

Energy Relations Between Russia and China in the Post-Cold War Era : Cooperation Motives Vs Competition Challenges

العلاقات الطاقوية بين روسيا والصين لما بعد الحرب الباردة:

دوافع التعاون في مواجهة تحديات التنافس



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Abstract:

The object of this study is the analysis and interpretation of **Russia's Foreign Policy to wards China sincethe end of the cold-war** ; in order to achieve this, we have highlighted the general framework of the formulation and the the execution of Russia's foreign policy during this period, its national interests set as objectives to be achieved through this policy based on the **ECONOMY**, in general, and especially on the use of its **ENERGYRESOURCES**, as a **TOOL** to achieve this objectives ; afterwards, we established a certain evaluation of this russian strategy as well as its prospects and its future evolution. In **conclusion**, we noted that national interest still remains a driving force in the formulation and execution of RUSSIA's foreign policy, like other states, even in post-Cold War times.

key words: Russia, China, Strategic Partnership, Energy Relations, Cooperation and Competition.

المخلص:

موضوع هذه الدراسة يتعلق بتحليل ومناقشة السياسة الخارجية الروسية تجاه الصين منذ نهاية الحرب الباردة. وعليه، قمنا برسم الإطار العام لصياغة وتنفيذ السياسة الخارجية الروسية خلال هذه الفترة، وتحديد أهدافها في ظل تركيزها على الجانب الاقتصادي وتأمين مواردها الطبيعية، وعلى وجه الخصوص مواردها الطاقوية، ثم بينا كيفية استخدام روسيا لهذه الموارد الطاقوية في سياستها تجاه الصين، ومعاينة مدى نجاحها في تحقيق مصالحها القومية من خلال هذه السياسة ؛ وأخيرا، اقترحنا صورة عن آفاقها المستقبلية ؛ في الختام توصلنا إلى أنّ المصلحة القومية بقت المحرك الرئيسي في صياغة وتنفيذ السياسة الخارجية لروسيا، على غرار باقي الدول، حتى في زمن ما بعد الحرب الباردة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: روسيا، الصين، الشراكة الاستراتيجية، العلاقات الطاقوية، التعاون والتنافس.

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Introduction:

In the post-Cold War era, which was particularly characterized by a decline in the role of Military Power in managing international relations ; Russia, with Putin's rise to power, resorted to a strategy of maximizing the role of the economic dimension in its foreign policy, especially by exploiting its Energy Resources. The problematic that arises regarding its relations with China is: ***How did Russia use its Energy Resources as a Tool in its pursuit of achieving its National Interests on the occasion of its dealing with China?***

To address this problematic, we formulated the **main question** of our study as follows: ***how and why does Russia use the energy factor in its foreign policy in general and its relations with china in particular ?.***

To answer this question, we have choose treating the following **sub-questions**:

- * what are the contexts of Russia's orientation towards this policy of relying on its energy resources in its foreign policy in general and in its relations with china in particular ?,
- * what are the motives for establishing energy ties with china ?,
- * what are the challenges facing these bilateral relations ?,
- * and finally, what are their future prospects ?.

In order to analyze and solve this problematic, we proposed **two hypothesis**:

- * If there is convergence of interests between Russia and China in the energy field, we will witness cooperation between the two countries in this regard.
- * If there is conflict and divergence of interests between *Russia* and *China* in the energy field, we will witness cooperation between the two countries in this regard.

Methodology:

To answer the above main question and the sub-questions associated with it , we will focus on the following issues: determining the priorities of Russian foreign policy during the post-Cold War, determining the internal and external contexts and factors that led Russia to rely and focus on the economic dimension in its foreign policy since 2000, determining how Russia uses its energy resources to achieve its foreign policy goals in its dealings with China, and how Russia succeeded in achieving its Objectives (National Interests) in this endeavour.

The First Topic:

Russian Foreign Policy Formulating Framework

In this chapter about the general framework concerning the formulation of Russia's foreign policy, we will discuss in the first requirement the following issues: the priorities of this policy in the political, economic and military spheres; in the second requirement, we will address the issue of economic orientation in this policy through the following points: the origin of this orientation in the post-Cold War period and determining its content; in the third requirement, we will talk about the internal and external contexts in which Russia adopted this orientation in its foreign policy; and in the fourth requirement, we will show the importance of energy resources in this Russian orientation by identifying the characteristics of the global energy market and the position of Russia in this area.

The First Requirement: Russian Foreign Policy Priorities

Foreign policy priorities in the political, military, and economic fields express the **National Interests** that **Russia** seeks to achieve at the **external level** ; these priorities include the following:

First Section: Political Priorities

Among the Russian foreign policy priorities in the political sphere, we can cite the following: protecting the Russian model of governance¹, keeping the former Soviet republics under Russia's direct political influence, realizing the principle of Multi polarity to confront Unipolarity and intensifying its participation in various international bodies and institutions in order to defend Russian National Interests.

Second Section: Economic Priorities

In order to accomplish its economic renaissance, we can mention that: * Russia is doing its best to value its natural resources, * Russia seeks to diversify its relations in the economic field, * It gave special importance to the issue of its accession to the **World Trade Organization** (it is what **Russia** has achieved for years).²

Third Section: Military Priorities

* preserving regional integrity, * preserving the stability and security of its immediate neighborhood countries, which Russia considers as an extension of its national security;³ from here, came Russia's keenness to keep its nuclear weapons to confirm and consecrate its international standing.⁴

¹-Laurent, Vinatier .*Les Relations UE – Russie : Moscou Pose Ses Conditions*. Policy Paper . Notre Europe . N° 20 . Mars 2006 . P. 12

²- نفس المرجع السابق.

³-Iona-Iulica, Vpoicu& Madeleine, Pepenel. *Energy Insecurity Crisis : The Case Of Georgia*. European Journal Of Inter-Disciplinary Studies. Issue N° 03. December 2010 . P. 33.

⁴- أ. / آيت عبد السلام، صابر. *التوجهات الكبرى للاستراتيجية الروسية بعد الحرب الباردة* .

The Second Requirement:

The Economic Orientation in Russian Foreign Policy

The economic orientation of Russia's foreign policy represents a change in order to adapt to the conditions of the post- Cold War era ; to understand this Russian endeavor, we will address the following issues:

First Section: The Emergence of the Economic Orientation in Russian Foreign Policy

Due to the increasing importance of the Economic Power in international relations during the post-Cold War era, Russia planned to achieve its Economic Renaissance;¹so, since assuming presidency, Vladimir Putin has relied on a policy based on integrated pillars, including: political pragmatism, Russia's maintenance of a deterrent military force, and all of this is supported by an economic force that serves as the solid core of the new Russian renaissance project².

Second Section: The content of economic orientation in Russian foreign policy

Russia seeks, with all determination, to provide appropriate conditions to achieve its National Renaissance through the policy of Economic Adjustment³; this policy aims to confirm and consolidate a comprehensive power strategy.⁴

The Third Requirement: Contexts of the emergence of the economic orientation in Russian foreign policy

The economic orientation of Russia's foreign policy occurred under the following context:

The First section: External contexts

The economic orientation of *Russian Foreign Policy* since 2000 came under unprecedented international circumstances, which are characterized by a *Global Unipolarity* led by America and a *Comprehensive Economic Globalization*.

على الرابط الإلكتروني :

http://internationalstudiesbridges_blogspot_com/

¹- Isabelle, Facon .La Politique Extérieure De La Russie De Poutine :Acquis, Difficultés Et Contraintes. FRS. Fondation Pour La Recherche Stratégique. N° 62, Septembre 2011. P. 553.

²- Paul-Henry, Dasseleer. Enjeux Politiques d'un Acteur Économique dans le Secteur Énergétique : GazProm . Les Acteurs Privés au Service d'une Vision Géopolitique. Bruxelles : Centre d'études de Sécurité et de Défense. p. 44.

³- Dmitri, Kriziliev. La Russie Et L'Union Européenne : Histoire, État Et Perspectives De Partenariat . Mémoire Présenté Pour Obtenir Le Diplôme De Master En Administration Publique .Ena / Paris.2005. P. 28.

⁴-Victor, Bernard .[Et All] . Quelle Stratégie De Puissance Pour La Russie?. BDC École De Guerre Économique . N° 12 .2006 . p. 06.

The Second section: Internal contexts

After the great collapse that Russia experienced, as a result of the “shock therapy policy” pursued under President Yeltsin's rule, a Russian political class emerged with a vision that gives a major role to the economy in the process of building the State's power, and believes that Economic Renaissance is the pre-requisite (sine-qua-non) condition for Russia's return as a Super-Power on the global level.

The Fourth Requirement: The importance of energy resources in Russian foreign policy

To highlight the importance of energy resources in the economic direction of Russian foreign policy, we chose to review the following issues:

The First section: Characteristics of the Global Energy Market

Among the characteristics of the global energy market, we mention the following¹:

- * High prices of energy resources.
- * Increasing threats targeting routes for transporting energy resources across the seas (not the security of supply routes).
- * The beginning of the depletion of global energy reserves.
- * The astonishing increase in the volume of consumption of energy resources and the steady increase in demand for them.
- * Increased risks of natural disasters.

The Second section: Russia's position in the energy field at the global level

One of the factors that allowed Russia to opt for this approach is its availability of enormous energy resources, as illustrated in the following two tables, the first (Table No. 1) representing the period before the *Ukrainian Crisis*, and the other (Table No. 2) representing the period post – crisis.

Russia was widely described as an Energy Superpower. It has the World's Largest Proven Natural Gas Reserves, the Second-Largest Coal Reserves, the Eighth-Largest Oil Reserves, and the Largest Oil Shale Reserves in Europe ; Russia is also the World's Leading Natural Gas Exporter, the Second-Largest Natural Gas Producer, and the Second-Largest Oil Producer and Exporter.

¹-Khader, Bichara. *Quelle Sécurité Énergétique Pour L'UE ? Cas Du Pétrole Et Du Gaz* . Géostratégiques. N°2. Juillet 2008.

Table N°1:Russia's Production And Exports of Energy Resources In 2012

Energy	Sector	Year	Russia Rank in the World	(%) Russian Production / Total World Production
<u>Gas</u>	Production	2012	2	19,1%
	Export	2012	1	22,3
<u>Oil</u>	Production	2012	2	12,6
	Export	2012	2	12,5
<u>Coal</u>	Production	2012	6	04,5
	Export	2012	4	08,8
<u>Electricity</u>	Production	2011	3	04,8
	Export	2011	4	08

Source :Table created by the author, data taken from the article:« **RUSSIA** ».on the **electronic link**:<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russia>

Table N°2:Russia's Production And Exports of Energy Resources In 2023

Energy	Sector	Year	Russia Rank in the World	Russian Production/Total World Production(%)
<u>Gas</u>	Production	2023	2	14,4
	Export	2023	2	14,7
<u>Oil</u>	Production	2023	2	12
	Export	2023	3	09,9
<u>Coal</u>	Production	2023	6	05,1
	Export	2023	3	15,2
<u>Electricity</u>	Production	2023	4	03,9
	Export	2021	6	02,7

Source :Table created by the author, data taken from the article:« **ENERGY IN RUSSIA** ».on the **electronic link**:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_in_Russia

Russia has moved towards this direction based on its awareness that its **energy resources** are considered a pillar of its strength at the internal level, and a pillar of its international standing as well, which allows it to play regional and global roles¹.

¹- نورهان، الشيخ. سياسة الطاقة الروسية وتأثيرها على التوازن الاستراتيجي العالمي. قضايا المركز الدولي للدراسات المستقبلية والاستراتيجية. العدد 10، السنة الأولى. أفريل 2005.

The Second Topic

The Importance of Energy Relations in Economic Cooperation Between Russia and China:

If political considerations played a decisive role in the emergence of the *Strategic Partnership* between **Russia** and **China**, the Economic Goals have a major impact in establishing this partnership ; and the economic relations between Moscow and Beijing began to strengthen little by little, especially since they signed the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in 2001;¹ with this qualitative Shift in Russian Politics, Russia seeks to achieve a number of Strategic Objectives, including:

* Developing infrastructure in Russian Far East. * Transferring advanced technology to develop the Russian economy. * Bringing capital to invest in the **Russian Economy**.

As for **China**, the rulers in Beijing are aware of their need to **cooperate** with the **Russian neighbor**, especially with the blockade imposed on China in the wake of the Tiananmen Square events in the late eighties of the twentieth century;² it is worth noting that : the Energy Relations between **Russia** and **China** are considered one of the most prominent aspects of the **Economic Cooperation** between the two States.

Aspects of cooperation between Russia and China in the energy field:

One of the manifestations of *Economic Cooperation* between **Russia** and **China** is their energy relations, Energy Resources have become one of the most important pillars on which Economic Cooperation between the two countries is based, especially after China's Oil Production became insufficient to meet its increasing needs over time;³ also, officials in Beijing played the financial card skillfully and came up with the idea of loans in exchange for oil until they

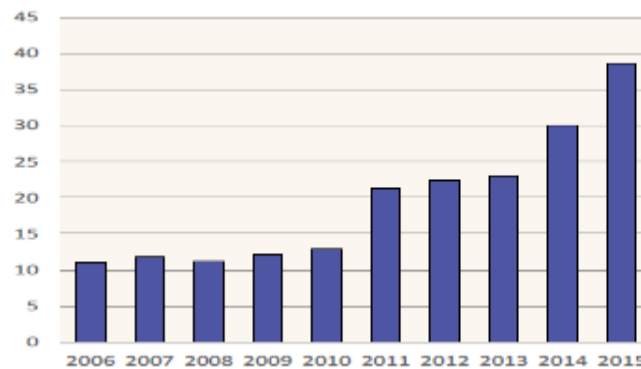
¹-Alessia, Amighini. "*Russia And China : The Progressive Building Of A Major Trading Bloc*". In : Aldo, Ferrari And Eleonora, Tafuro Ambrosetti (Editors). *Russia And China : Anatomy Of Partnership*. (Milano : Ledizioni Ledi Publishing. 1st Edition, 2019.) pp. 87 – 88.

² - Olga V., Grigorenko (etall.). "*The Development Of Russian – Chinese Relations : Prospects For Cooperation In Crisis*", *International Journal Of Economics And Financial Issues*, Arf, India, New-Delhi, 2016, 06 (S1). p. 258.

³- Jouko, Rantava. "*Russia's Economic Policy*", In : Arkady, Moshes And Nojonen, Matti. *Russia- China Relations : Current State, Alternative Futures And Implications For The West*. (Helsinki: The Finnish Institute For International Affairs, 2011). P. 52.

reached an agreement with their counterparts in Moscow; ¹the agreement between the two sides in this regard came because **Russia** was looking to diversify the markets for its energy exports away from **Europe**, and **China** was looking to reduce the dependence of its imports on the Malacca Strait, noting that its imports are predominantly by sea, and this is what it considers a weak point in its **Energy Strategy**, especially in light of the new security challenges that characterize the international state; ²among the indicators of **Energy Cooperation** between **Russia** and **China**, we mention that the **Chinese Development Bank** granted a loan worth 25 billion US dollars to **TransNeft** in exchange for supplying southern China with **Oil**, and then it provided another loan to **RosNeft** in order to increase its **Oil** exports to **China** from 300 thousand Barrels per day to one million barrels per day, starting in 2012; ³**Russia's Oil** exports have begun to witness a noticeable increase since 2011, as shown in the following figure:

A graphic representing Russia's oil exports to China between 2006 and 2015 (millions of tons)



Source :

Economic Relations Between Russia And China : Increasing Inter-Dependency ?. Bank Of Finland, 2016, p.8.

As for Natural Gas, the historic agreement between the Russian company Gazprom and the Chinese National Petroleum Company "CNPC" on

¹- Paik, Keun-Wock. Sino -Russian Gas and Oil Deal Cooperation : Entering into a New Era of Strategic Partnership. (Oxford : Oies, Working Paper , 2015). 2015, pp. 4 - 5.

²- Henrik, Bergersager. China, Russia and Central Asia : The Energy Dilemma. (Zürich : CCS, FNI Report, September 2012). P. 08.

³-Engelbrekt, Kjell And Watts, John. Sino-Russian Strategic Collaborations : Still An Axis Of Convenience " ?. (Stockholm: Swedish National Defense College, 2015), P. 26.

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May 21, 2014 regarding the export of Russian Gas to China came to represent a turning point in the energy policy of the two countries.¹

Cooperation between Russia and China in the Energy field is not limited only to Oil and Gas, as we find the two countries also cooperating in the sector of Nuclear Energy, which is considered another dimension of cooperation between the two countries in this field ; they have also been Cooperating in The Field Of Electricity since 1992; likewise, they are Cooperating in the field of Coal, as it is recorded, for example, that in the year 2010, China provided a loan to Russia worth \$6 billion US dollars to invest in the Coal Industries sector in exchange for supplying it with Coal, and this agreement is considered a Second Version of the Oil Agreement in exchange for financial loans.²

**The Third Topic
The Impact of Competition between Russia and China
on their Energy Relations:**

Despite the various gains achieved by Russia and China, within the framework of their energy relations, these relations face various challenges, which are represented by the competition between the two parties in this field ; this competition may reduce its effectiveness and thus limit its continued success in the future.

The First Requirement:

Manifestations of Competition in the Energy Field between Russia and China:

There are many indicators that indicate the existence of competition between Russia and China, and among these indicators we mention the following:

* The continued factor of suspicion, a suspicion with a historical dimension, especially in light of what some Russians consider the expansion of Chinese activity in the Russian Far East.³

¹-Locatelli,Catherine. *Les Échanges Gaziers Entre La Russie et La Chine à L'aune De Leur Sécurité Énergétique.*(Grenoble: Université Mendès-France, Cahiers De Recherches Edden, N° 2,2015). p. 01.

²- James, Henderson And Tatiana, Mitrova. *Energy Relations Between Russia And Chin : Playing Chess With Dragon .*(Oxford : Oies, Oies Paper, August 2016).pp. 72 -68

³ -Zhao,Mingwen *Deepened Strategic Partnership Of Coordination Between China And Russia.* (Pekin : The Ciis Blue Book On International Situation And China's Foreign Affairs, August 2011).p. 01.

* The conflict in the understanding of cooperation between them in light of the Win-Win philosophy, so that we find a wide gap in the two parties' understanding of this matter; these concerns are particularly evident among those who are called the "Anti-China Party".¹

The Second Requirement:

Manifestations of Competition in the Energy Field between Russia and China:

The relations of Russia and China in the energy sector known many problems, as *divergences* in *vision* between *Moscow* and *Beijing* regarding their *Energy Relations*, we can mention the following:

* Lack of agreement on the formulas for determining the prices of energy exports to China.²

* The lack of a complete desire on the part of the two parties to reach their cooperation in the energy field to the greatest extent that their capabilities qualify them in terms of Russia's enormous wealth and the large size of the Chinese market.

* The Russians' reluctance to open the energy sector to Chinese contributions at the level of the top of the sector pyramid (*Upstream*).

* with regard to their relations in the nuclear energy sector, it is noted that China is working on developing its own nuclear energy technology to be an independent actor in this field.³

The Fourth Topic

Energy Relations Between Russia and China, Future Prospects:

Talking about the Future Prospects of Energy Relations between Russia and China leads us to examine the extent of continuity or change in these relations ;if these Existing Energy Relations between Moscow and Beijing in the various sectors of Energy Field (Oil, Gas, Coal and Nuclear Energy) will continue ? ; to what extent, and to what level will they continue? ; if these relations will change, to what extent, and at what level will they change? ; in both

¹ -Salin,Pavel. "How Russia Perceive China ? "In :Arkady, Moshes And Nojonen, Matti. Russia - China Relations : Current State, Aternative Futures And Implications For The West. pp. 62-64.

²-Olga, Alexeeva et Frédéric, Lassere. "L'évolution des Relations Sino – Russes Vue De Moscou : Les Limites Du Rapprochement Stratégique ", Perspectives Chinoises , CEFC, Taipei / Taiwan , Mars 2018.pp. 79 - 80.

³-James , Henderson and Tatiana, Mitrova. Op. Cit., p. 71.

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probabilities: Continuity or Change, the process of these relations will happen according to a possible situation which will be framed by the potential internal and external contexts of **Russia** and **China**.

The First Requirement:

Scenario of continuity of energy relations between Russia and China:

In this scenario, we will witness the continuity of energy relations between Russia and China as they are in their current state and level, and this is due to the continuity of the goals that these relations came to achieve for the benefit of the two countries, which will remain conditional on the availability of a group of factors, among which the following could be:

A - The continued validity and effectiveness of these energy relations. **B** - The absence of a credible alternative that simultaneously achieves the interests of Russia and China in this field.

In the **Scenario of Continuity**, we will either witness the continuation of the same model of energy cooperation adopted by Russia and China as a means of achieving the goals of both parties (i.e. maintaining the status-quo in the same manner followed so far); according to the general trends prevailing within **Russia** and **China**, as well as the **international situation** at the **regional** and **global levels**, this **scenario** remains likely to continue, at least, for the foreseeable future of these **energy relations** between the two parties, and this is due to the continued need for **Russia** and **China** to **cooperate together** and its tireless work to consolidate this **Energy Cooperation** and inoculate it with new elements as a **response to the challenges it may face on the ground, both internally and externally**.

The Second Requirement:

Scenario of changing energy relations between Russia and China:

Regarding the **scenario of change** in the **Energy Relations** between **Russia** and **China**, we will witness either a **change in the model of Energy Cooperation** adopted by **Russia** and **China**, since the **end of the Cold War**, as a means of achieving the goals of both parties (i.e. a change in the status-quo along the same lines of **Energy Cooperation** followed until now). ; and in this case:

we will witness a decline in energy cooperation between **Russia** and **China** as a result of internal or external factors, especially if either Moscow or Beijing has an alternative to its partner, and here we are witnessing a change in the foreign policy of either Russia or China, or both, according to what **Charles Harman** calls: "Programmatic Change" ; in which the goals of each of them continue with a change in the tools for striving to achieve them, such that the importance and

priority of the energy cooperation that brings them together as it is the appropriate tool (according to the estimation of **Russia** and **China**) to achieve their goals decreases ; among the possible images and alternatives for this scenario to occur, we can present the following:

- **Russia** may dispense with the policy of exporting its energy resources, as a result of internal or external motives, but it is a scenario that remains unlikely on the foreseeable level because the interests of the two parties are still interconnected in this area; this, despite the fact that unexpected events remain possible and are not completely and definitively excluded, which is what the facts of recent and distant history attest to.

- Or, **China** may dispense with the policy of importing its energy needs from Russia, as a result of internal or external motives; but it is a scenario that remains unlikely, at least in the foreseeable future, because the interests of both parties are still interconnected in this area ; this said, despite the fact that unexpected events remain possible and are not completely and definitively excluded, as is attested by various facts of recent and distant history.

In **another possible picture** of the occurrence of the “**Scenario of Change**” in the **existing energy relations** between **Moscow** and **Beijing** since the end of the Cold War, we find that: in addition to the decline in the degree of energy cooperation between Russia and China and the decline in its scope, these existing energy relations between Moscow and Beijing will witness an increase ; the degree of competition between them and the expansion of its scope to include all sectors of energy relations between them (**Oil, Gas, Coal** and **Nuclear Energy**), here we are witnessing a **Change** in the **Foreign Policy** of **Russia**, **China**, or **both**, according to what **Charles Harman** calls: a “ **Change in Orientations** ”, in which the general orientations of the **Foreign Policy** of **Russia**, **China**, or both of them change, so that their goals and strategies change, as well as the tools for achieving them ; this possibility remains very likely, especially if we know that **China** has not completely disappeared from the list of **potential threats** to **Russia’s National Security**, which remains concerned about the military development that **China** has achieved ; this is on the one hand ; on the other hand, in view **Of Beijing’s Ambitions**, especially at the **regional level** and in particular in **Central Asia**, which **was part of the former Soviet Union**, we find analysts who go so far as to say that there is a possibility of the emergence of a “ **New Great Game** ” and the **emergence** of a

Russian-Chinese conflict due to contradictions between their interests; ¹what facilitates the transformation and change in relations between Moscow and Beijing is the intervention of the **External Factor** in the situation, and this factor is represented by the **United States of America** in particular; therefore, this possible picture will remain one of the “change scenario” in energy relations between Russia and China, at least in the foreseeable future, because the interests of the two parties are still interconnected and intertwined in various fields and at all levels, which avoids them being drawn into such a situation in their relations, **a state which remains very expensive for both Russia and China.**

Results:

From the above, it appears that the prospects for energy relations between Russia and China will likely be shaped according to a scenario of continuity or a scenario of change ; we appreciate that the **Scenario of Change** in its various forms, whether it is a **Change** in the order of priorities or a **Reformulation** of the general **Foreign Policy Orientations** of **Russia** and **China**, it will remain unlikely because it includes a **change in the comprehensive foreign policy goals of both countries in general and between them in particular, which is unlikely**, at least in the foreseeable future.

As for the continuation scenario, which includes the continuation of energy relations between Russia and China with the same goals that cover the vital sectors for the two countries (oil, gas and nuclear energy), it is likely that the energy relations between Russia and China will be problematic according to his approach, which means that the situation What exists between these two countries within the framework of their energy relations will continue and will not witness radical changes; with the possibility of introducing secondary changes to the structure of these relations to enhance their continuation in the same direction, and this will be a result of the continuity of the same reasons and factors that led to their establishment at the beginning, and this is in line with their internal, regional and global contexts; because energy cooperation between Russia and China, will, if it happens, allows them to strength their power and their ability to confront various challenges, whether internal or external; this trend will also remain very likely given the importance of the energy sector to the Russian economy as it is a pillar and a major source in the state budget, what

¹**Hao, Tian** *Sino-Russian Relations : Conflict And Cooperation.* (Thesis Submitted to Lehigh University, Bethlehem , Pennsylvania, USA. 2016).p. 13.

increases the strength and credibility of this Scenario is the increase in China's needs for energy resources, and that Beijing will not find anyone better than Moscow to provide it with these needs. Accordingly, Energy Cooperation between Russia and China will remain one among the Basic Pillars of Economic Cooperation between the two countries within the framework of their Strategic Partnership, especially with regard to the Tioman and Eastern Siberian fields, as well as Sakhalin, as pipelines are awaited to deliver their resources directly to China, and thus Russia will become the china's main gas supplier at a rate that may reach 30% of China's needs for this product. In addition to this, Russia is likely to be more open to Chinese investments in its Energy Field, especially in light of the Blockade imposed on it through Western Sanctions imposed on it since the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 ; Cooperation with China will bring it the capital it needs in the Energy Field (Oil, Natural Gas, Coal and Nuclear Energy), especially with the scarcity of Western Investments in Russia for years, the Chinese will also bring with them technology related to the energy industries in its various stages from exploration to refining, transportation and distribution;¹ this scenario will not be credible unless the outlook of Moscow and Beijing becomes more in line with economic logic; this, while the possibility of trade disputes remaining between the two countries regarding this energy sector remains, but this remains within the limits of competition between the interests of each of them without pushing them into conflict and estrangement; without forgetting “ the existence of close ties and communications between the world of politics and economics in the two countries ”;this does not mean that economic calculations are not important to decision-makers in Russia and China, even if the logic of politics does not necessarily align with the logic of economics in the International Relations, although Economic Relations require, in addition to political will, the availability of other factors that may be decisive in this domain.

Conclusion:

At the end, we can say that: the previously mentioned manifestations of Cooperation between Russia and China, within the framework of their Energy Relations and the various and diverse gains and goals achieved by them, even if they are unequal, confirm the First Hypothesis that: the Convergence of

¹-Nicolas, Grosset. Le Partenariat Russo – Chinois à L'heure Trump : Un Nouvel Ordre Mondial Illibéral en Formation ?.(Bruxelles : Institut Royal De Défense et Centre d'Études DeSécurité et de Défense, 2019). p. 33.

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Common Interests for Russia and China led them to establish Cooperation Relations which affected all Sectors of the Energy Field (Oil, Gas, Coal, Electricity and Nuclear Energy), on the one hand; on the other hand, they confirm the Second Hypothesis that: the Divergence and Conflict of Interests between Russia and China lead to Competition and Struggle between them, this situation reduces the degree of Cooperation between them in this field. However, at the same time, Russia and China still working to overcome the various Challenges facing their Energy Relations, and seeking to find possible solutions to this challenges and problems which will be Satisfactory to both countries, with the aim of continuing these relations and not negatively impacting their “Strategic Partnership” established since the conclusion of the “ Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendship ” on July 16, 2001 ; from all this, it can be said that the Energy Relations between Russia and China will remain established and based on the logic of the REALPOLITIK more than on the Values and Principles that may accidentally bring them together ; considering that Politics ultimately only believes in the logic of “There is no permanent enmity..., no permanent friendship..., but there are only permanent interests! ”.

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