse of the state, the popular view of the 'results' of this process turns out to be unequivocal – and scathing. The continuing popularity of Vladimir Putin's state-centric semi-

1 "An Agenda for Renewal: U.S.-Russian Relations. A Report by the Russian and Eurasian Program of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace", Washington, D. C., December 2000.

2 Noam Chomsky, Democracy in a Neoliberal Order: Doctrines and Reality. TB Davie Lecture Series, University of Cape Town, 28th May 1997.

authoritarianism and the growing scepticism encountered by Western advocates of democratisation cannot be understood unless this experience and the inferences that are drawn from it are appreciated. The questions that politicians in the West must ask are: Have their efforts to promote democracy been directed at the right people, to the right extent and in the right way and have they created an international environment that supports these efforts?

It is these questions that are addressed in the present study. To begin with, the domestic and external state of the democratisation process worldwide will be dealt with – an area that has seen renewed interest in the last fifteen years. The study will address both the so-called ‘positive’ promotion of democracy by specific external actors and the international environment, together with ‘conditional’ foreign policies, which can be regarded as ‘negative’ promotion of democracy. In the following, the most common criticisms will be presented. It is important to consider, however, that the promotion of a democratic system from outside a state represents a relatively new field of international endeavours. Thus, the experience so far obtained, from Third- and former Second-World countries, is necessarily limited.

The investigation of Western democracy promotion in Russia has two aspects to it, considering, as it does, both, the ‘positive’ and the ‘negative’ components. Bearing in mind the ‘negative’ use of conditionality, the importance of Russian political conditions in general and the aim of creating democracy in particular are explored, with regard to how they shape the foreign policy of Western nations towards Russia. In so doing, the focus will be on German foreign policy. Here, one is left with the impression that, rather than being used to promote cooperation, the rhetoric about the democratisation of Russia is misused, as an excuse to refuse to cooperate – without being, in fact, much influenced by developments within Russia itself. At the same time, the ways in which material aid is used in the process of democratisation, as well as the instruments applied, in the form of ‘positive’ assistance, should be investigated. Special attention will be given to the US, which attach most importance to such activities, under the aegis of their programme of “development assistance” with the Russian Federation, and where the most detailed academic studies have been conducted. Finally, the Conclusion will consider whether and in what ways the lack of coherence and, more importantly, the contradictions, in Western policies designed to promote Russian democracy, can be reduced or overcome.

1. Democracy as an export item: historical and conceptual foundations

Both in practice and in the underlying theory, the promotion of democracy can be considered an historical attempt to complement the economic push by the political principle of modernity. It can be defined as follows:

“Democracy promotion & protection consists of all overt and voluntary activities adopted, supported, and (directly or indirectly) implemented by (public or private) foreign actors explicitly designed to contribute to the political liberalization of autocratic regimes, democ-

ratization of autocratic regimes, or consolidation of democracy in specific recipient countries.”³

Generally, the aim is clear: Explicitly as well as implicitly, it is to produce a political system that follows the blueprint of donors in the North Western hemisphere.⁴ Seen from this angle, the promotion of democracy is no different from other attempts, past or present, to export political systems. What is less clear, however, is how this aim can best be realised. In the nineties, attempts were made, at the level of academic discussion, to address this problem. The conclusions that were reached, however, rather like those of the idealised model described in the citation above – which progresses from (opening) liberalisation, via (basic) democratisation, to (final) consolidation of democracy – are of little help when it comes to developing practical strategies.

Detailed investigations of recent attempts at democratisation have occurred as part of the research into post-socialist transitions and into Third World countries. Less information, however, is available about the external conditions pertaining to this process and, specifically, to the promotion of democracy, particularly in relation to the role played by Germany and Europe.⁵ In the US, the situation is little better.⁶ This can be explained by the fact that in a German context, the promotion of democracy and human rights did not merit the status of independent programmes and projects in official development

- 3 Philippe C. Schmitter, Imco Brouwer, *Conceptualizing, Researching and Evaluating Democracy Promotion and Protection*, European University Institute Florence, EUI Working Paper SPS No. 99/9, p. 9.
- 4 The former US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright expressed this in her own clear way: “We will continue to promote and advocate democracy because we know that democracy is a parent to peace, and that the American constitution remains the most revolutionary and inspiring source of change in the world.” “Democracy & the U. S. National Interest”, <http://www.usaid.gov/democracy/dusni.html>.
- 5 See e.g. Geoffrey Pridham (ed.), *Encouraging Democracy: The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe*, Leicester (LUP), 1991; Geoffrey Pridham, Eric Herring, George Sanford (eds), *Building Democracy? The International Dimension of Democratisation in Eastern Europe*, Leicester (LUP), 1994; Wolfgang S. Heinz, *Positive Maßnahmen zur Förderung von Demokratie und Menschenrechten als Aufgabe der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit*, Berlin (Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik), 1994; Rolf Hanisch (ed.), *Demokratieexport in die Länder des Südens?*, Hamburg (Schriften des Deutschen Übersee-Instituts, Vol. 35), 1996; Kristi Raik, *Towards Substantive Democracy? The Role of the European Union in the Democratisation of Estonia and the other Eastern Member Candidates*, Tampere (TAPRI Research Report, No. 84), 1998; Gero Erdmann, *Demokratie- und Menschenrechtsförderung in der Dritten Welt. Grundlinien eines Rahmenkonzeptes für die kirchliche Entwicklungsarbeit*, Bonn (Deutsche Kommission *Justitia et Pax*), 1999.
- 6 See, amongst others: Joshua Muravchik, *Exporting Democracy. Fulfilling America’s Destiny*, Washington D. C. (The AEI Press), 1991; Abraham F. Lowenthal (ed.), *Exporting Democracy. The United States and Latin America. Case Studies*, Baltimore (The Johns Hopkins University Press), 1991; Laurence Whitehead (ed.), *The International Dimensions of Democratization. Europe and the Americas*, Oxford (OUP), 1996; Catharin E. Dalpino, *Anchoring Third Wave Democracies. Prospects and Problems for U.S. Policy*, Washington (An Institute for the Study of Diplomacy Monograph) 1998; Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad. The Learning Curve*, Washington, D.C. (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), 1999; Marina Ottaway, Thomas Carothers (eds), *Funding Virtue: Civil Society Aid and Democracy Promotion*, Washington D. C. (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), 2000; Michael Cox, G. John Ikenberry, Takashi Inoguchi (eds), *American Democracy Promotion. Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts*, Oxford (OUP), 2000.

assistance until the beginning of the nineties.⁷ This was linked to a rise in the importance of 'good governance' in development politics, a concept that has been enthusiastically adopted since the mid-eighties, especially by the World Bank. Following a first revision of conditions for the allocation of aid in 1991, the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation established five criteria in 1996 that became important parameters in making decisions on the distribution of aid – respect for human rights, participation of the population in political decision-making, the rule of law, a social market economy and state actions directed at promoting development. The 'politicisation' of development programmes, which was thus introduced and which was reinforced, following the change in government in 1998, no longer regarded these criteria as merely important internal conditions for successful development and, so, a standard for cooperation. They were also seen as objectives in their own right. The acceleration of the "third wave" of democratisation, as identified by Samuel Huntington, at the same time provided the international background. With this wave, democracy became the one and only legitimate political system, throughout the world.

During the sixties and seventies, the politics of development were dominated by modernisation theory, which, like the Cold War, tended to produce very utilitarian relationships between Western democratic states and other regimes, including the less democratic ones. Thus, little room was left for the promotion of democracy as a cause in its own right. At best democracy served as a weapon in the ideological war against socialism. Its application, therefore, did not extend to undermining despotic regimes, such as Guatemala, Zaire or South Korea, which played an important supporting role in the Cold War. These countries lacked, according to the technocratic idea of modernisation, the fundamental economic, cultural and institutional preconditions required for the introduction of democracy. It was held that democracy should come about naturally in due course, as economic development and resultant social changes occurred. The belief at the time, which was also reflected in practice, was that this economic development had to be under the control of interventionist, if not authoritarian, 'developmental states'. The idea of external democratising interventions, either by imposing conditions or by granting of support, was ruled out from the start. Development assistance preferred to see itself as explicitly apolitical.

This situation had changed by the eighties, when the "third wave" of global democratisation reached countries in Latin America and Africa, in which socio-economic conditions appeared utterly unsuited to the establishment of democratic systems of government. Ironically enough, the person behind this development was the last true Cold Warrior – the American president Ronald Reagan.⁸ Using his dual strategy of active

7 See Gero Erdmann, Eine zulässige Einmischung. Demokratie- und Menschenrechtsförderung in der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit, in: *E+Z*, Vol. 41, No. 6, 2000, p. 160; Bernd Eisenblätter, Entwicklungspolitik ist Demokratiepoltik. Tagung der Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Caddenabia, 30th October 2000.

8 Cf. Thomas Carothers, Taking Stock of Democracy Assistance, in: Cox, Ikenburry, Inoguchi, as above (Footnote 6), pp. 182–186.

armament and democratising diversion, he made a bold attempt at consigning the socialist regimes to the place where he thought they belonged: in the dust bin of history. However, the second part of this strategy could no longer ignore those countries in the Western hemisphere, whose authoritarian regimes fell victim to the same wave of democratisation. This was in spite of the efforts of Reagan's UN ambassador, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, who did her utmost to differentiate between "authoritarianism" here and "totalitarianism" there. Consequently, it was circumstance rather than conviction that was the cradle of the American "crusade for democracy". When the epoch changed, this crusade became a global strategy that produced a new phenotype with missionary qualities: the 'democratiser'.

The "third wave" of democratisation that, according to Huntington, started in Portugal in 1974 and accelerated massively with the disintegration of so-called real socialism, towards the end of the eighties, was a global but, at the same time, predominantly local event. Its principal roots – such as the exhaustion of the established authoritarian regime or the growth of opposition movements – were essentially domestic in nature. Democracy promotion by OECD states was merely a reaction to those developments. Its very logic was to shape the world in one's own image, using a behavioural pattern that is both instinctive and at the same time thought through. In so doing, it was hoped that the likelihood of cooperation and peace would be increased and, at the same time, trust was placed in the wider problem-solving capacity of democracies.⁹ According to Strobe Talbott's classic summing up of these motives, the promotion and protection of democracy in other countries provide the opportunity for "American values and interests [to] reinforce each other."¹⁰ The promotion of democracy should thus link the two antagonistic concepts applied to American foreign policy as well as to any other: realism and idealism.

This goes by no means uncontested. Some think it unrealistic to expect American interests and values to join up in the crusade for democratisation and, therefore, believe that political priorities should be guided by the direct impact on the well-being of the US. Therefore, the demand for democratisation in other parts of the world is always seen in a functional way and is, in itself, irrelevant.¹¹ Furthermore, the process of democratisation is a transitional phase and, as such, prone to endangering political, economic and social

9 Cf. Eberhard Sandschneider, *Demokratieförderung von außen*, in: *Internationale Politik*, No. 5, 1997, p. 13.

10 Strobe Talbott, *Democracy and the National Interest*, in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 6, 1996, p. 49. The Clinton administration goes into more detail in the "National Security Strategy": "The core of our strategy is to help democracy and free-markets expand and survive in other places where we have the strongest security concerns and where we can make the greatest difference. This is not a democratic crusade; it is a pragmatic commitment to see freedom take hold where that will help us most. Thus, we must target our efforts to assist states that assist our strategic interest." "Democracy & the U. S. National Interest", <http://www.usaid.gov/democracy/dusni.html>.

11 Cf. Robert Kagan, *Democracies and Double Standards*, in: *Commentary Magazine*, August 1997, <http://www.commentarymagazine.com>.

stability and characterised by a rapidly increased risk of violent conflicts, internally as well as externally. Therefore, democracy promotion may rather be regarded as a pragmatic damage-limitation exercise.

Democratisation processes are internal phenomena. However, they do not occur without external influences that can vary greatly in intensity and serve radically different purposes. Firstly, these influences usually include the general international situation. The developed states' monopoly on democracy determines their content and creates the corresponding international climate. In this respect, both the OSCE, the responsibilities of which are enshrined, for example, in the CSCE's 1990 Charter of Paris, and – more importantly – the European Union are relevant. The latter, for instance, links requests for assistance or membership with concrete demands.¹² Secondly, influences include external support that is intended to have a direct and specific impact. This external support can be understood in a broad sense – whereby public relations managers sometimes include economic support – as well as in a narrow sense. The latter means support that is aimed directly at bringing about democratic change or a consolidation of the new order. This includes support for the formation of democratic institutions or of legislative procedures, both of which are usually in the form of political advice, as well as the support of independent media or the promotion of 'civil society' – a concept which has grown in importance since the fall of socialism. The following will give a first impression of a typical distribution of resources: 40 percent of the 85 millions dollars in annual US aid for "democracy and governance work" in Africa is given to public institutions and, presumably, the remainder is given to non-governmental organisations and, therefore, to 'civil society'.¹³ Thirdly and finally comes economic as well as political support with strings attached. Support is linked to minimum conditions, with respect to compliance with human rights or the observation of democratic principles. These conditions can vary considerably from one case to the next.

Such differentiation is necessary in that the different phases of the democratisation process – usually ranging from a change of regime to consolidation of democracy – require different forms of democracy promotion addressed at different groups in society and government.

2. Review of Western democracy promotion

Whereas democracy, being the only remaining legitimate political system, at least in the Northern hemisphere, is no longer questioned, activities aimed at spreading this concept

12 Cf. Philippe C. Schmitter, *The Influence of the International Context upon the Choice of National Institutions and Policies in Neo-Democracies*, in: Laurence Whitehead (ed.), *The International Dimensions of Democratization. Europe and the Americas*, Oxford (OUP), 1996, pp. 26–54.

13 Meeting report "Democratization, Human Rights, and Good Governance in Africa: French, American, and African Perspectives", 3rd June 1998, <http://www.med.org/publications/reports/africa/toc.html>

globally are far from universally accepted. Criticism of democracy promotion, by donors and recipients, is both broad and, as always, contradictory. It deals, for instance, with the importance of democracy promotion in Western foreign and/or development policies. Here, considerable agreement is found, as it seems clear that democracy promotion rates much lower in the priority list of foreign and economic policy than might be expected from all the grandiose rhetoric. Thus, in cases where conflicts touch upon concerns over political security, the aim of democracy promotion is regularly abandoned.¹⁴ The categories used in the distribution of official Western aid plainly indicate this hierarchy of aims (see *Tables 4 to 6*).

Moreover, the promotion of democracy and human rights, being a good subject for rhetoric, is frequently headlined in official aid programmes. In fact, completely different goals are pursued and different priorities established. This is particularly true for the economic liberalisation that frequently appears not only in rhetoric but also conceptually and operationally as a synonym for democratisation. For instance, the Clinton doctrine of “democratic enlargement” not only had a primarily economic focus; it also reiterated what had already been established as inadequate in the modernisation theories of the sixties:

“The vision of democratic enlargement was econocentric: Only countries with free-spending middle classes, it was believed, could become democratic and adopt the Western values of embracing ethnic diversity, protecting citizen’s rights, and cooperating with the world community to stop terrorism.”¹⁵

In addition, criticism was fuelled by questions about the actual influence of democracy promotion. The question arises as to whether democracy promotion has any effect at all, let alone whether this effect is positive or negative. According to optimists like Larry Diamond, there is no doubt that external influence was of considerable, if not decisive, importance in the last wave of democratisation:

“Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the third wave is the considerable contribution that international actors have made to democratic development by enhancing the resources, skills, techniques, ideas, linkages, and legitimacy of civil society organizations, civic education efforts, the mass media, legislatures, local governments, juridical systems, political

14 Cf. Stephan G. Bierling, *Wirtschaftshilfe für Moskau. Motive und Strategien der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der USA 1990–1996*, Paderborn (Schöningh), 1998; Gorm Rye Olsen, *Promotion of Democracy as a Foreign Policy Instrument of ‘Europe’: Limits to International Idealism*, in: *Democratization*, Vol. 7, No. 2, Summer 2000, pp. 142–167. For the US, Thomas Carothers sums up: “Where democracy appears to fit in well with U. S. security and economic interests, the United States promotes democracy. Where democracy clashes with other significant interests, it is downplayed or even ignored. And where the United States has few identifiable economic or security interests of any real consequence – as in large parts of Africa, for example – the United States will give some attention to democracy out of a general idealistic impulse but usually not commit major financial or human resources to the task.” (*The Clinton Record on Democracy Promotion*, Washington D. C. (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Working Papers, No. 16), September 2000, p. 3).

15 Douglas Brinkley, *Democratic Enlargement: The Clinton Doctrine*, in: *Foreign Policy*, No. 106, Spring 1997, p. 118. In addition, using the term *geo-economics* generously: “Put another way, enlargement was about spreading democracy through promoting the gospel of *geo-economics*” (p. 125).

parties, and election commissions in the developing and post communist worlds. The prospects for democracy in the world will be much brighter if these many currents of practical engagement are sustained, refined, and widened.”¹⁶

Others are much more careful in their judgement and acknowledge at best a limited influence. Thus, Thomas Carothers, in his extensive audit, summarises the results of the “most extensive, systematic effort the United States has ever undertaken to foster democracy around the world” – at a cost of 700 million US dollars annually at the end of the nineties – in the following sceptical way:

“The conclusion is the same, whether for countries moving ahead or moving backward in attempted democratic transitions or for countries that are not yet transitional: democracy aid generally does not have major effects on the political direction of the recipient countries. The effects of democracy programs are usually modestly positive, sometimes negligible, and occasionally negative.”¹⁷

Still, he believes that activists in the field of democratisation have learned the lessons of the early years and have visibly increased the professionalism of their work. The major part of the deficiencies he found were due to a practice that was too naïve and, in particular relating to the US, too missionary. Therefore, he does not question the principle of external democracy promotion per se and, moreover, does not recognise any invincible structural barriers for external interventions in this sensitive field. It should be stated that such criticism has already been seen in the older development assistance, where the ongoing refinement of the instruments used has, over decades, improved the performance of individual projects. However, this cannot be said of development programmes let alone for the overall impact on national development. Originally conceived as an instrument of foreign policy, democracy promotion is moreover accused of failing to be in any sense self-critical. In the name of universal values and tried and tested models, it is not only every connection to ‘cultural relativism’ that is rejected. Also the postulates of the development policies, such as target group orientation, ownership, and participation, regarding the design of the cooperation, are largely ignored.¹⁸

Other critics who equally believe in the efficacy of external interventions, such as democracy promotion, doubt their positive character. In their opinion, Western democracy promotion has contributed to the creation of ever expanding “illiberal democracies”, or, at least, has not put a stop to them. According to such critics, this was possible as democracy promotion has focused on the holding of elections and has neglected the equally important dimension of the rule of law.¹⁹ Democracy promotion is

16 Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, Baltimore (JHUP), 1999, p. 272.

17 Carothers, see above (Footnote 6), p. 308, 331. Scepticism also found in: Robert Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics*, Yale (YUP), 1989. Mendelson grants limited effect at best in: Sarah E. Mendelson, *Democracy Assistance and Political Transition in Russia. Between Success and Failure*, in: *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 4, 2001, pp. 68–106.

18 Cf. Friederike Diaby-Pentzlin, *Demokratieförderung in der Praxis der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (EZ) – Chancen für “Politik von unten”?* Conference of the Vereinigung der AfrikanistInnen in Deutschland (VAD) in Leipzig (29th March – 1st April 2000).

19 Fareed Zakaria, *The Rise of Illiberal Democracy*, in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 6, 1997, pp. 22–43.

even thought to have been an essential contribution by the West in producing fundamentally undesirable outcomes – in particular in Russia.²⁰

Another strand of criticism is explicitly and analogously linked to a common sceptical view of development assistance. According to this criticism, useful projects have been carried out; however, these had no lasting impact, as they often exceeded the indigenous capacities of the recipients. So, when funds and experts were withdrawn at the end of given projects, the achievements fell apart – an experience that is apparently common. The argument is that democracy promotion has repeated and is repeating this kind of mistake in a big way:

“Poor countries need democracy, but the democratic institutions and processes they can afford are limited, different from those in use in the established industrial democracies, and probably less than ideal.”²¹

This is held to be true for elections, the realisation of which cost, for example, 4.4 percent of the gross domestic product in Mozambique in 1994 and 73 percent of the budget for public education in Nicaragua in 1996. It is argued that this is also true for the direct support of political parties or non-governmental organisations, in form of technical equipment and finances, which lead to the emergence of a recipient mentality and of expectations of standards that bear no relation to prevailing social realities. The consequence: As soon as the donors pull out, such organisations collapse, as they have a predominantly artificial structure. Although this problem can be countered by a modification of the strategy – guided by demand rather than supply – the fundamental problem continues to exist. The “third wave” of democratisation tried to compensate for social and economic deficiencies with external aid; it is the optimism of this wave that needs to be reviewed right to its core, since “This assumption lies at the root of many expensive and wasteful projects.”²²

Over and above this criticism, democracy promotion is confronted with a structural dilemma that does not exist, in this form, for development assistance: It touches the balance of power in the countries concerned. Here, the two common forms of democracy promotion have to be distinguished. On the one hand, there is the ‘negative’ form that consists of the use of conditions which is based on the readiness of political leaders to perform a cost-benefit analysis in a rational way. ‘Negative’ democracy promotion is thus an integral part of cooperation strategies, though at different entry levels that spread from the protection of fundamental human rights in authoritarian regimes like the Peoples’ Republic of China, to the introduction of democratic measures. Therefore, this form of democracy promotion reflects established internal power structures.

20 Cf. Peter Reddaway, Dimitri Glinski, *The Tragedy of Russia’s Reforms. Market Bolshevism Against Democracy*, Washington D. C. (United States Institute for Peace), 2001; Stephen F. Cohen, *Failed Crusade. America and the Tragedy of Post-Communist Russia*, New York (W. W. Norton), 2000.

21 Marina Ottaway and Theresa Chung, *Toward a New Paradigm*, in: *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1999, p. 100.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 112.

On the other hand, there is 'positive' democracy promotion, which directly interferes into established power structures. This is in stark contrast to economic support that is said, in contradiction to the technocratic assumptions of modernisation theory, to exert a stabilising influence on the existing political order. Democracy promotion rather tends to threaten the political forces that are in power at the time – especially if those forces are not well established. This applies not only to situations where, following the principle of "levelling the playing field", assistance is given to social organisations and parties in opposition,²³ but also to activities, such as the observation of elections, that appear on the surface to be politically neutral. Even 'technical' reforms, which are intended to help improve the working procedures of parliament or the judiciary, influence, to a greater or lesser extent, the distribution of power and, therefore, affect vested interests. To ignore these effects would guarantee the failure of such projects; to let them guide democracy promotion would unacceptably compromise freedom to act. Between these two, only a narrow path remains.

Thus, democracy promotion has the tendency to be, in a political sense, procyclical. It can accelerate the 'original' wave of democratisation that is widely supported internally and it may even direct it constructively. It cannot, however, open up poorly – or newly – established distributions of power in the name of democracy, nor can democracy promotion prevent a move away from the path of democratic virtue. That this is the case is impressively illustrated by the Russian example. Here, the problem was aggravated by the Western side, who operated in a contradictory manner: At an official, international level the person of the Russian president, together with the institution he represented, were idealised as outstanding symbols of democratic change. Whilst it is true that the president deserves the credit for introducing this change, his inconsistent policies have proved to be equally inhibiting. However, at the operational level of technical assistance, the president's democratic opposition, as supposed guarantor for the continuing political reorientation, became the main recipient of democracy promotion. In some respects, this reflects the antagonism between those in the West who believed in the systemic logic of the Cold War when promoting the Russian transformation and those who operated against a background of experiences collected during development assistance in the Third World. The lack of authority of the democratic opposition, together with the democratic unreliability of the official Russia leadership, led to a consolidation of weaknesses in the process of democratisation that slowly developed into a 'demarcation syndrome' on the part of the West. Yet the rigour of this syndrome may offer a reference point, but does not leave much space for much needed cooperation.

23 Mendelson, see above (Footnote 17), p. 74.

3. Democracy as an instrument of political demarcation

The claim that moral values and material interests, in other words idealism and realism, are uniquely bound in Western democratisation politics is an efficient marketing tool, aimed at increasing the budget for development aid. The practice, however, is different, as the example of Western and, in particular, German policies towards the new Russia clearly indicates. Foreign policy is neither determined by the declared aim of idealistically supporting democracy in Russia, nor is there, in the tradition of realism, a genuine foreign policy agenda that completely ignores the democratic values that it is hoped to introduce. In fact, German policy oscillates between the two extremes in a characteristic way. On the one hand, it gives the impression of wanting to serve democracy. However, this is mainly used as means of immunisation against a Russia that, regardless of its political status, one would rather keep at arm's length. That is the *leitmotiv*. On the other hand, it deigns to be on good terms with the Russian power, when the prevailing circumstances of international political interests dictate – this being no more than a tactical variation.

If an historical constant is to be defined in the relationship between Russia and the West, then it is the central role that the West, in all its many forms, plays in Russian politics and in the Russian self-understanding. The reverse is not true. For the powers to the west of its border, Russia was and is again today the political side issue that its geographic location at the margin of Europe might suggest. Only during the Cold War did the country – in the political and ideological guise of the Soviet Union – exist as a significant reference point. Following the logic of zero-sum calculations, Russia, as the counterpoint in the bipolar power structure of the time, had the privilege of a voice, both actively and passively, in how the world was perceived. Today, little or nothing of this remains.

It may only be in the minds of some (geopolitical) theoreticians, with very ambivalent agendas, that geography is of the utmost importance. However, this does not necessarily imply that it has no meaning and could not be used for a symbolic consolidation of political principles. Against this background, the US could easily part with the 'Russia-first' policy of the first Clinton administration, this being simply a relic of the bipolar politics of the Cold War that survived into the new era. However, the 'Russia fatigue' that followed and which persisted up until the 11th September 2001 was certainly not an adequate solution to the problem. It simply emphasised that Russia is, in many respects, distant: "Far from having the *wrong* policy toward Russia, the United States may actually have ceased to have one at all."²⁴

For Germany, whose foreign policy is primarily oriented towards Europe, this cannot be the case. On the European continent, Russia remains to this day, geographically and militarily, by far the largest and most powerful country, regardless of all its apparent

24 Stephen Sestanovich, *The Collapsing Partnership: Why the United States Has No Russia Policy*, in: Robert J. Lieber (ed.), *Eagle Adrift. American Foreign Policy at the End of the Century*, New York 1997, p. 164.

weaknesses. Against this background, the official line in Germany is that “German interests oblige Germany to be engaged.”²⁵ Germany believes that it cannot afford the luxury of a Russia fatigue. But at the same time, it is uncertain as to how to deal with Russia: On the one hand, the country is too large and menacing to be ignored; on the other, it is too far away and too unreliable to be a serious candidate for a partnership.

In some way, the current German indecisiveness with regard to Russia reflects the dual asymmetry that has characterised relations between the two countries for at least two centuries. According to the categories of power politics, Germany – or, prior to the founding of the so-called second empire, its constitutive elements, such as the monarchies of Hohenzollern and Habsburg – was significantly inferior to Russia. This was never clearer than in the period after the Second World War but was also true for most of the 19th century, when, after the Vienna congress, the German states were, in the scathing words of Friedrich Naumann, “like better Balkan states” lying at Russia’s feet.²⁶

On the other hand, in terms of its culture, Germany considered itself far superior to Russia, a claim that was a notable point of agreement between Russian Sapadniki (Westernisers) and German nationalists during the 19th century. It was thus in vein that the famous Prussian historian Heinrich von Treitschke, who joined with the “Northern colossus” in disgust at “the famous civilisation of the Western powers” campaigned furiously to ensure that “we Germans have no cultural conceit and recognise the authority of the despotic forms of the Russian state”.²⁷ It was the shared need for compensatory relief from this dual asymmetry that created a tense but also exciting relationship that was, at its best, productive and innovative and, at its worst, destructive and filled with hate.

Currently, the German attitude towards Russia oscillates between a sort of cultured arrogance, looking down its nose at the Russian potential for chaos, its weakness or the domestic authoritarianism that is, in itself, a “danger” to Germany,²⁸ and the less pronounced respect for its still impressive political and military weight that gives it a “decisive importance” in European security.²⁹ That these two attitudes do not properly fit together has been recognised by, amongst others, Christoph Bertram, who, taking the side of the proponents of chaos theory, stated:

25 Wolfgang Ischinger, German Policy Toward Russia, in “U.S.-Russia Relations”, 24th Conference, 16th – 20th August, 1999, Congressional Program (The Aspen Institute), Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 21.

26 “In the conflict between the West and the East, the East had won and used its victory.” Friedrich Naumann, *Mitteleuropa*, Berlin (Georg Reimer), 1915, p. 47.

27 Heinrich von Treitschke, *Zehn Jahre Deutscher Kämpfe. Schriften zur Tagespolitik*, Berlin (G. Reimer), 1879 (2nd edition), p. 594, p. 598. Such a judgement was born out of a mixture of anti-Western reflex and mere power politics, since: “Today the peace in the world and the new international order are based on the alliance between Germany and Russia; therefore, the agents of France and of the ultramontanists on the Danube and Spree attempt to destroy it using a thousand bad arts.” (p. 596).

28 Wolfgang Ischinger at a discussion meeting about Russia organised by the German Society for Foreign Policy, 3rd September 1998 in Bonn, in: <http://www.dgap.org>.

29 Klaus Kinkel, Chancen für Freiheit, Demokratie und Rechtsstaatlichkeit in Russland, *Bulletin des Presse- und Informationsamtes der Bundesregierung*, No. 14 (9^h February) 1994, p. 126.

“Not Russia’s power but her weakness and vacillation make her a problem for European stability and international security, and her uncertain evolution from instability to consolidation render her, for the foreseeable future, unpredictable and hence unfit to be a reliable and resilient partner for the common order. To recognize this does not mean either to neglect the damage that Russia can still do to international order or to advocate a western policy of isolating that big and troubled country. But it does mean to realize that, as long as Russia remains in the doldrums of stagnation and drift she is not truly capable of underpinning international stability in a sustained way. That stability has to be provided by the West without relying on Russian support.”³⁰

Assuming that it is no longer Russia’s power on the international stage that is the central problem, the strategic consequences are simple in that they reveal a special approach to democratic conditionality: “Since Russian internal instability is the chief challenge, that strategy has to try both to limit the damage that a weak Russia can wreak abroad as well as to encourage her internal consolidation, structural renewal, and democratic resilience.” Therefore, it is demanded that Western policy should be “more engaging and less diplomatic” and that “less cosmetics and more directness” should be expressed.³¹ In other words: As the Western states do not depend on Russia, they can afford the luxury of shaping Russia internally in their own image whilst, at the same time, using those instruments externally that are appropriate to countries that have not (yet) reached the required standards of this model – a bold, better, adventurous combination. This has little to do with political strategy but has a lot to do with the arrogance that does not acknowledge Russia as anything more than the remains of a failed and bankrupt competitor. Neither the internal change intended nor the responsible behaviour in international affairs desired will be achieved in this way.

It only took two, rather small, ethnic wars in Europe and an unprecedented terrorist attack on the US to reveal the emptiness of such rhetoric. The wars in Kosovo and in Chechnya demonstrated as well as the 11th September, each in its own way, that Russia still matters – both in terms of the infliction as well as the limitation of damage. Whereas the Kosovo conflict led German foreign and defence policy to enter into war for the first time in over fifty years – albeit through a multilateral decree legitimised by humanitarian aims – the war in Chechnya was met with sheer helplessness that has been described by the foreign minister, Joschka Fischer, as follows: “If we do a realistic analysis, we will recognise that our power is sufficient to curb Russia’s actions, but not to actually stop them. This is the reality.”³² As a matter of fact, Germany, following a classical realist tradition, did neither. Instead, the foreign minister called upon the high rationality of ‘integration’ and in actual fact pursued a policy of appeasement. This contrasts with his

30 Christoph Bertram, How to Deal with Russia?, in “The Russian Transition. Challenges for German and American Foreign Policy”, Conference Report, Washington D. C. (American Institute for Contemporary German Studies), 10th May 1999, p. 32.

31 Ibid., pp. 32, 36.

32 Foreign minister Joschka Fischer’s speech about the governmental policy regarding Chechnya in the German parliament on the 28th January 2000, in: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>.

decidedly interventionist policies favoured in the Balkan states, even though the ground was prepared by the familiar rhetoric of “political and humanitarian catastrophe”:

“You have to intervene where you can and where all other means have failed. Where intervention is not possible – here I would like to use the example of North Korea, another nuclear power, whose own population is barbarically oppressed – ‘integration’ has to be attempted by using other instruments such as was done during the Cold War.”³³

Apart from the fact that complexity can rarely be reduced to a single alternative, Fischer’s hypothesis reveals a strangely romantic understanding of history: The (proxy) wars of the bipolar era were rarely if ever accompanied by a policy of integration. On the contrary, these conflicts were always in danger of escalating far beyond the immediate cause and locality. Integration was only an ex-post-phenomenon that resulted from the seventies’ re-interpretation of earlier crises. It was supposed to contribute to making repetition of such crises impossible. Moreover, in today’s world, such integrationist policies are nothing more than a violation of or even a break with those values and duties that have been declared to be the democratic essence of the post-socialist transition process. This equates to a logic that is dictated by the balance of power. It does not, however, correspond with the progress of civilisation or of democratic values. And it fundamentally contradicts the official rhetoric that has declared the latter to be the decisive political standard.

That – in a constructive way – considerations of power politics can replace idealistic ones was demonstrated a year before when the German Government, in particular, tried hard to integrate Russia in a diplomatic solution to the Kosovo crisis – at a time when a military solution by NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia, was considered increasingly unlikely to succeed. It was one of few cases in which Russia’s genuine importance was appreciated and the new post-Soviet Russia was both accepted and flattered as a partner in the politics of security. Only in the aftermath of 11 September Russia became again, and on a much broader basis, an integral part of Western endeavours when it declared its readiness to join the global alliance to fight international terrorism.

The political machinations that surrounded the Kosovo war at least revealed that German diplomacy has more freedom in the much-praised alliance than the traditional patterns of German-Russian relations would lead us to believe.³⁴ However, since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, a coherent German policy towards Russia has neither evolved nor can it be discerned. Germany sticks to the goals of transforming Russia into an economically prosperous nation that is an honest democratic partner in questions of security. Since it does not seem possible to meet what has now become the occidental standard, German policy does not appear to be capable of deciding whether Russia should

33 Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, 9th December 1999 in the radio programme “ARD-Morgenmagazin”, topic: Chechnya, in: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>.

34 Until then, the German side had reacted with multilaterally inspired reservation to the Russian multipolar courtship. The result was a passiveness that did not perceive the bilateral opportunity nor tried to influence the supposed multilateral restrictions.

be accepted as real partner (strategic or otherwise) or should be treated as virtual enemy, and whether the goals of international cooperation should be given priority over goals of internal transformation. Undoubtedly, this lack of resolution cannot be viewed independently of circumstances in Russia, which do not offer a simple starting point. At the same time, the lack of focus in foreign policy has contributed to an opening of domestic floodgates. In this way, politics has become the victim of public opinion that, after 'Gorbi-Mania' died down, is at best indifferent, at worst hostile towards Russia.

In view of the current circumstances of trans-national communication and interaction, international relations are no longer a subject for cabinet politics. Therefore, the common perception of political, economic and social (dis)order and the questions of identity have gained significance. In other words, foreign policy no longer follows its own logic and rationality, assuming it ever did. However, the extent to which developments inside Russia – be it the new complex situation, which destabilises the perception more than the real circumstances, be it poverty and criminality – determine Russia's image in Germany, as well as in the Western world, is unprecedented. This is only plausible when one takes into account that there are no goals or interests that could act as the foundation for a genuine foreign policy agenda towards Russia, a situation that essentially prevailed up until 11 September. Moreover, it must be noted that Russia is measured against a democratic yardstick that ignores the questionable achievements of all the other CIS states but which, at the same time, the candidates applying for membership of the European Union would feel honoured to meet. This might also be the explanation for the widely deplored reductionist focus of Western contact diplomacy on the democratically idealised Soviet and Russian presidents. This reductionism certainly reflected the concentration of political power on the Russian president. Above all, however, it expressed a lack of readiness to expose oneself to Russia's complex political landscape. What could have been easier than having the two warriors of light – Gorbachev and Yeltsin – struggling against the forces of darkness? They were symbols for – but not guarantors of – the introduction and continuation of a reform process that followed Western models and were also prepared to continue to cooperate with the West. This allowed the West to work for their political survival and to keep at the same time a distance from the country as a whole.³⁵ The visible and noticeable strengthening of the 'power vertical' in Russian parlance with the arrival of the new president Vladimir Putin has both made this focus superfluous and revealed the dubious character of such policies.

Just as it was at the beginning of the Cold War, Russia's catastrophic image appears to be a "great relief" (Peter Bender) to the political establishment. This image once made reconciliation unnecessary and renders today the temptation to enter into a possibly

35 This is not so very new: "It is strange that this firmly rooted alliance has maintained its original dynastic character to this day. As the friendship of the courts warms, the relationship between the two nations cools" – a gap between the official cooperation at the top and mutual perception at the base already existed in the 19th century, as Heinrich von Treitschke reported with sorrow, see above (Footnote 27), p. 598.

exclusive partnership illusionary. To summarise: In public opinion as well as in official decision-making, Russia is portrayed as a black hole that is about to implode or explode. Russia is a country with an impoverished and either desperate or fatalistic population that is governed by criminal structures and exploited by an oligarchy of oil and financial barons. It is a country with a governmental apparatus that appears either as a Potemkin village on the edge of collapse or a copy of the omnipotent Soviet machine, stripped of any ideology: authoritarian, interventionist and completely corrupt. As many items can be added to this list as one likes. Moreover, both the heart patient Yeltsin and the judoka Putin can be portrayed as ideal representatives of the political and social reality.

This has little to do with reality and much to do with spin: Such a country can in no way be regarded as a reliable partner, nor does it command excessive respect as an enemy. It is much more plausible that a country that is portrayed in this way appears as the source of every imaginable and uncontrollable risk – completely ignoring the fact that not one of the catastrophic scenarios presented in the last decade has come about. Nonetheless, this perception has infiltrated the making of German policy towards Russia. Christoph Bertram's plea, which aims at firmly pointing out to Russia its limitations, is representative of the general mood in the part of government and society that has professional dealings with German foreign policy. The message is: If Russia wants to be taken seriously as a partner, it has to address its internal disorder and it has to complete the transformation process in the way intended by the technical help of Western spin-doctors.

Strobe Talbott has explained, in the name of the US, how this is to be understood. Although, it is generally stressed that Western promotion of democracy in Russia must not follow a universal model and must not be forced, there is no doubt that attempts are made to export a recipe that has been successful at home to all corners of the world:

“The American response to democrats in Russia and everywhere should be: Welcome to the terra firma of real politics, which for us is terra cognita; as you find your way, we'll be with you, through all the fits and starts, so long as you keep moving in the right direction.”³⁶

However, following this direction has so far not at all guaranteed Russia access to the decision-making centres of the Western Alliance; only when – in the wake of the terrorist attacks – it proved a valuable security partner at least NATO opened up a bit.

Even more than ten years after Perestroika initiated the transformation process in Russia, the political agenda of the West reads as if Mikhail Gorbachev still had to struggle against forces long gone. This agenda is being advanced in spite of the declared reservations of the Russian leadership and the growing unease of the Russian public. The fundamental attitude of the West, which in this respect matches the German attitude, is revealed when the two statements that could be characterised as guiding principles for the relations between the European Union and Russia are compared. The EU defined two “clear strategic aims” towards Russia and confirmed the principles of the partnership agreement of 1994 in their “Common Strategy” of 1999:

36 Talbott, see above (Footnote 10), p. 62.

- a stable, open and pluralistic democracy in Russia, governed by the rule of law and underpinning a prosperous market economy benefiting alike all the people of Russia and of the European Union,
- maintaining European stability, promoting global security and responding to the common challenges of the continent through intensified cooperation with Russia.³⁷

Even when the declaratory nature of such a document is taken into account, an attitude is expressed, which is similar to that applying to Third World countries to which member states have a paternalistic relationship, due to former colonial links: Domestic goals, such as the introduction of democracy and the market economy, are placed on the same level as common international goals like stability and security. In addition, the link between the two remains unclear. Justification for such a domestic agenda is only provided when this is in the explicit interest of the addressee. This was undoubtedly true at the very beginning of the transition in Russia, even though the questions of what shape democracy and the market economy should have and how they should be achieved were being hotly debated in the country at the time. Today, the Russian leadership demonstratively emphasises the principle of equality, to counter any impression that it plays an inferior role in an already asymmetrical relationship. Thus in responding to the “Common Strategy” of the EU, Russia was at pains to stress the “common interests” and the principle of “reciprocity” and underlined its freedom to act independently: “Russia should retain its freedom to determine and implement its domestic and foreign policies”. Not least, the Russian document made clear that Russia has more and different things to offer than simply working through the EU agenda.³⁸

The Russian attitude is no doubt in contrast to popular expectations in the West, which assume the unstoppable global spread of Western democratic ideas of government and society and which even attempt to define the terms and conditions for this spread. Therefore, with democracy and the market economy alone, Russia cannot expect to be allowed to participate in all the alliances and organisations to which her self-declared models belong. On the contrary, arguments are put forward that are geo-strategically inspired and all too familiar from the school of realism. Therefore, it is no surprise that Russia too sticks to the logic of her multipolar concept in her response to the EU, even though Moscow itself is not particularly satisfied with the results of its transformation process. A stable foundation for cooperation can, thus, hardly be built, when the former permanent secretary at the foreign office and current ambassador in Washington, Wolfgang Ischinger, still believes that Russia must be pinned down to the transformation goals of the EU. He demands, rather biasedly: “Now it will depend on the synchronisation

37 “Common Strategy of the European Union of 4th June 1999 on Russia” (1999/414/CFSP).

38 “Russia Common Strategy Towards the EU” in the edition of the delegation of the European Commission in Russia.

of each other's ideas. However, this requires that Russia accepts the democracy promoting goals of the EU as the foundation for partnership."³⁹ Why should this be so?

This claim not only aims to create the necessary preconditions for a true partnership in Russia. It is also, against the background of the dual asymmetry mentioned above, an expression of a reappearance of the cultural inequality between the East and the West that has arisen since the fall of Marxism and Leninism. That this is accompanied by a "complacent conceit in questions of culture" (Heinrich von Treitschke) comes as no surprise. In all openness, the introduction of democracy and the market economy appears, in the eyes of many Westerners, to be a new attempt at "civilising the Russians"⁴⁰ or, as others prefer, more diplomatically, at least a contribution to the 'Europeanisation' of the country.⁴¹ Even Strobe Talbott justifies his plea for a "strategic alliance with Russian reform" – that changed to "strategic patience" after continuing frustrations – with the intention of transforming Russia into "a normal, modern state".

Such a political approach must appear thoroughly paternalistic, and not only to Russian eyes, as it aggravates the basic dilemma of the dual asymmetry: As Russia searches for genuine international cooperation that corresponds, more or less, with her desperate wish to be recognized as a great power, she is regularly presented with responses that consist of calls for domestic transformation. The social and economic transformation, however, is inseparably linked with the extraordinary decline of the country. Therefore, such a reaction can, in the short and medium term, only strengthen the common feelings of inferiority, which further weaken the political and social foundations required to realise such political aims in the domestic realm. This can only be countered when Russian foreign policy is taken seriously. In other words, compensatory actions – including on a purely symbolic level – are required to complement those activities that are promoting democracy within Russia – and this cannot wait until another crusade against terrorism has led to another global coalition.

39 And he continues: "Whereas Russia recognises the European Union predominantly as economic partner, the European Union has always understood the partnership with Russia in a political way. Therefore, the latter insists on laying down norms about democracy and the rule of law." Wolfgang Ischinger, *Russia as European Power*, lecture in Tutzing 2nd July 2000, p. 3, in: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>. Cf. Warren Christopher on the 22nd March 1993: "The most important point is that Russia must remain a democracy moving toward a market economy. That is the only basis for our new U.S.-Russian partnership." *USPIT*, No. 30, 1993, p. 20.

40 Martin Walker, "Russia and the West. What Is to Be Done Now", *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 1994, p. 5.

41 Wolfgang Ischinger, opening statement, *Russia-Symposium of the Baden-Baden-Foundation*, 1st October 2000, p. 1, in: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>.

4. Promotion of democracy in practice

As demonstrated, not only does the Western side regard democratic conditions as a basic prerequisite for cooperative relations, also, the securing, stabilisation and the establishment of democracy attract special attention in the prevailing political climate of Putin's state centrism. It is in this sense that a number of outstanding American experts suggest that the Bush administration should not only reaffirm conditionality towards Russia but also actively intervene in her domestic affairs:

“[T]he new U.S. administration needs to stress that the preservation of democracy in Russia is a precondition for cooperation and integration into the Western community of states. Putin wants to make Russia a great European power once again. The new administration should regularly and clearly remind him that all great European powers today are democracies. It is not enough, however, to try to convince Putin and his government to adhere to democratic practices for reasons of self-interest. Instead, the United States must become more engaged in defending and assisting those individuals and organizations within Russia fighting for democratic institutions and values. Unlike the debate about the market, the debate about democracy in Russia is not over.”⁴²

According to the authors, the practical consequences of this should include halving American economic support and increasing democracy support from 16 to 40 million US dollars annually.⁴³ Funds for the promotion of democracy are to be given predominantly to non-governmental organisations, instead of the government, in order to support civil society rather than promoting the formation of state institutions. This reveals two fundamental problems inherent in Western cooperation with Russia: One consists of identifying appropriate recipients, the selection of whom reflects the relative readiness for conflict or cooperation between the Western donors and the Russia establishment, in Moscow as well as in the regional capitals. The other problem concerns the relative importance of the promotion of democracy compared to other categories, in particular economic assistance. The latter calls for a short overview of the volume and progress of resource transfers, with which the Western donor countries, the US, Germany and the European Union, have supported the transition process in Russia since 1992.

4.1. Aid as reflected in changing policies

In contrast to original assumptions, the introduction of democracy and the market economy into Russia has proven to be a task that will last not years but decades. Consequently, the fundamental domestic preconditions for sustained beneficial relations – in the sense of the concept of the ‘democratic peace’ – have not yet been achieved. Nevertheless, such a noble goal is worth any effort, including financial obligations. Yet in the short term, there is a gap between rhetorical attention, easily given, and the expensive transfer of funds. In addition, the conflict of interests that is guided by short-term benefits

42 “An Agenda for Renewal...”, see above (Footnote 1), p. 38.

43 See details on page 26.

in both the political and economic fields, cannot easily be compensated for by long term planning. In fact, the contradiction between long term necessities and short-term needs has turned out to be one of the most difficult conflicts in Western support of the Russian transformation process.

The most important Western donors not only agreed with the goals of the transformation process, they also agreed with their own tendency not to get too much involved financially, particularly as any economic benefits were not immediately recognisable. Today, looking back, there can be little doubt that the donors failed to do justice to the historical task before them, which was lost in the daily bureaucratic life of administering funds. The US administration provides but one characteristic example. From the beginning, the US attempted to solve the conflict between short- and long-term calculations of benefits by following the trusted concept of maximising yield whilst minimising one's own contribution. Congressman Tom Lantos explained frankly, in 1993, how such a concept could work: "It's unrealistic to expect major contributions from the United States, but not unrealistic to expect major leadership from the United States."⁴⁴ Nevertheless, this utterance was made at a time when American bilateral transfers were at a high point. These transfers fell into three categories: The "Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme" (Nunn-Lugar) that, under the aegis of the Pentagon, was supposed to support the securing and demolition of weapons of mass destruction; the food support programme, monitored by the Ministry of Agriculture; and the actual transformation programme, under the "Freedom Support Act", carried out by USAID, the "Agency for International Development" and monitored by the State Department. The "Freedom Support Act" governs both economic assistance and the support of democratisation and promised aid to the amount of 2.7 billion US dollars between 1992 and 2000. Of this, a relatively high percentage, amounting to 2.3 billion US dollars was actually paid out (see Table 1).

Table 1: Bilateral US Aid Programmes for the Russian Federation (million US dollars)

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Food aid	130	1 030	30	30	20	10	./.	1 160	200
Nunn-Lugar	10	170	260	150	170	250	280	390	430
Freedom Support Act	90	310	1 000	360	220	140	210	160	180
Other	20	40	30	20	140	190	220	420	250

Source: US General Accounting Office, *Foreign Assistance to Russia*, GAO-01-8, p. 164.

44 Citation as in Bierling, as above (Footnote 14), p. 239.

About half of all funds donated under the “Freedom Support Act” were given in the year 1994, which saw the beginning of the international reform offensive, early in the Clinton administration. This aid was linked to the hope that, through a drastic increase of transfers, in particular in the fields of privatisation and of reform of the capital market, Russia’s reform process would experience a jump-start. As is now clear, this was not the case. By the mid-nineties, annual aid shrank to about 200 million US dollars and the gap between the US financial contributions and the US claim of leadership increased. As a consequence, the role of acting as the decisive agency for the coordination, provision and monitoring of Western aid to Russia was assigned to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in collaboration with the World Bank. Accordingly, the IMF and the World Bank became by far the biggest donors. The World Bank promised 12.1 billion US dollars for 46 projects in Russia between 1992 and 2000, 7.5 billion of which have actually been transferred. After a slow start, the loans given by the IMF amounted to 22 billion US dollars, of which Russia already paid off 8 billion in the second half of the nineties. The more important these two donors became, the more the genuine promotion of democracy was pushed into the background, as direct ‘political’ questions, aside from the rather technocratic notion of ‘good governance’, are not considered in their allocation of funds.

In contrast to some official utterances, the same was also true of Germany, which did not live up to contrasting claims of being a generous donor placing few demands on Russia. It is true that Germany has been the biggest bilateral financier, not only of the old Soviet Union but also of the new Russia, but German aid was also linked to particularistic political and economic interests: Its aid was the result neither of reconciliatory altruism nor of a long-sighted transformation strategy. In other words, Germany demonstrated generosity when the subject of transformation still was a side issue and its contributions declined, when demands for definite reform measures grew proportionately.

In the first half of the nineties, it was the settlement of the after-effects of German unification that was the primary concern of the German government. This included the financial costs of the unification and the withdrawal of the Soviet army, as well as the preservation of economic relations between enterprises of the former GDR and their clients in Russia. Against this background, Germany consented to give unprecedented funds, amounting to approximately 100 billion German Marks. However, of these, only 4.4 billion German Marks or less than five percent were directed towards technical or humanitarian aid.⁴⁵

45 Approximately 17 billion German Marks were lost subsidies for financing the withdrawal of the Soviet army; 33 billion were credit guarantees for German exports; 12.4 billion were used for the conversion of debts of the former Soviet Union within the scope of the Parisian Club of public creditors; 20.6 billion (according to German calculations) were used to balance Rouble transfer deals that had been inherited from the GDR and were frozen until 2001; the German contribution to multilateral programmes (TACIS, EBRD) amounted to about 2 billion, compare “Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Große Anfrage der Fraktionen der CDU/CSU und F.D.P.,” German Parliament, 12th legislative period, Document 12/6162.

By the mid-nineties hopes of supporting East German industry's transition to the market economy with the help of the Russian market were finally dashed and the completion of the withdrawal of the Soviet army removed the last potential lever for political pressure. It was not until then that Russia's democratisation and the introduction of the market economy attained the status of political goals in their own right and were no longer the subject of compromises for the benefit of special German interests. However, now financial restrictions – resulting from the financial consequences of German unification and the criteria of stability demanded by the European Monetary Union – could be felt and they were given more importance in the political decision-making process. The argument put forward in 1994 by the former foreign secretary, Klaus Kinkel, who stated that there could not be “more money for fewer reforms” cannot hide the fact that the reason for the generous German contributions had simply ceased to exist.⁴⁶

From the mid-nineties, fresh money was only given to an extent that expressed a continuing interest but which did not suggest a priority area. The only exception to this was in the spring of 1996, when a 4 billion German Marks block of credit was granted (and officially guaranteed), which was designed to demonstratively support Boris Yeltsin, who was in a supposedly hopeless position against his communist competitor in the forthcoming election. This credit formed the high point in a symbolic policy that was reduced to the person and office of the president. Even the Hermes export guarantees, covering political and economic risks, reliable instruments for the promotion of German exports were gradually reduced and finally frozen, when Russian insolvency became a real possibility. Only in 2000 were contributions resumed on a moderate scale of up to 1 billion German Marks. The German government's TRANSFORM programme, founded in 1994, aimed at rationalising technical help for a total of 11 ‘transformation countries’ in Central and Eastern Europe. Originally, it paid 70 million German Marks to Russia annually. In 2000, after drastic cuts, an annual 27 million German Marks is all that was left (see Table 2).

Table 2: Bilateral technical cooperation between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Russian Federation (TRANSFORM-Programme, million German Marks)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Russia	70	72.4	47	41.5	33.6	27
<i>Percentage of total programme volume</i>	25 %	25 %	27 %	28 %	26 %	24.5 %
Poland	31	28	18	14	7	6
Ukraine	29	29	30	25	20.3	./.

Source: Ministry of Economics; Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

46 Citation as in Bierling, as above (Footnote 14), p. 274.

Its multilateral counterpart, the European Union's TACIS programme for the CIS member states and Mongolia, amounted to a total of 1.3 billion Euros of direct aid for Russia between 1991 and 2000 and a further 700 million Euros of indirect aid, within the scope of common programmes. Therefore, Russia received more than a third of the total (see *Table 3*).⁴⁷

It was a paradox: During the time when the promotion of democracy and the market economy in Russia advanced rhetorically to be the most prominent goals of Western policies, the readiness to make financial contributions supporting these goals decreased steadily. Even worse: Although it is the done thing in the West to complain that Russia's reform process has failed or at least has not yet been successful, earlier financial contributions, intended to support this reform process, are reclaimed consistently in repeated negotiations on rescheduling debts. The German management of debts, in particular debts that Russia had to take over from the Soviet Union and those that have been crystallised out of the socialist inheritance of the GDR, demonstrates impressively how the goal of transformation is sacrificed on the altar of short-term and short-sighted interests. While the US repeatedly demonstrated leadership and spoke out for the, at least partial, reduction of debts – which is not excessively demanding, in view of her limited exposure – the German government has regularly opposed such ideas.

47 In 2000, only 92 million Euro were given: 38 million for the TACIS-countries programme, 20 million for a programme promoting small and medium sized companies and the SPP, 34 million for the TACIS programme for nuclear security. See *Tacis in Russia*, No. 6, November 2000, <http://www.eur.ru/eng/tacis>.

Table 3: TACIS-Contributions: Recipient countries (1991 – 1999, million Euros)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Total
Armenia	2.3	9.6	17.0	0.0	6.0	14.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	58.9
Azerbaijan	0.4	12.5	8.0	8.0	6.0	16.0	0.0	26.8	9.5	87.2
Baltic States *	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
Belarus	8.9	14.6	9.0	7.0	12.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	56.6
Georgia	5.0	9.0	6.0	8.0	6.0	16.0	0.0	16.0	0.0	66.0
Kazakhstan	7.7	20.6	14.0	14.0	15.0	0.0	24.0	0.0	23.9	119.2
Kirgistan	0.7	9.2	10.0	0.0	8.0	0.0	13.0	0.0	12.0	52.9
Moldova	1.1	9.0	0.0	10.0	9.0	0.0	18.0	0.0	19.5	66.6
Mongolia	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.0	0.0	9.5	0.0	11.0	0.0	28.5
Russia	212.0	111.0	160.8	150.0	161.2	133.0	132.9	139.7	101.0	1301.5
Tajikistan	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.0
Turkmenistan	0.9	8.8	0.0	8.0	4.0	0.0	11.5	0.0	8.5	41.7
Ukraine	28.7	48.3	43.3	50.5	72.5	76.0	59.0	44.0	46.0	468.2
Uzbekistan	1.7	18.8	0.0	15.0	10.0	28.0	0.0	29.0	0.0	102.5
Regional programmes**	106.0	88.6	172.0	131.5	124.5	152.0	135.0	155.8	129.4	1194.8
Coordination of donors***	0.0	34.9	21.0	24.7	40.0	43.0	37.0	43.0	44.4	288.0
Programme costs****	6.2	24.0	11.1	21.0	23.0	37.5	34.5	31.9	33.5	222.6
Other*****	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0	11.0	11.9	0.0	0.0	42.9
Total	396.5	418.9	472.1	469.7	511.2	536.0	481.7	507.2	427.6	4220.9

Source: European Commission, annual report 1999 about the TACIS-programme.

* The Baltic States have been receiving funds within the scope of the PHARE Programme since 1992.

** Including Interstate Programme, Nuclear Safety Programme and Programme for Cross Border Cooperation.

*** Including EBRD Bangkok Facility and International Science and Technology Centre.

**** Including coordination, information, monitoring and evaluation.

***** Including democracy programme.

4.2. Democracy promotion – symbolic reference to political rhetoric?

Even when Western support for the transformation process in Russia aimed, of course, at providing financial help for the success of this process, it also proved to be a public relations show for the entertainment of domestic audiences. At this point, the reader is

reminded of the bombastic announcements of the G7 states in the first half of the nineties, which time and again bundled concrete promises from the past and vague intentions for the future in new and weightier aid packets. The high point was reached in the spring of 1993, when a G7 meeting in Tokyo announced aid amounting to 43 billion US dollars. However, when scrutinised, only 3 billion of those 43 billion US dollars proved to be new and could actually be retrieved.

A quantitative study of democracy promotion encounters similar problems. The donors use very different categories with varying degrees of transparency and, when presenting their own contribution, marketing plays as important a role as the needs of the recipients. Thus, the data obtainable can hardly be compared. As a reminder, the principal elements of 'positive' democracy promotion are listed here. 'Positive' democracy promotion aims at creating democratic institutions, either through political advice or in the form of organising and monitoring elections; it also aims at strengthening civil society and promotes independent media, as well as political parties and non-governmental organisations, including human rights groups, environmental organisations, women's groups or trade unions. As the rule of law is usually regarded as a constitutive pillar of democratic systems, the consolidation and modernisation of the legislature should be included in this category.

Among the Western donors, it is the United States that gives the most attention to democracy promotion, in public relations as well as practical politics. According to official sources, programmes that serve the promotion of democracy and the rule of law constitute 24 per cent of activities that fall within the scope of the "Freedom Support Act".⁴⁸ This has provided a framework for such US activities since October 1992 and has three goals: the promotion of market reform, the creation of a democratic state and the cushioning of the social costs of the transition process. The second goal consists of creating a transparent and open government, answerable to the public, the self-organisation of citizens and democratic and political procedures that ensure participation in the political and economic life as much as respect for human rights and fundamental liberties. The contributions can be assigned to the categories described in Table 4 which demonstrates that there are considerable fluctuations and shifts, not only relating to absolute but also to relative figures. At the beginning, when supply was at its lowest, humanitarian aid was dominant. From 1993 to 1996, support for economic change came to the fore, whereas democratic transformation has been given more weight since 1997. In 1999, the volume of the latter even overtook the category "market reform" – though with a general tendency to decrease.

Other sources judge the share belonging to democracy promotion to be considerably less. According to a study by the Carnegie Foundation, democracy promotion received only 133 million US dollars between 1990 and 1999 (out of a calculated total contribution

48 General Accounting Office, *International Efforts to Aid Russia's Transition Have Had Mixed Results*, GAO-01-8, p. 18.

by the US of 4.47 billion US dollars). This would amount to no more than 6 per cent of the total contributions falling within the scope of the “Freedom Support Act”. The same study claims that the European Union gave 271 million US dollars, twice as much as the US (the total contributions of the EU were given as only 1.42 billion US dollars).⁴⁹ The differences between the US and EU contributions are explained not only by a varying base of total contributions but, above all, by the different official definitions of contribution categories. In the example cited here, the EU commission was more generous and included funds for education and the administrative reform, whereas the data for US Aid are based exclusively on the promotion of civil society.⁵⁰ Similarly, differences in the details of US contributions can be explained.

Table 4: “Freedom Support Act”, distribution by category (million US dollars)

	Market reforms	Democracy and the rule of law	Social costs
1992	17.58	8.05 / 9%	44.86
1993	205.09	52.86 / 17%	45.41
1994	572.30	213.33 / 21%	123.32
1995	210.83	74.00 / 21%	62.58
1996	136.66	42.40 / 19%	27.84
1997	72.23	46.56 / 33%	15.76
1998	125.69	57.48 / 27%	18.10
1999	46.83	72.44 / 45%	28.80
2000	32.53	64.06 / 36%	23.32
Total	<i>1419.74</i>	<i>631.18 / 24%</i>	<i>389.99</i>

Source: US General Accounting Office, *Foreign Assistance to Russia*, GAO-01-8, p. 170.

49 Sarah E. Mendelson and John K. Glenn, *Democracy Assistance and NGO Strategies in Post-Communist Societies*, Washington, D. C. (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Working Papers, No. 8), February 2000, p. 63. Funds for the democracy promotion were significantly higher in eastern Central Europe (US: \$599 million, PHARE: \$891 million), as well as in the other states of the CIS (US: \$222 million, PHARE: \$393 million) in absolute and in relative terms. This is in agreement with other sources from the Carnegie Foundation, which determine that democracy promotion – after denuclearisation, economic reform and humanitarian projects – amounts to only \$130 million and therefore only constitutes 2.2 percent of a calculated total volume of American aid for Russia of \$5.45 billion between 1992 and 1998. Compare “An Agenda for Renewal...” see above (Footnote 1), p. 39.

50 The relevant study names examples of US projects: “promote party formation through training of activists in ‘election readiness’ and campaign techniques (direct mail, polling, advertising)”, “promote coalitions to minimize competition between like-minded candidates”, “promote transparency in elections by advising domestic election monitoring groups”, “promote youth and women candidates”, “professionalize media outlets”, “train journalists”, “provide equipment” and “promote economic viability”, *ibid.*, p. 4.

The IMF and the World Bank interpreted their original task in a traditionally restrictive way. Consequently, hardly a single one of their contributions could be assigned to democracy promotion in more than a very indirect sense. The IMF in particular – while focussing on macro economic stability in Russia until the end of the nineties – neglected the promotion of even those rudimentary institutions that are indispensable for the functioning of a market economy. This fatal omission has been universally criticised and has sometimes been blamed for the unsatisfactory development of economic transformation. The Deutsche Bank Research, for example, made the criticism that the “focus on text book macro-adjustment has neglected the institutional prerequisites for economic development – the rule of law and an impartial administration”.⁵¹ Another example for this kind of criticism is found in the audit of the US General Accounting Office. The Office makes the criticism that the IMF popularised the wrong assumptions of all Western donors, that market liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation will lead to an automatic and gradual development of the necessary institutional facilities.⁵² Initially, to pay inappropriate attention to these institutions appeared to be an attempt to revive the socialist (and failed) planned economy.

As already mentioned, the European Union gives an impression that is rather confusing. According to the – evidently wrong – presentation of the US General Accounting Office, democratisation of Russia was of minor importance for the promotion within the European TACIS-programme. The US General Accounting Office also concludes that democratisation only became a central goal in 2000. According to the GAO, in the years before and particularly during the early phase of the Russian transformation process, up until 1994, the promotion of economic reforms and of human capital were the focus of interest and used up most of the available resources.⁵³

This agrees only partially with the EU’s presentation of its own activities.⁵⁴ On the one hand, the European Commission admits that the promotion of democracy has yet to play

51 A summary of the judgement of the Deutsche Bank Research about the programmes that the IMF supported and inspired (and their negative impact on the stability of Russian democracy) reads as follows: “Arguably, the IMF-led macro-programmes have even contributed to the country’s collapse in autumn 1998: a fixed exchange rate has not been useful for a country that depends on volatile commodities prices, the capital account liberalisation had destabilising effects, (...) Especially the benign neglect with which the IMF treated government wage arrears has undermined public institutions.” Deutsche Bank Research, Country Brief: How should the West support economic reform in Russia?, 5th July 2000.

52 General Accounting Office, International Efforts to Aid Russia’s Transition Have Had Mixed Results, GAO-01-8, p. 11.

53 Ibid., pp. 61,187.

54 The GAO’s judgement is obviously not based on the regular “Action Programme” of 2000 but on the “Core Action Programme” that was initiated in view of the second war in Chechnya on the 28th June 2000. In December 1999, the Helsinki summit decided that all TACIS activities except for the ones directly promoting democratic values and civil society in Russia were to be frozen. The “Core Action Programme” simply realised this decision. Therefore, it might be understandable, that this was seen as the first focus on democracy. It has a volume of 34 million Euro, of which only 11 million are spent on five classic democracy promotion projects (see Tacis in Russia, No. 4, June 2000). The reinstated regular “Action

a major role in the programmes for individual countries. On the other hand, the so-called “PHARE and TACIS Democracy Programme (PTDP)” was already initiated in 1992. Within the scope of this programme, Russia received about 17 million ECU’s between 1993 and 1996.⁵⁵ For the total period from 1991 until 1999, the Commission claims that 32 million Euros were donated in the form of “other” EU contributions to Russia, the major part of which were probably designated for democracy promotion as part of the PTDP (*see Table 5*). This amount is modest when compared to US contributions and reflects the fact that the promotion of democracy is linked tightly to the major goal of supporting non-governmental organizations, the training of parliamentary practices and the support of independent media.

In principle, three types of projects, “macro”, “micro” and “ad-hoc”, are carried out within the PTDF. Half of all macro projects administered in Brussels were centred on the promotion of non-governmental organisations. Similarly, smaller NGO’s are referred to the micro projects, for which local EU delegations are responsible. Ad-hoc projects take up a third of the total volume of the programme. They are initiated by the Commission in response to an “urgent request” or the identification of “specific needs”. A quarter of the ad-hoc projects are carried out within common programmes with the Council of Europe. The aim is to improve the involvement of participating countries in the Council’s activities. Therefore, assistance is given for legislative processes – for example for the implementation of a convention against torture, for the training of judges and for the observing and enforcement of human and civil rights. Further fields of assistance are parliamentary practice, the observation of elections, the training of journalists and the education of citizens. In addition, human rights were rated “highest priority” in Russia. Therefore, the “monitoring of security structures” – including the training of public servants and armed forces – was given a higher attention than in other countries.⁵⁶

An evaluation concludes that, although the EU Democracy Programme has been valued highly, its significance is limited if only because of the relatively small volume:

“The Phare Tacis Democracy Programme is relatively small compared with overall Western democracy assistance. Moreover, it is only one element of an array of programmes funded under the Phare and Tacis programmes aimed at assisting democracy.”⁵⁷

Programme” that has a volume of 38 million Euro is dedicated to the support of the economic programme of the new Russian government.

55 Calculated using the amounts given in “Evaluation of the PHARE and TACIS Democracy Programme 1992–1997”, p. 5, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/evaluation/reports/tacis/951432.pdf>.

56 *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 71. Projects carried out in Russia within the programme are as follows: “Democracy and the rule of law” (via the Council of Europe), 1,182,000 ECU, the training of young members of parliament by the private School for Political Studies in Moscow, 271,670 ECU, a seminar about human rights by the Advanced Educational Training Institute in Moscow, 261,308 ECU, election support (in cooperation with the OSCE), 140,000 ECU, training of journalists (in cooperation with the Gasperi Foundation Rome and the Moscow State University), 199,785 ECU.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 76.

Contrary to the opinion of the GAO, the individual TACIS country programmes have, for some time, also been including projects that can be assigned to the promotion of democracy in both a narrow and a wider sense. This includes projects supporting administrative reforms that contribute to the formation of institutions. They aim to improve the central political decision-making process and increase the efficiency of the administration at all levels of government. They are also meant to create a stable environment for economic activities. Furthermore, they involve educational and training measures that support the formation of civil society.

**Table 5: TACIS-Funds for the Russian Federation:
distribution by category 1991-1999 (million Euros)**

Programmes for individual countries	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Nuclear safety and the environment	13	0	0	0	0
Company restructuring and development of the private sector	27	30	55	43	41
Reform of public administration, social services and education	47	25	44	19	53
Agriculture and food	51	21	13	16	17
Energy	42	16	21	20	18
Transport	33	15	14	14	13
Political advice and small projects	0	0	0	19	0
Telecommunications	0	5	5	4	5
Other	0	0	10	15	15
Subtotal	213	112	162	150	162
Other programmes					
The data are based on the assumption that 50% of all funds for the NIS are directed to Russia.					
Regional programmes*	25	12	35	24	23
Nuclear Safety	27	30	44	33	30
Coordination of donors**	0	28	10	10	20
Programme overheads***	3	12	6	11	12
Other****	0	0	0	5	5
Subtotal	55	82	95	83	90
<i>Total</i>	<i>267</i>	<i>193</i>	<i>256</i>	<i>233</i>	<i>250</i>

Table 5 (cont.)

Programmes for individual countries	1996	1997	1998	1999	Total
Nuclear safety and the environment	6	5	10	8	42
Company restructuring and development of the private sector	31	29	32	18	306
Reform of public administration, social services and education	34	27	33	20	302
Agriculture and food	11	13	9	5	156
Energy	12	13	9	4	155
Transport	9	7	8	5	118
Political advice and small projects	26	31	28	23	127
Telecommunications	3	4	3	2	31
Other	3	4	10	8	65
Subtotal	135	133	142	93	1302
Other programmes The data are based on the assumption that 50% of all funds for the NIS are directed to Russia.					
Regional programmes*	25	21	22	16	203
Nuclear Safety	40	34	17	12	267
Coordination of donors**	25	27	29	29	178
Programme overheads***	19	17	16	19	115
Other****	6	6	5	5	32
Subtotal	115	105	89	81	795
<i>Total</i>	<i>248</i>	<i>238</i>	<i>228</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>2097</i>

Source: Development Researchers' Network: An evaluation of the Tacis Country Programme in Russia. Final Synthesis report. Vol. 1, January 2000, p. 7, <http://www.eur.ru/eng/tacis/er.html>.

* Including "Interstate and Cross-Border Cooperation" (since 1996).

** Including 50% of EBRD Bangkok Facility and of the International Science and Technology Centre.

*** Including coordination, monitoring, information and evaluation.

**** Including democracy programme.

It is only since the beginning of the second TACIS programme phase in 1995 that these tasks have been prioritised in Russia.⁵⁸ Part of the small project programme is the field of direct political advice, which was introduced in 1992. It is understood as contributing to the formation of institutions and is designed to meet the short-term needs of important decision-makers in recipient countries for political advice, for example on legislative procedures.⁵⁹

The German federal government's TRANSFORM programme, like the activities of the German federal states, exclusively aims to promote economic change in Russia and to strengthen bilateral economic relations. It certainly makes contributions that could be assigned to the formation of institutions, such as "governmental and legal advice" and "administrative assistance". The link to the promotion of democracy is, however, weak. They deal exclusively with the transfer of economic and financial knowledge, in contrast to the comparable fields of the TACIS programme (compare the distribution categories in 2000 in Table 6).⁶⁰

Table 6: TRANSFORM-projects in Russia in 2000: distribution by category

Category	Thousand German Marks	%
Governmental and legal advice	2 250	8.3
Support for private companies	11 076	41.1
Training in the economy	9 385	34.8
Financial sector	2 050	7.6
Agricultural sector	1 250	4.6
Administrative assistance	750	2.8
Other	200	0.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>26 961</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: German embassy in Moscow: *Das deutsche TRANSFORM-Programm für die russische Wirtschaft*, http://www.germany.org.ru/de/wirtschaft/wi06_p.html.

58 Cf. Development Researcher's Network, *An evaluation of the Tacis Country Programme in Russia Final Synthesis Report*. Final Synthesis report. Vol. 1, January 2000, p. 24, <http://www.eur.ru/eng/tacis/er.html>.

59 Cf. European Commission: *Evaluation of the Tacis Policy Advice Programme 1999*. Final Report June, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/evaluation/reports/tacis/951475.pdf>. Other small project programmes include 'civil society', 'training' and 'international standardisation'.

60 Cf. "TRANSFORM-Programm der Bundesregierung für Osteuropa", *BMZ spezial*, No. 16, August 2000. According to the German embassy in Moscow, some examples of projects are named here: Establishment of suitable conditions for investment and financial instruments aimed at increasing German or foreign investments in the regions" in cooperation with the Russian Federation Council, advice for the State Duma concerning questions of privatisation, banking reform, agricultural policy and advice for the reform of civil, trade and economic law.

In the bilateral technical cooperation between Germany and Russia, the traditional division of labour is maintained to a greater extent than in development assistance. This division assigns political assistance and, therefore, the promotion of democracy to the political foundations that are more or less independent from the government. The activities of these foundations are not subject to the rules that require transparency in public institutions. Nevertheless, it is estimated that the five relevant foundations that now exist – the Friedrich-Ebert, the Konrad-Adenauer, the Friedrich-Naumann, the Heinrich-Böll and the Rosa-Luxemburg foundations – have about 3 million Euros at their disposal to cover both the costs of projects in Russia and their own infrastructure.⁶¹

4.3. The effects of democracy promotion: an interim report

According to conservative estimates, the US, Germany and the European Union have spent 200 million US dollars for the promotion of democracy since the foundation of the Russian Federation on the 1st January 1992. Less conservative estimates speak of up to 1 billion US dollars. This only takes into account one, albeit important, part of the external support, as other official bilateral donors, such as Great Britain and France, are excluded in this estimate, as is the relevant contribution of private institutions such as the Soros Foundation. Yet the number of studies into the effects of democracy programmes and projects is comparatively small. There is a complete lack of scientific analysis and external evaluations are rare. Only internal evaluations of the donor organisations can be found in greater numbers.⁶²

Such evaluations come to the more or less unanimous conclusions, already familiar from other experiences in development assistance, that the record has been mixed: Success and failure are found in equal measure. The assessment of individual projects is positive but it is agreed that they have contributed little or nothing to the most challenging goal of consolidating democracy in Russia. At best, only indirect effects can be observed which, however, can be neither measured nor checked. Such a conclusion naturally raises the question as to the purpose of these projects, given that their effect is small or negligible. Nevertheless, the recommendations are unequivocal – another familiar phenomenon: The real costs and the potential benefits are to be considered

61 All political foundations except for the last one have their own offices in Moscow. Concerning the general role of the foundations in the German democratisation politics see Joachim Betz, *Die Demokratie-exportpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, in: Hanisch (ed.), see above (Footnote 5), pp. 203–230; Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, *Foreign political aid: the German political foundations and their US counterparts*, in: *International Affairs* (London), Vol. 67, No. 1, 1991, pp. 33–63.

62 Concerning the external evaluations special attention should be given to the study of Mendelson, Glenn, from 1997/98, see above (Footnote 49), initiated and financed by the Carnegie Foundation and to the last report of the US General Accounting Office, *International Efforts to Aid Russia's Transition Have Had Mixed Results*, GAO-01-8. The internal evaluations initiated by donors include the evaluation of the PHARE/TACIS democracy programme for 1992 to 1997 (published in September 1997), the extensive evaluation of the TACIS country programme Russia that was published in January 2001 and the evaluation of the TACIS Policy Advice programme from June 1999.

carefully, and the programmes for the promotion of democracy are to be continued with increased effort.

Two reasons are repeatedly given, which are thought to explain why the continuing promotion of democracy is not able to have a decisive structural impact on a country of the size of Russia. On the one hand, it is claimed that the financial contributions fell far short of meeting the requirements of such a task and that they never could do justice to the problem. For example, the evaluation study of the EU democracy programme states:

“Democracy assistance is a comparatively minor instrument in assisting the process of democratisation. Of its nature, such assistance can never be more than enabling, helping those individuals in society who already are working for democracy. Moreover, the scale of democracy assistance is nowhere commensurate with the magnitude of the challenge.”⁶³

On the other hand, others point out that every attempt at external intervention meets its limits when an open domestic environment is not present and when the internal balance of power is directed against it. For example, Thomas Carothers sums the situation up as follows:

“Although Western aid generally plays a positive role, official aid is, after ten years, at something of an impasse: where it works, that is, where governments and major institutions make good use of it, it is not essential; where it is really needed, in the many countries failing in their economic and political transitions, it does not work well because the main recipients are rarely committed to genuine reform. In this context, aid to promote civil society is of critical importance.”⁶⁴

As is commonly agreed, Russia belongs to the ‘grey zone’ between authoritarianism and mature democracy. The therapy, it is suggested, is to turn away from the cooperative formation of institutions and take care of civil society. In this way, civil society should be able to resist the political elite that is thought to be responsible for the stagnation of the democratisation process. The starting point for this is provided by the results of the evaluation of the promotion of non-governmental organisations (NGO’s) in Russia and elsewhere. With respect to the NGO’s, the promotion of democracy has left considerable traces, even though critical voices point out the generally hybrid character of those organisations that were founded with Western help and even though this example confirms Marina Ottaway’s fundamental criticism (see *above page 9*). The evaluation of the EU activities concludes:

“The most significant impact of Western democracy assistance in general, and the PTDP in particular, has been the contribution to the growth of a lively NGO sector in all countries. The NGO sector has been important in lobbying for political reform to correct weaknesses in both formal and substantive democracy, in providing a bulwark against the reversion to authoritarianism, in changing political culture particularly where it has spread to the countryside, and in providing a form of critical monitoring of the evolution of democracy.”⁶⁵

63 PTDP Evaluation Report, see above (Footnote 55), p. 76.

64 Thomas Carothers, *Western Civil-Society Aid to Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, <http://www.ceip.org>.

65 PTDP Evaluation Report, see above (Footnote 55), p. 5.

It is claimed that Western assistance is indispensable for the growth of the NGO sector, particularly in Russia, and this not only for financial but also for psychological, political and pragmatic reasons. This growth is linked to an increasing political influence and, therefore, the NGO's are ascribed a significant indirect impact on the democratisation process. However, there are a number of NGO's, in Russia, in which the Western partner plays a much greater role than national members.⁶⁶ Sarah Mendelson and John Glenn point this out in their external evaluation of the USAID programme. They observed that NGO's and political parties have been successfully formed with only limited financial funds. Yet, it has not been possible for these to form a proper base in their respective societies: "In every case examined, however, these very institutions function poorly with weak links to their own societies." Political parties do not look after their voters, private media limit themselves to being mouthpieces for their owners, and social organisations have left the care of the state to come under the care of their transnational partners.⁶⁷

It is thus questionable whether the introduction of Western election campaign methods, from electronic office equipment to addressing the voter directly, truly had the effect of having changed the course of the ship into a democratic direction in the mid-nineties.⁶⁸ Around this time the last case occurred in which the fight against the alleged communist danger unified the darlings of Western foreign policies, at the top of the state, and the darlings of Western democratisers, at society's base. For the communist party neither Western assistance nor Western campaign techniques had any impact when achieving success in the Duma elections in 1995 and experiencing failure in the 1996 presidential elections – they were simply non-existent. Its only strengths were also its main weaknesses: the broad, though predominantly sclerotic, membership and the professional, if Soviet socialist, party apparatus. As a truly authentic power of the past the communist party has never had a real chance. On the other hand, the current president uses techniques completely at odds with those in the US, regarding both the content and the communication of his campaign. And he does so with extraordinary success.⁶⁹ After all, rulers in the provinces and in Moscow have proved on several occasions that they have enough influence to generate the desired election results, even whilst maintaining a democratic façade. At most, Western influence has ensured that this façade is considered to be necessary, replacing, as it does, the other, clumsier, forms of manipulation practised in regions such as Tatarstan, Bashkortostan or the Kalmykia's Steppe.

66 *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 56.

67 Mendelson, Glenn, see above (Footnote 49), Executive Summary.

68 In this case Mendelson is optimistic, see above (Footnote 17), pp. 80–84.

69 Although having been noticed, the question is not asked whether the relevant advice for the Yeltsin election campaign really had the decisive role it is claimed to have had, see *ibid.*, p. 98. Mendelson about Putin: "Putin made clear his disdain for campaigning with the statement: 'These videos, their advertising. I will not be trying to find out in the course of my election campaign which is more important, Tampax or Snickers', a clear allusion to campaigning as a Western marketing technique."

This touches on the fundamental problem of how the details of the promotion of democracy are conceived beyond a financial commitment: Which internal body is chosen to be responsible for externally induced activities and how is it chosen. The American promotion of democracy, in particular, has combined the continuation of an anti-communist crusade and the instruments of development assistance in a particular way. This did not pose a problem in the early phase of the Russian transformation process, as the then broad, as well as diffuse, democratic camp agreed on all points and welcomed any support towards a “return to the civilised world” and against the powers of darkness. By 1993, this situation had already ceased to exist. Since then, “civilised” support is given to “authentic” democrats, consisting of a core of former activists, towered over by the protagonists Yegor Gaydar and Grigory Yavlinsky, who are supported by an ever dwindling membership and falling share of the vote. These former activists have succeeded more than others in meeting the democratic criteria laid down by their foreign donors – not least because of their frequent presence abroad. In fact, this remains as the sole achievement in the democratisation process in Russia, both for them and for other Western favourites.

The “Russia’s Choice” and “Yabloko” parties, as well as most of the others, have been nothing more than vehicles for their founders and leaders, as they vie to distinguish themselves from each other. Therefore, it is not surprising that the external hope of creating a common movement, that is “getting the dems together”, has been dashed again and again. Democrats not only had to live with the stigma of being kept by foreign powers but also with the suspicion that they were being operated by remote control. This did nothing to enhance their political impact. In actual fact, the very openness of the intervention by external political powers, as practised by an official American aid programme such as the “Freedom Support Act”, must have fed suspicions. To illustrate this point: Supposing organisations, such as the US International Republican Institute (IRI) and the US National Democratic Institute of International Affairs (NDI) formed the basic organisation of the German conservative and liberal parties, worded and tested their election platforms, with the help of focus groups, designed and printed their campaign materials and coordinated constituency candidates? Something like this happened in Germany under the name of ‘re-education’ and was based on unconditional capitulation as well as on having the status of an occupied country. Since 1992, however, this has been happening in Russia, supported by an American democracy promotion that is inspired by the universal validity of their own life experience and of their ultimate victory over the communist powers of darkness. Moreover, the emphasis is meant to continue well into future.⁷⁰ The German political foundations, as well as the European Union, have withdrawn from such actions. It is true that their political reference points are not fundamentally different from those of the American ‘democratisers’, but the anti-communist

70 See Sarah E. Mendelson, *Western Assistance and the Development of Parties and Elections in Russia*, mimeo, Autumn 1999.

verve is less and the empathy, influenced by broad-based experiences in development assistance, is more pronounced.

An interventionist democracy promotion of this sort is problematic, particularly because the legitimate goal of establishing commonly accepted democratic procedures in Russia is replaced by the goal of achieving a certain political result. In the early phase of transformation, the two goals were congruent, as the support of democratic forces against the established communists also worked for the introduction and protection of democratic procedures. Yet, the on-going support of those political forces regarded to be genuine democrats, according to external criteria, cannot be justified anymore by contributing to the transformation of an 'electoral democracy' into a 'substantial democracy'. The more heterogeneous the real and potential enemies of democracy are, the more difficult it is to identify those enemies, and the democratic quality of political activists can no longer be judged by how much they are involved in turning the tide against the ancien régime – a criterion that has, in fact, always been questionable. Comfort can be found in the finding that such promotion of particular political powers has met with little success, in Russia and elsewhere:

“The bad news from the postcommunist world is that a lot of money was spent on introducing agendas from the outside and creating nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that pleased external donors. The good news is that this effort did not work.”⁷¹

However, since such a diagnosis brings not relief but alarm, the goal of democracy itself is in danger of being damaged and of being not only associated with economic decline but also with foreign influence. The attempt to externally influence the democratisation process in Russia remains a long-term venture, the result of which can hardly be predicted. Thus, besides a carefully designed and implemented concept of supporting the NGO sector, presence in the regions is a further essential criterion. It is true that there were (mainly rhetorical) Western moves away from Moscow in the nineties, but major parts of the country are still given only marginal attention. A counterweight, in the sense of checks and balances, for the Muscovite centre and its political elite cannot be created this way. Table 7 shows the example of the TRANSFORM aid, with its primarily economic goals, and how the main part – approximately 70 per cent – of the contributions of the German government is directed to the national elite in the two centres – Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Similar observations can be made for the EU TACIS programme, which, in the second half of the nineties, turned back to the federal level, in order, as it is put officially, to accelerate the reform process.

71 Irena Lasota, *Sometimes Less Is More*, in: *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 10, No. 4, October 1999, p. 128.

Table 7: TRANSFORM projects in Russia in 2000: regional distribution

Region	Thousand German Marks	%
City of Moscow	450	1.7
Oblast Moscow	1 760	6.5
Oblast Leningrad	488	1.8
City of St. Petersburg	1 709	6.3
Others (e.g. Samara, Yaroslavl, Voronesh)	2 480	9.2
Regional venture funds	4 501	16.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>11 388</i>	<i>42.2</i>
<i>For central government</i>	<i>15 600</i>	<i>57.8</i>

Source: German embassy Moscow: *Das deutsche TRANSFORM-Programm für die russische Wirtschaft*, http://www.germany.org.ru/de/wirtschaft/wi06_p.html.

Intensive communication and transnational contacts are necessary, though not in themselves sufficient, to gradually overcome the discrepancies that stand in the way of the goal of democratisation. In the times of the Soviet Union, such relations were very limited indeed and were little improved in the transitional phase between 1989 and 1992. However, there have since been significant, although not continuous, changes for the better in most areas, these being based more on individual initiative than on the lure of financial reward. For example, there are more Russian than American students at German universities nowadays. By no means all are in receipt of German stipends. After Poland, they represent, along with China and France, the largest and fastest growing group of foreign students (see Table 8).

Table 8: Foreign students in Germany

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Russia	1236	1868	2553	3109	3622	4182	4930	5946
China	5752	5821	5726	5425	4980	5017	5366	6526
USA	4436	4476	4371	4142	3993	3926	3719	3576
Poland	2714	3262	3813	4652	5271	5965	7015	8181
France	4733	5219	5617	5609	5894	6077	6146	6204

Source: German Department for Statistics

Unfortunately, a considerable asymmetry can be observed as, according to the data available, there are comparatively far fewer German students in Russia.⁷² The area of twinning between towns provides another example. Although there is less contact, in terms both of number and closeness of contact, than in West European networks, the number of such arrangements is increasing continuously and now exceeds one hundred. Both examples are in fields where individual commitment not only comes first, before the financial concerns, but also remains the dominant factor in the relationship. It is true that individual initiatives have a lasting effect, but limitations to or a lack of financial assistance restrict the number of such initiatives in a way that goes against the aim of indirectly promoting democracy.

5. Conclusions

The attempt to influence the democratisation process externally has already proved to be difficult in countries of the Third World, the sovereignty of which is compromised, both internally and externally, by the extent to which they are dependent on aid from the North. This problem applies all the more to a country of Russia's size, where current problems and their historical roots are deep and political ambitions and expectations are high. Western efforts in the nineties to help the "third wave" of democratisation from the outside strongly confirm the conclusions of Thomas Carothers:

"The effects of these programs are usually modest and sometimes paltry. They rarely determine political outcomes or fundamentally reshape political systems. Nonetheless, they positively affect the skills and outlook of thousands of political actors in other countries and over the long term contribute to helping democratization advance."⁷³

In the long run, it will become increasingly difficult to distinguish cause from effect. Thus, the external promotion of democracy can, at best, only be a contribution to a process that leads quickly from the overthrow of authoritarianism to the creation of democratic institutions. As a rule however, despite all the differences found between different systems, much more time is needed before these institutions function democratically. The attempt to use technical aid and direct interventions to create political systems that are compatible with one's own, an approach particularly popular amongst American 'democratisers', is doomed to fail in both the short and, even more so, in the longer term. The Russian example demonstrates that having the 'right' people at the 'right' places is not, in itself, sufficient to secure democracy. This also applies to the equally popular approach, which reduces democratic processes to a set of technocratic procedures. Here, too, the verdict on

72 Not many concrete pieces of information about German students in Russia are available. According to UNESCO, the number of students from East and West Germany enrolled at universities in the former Soviet Union has plummeted from 1500 students in 1987 to 96 students in the Russian Federation in 1994.

73 Carothers, *The Clinton Record*, see above (Footnote 14), p. 4.

ten years of democracy promotion is clear: "Democracy promoters must get out of the habit of shoving American-made institutional blueprints down foreigners' throats and learn to take their cue from local contexts and desires."⁷⁴ Whether Western assistance is still required today is questionable. Furthermore, democracy promotion has, since the mid-nineties, proved to be markedly counter-productive in Russia. It damaged both the favoured democratic forces and, at the same time, the very reputation of democracy as a political system. The export of democracy, so conceived, has to be replaced by the promotion of a real exchange, which includes partnerships between communities and federations, as well as the exchange of pupils, students and academics. For this, the financial possibilities are still deplorably limited.

Additionally, much of the talk about democracy, on both the Western and the Russian side, has, in fact, been referring to the market economy. This criticism does not have to go as far as the two fundamental critics of post-socialist 'market bolshevism', Peter Reddaway and Dimitri Glinski, who have reached the diagnosis that forced economic transformation is the main cause for what they regard as the striking failure of democratisation:

"Therefore, the choice of the ruling elite and its Western allies for an abrupt marketization, privatization, and deregulation led very rapidly – and with full awareness on the part of key Russian participants like Yeltsin and Gaidar – to the abandonment of the democratic road to reforms."⁷⁵

Following classic modernisation theory, economic and political transformations were simply equated with one another, so denying the contradictions between the two. Furthermore, the concentration of Western resources into the economy resolved these contradictions in a manner that was, de facto, in favour of the market. Thus, undesirable developments were promoted, especially in Russia, including popular ideas of authoritarian modernisation, as represented by the iron hand of a Pinochet, and the development of an oligarchic economy and, therefore, politics. So, the basis of the parallel promotion of democracy was considerably weakened.

Also, in continental Europe, the border between the democratically idealised occident and the doomed autocratic orient is prominently drawn between the countries associated with the European Union and Russia, effectively preventing the international environment from becoming a dominant source of infection for the democratic spirit. It is true that democracy in Russia is welcomed by the West, in particular by Germany, but the suspicion remains as to whether democracy is being promoted seriously. It seems that other factors ultimately set the tone for relationships with this country. This impression has been reinforced since 11 September and it applies, in particular, to Germany.

74 Gideon Rose, *Democracy Promotion and American Foreign Policy. A Review Essay*, in: *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 3, 2000/01, p. 199.

75 Reddaway, Glinski, as above (Footnote 20), p. 56. Also note the following citation: "the preference the West gave to its and Russia's IMF-style marketeers, coupled with a much cooler attitude toward the democratic movement as a whole, helped unleash the bacchanalia of shock therapy and privatization of the state. This preference contributed heavily to the defeat of democrats and democratic values at the present stage of Russian history." (p. 58)

To this very day, the relationship between the West, in particular Germany, and Russia is characterised by the dual asymmetry that has had an irresistible influence for more than two centuries. German foreign policy is torn between a superiority complex, with respect to culture, and an inferiority complex, with respect to power politics. A picture is so presented that is full of contradictions. On the one hand, official Germany is not at all convinced of new Russia's successes, with regard to transformation. After ten years of acting as a role-model, in respect of culture, Germany still feels it necessary to continue – in line with its Western partners – to give priority to democratic change and market reforms as conditionalities in its policy towards Russia. On the other hand, Germany, amongst others, has been noticeably quiet when it comes to blatant violations of human rights and the “humanitarian catastrophe” of Chechnya, for which Russia is responsible – obviously paying tribute to the realities of political power. On the one hand, Germany declares that it is ready to acknowledge Russia as a great power and recognises Russia's central role, be it in the maintenance of security and stability in continental Europe, be it in the fight against terrorism. On the other hand, it has, in the past, either kept quiet or even contributed to challenges to Russia's status, as for example in the first round of talks on NATO enlargement. Germany demonstrated its material generosity when it paid the Russian rulers to leave its unexpectedly unified country. It has, however, proven to be much more reluctant in contributing to the historical task of bringing highly vaunted Western cultural values to Russia itself.

Cast in a favourable light, the central significance currently given in German foreign policy to the consolidation of democracy and the market economy in Russia might be seen as attempt to buy time. As long nobody knows what to do with a ‘multipolar’ Russia, Germany, a symbol of multilateralism, can continue to hope that Russia's problems will one day solve themselves. However, a less favourable view is that the far-reaching Western postulates for transformation could be perceived as attempt to establish a world order that asks for simple obedience. From this point of view, the question of whether Russia belongs to Europe sounds familiar, as does the former imperialist response that Russia only has to be reformed and made smaller to fit.⁷⁶

To date, German, as well as Western, policies have been noticeably indecisive and aimless. This means in practice that cooperation with Russia is accepted to the extent of repeatedly offering a “strategic partnership”. At the same time caution and the necessity of “strategic circumspection” is postulated, in order to counter the innumerable risks that could arise from such cooperation. It also means that Russia is required to adopt the democratic and market economic aims of transformation that can only be met in the distant future. Yet until the dictates of a new common security threat proved otherwise,

76 Cf. German concepts that were popular before the change in circumstances of 1992, described as war aims by Paul Rohrbach, *Russland und wir*, Stuttgart (Engelhorn's Nachf.) 1915. These ideas have not ended together with the old European order. They can equally be found in the divisionist fantasies of Zbigniew Brzezinski (*The Grand Chessboard. American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York (Basic Books), 1997) who has repeatedly irritated his Russian readers.

the West was not prepared to start its own transformation and open the doors of the Western community to Russia. But still, taking into account that the Russian demands for great power cooperation are anything but unfounded, the symbolic, as well as pragmatic, importance of potential membership of NATO for the continuation of the internal change in the “right direction”, as Strobe Talbott once put it, should not be underestimated. In the case of the smaller East European states, policies on the expansion of NATO and the EU have incorporated the belief that internal transformation processes have to be supported from outside. It is implausible that this should not also be true for Russia. It is only thus that the pragmatism demanded can be more than a muddling through, governed by the declared belief that the scope available in cooperative relationships is ultimately determined by the economic and political system of the partner, which is decided mainly, but not exclusively, in Russia.