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# EU, Russia, China, Africa, South America – and More

By: Karsten Riise



## Brussels

Stephanie LeBlanc, Unsplash CC0

In the webinar “Hegemonic Transition” (Manila, 5 Mar 2021), Raffaele Marchetti, deputy rector and professor in International Relations at Luiss Guido Carli University in Rome, presented three scenarios for the future of US-EU-Russia-China relations.

### **Increasing tension USA-China**

leading to either:

#### **(1) West vs. the Rest**

Current or new spheres of influence.

#### **(2) China and Russia pull Europe in Eurasia vs. USA**

Africa-Eurasia, BRI and American solitude

#### **(3) West pulls Russia back into Europe vs. China**

China regional power

Source: <https://fb.watch/44CREZ9tx4/> Raffaele Marchetti at 0:13:00 hrs.  
Comments by Karsten Riise at 1:48:00 hrs. and 2:23:00 hrs.

Raffaele Marchetti's three scenarios are based on extensive literature research and many theoretic considerations. Marchetti's three scenarios create a very good basis for discussion, so let us explore Marchetti's scenarios further by connecting them with empirical realities.

In stark factual contradiction to Biden's stated intentions to "undo" Trump's policies, the USA continues forceful actions which further isolate the USA - also from the EU. A key example is gas.

<https://www.politico.com/news/2021/03/05/biden-ted-cruz-russia-pipeline-473910>

The US' transgressing attack on EU sovereignty by threatening sanctions to coerce EU energy (gas) infrastructure is bound to continue the trend since Trump that the USA alienates itself further – from *all* the rest of the World, actually. The irrationalities of American self-preclusion are adamant and bipartisan with strong continuities in two Presidencies as well as in Congress. The EU talks friendly with Biden - but in vigorous (but publicly understated) action both Germany and France expand EU Strategic Autonomy in economy & trade (Germany) as well as military capabilities (France). That is clear, when one closely studies [words](#) and actions transpiring from the EU through the press. The fact of the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investments (CAI) is strong proof of this. The EU's creation of Instex to bypass US sanctions is another proof. Macron's assertion that "NATO is braindead" and the surge in EU military programs (PESCO, European Defense Fund, EU military HQ) also prove that the EU Strategically increases Autonomy

The first of Raffaele Marchetti's three scenarios is therefore impossible: The Atlantic inexorably grows wider (and deeper). Marchetti's third scenario is impossible too - for the same reasons.

Within Marchetti's framework of three scenarios, Marchetti's second scenario is therefore predestined due to dynamics which Marchetti rightly refers to – but much more than that. Thus, it is not only (as Marchetti points out) about China "pulling in" the EU. It is *equally* about the USA sinking down in a "black hole" of political disarray and increasing collective cognitive problems within the US to clearly see and interact with the World. US perceptions of the World increasingly become distorted and inconsistent - even weird. Domestically, the US is moving in the direction of a dark phantasm of a public divided in two camps, which increasingly see each other as enemies. Congress has become dysfunctional. The underlying reasons for this are deep dividing trends in US society of race, religion, urbanization, economic transition, and much more. See my paper [USA – Politics Race Religion](#). US politics [feeds on enemy images](#). The US sees and creates enemy images, even where there are none. The Nordstream II gas project is an example of this. With Nordstream II, Biden continues a bipartisan US trend of foreign enemy-imaging and enmity-creation. Trump has an intuitive but non-rational grasp on this. Biden has neither. Biden communicates "rationality" but is neither rationally nor intuitively correct. Biden has not the "alternative" kind of "consistency" which Trump somehow has. See my paper [End of US Empire](#).

Deficiencies in US cognitional abilities across the board hinder the US in a realist approach to its own [capabilities](#) and definition of goals in foreign policy. The World must take its precautions.

EU, Russia, China, Africa, South America – and More

US naval plans will now press China to build a PLA Navy which can truly replace the US Navy in global reach. If Biden urges new billions for perpetual defense spending, it can be an own-goal.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/03/05/china/china-world-biggest-navy-intl-hnk-ml-dst/index.html>

It was already probable, that China might build a global high-sea navy. But now, as the US recognizes that the US has already decidedly lost the close-water naval competition within China's "First Island Chain", the American politico-military apex plans to threaten China's long-distance sea routes: the so-called SLOC (Sea Lines Of Communication). That is clearly what must be concluded from the CNN article in the link above. This American path of continuous naval buildup gives China no other choice than to continue expanding its PLA Navy globally. As the CNN article demonstrates, the USA in the highest likelihood cannot keep up with that anyway. China's ship building capacity and military tech development are simply too immense.

The biggest obstacle to Marchetti's Scenario (2) is the apparent disunity between the EU and Russia. There are, however, no fundamental contradictions between Russia and the EU. During Vladimir Putin's first years, these relations really worked quite well. Marchetti's frame of three scenarios is still immensely valuable to inspire further analysis. I will here simply venture a modification of Marchetti's scenario (2) for a possible scenario (4) to open a new perspective:

Scenario (4)

**Russia adjusts, and the EU (distanced from the USA) moves closer to Russia and China.**

The EU is already strengthening [Mega-Region to Mega-Region](#) relations to Africa (African Union) and South America (Mercosur). All of East Asia and Brazil are much stronger integrated with China than with the USA – see my paper [China-US Balance](#). China and the EU engage with Africa

All the world *around* the USA is [moving closer together](#).

Marchetti's analysis opens to the scenario (4) as above. A path of increasing connectivity between the EU, Russia and Eurasia, China, East Asia, Africa, South America - and probably Pakistan<sup>i</sup>.

Karsten Riise  
Partner & Editor

CHANGE NEWS &  
CHANGE MANAGEMENT

[ChangeManagement.DK@gmail.com](mailto:ChangeManagement.DK@gmail.com)

[www.Africa.Vision](http://www.Africa.Vision)

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<sup>i</sup> Already in 2012 China and Pakistan had a very established strategic relationship – it has only deepened since. [https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy\\_files/files/publication/twg12winterpant.pdf](https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/twg12winterpant.pdf)  
<https://www.gmfus.org/initiatives/china-pakistan-axis>