Journal of Global Initiatives: Policy, Pedagogy, Perspective

Volume 12
Number 1 *Russia Relations in Today's World*

Article 1

JGI Volume 12, Number 1 - Full Issue

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/jgi

Part of the Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
() "JGI Volume 12, Number 1 - Full Issue," *Journal of Global Initiatives: Policy, Pedagogy, Perspective*: Vol. 12 : No. 1 , Article 1.
Available at: https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/jgi/vol12/iss1/1

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Global Initiatives: Policy, Pedagogy, Perspective by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu.

Kennesaw State University
Division of Global Affairs

Russia Relations in Today's World

JOURNAL *of* GLOBAL INITIATIVES

POLICY, PEDAGOGY, PERSPECTIVE

2017
VOLUME 12
NUMBER 1

Special Issue:

Russia Relations in Today's World

Journal of Global Initiatives

Volume 12, Number 1, 2017

Contents:

1 *Introduction to the Special Issue* — Dan Paracka

18 *The Economic Roots of the Cold War: The IMF, ITO and other economic issues in post-war Soviet-American relations* — Kristina V. Minkova

32 *Lessons on Economics and Political Economy from the Soviet Tragedy* — Peter Boettke, Rosolino Candela

48 *US-Russian Relations: Dissonance of Ideologies* — Elena Glazunova

68 *Russia's Fight for the Globe* — Yuliya Brel

84 *Russia and Its Neighbors: A Geopolitical Analysis of the Ukrainian Conflict* — Michele Pigliucci

104 *Putin's "Eastern Pivot" and the Cold Silk Road: Evidence from the Arctic* — Thomas E. Rotnem, Kristina V. Minkova

140 *Political Homophobia as a State Strategy in Russia* — Nikita Sleptcov

162 *Is "This Guy" a Dictator? On the Morality of Evaluating Russian Democracy under Vladimir Putin* — Amir Azarvan

176 *Stanislavsky Inspired Acting Lessons for Life and Leadership* — Harrison Long

192 *About the Contributors*

Journal of Global Initiatives
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp. 1-17.

Introduction to the Year of Russia Special Issue

Dan Paracka

Kennesaw State University's (KSU) Year of Russia program provided an in-depth opportunity for our campus community to learn about Russia at a very important point in time. The program featured more than 30 events including a robust lecture series, special courses focused on Russia, a symposium on U.S.-Russia relations, and a faculty and student interdisciplinary seminar that traveled to Moscow and St. Petersburg. These different elements were intentionally organized to create synergistic opportunities for sustained intercultural exchange. For example, Dr. Tom Rotnem's POLS 4449: Russian Foreign Policy class conducted eight Skype-enabled classroom discussion sessions with Russian counterparts (faculty and students) from Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO). Topics for the discussion sessions included: 1) NATO/Russian relations; 2) Ukraine; 3) Syria; 4) Russia's global economic status; and 5) Russia's developing relationship with China. Later, a delegation of the MGIMO faculty and students attended the symposium on KSU's campus and then KSU faculty and students visited MGIMO in Moscow.

The U.S.-Russia Relations Symposium, co-hosted by KSU and the Georgia Institute of Technology, attracted 140 people including presenters from six different countries (Brazil, Japan, Germany, Italy, Russia, and the United States). There were representatives from three different Russian universities and there was also a delegation of 11 students from Campbell High School and 17 students from the University of Central Florida in addition to the KSU and Georgia Tech participants. Overall, across all of the Year of Russia events, more than 3,300 KSU faculty and students participated in the program.

Many of the articles in this journal were first delivered at the conference. The articles examine a wide range of both historical and contemporary issues in Russia, its international relations, and unique position in global affairs from diverse perspectives. Topics include: Soviet-American economic relations at the end of World War II; the tragic consequences of the Soviet experiment with socialism; historic influences of Russian and American ideologies on foreign policy; Russian foreign policy as anchored in the restoration of world power status; an analysis of Ukraine's strategic geopolitical position; political homophobia as a state strategy in Russia; the danger of rhetoric that promotes United States adversarial policy towards Russia; an improving Sino-Russian relationship particularly in the Arctic region; and the application of Konstantin Stanislavsky's acting lessons on life, leadership and international relations.

For the past 10 years, with the help of many colleagues, I have written an introductory essay focused on the country of study at the beginning of each year to serve as a starting point for student inquiry and understanding. What follows is an

adapted version of the essay. I hope it will also provide a useful introduction to the issues examined in this volume.

Russia's story consists of both tragic suffering and tremendous accomplishments that have helped shape the character of its people, making them resilient and proud. At the same time, Russian society and geography are too complex, too diverse, and too large for a single culture to serve as the national heritage (Figes, 2002, p. xxviii). Russia, situated in the middle of Eurasia, is both Eastern and Western and it is this ambiguity, this pull in two directions, which has helped make Russians skilled diplomats and negotiators. Having experienced invading forces from both directions, it has also made them wary and put them on guard. For this reason and "as a general rule, Russia has pursued balance-of-power policies" (Donaldson, Nogee, & Nadkarni, 2014, p. 4). Moreover, "Russians have traditionally had a deeply ingrained fear of anarchy and the centrifugal forces that tug at the unity and stability of their vast state … [which] has made Russians prize order and security" (Smith, 1976, p. 251). Unfortunately, the efforts to build a strong state have, at times, led to "subverted institutions and personalistic rule" (Kotkin, 2016, p. 4). This view, a type of Russian exceptionalism, where Russians are seen as having suffered under oppression for centuries and subjected to continuous external threats and harsh political realities, emerged first during the enlightenment period and was amplified as the Red Scare and Cold War emerged (Pate, 2016). However, Russia, in continuous relationship with its neighbors, influencing them and influenced by them, is not so different from the rest of the world.

Notably, the United States' views of Russia have often been biased tending towards such negative interpretations due, in part, to limited direct interaction and staunch ideological differences. Characterized by Cold War acrimony and antagonism, there has been far too little collaboration between the two countries.

Moscow as the Third Rome

The early history of Russia consisted of a collection of principalities. The Viking, Rurik of Rutland, defeated the Slavs at Novgorod in 862 becoming ruler of Northern Russia and his successor Oleg conquered Kiev. According to legend in 988, "after considering and rejecting Judaism and Islam, Great Prince Vladimir of Kiev embraced the Christian faith and established it as a state religion" (Taruskin, 2009, p. 156). Nicholas Riasanovsky (2005) has asserted that adopting Orthodox Christianity is the single most important event shaping Russian identity. One of the first cities to establish broader control and establish itself as a center of trade was Kiev, which flourished between 882 and 1125. Moscow was founded in 1147 by Yuri Dolgoruky (a monument in his honor stands in front of the city hall). The cities of Kievan Rus with the exception of Novgorod and Pskov were completely destroyed in 1240 by the vastly superior military of the Mongols (also known as the Tatars). The Mongols indirectly ruled the territory from the 13th to the 15th century. It should be noted that the Mongol Empire brought many advances, not only in military technology but also in trade, taxation, and administrative systems (Weatherford, 2004, p. xxiii).

Christianity came to Russia through Constantinople but ties were severed when the Ottoman Turks took control of Constantinople in 1453. The patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church transferred north to Moscow. After Kievan Rus was shattered by the Mongols, there was no large Rus state until one was reconstituted by Muscovy. Muscovy's strength gradually grew under Ivan the Great and it was at this time that the doctrine of Moscow as the Third Rome was firmly established, making Muscovy an heir to the older Byzantine and even Roman classical civilizations and the origins of Christianity. Historically, Russia has tried to set itself apart from its Asian neighbors by emphasizing its Christian nature although many of its people follow Muslim, Buddhist, or Shamanic traditions. In this regard, it is important to distinguish between "Russian" as an ethnic identity from the broader community of peoples who make up the Russian state.

According to Orlando Figes (2002), "the entire spirit of the Russian people, and much of their best art and music, has been poured into the Church, and at times of national crisis, under the Mongols or the Communists, they have always turned to it for support and hope" (p. 297). Under Christian theology, poverty was at times cast as a virtue among Russia's peasants, and excessive wealth was viewed as a sin. The liturgy in Russian Orthodox Church services is always sung and the chants and choral songs of the church are known for their beauty. However, instrumental music was long banned by the church and sacred compositions were not played in concert halls until Pyotr Tchaikovsky's *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* was performed in 1878 (Figes, 2002, p. 298).

Imperial Russia and the Rise of Colonial Nationalism

As both Russia and Western Europe grew and consolidated, Peter the Great, who ruled Russia from 1689-1725, took on an immense project, the construction of a new capital, St. Petersburg. He led the effort to Westernize/Europeanize the empire and his most successful military efforts concentrated on establishing Russia as a Baltic Sea power. The transformation was so great that historians tend to mark Peter's reign as the end of one era, Muscovy, and the start of another, the imperial. By the time of Catherine the Great, who ruled from 1762-1796, Russian noblemen and women were emulating European language, customs, and attitudes, and immersing themselves in the secular culture of the French Enlightenment (Figes, 2002, pp. 55-57). Catherine's Russia competed with the other great empires of the age defeating Sweden again and partitioning Poland. Much of Catherine's military expansion concentrated on establishing Russia as a Black Sea power. The Black Sea port of Odessa was founded in 1796, the year of Catherine's death.

Alexander I, who ruled Russia from 1801-1825, defeated Napoleon, but he never could have done so alone. Alexander needed alliances with other European powers especially the Prussians and later decisively the Austrians who switched their allegiance away from France. Many have credited geography and climate for Napoleon's failure, but strategic leadership and skillful diplomacy were equally if not more important than the cold weather or even Russian patriotism in defeating Napoleon. It was a strategy of deep retreat and restrained patience similar to one used by Peter the Great against Charles XII of Sweden and by the Mongols to defeat

the Russians in 1223 at the Kalka River (Lieven, 2009, p. 132; Weatherford, 2004, p. 263). Between 1812 and 1814, the Russian army first retreated from Vilna to Moscow and then advanced from Moscow to Paris. In 1815, after defeating Napoleon, Alexander I signed what came to be known as the Holy Alliance with Prussia and Austria.

The Napoleonic Wars accompanied rising European nationalism where British sea power had confined French imperialism to mainland Europe, while Russian imperial interests lied primarily southwards towards the Ottomans and Persians. The Portuguese monarchy escorted to Brazil and rescued by the British from Napoleon opened the entire Portuguese Empire to British trade, indicating the importance of collaborative alliances to compete globally. Russia's defeat of Napoleon also served to embolden and strengthen British imperialism, thereby increasing competition between Britain and Russia.

Interestingly, the War of 1812 seems to have served as both a glorious imperial victory of salvation and a watershed moment in Russia's movement towards national liberation (Figes, 2002, p. 138). The leaders of the 1825 Decembrist uprising were influenced greatly by soldiers and officers who had returned from the Napoleonic battlefield. It was the first attempt ever to overthrow the imperial political system. Nobleman had witnessed side-by-side the sacrifices of peasants on the battlefield who more than proved their worth as patriots. Russia mobilized over 230,000 men for the war effort, most of them serfs. Returned officers hoped to establish a new constitution that every man could understand, protect, and defend but their plans were ill-conceived and poorly timed, choosing to revolt at the swearing in ceremony for Tsar Nicholas I, whose royal soldiers were also assembled and who dealt harshly with the mutineers. Five hundred Decembrists were arrested and 121 conspirators, including the so-called peasant prince Sergei Volkonsky, were found guilty and sentenced as convict laborers to Siberia (Figes, 2002, pp. 83-90).

Nicholas I ruled with an iron hand from 1825-1855. He turned his ambitions to the Ottoman Empire defeating the Turks in 1828, winning independence for Greece and extending Russia's control over the Caucasus region. Later, when Russia assisted the Ottoman Sultan's call for assistance in putting down a revolt by Mohammed Ali in Egypt, Russia was rewarded with the rights to have its warships pass through the Turkish straits, but the British and French objected. Encouraged by Britain, the Turks declared war on Russia in 1853 and Russia was defeated in the Crimean War (Donaldson et al., 2014, pp. 22-23). It was a defeat that the Russians would not forget. European competition including Russian ambitions for control over the Ottoman Empire and its important sea trade routes would only intensify, eventually resulting in World War I.

Following the death of Nicholas I, Alexander II (who ruled from 1855 until his assassination in 1881) signed the treaty that ended the Crimean War and began initiating several important reforms, most importantly the Emancipation of Serfs (1861). The economic imperative calling for emancipation asserted that free labor is more productive than slave labor. Militarily, Russia turned to its Eastern borders winning territory in the Amur region of China and founding the city of Vladivostok in 1860. In 1874, Russia successfully defeated the khanates of Kokand, Bukhara,

and Khiva in Turkestan and later Tashkent right up to the borders of Afghanistan and British India (Figes, 2002, p. 411). In 1877, Russia renewed its conflicts in the Balkans attempting to liberate Bulgaria from Turkish occupation leading to the 1878 Treaty of Berlin (involving all of the major European powers of the time) and an uneasy accord between Russia and Austria. The Treaty of Berlin "created a series of Christian nation states in the Balkans and forced a realignment of Muslim populations" setting off massive migration movements (Karpat, 2010, p. 48). German Chancellor Bismarck also organized the 1884 Conference of Berlin known for unleashing the Scramble for Africa as the European powers divided the world into spheres of influence and their leaders engaged in a dangerous chess match of shifting allegiances and self-serving treaties.

Following the Berlin Conference, Germany increasingly saw itself vying with France, Great Britain, and Russia for predominance, and therefore looked to the Ottoman Empire as an important sphere of influence and potential ally. The Young Turks reformist movement also saw in Germany a successful, rapidly industrializing country able to help protect them from Russian expansionism (Fromkin, 1989, p. 66). German railroads connected Berlin with Istanbul.

It is during this period in the 19th century of rising nationalism and competing colonial empires that Russia expands and solidifies its rule into the Caucasus, Central Asia, and East Asia regions. Russian nationalism, like that of other 19th century nationalisms, was brutal in its treatment of minorities. It has long been argued that since Russia itself was a frontier society, its borders were relatively undefined and under-fortified contributing to expansionist tendencies. Perhaps for these reasons, Russia had also become quite adept at using local elites to promote its imperial agenda long before the British attempted to do the same in India. Russia's frontier colonialism also had much in common with the United States' frontier subjugation of native peoples especially in its promotion of a Christian civilizing mission. In addition, "the need to transform pasturelands into agricultural colonies and industrial enterprises kept the [Russian] government on a confrontational course with its nomadic neighbors" (Khodarkovsky, 2002, p. 222). At the end of the 19th century, the so-called "Great Game" in Asia pitted the world's two most powerful nations of the period, Britain and Russia, on a collision course for control over the Middle East (Fromkin, 1980, p. 936).

Serfs, Slavophiles, Artists, and Intellectuals

Following the emancipation of serfs, groups like the *narodniki* (populists) as well as many intellectuals, artists, and writers increasingly celebrated and romanticized the peasant as a heroic figure capable of withstanding great suffering with human dignity (Figes, 2002, p. 220). There was a new found fascination with a rural life little known or understood by the ruling classes of the urban centers. These artists and intellectuals viewed peasants as oppressed and in need of liberation, and increasingly advocated for all Russians to adopt the collectivist, in some ways quasi-socialist form of organization, that prevailed in peasant villages.

At the same time, Europe was also increasingly viewed by Russians as a morally corrupting influence—decadent, materialistic, superficial, and egotistical, and

it was portrayed this way in many of the works of Russia's literature. This reflected, in part, what came to be known as the Slavophile movement calling for a rediscovery of Russian roots and values, and where history might belong to the people (Figes, 2002, pp. 65, 135). Morality, spirituality, and social justice were core themes in their works. In general, the Slavophiles tended to be political conservatives, while the populists were revolutionaries. Both groups generally opposed those advocating for greater Westernization which was also a prevalent view at the time.

Artistically and intellectually, what began in the 1830s as largely a romantic view of the beleaguered peasant, by the latter half of the century began to challenge the received truths linking Orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationalism under Romanov rule, and by the 1930s became an almost blind faith in progress under Communist state control eventually giving rise to more outspoken dissidents after World War II.

The Trans-Siberian Railroad and East Asia

The development of railroads was a central aspect of infrastructure development in Russia at the end of the 19th and throughout the 20th centuries. Railways, a symbol of modernity, attracted people to towns and brought growth, replacing the old world of rural Russia with a new more urban context. Birth rates also increased dramatically during the second half of the 19th century with the population rising in Russia from 50 to 79 million. As more and more land was farmed (primarily in the southern regions) soil quality declined along with agricultural and livestock production, resulting in shortages and eventually famine (Figes, 2002, p. 258). Overall, less than 15% of Russian land is fit for agriculture as the tundra is a treeless plain with poor soil and little precipitation, while the taiga region, over half of the nation's land mass, has cold winters, hot summers, leached soils, and is covered in forest.

In 1898, China granted Russia a 25-year lease over the Liaotung Peninsula and Russia completed the Trans-Siberian Railway in 1903. In 1904, Japan, concerned about losing its trade privileges with China due to Russian expansion, launched a surprise attack on the Russians at Port Arthur. Japan's substantial military victories against Russia (the Russian navy was defeated at Tsushima and the army lost 80,000 men at Mukden) resulted in concessions of Manchurian territories to Japan and contributed to revolutionary fervor throughout Russia. The 1905 Revolution in Russia was fueled by striking workers, peasant unrest, and military mutinies, which led to the creation of the State Duma, a multiparty system and a Constitutional Monarchy in 1906. The 1905 Revolution largely failed to create real change in the political power of Tsar Nicholas II and it would not be until the middle of World War I and the additional suffering placed on the nation that a more complete revolution would occur.

The Russian Revolution and World War

Russian losses during World War I exceeded 3 million people and caused great hardship. In 1917 in the middle of the war, Russia experienced two revolutions, revolutions that were a reaction to over 300 years of monocratic rule. The Bolsheviks led by Vladimir Lenin came to power during the second revolution in October 1917 and promised to end Russia's involvement in World War I. They signed a peace treaty with Germany in 1918 but continued to face incursions by Allied forces, especially Polish forces. They signed a peace treaty with Poland in 1921 ceding parts of the Ukraine and Belorussia to Poland. Conditions in Russia continued to deteriorate. At least 5 million Russians died of starvation and disease during the famine of 1921 and the Bolsheviks had no choice but to accept foreign assistance. Three million Russians fled their native land between 1919 and 1929 (Figes, 2002, p. 528). In 1921, "Lenin's answer to the crisis was the New Economic Policy which represented a retreat from socialist economics. The peasants were given greater freedom, and private trade and private ownership of small businesses were again legalized" (Donaldson et al., 2014, p. 51).

Lenin also revised Marxist thought to emphasize its international dimension highlighting how imperialist nations exploited their colonies exacerbating the problems of class struggle. He believed that Russia would lead a worldwide movement of liberation from the oppression of bourgeois capitalism. Lenin's death in 1924 resulted in a divisive power struggle with Joseph Stalin emerging as the leader, ruling from 1929-1953. He immediately created large state-run farms to collectivize agricultural lands, expand industrial output, repress religion and close churches, and purge all opposition. It is estimated that as many as 10 million people died during the manmade famine of 1932-34, and an additional 7 million people were killed and 8-12 million arrested during the purges of 1934-38.

With the onset of World War II, the Soviet Union crippled by Stalin's Great Purge of 1937, having executed or imprisoned many high ranking officers, was generally ill-prepared for war and signed a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany. They were caught off guard when attacked by Nazi Germany in June 1941. By mid-September 1941, Hitler's forces had cut off the city of Leningrad and advanced to within a few hundred miles of Moscow. With great sacrifice, the Russians stopped the Nazi advance and slowly began to push them back. The siege of Leningrad lasted 900 days and as many as 1 million people died of disease and starvation before it was broken in January 1944 (Figes, 2002, p. 492). By the end of the war, 27 million people in Soviet Russia (especially many Ukrainians, Belarusians, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians, and many of the civilian victims were Jews) had died but the country emerged with control of vast territory in Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Donaldson et al. (2014) stated, "That the Soviet Union not only survived but emerged from the War as Europe's strongest power was a tribute to Soviet military valor and diplomatic skill" (p. 62). World War II, or The Great Patriotic War as it is known in Russia, mobilized all of Russia's resources including more than 1 million women who served with the Soviet armed forces as medics, scouts, snipers, and communication operators, and in combat positions in the infantry, artillery, armored tank, and anti-aircraft divisions (Pennington, 2010).

Stalinism and the Cold War

Under communism, old aristocratic ideas were abandoned for new proletarian ones where science and a mechanized collectivism promised to transform the world, where faith in religion would be replaced by scientific progress. Communism called for the abolition of private ownership over the means of production, state control of everyday life, and subordination of the individual to the power of bureaucracy. While the socialist ideal called for equality and the destruction of hierarchy, it especially targeted the privileges afforded to both the well-educated and religious institutions (Shafarevich, 1974, pp. 44, 53-54). The Soviet economy largely operated on plans from above rather than consumer demand from below. While very successful as a tool of industrialization, the planned economy did not necessarily promote individual initiative or innovation. It has been highly criticized for lacking quality and competitiveness. Solzhenitsyn (1974) criticized the communist state for usurping land ownership from peasants, political power from trade unions, and voice from minority communities (p. 11).

Following World War II, "both the USSR and the United States perceived themselves as heading coalitions struggling for peace and justice against an evil and determined rival" (Donaldson et al., 2014, pp. 73-74). Under such a competitive nationalistic framework, the United States and Russia viewed compromise and accommodation as forms of unpatriotic treachery. Solzhenitsyn (1974) described the context thus: "not a single event in our life has been freely and comprehensively discussed, so that a true appreciation of it could be arrived at and solutions found" (p. ix). He called for the USSR and the United States to find common interests, to cease being antagonists, and ensure respect for human rights (Solzhenitsyn, 1974, p. 8). He was critical of unfettered freedom devoid of moral responsibility and immersed in protecting its own self-interests. He called for both social justice and the renunciation of violence, for freewill in joining the social contract.

After Stalin died, Nikita Khrushchev took over denouncing Stalin in a secret speech and released 5 million people from the *gulags* (forced labor camps that housed mainly political prisoners). Khrushchev's rule saw numerous challenges and confrontations including the Soviet invasion of Hungary (1956), the Suez Canal crisis (1956), Sputnik and the space race (1957), the erection of the Berlin Wall (1961), and the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962).

The Cold War began with stalemates dividing East and West Berlin and North and South Korea, leading to divisiveness in other parts of the world and increases in arms sales. The Cold War begins in the Middle East with the Suez Canal crisis. In 1955, Gamal Abdel Nasser obtained $200 million dollars of advanced Soviet weaponry from Czechoslovakia, a move that angered the United States, which then withdrew funding for the Aswan High Dam project leading to the 1956 nationalization of the Suez Canal and the subsequent British, French, and Israeli attack on Egypt (Ahmed, 2011, p. 58). Weapons were the chief export of the USSR to the Third World (Donaldson et al., 2014, p. 86). In 1962, Soviet-supported Nasser began carrying out a proxy war in Yemen that spread into Saudi Arabia resulting in increased military support to Saudi Arabia from the United States (Bronson, 2006, pp. 85-88). U.S. strategic interests in the Middle East were to ensure access to oil

and prevent any hostile power from acquiring control over this resource. During the Cold War the Soviet Union was seen as the primary threat to those interests (Sick, 2009, p. 295). In 1968, when the British announced their intention of reducing their presence in the Middle East, the United States looked to partner with Iran and Saudi Arabia in order to counter the threat of Soviet expansion. This Twin Pillars policy ignored the issue that both Iran and Saudi Arabia were unhappy with Israel's aggressive stance in the Middle East. For Iran, the United States' support for Israel was untenable; however, "the Saudi leadership considered its geostrategic competition with the Soviets and its relationship with the United States more important than the Arab-Israeli one, and viewed the United States as its long-term central partner in that larger struggle" (Bronson, 2006, p. 120). Saudi Arabia and the United States became partners against "Godless" communism. Saudi Arabia was the United States' most important ally during the Cold War, assisting the United States to conduct proxy wars in Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Yemen, and the Sudan. The U.S.-Saudi partnership helped bankrupt the Soviet Union and contributed to its defeat in Afghanistan and losses in Africa (Bronson, 2006, p. 203).

Khrushchev was succeeded by Leonid Brezhnev in 1964. During the Brezhnev era, the major conflicts and issues included the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia (1968), the Vietnam War, war in Bangladesh (1971), Yom Kippur War (1973), SALT I & II ballistic missile agreements, war in Angola (1975), Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979), and the boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

It was estimated "that from 1950-1970, Soviet per capita food consumption doubled, disposable income quadrupled, the work week was shortened, welfare benefits increased, consumption of soft-goods tripled and purchases of hard-goods rose twelve-fold" (Smith, 1976, p. 58). By 1970, life expectancy reached 70 years and the Soviet Union had the highest ratio of doctors to population in the world. Furthermore, in 1974, 85% of all working-age women were employed, the highest percentage in the industrialized world (Smith, 1976, pp. 72, 130). However, by the late 1970s, there were significant signs of trouble. *New York Times* correspondent Hedrick Smith, in his 1976 book, *The Russians*, reported that the Soviet underground economy or black market grew out of the system's inefficiencies, shortages, poor quality, and terrible delays in service (Smith, 1976, p. 86). Communism became a patronage system where who you knew and their administrative position in the party's privileged class was decisive to improving one's quality of life (Smith, 1976, p. 29).

By the early 1980s the costs of war abroad had seriously undermined the Soviet economy fueling disillusionment if not despair at home. Between 1982 and 1985 the USSR had three successive leadership changes. Mikhail Gorbachev was elected general secretary by the politburo in March 1985 inheriting dismal prospects—most notably a stagnant economy, poor agricultural productivity, substandard housing, declining life expectancy, and rising infant mortality. His first unexpected crisis was the Chernobyl nuclear reactor accident in April 1986.

Perestroika and *Glasnost*

Aimed at restructuring and not dismantling the Soviet system, Gorbachev's *perestroika* (restructuring) reforms and *glasnost* (openness) campaigns required great courage as they nonetheless challenged the foundations of communist ideology. He recognized how military power and expenditures had been generally unproductive and that there was a need to shift focus and find a way to empower people to become more competitively engaged in the global economy. He was also particularly focused on curbing nuclear proliferation and the arms race. In the late 1980s, Gorbachev began withdrawing troops from conflicts in Angola (1988) and Afghanistan (1989), ending military aid to Nicaragua (1989), sponsoring a cease-fire in the Iran/Iraq war (1987), and encouraging Vietnam to withdraw troops from Cambodia (1989).

The opening up of reforms in Soviet Russia soon spread in unexpected ways throughout the region. In the spring of 1989 Poland conducted elections with Lech Walesa's Solidarity labor union winning the majority of contested seats; this was followed by a wave of mass demonstrations in Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania, all leading to the ousting of Communist Party control and new elections. The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and the reunification of Germany signaled an end to the Cold War as Gorbachev was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1990.

In 1991, concerned about the slow pace of reforms in Russia and the collapse of Soviet rule in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States, Russia became an independent state under pro-democracy President Boris Yeltsin, the first freely elected leader in Russian history, and soon thereafter formed the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), first with Belorussia and Ukraine and then adding Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Moldova, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Russia's first order of business was to negotiate new relationships and promote economic integration with the former Soviet republics and gain acceptance/membership in organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), and International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, there were many hurdles and roadblocks to joining these European and global institutions, and the CIS proved to be a very loose federation with each of the members pursuing their own interests and memberships in these international organizations, and each establishing its own currency. Russia offered CIS nations below market prices for commodities such as oil and gas, asking in return that these countries not enter into external defense treaties or allow foreign military bases to be established in the region, but this tactic largely failed and soon Russia was increasing prices to assert greater control (Donaldson et al., 2014, p. 178). The Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) gained membership in the European Union in 2004 along with former Communist bloc countries of Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia, followed by Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 and Croatia in 2013. More concerning to Russia, these countries also all joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a military alliance originally created to prevent a Soviet invasion of Western Europe. Notably, Finland, which

has as much reason to distrust and fear Russia as any nation, is a member of the European Union but not of NATO.

Conflicts in the Balkans and Caucasus Regions

Continued NATO expansion was based on old fears of the potential for Russian aggression and was viewed by Russia as a broken promise that limited their influence in partnering to resolve regional conflicts. Immediately following the breakup of the Soviet Union, several conflicts arose in the former republics including civil war in Tajikistan, two secessionist movements in Georgia (South Ossetia and Abkhazia), the war over Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan and Armenia, and the independence struggle of the Trans-Dniester region in Moldova, all of which contributed to these fears and to declining regional trade. The total volume of trade between Russia and the former Soviet Republics dropped by half between 1989 and 1993. In 1992-93, despite pledges of a $1.6 billion assistance package from the United States and a ten-year deferral on debt obligations, Russia continued to experience severe economic hardships, hyperinflation, unemployment, and reduction in social services (Donaldson et al., 2014, pp. 170, 237-238, 252, 257). It is estimated that by mid-1993, more than 40 million Russians were living below the poverty line.

The biggest conflicts in the region testing the evolving relationship between Russia and the West (NATO) were the wars in the Balkans and the war in Chechnya. The West did not question the right of Russia to assert authority over Chechnya but it did object to the brutality of fighting forces and the killing of civilians. Russia charged that the violations of human rights were being committed by Chechen rebels. The two-year war in Chechnya ended in 1994 with a compromise agreement providing some local autonomy to the region. However, the failure of Russian troops to win the war contributed to a gradual decline in Yeltsin's popularity as he was increasingly viewed as inept and weak, capitulating to Western demands. (Indeed, the West was treating Russia this way in its refusal to involve them more closely in actions in Kosovo.) Yeltsin was also increasingly seen as undemocratic following a Constitutional crisis and legislative power-struggle that included his impeachment and bombardment of the Russian White House in 1993.

Terrorist attacks by Chechen rebels involving over 2,000 hostages at hospitals in Budyonnovsk in 1995, and Kizlar in 1996 continued to force the question of how to deal with the region. In 1997, Yeltsin and Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov signed an agreement that was to extend autonomy, end hostilities, and follow the rules of law. Of special note, Chechnya is strategically important because it provides a vital link in the flow of oil from Baku, Azerbaijan, to the Black Sea port of Novorossik (Donaldson et al., 2014, pp. 240-245, 264). Comparatively, the level of concern and regulation over the placement of oil and gas infrastructure between the United States, Canada, and Mexico as regards to environmental protection and impact studies pales with the security risks and economic competition over the placement of oil and gas pipelines in the Baltic, Caucasus, Caspian Sea, and Central Asia regions. Throughout the region of the former Soviet Republics, the process of controlling oil and gas resources and supply pipelines is highly contested.

Oligarchs and a Powerful Petro State

More recently, economic growth was accompanied by the rise of oligarchs, a small number of people who gained control of a large share of what had earlier been state assets as the Soviet economy privatized. The means by which they gained control has also been called into serious question. Jerrold Schecter (1998) noted that "six hundred bankers and business people have been killed since the fall of the Soviet Union" (p. 13). Some of these oligarchs have treated Russia like their own personal property while others invested in building a stronger civil society through supporting democratic institutions such as a free press (Gessen, 2012a, pp. 124-134). A number of high profile corruption and murder cases have emerged in recent years including cases involving not just oligarchs but also political dissidents such as: the arrests of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Vladimir Gusinsky, Dmitry Rozhdestvensky, Pussy Riot, and Alexei Navalny, and the deaths of Sergei Yushenkov, Alexander Litvinenko, Boris Berezovsky, Galina Starovoitova, Anna Politkovskaya, Sergei Magnitsky, and Boris Nemtsov.

Helped by soaring revenues of petroleum exports, the rise of Vladimir Putin has been largely ascribed to his success in responding to the "dizzying economic decline of the early 1990s [that] produced a profound sense of national humiliation" (Donaldson et al., 2014, p. 117).

In 1999, Chechnya invaded the Dagestan region of Russia and Yeltsin appointed Vladimir Putin to put down the incursion. This was followed by several terrorist bombings in different cities across Russia including two in Moscow that resulted in more than 100 deaths and led Putin to initiate a full-scale war on Chechnya producing hundreds of thousands of refugees (Gessen, 2012a, pp. 23-27). Later that year, Yeltsin resigned and Putin became his successor. Putin won the election for president in 2000.

Beyond the important policy differences on the wars in Kosovo, Libya, and Iraq, NATO enlargement, and attempts to establish U.S. military bases and missile defense systems in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Putin has generally been supportive of developing good bilateral relations with the United States. This is best exemplified through Russia's support for the war on terrorism. At the same time, Putin has insisted that Russia's role in regional and world affairs be recognized. Since he became president, Vladimir Putin has worked to concentrate power and eliminate critics and competitors. As one of his vocal critics has observed, "three months after his inauguration, two of the country's wealthiest men had been stripped of their influence and effectively kicked out of the country [and] less than a year after Putin came to power, all three federal television networks were controlled by the state" (Gessen, 2012a, p. 174).

After 9/11, the war against Chechnya was largely portrayed as part of the West's war on Islamic fundamentalist terrorism (Gessen, 2012a, p. 229). The 2004 hostage crisis at a school in Beslan, North Ossetia, in which 342 mostly children were killed was followed by "Putin's decision to centralize Moscow's control over Russia's regions by discarding the popular election of regional governors and republic presidents" (Donaldson et al., 2014, p. 384).

Russia's growing economic success and Putin's efforts to take back control from the oligarchs was largely touted among the emerging BRIC countries' multipolar world (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) (Gessen, 2012a, p. 243). The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was another sign of Russia's attempts to develop strong regional partnerships. Putin won a landslide victory for re-election in 2004. In 2008, Dmitry Medvedev became president and appointed Putin prime minister as he was ineligible to run for a third consecutive term.

Today, "most economic production is in private hands, the ruble is fully convertible, and prices are free to fluctuate with supply and demand" (Donaldson et al., 2014, p. 9). Russia also has a large domestic market and well-educated workforce. Russia has joined the IMF and WTO but continues to be very dependent on oil and gas revenues which have been subject to significant price fluctuations effecting economic stability. Gazprom has a near monopoly on natural gas production and transport in Russia and about 17% of the world gas production, 18% of estimated reserves, and 15% of the global transport network (Donaldson et al., 2014, p. 150). Unfortunately, Russia has poor protection of property rights, relatively high levels of corruption, increasing state ownership, and an unpredictable judicial system (Guriev, 2016, pp. 21-22). Prospects for Russia's future economic growth are unclear and will depend largely on the degree of improvement in regional trade relations, legal protections, and controlled government spending.

Syria and Ukraine

Lukyanov (2016) wrote,

> In February [2016], Moscow and Washington issued a joint statement announcing the terms of a 'cessation of hostilities' in Syria agreed to by major world powers, regional players, and most of the participants in the Syrian civil war … Even as it worked with Russia on the truce, the United States continued to enforce the sanctions it had placed on Russia in response to the 2014 annexation of Crimea. (p. 30)

Russia's actions in Crimea and in Syria represent in part a response to U.S. aggression around the world since the end of the Cold War and what it generally views as an overly assertive U.S. foreign policy (Lukyanov, 2016, pp. 32-35). Many Russians see Putin's annexation of Crimea "as righting a historical injustice and reclaiming Russia's status as a world power" (Lipman, 2016, p. 44). But Russia needs to develop good relations with Ukraine and its other neighbors through diplomacy not force of arms. The biggest threats to Russia are not European expansionism and certainly not the ambitions of neighbors and important potential trading partners like Ukraine; rather it stems from on-going destabilizing conflict in the Middle East. In many ways, the West needs a stable Russian military presence in Sevastopol (it had a lease agreement through 2042) which makes Russia's aggression in Crimea, the Ukraine, and even Syria all the more troubling. Russia has played and can play a productive role in Syria as it did with the removal of

chemical weapons. It would be interesting to consider what influence the Moscow Patriarchate might have in regards to policies or relief efforts on behalf of Syrian Orthodox Christians. Russia's Middle East relations are critically important in resolving conflicts there, especially its relations with Turkey and Iran. Therefore, it is critical the United States and Russia come together over strategic policy in Syria. There will not be real or lasting security in the region without stable cooperation with Russia.

Conclusion

To summarize some of the main points of this introduction, Russia has tended to have strong leaders with centralized control. It is a predominantly Christian society with diverse ethnic populations and neighbors. It has suffered and sacrificed greatly through serfdom, war, and famine but remained very patriotic, hard-working, and high-achieving in both science and the arts. It has been very conscious of protecting its interests through strategic defense and diplomacy working to maintain a balance-of-power approach in its foreign policy and international relations.

The storied history of U.S.-Russia relations over the last century, epitomized by the Cold War era, has often been antagonistic resulting in disastrous third world proxy wars, a tragic and wasteful consequence. Real collaboration in joint problem-solving efforts has been lacking, collaboration in space exploration being one exception and disarmament another. Direct trade with Russia has also been limited.

There is a great deal of trauma and tragedy in Russia's history and current context that give cause for caution and concern (the same is true for most countries including the United States and its genocide of Native Americans, slavery, Vietnam, and Iraq), but these faults and mistakes need not define the future. We must learn from such mistakes rather than allowing them to become self-fulfilling prophecies where participants become complicit in a never-ending narrative of distrust and fear. As noted in this essay, it has been asserted that "centuries of invasion from both east and west engendered fear and distrust of the outside world" by Russia (Schecter, 1998, p. 26) but such circumstances have also promoted a strategy emphasizing a desire to form alliances and mutually beneficial relationships to weather such storms. Generally speaking, in global affairs, we should be looking to societies' strengths for answers, not the weaknesses for excuses. A paradigm shift from a worldview of competing empires to one of mutual responsibility is critically needed.

Rather than blaming others, people and nations need to recognize the creative power of collaboration across communities and cultures. War is costly and wasteful but we should not think that building coalitions and relationships is inexpensive or easily accomplished. It takes time and patience to develop trust and understanding.

As this issue goes to publication, investigations continue into the Trump campaign and its possible collusion with Russia to influence the U.S. presidential election. Regardless of the role of the Trump campaign, there does appear to be evidence of Russia's involvement in trying to influence American voters especially through social media platforms. It is not unusual or unheard of for foreign governments to try to interfere or influence the outcomes of elections. According to

Dov Levin of Carnegie Mellon University, the United States has done so more than 80 times worldwide between 1946 and 2000 (NPR, 2016). One thing that makes the current case different are the new tools available for carrying out such cyber-attacks. The use of social media that involves Americans themselves in spreading misinformation seems aimed at dividing society against itself. In many ways, we should be less worried about whether democrats or republicans win an election (as both are American parties that despite differences should have America's best interests at heart), and more concerned about issues of bipartisanship in support of the union. When the issue first emerged, Stephen Cohen (2017) wrote,

> The allegations are driven by political forces with various agendas: the Hillary Clinton wing of the Democratic Party, which wants to maintain its grip on the party by insisting that she didn't lose the election but that it was stolen by Russian President Vladimir Putin for Trump; by enemies of Trump's proposed détente with Russia, who want to discredit both him and Putin; and by Republicans and Democrats stunned that Trump essentially ran and won without either party, thereby threatening the established two-party system. (n.p.)

More recently, Masha Gessen (2012b) wrote that there is no reason to believe that "a tiny drop in the sea of Facebook ads changed any American votes" but a more likely explanation is that "a great many Americans want to prove that the Russians elected Trump, and Americans did not" (n.p.). The current crisis seems to have more to do with the new tools of social media and American divisiveness at home as it has to do with foreign affairs. Given the relentless ubiquity of access to the 24-hour news cycle on our mobile devices, the American public needs to learn how to become more responsible and discerning users of media technology. At the same time, these phenomena also underscore just how much we live in a global society and how much we have to learn about living cooperatively for the common good in such a world.

References

Ahmed, L. (2011). *A Quiet Revolution: The Veil's Resurgence, from the Middle East to America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Bronson, R. (2006). *Thicker than Oil: America's Uneasy Partnership with Saudi Arabia*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Cohen, S. F., Matlock, J. F., Pepper, J., Heuvel, W. V., & Speedie, D. C. (2016, February 17). Beyond a New Cold War? International Security and the Need for U.S.-Russia Cooperation. . Panel discussion conducted at the meeting of the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, New York City, NY.

Cohen, S. F. (2017, February 22). Why we must oppose the Kremlin-Bating Against Trump. *The Nation*. Retrieved from https://www.thenation.com/article/why-we-must-oppose-the-kremlin-baiting-against-trump/

Donaldson, R. H., Nogee, J. L., & Nadkarni, V. (2014). *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interests*. Armonk, NY: Me. E. Sharpe.
Figes, O. (2002). *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia*. New York, NY: Picador.
Fromkin, D. (1980). The Great Game in Asia. *Foreign Affairs, 58*(4), 936-951.
Fromkin, D. (1989). *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*. New York, NY: Holt.
Gessen, M. (2012a). *The Man without a Face: The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin*. New York, NY: Riverhead Books.
Gessen, Masha (2012b, November 3). Russian Interference in the 2016 Election: A Cacaophony, Not a Conspiracy. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/russian-interference-in-the-2016-election-a-cacophony-not-a-conspiracy
Guriev, S. (2016). Russia's Constrained Economy: How the Kremlin can Spur Growth. *Foreign Affairs, 95*(3), pp. 18-22.
Karpat, K. (2010). From the Classical Ottoman Religious Cultural Order to Nation State. In K. Karpat & Y. Yildirim (Eds.), *The Ottoman Mosaic: Exploring Models for Peace by Re-exploring the Past* (pp.41-56). Seattle, WA: Cune Press.
Khodarkovsky, M. (2002). *Russia's Steppe Frontier: The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500-1800*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana Press.
Kotkin, S. (2016). Russia's Perpetual Geopolitics: Putin Returns to the Historical Pattern. *Foreign Affairs, 95*(3), pp. 2-9.
Lieven, D. (2009). *Russia Against Napoleon: The Battle for Europe, 1807-1814*. London, England: Penguin Books.
Lipman, M. (2016). How Putin Silences Dissent: Inside the Kremlin's Crackdown. *Foreign Affairs, 95*(3), pp. 38-46.
Lukyanov, F. (2016). Putin's Foreign Policy: The Quest to Restore Russia's Rightful Place. *Foreign Affairs, 95*(3), pp. 30-37.
National Public Radio. (2016, December 22). Database Tracks History Of U.S. Meddling In Foreign Elections. *NPR.* Retrieved from http://www.npr.org/2016/12/22/506625913/database-tracks-history-of-u-s-meddling-in-foreign-elections
Pate, A. (2016, August 25). *The Case against Russian Exceptionalism*. Opening panel for KSU's Year of Russia, Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, GA.
Pennington, R. (2010). Offensive Women: Women in Combat in the Red Army in the Second World War. *The Journal of Military History, 74*, 775-820.
Riasanovsky, N. (2005). *Russian Identities: A Historical Survey*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
Shafarevich, I. (1974). Socialism in Our Past and Future. In A. Solzhenitsyn, *From Under the Rubble* (pp. 26-66). Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway.
Schecter, J. (1998). *Russian Negotiating Behavior: Continuity and Transition*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.
Sick, G. (2009). The United States and the Persian Gulf in the Twentieth Century. In L. G. Potter (Ed.), *The Persian Gulf in History* (pp. 295-310). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Smith, H. (1976). *The Russians*. New York, NY: Quadrangle.
Solzhenitsyn, A. (1974). *From Under the Rubble*. Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway.
Taruskin, R. (2009). *On Russian Music*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
Weatherford, J. (2004). *Ghenghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.

Journal of Global Initiatives
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp. 18-31.

The Economic Roots of the Cold War: The IMF, ITO and Other Economic Issues in Post-War Soviet-American Relations

Kristina V. Minkova

Abstract

In light of newly released archival resources, this article examines the traditional historiography of Soviet-American relations focusing on economic relations at the end of World War II.

The Cold War had an immense impact on the historical development of the world in the second half of the twentieth century, and its consequences continue to influence international relations. Examining the origins of the Cold War, the role of the U.S.S.R., and the United States in waging it remains highly relevant and topical today.

This study reveals the intensions of the Soviet government to participate in international economic cooperation at the end of World War II, undermining the distorted Cold War view of the 1950s-1980s propagated by both Soviet and Western propaganda. This new understanding is partly explained by the fact that the bulk of the documents had been for a long time unavailable to researchers.[1] Meanwhile, it shows that the history of Soviet-American relations and particularly that of the period considered is not indisputable. Nor should such studies be limited to the political problems that have traditionally been the focus of such scholarship. These enduring stereotypes significantly impede an impartial assessment of the current state of Russian-American relations. The paper further demonstrates how diplomatic missteps, fears, and hesitations contributed to the beginning of a long disastrous period in international relations known as the Cold War.

Economic relations between the U.S.S.R. and the United States in 1944–1946 cover a significant range of issues: the settlement of deliveries under the Lend-Lease Agreement; the question of the American loan to the U.S.S.R.; and the

[1] A significant bulk of the documents was declassified in 1992 but they are not freely available. They are preserved in the Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation which can be accessed only with a special license. Unfortunately, the researcher will not necessarily receive the documents he or she needs but only the documents that the keepers find appropriate to serve out. Many documents are still under seal.

American initiative to create several international economic and financial institutions including the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank, and the International Trade Organization, and the Soviet participation in these organizations.

It should be noted that neither the Soviet nor the American leadership had a unified position on any of these issues. Within three years, 1944–1946, Washington had changed its attitude to the very consideration of the issues listed above: one day they were planned to be discussed all together, another day, strictly separately. From the beginning of the talks the Soviet Government declared its desire to discuss each issue separately, but in the process it agreed to unite some of them into blocks.

Background

During the Second World War the future of international economic cooperation was addressed in the Atlantic Charter and the Lend-Lease Master Agreement, but it was more precisely taken up only at the Moscow Conference of the Allied powers in late 1943. This conference was preceded by exchange of memoranda from both American and Soviet sides regarding the necessity to start bilateral confidential negotiations on major problems of post-war economic development (AVPRF 624, 1–2). On November 1, 1943, the Soviet, U.S., and British foreign ministers signed a secret protocol containing 10 annexes. The ninth annex was entitled “The bases of our program for international economic cooperation” (FRUS, 1943, pp. 763–766). This program contained a list of issues that the “Big Three” considered the most important not only for the normalization of international economic cooperation, but also for the success of the post-war system of international relations as a whole. The list was topped by the expansion of international trade on a non-discriminatory basis and the regulation of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade in goods, as well as the establishment of solid international currency exchange rates and the organization of currency exchange.

The Americans and a lesser extent, the British, took the laboring oar in developing draft proposals on these issues. In the Soviet Union the People’s Commissariats of Finance (Narkomfin) and Foreign Trade (NKVT), in co-operation with the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKID) also worked on the Soviet position regarding post-war international economic relations.

The American proposals regarding the development of international trade led to the drafting of the Charter of the International Trade Organization (ITO). It was signed by 53 countries at the UN Conference on Trade and Employment on March 24, 1948, but never ratified by the United States and, therefore, most of the other signatory countries (Minkova, 2006, pp. 118-120). As for the establishment of fixed exchange rates and the organization of free currency exchange, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) were founded in the aftermath of the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference held in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in July 1944.

The Settlement of Deliveries under the Lend-Lease Agreement

On May 12, 1945, the Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew sent Soviet chargé d'affaires in Washington Nikolay Novikov a note informing the Soviet government that "the shipment of supplies under the current program of Lend-Lease will be immediately modified in view of the end of organized hostilities in Europe" (FRUS, 1945, pp. 1000–1001). The Soviet side was completely unprepared for this message (the answering note stated that "The note referred to and the discontinuance of deliveries have come as a complete surprise to the Soviet Government" (AVPRF 702, 1), and reacted very negatively. This perception of the situation settled deeply both in Soviet/Russian and American historiography becoming the basis of many false assumptions. To begin with, this note was considered authentic evidence of the abrupt change of U.S. policy towards the Soviet Union after the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt (Fleming, 1961, p. 269; Herring, 1973, p. 181; Pechatnov, 2006, p. 328). As a matter of fact the situation was completely different. Firstly, the United States was considering a program of post-war assistance to the Soviet Union since 1943 (FRUS, 1945, p. 937). Secondly, Washington was determined to fully implement its commitments on deliveries in the framework of the Fourth Protocol to the Lend-Lease Agreement and negotiate the Fifth Protocol, as State Department repeatedly notified the Soviet embassy in various documents (AVPRF 624, 13–14; FRUS, 1944, pp. 1032, 1084). Third, the termination of supplies under the Lend-Lease Agreement stemmed from the wording of the U.S. Lend-Lease Act, according to which the deliveries under this program were to be ceased with the end of hostilities.

Further delays in the talks on this issue ended with the signing of the "Agreement between the Governments of the US and the U.S.S.R. on the disposition of lend-lease supplies in inventory or procurement in the United States" (United States Treaties and Other International Agreements, p. 2819–2822) on October 15, 1945. The delays were mostly caused by the actions of the Soviet leadership which greatly delayed answering notes and other messages in the framework of negotiations. In addition, the U.S. side interpreted the Soviet violation of the Article III of Mutual Aid Agreement from June 11, 1942, as an inappropriate and egregious breach of trust. This article prohibited the Soviet government "to transfer title to, or possession of, any defense article or defense information, transferred to it under the Act of March 11, 1941, of the Congress of the United States of America, or permit the use thereof by any one not an officer, employee, or agent of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" (Mutual Aid Agreement). Meanwhile, the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow Averell Harriman reported to the State Department in March 1945 that Stalin had presented Poland with 500 trucks received by lend-lease. Another 1,000 trucks were "donated" by the Red Army to Łódź. In addition, Harriman mentioned deliveries of lend-lease flour to Poland and sugar to Finland (FRUS, 1945, p. 990).

The Negotiations over the U.S. Loan to the U.S.S.R.

The idea of granting the Soviet Union a credit worth several billion U.S. dollars for post-war reconstruction emerged in the U.S. Treasury even before an official request from the Soviet side. Throughout 1944, Trade Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr. repeatedly discussed with various U.S. officials the possibility of giving such a loan to the Soviet Union (FRUS, 1945, pp. 938-939).

The official request from the Soviet leadership was set out in the memorandum handed to Harriman by the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Vyatcheslav Molotov on January 3, 1945. The Soviet Government asked for a $6 billion credit for a period of 30 years at a 2.5% interest rate to purchase American industrial products and equipment required for the speedy restoration of their war-ravaged economy (AVPRF 29, p. 1). The reaction to this request came immediately: on January 6, 1945, Harriman wrote to then Secretary of State Edward Stettinius: "It is my basic conviction that we should do everything we can to assist the Soviet Union through credits in developing a sound economy. I feel strongly that the sooner the Soviet Union can develop a decent life for its people the more tolerant they will become" (FRUS, 1945, p. 947). At the same time Harriman insisted that negotiations on credit came completely separate from the negotiations on the lend-lease settlement.

On January 10, 1945, Secretary of Trade Morgenthau sent a memorandum to Roosevelt proposing to grant the Soviet Union a $10 billion credit for 35 years at 2% interest rate (FRUS, 1945, p. 948). Appropriate attention should be given to the uniqueness of this situation: the U.S. government, in fact, showed willingness to provide the U.S.S.R. with a larger credit on more favorable terms and for a longer period than requested!

However, it is here where the first difficulties emerged. The Soviet side insisted on discussing the loan jointly with the settlement of the Lend-Lease Act, considering it virtually one question. In the United States the State Department began debating on the form of the credit, conditions of its granting and, most importantly, on how to make Congress adopt relevant legislation to realize the procedure. Unable to find a quick compromise with the Soviet leadership the United States suspended deliveries under the Fourth Protocol to the Lend-Lease Agreement. Both sides found themselves frustrated.

If the Soviet Union were to enter the war with Japan it would be in the need of supplies under the Fourth Protocol; but until then the State Department could not justify the need of their renewal to the Congress. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Joseph C. Grew communicated this problem to Soviet charge d'affaires in the United States Nikolay Novikov in a note dated June 26, 1945 (FRUS, 1945, pp. 1027-1028). However, the next day Grew sent Novikov another note informing the latter about the possibility of delivering to the U.S.S.R. those goods from the list submitted by the Soviet side which could be found and prepared to ship by August 31, 1945. In a note dated July 17, 1945, this period was extended for one month (FRUS, 1945, pp. 1029-1030).

By this time the balance of power between the Allied Powers shifted significantly. The successful nuclear test of July 1945 made the United States and its President Harry Truman feel that they now occupied a unique position in post-war international relations. Being sure that the Soviet physicists would need another 15-20 years to develop their own nuclear bomb, President Truman began acting abruptly. In his famous letter to the U.S. Secretary of State James Byrnes, he confessed that he was "tired of babying the Soviets" (Truman, 1955, pp. 551–552). Hence in any negotiations the American side stopped seeking compromise. The question of credit was firmly tied to other problems in the economic relations between the two countries. In a memo of General Wesson, Director of the U.S.S.R. Branch of Foreign Economic Administration to its Administrator L. Crowley the former stressed the need to conclude a U.S.-Soviet trade agreement, an agreement on fishing rights in the Bering Sea and around the Aleutian Islands, and to settle violations of the Article III of the Lend-Lease Agreement mentioned above. Repeated U.S. notes to the Soviet leadership were left unanswered and Moscow did not terminate supplies of the lend-lease goods and equipment to third countries (FRUS, 1945, pp. 1038-1039). Meanwhile, the protracted negotiations between different U.S. administrations left Soviet requests for American credit unanswered. Stalin commented on this situation at a meeting with Senator Pepper and other American Congressmen in Moscow in September (Kennan, 1967, p. 179). Given the urgency of Soviet requests, it is further notable that it was not until August 9, 1945, that Harriman informed the Soviet leadership on the introduction of the U.S. law authorizing the Export-Import Bank to provide loans to other countries (AVPRF 669, p. 67).

The signing of the already mentioned Agreement on lend-lease supplies on October 15, 1945, was the last success in the Soviet-American talks on economic issues. After that the negotiations stalled despite the persistent interest from both the Soviet and American sides. On December 21, Harriman sent James Byrnes a telegram stating that "Little information has been received by this Embassy regarding our over-all economic policy towards the Soviet Union and particularly as it relates to Soviet economic policies .... Since Soviet political policy appears to be influenced by economic objectives it would seem that we should give at this time greater attention to the concerting of our economic policy with our political policy towards the Soviet Union" (FRUS, 1945, p. 1049).

The U.S.S.R. & the Creation of the International Trade Organization

Harriman's telegram to Washington was well received. The same day, December 21, Harriman forwarded to Molotov's deputy A. Vyshinsky "Proposals for the expansion of world trade and employment." Similar texts were sent to 13 other countries two weeks prior (AVPRF 47, pp. 137–139). Being the result of an exhaustive bargaining between Washington and London, the "Proposals" were a clear expression of the American view of the post-war economic order. The Soviet Government was asked whether it would agree to participate in the negotiations scheduled for March or April 1946. This document caused a major stir in the NKID

and NKVT that had already developed their own views on post-war organization of international trade. By December 31, 1945, the “Proposals” have been carefully studied in several departments of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. That day Molotov received a memo “On the US proposals to expand world trade and employment” (AVPRF, 700), signed by one of his deputies, Amazasp Arutyunyan, and the head of the NKID economic department Vladimir Gerashchenko. The letter briefly considered the American proposals for the preparation of an international conference on trade and employment, which was supposed to convene in the summer of 1946 under the aegis of the UN. In addition, the letter contained a summary of the basic principles of the Charter of the World Organization Trade and Employment. Arutyunyan and Gerashchenko wrote, “The American proposals to expand trade and employment – in particular as regards our foreign trade are largely unacceptable for us” (AVPRF 700, p. 3). However, they would find it possible to agree to participate in the preliminary discussions in March and April 1946 on the issues of world trade and employment, “not being bound, however, by any obligations with respect to our participation in the World Conference on trade and employment”(AVPRF 700, p. 3). They concluded that Soviet participation in the “said preliminary discussion of the US proposals on world trade” was advisable “regardless of whether we participate or not in the projected global organization” (AVPRF 700, p. 4).

These officials substantiated the need for the Soviet Union's participation in the talks by the fact that even in the case of a decision not to participate in the activities of the ITO, it would have been advisable to try removing from its charter provisions any aspects disadvantageous for the U.S.S.R., in order to test American, British, and other participants’ intentions in the negotiations as well as to examine the current state of trade and economic contradictions etc. If, however, Soviet participation in the Organization would be recognized in the future as desirable, participation in the preliminary discussions of the proposals for the conference, which would resolve the issue of the creation of the International Organization on Trade and Employment, would be all the more important (AVPRF 700). On January 3, 1946, Molotov forwarded this letter and the “Proposals” to his other deputy, Vladimir Dekanozov with the following note: “Please, present the project agreed with Comrade Mikoyan” (AVPRF 700, p. 1). All internal correspondence was classified as “secret”.

During January and February 1946 both NKID and NKVT were actively studying American proposals and their potential impact on the Soviet economy, Soviet-American relations and the U.S.S.R.'s position in the post-war world. However, at that time Moscow did not produce any response to the “Proposals.” The consequences were disastrous. On February 21, 1946, Byrnes sent to Soviet charge d'affaires in Washington Fyodor Orekhov a note stating that from that day, all economic questions between the two countries would only be negotiated together. By that time this list of questions included:

(1) Claims of American nationals against the government of the U.S.S.R., including claims arising from actions of the U.S.S.R. in occupied and liberated areas;
(2) Determining the concerted policy to be followed by the United States, U.S.S.R., and the United Kingdom in assisting the peoples liberated from the domination of Nazi Germany, and the peoples of the former Axis satellite states of Europe to solve their pressing economic problems by democratic means;
(3) Arrangements of free, equal, and open navigation on rivers of international concern to individuals, commercial vessels, and goods of all members of the United Nations;
(4) Preliminary discussions of a comprehensive treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation between the United States and the U.S.S.R., and agreement to enter into negotiations in the near future for the conclusion of such a treaty;
(5) Arrangements to assure the adequate protection of the interests of the writers and inventors and other copyright holders;
(6) Methods for giving effect to the United States "Proposals for Expansion of World Trade and Employment" transmitted to the Soviet leadership on December 21, 1945 (the date of transmission was surely put intentionally to show Soviet unwillingness to co-operation in this project of ultimate international importance);
(7) General settlement of lend-lease obligations in accordance with the provisions of the Lend-Lease Agreement on the basis of an inventory of lend-lease supplies in the possession of the U.S.S.R. or subject to its control at the end of hostilities;
(8) Civil aviation matters of mutual interest to the two countries;
(9) Discussion of other economic questions (FRUS, 1946, pp. 828-829).

It took the Soviet side almost a month to work out a suitable reply to that note. In his memoirs the then People's Commissar for Foreign Trade Anastas Mikoyan sparingly explained the reasons of such delay: "It was to our disadvantage, because for credits they wanted us to make concessions on other issues, that we were not ready to make decisions on" (Mikoyan, 1999, p. 495). Thus, only on March 15, 1946, Novikov informed Byrnes that the Soviet government agreed to discuss with the following questions: the amount and terms of credit; the conclusion of a treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation; methods for giving effect to the provisions of Article VII of the Lend-Lease Agreement; and the question of lend-lease supplies. As for other issues, the Soviet Government did not consider it "expedient to connect the discussion of any other questions with the discussion on credit" but expressed its willingness to discuss them at a time and place to be agreed upon by both parties (FRUS, 1946, pp. 829-830).

This time it was the U.S. leadership that took over a month to reply. On April 18, 1946, in a note to Novikov, Byrnes welcomed the readiness of the Soviet side to discuss the issues listed in the note from March 15. However, Washington

considered three matters not included in the Soviet list–that is the claims of American nationals against the government of the U.S.S.R; the concerted policies for economic assistance for liberated nations and the protection of intellectual property–closely connected with the issues that the Soviet Union government has already agreed to discuss immediately. He therefore suggested starting negotiations on these issues on May 15 in Washington, and on the technical aspects of lend-lease supplies–10 days before. Later on Byrnes expressed his pleasure from noticing the presence of a Soviet observer in the first meetings of the Boards of Governors of the IMF and IBRD, and expressed the hope that the Soviet Union would soon become a member of these organizations and participate in their activity (FRUS, 1946, pp. 834–837).

The Soviet experts from NKVT took about a month to finalize the answering note. On May 17, Novikov communicated to the Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson a note repeating almost word for word the text of the Soviet note of March 15. The only exception was the date–the Soviet side agreed to begin negotiations in May that year (already late for a few days to the date proposed earlier by the Americans)–and the addition of the question of navigation on the rivers and civil aviation to the discussion agenda. As for other issues of American concern, the Soviet leadership repeated its position that they had not been directly connected to key issues it agreed to discuss, but again expressed its willingness to start a preliminary exchange of views on an agreed date (FRUS, 1946, pp. 841–842).

On May 23, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs W. Clayton received from the Office of Financial and Development Policy a memorandum containing new measures for the response to the Soviets. It proposed two scenarios for further actions:

1. To make use of the phrasing in the Soviet notes, and to suspend the negotiations on credit; and
2. To defer discussions of a larger loan in the Congress until there is a guarantee of the successful completion of negotiations with the U.S.S.R. while providing the Soviet Union with a minor credit of $ 250-500 mln from free sums of Export-Import Bank (FRUS, 1946, pp. 842–843).

The United States' response followed in another month arriving only on June 13. Byrnes still insisted on the simultaneous discussion of all economic issues and appointed a new date for the commencement of negotiations–July 10, 1946 (FRUS, 1946, pp. 844–845). At the very bottom of the note it was stated that the U.S. government would be grateful for a quick response–a very clear allusion to the fact that there had been no progress in negotiations for six months. Meanwhile, representatives of 19 countries had already been actively working out the draft Charter of the ITO, the discussion of which was due to begin on October 15 in Geneva (Minkova, 2006, p. 111).

At the end of June 1946, the U.S. State Department prepared a draft of a new lend-lease agreement that the United States had hoped to discuss with the Soviet

Union and sign in a short time. However, no reaction to the note from June 13 followed from the Soviet side until early September. By then the State Department had to admit the need to offer Moscow separate talks on the Lend-Lease Agreement to get it off the ground and achieve at least some kind of positive result. William Clayton sent the corresponding note to Fyodor Orekhov on September 14, 1946. In addition, U.S. officials regarded these negotiations as a means to win back three American icebreakers transferred to the Soviet Union by lend-lease. Instead of being returned to the United States after the end of hostilities, these vessels were illegally held by the Soviets in violation of all agreements.

Clayton's note remained unanswered. On December 31, 1946, the U.S. ambassador to the U.S.S.R. W. B. Smith had to "remind" Molotov about it (FRUS, 1946, p. 865).

It should be stressed that in reality the Soviet attitude to the American proposals was by no means so indifferent as it may seem from the correspondence discussed above. It is true that in accordance with Anastas Mikoyan recollections the Lend-Lease Agreement did not represent any interest to the Soviet Union, and the Soviet leadership did everything possible to hold up talks on this issue (Mikoyan, 1999, p. 495). However, Moscow regarded an invitation to participate in the negotiations on the ITO as extremely important. The American "Proposals" had been carefully studied in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, and approximately since the end of May 1946 the Ministry of Foreign Trade started developing detailed guidelines ("directives") for the Soviet delegation to participate in working out the draft Charter of the ITO. Beside a very detailed analysis with a separate conclusion on every paragraph of the "Proposals for the expansion of world trade and employment," and a draft of the ITO Charter in its version from December 1945, these guidelines contained positions on all the economic issues listed in the note from February 21. These directives had even been approved by a special resolution carried by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) (RGASPI 28, 68–173). Another proof of the great desire of the Soviet leadership to take an active role in multilateral talks could be found in the renaming of the Council of the People's Commissars to the Council of Ministers and the People's Commissariats to the Ministries in March 1946 in order to conform to international standards (Law on Transformation, 1946). Some groups within the American leadership and academia had also been confident about the potential participation of the Soviet Union in the post-war economic cooperation, especially in the activities of the IMF and the ITO talks. This attitude survived Churchill's famous Fulton speech and lived up to mid-1947. In May 1947, the respected journal *The American Economic Review* published an article authored by a famous American historian and economist Alexander Gerschenkron (1947) entitled "Russia and the International Trade Organization." This article analyzed in considerable detail the applicability of each article of the draft ITO Charter to the economic and political situation in the U.S.S.R. In conclusion, Gerschenkron (1947) expressed confidence that Soviet participation in the ITO would contribute to "laying the basis of peaceful economic collaboration between different economic worlds" (p. 642).

The Participation of the U.S.S.R. in the IMF and World Bank

In early 1944, active talks were held between the Soviet and American experts regarding the basic principles of the IMF. Although almost every amendment proposed by the Soviet side had been declined by the Americans, in the middle of March 1944, the latter made counter-proposals for virtually all the points in question: the ruble exchange rate; the discount in contribution in gold for the countries severely damaged by war; the amount of basic economic information to be presented to the Fund; and the executive force of the Fund's decisions. However, at that stage of the talks the Soviet experts concluded that the Soviet Union would not get any economic gains from participation in the IMF, which would have only political importance for securing Soviet influence in international affairs (AVPRF 171, 10).

The Soviet leadership was eager to play a major role in the post-war economic and political order. This made Moscow agree to some clearly disadvantageous concessions to remain on board of economic negotiations. It is my belief that Stalin was not fully aware of all the complexity of the big economic and political game between the United States and Great Britain, which gained momentum in 1943. While the latter was struggling to save the remnants of its empire and was bargaining madly for credits vitally important for its survival, the former were clearly demanding the role of a world leader. For example, no Soviet documents show any hint of the Soviet understanding of the role of Canada in this bargaining, though in 1944 negotiations with Canada on economic issues were clearly more important to the United States than those with the U.S.S.R. Thus, in American documents the concern over the terms of the British-Canadian bacon contract outranks the Soviet-American discrepancy in the basic principles of the IMF activity (FRUS, 1944, pp. 50, 60, 78, 89).

In July 1944, Soviet representatives attended the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference in Bretton Woods, where the Soviet delegation made some further concessions to the American proposals by agreement with the Kremlin. On July 22, 1944, the chair of the delegation Mikhail Stepanov signed the Final Act along with the delegates from other 43 Allied Nations. Immediately after the Conference, the Soviet delegation submitted detailed observations on the advantages and disadvantages of the Soviet Union's membership in these organizations to the NKID, NKVT, Narkomfin, and the State Bank (Gosbank). Apparently, this question was consistently mooted in the NKID, NKVT, Narkomfin, and Gosbank throughout the entirety of 1945 (AVPRF 197, 1–4, 10–18; AVPRF 194, 196–205).

Documents deposited in the Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation suggest that the U.S.S.R. was about to join both the IMF and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) until December 31, 1945. In particular, the collection includes a draft Resolution of the Politburo "On accession of the U.S.S.R. to the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development," and the findings of a special commission authorized by a decree of the Council of People's Commissars from March 5, 1945,

to develop proposals regarding the possible participation of the U.S.S.R. in the International Monetary Fund and the IBRD. This commission concluded its work on November 27, 1945, with recommendations to the Soviet leadership to join the IMF before December 31 as the entry conditions after that date were to be determined by the Fund (AVPRF 194, 200).

However, during 1945 the position of the Soviet government to joining the IMF changed dramatically. Rapidly worsening relations with the United States made Stalin feel at a loss. The necessity to completely review his foreign policy led him to make some poor decisions. The decision to postpone the Soviet Union accession to the IMF might well be one of these poor decisions. Urged by both the Soviet and American officials to make a statement on the Soviet policy regarding joining the IMF, on December 29, 1945, the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Vyatcheslav Molotov communicated to Harriman that "the Soviet government considered it impossible at that time to sign the draft agreement drawn up in Bretton Woods ... the Soviet Government found it necessary to subject the issues raised by these projects to further study in the light of the new conditions of postwar economic developments" (AVPRF 704, 8).

This was obviously a difficult decision. A week earlier, on December 21, 1945 (the day when the "Proposals for the expansion of world trade and employment" were communicated to Vyshinsky), Molotov got another report on the IMF from his staff. This report presented weighty considerations from the Soviet Union to take part in the work of the IMF and the World Bank. In particular, it was believed that "the entry of the U.S.S.R. into the membership of the International Monetary Fund would be considered by the United States and other United Nations as a proof of its desire to participate in international economic cooperation. On the contrary, the Soviet Union's refusal to participate in the international monetary organizations would play into the hands of reactionary elements in US and British financial circles opposing the post-war cooperation between the main countries in the maintenance of postwar peace and order" (AVPRF 194, 8). Two days before Molotov's refusal to sign, the United States ratified the IMF agreement thus making it come into force.

No doubt following the example of Great Britain, the Soviet Union hoped to barter its signature on the IMF agreement in exchange for guarantees of a large credit from the United States (Pollard, 1985, pp. 67–68). Since by the end of December 1945 the issue of the loan still remained unresolved (Van Dormael, 1978, p. 192), the Soviet Union turned out to be a prisoner of its own aspirations–signing the agreement without getting the loan could be considered both in the United States and Great Britain as a clear evidence of the political and economic weakness of the Soviet Union (Gaddis, 1972, p. 23). It would be fair to say that this viewpoint has never been proved, but the bulk of documents and literature studied on the subjects makes very high the probability that the Soviet Leadership was motivated by these considerations.

The Western countries and the United States, in particular, met the refusal of the Soviet leadership to join IMF in 1945 with mixed reaction. Opponents saw it as another proof of the dictatorial aspirations of the Soviet leadership, who did not want to make any compromises with its former allies. Proponents of more liberal

positions reminded policymakers that the Soviet Union was not the only country that had not signed the IMF agreement on December 31, 1945. The list of these countries included, for example, Australia and New Zealand.

In effect, Molotov's statement was not an empty excuse and really did not mean the final rejection by the U.S.S.R. to joining the IMF and the World Bank. Otherwise, it is doubtful that Moscow would have allowed Czechoslovakia and especially Poland to become IMF members (Lavigne, 1990, p. 25). In addition, in March 1946, the Soviet Union took part in the first meeting of the IMF Board of Governors Fund as an observer (Brabant, 1991). Due to the anticipated entry of the Soviet Union in 1946 it was decided at this meeting to extend the period for acceptance of new members on the initial terms until the end of that year (Hexner, 1946, p. 640).

However, 1946 brought drastic changes to the character of the U.S.–Soviet Union talks on the issues of economic cooperation. As mentioned before, the Soviet membership in the IMF was no longer a separate question; it had become part of the whole complex of economic problems of multilateral and bilateral nature, which Washington agreed to consider only in tandem. The directives for the Soviet delegation prepared in May 1946 for the talks on the ITO still contained a few phrases concerning the Bretton Woods institutions. In particular, the document stated: "If the US government agrees with our proposals and will sign an agreement on granting a loan, the full and final settlement of the Lend-Lease, the delegation may declare the readiness of the Soviet Union to join the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development as well as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization" (RGASPI 28, 70).

The documents discussed in this study present us with a completely new picture of Soviet-American relations in 1944–1946. The Soviet leadership appears more open to international cooperation, at least in the economic sphere, than traditionally believed. Accordingly, the perception of 1946 as the first year of the Cold War takes a completely different hue. As we can see, in 1946 the Soviet leadership was still willing to participate in international affairs and did not seek isolation. However, its decision to take some time out to watch how the events would develop and consider from outside all the benefits and dangers of an active participation in international affairs proved to be a fatal mistake. The push-back and foot-dragging of late 1945–early 1946 turned fatal for Moscow, as the Soviet Union was cut off from the work of major international institutions, causing significant damage to its own national interests.

References

Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF 29). Collection 06 "Molotov Office." Series 7. Folder 2. File 29.

Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF 47). Collection 0129 "USA Records Office." Series 29 AVTO. Folder 172. File 47.

Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF 171). Collection 06 "Molotov Office." Series 6. Folder 17. File 171.
Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF 194). Collection 06 "Molotov Office." Series 7. Folder 19. File 194.
Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF 197). Collection 06 "Molotov Office." Series 7. Folder 19. File 197.
Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF 624). Collection 06 "Molotov Office." Series 6. Folder 46. File 624.
Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF 669). Collection 06 "Molotov Office." Series 7. Folder 43. File 669.
Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF 700). Collection 06 "Molotov Office." Series 7. Folder 45. File 700.
Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF 702). Collection 06 "Molotov Office." Series 7. Folder 45. File 702.
Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF 704). Collection 06 "Molotov Office." Series 7. Folder 45. File 704.
Brabant, J. M. (1991). *The Planned Economies and International Economic Organizations*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Fleming, D.F. (1961). *The Cold War and Its Origins, 1917–1960.* Vol. I. London, England: George Allen and Unwin.
Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS). (1943). (vol. I). Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS). (1944). (vol. II). Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, pp 1–105.
Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS). (1945). (vol. V). Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, pp. 809–1173.
Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS). (1946). (vol. VI). Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, pp. 828–865.
Gaddis, J. L. (1972). *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
Gerschenkron, A. (1947). Russia and the International Trade Organization. *American Economic Review 37*(2), 624–642.
Herring, G. C. (1973). *Aid to Russia, 1941–1946*. New York: NY: Columbia University Press.
Hexner, E. (1946, September). The Soviet Union and the International Monetary Fund. *The American Journal of International Law 40*(3), 637–640.
Kennan, J. F. (1967). *Memoirs, 1925–1950*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.
Lavigne, M. (1990). Organized International Economic Cooperation After World War II. *Soviet and Eastern European Foreign Trade 26*(1), 4–35.
Law on Transformation of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. to the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Councils of People's Commissars of the Union and autonomous republics – to the Councils of Ministers. (1946, March 15). Retrieved from URL: http://eao.memo27reg.org/o-preobrazovanii-soveta-narodnyh-komissarov-

sssr-v-sovet-ministrov-sssr-i-sovetov-narodnyh-komissarov-souznyh-i-avtonomnyh-respublik-v-sovety-ministrov-souznyh-i-avtonomnyh-respublik

Mikoyan, A. I. (1999). *Tak bylo* [Memoirs]. Moscow, Russia: Vagrius.

Minkova, K. V. (2006). *Mezhdunarodnaya mnogostoronnyaya torgovlya: ot antichnosti do VTO [International Multilateral Trade: From Antiquity to WTO]*. St. Petersburg, Russia: St. Petersburg University Press.

Mutual Aid Agreement between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, June 11, 1942. Retrieved from http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/amsov42.asp

Pechatnov, V. O. (2006). *Stalin, Roosevelt, Truman: U.S.S.R. and U.S.A. in the 1940s*. Moscow, Russia: Terra.

Pollard, R. (1985). *Economic Security and the Origins of the Cold War, 1945–1950*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RGASPI 28). Collection 84 "Mikoyan Collection." Series 1. File 28.

Truman, H. S. (1955). *Year of Decisions*. New York, NY: Doubleday & Company.

United States Treaties and Other International Agreements (1959). Washington: State Department.

Van Dormael, A. (1978). *Bretton Woods: Birth of a Monetary System.* New York, NY: Holmes & Meier.

Journal of Global Initiatives
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp. 32-47.

Lessons on Economics and Political Economy from the Soviet Tragedy

Peter J. Boettke and Rosolino A. Candela

Abstract

This paper explores the economics and politics of the tragic Soviet experiment with socialism. Beginning with the period of "War Communism" between 1917 and 1921, the Soviet government's attempt to implement socialism failed to achieve its stated objectives, namely to create social harmony, eliminate class struggle, and to unleash advanced material production. It attempted to achieve these ends by abolishing private property and market prices in the means of production, eliminating the incentives and information necessary to guide production in an efficient manner. The unintended political and economic results were disastrous, leading to tyranny, famine, and oppression. Failing to achieve its stated objectives, after 1921 the Soviet Communist regime continued to survive only by changing the meaning of socialism. *De jure* socialism in the Soviet Union continued to mean the abolition of private property and market competition of the means of production. However, *de facto*, this meant the monetization of political control over resources, via black market exchange, in a shortage economy, and competition for leadership in the Communist Party to control such resources. As a result, the Soviet political system failed to achieve the ideals of socialism on its own terms, not only because central planning eliminated the institutional conditions necessary to allocate resources productively, but also because central planning created the institutional conditions by which the worst men, those most able and willing to exercise force in a totalitarian environment, got to the top of the political hierarchy.

Introduction

The old saying goes that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. After 100 years since the Bolshevik Revolution, there is no mistake that socialism has been an immense failure everywhere it has been attempted. The consequences in the 20th century of collectivism in the Soviet Union was drastic not only in terms of economic performance, but also for overall human welfare. To say that socialism wrought deprivation and death in the Soviet Union is an understatement. R. J. Rummell (1994) estimates that between 1917 and 1987 the Soviet Union was responsible for 61,911,000 deaths at the hands of the government. Is this because human beings are imperfect, and therefore failed to live up to the ideals of socialism, or did socialism as a doctrine fail to live up to the demands of humanity? To put it another way, did socialism fail because the "wrong people" were in charge, or did socialism fail because it generated the very conditions for the wrong people to

become in charge? This question is as timely as ever, not only because of the centennial anniversary of the October Revolution, but also because of the recent resurgence of socialism in Venezuela. As Steve Hanke (2014, n.p.) writes,

> Despite frequent references to the late Hugo Chavez's 'Bolivarian' revolution, the [Nicolas] Maduro playbook is nothing more than a rehashing of Marx and Engels' ten-point plan. This was laid out in the *Communist Manifesto*–a crystal-clear road map of where they wanted to take their adherents. Once you reflect on the Manifesto's ten-point plan, you realize that Maduro (and many other politicians elsewhere) aren't very original.

Among these ten points, socialism included, as its fundamental basis, the abolition of private property and, by implication, money prices, which are vital in both delivering the incentives and indirectly providing the information necessary to allocate scarce resources and generate social harmony among the plans of millions of individuals.

The Soviet experience with socialism was the largest social experiment of the 20th century, influencing both directly and indirectly the rise of other socialist regimes throughout Europe, Africa, and Asia. In this paper, we will explore the economic history of the Soviet Union to understand the institutional arrangements under which the Soviet economy operated.

As we discuss in Section II, both in theory and in practice, socialism in the Soviet Union, as first implemented by Vladimir Lenin between 1917 and 1921, was an *immanent* failure, meaning it failed to live up its own goals as first outlined by Karl Marx and followed by Lenin, namely to abolish scarcity by superabundant material production and thus create social harmony among classes. Just like his predecessors in political economy going back to Adam Smith, Marx shared the goal of delivering the least advantaged of society from poverty. His dispute, however, was not with the *ends* of classical political economy, but with the *means* by which to fulfill such ends, namely the abolition of private property in the means of production. Between 1921 and 1928, Lenin and the Soviet regime abandoned socialism in practice, retreating from its original theoretical outlines, and substituting it with the New Economic Policy for the promise of socialism in the future. However, this future was never realized.

In Section III, we explore how, after 1928, the Soviet government claimed to be upholding the practice of socialism, but only by changing the original meaning of socialism. In reality, what socialism came to mean was the political allocation of monopoly privileges to cronies of the Communist Party and the Soviet Planning Committee, known as *Gosplan*. To quote economist and Sovietologist, G. Warren Nutter (1968), markets without property is a grand illusion. Socialism *de jure* meant the abolition of private property and markets, but only to resurface *de facto* in politics as monopoly rights acquired through the use of personal influence, for the purpose of monetizing these rights in the Soviet black market; this practice became known in the Soviet Union as *blat* (Boettke, 1993, p. 168; Levy, 1990, p. 218).

Section IV discusses Mikhail Gorbachev's attempt to reform the Soviet economy after 1985, similar to Lenin's New Economic Policy. In practice, however, Gorbachev's reforms represented only a reshuffling of patronage appointments within the Soviet political system, not of the overall system itself. Under the guise of reform, Gorbachev only changed the "players" holding political rights to allocate resources in the Soviet economy. By not changing the rules that govern economic activity within the Soviet economic system, the Soviet economy continued to experience shortages, bribery, and corruption as it had before Gorbachev rose to power. Section V concludes.

From Marx to Lenin: The Implementation of Socialism and the New Economic Policy in the Soviet Union

As John Reed (1985) reported in *Ten Days that Shook the World*, at his first appearance before the Bolsheviks after the October Revolution of 1917, Vladimir Lenin took the podium, stared out into the cheering crowd and simply said, "We shall now proceed to construct the Socialist order" (p. 129). Their plan of social construction after the revolution was not a by-product of improvisation. Moreover, it cannot be interpreted as simply an unavoidable consequence of the Russian Civil War between 1919 and 1922 (Boettke, 1990b, pp. 16-21). The notion that the Bolsheviks had begun to collectivize property and devalue the currency through inflation due to the necessities of war is merely an *ex-post* rationalization. For example, the economist Maurice Dobb and the historian E. H. Carr argued that given the necessity for the Bolsheviks to fight the civil war, inflation was used as a forced tax on the moneyed bourgeois class. Once money became worthless, it became necessary to abolish private property by confiscating resources by force for the war effort.

This ex-post rationalization is fundamentally flawed in two respects. First, even though the civil war influenced the way that policies were implemented, the war itself had little or nothing to do with what *fundamentally* motivated the policies. The socialist project would have failed even if no civil war took place, precisely because socialism as it was understood was inconsistent with the goals of delivering a post-scarcity world of advanced material production, namely by eliminating the wastes of capitalism. Secondly, Lenin and the Bolsheviks possessed a concrete ideological intention of constructing a socialist order along Marxist lines *prior* to the outbreak of the Civil War. The period now known to economists and historians as "War Communism" (but at the time simply known as Communism), refers to a series of policies which constituted the economic program of the Bolsheviks from 1917 to 1921 (although for purposes of exposition it is perhaps more accurate to place the beginning of this program as December 1917 or January 1918, when the Supreme Economic Council was formed and the nationalization of industry began). As indicated in Table 1, the deliberate march towards socialism had already been outlined and begun to be implemented before the beginning of War Communism.

Table 1: *Major Economic Decrees and Resolutions Passed by the Bolsheviks during the Period of War Communism*

Dates (Western calendar)	Decrees and resolutions
8 November 1917	The Council of People's Commissars is formed
8 November 1917	Decree on Land abolished the landlords' right of property and called for the confiscation of landed estates
27 November 1917	Decree on Workers' Control over Production
15 December 1917	Supreme Economic Council is established
27 December 1917	Declaration of the Nationalization of Banks
15 January 1918	Dividend and interest payments and all dealings in stocks and bonds are declared illegal
16 January 1918	Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People abolished the exploitation of man by man
10 February 1918	Repudiation of all foreign debt
22 April 1918	Nationalization of foreign trade
1 May 1918	Abolition of inheritance
9 May 1918	Decree giving the Food Commissariat extraordinary powers to combat village bourgeoisie who were concealing and speculating on grain reserves
9 June 1918	Labor mobilization for the Red Army
28 June 1918	Nationalization of large-scale industry and railway transportation
2 November 1918	Decree on the Extraordinary Revolutionary Tax to support the Red Army and the International Socialist Revolution

22 March 1919	The Party Programme of the Eighth Party Congress; called for increased centralization of economic administration
29 March to 4 April 1920	The Outstanding Resolution on Economic Reconstruction is passed, calling for increased centralization of economic administration to insure the unity of the plan necessary for the economic reconstruction after the civil war and foreign intervention
29 November 1920	Decree of the Supreme Economic Council on the nationalization of small industrial enterprises; all enterprises with mechanical power who employed five or more workers, and all enterprises without mechanical power who employed ten or more workers, were nationalized
March 1921	The Kronstadt Rebellion
8–16 March 1921	Resolution on Party Unity abolishing factionalism within the Party is accepted
23 March 1921	The Tax in Kind is established and the New Economic Policy is introduced

Source: Boettke, 1990a, p. 122.

The socialist utopia that Lenin wished to construct was based on works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who argued that the market economy–based on private property, money prices, and production for exchange–was not only unjust, but also wasteful. The original Marxian paradigm saw rivalry, or what Don Lavoie (1985a) refers to as "the clash of human purposes" (p. 22), as an inherent aspect of the market economy and the price system. For having this rivalrous attribute, Marx condemned capitalism as being anti-social and alienating to the proletariat, since he regarded all of the surplus value of commodity production to be derived solely from labor. Moreover, Marx's critique of the market economy is that the antagonistic mode of capitalist production, based on market exchange, was an unnecessary waste because all of social production was not rationally planned in advance. From a Marxian perspective, capitalism expresses an internal contradiction between, on the one hand, the widening and deepening interdependence of producers upon one another and, on the other, their antagonistic struggle in the market. Because capitalism involves the simultaneous pursuit of conflicting plans by separate,

"alienated" producers, he wished to eliminate alienation and the wasteful circulation of goods and services between consumers and producers through buying and selling. Instead, Marx wished to eliminate such commodity production for market exchange and pursue commodity production for direct use under a single, deliberate, and unified plan, as if all production in the economy was organized like one immense factory. Marx viewed central planning as a way of facilitating social harmony and eliminating class struggle by pre-coordinating productive plans in society.

Although Marx said little directly about the nature of socialism, in *Das Kapital* he described its fundamental attributes by clarifying its antithesis–capitalism. To put it another way, "where *Das Kapital* offers us a theoretical 'photograph' of capitalism, its 'negative' informs us about Marx's view of socialism" (Lavoie, 1985a, p. 30). Implicit to Marx's view of socialism was the abolition of the institutional prerequisites of rivalry in the market economy, namely private property in the means of production and money prices. In other words, the abolition of private property, the negation of capitalism, would abolish rivalry and therefore exploitation of the proletariat with it (see Marx & Engels, 1988, p. 198). It was this Marxian vision that Lenin wished to construct, with the Bolsheviks leading the way.

However, in an article titled "Economic calculation in the Socialist Commonwealth," Ludwig von Mises (1975) argued why this project was predestined to fail. Given the stated ends of the socialists, namely to deliver advanced material production, to eliminate the wastes and alienation characteristic of capitalism, and create social harmony, Mises argued that abolishing private property and money prices as a means to achieve this end would make economic calculation impossible. "Where there is no free market," Mises argued, "there is no pricing mechanism; without a pricing mechanism, there is no economic calculation" (1975, p. 111). To put it differently:

1. Without private property in the means of production, there will be no market for the means of production.

2. Without a market for a means of production, there will be no monetary prices established for the means of production.

3. Without monetary prices, reflecting the relative scarcity of capital goods, economic decision-makers will be unable to rationally calculate the alternative use of capital goods (Boettke, 1998, p. 134).

His argument was not a normative assessment of the goals of the socialists. Rather, his indictment of the socialist project was a positive analysis of the means they wished to use to achieve their goals. In the world in which we live, economic decision-makers are confronted with an array of technologically feasible production projects. What economic calculation provides is a means to select from among an array of technologically feasible projects those that employ resources in an *economic* manner, meaning that they are employed according to consumers' most

highly-valued uses. Moreover, in order to illustrate the crucial point of his argument, Mises granted as assumptions the best-case scenario in which the socialists are regarded as completely benevolent and possessing all the available technological knowledge about different production processes. Even in this best-case scenario, central planners would still would not know how to *economically* allocate resources, precisely because the economic knowledge required to make this decision is *contextual*: it is knowledge that is embodied *only* in an institutional context of private property rights. That is, *it is only through the act of exchange that the relative and subjective valuation of scarce resources are translated into economic knowledge*. Whereas on the one hand, central planners are precluded from access to such contextual knowledge, as Mises (1975) states clearly, "[t]he property owner on the other hand himself bears responsibility, as he himself must primarily feel the loss arising from unwisely conducted business. It is precisely in this that there is a characteristic difference between liberal and socialist production"[1] (p. 122).

The utopian aspiration under socialist production, however, resulted in a nightmare by early spring of 1921. In all areas economic output fell far below pre-war levels. In 1921 the Soviet Union, as Stephen Cohen (1980) has pointed out, lay "in ruins, its national income one-third of the 1913 level, industrial production a fifth (output in some branches being virtually zero), its transportation system shattered, and agricultural production so meager that a majority of the population barely subsisted and millions of others failed even that" (p. 123)[2]. Never thereafter did the Soviet Union attempt to implement socialism in its purest form.

The Bolsheviks were forced to retreat from their attempt to implement Marx's utopia and instead re-introduced market relations of exchange and production with

---

[1] Although Mises had directed his theoretical critique of central planning at actual attempts at "war planning" in Austria and Germany and "war communism" in Russia, his argument applies no less to a mixed economy, which attempts to combine the market mechanism, based on private ownership, with non-comprehensive planning in the production and allocation of resources. Moreover, the actual practice of socialism in the Soviet economy was "mixed" if we include the use of black markets and world market prices to allocate resources alongside central planning. However, government officials by definition did not legally own the capital value of the resources over which they are responsible, even though they had *de facto* control over their use. More specifically, whether bureaucrats direct the allocation of resources through direct ownership, taxation, regulation, or government lending, under a "mixed" economy, they do not directly bear the costs and benefits of their decision-making in terms of owning the appreciation or depreciation of the capital value of such resources in alternative uses *at the time of their decision* (Alchian, 1965, p. 822; see also Rothbard, 1962, pp. 828-829 and Boettke & Coyne, 2004). Costs for the decision-maker only have economic significance at the moment of choice (see Buchanan 1969/1999). This contextual knowledge simply does not exist outside the context of exchangeable private property, whether planning is comprehensive or non-comprehensive. For "the knowledge problem" under non-comprehensive planning, see Lavoie (1985b, pp. 52-57).

[2] Similarly, economic historian Alec Nove gives similar estimates of the tragic consequences of War Communism. See Nove's *An Economic History of the U.S.S.R.* (1969/1984, p. 68).

the New Economic Policy (NEP) in the spring of 1921. This “mixed system” produced varying results over its lifetime (1921-1927), with the high-water mark of economic recovery coming in 1925. The relative freedom of exchange and production produced a drastic recovery from the catastrophe of war communism, particularly through the entrepreneurial activity of middlemen, known as Nepmen. These entrepreneurial middlemen acted on discrepancies in prices between state-owned trusts and private cooperatives to exploit opportunities for profit, generating a more efficient allocation of resources.

However, the NEP did not dismantle the institutional infrastructure within which production took place. Thus, the NEP that was implemented with incentive incompatibilities, failing both economically and politically. For example, the cornerstone of the NEP was the substitution of the tax in kind for the grain requisitioning of “War Communism.” Peasants, though, with the war communism period still fresh in their memories had to be convinced that arbitrary requisitioning was not a policy option. The ideological commitment of the leading figures of the Communist Party, not only Lenin, but also Nikolai Bukharin and Leon Trotsky, prevented them from fully adopting the institutional prerequisites of a market economy under the rule of law. Thus, without the government making a credible commitment to maintain the NEP, peasants could not feel secure in their possession of their grain. As a result, by the end of the 1920s (i.e., 1928) peasants no longer had an incentive to market grain surplus. While industrial production was reorganized such that by 1923, of the 165,781 enterprises accounted for in an industrial census 88.5% were owned by private persons, 8.5% were state owned, and 3.1% were cooperative enterprises. Although these private enterprises amounted to 88.5% of the total enterprises, they employed only 12.4% of the total number of workers employed in industry, while the state-owned enterprises, which comprised only 8.5% of the total enterprises, employed 84.1% of employed workers. Thus the state was freed from administrating small enterprises, while at the same time holding fast to the industrial base of Russian society. The "commanding heights" of industry remained state property. The NEP saw a great recovery from the cataclysm of the communist experiment with economic planning, but the system itself was a massive interventionist system possessing its own dynamic (Boettke, 1990b, p. 116).

Moreover, the NEP did not result in any political liberalization. The adoption of NEP was an admission that the task of centrally planning an economy was beyond the ability of the Bolsheviks. But, by moving to market methods of economic organization, Lenin inadvertently threatened the political survival of the Communist Party. So at the same time that Lenin re-introduced market mechanisms he outlawed all political factions within Soviet politics, including factions within the Party. Thus the political monopoly of the Bolsheviks was maintained and solidified. That was the political system that Stalin inherited and manipulated in his struggle for succession after Lenin’s death in 1924 and his subsequent consolidation of power in the late 1920s. With Stalin in power, the NEP was abandoned in 1928. The NEP failed not because of the partial liberalization of the Soviet economy. Rather, the internal contradictions of the NEP led to an ever-increasing bias towards

political intervention into the marketplace. Since no credible commitment could be made towards market or political liberalization, the only logical alternative for the Communist Party was to reassert authoritarian control over the economy.

The failure of the experiment with pure socialism, the subsequent failure of the NEP, and the rise of totalitarian rule under Stalin, cannot be explained by having malevolent individuals in charge of planning the economy. As Mises argued above, the institutional conditions of socialism precluded central planners from achieving their objectives even under the best of intentions. However, what must also be understood is that the rise of totalitarianism like Stalin is a *consequence* of socialism, not its cause (see Hayek, 1944).[3]

The rationale behind this tragic consequence can be understood by Adam Smith's notion that the division of labor is limited by the extent of the market. In the marketplace, as the extent of voluntary exchange increases, individuals are encouraged to exercise specialization in production to a greater degree in order to increase to their ability to buy goods and services for consumption. In an environment such as the Soviet Union, as resources became increasingly allocated by central planning, the extent of the market must contract at its expense. In the context of central planning, the type of specialization that emerges differs radically from markets. As the extent of central planning increases, the incentive structure within this political context will select leaders who are willing and able to specialize in the use of force over other men. To put it metaphorically, "success" in this institutional context is judged by the ability to treat people like pawns on a chessboard, treating them as a mere means to serve the "common good." The complexity of centrally planning an economic system implies that that planners must be granted almost unlimited discretion in order to respond to its unintended consequences. As a consequence, we should expect that only those that have a comparative advantage in exercising discretionary power will survive. Totalitarianism is neither a consequence of "corruption" nor "historical accident," but rather a logical consequence of the institutional incentives of the attempt to centrally plan an economy (Boettke, 1995).

The Institutional Nature of the Soviet System

Having retreated from the Marxist utopia of socialism after 1921, the textbook model of socialism, namely abolition of private property in the means of production, no longer applied to understanding how the Soviet economic and political system operated. Although the Soviet Politburo continued to invoke the abolition of the injustice of market competition through central planning as its legitimating rhetoric, Soviet-style socialism in reality was best understood as a monopolistic, rent-seeking society (Anderson & Boettke, 1997), one in which property rights over resources

[3] On a related note, it is important to recognize that a communist political regime will continue to significantly impact a society even after its fall. Negoita (2011) addresses this issue in the context of Romania in recent decades.

were acquired through political competition, rather than untrammeled market competition (Kasper, Streit, & Boettke, 2012, p. 44; see also Tullock, 1967).

Why is this an effective model to understand the Soviet economy? First, given the Soviet economy's inefficiency in terms of delivering economic prosperity to the masses of the population, it explains the political logic by which the Soviet system was able to last so long. This logic was to concentrate benefits on those in power and disperse costs on the masses of impoverished Soviet citizens. As a result, the Soviet system incentivized the creation of a loyal bureaucracy, who benefited directly from maintaining the existing system.[4]

Secondly, since rent-seeking is simply the non-market manifestation of competition for income, derived from political control rights over resources, this model seems uniquely well-suited to analyzing resource allocation in non-market settings, such as in politics. Rather than abolishing private property and rivalrous competition of the marketplace in the name of justice, in reality property rights and competition were simply transferred to the political marketplace of patronage, known as the *nomenklatura* system. The *nomenklatura* refers to a vast political cartel of interlocked state monopolies, which worked to provide and protect perquisites to those in appointed positions of power, namely by controlling entry and competition to these positions. In effect, the *nomenklatura* enforced a collusion among the separate state-owned firms and ministries so that the Soviet system operated as an effective political and economic monopoly. Illicit entry and competition by one monopolist into the privileged market domain of another state-sanctioned monopolist was controlled so as not to chisel the value of the latter's monopoly privilege, which came in the form of bribes and perquisites received from *de facto* control of state resources.

Third, it also provides the rationale behind the persistence of a shortage economy and the bias in centrally planned prices throughout the history of the Soviet Union (see Levy, 1990 and Shleifer & Vishny, 1992). That is, it explains why the incentive was to hold down prices over scarce goods and services, not keep them up, in order to perpetuate shortages. Why is this case? In a market economy, the entrepreneur who organizes the firm is the residual claimant, or the individual who absorbs the profits as well as the losses from his or her decision-making. By metering and monitoring of the marginal productivity of individual workers into team production, namely by reducing shirking by employees (Alchian & Demsetz, 1972), and by using capital and other inputs in a cost-effective manner, the entrepreneur is disciplined to earn profits and avoid losses.

From a property-rights perspective, we can usefully distinguish between cash-flow rights, or the ability to exchange resources for money, and control rights, the ability to exclude others from the use of resources. The Soviet economic system was one where control rights rested to a large degree at the management level of state-owned enterprise, but managers did not possess full cash-flow rights. This

[4] With this recognition in hand, the effectiveness of Soviet bureaucrats in achieving desired outcomes for politically connected elites could perhaps be assessed by developing notions of equity similar to the heterodox notions of tax equity defined by Mathews (2015).

meant that any losses accrued by firm managers from misallocating inputs according to consumer demands were borne by the state, in effect dispersed as costs in the form of lower standards of living to the masses of Soviet citizens. As long as output targets set by Gosplan, the central planning agency of the Soviet Union, were met and everyone received their perquisites due to them, then the firm manager was judged as a success. Moreover, any waste incurred in the production process was not penalized, since the Soviet bureaucracy was not intending to allocate resources in a wealth-maximizing manner for the Soviet citizenry, but in a manner that would maximize their own private gain from controlling the allocation of scarce resources.

In addition, at all levels of the Soviet planning bureaucracy, from the Politburo to Gosplan, the state agencies which outlined and administered central planning, set output targets, and planned prices, *no single individual* could legally accrue additional profit from increasing output beyond a pre-determined target to meet any excess demand by consumers of goods and services. Any additional output that was officially reported as produced and sold, in effect, was a 100% tax to the managers of the state-owned firms, the benefits of which would go the coffers of the state treasury. Moreover, any bureaucrat ordering an increase in the price of a good, so as to approach a market-clearing equilibrium, would not accrue the marginal revenue from the increased prices of such goods. Unable to legally derive a profit from the sale of output, it is in the mutual interest of the firm managers to restrict output and for bureaucrats to hold centrally set prices below market-clearing prices, which results in shortages (Shleifer & Vishny, 1992, p. 239). Firm managers and bureaucrats benefited from creating a shortage by being able to monetize their *de facto* control of goods and services in the form of bribes from consumers, whose valuation of such goods and services exceeded the official price ceiling. In essence, a state shortage of buns and a state shortage of sausages translates into a black market sandwich sold out the backdoor, with a corresponding high price.

Alongside this shortage economy, there emerged a secondary supply system around a special group of middlemen, known as the *tolkachi*, whose role was to fill the gaps in the failure of the state enterprises to fulfill their output targets. Acting on behalf of such state enterprises, the *tolkachi* worked to sell surplus commodities on the one hand and to purchase needed products on the other to facilitate production. On the consumption side, they attempted to correct for long queues and poor quality of consumer goods found in official state stores, namely by transforming these non-monetary costs to consumers of obtaining goods into economic gains for themselves, via black market side-payments (Boettke, 1993, pp. 65-66). While Communist Party officials enjoyed queue-free stores, the underground economy operated to prop up these missing benefits to the rest of Soviet society.

The centralization of the Soviet economy metaphorically into one big factory manifested itself as a divergence between the *de jure* system of central planning, in which property, free pricing, and profit/loss were formally abolished and their *de facto* existence, both externally in the form of black markets, and internally in the evolution of informal property rights over state-produced resources, which were monetized via exchange on the black market. Rather than produce for direct use, as

outlined in the textbook model of socialism, production became divided into two categories: production in the state sector of the economy for its own sake (i.e., to maintain the illusion of socialism as a legitimizing ideal) and production for exchange, which sustained the rest of the population. It is this institutional framework that Mikhail Gorbachev inherited when he came to power in 1985.

Perestroika under Gorbachev

When Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, he had inherited an economic and political system that had long been stagnant and corrupt. Despite the corrupt and stagnant nature of the Soviet state, it had proved to be a remarkably stable autocracy from its inception until Gorbachev's succession. However, just as Gorbachev rose to power, the Soviet Union's bureaucracy was undergoing a massive turnover. Given the entrenched interests of the Soviet bureaucracy, the claim could be made that, under the status quo, the earlier "reform" efforts by Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov, and Chernenko were not possible. However, unlike these previous autocrats, Gorbachev faced a radically different situation.

One of the consequences of Joseph Stalin's purges during the 1930s was the creation of a young and loyal cohort that would control the appointment of Soviet bureaucrats for decades. A comparison of the Seventeenth Party Congress in 1934 and the Eighteenth Congress in 1939 demonstrates this purge effect. At the 1934 Congress 80% of the delegates had joined the Party prior to 1920, but at the 1939 Congress 50% of the delegates were under 35 years old.[5] Although Stalin's purge of the "Old Bolsheviks" served, among other things, to create a layer of very young and loyal apparatchiks (Boettke, 1993, p. 82), from a political economy standpoint, it also created a situation that would later prove to be un-robust and unstable.

By the mid-1980s, the Soviet Union's aging bureaucracy began to retire or die, resulting in a "demographic transition" during this period. With them, these personnel took a network of informal contractual agreements that formed the cartelizing basis of the Soviet patronage system. This meant that "*the transaction costs associated with the realignment of rent flows and patronage opportunities were rapidly, and significantly, lowered*" (italics original, Anderson & Boettke, 1993, p.110). In effect, positions controlling rent flows went on the auction block in the mid-1980s.

However, this did not present an opportunity for Gorbachev to be a *laissez-faire* reformer of the Soviet economy. His attempts at "reform" under *Perestroika* were not instituted to change the rules of the game within the economy; they were

[5] As Michael Voslensky (1984) points out, "In 1930, 69 per cent of the regional and district secretaries and secretaries of the central committee of the Union's constituent republics had joined the party before the revolution. In 1939, 80.5 per cent had joined the party only after 1924, i.e., after Lenin's death. Of the 1939 secretaries, 91 per cent were under forty; in other words, they were adolescents at the time of the revolution. The figures for the secretaries of regions and towns are similar. In 1939, 93.5 per cent had joined the party only after 1924, and 92 per cent were under forty" (p. 61).

not attempts to institute a market economy, fundamentally based on well-defined and exchangeable property rights. Indeed, the word *perestroika* in Russian means "restructuring," but this only implied a restructuring of political appointments with the Soviet political system, not a restructuring of the system itself. Upon closer examination, the succession of Gorbachev in general and the *perestroika* reform program in particular closely resembled other Soviet government policy adjustments which followed shifts in the top leadership. Perestroika did not emerge as a central plan to end central planning and introduce a market economy, but rather represented the "Gorbachev" distribution of patronage perquisites, couched in liberalization rhetoric. Any real attempt to reform the institutional infrastructure of the Soviet economy would run contrary to the logic of political decision-making, which is to concentrate benefits on well-organized special interest groups, and disperse the costs of such policies on the masses of the population.

The most dramatic evidence of "reform" under the Gorbachev regime was the alleged relaxation of controls on private economic activity. From 1985-1991, Gorbachev introduced at least 10 major policy packages for reform under the name of *perestroika*, yet not a single one was implemented fully. An example of these half-measured attempts at reform were two key legal components of *perestroika*, which included the Law on Individual Enterprise of 1986 and the Law on State Enterprises of 1987.

The Law on Individual Enterprise allowed individuals to engage in activities which previously had been deemed illegal, the intent of which was to encourage individual economic enterprise and market experimentation. Family members of state employees or individuals such as students, housewives, and pensioners were allowed to work full-time if they desired. But in order to do so, individuals had to apply for a license granted by local authorities and pay either an annual income tax or a fee, which in particular cases was required where it was difficult to monitor income, such as driving a taxi. For example, the fee for a private taxi, in 1987, was 560 rubles, which meant that a worker who was "moonlighting" as a taxi driver had to earn the equivalent of three months' wages before driving the taxi would cover its costs (Boettke, 1993, p. 101). Given these prohibitively high licensing fees, the unintended consequence of this policy was the persistence of a black market: very few if any of the Moscow *chastniki* (private taxis) were registered and, therefore, official. The Law on Individual Enterprise, in effect, amounted to simply regulating and taxing an activity that had gone on "unofficially" for years.

An even more fundamental problem with the law on private economic activity was the existence of the campaign against unearned income. The campaign required individuals to have appropriate documentation explaining how they had made their money, the unintended consequence of which was the emergence of an illicit market in documentation. The attitude of the regime conveyed by the campaign simply reinforced the lack of trust citizens possessed concerning the commitment of the government to reform. Without a credible conveyance of commitment to market reform, farmers, workers and so on, did not have any incentive to invest in the above-ground market.

The intended effect of the Law on State Enterprises was to reintroduce self-accounting, self-financing, and self-management of state enterprises. However, given the Soviet Union's commitment to full employment, there was no credible commitment to reintroduce true residual claimancy analogous to a firm in a market economy, in which the firm owner absorbs both the profits and losses of his decision-making. Despite whatever announcement made about self-financing, there was no precedent in previous reforms, not even from the New Economic Policy, regarding this. Given the expectation that Gorbachev would later renege on full liberalization of profits and losses, what incentive do firm managers have in this uncertain context? As long as there was a credible commitment to full employment, enterprise managers faced a "soft budget constraint," meaning they would not bear any losses, they would not be allowed to go bankrupt, and they would continue to be subsidized by the state. As a result of the contradictory goals, firm managers increasingly monetized their discretionary power by approving wage increases. In other words, they were privatizing the benefits of the law, but socializing the losses onto the rest of the economy. As a result, the Soviet Union ran increasingly large budget deficits and resorted to monetization of its debt in order to pay it off.

The inability for Gorbachev to convey any kind of commitment to reform sealed not only the fate of *perestroika*, but also the fate of his own political career. The reforms simply could not get the economy going, and the situation in the Soviet economy continued to deteriorate. The political instability of failed reforms, alongside deflated expectations on the part of the population, produced a highly troublesome situation for Gorbachev, not only costing him his credibility with his more liberal allies in the Communist Party, but also with hardline conservatives. When hardliners in the Party failed to reassert control through "constitutional" means, they resorted to an attempted *coup d'état* in 1991. It was the failure of *perestroika* that in fact led to the attempted coup, the unintended by-product of which led to the official unravelling of the Soviet Union as a political entity on December 26, 1991. Although the transition from Mikhail Gorbachev to Boris Yeltsin was peaceful, and the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union ended without firing a shot, the collapse of the Soviet Union took with it a horrific legacy of poverty, famine, tyranny, and murder.

Conclusion

The terrible consequences of the Soviet experience with communism were not a *behavioral* failure, but an *institutional* failure. The Soviet economy failed to achieve economic prosperity and social harmony not because the Soviet people and its leaders were self-interested and inhumane, but because the institutional rules by which the Soviet economy was organized failed to channel the self-interest of individuals in a socially beneficial, humane manner. Rather than craft a set of institutions within which bad men could do least harm, it only created the very conditions for such a tragic consequence. Its failure was not its attempt to achieve an idealistic end, but its attempt to choose a particular set of means that were inconsistent with the demands of humanity. The abandonment of private property,

money prices, and profit/loss signals under a socialist utopia only led to the abandonment of our ability to cooperate in a peaceful and productive manner via exchange. With this abandonment came the embrace of the most inhumane coercive efforts to destroy the aspirations, and most unfortunately, the lives of millions of individuals, all to serve the interests of a governing elite under the justificatory guise of a unified, central plan that would supposedly deliver a just, post-scarcity world. The Soviet experience with Communism is a lesson of economic history that we must never forget, not just for pedagogical reasons, but for the sake of posterity, so as to prevent its return.

References

Alchian, A. A. (1965). Some Economics of Property Rights. *Il Politico*, *30*(4), 816-829.

Alchian, A. A., & Demsetz, H. (1972). Production, Information Costs, and Economic Organization. *The American Economic Review*, *62*(5), 777-795.

Anderson, G. M., & Boettke, P. J. (1993). Perestroika and public choice: The economics of autocratic succession in a rent-seeking society. *Public Choice*, *75*(2), 101-118.

Anderson, G. M., & Boettke, P. J. (1997). Soviet venality: a rent-seeking model of the Communist state. *Public Choice*, *93*(1), 37–53.

Boettke, P. J. (1990a). The political economy of utopia: Communism in Soviet Russia, 1918–1921. *Journal des Economistes et des Etudes Humaines*, *1*(2), 91–138.

Boettke, P. J. (1990b). *The political economy of Soviet socialism*. Boston, MA: Kluwer.

Boettke, P. J. (1993). *Why Perestroika failed: The politics and economics of socialist transformation*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Boettke, P. J. (1995). Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* revisited: Government failure in the argument against socialism. *Eastern Economic Journal*, *21*(1), 7-26.

Boettke, P. J. (1998). Economic calculation: The Austrian contribution to political economy. *Advances in Austrian Economics*, *5*, 131–158.

Boettke, P. J., & Coyne, C. J. (2004). The forgotten contribution: Murray Rothbard on socialism in theory and in practice. *The Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics*, *7*(2), 71–89.

Buchanan, J. M. (1999). *The collected works of James M. Buchanan* (Volume 6: Cost and choice: An inquiry in economic theory). Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund. (Original work published 1969)

Cohen, S. (1980). *Bukharin and the Bolshevik revolution*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1973)

Hanke, S. H. (2014). Venezuela's playbook: the communist manifesto. Retrieved from https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/venezuelas-playbook-communist manifesto

Hayek, F. A. (1944). *The road to serfdom*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Kasper, W., Streit, M. E., & Boettke, P. J. (2012). *Institutional economics: Property, competition, and policies* (2nd ed.). Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar.

Lavoie, D. (1985a). *Rivalry and central planning: The socialist calculation debate reconsidered*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lavoie, D. (1985b). *National economic planning: What is left?* Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing.

Levy, D. (1990). The bias in centrally planned prices. *Public Choice*, *67*(3), 213-226.

Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1988). *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*. (M. Milligan, Trans.) Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books. (Original work published 1932)

Mathews, T. (2015). Public finance and tax equity in the Arabian Gulf monarchies. *Journal of Global Initiatives: Policy, Pedagogy, Perspective*, *10*(1), 51–72.

Mises, L. v. (1975). Economic calculation in the socialist commonwealth. In F. A. Hayek (Ed.), *Collectivist economic planning* (pp. 87-130). Clifton, NJ: August M. Kelley. (Original work published 1920)

Negoita, M. (2011). State weakness in Post-Communist Romania and the legacy of Communism. *Journal of Global Initiatives: Policy, Pedagogy, Perspective*, *6*(2), 81–96.

Nove, A. (1984). *An economic history of the U.S.S.R*. New York, NY: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1969)

Nutter, G. W. (1968). Markets without property: A grand illusion. In N. Beadles & A. Drewry (Eds.), *Money, the Market and the State* (pp. 137–45). Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Reed, J. (1985). *Ten days that shook the world*. New York, NY: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1919)

Rothbard, M. N. (1962). *Man, economy, and state: A treatise on economic Principles*. Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand.

Rummel, R. J. (1994) *Death by government*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1994.

Shleifer, A., & Vishny, R. (1992). Pervasive shortages under socialism. *RAND Journal of Economics*, *23*(2), 237-246.

Tullock, G. (1967). The welfare costs of tariffs, monopolies, and theft. *Western Economic Journal*, *5*(3), 224-232.

Voslensky, M. (1984). *Nomenklatura: The Soviet Ruling Class, An Insider's Report*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Journal of Global Initiatives
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp.48-67.

U.S. - Russian Relations: Dissonance of Ideologies

Elena Glazunova

Abstract

This paper examines Russian and American ideologies and their influence on the foreign policies of both countries in historical retrospective and today. The paper especially illustrates the role of ideology in Russia and U.S. relations during different periods with different intensity. In the relatively "calm" periods of history ideology was not that noticeable. However, at other times, Russia and the United States have engaged in a clash of ideologies that provided a powerful impulse to the formation of new models of international relations. Despite the post-Cold War hope that there would be less ideology in international relations in recent decades the role of ideology seems to have increased.

Introduction

The current foreign policy of the Russian Federation, to a significant extent, is a historical legacy formed by tremendous calamities and immense triumphs. The Russian Empire played a major role in thwarting Napoleon's relentless expansion. The Soviet Union subverted Germany's advanced war machine during the Second World War and came to dominate the world scene just two decades later (Shevchenko, 2015). But during its more than 1,000-year history, Russia has had four catastrophic events which crushed it as a state: the 13th century Mongolian invasion, the 17th century "Time of Troubles" (*Smuta*), the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 (after which Russia became a battlefield for civil war and foreign interventions), and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 (which was accompanied by a series of civil wars in post-Soviet space, a catastrophic economic downturn, and the unprecedented geopolitical breakdown of the country). This collective history helps to explain key specifics of Russian idiosyncrasy–the sense of vulnerability, the very painful reaction to any foreign influence and foreign ideological "experiments," and the struggle *to preserve* not only her territories and statehood itself, but her moral values also.

The notion of "statehood" (*derjavnost*) has become very important in the contemporary political discourse within Russia. This is different from the notion of "state," which mainly refers to administrative, managerial, law-enforcement, and judicial functions. The notions of *derjava* (power) and *samoderjavie* (autocracy) point to sovereignty, full self-sufficiency, independence, and the significance of the country in international relations. Furthermore–they connote the spiritual and moral mission of the Russian state–resisting evil in the world.

That is why the first Russian political ideology, which was formulated in 1833 by the Secretary of Education Count Sergey Uvarov, included these notions. The so called *Uvarov's Triad*– "Orthodoxy, Autocracy (*samoderjavie*) and Nationality"–also known as the *Official Nationality*–was a Russian national version of an international European ideology of restoration and reaction (Yanov, 2013). Since 1833, and to the present time, this triad remains the best way to explain the specifics of Russian historic conservatism and its modern incarnation.

In contrast with universal and international ideologies like socialism and liberalism, conservatism has always represented a national phenomenon. Like K. Leontiev, a 19th century philosopher, wrote, "each nation has its own protective ideology: the Turks have Turkish one, the Englishmen–English, Russians–Russian; and liberalism is everyone's" (Leontiev, 1885). While liberalism has not tended to find much expression within Russian identity, conservatism has.

Each time when Russia lost "statehood," it cost her people blood, suffering, misery, fear, and humiliation. The most fresh, and for several generations a still unhealed wound, was the first post-Cold War decade which resonates with defeat, the loss of identity, and subservience to the West. Russians throughout society were inclined to blame the "de-ideologization" of Yeltsin's failed policies for all of their disasters.

The Importance of Ideology to Guiding Social Action

Today most Russian specialists in political science (including the author of this essay) would probably characterize themselves as "inertial Marxists" (Bogaturov, Kosolapov, & Chrustalev, 2002; Manykin, 2009; Pechatnov & Manykin, 2012, Setov, 2010). To apply this term to the theory of international relations, most Russian scholars share the views of the realist paradigm which has a lot in common with Marxism (material interests are basic, ideas are "superstructure" etc.). It is interesting to note that this statement applies not only to specialists who received their education in Soviet times, but also to the younger generation of Russian scholars who embrace this theoretical position. The liberal or constructivist approaches have not yet taken strong roots in the current Russian academic community. The classical definition of ideology given by the French philosopher of 18-19th century Antoine Destutt de Tracy as "a science of ideas" (Kennedy, 1979) seems to be too broad for contemporary challenges of scientific analysis. In this circumstance, Russian scholars tend to include Marxist precepts as an element of their methodology of the study of ideology.

The key Marxist position about ideology (expressed in his famous *German Ideology* in 1846) is that it is just a "reflection" of socio-political reality: ". . . The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behavior . . ." (Marx 2000, p. 8). Nevertheless, we also cannot miss another famous Marx thought, expressed in

1844: “Ideas become a material force when [in the] possession of the masses” (Marx, 2000, para7).

Why is ideology so important? In contrast with *philosophy* that seeks to explain the universe, but does not offer concrete actions, the main function of ideology is to provide human beings with guidance for social actions. Ideology supplies motivation for the long-term purposes of political behavior and the methods of gaining them - as Russian eminent specialists in international relations theory point out (Kosolapov, 2002, pp.234-235; Voytolovsky, 2015). However, not all ideas can become so influential. In order to become influential, they must resonate with and address the aspirations of the masses. This “connection” best occurs in very particular circumstances and conditions of human life. Such a situation can be illustrated by examples of U.S.-Russian relations in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Ideology in Russia and United States Relations in the 18th and 19th Centuries

Ideology became a significant element of international relations at the end of the 18th century. The turning point was the French Revolution and the wars of Napoleon. This statement is generally accepted in both Russian and Western literature. However, by accepting this point we risk overlooking a very important fact: the birth of the United States as a new country in the Western hemisphere. Appearing as a first “practical” result of the Enlightenment, this new state carried a powerful ideological charge - and well before the French Revolution, it challenged the European “ancient regime.”

Alan Cassels (1996) in *Ideology and International Relations in the Modern World* writes, “Behind the revolt of the thirteen American colonies in 1776 lay political theories regarding a ruler’s obligation under a social contract and the iniquity of absolute monarchy or despotism” (p. 15). The phrase “we the people of the United States …” officially confirmed the principle of popular sovereignty two years before it was included in the *French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*. This could not have been to the liking of Catherine the Great. Thus, the ideology of the United States of America *a priori* had the potential for conflict with Russian autocracy. However, conflict did not develop. Just the opposite occurred: Catherine the Great in fact chose to help American patriots in their fight with Britain, first refusing to honor the request of British King George III to send Russian troops for the suppression of the uprising colonies, and later initiating the *League of Armed Neutrality* (1780-1783) to protect trade between neutral states and the countries which were involved in the war.

The Russian Empress, being an adherent of the traditional 18th century European balance of power policy, tried to weaken Britain. There were also ideological considerations. For example, several years later Russia, while actively trading with the young American Republic, was steadily waging war with revolutionary France. The explanation for this perhaps puzzling choice is that Catherine the Great did not take American free-thinking and sedition as a serious practical threat to the Russian regime. Moreover, the reason is not only the

distance involved–the American revolutionary contagion, of course, was much further away than the French Revolution. The American Revolution also did not look that bloody and radical. In comparison with the French "Peace to the shacks! War on the palaces!" the American "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" seemed pretty harmless. The concept "pursuit of happiness," upon closer examination, turned out to be much closer to the John Locke's triad of "life, liberty, and property" than to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's conception of property, which became even more radicalized by the French Revolution. The personality of the Empress also mattered: Catherine the Great was known for her fascination with the philosophy of the Enlightenment, which she skillfully used to disguise the most unsightly features of Russian autocracy, and for improving the image of the throne.

Meanwhile, the former colonies had to decide how to deal with the rest of the world. The founding fathers encountered a serious dilemma. Should the young republic concentrate its efforts on creating a "City upon a Hill" which would be a superior model and a lighthouse for humankind? Alternatively, should the country share its unique experience with the Old World? In many ways, making the first choice implied isolation and not adopting the idea of a noble mission, whereas making the second choice would be to step into the morass of involvement in eternal European wars and conflicts.

In 1796 in the famous *Farewell Address*, President George Washington laid out the route for future America foreign policy: "The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop. Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities" (Washington, 1796, para 38.). Thus, the decision was made to reduce involvement in any conflicts outside the American continent. This reduced the risks for Catherine the Great and her successors, who already had too much engagement in Europe.

The French Revolution was also a revolution in international relations. Before the revolution all European states were monarchies, so any diversity of concepts could not exist in principle. Afterwards, it was very different. The Jacobins revolutionary wars and later the Napoleonic military campaigns, in fact represented a struggle for a new "social project," the spread of new liberal values and ideals. This circumstance demanded adequate countermeasures from the European autocracies. The military victories over Napoleon were not enough–powerful liberal ideas could not be stopped just by military methods.

Russian Tsar Alexander I articulated the fundamental principle of the new international system through the Holy Alliance of European monarchs which was created on September 26, 1815, with the purpose of preserving the social order. In

1820, Alexander I invited the countries - participants of the European "concert"– to sign a protocol that proclaimed the right to suppress revolutionary unrest in any country even without agreement of its government. Austria and Prussia consolidated their position with that of Russia. France and Great Britain refused to join.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the ties of Russia and the United States began to strengthen. The common interest was the protection of the rights of neutral shipping and active trade during blazing European wars (Bolkchovitinov, 1966, p. 336). There was mostly no place for ideology in U.S.-Russian relations throughout the 19th century. America was not even a part of an international system of that time while Russia was a member of "The Great Powers' Club," one of the most significant actors of the multi-polar and mainly Euro-centric world. Ideologically, Russia remained a bulwark of autocracy and conservatism. Sometimes considerations of ideological solidarity even prevailed over Russian national interests; for instance, in 1848-1849 Tsar Nicolas I helped Emperor Franz Joseph to suppress the Hungarian rebellion.

In general the Vienna model of international relations as well as the previous one, the Westphalian model, was based on the principle of national sovereignty, which did not require any country to have a particular type of governance or social order. European states mainly acted according to these models. In Russian-American relations, this was manifested very brightly with the outbreak of the American Civil War. The autumn of 1862 marked a most dramatic point of cooperation between Russia and the United States. In a critical time for the Union, Russian Emperor Alexander II made a very risky decision–he ordered two squadrons of the Russian Navy to sail to the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the United States. Neither Russian nor American historians have reached a consensus on the motivations behind the dispatch of the Russian fleets to both the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts of the United States (Bolkchovitinov, 1996; Saul, 1991, p. 339-354). The story was not as romantic as it may appear after reading enthusiastic reviews of American federal newspapers of the time. Helping President Lincoln and the cause of the North was not the first priority for Alexander II. The decision to dispatch the fleet came in the midst of a very tense time in the relations between Russian and European countries, primarily Britain and France. In January 1863, an uprising of national liberation began in the territory of "Russian Poland" (the territory Russia got after the Third partition of Poland in 1795 and Vienna Congress in 1815). After Russian troops started to suppress the rebellion, Britain and France presented to the Russian government a series of diplomatic notes demanding independence for Poland. Britain and France also demanded the convening of a European conference on the Polish question in order to discuss the future structure of the Polish state. Russia was just recovering from the Crimean War and a threat of a new European anti-Russian coalition was very serious. Emperor Alexander II declined to agree to the demands of the powers. He ordered Prince Gorchakov to answer with a firm "no" and protest against interference in the internal affairs of Russia. At the same time St. Petersburg did not want a new war. The difficulty of the situation in Russia was exacerbated by the fact that the

Russian fleet was much weaker than the united Anglo-French naval forces. In the event of war, Russia was vulnerable to the maritime operations of the European allies. In addition, there was a high probability that the Russian fleet would be blockaded inside the Baltic Sea. In this situation, the manager of the Marine Department, Admiral N. K. Krabbe, offered an exit - sending the fleet out of harm's way as a preventive measure.

The second intention at the time was to threaten to disrupt British sea trade. Russia's plan was implemented, and the calculation was accurate: the anti-Russian coalition completely collapsed. There is every reason to believe that the results of the visit of Russian naval squadrons to the United States exceeded the initial calculations and expectations of the naval ministry. Russia was able to solve the complex problems of both a political and a military-strategic nature. The mere presence of Russian warships in the U.S. ports forced England and France to abandon their intentions to intervene in the Polish question, helped to change the situation in the U.S. Civil War in favor of the North by siding with the Lincoln government, and demonstrated that the Russian fleet had once again become an effective force in international politics (Bolkchovitinov, 1994). At the same time it is important to highlight that Alexander II did not hesitate about which side of the American Civil War to support. The endorsement of the government of Abraham Lincoln was based on principles of sovereignty and legitimacy. Commenting on British-French intrigues and their plans for intervention against the Lincoln government, Russian Secretary of Foreign Affairs Prince Alexandre Gorchakov wrote to his American colleagues,

> "You know the sentiments of Russia. We desire above all things the maintenance of the American Union as one indivisible nation. . . . Proposals will be made to Russia to join some plan of interference. She will refuse any intervention of the kind. . . . You may rely upon it, she will not change. But we entreat you to settle the difficulty. I cannot express to you how profound an anxiety we feel — how serious are our fears" (Taylor, 1862, p.764).

For Russians a dilemma about whom to support in this war did not exist. For the British it definitely did. Both conflicting American parties proclaimed ideas that mattered for the British liberal conscience. The Confederacy claimed the right of self-determination–the same as German, Italian, and other liberals had advanced in 1848. At the same time, Southerners in the United States also advocated for the institution of slavery, which was incompatible with liberal values. William E. Gladstone personified this liberal dilemma. Early in the war he was decidedly sympathetic to the Southern right of self-determination. It was at the worst time for the North–in the fall of 1862–that the British and French were planning intervention against Lincoln (Jones, 2011; Tarpley, 2011). Sending fleets to the American coasts was a signal to the British and French that the United States would not stay without allies if European powers make a decision to intervene in support of the "Southern insurgency". Perhaps this partly led to the

fact that "by the close of 1865 Gladstone had been converted . . . to regard slavery as the key moral issue at stake and to switch his allegiance to the Union cause" (Cassels, 1996, p. 68). The contrasting positions of Russian solidarity and British equivocation could not be more clear. By the time Gladstone came to support the Lincoln government the Civil War was reaching its conclusion.

In the 19th century, ideology was not a primary factor in international relations. The situation radically changed in the 20th century when the struggle for the minds of people became a constant part of world politics. That is why the 20th century has been called the "century of ideology." Different periods of this century were marked with uncompromising conflict between various ideologies. Each of them (whether the liberal-democratic internationalism of Woodrow Wilson, or the Bolshevik project of world revolution, or Nazism, or the Soviet version of Marxism-Leninism) not only proposed new types of social systems inside the countries which they represented, but sought to establish a New World Order based on their particular ideology. The wars of the 20th century were wars for "new social projects."

Communist Internationalism vs. Liberal Internationalism

The first "phase" of the U.S.-Russian ideological contest in the 20th century started during World War I. Before the war, the idea of "Manifest Destiny" was limited within the Western Hemisphere. During the war, the United States broke free from the clutches of isolationism. For the first time in history, the United States tried to project a global dimension. Woodrow Wilson, the 28th president of the United States, eventually tried to realize Thomas Paine's (1776) vision that "a cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind," written in the introduction of his famous *Common Sense* (p.68). By the beginning of the war, the United States had become an economic giant, but primarily remained a minor player in global politics.

Relying on the growing power of his state, while preparing the United States to go to war, President Wilson, who was perceived in Europe as an idealist, formulated a new American approach to international relations: "We insist upon security in prosecuting our self-chosen lines of national development. We do more than that. We demand it also for others. We do not confine our enthusiasm for individual liberty and free national development to the incidents and movements of affairs which affect only ourselves. We feel it wherever there are people that try to walk in these difficult paths of independence and right. . . . In this we are not partisans but heralds and prophets of a new age" (Wilson, 1915, para 10).

For Europeans the most striking idea was that the American goals in war were formulated not as much in the national interest but to make "the world safe for Democracy" (Wilson, 1917, para 18). A stunning result was that the nation accepted this idea. However, having said that in April of 1917, the president could not have foretold that six months later his revolutionary approach would meet a not less powerful ideological competitor on the other side of the globe. In November of 1917, Russia offered the world another social project: the new

Soviet leadership declared its intention to spread the Bolshevik Revolution beyond the borders of Russia.

It is well known that President Wilson's *Fourteen Points* allowed Germany's new chancellor, Prince Maximilian, to end the war on dignified terms and to reach an armistice without admitting defeat. This American plan also became the basis of the Versailles peace settlement. But it is not widely known that Wilson's *Fourteen Points* actually were an answer to Lenin's most thundering proclamation–the *Decree on Peace*: "The workers' and peasants' government, created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, calls upon all the belligerent peoples and their government to start immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace" (Lenin, 1917, para 1). This was the appeal of the new Russian leader to the entire world. This looked like the Bolsheviks, whom Wilson deeply despised, had seized the initiative from the country that had just declared itself the leader of the liberal world. Paradoxically, Lenin and Wilson were campaigning for the same goals–democratic peace, open diplomacy, national self-determination–but the ways of achieving them were totally antithetical.

The American vision, based on the principles of a liberal-democratic interventionism, was presented in Wilson's style–grandiloquently and in the abstract:

> What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us. (Wilson, 1918, para 2.)

Lenin's goal was much more concrete: "The workers' movement will triumph and will pave the way to peace and socialism" (Lenin, 1917). Both nations proclaimed a crusade. This ideological standoff predetermined not only the character of the bilateral relations, but also the nature of two international models–the Versailles-Washington and the Yalta-Potsdam (or bipolar) models.

Within a short period of postwar "Wilsonianism" (before America returned to isolationism) the United States managed to realize in practice a crusade of ideas. Notwithstanding the negative position of the War Department, Wilson responded to the request of France and Great Britain and sent American troops to Russia. The American Expeditionary Force was under the command of Major General William S. Graves. It was called Siberia, and consisted of 7,950 officers and enlisted men. Despite its stay in the Russian Far East from August of 1918 until April of 1920, the Siberia force did not take part in any battles, but the involvement of the United States in the Russian Civil War is an indisputable historical fact (McMaster, 2014).

Collective security, President Wilson's most cherished concept that found embodiment in the League of Nations, became the foundation of the new Versailles-Washington world order. From the moment of its creation, the Treaty of Versailles was doomed. The Senate of the United States never ratified it. Its distinct anti-German and anti-Soviet character - Soviet Russia was not invited to the Paris Conference; and Germany was declared the main and only culprit of the war (Peace Treaty of Versailles, 1919) - led humankind to World War II.

The specificity of this conflict for the first time since the end of the 18th century consisted of ideology in addition to the more traditional complex of factors (geopolitical, economic, etc.). The Axis powers fought not only for territories and resources–they strived also to impose on the world a certain manner of life and a distinct system of values.

There were a variety of reasons why most major Western democracies and the Soviet Union became allies in this war. First, of course, they united in their efforts to stop the attempts of the Nazi revisionist powers to establish world dominance. But there was also an ideological factor: communist internationalism with its preaching of the equality of working people all over the world had the same humane charge as the liberal system of values–freedom and equality dovetailed with it better than with the misanthropic racism of Nazi Germany and Japanese militarism.

The Cold War Paradox

Following the defeat of Germany and of fascist ideology the world entered into a new epoch–so called "bipolarity." On one hand, the Cold War seemed to represent the quintessential and most complete form of the U.S.-Russian ideological conflict. The military power and "soft" power of both states were called upon to serve the spread of moral values, the world-views, and the legitimacy of the two "superpowers." In the big picture this represented a rivalry between two social systems and alternative ways of life–capitalism and socialism. The ideological component of international relations was acknowledged even by the pillars of realistic theory. Hans Morgenthau, by way of example, argued that ". . . the struggle for the minds of men" needed to be added to "the traditional dimensions of diplomacy and war" (Morgenthau, 1966, Preface).

There has been no period in the history of international relations when such number of ideological conceptions, doctrines, and theories were invented From George F. Kennan's "containment" to Ronald Reagan's "evil empire," from the proclamation of Marxist-Leninist ideology with the reference to the old Bolsheviks' principles of proletariat internationalism to Mikhail Gorbachev's new political thinking with its priority of universal values over class, national, religion, etc.–all this diversity fitted into 45 years of the bipolar confrontation.

On the other hand, in the worst period of bilateral relations–the Cold War - ideological disputes were not that meaningful. During the almost half century of bipolar confrontation each of the two countries tried to stick to rational approaches to bilateral relations. It meant balancing interests with values and avoiding

extremes. Of course there were periods when the ideological messages in the rhetoric of both countries dominated. For instance, during the Eisenhower years, United States foreign policy seemed to be highly ideological. But in practice the famous John Foster Dulles concept of "*immorality* and short-sightedness of neutrality" - countries had to take sides in the ideological struggle because neutrality was not a moral option - had to be implemented in concert with the geopolitical and geostrategic interests and intensified American involvements in Third World countries with the purpose to change uncomfortable regimes or vice versa–to support "the right" ones (Dulles, 1956). By way of example, cooperation between the United States and the most odious Latin American dictatorships continued throughout the Cold War. While the priority task of Soviet foreign policy in the Third World remained the support of "friendly regimes," the decisive criterion for making decisions to grant aid (military, economic, technical) was the amount of practical and geostrategic benefit that the U.S.S.R. could obtain.

It is also hard to say whose foreign policy was more ideological–the American or the Soviet. Shortly after World War II, despite the flows of ideological rhetoric, Josef Stalin approached foreign policy from the point of view of balance of power. For him, Eastern Europe belonged to the Soviet sphere of influence. Ideology was not his priority. Even if at the beginning of his revolutionary activity he shared the belief that working masses in their hearts are internationalists, the Polish-Soviet war of 1920 convinced him otherwise. The Polish proletariat and peasants did not support Lenin's idea of overthrowing the bourgeois government and the "sovietization" of Poland. Stalin built his foreign policy on the principles of *raison d'état* and political realism. He did not support Greek communists, in fact leaving Greece for the Western sphere of influence. After 1947-48, when early post-war hopes that communist parties in Europe would strengthen their positions disappeared, Stalin started to enhance the "security belt" along western borders of the U.S.S.R., increasing the pressure on Eastern European governments. One of the measures to get their loyalty was "sovietization." However, the determining factor of this politics was, of course, the presence of the Red Army. Stalin's successors mostly continued this policy. For instance, Nikita Khrushchev rhetorically supported China's claims to the islands of Taiwan but rejected any military action. Sometimes ideological rhetoric practically disappeared from the dialogue of both countries. This occurred when the opportunities for mutually beneficial partnership overpowered ideology–like in the first half of 1970s, during the *détente* era. Leonid Brezhnev, in spite of widespread opinion, did not give real assistance to the government of Salvadore Allende in Chile because he did not want to overly upset *détente* with the United States. A little detail can illustrate the Soviet approach: the cost to the Chilean government for leasing its Moscow Embassy was actually increased. Brezhnev too cherished the *détente* to expose it to risk for the sake of supporting the socialist experiments of the government of a distant Latin American country (Glazunova, 2017).

Generally, the Americans accepted these rules and played mostly the same game: not to challenge the vital interests of the other. Thus, American reactions to

events in Hungary in 1956 and during the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 were not more than diplomatic protests and verbal condemnations. The same was true for the Soviet reaction to the American invasion of Grenada in 1983. Only once were the rules of this game roughly violated–in the fall of 1962. The Cuban Missile Crisis could have resulted in a nuclear catastrophe, but at the same time it paved the way for the future *détente*.

The ideological aspect of the Cold War was more noticeable in the superpowers competition over the Third World. The term itself had very deep ideological connotations: in 1952 French sociologist Alfred Sauvy used it to refer to the former colonial countries, comparing them with the third estate of French society on the eve of the 18th century revolution - unfairly exploited and potentially revolutionary (Sauvy, 1952). As Odd A. Westad (2007), one of the founders of the "new Cold War history concept," wrote, that it also assumed "the refusal to be ruled by the superpowers and their ideologies, the search for alternatives both to capitalism and Communism . . ." (p.2). But this alternative was difficult to achieve. The Third World became an arena of ideological and geopolitical competition. During almost five decades of "Cold War" American administrations–Republican and Democratic - both "officially took the view that adherence to Marxism-Leninism not only made governments internally repressive but also–through their presumed subservience to Moscow–a threat to the global balance of power" (Gaddis, 1992, p. 13). John Gaddis (1992) argues "there was never very good evidence to support this claim" (p. 13).

The U.S.S.R. did try to use ideology to gain its objectives in so called "developing countries" of Asia and Africa. Both Moscow and Washington experts identified these areas as containing "vital" interests - security, strategic, economic, and political. Both the United States and the Soviet Union aspired to be a global power, with influence and presence across the globe as benefits a superpower. As former Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko used to say: there is no question of significance that can be resolved without the Soviet Union (Saivetz, 1989, p. 211). Furthermore, the Third World served as a testing ground for both sides for their competing ideas about the nature and direction of historical changes.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union marked a new historical crossroads of international relations and the beginning of a new era. In comparison with the Cold War's "clarity," the post-war transitional phase seems to be much more muddled, dangerous, and unpredictable. To a large extent, this complexity can be explained with the growing role of the ideological factor in world politics. The present main confrontation between liberal ideas of a universal world and increasingly conservative antiglobalistic tendencies give a powerful impetus to the process of formation of a new international model. It is clear that U.S.-Russian relations in the present continue to be a testing ground for any global system.

Present U.S.-Russian relations are surviving hard times. European and American media blame Russia. Putin's Russia is called revisionist, aggressive, nationalistic, authoritarian, etc. Experts (mostly Western, but a few Russian also), trying to understand the overwhelming support and popularity of President

Vladimir Putin in Russian society, sometimes make conclusions having nothing to do with reality. For example, in 2015 Senior Associate and Chair of the Carnegie Moscow Center A. Kolesnikov published an article titled "Russian Ideology after Crimea" (Kolesnikov, 2015), where he expressed his distinctive opinion:

> Following the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, the Russian public has embraced an increasingly conservative and nationalistic ideology. . . . The new ideology is based on a deliberate recycling of archaic forms of mass consciousness, a phenomenon that can be termed the sanctification of unfreedom. Confined to a besieged fortress, surrounded by external enemies, and faced with a domestic fifth column, the people of Russia have begun to experience Stockholm syndrome and have thrown their support behind the commander of the fortress, President Vladimir Putin. . . . This sacralization of unfreedom gives birth to militarism.

In this long citation there are only two words which are supported by evidence: "conservative and nationalistic." The rest of the judgements–especially the existence of the "Stockholm syndrome" and the "sacralization of unfreedom"–are groundless assessments.

Conservatism (in both meanings–as a system of moral values, and as a political ideology) definitely dominates in Russia today. In 2016, among 75 registered political parties (Spisok, 2016) about 20 directly declared conservative values and principles. At least another 15, according to their program rhetoric, can be named "near-conservative." Two of the four parties represented in the Duma openly declare their adherence to conservatism (United Russia) and nationalism (the Liberal-Democratic Party). A third party in the Duma–the Communist Party of Russian Federation–also appeals to historical traditions and cultural roots–the views that are the main definition of all kinds of conservative thoughts. The ideological credo of the Russian President is expressed by the notion "conservatism." A favorite concept of Premier Dmitry Medvedev is "conservative modernization" (Shirinyants, 2014). To paraphrase Russian philosopher Konstantin Leontiev, one can say that being a severest conservative in Russia today is profitable and easy like it was in the 1990s to be a liberal (Leontiev, 1885).

"Conservative-preservative" thinking, which shapes current Russian foreign policy, did not appear after Crimea. Practically all experts conclude that it is a product of the shaping of several hundred years. However, there is not enough attention to the role of the more recent period of Russian history–the 1990s. There is no doubt that the current way of thinking in Russia emanates from the top. Nevertheless, a most important and interesting consideration is not this circumstance, but why there is such a strong request for it from the bottom. Why are Russians ready to sacrifice their well-being to support President Putin's politics, in particular his anti-Western and anti-American course?

Examining the First Post-Cold War Decade

The answer to why Putin is supported by the Russian people is found by examining the first post-Cold War decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disastrous consequences for the people of Russia. A frame for this ill-fated period of time is the negative attitude within the country to what was perceived widely as the "de-ideologization" and "Westernization" of Yeltsin's domestic and foreign policies.

Of course the "de-ideologization" of Yeltsin's foreign policy is only a myth. The ideological credo of Yeltsin's first foreign minister, A. Kozyrev, was expressed very clearly: "Our choice is . . . to progress according to generally accepted rules. They were invented by the West, and I'm a Westernizer in this respect–the West is rich and we need to be friends with it. . . ." (Stent, 2014, p. 24). Throughout the 1990s Washington's policy toward Russia was conducted out of a traditional conviction that the internal socio-political regime shapes the international behavior of a country. In the view of American experts, Yeltsin was a guarantor of liberal and democratic reforms in Russia, and of not returning to some kind of totalitarian or authoritarian regime that could jeopardize U.S. interests. So the West had to support it financially. Money was given in the format of "structural adaptation": Russia had to provide the conditions for democratization of its internal life, and to follow the rules that were dictated by the single "superpower"–the United States–in its foreign policy. Throughout the first half of the decade Russia was obedient, accepting the status of America's junior partner and subsequent moves towards NATO expansion, cooperating with NATO in the Balkans, and listening to Western criticism of the Chechen war.

Yeltsin's American honeymoon did not last long. By the middle of 1990s, many Russian people already perceived that Yeltsin's domestic and foreign policies were a betrayal of the national interest. At the beginning of 1996 Yeltsin's popularity was at a historical low point, with only an 8 percent approval rating. He was in fifth place among presidential candidates, while the Communist Party leader G. Zyuganov was ahead with 21 percent. It compelled new Russian oligarchs, scared about the looming prospect of a communist victory, to join together their financial resources in order to re-elect the incumbent President (so called *semibankirshcina*–seven bankers). Still, Yeltsin's victory would not have been possible without American support. In February of 1996 the International Monetary Fund, urged on by the United States, granted a $10.2 billion loan to Russia (Russia and I.M.F., 1996). These huge sums not only allowed Yeltsin's team to pay off long-owed wages and pensions to millions of Russians shortly before the June election, but also deploy a massive "black arts" campaign against Zuganov. American political technologists played an important role in the re-election.

Yeltsin's victory, however, did not change public assessment. The period of 1996-1999 was characterized by growing domestic criticism of Russia's weak and defeatist foreign policy and leading to the more nationalistic mood.

In 1990s, listening to endless speeches about democracy, freedom, etc., and in reality observing misery, crime, cheating, major corruption, and the aggression of a cheap mass culture, Russians realized that notorious “common human values” do not mean much in the absence of “freedom from need” and “freedom from fear.” In this time frame several generations of Russians, including very young people, got a very strong vaccination against the liberal system of values, Western ideology, and Western culture. The “syndrome of the 1990s,” which created a fertile soil for the growth of conservative ideology, did not mean disease. On the contrary, for many Russians, it meant recovering.

The first bright manifestation of this “recovering” related to the U.S.-Russian interactions was the famous “Primakov loop” in March of 1999. Russia’s new Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov was on his way to Washington, D.C. to negotiate with Vice-President Albert Gore the next tranche of IMF monetary aid. After being informed about the NATO bombardment of Yugoslavia, which was to commence a few hours later, Primakov ordered the government official plane to return to Russia. This case went down in history under the name "Primakov's loop". This choice of action by Primakov was not just a gesture–it was the beginning of a new foreign policy consensus within Russia. “Primakov loop” had several key messages: Russia is a partner, not a client of the West; Russia is in a unique position being both a European and an Asian country, and its national interests lie between those two worlds; Russia is a competent actor in a multipolar, not a unipolar world; and in foreign policy Russia values realism (real deals), not some abstract ideas and dogmas.

Putin’s Russia and Prospects of U.S.-Russian Interactions

By the time of Putin’s coming the public mood in Russia was quite different from what it had been a decade before. Clinton’s policy facilitated an anti-Western and anti-American mood within Russia. Outwardly benevolent and friendly, it was in fact anti-Russian, especially because it supported NATO expansion. In the eyes of the Russian people by “expanding democracy” in Russia the United States actively supported the creation of a new socioeconomic regime of “criminalized capitalism.” In general, the experience gained from dealing with different American administrations brought Russians to the conviction that it was easier to find a common language with Republicans than with Democrats. Russians considered Republicans less dogmatic and more maneuverable. They used to be closer to the realpolitik concept, which is closer in turn to Russian conservatism. Republicans are more inclined to prefer equilibrium in world politics. Democrats are more exposed to the influence of ideology and strive to pursue reforms, transformations, and crusades.

According to Henry Kissinger (2005), “This is why crusaders have usually caused more upheavals and suffering than statesmen” (para 13). During the last years of President Reagan’s administration, and during the presidency of George H. W. Bush, American policy toward Russia was generally cautious. Then

Democrats came to the White House and started a policy based on liberal-democratic ideas coupled with a reformist activism. First, came Yugoslavia and the 1999 NATO expansion, then more active involvement in post-Soviet space–all this Russia at first was watching in silence, but gradually became more and more wary. To paraphrase Prince Gorchakov's famous words: "Russia was not only concentrating. Russia was getting angry" (Glasser, 2013, para 1.). Russia was preparing to counter-attack.

Putin understood this public mood very well. It corresponded with his own convictions. The period of Russian-American partnership that was shaped after 9/11 was short. Soon Putin announced his opposition to the U.S. "war on terror." Russians viewed American criticism of the wars in Chechnya and human rights policies as an interference in its internal affairs. That deterioration of relations occurred because of at least two big issues: the use of military force to effect regime change in Iraq, and the illegitimacy of Western military intervention without UN sanction. At the same time, Americans became more and more disappointed in Russia's lack of democratic reforms. Meanwhile, rising oil prices strengthened the Russian economy and the socio-political situation within Russia became more stable. The Kremlin needed Washington less and less. Moscow increasingly accused Washington of undermining a systemic balance, be it via NATO's eastward expansion or via humanitarian intervention into countries formerly known as the Third World.

In 2005 in his Second Inaugural Address, President George W. Bush stressed that in order to protect the American people and defeat terrorism America had to spread its values to other countries: "The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world" (Bush, 2005). The Bush Freedom Agenda was just another reincarnation of liberal internationalist ideology. Moscow perceived it as a justification for any American involvement in the internal affairs of other countries. In contrast to the United States, Russia firmly advocated the principle of noninterference.

In 2003, and again in 2005, Washington supported "color revolutions" in the Russian "backyard." Ukraine was the most sensitive for Russians. Angela Stent (2014) identified the magnitude of support for the "Orange Revolution" by referencing the fact that Ukraine had become the third largest recipient of U.S aid after only Israel and Egypt (p. 111). This approach inflamed U.S.-Russian relations. The result of this ideological confrontation was Putin's legendary Munich Security Conference speech of 2007. The Munich speech marked a new phase in Russia's relations with the United States and the world, which is continuing until the present. The basic construct of Putin's Munich speech was the idea of "sovereign democracy," which refers to a "form of political life where political power, the authority from which power is derived, and decisions are taken by a diverse Russian nation for the purpose of gaining material welfare, freedom and fairness for all citizens, social groups and nationalities and for the people that formed it" (Surkov, 2006). Of course the key word of the construction was "sovereign," not "democracy."

There were several core ideas in the speech: neither the United States (nor any other nation) can teach Russia about democracy; Russia would no longer accept an agenda dictated in Washington; and Russia's political system meets the needs and expectations of the Russian people. The concept was more than just an ideological response to Bush's Freedom Agenda: it challenged the universality of the Western value system and proved that Russia's ideology and policy choices are derived from its own unique history and are as legitimate as that of the United States or Europe. Strong "conservative/preservative" evocative appeals to ideological and political traditions became dominant in Russian domestic and foreign policy theoretical discourse and practice.

Conclusion

In the 19th century Uvarov's triad did not become an official ideology. At the time it was not understood and rejected. It cannot be said that the creators of today's Russian ideology understand it better, but it is impossible not to see them attempting to revive all three postulates and adjust them to current reality. As Uvarov denied the godlessness of the 18th century and its mockery of faith and church, today Russia seeks to reverse the atheism of the Soviet era as well as the dissoluteness and permissiveness of the liberal 1990s. According to the revived ideology, the authority of the state must be based on the dominant religion, and only by being sanctified in the beliefs of people will it be strong and legitimate. As Uvarov preferred constitutional monarchy over a republic form of government, today Russia is promoting Putin's model of a "strong state" which is based on the idea of "managed democracy." The most complicated element of the triad–nationality–is also very relevant for today's political tasks. Like Uvarov counter-posed this notion to the French revolution's *fraternité* (which has international meaning declaring that all people are brothers), modern Russian conservatism appeals to nationalism to oppose globalism which implies Western, primarily American, dominance.

Crimea became the culmination of implementation of these concepts. In 2014 Putin returned national pride to the Russian people. For this, most of them are ready to forgive him shortages of his domestic politics, the falling standard of living, and the deterioration of the Russian image abroad. The degree of his popularity in society is still high (*Reitingi "Edinoy Rossii" i Putina dostigli maksimuma.* (2017). The "Crimea consensus" is a very important factor of Russian political life. And it is going to stay this way in the 2018 election.

The Crimea annexation and following Russian participation in the war in eastern Ukraine ultimately damaged relations between Russia and the West, in particular with the United States. In this period, we have been watching probably the most serious split between the ideological mainstreams of the two countries in the history of their relations: Russian "conservative/preservative" ideology versus American "liberal globalism." This confrontation is being aggravated by the fact that the Russian internationalism of the 20th century - in all its forms – is now

changed to nationalism. One can say that the same trend is visible in America today. But it is clear that nationalism in the United States does not have fertile soil since it is a country of immigrants. Today's rhetoric of nationalism may be considered as an ideological deviation, which will not live very long.

Despite the divergence of ideologies Russia and America have several key concerns that demand cooperation. One example is fighting Islamist terrorism. At this time one should not overestimate President Donald Trump's sympathies to Russia and his aspirations for cooperation. Even if he has such aspirations, the American system of checks and balances will not let him act alone. Therefore, the question of the future of U.S.-Russia relations may well depend upon broader social views of practical well-being and moral ideas, ideologies that both countries, at different times and with different intensity, have shared in common.

In the longer term, it is more likely that both countries will come to see that, in this globalized interdependent world, there are few great problems that can be solved without their active cooperation. And their national interests compel it.

References

Bogaturov, A., Kosolapov, N., & Khrustalev, M. (2002). *Ocherki teorii i metodologii politicheskogo analiza mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniy*. Moskva.: NOFMO. (Богатуров А.Д., Косолапов Н.А., Хрусталев М.А. *Очерки теории и методологии политического анализа международных отношений*. Москва.: НОФМО, 2002).

Bolkchovitinov, N. (1966). *Stanovlenie russko-amerikanckich otnoshenii. 1775-1815*. (Болховитинов Н.Н. *Становление русско-американских отношений.* 1775-1815). Retrieved from https://www.booksite.ru/fulltext/russ_america/pdf/205/text.pdf

Bolkchovitinov, N. (1994). *Istoriki v poiskakh istiny: Vizit russkogo flota v SSHA v 1863-1864 gg.* (Н.Н. Болховитинов. *Историки в поисках истины: Визит русского флота в США в 1863-1864 гг.).* Retrieved from http://america-xix.org.ru/library/bolkhovitinov-russian-fleet/

Bolkchovitinov, N. (1996). *Russkiye eskadry v SSHA v 1863-1864 gg*. (Н.Н.Болховитинов. *Русские эскадры в США в 1863-1864 гг.).* Retrieved from http://america-xix.org.ru/library/bolkhovitinov-russian-squardon/

Bush, G. W. (2005, January 20). *President Bush's Second Inaugural Address*. Retrieved from http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4460172

Cassels, A. (1996). *Ideology and International Relations in the Modern World*. London, England: Routledge.

Dulles, J. F. (1956, June 10). Text of Dulles Speech Explaining U.S. 'Peace Insurance Policy'. *The Cost of Peace Special To The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/1956/06/10/archives/text-of-dulles-speech-explaining-us-peace-insurance-policy-the-cost.html

Gaddis, J L. (1992). *The United States and the End of the Cold War. Implications, Reconsiderations, Provocations.* Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Glasser, S. (2013, April 29). Minister No. Sergei Lavrov and the blunt logic of Russian power. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/04/29/minister-no/

Glazunova, E. (2017). *Vrajhda no ne v otkrytujy: vmeshatelstvo SSHA vo vnutrennie dela Chili (1970–1973)/ Novaj i Noveishaya istoria*, № 1. Pp. 38-56. (Глазунова Е.Н. *Вражда, но не в открытую: вмешательство США во внутренние дела Чили 1970-1973/ «Новая и Новейшая история»*, № 1. 2017. С.38-56.

Jones, W. (2011). Britain's Surrogate War Against the Union, 1861-65. *Schiller Institute*. Retrieved from http://schillerinstitute.org/strategic/2011/us_civil_war.html

Kennedy, E. (1979). Ideology from Destutt De Tracy to Marx. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, *40*(3), 353-368.

Kissinger, H. A. (2005, May 12). Realists vs. Idealists. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/12/opinion/henry-a-kissinger-realists-vs-idealists.html

Kolesnikov, A. (2015). Russian Ideology after Crimea. *Carnegie Moscow Center.* Retrieved from http://carnegie.ru/2015/09/22/russian-ideology-after-crimea-pub-61350

Kosolapov, N. (2002). *Ideoligia i mezdunarodnye othoshenia na rubesze tysjacheletii*. In A. D. Bogaturov, N. A. Kosolapov, & V. A. Chrustalev (Eds.), *Ocherki teorii I metodologii politicheskogo analiza mezdunarodnych otnoshenii.* NOFMO. Retrieved from http://obraforum.ru/Essays.htm; (Косолапов Н.А. *Идеология и международные отношения на рубеже тысячелетий*/ В книге: Богатуров А.Д., Косолапов Н.А., Хрусталев М.А. *Очерки теории и методологии политического анализа международных отношений*. М.: НОФМО, 2002).

Lenin, V. (1917). Report on Peace. Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. *Marxists Internet Archive*. Retrieved from https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/oct/25-26/26b.htm

Leontiev, K. (1885). *Chem i kak liberalism nash vreden?* Retrieved from http://knleontiev.narod.ru/texts/liberalizm.htm (Леонтьев К.Н. (1885). *Чем и как либерализм наш вреде*н? Retrieved from http://knleontiev.narod.ru/texts/liberalizm.htm

McMaster, C. (2014). Woodrow Wilson and the American Expeditionary Force to Siberia, 1918-1920. *Inquiries*, *6*(4), pp.1-2. Retrieved from www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/889/2/woodrow-wilson-and-the-american-expeditionary-force-to-siberia-1918-1920

Marx, K. (2000). *A Critique of The German Ideology*. *Part I. Feuerbach*. Online Version: Marx/Engels Internet Archive (marxists.org). Retrieved from https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx_The_German_Ideology.pdf

Marx, K. (2000). Abstract from The Introduction to Contribution To The Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. *Marxists Internet Archive*. Retrieved from http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/df-jahrbucher/law-abs.htm

Manykin, A. (Ed.). (2009). *Osnovy obshchey teorii mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniy*. Moskva: Izdatel'stvo MGU. (Маныкин А.С. (ред.). *Основы общей теории международных отношений*. Москва: Издательство МГУ, 2009.

Morgenthau, H. J. (1966). *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Knopf.

Paine, T. (1776). *Common Sense*. The Writings of Thomas Paine. Retrieved from http://www.calhum.org/files/uploads/program_related/TD-Thomas-Paine-Common-Sense.pdf

Peace Treaty of Versailles. (1919). Articles 231-247 and Annexes. Reparations. Part VIII. Reparation. Section L. General Provisions. Article 231. Retrieved from http://net.lib.byu.edu/~rdh7/wwi/versa/versa7.html

Pechatnov, V., & Manykin, A. (2012). *Istoria vneshney politiki SSHA*. Moskva: Mejdunarodnyye otnosheniya. (Печатнов В.О., Маныкин А.С. *История внешней политики США*. Москва: Международные отношения, 2012).

Reitingi "Edinoy Rossii" i Putina dostigli maksimuma. (2017). (*ВЦИОМ: рейтинги «Единой России» и Путина достигли максимума*). Retrieved from http://izvestia.ru/news/668152; Levada-Tzentr. *Fevral'skie reitingi odobrenia i doveria*. (Левада-Центр. Февральские рейтинги одобрения и доверия). Retrieved from http://www.levada.ru/2017/02/22/fevralskie-rejtingi-odobreniya-i-doveriya-6/

Russia and I.M.F. Agree On A Loan For $10.2 Billion. (1996, February 23). *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/1996/02/23/world/russia-and-imf-agree-on-a-loan-for-10.2-billion.html

Saivetz, C. R. (Ed.). (1989). *The Soviet Union in the Third World*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Saul, N.E. (1991). *Distant Friends: The United States and Russia, 1763-1867*. Lawrence, Kan: University Press of Kansas.

Sauvy, A. (1952, August 14). Trois Mondes, Une Planète. *L'Observateur*. Retrieved from http://www.homme-moderne.org/societe/demo/sauvy/3mondes.html

Setov, R. (2010). *Sovremennyy miroporyadok i gosudarstvennyye interesy Rossii*. Moskva: Tri kvadrata). (Сетов Р.А.*Современный миропорядок и государственные интересы России*. Москва: Три квадрата Москва, 2010).

Shevchenko, N. (2015). Three historical principles of Russian foreign policy for Washington. *Russia Direct*. Retrieved from http://www.russia-direct.org/opinion/three-historical-principles-russian-foreign-policy-washington

Shirinyants, A. (2014). *Konservatizm i politicheskie partii v sovremennoy Rossii*. (Ширинянц, А. *Консерватизм и политические партии в современной России)*. Retrieved from

http://4pera.ru/news/analytics/konservatizm_i_politicheskie_partii_v_sovremennoy_rossii/

Spisok zaregistrirovannych politicheskich partiy. (2016). Retrieved from http://minjust.ru/ru/nko/gosreg/partii/spisok (*Список зарегистрированных политических партий*. (2016). Retrieved from http://minjust.ru/ru/nko/gosreg/partii/spisok

Stent, A. E. (2014). *The Limits of Partnership: U.S.-Russian Relations in the Twenty-First Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Surkov, V. (2006, November 20). *Natzionalizatzia buduschego*. In *Expert* № 43(537). (Сурков, Владислав. 2006. *Национализация будущего*/ *Эксперт*, № 43(537). Retrieved from http://web.archive.org/web/20061205211300/http://www.expert.ru/printissues/expert/2006/43/nacionalizaciya_buduschego/

Tarpley, W. G. (2011, April 25). U.S. Civil War: The US-Russian Alliance that Saved the Union. In *Voltairenet*. Retrieved from http://www.voltairenet.org/article169488.html

Taylor, B. (1862). Bayard Taylor to Secretary Seward (1862, October 29); *U.S. Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864, Part II.

Voytolovsky, F. (2015*). Ideologicheskaya refleksia mirovoi politiki*. In *Mezdunarodnye processi*, tom 13, # 1(40). Janvar-mart. (Войтоловский, Ф. *Идеологическая рефлексия мировой политики*/*Международные процессы*, том 13, № 1 (40). Январь-март 2015. Retrieved from http://www.intertrends.ru/fifteen/004.htm

Washington, G. (1796). Washington's Farewell Address. *Yale Law School*. Retrieved from http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp

Westad, O. A. (2007). *The Global Cold War. Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Wilson, W. (1915, December 7). Third Annual Message. *XXVIII President of the United States: 1913-1921*. Retrieved from http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29556

Wilson, W. (1917, April 2). *Wilson's War Message to Congress. Woodrow Wilson, War Messages*, 65th Cong., 1st Sess. Senate Doc. No. 5, Serial No. 7264. Retrieved from https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Wilson's_War_Message_to_Congress

Wilson, W. (1918, January 8). *President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points*. Retrieved from http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp

Yanov, A. (2013). Golden Age of Russian Nationalism. *Institute of Modern Russia*. Retrieved from https://imrussia.org/en/society/462-qgolden-age-of-russian-nationalismq

Journal of Global Initiatives
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp. 68-83.

Russia's Fight for the "Globe"

Yuliya Brel

Abstract

The foreign policy of Russia in the near abroad is the continuation of its domestic policy, which includes the consolidation of the population around a leader by means of creating an image of an enemy, especially at times when the economic situation in the country is deteriorating. When interpreting the inner processes in the country, political scientists usually apply the decomposition of the totalitarian Soviet regime as a framework. This paper suggests a broader framework through an analysis of historical structures anchored in Russian civilization. The key to understanding Russia's foreign policy, I argue, is rooted in the imperial syndrome associated with the country's history, whether one considers the tsarist, Soviet, or post-Soviet periods. At present, Russia's desire to restore its status as a world power, as in the past, requires it to develop a foreign policy secured by control of its nearest neighbors. For centuries, it purchased their loyalty and fealty with natural resources. When this routine was disrupted, for example with a drop in the market prices of raw materials, another practice developed where, in order to maintain its hegemony, Russia used aggression against its nearest neighbors. This approach is sustained by endorsement from the general public that seems oblivious to conditions of unparalleled income inequality in Russia. For them there is nostalgia for the restoration of a super power status for the country. The chief outcome of the study is Russian policies of self-isolation and hybrid wars against its nearest neighbors, which is a contemporary means used to prolong the life of an imagined empire.

Introduction

On November 30, 2016, the United States House of Representatives approved the Intelligence Authorization Bill. Title V of the bill (Matters Relating to Foreign Countries) specified the creation of an interagency committee "to counter active measures by the Russian Federation to exert covert influence over peoples and governments" (Civic Impulse, 2017, p. 53). The matter concerned the disclosure of disinformation and forgeries, funding agents of influence, assassinations, terrorism, and other activities of the kind "carried out in coordination with, or at the behest of, political leaders or the security services of the Russian Federation" (Civic Impulse, 2017, pp. 53-54).

Clearly, a full 180-degree turn in the Russian-American relations was not an instantaneous event. Initially there was little portent of going back to the active phase of the Cold War in U.S. relations with Putin's Russia. After September 11, 2001, Putin was the first to call American President George W. Bush to express his

condolences and to declare his readiness to render assistance in fighting terrorism. Shortly after that, following the announcement by President Bush of the United States' intent to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty (Arms Control Association, 2002), and the International Security Conference in Munich in 2002 (Schwartz, 2002), relations began to take a turn for the worse. Five years later, at the Munich Security Conference of 2007 Putin announced that the unipolar model of the modern world was unacceptable for Russia. He emphasized that Russia "[was] a country with more than a millennial history, and [that] it almost always enjoyed the privilege of conducting an independent foreign policy" (Putin, 2007). Although Russian leadership might perceive NATO membership as consistent with a unipolar vision, in March 2009, Radoslaw Sikorski, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, talked about his desire to see Russia among the NATO member-nations (Gołota & Wroński, 2009). In spite of numerous reservations, such a possibility was also left open by Dmitry Rogozin, the Permanent Representative of the NATO Response Force, in April 2009 (Rogozin, 2009).

The seeming point of no return in the Russian-American relations was passed in March 2014 after the annexation of the Crimea by Russia. In light of perceived United States support for the overthrow of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych, the prospects of an anti-Russian government in Ukraine, and the potential loss of Crimean ports for the Russian Black Sea Fleet, Putin justified the actions of Russia as a necessity to protect the population of the Crimea from the repressions and reprisal raids of the Ukrainian radicals (Putin, 2014). According to independent analysts and political writers, such a U-turn in Russia's foreign policy was inevitable (Gudkov, 2016; Klyamkin, 2014). These analysts regard the change as a resort to traditional means, i.e. the use of aggression and conducting hybrid wars against the nearest neighbors, for solving internal problems.

In this article, I will first explore the idea that in its development Russia goes through the cycles of reforms and counter-reforms, which help preserve the historical status quo in Russian society. I will also consider how the consolidation of Russian society is attained by creating the perpetual image of an external enemy. This image appeals to the people's perception of the country as an imperial nation and a world power. "Splendid little wars" against real or imagined enemies give the Russian authorities an opportunity to distract the population from the internal problems. The economy is a major part of this argument. The question of "whether Moscow will be able to handle [this] strategic over-extension, which entails the use of considerable resources while its economy is in bad shape" looms large (Scimia, 2017). Arguably, economic problems in Russia occasionally stem from its intermediate geopolitical and cultural position between the West and the East that at times have impeded trade relations.

Utilizing primarily web-based sources from Russian scholars in order to provide readers with easily accessible references (many of these works are also published in printed form), I will also examine how the characteristics of the cultural core of the Russian civilization that have contributed to its survival for millennia, actually stymie creativity in the 21st century. By reviewing the theories of Russian historians, philosophers, sociologists, and political scientists, and by

analyzing the outcomes of public opinion polls, as well as statistical and economic data, I show that when change does come, it is derivative. This tendency to adapt from external sources bears the seeds of its own destruction due to the persistence of reactionary forces against change in the society. I will conclude with some thoughts about how Russia compensates for its inability to exert "soft power" on its nearest neighbors, and what the country's current development prospects are.

Literature Review

One of the explanatory models of social transformations in the history of Russia is the theory of the "civilizational pendulum" or "cyclic recurrence of history" offered by Bagdasaryan (2010). According to the model, "the direction in which development moves at a particular historical stage is determined by the combination of the innovational and traditional potentials" (Bagdasaryan, 2010, p. 61). When the former potential prevails (often inspired by external forces), the system becomes transformed. Innovations, however, incite rejection and set the countermove of the pendulum mechanism in motion. In this sense, crises can be regarded as the maximum swing points of the pendulum. Thus, "when the maximum of the innovation amplitude has been reached, the vector of the social development inevitably gives way to the opposite one," which leads to the periods of counter reforms in Russia (Bagdasaryan, 2010, pp. 61-62).

The idea that in its development Russia goes through cycles of reforms and counter-reforms is supported by the sociologist Vladimir Lapkin and the political scientist Vladimir Pantin (2007). Their work connects the problem of Russia's image with reactionary domestic and foreign policies developed by the authorities. Policies that the authors single out emphasize the "intermediate," "borderline" geopolitical and cultural position of Russia between the West and the East, whereby "the image of Russia inside and outside the country somehow bifurcates and fluctuates" (Lapkin & Pantin, 2007, pp. 1-2).

Lapkin and Pantin (2007) further argue that during the periods of liberal reforms, Russian society and the state "primarily consider themselves closely connected to European culture, and more broadly to the West," signaling their equality with the "civilized world" (pp. 2-3). At such times, the West tends to perceive Russia as not posing any real threats, though "lagging behind" the civilized world. On the contrary, when the Russian state goes through periods of anti-liberal counter reforms, its "separate identity" and civilizational differences from both the West and the East begin to be emphasized. These are also the times that tend to accentuate Russia's "greatpowerness, uniqueness, imperial might" as well as its "special messianic role in the world process (Lapkin and Pantin, 2007, p. 3). At such moments the West sees Russia "largely as an independent, but hostile and unpredictable nation whose political and economic life is significantly different from life in western countries" (p. 3). Relatedly, Bagdasaryan (2010) highlights a set of indicators that directly lead to an increase in external aggression. Those are the level of national focus versus the level of cosmopolitism; the etatism paradigm (the popularity of the strong state concept); the propaganda actualization of the

external enemy image (the West), and the nature of defining Russia's historical mission, among others (Bagdasaryan, 2010, p. 64).

The historian Alexander Akhiezer (1995) regarded Russia as having an intermediate position between liberal and traditional civilizations (p. 4). In its historic development Russia stepped over the bounds of a traditional civilization characterized by static reproduction, i.e. the type of reproduction under which quantitative changes in society and culture are possible only at the expense of attracting additional resources. However, Russia did not manage to become a full-fledged part of Western liberal civilization where the dominant position is held by intensive reproduction fueled by innovation. Situated between such forces, societal dynamics acquired a conflict-ridden, self-destructive character which Akhiezer (1995) called "cleavage" (p. 6).

Cleavage is "a pathological condition of society" characterized by a vicious circle, which means that if progressive values in one of the two parts of the cleaved society are activated, in the other part traditional forces are brought into action, and vice versa (Akhiezer, 1995, p. 6). Akhiezer (1995) argues that the two opposing parts in the cleaved society (progressive values vs. traditional values) act in the opposite directions and thus paralyze and disorganize each other (p. 6).

In a cleavage-based society any attempts to substitute alternative decisions for those just taken may form the so-called "lame decisions" (Akhiezer, 1995, p. 32). The latter are characterized by simplification–a tendency to solve not what needs to be solved, but what can be solved according to the understanding of the authorities (Akhiezer, 1995, p. 34). This tendency coincides with Herbert Simon's idea of "satisficing." Satisficing refers to making decisions, which are just good enough in terms of some criterion (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2009, p. 348). Lame decisions make the authorities "pursue a 'satisficing' path, a path that will permit satisfaction at some specified level of all of [their] needs" (Simon, 1956, p. 136). The project *Novorossia* envisaging the creation of a confederative union of the unrecognized Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics may serve as an example in this case. At the initial stage (May 2014), it was actively supported by the Kremlin. However, having encountered resistance on the part of the West and the impossibility of spreading the Donetsk-Lugansk experience over the contiguous regions of Ukraine, the project was closed a year later.

According to the Russian historian Nikolai Berdyaev (2007), the immense space of Russia subjugates the "Russian soul" instead of emancipating it (p. 115). Organization of the vast space into the greatest state in the world was paid for by over-centralization, "submission of life to the state's interests, and suppression of any independent forces, personal as well as public" (Berdyaev, 2007, p. 114). Berdyaev (2007) wrote the collection of articles, *The Destiny of Russia (1914-1917)*, before the end of World War I. He hoped that the war would lead to "a radical change in the consciousness of the Russian people" (Berdyaev, 2007, p. 120). They would disengage from the power of space, and instead get control over it. This would allow them to radically change their attitude to the state and culture. Instead of being their master, the state should become "the inner power of the Russian people" (Berdyaev, 2007, p. 120). As for culture, in the opinion of Berdyaev (2007),

it was supposed to become "more intensive" (p. 120). Without such a change "the Russian people cannot have a future … and the state is exposed to the threat of disintegration" (Berdyaev, 2007, p. 120). The philosopher's hopes were not destined to be realized. During the 20th century the state disintegrated twice. That is why the fight for Russia's global status still remains a main factor in the process of consolidation for an atomized people who never managed (not without the assistance of the state) to acquire the skills of collective action.

The problem of consolidation is pertinent to any society that has transitioned from a traditional civilization to a liberal one. However, for Russia which is stuck in-between, it is exacerbated by the cleavage or tensions between innovation and tradition, between foreign and domestic. To overcome it, it is necessary to reach a basic consensus between the conflicting cultures and their bearers, further providing legitimacy to the state power (Akhiezer, Klyamkin, & Yakovenko, 2013, p. 45). In early states, the legitimacy of the ruling stratum was determined by how successful it was at coping with the protection of its subjects from external threats, and by its ability to annex new territories. That is why "victories in wars were a powerful source of the state power legitimacy" (Akhiezer et al., 2013, p. 44). In the words of Akhiezer, Klyamkin, and Yakovenko (2013), "the fall of European monarchies (German, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian) … during WW I proved that the ancient mechanism when power could be legitimized by means of victories and de-legitimized by means of defeats continued to exist even millennia later" (p. 44). These authors also contend that "the state consolidation through the image of an enemy–real or simulated–has not been eliminated until now" (Akhiezer et al., 2013, p. 44). Therefore, victories in wars gave Russia an opportunity to establish and support its notion of imperial might legitimizing the ruling elite.

Wars, however, could also be "a specific means to obscure internal problems, which under the condition of peace reveal[ed] their intractability and insolvability … and the hidden cracks of the socio-cultural cleavage" (Akhiezer et al., 2013, p. 45). Also, the vast expanse of the Russian territory did not require much investment from its inhabitants. It has always been possible for the state to secure additional resources to enhance production in society making innovation unnecessary or at least less attractive. Nevertheless, Russia's position as an intermediary civilization forced the country to go through cycles of reforms and counter-reforms in the course of its history. The periods of reforms drew Russia nearer to the "civilized world," i.e. to the Western European culture, whereas the periods of counter-reforms incited in the population the ideas of Russia's uniqueness and aspirations for the country's messianic role in the world.

Analysis

In the remaining part of my article I will show how and why the population of Russia currently tends to support the aggressive foreign policy of the Kremlin. The following analysis of public opinion polls and of the statistical and economic data shows that while previously the Russian authorities ensured support of constituents by improving their well-being, the main focus of the current domestic policy is to

create an image of an external enemy (or enemies). This helps politicians to distract the masses from recognizing that Russia has been unable to create a competitive economy. By involving the population in foreign policy endeavors, which propel dangerous dreams about the restoration of the country's former greatness and status as a world power, elites are trying to divert the people's attention from the fact that the Russian economy is currently suffering from three ongoing crises (Mirkin, 2017). The first one is the investment crisis; the second is connected with the drop in the population's real income that continues for the fourth consecutive year; the third is the overpriced Russian ruble, which may become devalued at any moment. In addition, the modern Russian economy is still mostly extractive, which makes Russia "a great state of raw materials" unable to compete with either "the Asian electronic 'tigers'" or other developed countries of the world (Mirkin, 2017).

Negative Mobilization

In his book *Negative Identity* (2004), the Russian sociologist Lev Gudkov noted the following, "Consolidation of the Russians happens not on the basis of positive ideas … but on the solidarity of repulsion, denial, and demarcation. It is a deep cultural circumstance rather than manifestation of an opportunistic potential of collective mobilization" (p. 156). Therefore, the most important condition for the reproduction of the negative identity is the presence of the image of an "enemy" (an "alien"). It affixes wholeness and stability to the national identity. Gudkov provides a useful theory about how negative mobilization forms. He identifies three conditions conducive to the forming of mobilization waves in the Russian society. First of all, negative mobilization begins only when the differentiation and sophistication of the social system reaches such a degree under which the commanding top begins to lose control over what is going on. Secondly, under such conditions the processes of structured changes turn out to be blocked by the interests of some influential groups. Thirdly, the intellectual elite degenerate since they become little other than bureaucrats serving the regime (Gudkov, 2004, p. 484).

The data in Table 1 help assess the effectiveness of Russia's aggressive foreign policy with respect to the perception of the political elite by the population of the country. The coercive annexation of the Crimea had a positive impact on Putin's rating, although many remained relatively low.

The first column shows the results of the survey which was conducted under the conditions of a deep economic crisis five months before the default.[1] Public opinion perceived the authorities of Yeltsin's call-out as corrupted (63%) and alien to the people (41%). During the "fat" years of Putin's rule the population's

[1] The sovereign default occurred in Russian on August 17, 1998. The main reasons for the default (the inability to service some or all the country's fiscal obligations) were as follows: an enormous state debt; low world prices for raw materials, which made the basis of the Russian export; the peanut politics of the state; the establishment by the state of the Ponzi scheme, which refers to a fraudulent investing scam; and the meltdown of the Asian economies.

perception of the authorities improved, but not significantly or in all categories. Comparing the data in the last two columns it is necessary to keep in mind that by November 2016 the real income of the population had been decreasing for 24 consecutive months. Nevertheless, the share of Russians characterizing the authorities in a negative way substantially decreased.

Table 1

Please name the traits that in your opinion characterize the current authorities (percentage of the number of respondents)[2]

	March 1998	November 2012	**November 2016**
Corrupted	63	52	**31**
Bureaucratic	22	30	**26**
Legitimate	12	8	**23**
Alien to the people	41	32	**23**
Strong, firm	2	10	**19**
'Ours,' habitual	3	4	**11**
Authoritative, respected	2	6	**11**

Note. Adapted from Levada-Center (2016a).

The figures in the last column support the idea of Akhiezer et al. (2013) about wars being a convenient means for the authorities to distract the population from internal problems (p. 45). Russian rulers have always skillfully played the strings of the people's "deeply-rooted patriotic sentiment" knowing for centuries that the population possessed "a strong resilience to material shortages" (Scimia, 2017). Thus, the events in Ukraine and the annexation of the Crimea turned out to be a consolidating factor for the Russian society, at least for the time being. However, the countdown of shaping the current mobilization wave should be taken not from March 2014 and the annexation, but from the end of 2011 when in response to mass protests against rigging the election outcomes, the Kremlin began to renew the policy of societal consolidation (in opposition to external threats). The central element of the new policy became the anti-West rhetoric.

[2] The survey was conducted on November 18-21, 2016, using an all-Russian representative sampling of the urban and rural population. The number of respondents equaled 1,600 people aged 18 and older. The survey was conducted at respondents' homes using face-to-face interviews. The six answer options given in the table were the most popular ones in November 2016.

The beginning of Vladimir Putin's third presidential term (March 2012) coincided with a sharp slowdown in the economic growth, which served as an additional incentive to form an image of an enemy. The dynamics of answering the question, "Are things in Russia going in the right direction or are the events leading us nowhere?" illustrate the connection between the external "splendid little wars" and positive assessments by mass consciousness of the state of affairs inside the country (Levada Center, 2016b, p. 33). The two most important peaks of positive assessments were recorded in August 2008 ("peace-enforcement of Georgia"), and after the annexation of the Crimea in March 2014.

State Cultural Policy

In December 2014, Putin approved *Foundations of the State Cultural Policy* (FSCP) decree. The document consists of 72 pages. The word "civilization" is mentioned in it 30 times. According to the authors of the document, Russia is a unique and authentic civilization, which reduces itself to neither "the West" nor "the East" (FSCP, 2015, p. 30). It is a bridge between the neighbors on "the left" and on "the right" (FSCP, 2015, p. 30). Civilizational authenticity is secured by means of transferring from generation to generation the traditional values, norms, mores, and patterns of the country's behavior (FSCP, 2015, pp. 26, 44). It is identified as a priority of the cultural and humanitarian development (FSCP, 2015, p. 9). At the same time, there was no space in the voluminous document to articulate the content of "civilizational authenticity" (FSCP, 2015, p. 3). The only exception was Russian mentality. Its main characteristic was a pronounced priority of the spiritual over material (FSCP, 2015, p. 31). The absence of any detailed description of the FSCP characteristics is evidence of the declarative nature of the document that presages a propaganda campaign for confrontation with the "other," specifically Western Europe and the United States.

Thus, a concise wording of the document's main thesis would be "Russia is not Europe" (Bershidsky, 2014). Although Putin has mentioned it many times in his speeches that Russia had civilizational differences with the West, according to Bershidsky (2014), the FSCP officially enshrined Russia's "rejection of the European path and of universal values such as democratic development and tolerance toward different cultures" (n.p.).

Three factors seem to come into play with respect to "Russia's non-European path" (Bershidsky, 2014). First of all, it is a quest for security from terrorist attacks, as well as from internal breakdown, and a perceived threat from the West. Secondly, it is Russia's sense of uniqueness with its growing rejection of Western values and the idea that "Russian civilization can develop along the lines of a limited federation of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus" (Johnson, 2014). Finally, it is an imbedded ideology growing out of Russia's vastness that centralized governance is necessary, accepted, and even preferred, which in turn contributes to greater police powers on the part of the state.

The Russian Economy

The central idea of the cultural program seems to be accurate–Russia is a separate civilization. This distinct civilization has survived over the course of its millennial history thanks to this identity. In the article *The Clash of Civilizations?* Samuel Huntington (1993) stated that when the Cold War ended and ideological division of Europe disappeared, the region became divided in a cultural way (p. 29). The division now was between Western Christianity, on the one hand, and Orthodox Christianity and Islam on the other (pp. 29-30) The important dividing line in Europe "may well be the eastern boundary of Western Christianity in the year 1500" (Huntington, 1993, p. 30). Thus, the peoples who live to the north and west of this line are either Protestants or Catholics. In the course of their history they went through the same stages as other Western European countries, i.e. feudalism, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the Industrial Revolution (Huntington, 1993, p. 30). They were also generally better off than those who lived to the east. Therefore, Huntington (1993) predicted that those peoples would "look forward to increasing involvement in a common European economy and to the consolidation of democratic political systems" (p. 30). The Orthodox and Muslim peoples to the east and south of the line "were only lightly touched by the shaping events in the rest of Europe; [were] generally less advanced economically; [and] seemed much less likely to develop stable political systems" (pp. 30-31). In full compliance with Huntington's logic, the three former Baltic republics of the Soviet Union focused on the integration with Europe, and "quickly evolved into genuine and, in many respects, liberal democracies" (Diamond, 2008, p. 190). The six republics with predominantly Muslim populations reverted to sultanic-like regimes with strong individual rulers. The six Orthodox republics proclaimed commitment to the principles of democracy on the forefront of the Perestroika euphoria; however, they did not manage to realize them consistently in practice. Eventually, with the exception of the Baltic States, all other former Soviet republics and "most prominently Russia … regressed from democratic possibilities or reestablished dictatorship without communism" (Diamond, 2008, p. 190).

The authors of FSCP, however, consider the cultural peculiarity of Russia as the guarantor of the Russian statehood stability and competitiveness (FSCP, 2015 p. 49). Official economic statistics, on the contrary, do not confirm the presence of such competitiveness. Modern Russia, just like the Soviet Union before it, suffers from what Larry Diamond (2008) called "the exceptional curse of oil" (p. 74). Already the economy of the Soviet Union after the discovery of the oil and gas fields in Western Siberia began to sweepingly acquire the structure characteristic of a petro-state. Therefore, it is not by accident that "the largest geopolitical catastrophe" of the 20th century started in 1985 after an almost six-fold drop in oil prices (Putin, 2005).

The modern Russian economy has been substantially dependent on oil prices as well. In the words of the program director of Moscow Carnegie Center Movchan (2017), in Russia in 2008 the correlation between the changes in oil prices made up between 90% and 95% of the changes in the GDP growth rate, the federal budget

income, and the size of reserves (p. 5). According to the Russian Ministry of Finance, in 2014, 35.4% of the federal budget revenue came directly from the export of petroleum. Value-added tax received from selling imported goods, most of which (92%) were paid for with the money received from exporting raw materials, made up additional 15% of the budget (Movchan, 2017, p. 7). Also, taxes, levies, and payments for natural resources equaled 20% of the budget, with excise and other duties on imported goods adding another 13%. Altogether, in 2014, "83.4% of the federal budget income was made up by the revenue from the extraction and export of raw materials" (Movchan, 2017, p. 7).

It would be a mistake to think that an increase in the general income of the Russian population occurred because the state managed to create a competitive industrial sphere. The increase should be first accounted for by the export of oil, the extraction of which makes up about 20% of the Russian GDP. Another factor explaining the increase in the income is the outpacing consumption growth, which is fueled by trade "blown out of proportions due to the huge petrodollars flow of import" (Movchan, 2017, p. 6). Citing the data of the Federal Service of State Statistics (Rosstat), Movchan (2017) indicated that by 2014 Russia was importing from 85% to 95% of production means, and from 50% to 70% of consumption goods (p. 6).

A growth in the income of the Russians during the 2000s did not contradict such a roll back as it was ensured mainly at the expense of the raw material rent. The latter, however, is threatened today not only by the unfavorable demand-supply situation but also by the deepening technological underrun. The methods of oil extraction used in Russia are inefficient from the point of view of oil recovery factor, which is on average 30% lower today than in the United States and is slowly decreasing, whereas in the United States it is slowly growing. The maximum possible extraction in Russia will decline and, according to some estimates, will dwindle at least two times by 2035 (Poddubny, 2011, pp. 85-103).

Russia's rejection of a planned economy and the shift to the market were supposed to promote the development of knowledge intensive branches of industry. In practice, however, the situation was reversed. According to the data of the Russian Machine-Building Portal (2013), for the last 20 years the production of processing units in Russia decreased almost 20 times: from 70,000 to 3,000. They assert that the decline should be attributed to the political events that led to the change in the country's economic set-up in the 1990s, which "made most of the machine-tool building enterprises in Russia bankrupt or put them on the verge of bankruptcy" (Machine-Building Portal, 2013).

Machine building, however, is the core of modern industry. It is impossible to create a modern economy without it. That is why the federal program National Technological Base adopted in 2006 and intended for the time frame of 2007-2011 was specifically earmarked to breathe new life into such an important branch of industry (Government, 2007). The program did not produce the expected outcome, and could not produce it. This is a direct consequence of Russia's inability to introduce quantitative changes into the economy by means of innovation. The situation was also aggravated by the brain drain from the country and the overall

low ranking of most Russian universities. According to a report by Russia's Committee of Civil Initiatives, human capital is actively leaving the country, and the "quality losses due to emigration that the domestic human capital is experiencing are significant and cannot be replenished at the expense of external resources" (Vorobieva & Grebeniuk, 2016, p. 25). Only between 2002 and 2011, 93,000 Russians with degrees emigrated from the Russian Federation (Vorobieva & Grebeniuk, 2016, p. 25). This process of washing out the most "educated, proactive and motivated" citizens continues (Abramov, 2016). Also, according to the 2017 ShanghaiRanking Academic Ranking of 500 world's top universities, Russia's best university (Lomonosov Moscow State University) ranked 93 (ARWU, 2017). Its second best higher education establishment, Saint Petersburg State University, found itself 400th (ARWU, 2017). Therefore, the absence of a competitive industrial sphere and the non-competitiveness of the Russian economy were not aided by government policy. Policies that isolate Russia from the world community of nations are counter-productive. Over-reliance on natural resources and military force are also misguided. Russia's government and leadership have been astute at capitalizing on traditional fears and mistrust of the other, strategies that have long been employed in Russia to its own detriment.

In April 1985, Gorbachev began Perestroika with "uskoreniye," which can be translated into English as "acceleration." The term refers to the initial stage of Gorbachev's reforms when the Soviet government was trying to expedite the social and economic development of the country, thus acknowledging that the USSR had been lagging behind the Western countries in that respect. The machine manufacturing industry was supposed to play the central role in the process of acceleration of the economic development, propelling a quick switch to totally new technologies. The outcome of the attempt was illustrated by the examples cited above. There is no quick fix and yet people are impatient. Russia's leadership has tended to opt for the expedient low hanging options over the hard work of human resource development and partnership building. Twenty-five years of the contemporary history of the Russian Federation reflects 25 years of accelerated de-industrialization. That is why the breakaway from the industrially developed countries is growing with every passing year.

Consolidation without "soft power"

The practice of consolidating periphery around the imperial core at the expense of redistribution of the natural resource rent is centuries-old. Let us consider the Soviet period. In her book *To Feed and to Govern: About Power in Russia in the 16th through 20th Centuries*, Tamara Kondratieva (2006) shows on numerous examples how beginning with the Middle Ages, when Russian feudal lords would give their noble servants lands "to feed" upon them, the concept of "feeding" emerged (p. 7). "Governing" the lands was secondary. Thus, according to the Russian historian Kluchevsky, in the Russian history the formation of power relationships happened in this order: first came feeding, then governing (Kondratieva, 2006, p. 7).

The tradition continued into the modern times when the new symbiotic formation of the party-state became the only owner of the country's riches and distributor of the material benefits. The "owner" determined his monopoly power at the individual level, in the first place, by means of distributing produce and manufactured goods depending on the social status, labor significance, and political orientation of citizens (Kondratieva, 2006). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the "feeding" practice transformed into purchasing the loyalty of the periphery with the help of natural resources by the imperial core. If purchasing the loyalty of its nearest neighbors was not feasible, Russia resorted to such pressuring means as direct threats and military interventions. Russia has to employ either of the options because it simply does not possess soft power, if one understands by it "getting others to want what you want" by means of "cultural attraction, ideology, and international institutions" (Nye, 1990, p. 167).

The diverse relations between Russia and its nearest neighbors are examples of different degrees of success and failure of the feeding/purchasing practice. Russia, for instance, was not able to hold the Baltic States in its sphere of influence by means of the pre-dosed "feeding." That is why the latter opted for NATO umbrella to retain their independence. In the cases of Ukraine and Georgia, the refusal to exchange one's loyalty for "feeding" resulted in Russia exercising military power to keep the former Soviet republics within its circle of influence.

The union state of Belarus and Russia may serve, however, as an example of efficiency of "feeding." Its history (founded on April 2, 1997) is first of all the history of oil and gas trade "wars" whose essence boils down to the struggle of political elites for the "fair" distribution of the resource rent. The last trade war, unprecedented with respect to its duration, had started in the summer of 2016 and ended only in April of 2017. The reason for noncompliance is self-explanatory. The drop in the world prices for energy supply considerably decreased the subsidizing abilities of the Russian budget. For Lukashenko, the head of the Belarusian state, the present level of subsidies means the loss of social and political stability in the country.

Although Russia is unable to recruit allies from its immediate circle with "soft power," it nevertheless aspires to "the world cultural expansion" (FSCP, 2015, p. 39). The official civilizational optimism recorded by FSCP finds neither understanding nor support from the majority of liberal-minded Russians. They call for reforming the state and its base institutions towards more inclusive, empowering democratic institutions and market economy. For instance, here are the suggestions of the politician and economist Yavlinsky (2017) that he enumerated in his article on the outcomes of the latest Gaidar Forum:

- changing the domestic and foreign policy, abolition of repressive laws, emancipation of mass media, and fence-mending with the nearest neighbors and the rest of the world;
- emancipation and encouragement of entrepreneurial initiative;

- creation of favorable institutional environment for business that would presuppose opportunities for business to legally and openly participate in the political life of the country;
- provision of maximally competitive environment in all spheres; and
- forming of the so-called "development institutes" whose task would be to encourage long-term investment, and using for this purpose the largest part of the state's rent income.

For Yavlinsky (2017), there is "overconcentration of power, [with] its non-transparency and irremovability, and the absence of political competition, checks and balances." All these obstacles turn the implementation of reforms into mission impossible.

One may, however, argue about the efficiency of such obvious suggestions. The overconcentration of the Russian power did not come from nowhere. As it was rightly noted by the historian Vladimir Buldakov (2007), power in Russia is "a derivative from the people's ideas about it" (p. 22). The way it is formed is difficult to grasp from the sociological point of view (Buldakov, 2007, p. 22). That is why any attempts at reforming the Russian state by virtue of direct impact on power are a priori doomed to failure.

Conclusion

On the one hand, in its domestic policy Russia puts a premium on the struggle for retaining traditional values, which is an unmistakable sign of the loss of the historical dynamics, i.e. change. Culture is not static. Russia's foreign policy, on the other hand, is anchored by control of its nearest neighbors. Having gone through the disintegration of the empire, the former imperial nation suffers from the wounded grandeur complex, which makes it an easy prey for politicians willing to draw the people in dangerous foreign policy enterprises. Being unable to exert "soft power" on the immediate neighbors, Russia compensates for it in two ways: by either purchasing the loyalty of the regimes ready to sacrifice part of their sovereignty in exchange for economic subsidies (Belarus, Armenia), or by the direct military interference (Georgia, Ukraine).

The idea of a super power has indeed proved to be much-in-demand for the masses. Therefore, one of the country's prospects is the continuation of the self-isolation policy (de facto or chosen), coupled with hybrid wars. This policy, however, limits Russia's potential for development by stifling the ingenuity of citizens' entrepreneurial spirit. Although it may help prolong the life of an imagined empire, in reality it does not contribute to Russia's greatness. Another choice for Russia could be the transformation into a liberal civilization, which will most probably demand a change in civilizational identity, as well as the acceptance of universal values such as respect for human rights and dignity, and so on. Time will show whether Russia will choose innovation over tradition, or vice versa; and whether it will attempt to join the "civilized world" yet again, or will continue to lead a wretched existence on the historic sidelines.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express her thanks to Mr. Siarhei Nikaliuk, Belarusian sociologist and expert of the Independent Institute of Social, Economic, and Political Studies, as well as to Dr. K. C. Morrison, Professor at the School of Public Policy and Administration, University of Delaware, and Dr. R. Kennedy, Professor Emeritus at the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, Georgia Institute of Technology and President of the Atlanta Council on International Relations, for their valuable advice and guidance in the process of preparing the given paper.

References

Abramov, D. (2016, October 6). Russia's Brain Drain Worse than Previously Believed – Report. *The Moscow Times.* Retrieved from https://themoscowtimes.com/news/russias-brain-drain-worse-than-previously-believed-report-55635

Akhiezer, A. (1995). Russia: Some Problems of Social and Cultural Dynamics. *Mir Rossii,* (1), 3-57.

Akhiezer, A., Klyamkin, I., & Yakovenko, I. (2013). *History of Russia: The End or a New Beginning?* Moscow, RF: Novoe Izdatelstvo.

Arms Control Association. (2002). U.S. Withdrawal from the ABM Treaty: President Bush's Remarks and U.S. Diplomatic Notes. Retrieved from https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2002_01-02/docjanfeb02

ARWU ShanghaiRanking. (2017, August 15). ShanghaiRanking: Academic Ranking of World Universities 2017 results announced. Retrieved from https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/news/shanghairanking-academic-ranking-world-universities-2017-results-announced

Bagdasaryan, V. E. (2010) Inversion of values of Russian "strifes" according to the theory of "pendulum of civilization". In A. O. Lapshin, P. P. Marchenya, I. A. Anfertiev, V. P. Buldakov, O. G. Bukhovets, S. V. Karpenko, … V. V. Shelokhaev (Eds.), *People and Power in Russian Strife* (pp. 61-70). Moscow, RF: Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Berdyaev, N. A. (2007). About the Ascendancy of Space over the Russian Soul. In N. A. Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Russia* (pp. 113-123). Moscow, RF: Eksmo.

Bershidsky, L. (2014, April 04). Putin's Rejection of the West, in Writing. Retrieved from https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2014-04-04/putin-s-rejection-of-the-west-in-writing

Buldakov, V. P. (2007). *Quo vadis? Crises in Russia: ways of rethinking.* Moscow, RF: Russian Political Encyclopedia (ROSSPEN).

Civic Impulse. (2017). H.R. 6393 – 114th Congress: Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017. Retrieved from https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr6393

Denhardt, R. B., & Denhardt, J. V. (2009). *Public Administration: An Action Orientation.* Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, Inc.

Diamond, L. (2008). *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to Build Free Societies throughout the World.* New York, NY: Times Books Henry Holt and Company, LLC.

Foundations of the State Cultural Policy (FSCP). (2015). Retrieved from http://mkrf.ru/upload/mkrf/mkdocs2016/OSNOVI-PRINT.NEW.indd.pdf

Gołota, M., & Wroński, T. P. (2009, March 31). Radosław Sikorski: Rosja w NATO? Czemu nie. *Gazeta Wyborcza.* Retrieved from http://wyborcza.pl/1,75398,6444989,Radoslaw_Sikorski__Rosja_w_NATO__Czemu_nie.html

Government of the Russian Federation. (2007, January 29). Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation #542007. About the Federal Special-Purpose Program "National Technological Base" for the Years of 2007-2011. Retrieved from http://base.garant.ru/190626/#friends

Gudkov, L. (2004). *Negative Identity. Articles 1997-2002.* Moscow, RF: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie.

Gudkov, L. (2016, December 28). A Short Novel about the Soviet Individual. *Vedomosti.* Retrieved from https://www.vedomosti.ru/opinion/articles/2016/12/28/671519-povest-o-sovetskom

Huntington, S. P. (1993). The Clash of Civilizations? *Foreign Affairs, 72*(3), 22-49.

Johnson, M. R. (2014, August 2). Russian Nationalism and Eurasianism. Retrieved from: https://syncreticstudies.com/2014/08/02/russian-nationalism-and-eurasianism-the-ideology-of-russian-regional-power-and-the-rejection-of-western-values/

Klyamkin, I. (2014, June 14). An Interview with Igor Klyamkin *Romanticization of War,* June 14, 2014). Retrieved from http://demset.org/f/showthread.php?t=9335

Kondratieva, T. (2006). *To Feed and to Govern: About Power in Russia from the 16th through 20th Centuries.* Moscow, RF: Russian Political Encyclopedia (ROSSPEN).

Lapkin, V., & Pantin, V. (2007). Dynamics of the Image of Russia and Cycles of Reforms/Counter-reforms. *Neprikosnovenny Zapas, 1*(51), 1-4.

Levada Center. (2016a, January 12). Power and Society. Retrieved from http://www.levada.ru/2016/12/12/vlast-i-obshhestvo/

Levada Center. (2016b). *Public Opinion – 2015.* Moscow, RF: Levada-Center.

Machine-Building Portal. (2013, September 18). Retrieved from http://www.mashportal.ru/machinery_russia-31956.aspx

Mirkin, Y. (2017, April 24). Republic – Got off the oil curse? An answer to Medvedev persuading of the opposite. *The Institute of World Economy and International Relations* (*IMEMO*). Retrieved from http://telegra.ph/Republic---Slezli-s-neftyanoj-igly-Otvet-Medvedevu-ubezhdayushchij-v-obratnom-04-24

Movchan, A. (2017). *Fast Facts: The Russian Economy in 2017.* Moscow, RF: Moscow Carnegie Center.

Nye, J. S., Jr. (1990). Soft Power. *Foreign Policy*, (80), 153-171.
Poddubny, Y. A. (2011). EOR – Frustrated Hopes. Area for Further Actions. *Oil. Gas. Innovations*, *7*(7), 85-103.
Putin, V. V. (2005, April 25). Address of the President to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. Retrieved from https://rg.ru/2005/04/25/poslanie-text.html
Putin, V. V. (2007, February 10). The Speech and Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy. Retrieved from http://special.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034
Putin, V. V. (2014, March 18). Address of the President of the Russian Federation. Retrieved from http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603
Rogozin, D. (2009, April 2). Rogozin: Russia does not reject a possibility of its integration in NATO in future. Retrieved from http://www.interfax.ru/russia/71932
Schwartz, P. (2002). Europe reacts nervously to Bush's State of the Union speech. Retrieved from http://intsse.com/wswspdf/en/articles/2002/02/euro-f01.pdf
Scimia, E. (2017, February 10). Can Russia project power while battered by economic woes? Retrieved from http://www.atimes.com/can-russia-project-power-battered-economic-woes/?platform=hootsuite
Simon, H. A. (1956). Rational Choice and the Structure of the Environment. *Psychology Review*, *63*(2), 129-138.
Vorobieva, O. D., & Grebeniuk, A. A. (2016). *Analytical Report: Emigration from Russia at the End of the 20th and the Beginning of the 21st Century, Civic Initiatives Committee*. Retrieved from https://komitetgi.ru/analytics/2977/
Yavlinsky, G. (2017, January 16). The economy of the periphery, or Wind in the pockets. Retrieved from http://www.yabloko.ru/blog/2017/01/16_0

Journal of Global Initiatives
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp. 84-103.

Russia and Its Neighbors: A Geopolitical GIS-Mapping of the Ukrainian Situation before the Current Conflict

Michele Pigliucci

Abstract

Within the context of a new Cold War between the Western powers and Russia, one of the most dangerous hot spots is Ukraine. Since 2014, in fact, the Ukrainian army has been engaged in a civil war against Russian-backed troops of self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk Republics. This crisis appears as a new geopolitical tool both for Russia and for the United States: for the former, in order to contain NATO expansion, for the latter, in order to counteract Russian influence and to open the way for U.S. liquefied natural gas exports in Europe, reducing European energy dependence on Russia (Chornii, 2015; Marples, 2016). The Ukrainian position is strategic: it is one of the main transit routes of Russian natural gas to European countries, with three main pipeline corridors. Knowledge of Ukraine's geographic situation is needed in order to better understand the evolving crisis in the region.

Introduction

This article maps various data with a GIS tool, in order to point out social and political factors underpinning the crisis. It highlights the deep differences between Western and Eastern regions of the country in the following aspects: economic differences, which will be described using macro-economic indicators in a regional-scaled map; demographic differences, which will be described through a regional-scaled map of population distribution by native language, in order to better highlight the role of Russia's influence in national identity; and political differences, which will be shown by mapping the 2010 presidential election results (the last vote before the crisis) in order to highlight the split among the Ukrainian people in the choice between European or Russian spheres of influence. By combining various data, we propose an "instability factor," namely an index composed of the elements with highest risk factor in the crisis. Through the "instability factor," a regional-scaled map will highlight the Ukrainian regions with the highest risk for an escalation of the Donbas crisis (Kulyk, 2016).

The Ukrainian Crisis (2014 to present)

For the past three years, the NATO-backed Ukrainian army has faced a civil war

against Russian-backed troops of the self-proclaimed People's Republic of Donetsk (RPD) and People's Republic of Luhansk (RPL) (Nicolai, 2017). Overshadowed by a more spectacular Syrian civil war, the Ukrainian war is almost ignored by mainstream media, despite its importance and risk, especially for the European Union (Gaiani, 2014; Sceresini & Giroffi, 2015).

The current crisis erupted during the winter 2013-14, when violent clashes exploded in Kiev following Yanukovych's decision to halt the country's process of integration with the European Union. The growing clashes forced Yanukovych to leave the country (de Ploeg, 2017). Following his flight, a new government took power whose first act was the proposal to repeal the bilingualism law that recognized Russian as an official language of Ukraine (На Украине отменили закон… 2014; White, Feklyunia, 2014). In this way, the "Euromaidan" forces seemed to have the intention to exclude the Russian-speaking population, which was interpreted as a hostile act against the part of Ukrainian people who speak Russian as their first language (Dubin, 2017. cfr. Bocale, 2016).

During February 2014, armed people, pretending to be popular militia occupied regional government buildings in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and replaced the Ukrainian flag with the Russian one (Marxsen, 2014). On March 16, 2014, following a controversial ballot, the Russian Federation intruded and annexed Crimea. Russian-speaking rebels in the Eastern regions of Donec basin followed a similar path. In May 2014, Regional Administration buildings were occupied and self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) and Luhansk People's Republic (LPR) were established, following a referendum, while in Odessa, far-right Ukrainian protesters occupied the Trade Unions house, setting the building on fire and killing 46 pro-Russian people and injuring more than 200 (Hyde & Rudenko, 2014).

In May 2014, Yulia Tymoshenko and Petro Poroshenko faced off in a presidential election, the latter won collecting 54.7% votes, but Crimea and Donec basin population had not the chance to vote because of the crisis. One of the first acts of the newly elected President Poroshenko was to sign again an association agreement between Ukraine and the European Union, overriding the Yanukovych decision.

On the 5th of February 2015, People's Council members of the People's Republic of Donetsk issued a memorandum from which it is possible to find some elements that enable a better understanding of the aims of the self-proclaimed state. The document titled "Memorandum of Donetsk People's Republic on the principles of state-building, political and historical continuity" reads, in part, as follows:

> *We, members of the People's Council of Donetsk People's Republic of the first convocation, elected by universal democratic and free elections on November 2, 2014, taking into account the principles of international law, embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, proclaim the Memorandum on the principles of state-building, political and historical continuity. Based on the will of the people of Donbass, expressed in the referendum of May 11, 2014, in the Act of the proclamation of state*

> *independence of Donetsk People's Republic, the Declaration of Sovereignty of the Donetsk People's Republic from April 7, 2014, understanding of the need for the progressive development of law-making and state-building process, we affirm the historical connection of the state formations of the Donetsk-Krivoy Rog Republic and Donetsk People's Republic (...).*
>
> *We, members of the People's Council of Donetsk People's Republic, recognizing our responsibility to the past and paving the way to the future:*
>
> *- declare the continuation of the traditions of Donetsk-Krivoy Rog Republic and declare that the state of Donetsk People's Republic is its successor;*
>
> *- call for cooperation and uniting efforts to build a federal state on a voluntary contractual bases of all the territories and lands, that were part of Donetsk-Krivoy Rog Republic.* (Donetsk Republic Memorandum…, 2015).

Donetsk-Krivoy Rog Republic (DKR) was a Republic founded in February 1918 by the IV Congress of Soviets of the Donetsk-Krivoy Rog basin, following the Russian Revolution (Донецко-Криворожская советская республика… 1969-1978). The Republic comprised of the territories of Kharkov, Dnepropetrovsk, Kherson, Odessa, Nikolaev, Crimea, and Don Host *oblast (область*). According to DPR and LPR memorandum, Donetsk-Krivoy Rog Republic never formally ceased to exist, despite the German occupation, war, and other social disasters, and "its ideas lived on in the hearts and souls of millions of people" (Donetsk Republic Memorandum…, 2015).

By solemnly affirming the historical continuity of DPR with the Soviet Republic of Donetsk-Krivoy Rog, a state created in February 1918 in order to integrate Donec e Krivoy Rog river basins, representatives of self-proclaimed Donbas Republics confirmed their wishes to extend control over the entire territory of the former Soviet Republic. A similar press release, published on 6th of April 2015 on a Russian website, claimed the reconstitution of Odessa Soviet Republic, a state proclaimed in 1918, then occupied by Germany until the end of the war. Such press releases had no concrete results but are useful to understand pro-Russian projects in the Ukrainian civil war.

This article aims at analyzing geographical elements of Ukraine's territory, in order to provide evidence related to the geopolitical situation of the country, studying critical elements and foreseeing potential consequences. The point is to highlight geographical elements useful to predict potential spread of conflict in other regions of the country.

Since "geography matters" (Massey & Allen, 1984), knowledge of territory is needed for every geopolitical analysis, in order to counteract the so-called "geographic banalization," namely the loss of geographical knowledge due to popularly available information tools (Borruso, 2010, p. 243). Without geographical knowledge, it is impossible to understand geopolitical issues (Battisti, 2002). Geopolitics is the "dynamic stage" of political geography (Massi, 1931), and

requires deep analysis of mapping (Boria, 2007; Boria, 2008) varied complex factors within and across territories, in order to understand the relationships among economic, social, and political data.

Ukraine and the Energy Market

Ukraine is a key territory both for the European Union and for Russia. Due to its geographical position, Ukraine is a transition area for natural gas supply coming from Russia towards Europe (Semenenko, 2015). European import of hydrocarbons from Russia represents 39.3% of the total for natural gas, 33.5% for oil, as well as 6% of total European energy consumption (Eurostat, *data*, 2013). The European Union is the main export market for Russian natural gas, with an export of 161.5 billion cubic meters (bcm) (Gazprom, *export data*, 2013). The whole hydrocarbons market is 15% of the Russian Federation's GDP (World Bank Group, *data*, 2013).

Figure 1. Ukraine Territory, with main cities and Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) Zone. Source: created by author.

The European Union, mainly pushed by former Warsaw Pact states, has, for many years, tried to reduce energy dependence from Russia and to break free from the supply control that serves as a Russian pressure tool on European national governments.[1] The strategy of Gazprom, a Russian state-controlled company for natural gas mining and distribution, is the use of prices as a control tool on former

[1] Mainly Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania.

Warsaw Pact states. This strategy became evident during the crisis between Russia and Ukraine, in the winter 2008-09, when Gazprom used natural gas supply (as well as threats to block it) to stop the leaning of Ukraine towards the European Union and NATO (Kandiyoti, 2015).

During the winter 2013-14, when the current crisis started, price policy was openly used to sustain or to counteract policies of the Ukrainian government. In November 2013, after Yanukovych stopped the process of association and free trade with the European Union, Gazprom implemented a radical cut of hydrocarbons prices to Ukraine. In the same way, in February 2014, after Yanukovych escaped from the country, Gazprom punished the "Euromaidan" *coup d'état* by raising prices by 81%.[2]

A dense pipeline network (Figure 2) shows how all the natural gas and oil exported from Russia to Europe passes through two hubs: Ukraine and the Baltic Sea. The Nord Stream Pipeline runs through the Baltic bypassing Poland to reach Germany. The Belarus branch of pipeline passes through Ukrainian territory before reaching Europe, thus dependent on the relationship between Kiev and Moscow. Market access for the main Russian state-company depends on stability and capacity of these two hubs.

Instability in Ukraine has pushed Russia to try to open new paths for pipelines with three main projects. These are: (a) Nord Stream 2 project against which former Warsaw Pact countries are protesting and that would expand pipeline capacity from 33 bcm to 55 bcm; (b) South Stream projected pipeline that would bypass Ukraine from the south passing through the Black Sea with a 63 bcm flow (hindered by European Union); and (c) Turkish Stream pipeline that would pass through Turkey and whose completion closely depends on many factors such as the Syrian crisis, instability of Turkish regime, and difficult relations between Ankara and the European Union (Paolini, 2014). The issue of building a new pipeline bypassing Ukraine involves many European countries, like the former Warsaw Pact states, which are trying to halt new pipeline projects from Russia in order to avoid Moscow cutting off the Kiev gas market. Western countries are also trying to take advantage of every opportunity to improve their national energy security.

A real arm wrestling match took place in the European Union among Italy (pushing for the building of South Stream, in which Italian State-company ENI is involved), Germany (aiming to reach the goal of doubling Nord Stream Pipeline), and Greece (interested in the Turkish Stream project). In the middle, former Warsaw Pact European countries, led by Poland, pushed the European Union to enforce anti-trust rules against every new Gazprom project (De Maio, 2016a). In February 2015, the European Commission approved an Energy Union Strategy, following pressure from some Eastern-European countries, a project aimed at finding a long-term strategy to "free" European Union from Russian dependence. Until now, the result of this competition was the halting of the South Stream project,

[2] The issue of Ukraine purchase of Russian gas has its roots in 1991. Being in Russian sphere of influence, Ukraine have paid below-market prices until the 2014 crisis. Still today, buying Russian gas for Ukraine is quite a bit cheaper than many other energy sources. During 2009 gas crisis, Gazprom accused Ukraine government of stealing gas from transit supplies.

while North Stream 2 and Turkish Stream still remain on the table.

Figure 2. European pipeline network. Source: International Energy Agency, 2014.

In some sense, persistent opposition coming from the European Union to any new pipeline project–and in particular from former Warsaw Pact states, wishful to preserve the strategic centrality of Kiev–prevents any reduction of energy traffic concentration in the Belarus-Ukrainian region. Since any loosening of European dependence from Russian gas looks a long way off, Ukraine remains the main traffic hub, as well as a geopolitical tension hub. The United States and Eastern European countries are trying to pull Ukraine to the European side where the entry of Ukraine into the European Union would extend the European rules on energy and open the road to liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports from the United States, hence loosening the ties through which Europe remains linked to Russia. When visiting European countries in March 2014, President Obama aimed to propose the United States as an alternative supplier for European energy needs, in order to "free" Europe from dependence on Russia (European leaders ask…, 2014). This is the only concrete project aimed to weaken European energy dependence on Russia, but it is still far from realization (cfr. Youngs, 2009).

On the other side, Russia is trying to keep Kiev in its sphere of influence in order to maintain control of a large part of gas and oil trade with Europe, especially since Europe is trying to halt the pipeline projects coming from Russia that bypass Ukraine. In the meantime, the Ukrainian war is seriously affecting the gas trade, harming Ukraine's economy, stressed by a fast-growing public debt. According to President Poroshenko's speech in the U.N. assembly (September 2015), the total amount of war costs for Ukraine is close to $5 million per day. Not just Kiev but also Moscow is affected by these significant losses. Gazprom energy exports are often halted due to sanctions imposed by the United States and allies following Crimea's occupation. However, Ukraine's civil war is not just related to energy.

There are other geographic, political, economic, and linguistic reasons that need to be understood and taken into account. Territory is never a neutral factor in such a geopolitical crisis and it is impossible to understand the Ukrainian situation without knowing more about its territorial background. For this reason, we need to focus the analysis at the regional scale, in order to give place-based evidence to a complex situation.

The Ukrainian Situation before the 2014 Crisis

Ukrainian war mainly concentrate within the territory of the Donec basin, straddling Donetsk and Luhansk *oblast*, a territory now partly controlled by the self-proclaimed RPD and RPL. The Ukrainian government does not recognize neither the republics nor the *de facto* annexation of Crimea to the Russian Federation. Kiev calls these territories Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) zone. The zone encompasses around 7.5% of national territory (Crimea included), i.e., around 45,000 km^2 on an over 600,000 km^2 national area (Figure 1).

Ukrainian territory is composed of 24 *oblast* – an administrative regional level corresponding to NUTS 2 level[3] – two cities with special status (Kiev and Sevastopol) and the autonomous Republic of Crimea.[4] By analyzing census 2001 data, the last available before the crisis, it is possible to observe that the economic reality of various *oblast* is deeply unequal.[5] There are many differences amongst regions. The first indicator chosen in this research is the regional GDP per capita. By mapping this, it is possible to see that regional GDP per capita of Eastern *oblast* is up to three time larger than Western ones, with 13,228 hryvnias produced in Chernivtsi against 42,068 hryvnias in Dnipropetrovsk (Figure 3).[6] Eastern *oblast* have an industrial infrastructure specialized in iron metallurgy and coal mining.

---

[3] The nomenclature of territorial units for statistics, abbreviated NUTS (from the French version Nomenclature des Unités territoriales statistiques) is a geographical nomenclature that subdivide the territory of European Union at three different levels (NUTS 1, 2, and 3, from larger to smaller).

[4] For a better readability, in the maps realized for this paper, the Kiev data were merged to the Kiev *oblast* data, while Sevastopol data were merged to Autonomous Republic of Crimea data.

[5] Except where differently specified, all the data of this analysis are referred to 2001 census. http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/. The aim is to highlight situation of the country before crisis.

[6] U.S. dollar to Ukrainian hryvnia rate is 1=26.9400 (March 2017). 13.228 hryvnias is equivalent to around $491, while 42.068 hryvnias is equivalent to around 1.561€. State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2011.

Figure 3. Regional GDP per capita in hryvnias, 2011. Source: Created by author based on State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2011.

Economic differences among regions are really deep, and they are reflected on average wages: people living in Eastern countries earn on average $100-120 more than Western countries. The gap between Donetsk *oblast* and Ternopol *oblast* reach $164 average, showing a situation of dependence of poor regions on richest ones, whose economy is based mainly on mines and natural resources.

There are also many other differences in population distribution in the *oblast*. According to census questions related to mother tongue, a very significant share of the population uses Russian language, and not Ukrainian in the home. It is helpful to plot this data in a regional map (Figure 5) in order to better understand the distribution of this population. The Russian-speaking people are mainly located in Eastern *oblast* and in a coastal strip from Black Sea to Odessa (where it exceeds 40% of total population), while the Ukrainian-speaking population is mainly distributed in the Western and central regions. In addition, urban population distribution is unequal, with a distribution similar to that of mother tongue: of nine total cities with more than 500,000 people, seven are in the Eastern side, while in Western *oblast* there are just Kiev and L'viv. Therefore, by looking at the maps, we can evaluate deep differences–economic, social, demographic–between the Eastern and Western Ukrainian regions. The Eastern *oblast* are on average much richer, more urbanized, and with higher percentage of Russian-speaking population than the Western ones (Corsale, 2016).

Figure 4. Salaries per region in USD, 2013. Source: (И все развалилось… 2014)

Another major difference is related to political beliefs and ideology. The last Ukrainian presidential elections before the crisis were held in two rounds in 2010: the first round on 17th January, and the second round on 7th February. Eighteen candidates competed, but the biggest competition was between Russian-backed Viktor Yanukovych and UE-backed Yulia Tymošenko, the representative of Orange Revolution movement, which led to the government of Viktor Juščenko in 2005.

Figure 5. Russian-speaking people in percentage, 2001. Source: Created by author based on Census data, 2001.

Figure 6. Percentage votes for Yanukovych, first round presidential election, 17th January 2010. Source: Created by author based on election results, 2010.

By analyzing the results of this election before the crisis, it is possible to better understand the political differences within the Ukrainian population. In fact, this data shows the power of two influential spheres, a Russian one and European one, on a population deeply divided. During the last few years, debating policies of European Union integration represented one of the main reasons for political discord between supporters of a Ukraine closer to Europe, and defenders of the traditional position of the country, as a Russia strategic ally since the falling of the Berlin wall. Through territorialization of electoral data from these first and second rounds, it is possible to determine the distribution of supporters of the two factions, and then compare the results with socioeconomic and demographic elements.

The economic and linguistic data we observed between Western and Eastern *oblast* is mostly reflected in electoral results. Russian-backed Yanukovych became president thanks to votes collected in the Eastern Russian-speaking *oblast*. Despite the high number of candidates in some Eastern *oblast*, Yanukovych collected more than 50% of votes already in the first round, exceeding 70% in Donetsk and Luhansk, and 60% in Crimea (Figure 6). The same pattern for Yulia Tymošenko, whose votes were collected for the most part in Western and Northern *oblast*, exceeding 50% in Volyn *oblast* (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Percentage votes for Tymošenko, first round presidential election, 17th January 2010. Source: Created by author based on election results, 2010.

During the second round, this difference became more evident: Yanukovych, the pro-Russian candidate (winning with a difference slightly lower than 900,000 votes), dominated in all the Eastern regions, while his rival exceeded half of all votes in all Western regions (Figure 8). It is possible to read the vote for Yanukovych as a vote for a Russian sphere of influence: following the 2004 Orange Revolution, the issue of pursuing pro-European or pro-Russian policies strongly influenced the 2010 election campaign, representing the real dividing line amongst candidates.

Figure 8. Distribution of votes for second round candidates, presidential elections, February 7, 2010. Source: Created by author based on election results, 2010.

Votes for Yanukovych mainly came from Russian-speaking population, while competitor votes came from the Ukrainian-speaking population. In this case, on a quick analysis, the results would appear to be based on ethnicity, or on a linguistic-based preference reflected in political results. Nevertheless, by comparing the presidential election results with the Russian-speaking population data, it is possible to discover a different situation: only in Donetsk, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhya regions did votes for Yanukovych almost perfectly overlap with Russian-speaking data, while within the other *oblast* this is not the case. In Crimea, the future president collected a percentage of votes 15% lower than the Russian-speaking population percentage; within Kiev region, this difference was 10%, while in other *oblast* Yanukovych votes far outnumbered the Russian-speaking population (+22% in Mykolayiv, +25% in Kirovohrad, even +27% in Western Transcarpathia, on the

border with Moldavia). Yanukovych was elected because of this perhaps unexpected support. This is a sign of the penetration power of Russian influence in Ukrainian-speaking population, and of the general complexity of this political situation (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Percentage difference between Yanukovych votes and Russian-speaking population. Source: Created by author based on Ukraine Census data (2001) and election results, 2010.

The Instability Factor

Through cartographic place evidence, it is possible to highlight some aspects of Ukrainian regional situation before the "Euromaidan" crisis. Maps show a complex situation, with deep social, economic, and linguistic differences. The portrayal of Ukraine as a country with a Europhile population forced under the energetic geopolitical pressure of Russia does not fully describe the greater geographical complexity of the region. Through a set of data indicators, it is possible to highlight some factors of greater influence on this crisis, and useful to understand possible future scenarios.

Starting from analyzed territorial data, it is possible to generate a synthetic index called the "instability factor," which aims to summarize the major indicators that lead and sustain the current political crisis: linguistic composition of population; Russian-speaking population distribution; Russian political influence (counted by percentage of Yanukovych votes in the presidential elections); and economic disparity, counted by regional GDP per capita, which often accompanies

political tensions.

The formula for this index is the mathematical sum of the selected indicators, expressed in percentage: the Russian-speaking population according to 2001 census; the result of Yanukovych votes in the last presidential election before the crisis (2010); and the regional share of GDP per capita (2011). The author decided not to weight differently these indicators in this analysis considering them a simple vector of loss of stability in the field of this geopolitical context. Please find the composite scores listed alphabetically below by *oblast* from a scale of (64) to (281).

Table 1: *Instability Factor by* Oblast *in the Region*

Oblast name	Instability Factor
Autonomous Republic of Crimea	208
Cherkasy *Oblast*	98
Chernihiv *Oblast*	98
Chernivtsi *Oblast*	71
Dnipropetrovs'k *Oblast*	221
Donetsk *Oblast*	279
Ivano-Frankivs'k *Oblast*	75
Kharkiv *Oblast*	193
Kherson *Oblast*	281
Khmel'nyts'kyy *Oblast*	80
Kiev *Oblast*	255
Kirovohrad *Oblast*	107
Luhansk *Oblast*	228
L'viv *Oblast*	81
Mykolayiv *Oblast*	163
Odessa *Oblast*	183
Poltava *Oblast*	158
Rivne *Oblast*	74
Sumy *Oblast*	104
Ternopil' *Oblast*	64
Transcarpathia *Oblast*	83
Vinnytsya *Oblast*	82
Volyn *Oblast*	72
Zaporizhzhya *Oblast*	196
Zhytomyr *Oblast*	91

Source: Created by author based on Ukraine Census data (2001), State Statistics Service of Ukraine ,2001 and election results, 2010.

The data are collected from the Election results, 2001 State Census, and State Statistics Service of Ukraine, before the deep changes brought by the current crisis, and aims to give evidence to territorial elements on a regional basis. Through this tool it is possible to understand which territories presented significant critical elements before the war and consequently which territories are permeable to an

eventual spread of conflict. The higher factor means a greater risk for the region to be affected by an eventual spread of the crisis due to the presence of these main elements at the outset of the current war.

Figure 10. Instability factor. Source: Created by author based on Ukraine Census data (2001), State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2011 and election results, 2010.

A regional map of this factor allows us to understand how deep are the differences in Ukrainian regions; furthermore, through the instability factor, it is possible to foresee the potential spread of the current crisis particularly to Dnipropetrovsk and Kherson *oblast* where the index exceeds 200, reaching the same level as Donetsk, Luhansk, and Crimea regions (Figure 10).

Conclusion

The instability factor is useful to understand the major factors on which the Ukrainian crisis and civil war are based, and their diffusion in the region. The goal of this research is to identify trends that help to understand, examine, and foresee the eventual evolution of crisis. This index highlights how risk zone interests encompass all Eastern regions and the whole coastal strip of the Black Sea from Mariupol to Odessa region.

This analysis shows that in case of the spread of civil war, these *oblast* would be more permeable to secessionist pro-Russian agenda with the aim to connect Russia to the Odessa region. Such an eventual *de facto* annexation of the coastal strip–similar to what happened in Donbas–would cut off Kiev from the Black Sea,

letting rebels to link with Republic of Moldova. In Moldova, a strong pro-Russian movement is pushing the country to strengthen ties with Moscow. In the end of 2016, Igor Dodon, a pro-Russian leader, won the presidential elections in Moldova. His first act as a new president was to remove the European flag from the presidential building. In this context, the target of a self-proclaimed Republic to be recognized as a renewed historical Donetsk-Krivoy Rog Republic, as written in the statement published in 2015, indicate a new purpose: to promote the ties between Russia and Europe, cutting off Ukraine from its current position as an energy hub. In the case of a coastal alliance between Russia and Moldova, Gazprom's new pipeline would easily reach Europe bypassing Ukraine and diminishing its central role in the European energy supply. However, access to the pipeline is crucial for maintaining the entire Ukrainian economic system, its loss having catastrophic consequences for Ukraine (Fasola, 2016).

The geopolitical situation of Ukraine is quite different from the previous Cold War confrontations (cfr. Wilson, 2016). In this case, the likely direct involvement of Russian soldiers in fighting, as well as the not-so-secret involvement of U.S. intelligence forces in backing Ukrainian Army against DPR and LPR forces, appear as evidence for increased possibility of direct conflict [7]. The energy issue is an economic tool used to strengthen or weaken the ties between former Soviet Republics–like Ukraine–and Europe or Russia. The main issue for the United States is a kind of a new "Reagan Doctrine": according to this, the United States is directly involved in regime change actions in the key-countries for Russian economy, such as Ukraine (Szporluk, 2000). Destabilization of pro-Russian regimes and support to anti-Russian movements are crucial actions that are part of strategy in counteracting Russia's attempts to expand influence (cfr. Khrushcheva, Maltby, 2015).[8]

Similarly, the main issue for Russia is to keep Ukraine out from Euro-U.S. influence, in order to avoid NATO to reach its borders. For Moscow, selling natural gas is the best way to keep countries tied to Russian influence, taking advantage of their growing energy needs. In this sense, Ukraine's key position in the pipeline network is the main reason for Russia to keep control on Kiev. The Russian economy depends on energy sales to Europe, and Moscow can't risk being cut off from Europe by an anti-Russian regime, at least until new pipelines are built.

It is really hard to foresee how this conflict will be solved. Since 2014, Russian-backed forces are fighting against regular and irregular Ukrainian troops, in an exhausting and bloody war.[9] Through the analysis of this article, what is possible to

---

[7] Proof of the direct involvement of Russian soldiers are in the events of capture of some of them by Ukrainian authorities on battleground. (Captured Russian troops… 2014; cfr. Harris, Dreazen, 2014)

[8] The direct involvement of the U.S. government in Ukraine crisis is proved by several sources. The idea of a new "Reagan Doctrine" is a reading of author, based on these sources. (Интересы РФ и США…2014: interview of George Friedman, CEO of Stratfor, calling the overthrow of Yanukovych the "most blatant coup in history"); (Kaylan, 2014; Ukraine crisis… 2014: transcription of leaked Nuland-Pyatt call); Milne S., 2014.

[9] According to VoaNews, United Nations estimates around 10,000 people have been killed and around 23,500 injured since 2014 to July 2017. (OHCHR: Deaths… 2017).

forecast is the possibility of a macro regional spread of the violence, and the potential involvement of certain regions in the operation, due to high levels of the instability factor. However, the instability factor could also be used to develop targeted policies in order to prevent this spread by intervening on economic, social, and cultural elements. For example, establishing policies that provide greater autonomy to Russian-speaking regions and develop proper laws for the protection and adequate representation of minorities, while also introducing measures to reduce economic disparities including autonomous energy policies for Ukraine with regards to both the European Union and Russia, could effectively mitigate against the spread of the crisis. In conclusion, geography matters, in Ukraine such as everywhere: the deeper the knowledge of the real situation of a country, through territorialized regional-scaled data, the deeper will be the understanding of real differences in territories and related problems, and the stronger will be the preventive action of national and international policy and decision makers.

References

И все развалилось: раскол Украины по экономическому признаку (важный текст) (2014). Retrieved from https://sputnikipogrom.com/russia/ua/8659/everything-is-annihilated/.

«Интересы РФ и США в отношении Украины несовместимы друг с другом» (2014). Retrieved from https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2636177.

На Украине отменили закон о региональном статусе русского язык (2014). Retrieved from https://lenta.ru/news/2014/02/23/language/

Донецко-Криворожская советская республика, Большая советская энциклопедия (1969-1978). Retrived from https://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/bse/85472/%D0%94%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%86%D0%BA%D0%BE

Battisti, G. (2002). *Un pianeta diviso. Contributi alla geografia dei popoli e dei confini*. Trieste, Italy: Università degli studi di Trieste.

Bocale, P. (2016). Trends and issues in language policy and language education in Crimea. *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, *58*(1), 3-22. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00085006.2015.1130253

Boria, E. (2007). *Cartografia e potere*. Torino, Italy: UTET.

Boria, E. (2008). Geopolitical Maps: A Sketch History of a Neglected Trend in Cartography. *Geopolitics*, *13*(2), 278-308.

Borruso, G. (2010). La 'Nuova Cartografia' creata dagli utenti. Problemi, prospettive, scenari. *Bollettino dell'Associazione Italiana di Cartografia*, (138), 241-252.

Boussena, S., & Locatelli, C. (2013). Energy institutional and organisational changes in EU and Russia: Revisiting gas relations. *Energy Policy*, *55*, 180–189.

Captured Russian troops 'in Ukraine by accident', 2014. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28934213

Chornii, N. (2015). EU energy security in the context of The Russian Federation's

change in energy strategy: the geopolitical aspect. *Przeglad Politologiczny*, (3). doi: 10.14746/pp.2015.20.3.12

Corsale, A. (2016). *Geografia delle minoranze tra Baltico e Mar Nero*. Rome, Italy: Franco Angeli.

De Maio, G. (2016). A tale of two countries: Italy, Germany, and Russian Gas. *U.S.-Europe Working Paper*, Center on the United States and Europe. Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/fp_20160818_demaio_tale_of_two_countrie.pdf

de Ploeg, Chris Kaspar (2017). *Ukraine in the Crossfire*. Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press.

Donetsk Republic Memorandum declares state continuity with Donetsk - Krivoy Rog Republic (2015) Retrieved from http://www.fort-russ.com/2015/02/donetsk-republic-memorandum-declares.html

Dubin, B. V. (2017). Ukrainian protest: On the eve, during, and after (a sociologist's view). *Russian Social Science Review*, *58*(2-3), 252-261. doi: 10.1080/10611428.2017.1316076

European leaders ask Obama to allow increased exports of US shale gas (2014), The Guardian. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/26/europe-asks-obama-increased-exports-shale-gas

Eurostat (2013), *data*. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat

Fasola, N. (2016). Moldavia: geopolitica delle elezioni presidenziali. *Pecob. Portal on Central Eastern and Balkan Europe*. Retrieved from http://www.pecob.eu.

Gaiani, G. (2014). Il mosaico dei vinti: viaggio nella guerra del Donbas. *Limes*, *12*, 71-82.

Gazprom (2013). *Export Data*. Retrieved from http://www.gazpromexport.ru/en/about/activity/

Harris, S., Dreazen Y. (2014). U.S. Intel Sources: Russian Invasion of Eastern Ukraine Increasingly Likely. *Foreign Policy*, Retrieved from http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/03/27/u-s-intel-sources-russian-invasion-of-eastern-ukraine-increasingly-likely/.

Hyde, L., & Rudenko O. (2014, May 7). Odessa: Who is to blame for 46 Odessa deaths? *Kyiv Post.* Retrieved from https://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/odessa-who-is-to-blame-for-46-odessa-deaths-346817.html

Kaylan M. (2014). *Why CIA Director Brennan Visited Kiev: In Ukraine The Covert War Has Begun*, Forbes. Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/melikkaylan/2014/04/16/why-cia-director-brennan-visited-kiev-in-ukraine-the-covert-war-has-begun/#68d3545410cb

Kandiyoti, R. (2015). Natural Gas as a Political Weapon? Powering Europe: Russia, Ukraine, and the Energy Squeeze. In C. Dupont &S. Oberthür (Eds.), *Decarbonization in the European Union* (pp. 49-65). London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.

Khrushcheva, O., & Maltby, T. (2015). Evolutions and Revolutions in EU-Russia Energy Relations. In C. Dupont & S. Oberthür (Eds.), *Decarbonization in the*

European Union (pp. 201-221). London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.
Kulyk, V. (2016). National Identity in Ukraine: Impact of Euromaidan and the War. *Europe-Asia Studies*, *68*(4), 588-608. doi: 10.1080/09668136.2016.1174980
Marples, D. R. (2016). Russia's perceptions of Ukraine: Euromaidan and historical conflicts. *European Politics and Society*, *17*(4), 424-437. doi: 10.1080/23745118.2016.1154129
Marxsen, C. (2014). The Crimea Crisis. *Zeitschrift für ausländisches öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht*, *74*, 367-391. Retrieved from http://www.mpil.de/files/pdf4/Marxsen_2014_-_The_crimea_crisis_-_an_international_law_perspective.pdf.
Massey, D., & Allen, J. (1984). *Geography matters!: a reader*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
Massi, E. (1931). I nuovi compiti della geografia politica. *Stvdivm*, (2).
Milne S. (2014). *It's not Russia that's pushed Ukraine to the brink of war*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/apr/30/russia-ukraine-war-kiev-conflict
Nicolai, P. (Ed.). (2017). *Ukraine in crisis*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Routledge
OHCHR: Deaths, Injuries Mount as Ukraine Conflict Enters 4th Year, Voanews. Retrieved from https://www.voanews.com/a/united-nations-human-right-council-ukraine-conflict/3910072.html
Paolini, M. (2014). Nella guerra del gas Mosca riparte da Ankara. *Limes*, *12*, 153-160.
Semenenko, I. (2015). Energy security of Ukraine in the context of its sustainable development. *Institute of Economic Research Working Papers*, 11 (3), 537-555.
Sceresini, A., & Giroffi, L. (2015). *Ucraina. La guerra che non c'è*. Milan, Italy: Baldini & Castoldi.
State Statistics Service of Ukraine (2011), *Census Data*. Retrieved from www.ukrstat.gov.ua
Szporluk, R. (2000). *Russia, Ukraine and the Breakup of the Soviet Union*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press.
Ukraine crisis: Transcript of leaked Nuland-Pyatt call, BBC News, 2014. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26079957
Youngs, R. (2009). *Energy Security: Europe's New Foreign Policy Challenge*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Routledge.
White, S., & Feklyunia, V. (2014). *Identities and Foreign Policies in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus: The other Europe*. London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.
Wilson, A. (2016). The Donbas in 2014: Explaining Civil Conflict Perhaps, but not Civil War. *Europe-Asia Studies*, *68*(4), 631-652. doi: 10.1080/09668136.2016.1176994
World Bank Group (2013). *Data.* Retrieved from http://www.worldbank.org/

Journal of Global Initiatives
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp. 104-139.

Putin's "Eastern Pivot": Divergent Ambitions between Russia and China? Evidence from the Arctic

Thomas E. Rotnem and Kristina V. Minkova

Abstract

Focusing upon the warming Sino-Russian relationship in general, this paper also examines in particular both countries interests in the Arctic region. The paper begins with a brief overview of the developing Sino-Russian relationship since the late 1980s. After discussing the blossoming of friendlier ties during the Putin-Xi era, it reviews some of the arguments and assumptions that scholars have held predicting either an ever closer relationship or an eventual rupture in those relations. The paper then analyzes both countries' interests in the Arctic realm, using this case study as evidence supporting the view that the Sino-Russian relationship–despite its many difficulties–has been effectively managed in this arena for mutual benefit. As well, although it was not intended to be so, the sanctions regime imposed by America and her European allies has been a key driver in the closer Arctic relationship, in specific, and Sino-Russian relations, in general.

The Russo-Chinese Relationship in Recent History

Since the earliest interactions between Russians and Manchus in the 1650s to the summits between Russia's post-communist leadership and China's powerful communist brokers in the early years of the third millennium, borders, trade, and broader geopolitical strategic considerations have played a crucial part in the two great powers' relationship. From the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) to the Treaty on Good Neighborliness, Friendship, and Cooperation (2001), the relationship between the two countries has either broken down or blossomed on these issues; at the same time, during each successive era, historical experiences have played an important role in shaping each party's strategic behavior (Rotnem, 2014). In the early 1980s, with the U.S.S.R. mired in the deepening Afghan struggle and Deng Xiaoping's domestic reforms having borne fruit, the senior leadership in Beijing signaled a willingness to improve Sino-Soviet relations. In 1982, Beijing asserted that a more independent foreign policy would henceforth be followed, perhaps because the new Reagan administration indicated a more pugnacious U.S. foreign policy was in the offing or possibly because the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) wished to re-balance their relationship vis-à-vis Washington by repairing relations

with Moscow. Whatever the rationale, the two former rivals began to consult regularly on a variety of items of mutual concern, including issues of scientific and technological exchanges, security, and trade. With Mikhail S. Gorbachev's assumption of power in early 1985, further stimulus was given to the improving relationship.

"Novye Myshlenie" or "new thinking" was the rhetorical, pragmatic cornerstone of Gorbachev's foreign policy. Requiring a breathing space from the Cold War confrontation between East and West, the new General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party devoted his energies to the domestic front, in order to re-shape, re-balance, and transform the ailing command administrative economy. While Gorbachev eventually made significant compromises with Reagan over arms control and Soviet conventional forces in Europe, the General Secretary also made important concessions to the Chinese, such as ending the conflict in Afghanistan, reducing Russian troop commitments in Mongolia, and putting pressure on its Vietnamese allies to end their occupation of Cambodia.

As a result, the first Sino-Russian summit in over 30 years was held. Gorbachev's meetings with Deng in early 1989 signaled the normalization of governmental relations, as well as the renewal of ties between the "brotherly" communist parties of both states. Though little else grew out of this meeting–in large measure due to the ongoing and incipient democracy protests in Beijing that spring–nevertheless, these meetings were an important first rung on the ladder toward a more pragmatic, stable relationship, one in which both parties begged off interfering in one another's domestic affairs and participating in ideological contestation, while also putting aside the potential for a renewed military alliance.

In 1990, both parties agreed to reduce their military deployments and armaments along their lengthy border. In addition, military contacts were re-established, as reciprocal missions visited one another's capital. Thereafter, Moscow began its first of many sales of military equipment to the People's Republic of China (PRC), with an agreement signed that fall to offer the Chinese transport helicopters. Indeed, by the end of the Gorbachev era, trade in non-military goods had also increased, from $380 million in 1985 to over $6 billion in 1991 (Menon, 2009, p. 11).

The warming trend continued under President Boris N. Yeltsin's leadership of the now democratic, post-communist Russia. Within months, Yeltsin made a state visit to China's capital city, laying the initial groundwork for the eventual announcement in September 1994 that a "constructive partnership" had been established between Russia and China. Economic trade continued to surpass the $6 billion mark annually into the mid- and late-1990s, with raw materials and energy products heading the list of Russian exports to China, and consumer goods topping China's exports to Russia (Goldstein, 2001, p. 850). In addition, Yeltsin's visit to Beijing concluded with a partial resolution of ongoing border problems; a 1992 agreement signed between Jiang Zemin and Yeltsin delimited roughly 4,200 kilometers along the eastern Sino-Russian border. This agreement was followed by increased sales of arms to China, with over $2 billion in deals struck yearly between

1992 and 1994 (Menon, 2009, pp. 10-12). Within several more years, Russia would become China's largest supplier of munitions and military equipment.

By 1996, both Russia and China began to realize their common interests in challenging the Ameri-centric, unipolar world order, with the potential expansion of NATO and the strengthened U.S.-Japanese relationship as partial motivating drivers. As a result, their "constructive partnership" soon blossomed into something more, i.e., the "strategic cooperative partnership." Announced at the third Sino-Russian summit meeting in April 1996, the new relationship heralded a series of agreements signed between the two powers. One of these effectively settled almost all remaining border issues, leaving a mere 400 kilometers still in dispute (Ferdinand, 2007, p. 850). Another critical result of the thawing trend was the Shanghai Agreement, a security-oriented arrangement that included not only China and Russia, but also the Central Asian states of Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. The "Shanghai Five" met throughout the late 1990s to deal with various security items, including extremism, separatism, and terrorism, issues about which Moscow and Beijing surely held a shared interest (Tang, 2000, p. 371). Ultimately, this organization developed into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, adding Uzbekistan to the original membership, while broadening the agenda to include economic cooperation. A major unstated goal of the organization was to frustrate U.S. foreign and defense policy in Central Asia.

Strengthened Ties during the Putin Era

Sino-Russian relations continued to improve under Vladimir V. Putin's tenure. The two powers increasingly saw eye-to-eye on border and trade issues, as well as a number of other strategic concerns, e.g., human rights, treatment of ethnic minorities, as well as, perhaps most importantly, the U.S.'s role in the world.

In July 2001, Putin and Jiang Zemin signed the "Treaty of Good Neighbourly, Cooperative and Friendly Relations." The treaty established a variety of cultural and scientific exchanges, as well as opportunities for greater economic cooperation. The new treaty also included articles on security issues, among which were growing military-to-military weapons transfers, including a billion dollar contract to supply China with attack aircraft and a 15-year Military Cooperation Plan (Rangsimaporn, 2006, pp. 478-479). Since then, the two powers' militaries have increasingly held more frequent joint land and/or naval exercises, most recently in the Joint Sea 2017 maneuvers in the Baltic Sea (Bhadrakumar, 2017).

Outstanding border problems between the two countries were resolved in the "2004 Complementary Agreement," with the remaining disputes regarding three islands in the Amur River dealt with amicably. Russia transferred the Tarabarov Island and portions of two others to China, and in return Beijing dropped remaining claims over other Russian-administered territories along their shared border. Both countries' parliaments ratified the treaty and the official ceremony on transfer was later held in October 2008.

In terms of trade, the relationship continued to bear fruit. Bilateral trade increased more than tenfold since the high-water mark of the late Yeltsin era,

reaching $88.8 billion in 2013. To be sure, much of Russia's exports to China continue to be centered upon primary products, e.g., oil products, timber, ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, etc. At the same time, arms exports remain a sizeable portion of overall trade. The trade volume is set to rise much higher, though, in the aftermath of historic gas export agreements inked between Putin and Xi Jinping in Beijing in May and November 2014. The May agreement guaranteed Russian annual deliveries of at least 38 billion cubic meters of natural gas to China, via the "eastern route," beginning in 2018 ("Russia-China to Sign," 2014). In reality, with China's desire to replace aging, polluting coal-burning plants with cleaner-burning, gas-powered generation in the near term, the size of Russian gas deliveries will undoubtedly exceed the contract specifications. And, according to President Putin's statement on the May 2014 agreement, the level of bilateral trade was to exceed $100 billion in the year, with a doubling of that figure within five years (MacFarquhar & Herszenhorn, 2014.). The November agreement, signed during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit meeting in Beijing and adding an additional 30 billion cubic meters of Russian gas to China's markets by 2019, virtually guarantees that (Panin, 2014b).

A Confluence of Interests and a Marriage of Convenience …

Besides improving prospects for trade and the resolution of border issues, what has spurred the very real warming as of late in the Sino-Russian relationship? To be sure, there are a variety of strategic reasons for the marked improvement, the Ukrainian crisis (and the sanctions regime) being only the most recent.

For one, both China and Russia are engaged in a battle with terrorist groups on their peripheries. Although Ramzan Kadyrov's oppressive dictatorship in Chechnya has kept Islamists in the tiny republic on their heels, the terrorist presence in the North Caucasus has by no means been extinguished, now and again creating opportunities for striking even within Russia proper. As well, China is confronted with its own Muslim separatist movement in Xinjiang, with numerous recent bloody incidents proving that the threat has not been managed very well by central authorities in Beijing. Indeed, one of the main rationales behind the formation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was to create a region-wide organization that could deal with international terrorism in the Eurasian region, writ large, in addition to Central Asia, as both countries also fear the influence of terrorist forces emanating from the five former Soviet republics in that realm.

The two countries have also been chafing at attempted (either alleged or perceived) U.S. "imperial" undertakings, particularly in the Middle East during the last decade. Russia sees its former client state regimes in Iraq, Libya, and Syria all having been affected adversely by U.S. foreign policy moves. Although Moscow was not wholly opposed to the U.S. invasion that overthrew Saddam Hussein in 2003, U.S. and European allies' actions in Libya (acting ostensibly under a UN humanitarian mandate) that ended in regime transformation caused the

Medvedev/Putin tandem to feel betrayed.[1] It can be argued that because of the Libyan action, the situation in Syria today is so bloody and a resolution so far removed. Similarly, "responsibility-to-protect-type" (R2P) proclamations from the U.S. administration worries China, which deems any U.S.-supported human rights actions as an unwelcome harbinger of potential outside interference in Beijing's internal affairs.

Closer to home, both Moscow and Beijing fear U.S. actions undermine these regimes' domestic stability, as well as generate a more threatening international security environment. Russia believes that various "color revolutions" in its "near abroad" over the last decade have been influenced, if not directly inspired, by successive U.S. administrations, including the latest provocation in Ukraine in November 2013-February 2014; their goal, according to the Kremlin, is to undermine Russia's leverage over these former states of the Soviet Union, if not to challenge Putin's right to rule in Russia, itself.[2] By the same token, attempts to expand NATO or the European Union eastward send similar alarm bells ringing in the towers of the Kremlin.

For its part, China views America's "pivot to Asia"–along with concomitant pledges of security assistance to its East Asian allies and recent U.S. basing agreements with the governments of Australia and The Philippines–as measures that reduce China's freedom of strategic maneuver and ultimately reduce its ability to become a regional hegemon. As well, China fears the ability of the U.S. Navy to cut off its avenues of consumer exports, but especially impair its ability to import fossil fuels, thereby threatening its all-important economic potential–a potential that keeps the Chinese government firmly ensconced in power. This fear has also encouraged a deepening in the Sino-Russian relationship, as China invests heavily in oil and gas imports from Russia, along with pipeline infrastructure that would not necessarily be imperiled by U.S. naval re-deployments in the region. Most recently, President Putin allowed China to join Vankor, a huge oil production field in Eastern Siberia (Chazan, 2014). It is for the same reason–access to new sources of fossil fuels–that China has signed deals with Russia to jointly explore for oil and gas deposits in the deep Arctic waters in Russia's Kara Sea (Jakobson, 2013; Mitchell, 2013.).

As well, the two have recently entered into agreements to reduce U.S. (and Western) hegemony in the financial and trade arenas. At the sixth BRICS summit in July 2014, Russia and China, along with India, Brazil, and South Africa, signed agreements to create the BRICS Pool of Conventional Currency Reserves and the New Development Bank. Meant to counterbalance the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, the new financial structures will provide $100 billion for initiating a joint response to financial challenges and provide $50 billion in capital for priority long-term projects in the member countries, respectively

---

[1] Much the same could be said regarding Nato-led actions in Serbia that eventually created an independent Kosovo.

[2] For example, the Kremlin views the demonstrations following parliamentary elections in December 2011 as having been linked in some way to "foreign influences."

(Alexandrova, 2014). Moreover, Xi and Putin announced the creation of a $10 billion Russian-Chinese development fund at a recent meeting ("Russia and China," 2017). In addition, China and Russia have set up ruble-yuan currency swaps on certain trade deals in an effort to bypass reliance on the U.S. dollar. (Indeed, China has inked numerous deals with other large trading partners, e.g., Brazil and India, which similarly push the greenback to the side.) Should China and Russia decide to drop dollar-denominated energy prices entirely in their relationship, this could undermine the U.S. dollar reserve currency status. The two are also attempting to slowly reduce the size of their U.S. denominated debt (Halligan, 2014). And, President Putin announced recently that Russia, alongside presumably China and other countries, is developing its own indigenous bank clearinghouse system, thereby replacing its reliance on the U.S.'s SWIFT clearinghouse system ("President Putin Pledges," 2014). Besides these financial undertakings, Russia and China are also attempting to challenge U.S. control over transoceanic shipping and trade by constructing the Interoceanic Grand Canal through Nicaragua, creating an alternative to the U.S.-supported Panama Canal (Paniev, 2014.)

… Or, an Embryonic Alliance in the Making?

All of these events have caused some to wonder whether or not China and Russia are creating more than a mere "relationship of denial"–i.e., denying terrorists easy marks, denying challengers the opportunity to undermine authoritarianism in Eurasian states, and denying the United States its hegemonic position, worldwide. In other words, can the current marriage of convenience turn into an economic, military, and political alliance between Moscow and Beijing?

Those who would discount this possibility point to the existence of many fundamental differences that exist between the two great powers. Perhaps most disruptive to a closer Sino-Russian relationship are the many geo-strategic issues that confront it, from Central Asia to Northeast Asia, from relationships with regional rivals of China's to a potential contest between the two over access to the Arctic, its resources, and perhaps its lucrative shipping lanes.

As for Central Asia, it looms large in both countries' development plans. For historic reasons, of course, Russia has many political, economic, and security ties to the countries of Central Asia. Indeed, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tadzhikistan are integral to President Putin's plans to create a greater Eurasian Economic Union, an entity that can vie with the EU, NAFTA, or ASEAN in global trade, while preserving Russia's influence in such circles, and anchoring the non-Russian states of the former Soviet Union to Moscow's orbit.

However, immediately upon coming to power, Xi Jinping unveiled his "New Silk Road" ("One Road–One Belt") policy–a strategy of massive Chinese investment in Central Asian countries' transport and pipeline infrastructure, oil and gas field development, and consumer goods markets. To be sure, Xi's move has much more to do with securing reliable supplies of fossil fuels–as currently much of China's supply is vulnerable to the U.S. Navy–than it does replacing Russian influence in the region. China also wishes to stabilize its western borders and

develop its western regions in order to undermine support for domestic terrorism. Still, Xi's visits to the capitals of Central Asian states is said to have frustrated Moscow to no end, concerned as it is about a wholesale reorientation of this realm toward Beijing and East Asia.[3]

Northeast Asia is another theater of potential contest between the two Asian powers, in particular because the two share a lengthy border there. Although all outstanding border disputes had been officially settled in 2008, population dynamics along that border cause alarms to ring in some Kremlin quarters. Indeed, Russian lands east of Novosibirsk contain only 7 million citizens. However, over 100 million Chinese live within 100 miles of the Russian-Chinese border. And, the fact is that the regions of Eastern Siberia and the Far East are full of resources needed by the Chinese manufacturing sector, all at the same time some Chinese maps reportedly portray lands to the south of the Ussuri River as "unreclaimed" Chinese territory. Those who argue that this demographic issue acts as a check on an ever-improving relationship between China and Russia point to Prime Minister Medvedev's repeated calls to develop the Far East as a "national priority" as evidence of Russia's heightened apprehension ("Russian Government," 2017).

Each power is also paired with regional rivals of the other in South and Southeast Asia, thereby further frustrating growing ties between the two, it is suggested. To be sure, Russia's warm ties with Vietnam rankles the Chinese, particularly in view of the growing energy and defense agreements that have been signed between Moscow and Hanoi. In November 2013, Moscow agreed to a host of new energy and weapons projects, including those on manufacturing military technology within Vietnam and developing alongside Hanoi several gas fields in the disputed South China Sea ("Russia Strengthens," 2013). As well, although India and China are engaged in ongoing talks to repair their fraught relations, border conflicts between the two and Chinese naval deployments in the Indian Ocean will continue to constrain real progress in the relationship, whereas India's relationship with Russia is both enduring and multifaceted (Agrawal, 2014). To be sure, Moscow recently delivered to New Delhi its first aircraft carrier, with joint air force exercises completed in 2014. As well, Russia is negotiating with India for the purchase of Russian liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports.

Moreover, some argue that Russia's elites–who are well aware of the country's current and future global position and trajectory vis-à-vis China–do not wish to be considered as a junior partner or raw materials appendage of China's, even after the sanctions imposed by the West over Ukraine have resulted in a more circumscribed Russian future. Indeed, just as much as Mao disliked the notion of deferring to the wishes of Stalin (or indeed Khrushchev), Putin and his entourage, it is argued, wish to avoid the same vis-à-vis Xi Jinping. As well, having felt a definite "second class" status at the hands of the West since 1991, the Russian leadership would certainly not wish to replace the West with China in such an unequal relationship.

---

[3] One outgrowth of Moscow's frustration has been its lobbying to gain India's entry into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which would act as a counter-weight to China's growing influence in Central Asia.

Among the many scholars who take a dim view of the prospects for genuine Sino-Russian rapprochement are those who argue that such economic tensions, great power pressures, and even an emerging status/power differential will keep the two regional players from developing a closer relationship. Darden (2016) believes that a closer relationship between the two is unlikely unless China eschews a deeper integration with the world economy, and creates a much closer economic relationship with Russia. Indeed, Duben (2015) concurs with this view, stating that, despite statements to the contrary, little progress has been made on a host of bilateral economic, financial, and infrastructural projects between Russia and China, while arguing that the warming relationship is overstated and problem-laden. Ostrovsky (2015) and Kortunov maintain, too, that the vaunted economic link is problematic, but place the reasons for this in either lack of interest by the Chinese or in the mutual lack of contacts and business ties between the two countries' business elites (Hille, 2016).

Others point to non-economic concerns as major reasons for the absence of a closer connection between Beijing and Moscow. Putz (2016) argues that China's economic, political, and military involvement in "Russia's backyard," i.e., Central Asia, will continue to frustrate closer political ties between the two. Similarly, Hartwell echoes this concern–both with respect to Central Asia (and elsewhere)–and claims that China's hubris vis-à-vis Russian influence in the region is a significant impediment to further comity (Hartwell, 2015).[4] Gabuev concurs that a stronger relationship between the two countries is difficult to conceive of, with Russia having to concede to China in both the economic and political realms. In other words, the status/power differential grates on both the Russian elites and masses, as they realize that "Russia needs China more than China needs Russia. Russia has nowhere else to go" (Hille, 2016).

On the other hand, other scholars disagree, arguing as Nadege Rolland does, that the Russia-China partnership is genuine, developing, and–that as it strengthens–has the potential to manage both long-standing and emerging problems that both would concede do in fact exist (Putz, 2016). To be sure, Farchy (2015) maintains that it is not at all apparent that Russia's elite fears overt Chinese economic dominance in Central Asia and has ultimately accommodated itself to this eventuality, while reserving for Moscow definitive responsibility for Central Asia's military and security policy realms.[5] Some go further, arguing that China's leaders willingly cede to Moscow's pre-eminence in this domain, while encouraging closer cooperation between Beijing and the members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) (Strokan & Mikheev, 2015; Vorobyov, 2017).

Others would argue the economic tensions that exist are subordinated to economic drivers that are beneficial to both sides. For example, Lukyanov (2015)

---

[4] Hartwell states that "China may see itself having a partnership with Russia in the region, but it believes it–and not Russia–is the leader" (Hartwell, 2015).

[5] Farchy argues that another limiting factor to Chinese economic dominance in Central Asia are fears of that very eventuality that are held by citizens in the five Muslim states of this region (Farchy, 2015).

believes the Kremlin views China's investments in the Silk Road projects of Central Asia and beyond ultimately serve Russia's long-term interests for economic self-development. Trenin, too, views China and Russia's shared interests and goals–both economic and geo-political–as mutually beneficial and supportive of a continued closer association. As well, Trenin discounts both the "hubris" and the "power/status differential" as impediments to the relationship, as he views the Moscow-Beijing partnership as "coordination without a central command" (Trenin, 2015).

Our own view lies closer to these optimists' assessments of a continuing, closer affiliation between the two powers. Indeed, as it relates to the Arctic interests of the two states–i.e., a major focus of this paper and a subject to which we shall now turn–it is apparent that the two powers' interests largely coincide. It is also our contention that besides the economic drivers behind the Sino-Russian collaboration in the Far North, U.S. and Western policy towards Russia since 2014 has unfortunately contributed to this developing Arctic collaboration.

Climate Change, the Arctic, and Russia's Far North

The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently released its Fifth Assessment Report, entitled *Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis*. Among the many findings outlined in the voluminous document, the IPCC establishes that climate warming is "unequivocal" and that the warming of ocean currents there accounts for "… more than 90% of the energy accumulated between 1971 and 2010" (*Working Group I*, 2013, p. SPM-4). The report also finds that Arctic Sea ice and snow cover in Northern Hemisphere areas continue to decrease in extent. More specifically, the report establishes that during the period of 1979-2012, the average loss of Arctic Sea ice very likely reached somewhere between 3.5% to 4.1% per decade (*Working Group I*, 2013, p. SPM-6). As well, the report concludes that the Arctic's sea ice may vanish within 30-40 years (Clark, 2013b).

A more recent estimate by Peter Wadhams, an applied mathematics and theoretical physics professor at the University of Cambridge, indicates that by 2020 the Arctic will essentially be free of ice in the high summer months, certainly enough to allow safe passage of container ships (Medred, 2014). Of course, should this occur, a host of environmental and economic problems will ensue, from dramatic increases in world ocean levels to the release of vast stores of methane deposits–a particularly virulent greenhouse gas–to loss of habitat for polar bears and other Arctic species. By one estimate, the total cost of a complete Arctic meltdown approaches $60 trillion (Clark, 2013a).

To be sure, Russian Arctic waters–from the Barents Sea in the northwest to the Chukchi Sea in the northeast–have experienced considerable warming. Indeed, whole sections of Russia's coastal Northern regions are ice-free for significant periods of time throughout the year, whereas all of it has become virtually ice-free during the early summer-through-October period (Crooks & Chazan, 2012).

Moreover, climate change is also causing Russia's permafrost region–which totals some 69% of their territory overall–to melt, "… converting a large part of Russia into a swamp" (Vorontsova, 2013). According to the head of the Russian Emergency Situations Ministry Center for Predictions and Monitoring, by 2050 the Russian permafrost region will decline by over a third (Goble, 2013). Such an outcome will not only lead to the release of significant amounts of methane - perhaps 500 times as much methane gas is trapped beneath the Arctic Ocean as exists currently in the atmosphere (Medred, 2014) - but also create a transportation and infrastructure nightmare in Russia's permafrost areas, as over 5,000 kilometers of railroad track and perhaps as much as 40% of infrastructure are at severe risk of collapse (Goble, 2013). Such developments will put enormous stress upon an already cash-strapped and fossil fuel-dependent federal budget.

The Climate Change Windfall?

A major discovery in late 2013 by the Austrian oil company OMV in a largely unexplored section of the Barents Sea demonstrates the massive potential for the five littoral states to the Arctic Sea; OMV claims to have found as much as 160 million barrels of recoverable oil (and 10-40 billion cubic feet of natural gas) approximately 200 miles off the coast of northern Norway (Shotter, 2013). This find was followed by a joint ExxonMobil/Rosneft discovery in September 2014–this time in the Kara Sea–that holds upwards of 750 million barrels of oil (Kramer, 2014).

Indeed, according to the 2008 United States Geological Survey (USGS) study, the Arctic region could hold as much as 30% of the world's undiscovered natural gas and 13% of the world's undiscovered oil. Of these figures, approximately 240 billion barrels of oil and oil equivalents (e.g., natural gas and methane, mainly) have already been found, a figure that constitutes nearly as much as the total proven reserves of Saudi Arabia. Beyond this, it is estimated that another 400 billion barrels of oil lay "undiscovered" still in the Arctic region (Emmerson, 2010). For its part, Russia's federal geological agency claims the total figure of recoverable reserves–both discovered and undiscovered–is far higher than the USGS estimate. One estimate puts the overall energy reserves in the Arctic regions of Russia at more than 1.6 trillion tons (Zamyatina, 2014). Of course, at today's extremely low prices for oil and gas, a significant portion of these Arctic reserves are unrecoverable.

A cursory perusal of the USGS study's data on the likely areas for potential recoverable assets demonstrate that two of these areas lie immediately north of Russia, in the Barents Sea basin and the West Siberian basin (i.e., the Kara and Laptev Sea regions) of the Arctic Ocean (See Table 1 and Figure 1). By USGS and Russian estimates, therefore, the Arctic basins to the north of Russia constitute a huge potential for hydrocarbon extraction (Sale & Potapov, 2010).

Although Russia has exploited natural gas and oil reserves in its Arctic regions since the early 1970s, offshore areas that the aforementioned USGS study argues hold promising hydrocarbon reserves have historically gained little attention for a variety of reasons, owing mainly to the extreme environment. Due to warming

climates, however, this is changing, with Putin's administration turning its focus resolutely toward exploring and developing these offshore Arctic reserves. Indeed, President Putin recently stated at the International Arctic Forum in Salekhard, Russia (capital city of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Region, Russia's main gas producing region), that "… the time for an industrial breakthrough has come in the Arctic" (Kravtsova, 2013).

Table 1: Arctic Basins with High Probability of Significant Fossil Fuel Deposits

Petroleum Basin	Natural Gas (trillion cubic ft)	Natural Gas Liquids[6] (billion barrels)	Crude Oil (billion barrels)	Total (oil equivalent in billions of barrels)
Yenisey-Khatang basin	99.96	2.68	5.58	24.92
West Siberian basin	651.50	20.33	3.66	132.57
East Barents basin	317.56	1.42	7.41	61.76
East Greenland Rift basin	86.18	8.12	8.90	31.39
West Greenland-East Canada basin	51.82	1.15	7.27	17.06
Amerasia basin	56.89	0.54	9.72	19.75
Arctic Alaska basin	221.40	5.90	29.96	72.77

Source: Circum-Arctic Resource Appraisal: Estimates of Undiscovered Oil and Gas North of the Arctic Circle. Kenneth J. Bird, et al., United States Geological Survey, Fact Sheet 2008/3049, July 2008.

Oil + Gas = National Security

To be sure, the leadership of today's Russia continues to view oil and gas exports as critical for the country's future. Putin's doctoral thesis of 1999 foreshadowed his attempt as president in 2000-2008 to gain control of privatized oil companies for the benefit of the Russian state, and its budget. As a result, a host of private oil companies–from Roman Abramovich's Sibneft to Mikhail Khodorkovsky's YUKOS–were bought or otherwise obtained by the Russian government during this period. It appears that Putin's entourage has decided recently to accumulate even more private oil for state coffers; in September 2014 a Moscow court seized billionaire Vladimir Yevtushenkov's shares in Bashneft', a large Russian oil

[6] Natural gas liquids include fuels and chemicals that are separated out from either natural gas or crude oil and include ethane, butane, propane, isobutene, and natural gasoline. They may also be used as feedstocks to make a variety of chemicals and plastics (Friedman & Puko, 2014).

company active in Bashkortostan (Weaver, 2014). By the end of 2008, fully 40-50% of Russia's budget was accounted for through either taxation of fossil fuels production or from oil and natural gas exports.

Although attempts were made under Dmitrii Medvedev's presidency to diversify Russia's economy, it appears that Putin–now in his third term as president–jettisoned serious consideration of diversification and has returned to a fuller appreciation of the role of oil and gas production for Russia's future. And, with declining oil and gas production in many of the country's aging fields, Russia is naturally looking to the offshore regions of the Arctic to avoid a production crisis, even in the current era of extremely low oil/gas prices.

Figure 1. Arctic Oil and Natural Gas Basin Map. Source: Geology.com and MapResources.

Such a production crisis would seriously undermine the country's budget, the Russian economy, the country's national security, and, ultimately, its leaders' grip on power. As such, the Russian government has placed the Arctic near the center of its national security priorities to 2020. In addition, Russia is pressing its claims for undersea resources that lie beyond its 200-mile exclusive economic zone, and are allegedly extensions of its continental shelf. As well, the government had been

attempting for some years to lure Western oil majors' interest in developing offshore oil and gas fields.

And, Western oil majors–ExxonMobil, BP, Royal Dutch Shell, Italy's Eni, France's Total, and Norway's Statoil–were taking notice, as "state-directed resource nationalism" has reduced their range of investment and exploration opportunities in Venezuela, Brazil, and many states in the Middle East. For example, Shell returned to Russia in full force, after having been outmaneuvered by Russia in 2006, when it lost control over its Sakhalin-2 oil and gas development project in Russia's Far East. Despite that loss in shareholder value, in April 2013 Shell's Chairman inked a joint exploration and development deal with Russia's Gazprom that would allow Shell a 33.3% stake in the development of the Severo-Vrangelevsky (North Wrangel) field in the Chukchi Sea and the Severo-Zapadny (North-West) field in the Pechora Sea (ITAR-TASS, 2013). Additionally, ExxonMobil signed an earlier deal with Russia's largest oil company, Rosneft, to explore 150 million acres in offshore regions of the Kara Sea (Koranyi, 2013b; Crooks & Chazan, 2012). And, in early 2013, even China's National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) got into the act, partnering with Rosneft to explore three offshore Arctic areas (in the Pechora and Barents Seas); this signaled the first Arctic offshore oil/gas deal that Russia has signed with an Asian company (Katakey & Kennedy, 2013). And, although offshore natural gas development projects have gained less interest recently by both the Russian government and Western oil companies, drilling for oil in the offshore Arctic continued to be of high interest to all parties, at least until the United States and the European Union imposed targeted sanctions against Russia's energy sector in summer 2014.

As stated previously, many Western oil majors view the offshore Arctic as a potential boon in terms of future bookable reserves, despite the formidable development barriers that exist. Moreover, unlike development of natural gas wells in the Arctic offshore, there are reportedly plenty of oil projects in that region that will breakeven even if oil prices continue to remain well under $80 per barrel (Crooks & Chazan, 2012). Additionally, Western oil companies with an interest in other, perhaps more lucrative *onshore* projects in Russia also felt pressure to invest in what the Russian government perceives as a prestige project–opening up the Far North to greater exploration and resource exploitation–in exchange for these same Western oil companies having the chance to gain a stake in less challenging oil and gas projects within Russia's onshore regions, for example, on the Yamal peninsula or in the Bazhenov fields.

For its part, Russia needs Western oil majors, both for their capital resources and their technology and expertise. Although President Putin has cited plans to spend as much as $500 billion on Arctic exploration over the next 30 years, Western oil companies ponied up tens of billions of dollars in recent times to jointly explore for oil alongside Rosneft in the Kara, Laptev, and Chukchi Seas (Amos, 2014; Emmerson, 2012; Kramer, 2014). Joint exploration with Western oil majors also made it easier for Russia to obtain loans from international banks. And, since exploring and drilling in the Arctic is particularly expensive, additional non-Russian financing of such activities is always welcome. As well, the Russian government–

prior to the sanctions regime–lured Western oil companies with tax concessions and other incentives in order to gain expertise in working in Arctic and offshore environments and for Western oil companies advanced technologies for finding and accessing such resources (Hamilton, 2012; Panin, 2014). Now, due to the sanctions regime, much of these technologies and hardware is off limits to Russian energy companies.

It is important to note, however, that even if sanctions are removed and such joint development projects proceed in the near future, Russian capital and Western technology and expertise will still meet significant constraints in developing these offshore oil reserves. For one, with a time horizon of 20-30 years, it's difficult to gauge the profitability of capital projects, as well as the price of oil upon which they must be based, that far out. Additionally, open sea conditions in the Arctic at this point will allow for only a short summer installation (July-October) season that frustrates attempts to make progress on such projects very quickly. Moreover, iceberg activity in the regions under exploration mandate that companies build extremely strong oil drilling platforms, each able to withstand in excess of six million tons of impact; as well, pipelines need to be buried very deep to avoid subterranean contact from the largest of these icebergs. Furthermore, at $120 million per ship, available icebreaking vessels are in short supply; as well, the daily cost to operate a vessel today is more than $50,000. Lastly, of the four prime areas in the Arctic–that together allegedly hold 75% of the oil reserves there–these areas are also the most challenging because of ubiquitous ice floes (Hamilton, 2012).

The Suez Alternative?

> "I want to stress the importance of the Northern Sea Route as an international transport artery that will rival traditional trade lanes in service fees, security, and quality." – Vladimir Putin (Byers, 2013)

Climate change in the globe's northernmost latitudes may also produce another favorable consequence for the Russian Federation: an ice-free shipping route that holds significant potential for transoceanic shipping, rivaling other major routes and perhaps gaining Russia considerable transport revenues. Thus, the possibility of ice-free cargo shipping for a considerable portion of the year across the Northern Sea Route (NSR)[7] may provide competition to shipping alternatives, be they rounding the Cape of Good Hope or transit through the Suez Canal.

[7] According to a July 2012 law passed by the Russian lower house, the NSR is defined as "The aquatic space adjacent to the northern coast of the Russian Federation, covering internal waters, territorial sea, the contiguous zone and the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation and bound by division lines across maritime areas with the United States and the parallel Cape Dezhnev in the Bering Strait, west meridian of the Cape of Desire to the Novaya Zemlya archipelago, eastern coastline of the Novaya Zemlya archipelago, and the western boundaries of the Matochkin, Kara, and Yugorsky Straits" (Bennett, 2013).

Arctic sea ice achieved its lowest record ever in 2012, allowing travel that year along the NSR for more than half of the year. Indeed, the U.S. National Snow and Ice Data Center reported that Arctic ice covers only approximately 2,200 square kilometers, about half of the total area covered by ice in 1979 (Bering Strait, 2013). And, it is predicted that within a decade the ice-free season could extend for a full eight months annually (Koranyi, 2013a).

The year 2009 marked the first commercial crossing of the fabled Northeast Passage, an earlier and alternate name for the NSR. In 2012, almost four dozen ships sailed from Norway to the Bering Strait. In 2013, 71 ships, including the first ice-class tanker, carried 1.35 million tons of cargo through the NSR; to be sure, the Stena Polaris, owned by a Swedish transportation company, traversed the NSR with 40,000 tons of naptha months ago and successfully delivered its cargo to a South Korean terminal (Dawson, 2014; Ice-class Tanker, 2013; Kramer, 2013). In another first, the Yong Sheng, a Chinese container ship, traveled from the Bering Strait to its destination in the Netherlands in September 2013 (Bering Strait, 2013). According to one study, trans-NSR shipping is set to grow by more than 30 times to 2020 (Koranyi, 2013a).[8] Another, attributed to the South Korean Maritime Institute, estimates that the NSR may account for more than a quarter of Asia-Europe transport by 2030 (Milne, 2013b).

Why might shippers prefer the NSR, despite the need for Russian icebreakers to accompany vessels during even some of the warmer months? For one, the route between East Asia and Europe is much shorter than traversing the Suez Canal, by as much as 40%; delivering cargo from East Asia to Europe via the Suez Canal can take as long as 40 days, whereas the NSR is 7,000 kilometers shorter and requires only 25 days (Ice-class Tanker, 2013). Thus, a shorter distance saves a considerable amount of time that theoretically lowers shipping costs. Additionally, ships utilizing the NSR avoid pirate-infested waters in the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Straits of Malacca.[9] Moreover, using the route circumvents the unpredictable impulses of an unstable Egyptian government, as well as the volatile Middle Eastern region, in general. As a result, both European and Asian states are beginning to note their interest in the route; among the most interested of these states are China, South Korea, and Singapore. Even tiny Iceland is getting into the act, having decided to build an Arctic port at the extreme northeast of the country, in Finna Fjord (Milne, 2013).

In response, the Russian government stepped up plans to invest in port infrastructure, railway construction, and its aging nuclear icebreaker fleet. Indeed, the Russian government and legislature passed appropriations bills worth billions of dollars to repair existing and/or build new deep water ports along the NSR, as

---

[8] This is projected, despite recent stiff declines in trans-NSR shipments in 2014 and 2015. Reportedly, the uncertain opening of the NSR in 2014 was in part responsible for fewer inter-continental transits; as well, the slowing Chinese economy is another reason.

[9] China reportedly relies on the Strait of Malacca for delivery of upwards of 80% of its oil needs; the NSR is considered so important for the future of China's development that it is referred to as the "Arctic Golden Waterway" in China (Byers, 2013).

well as plan for an impressive Arctic railway–the Belkomur Railway–which will run between Arkhangelsk to Perm (Bennett, 2013). Presently, Russia's icebreaker fleet counts among it six nuclear-powered vessels, but most of these are obsolete and will have to be replaced in a few years. Long lead times for launching new nuclear-powered icebreaking vessels–as much as six to seven years–means that the world's largest icebreaker fleet will be constrained for some time thereafter in terms of maintaining open seas above Russia's northern regions in colder months (Goble, 2013). Still, the government is investing in bringing new icebreaking vessels on line in the shortest possible timeframe; a next generation icebreaker is set to be built by the end of 2017 (Alexeev, 2013).

Still, there are significant problems connected with the NSR. As noted previously, a larger icebreaker fleet is required if a substantial upturn in cargo traffic is to ply the NSR. Beyond the other infrastructure constraints mentioned above, there is also a definite lack of search and rescue facilities in the region that can support needed rescue attempts for ships in trouble. And, since warming seas means more icebergs the need for such facilities is not theoretical. Indeed, the head of Denmark's shipping conglomerate, AP Moller-Maersk, claims that the continuing need for icebreakers, as well as the significant number of icebergs along the route, make traversing the NSR an expensive option, an option that will only become commercially viable in 20 years or more (Milne, 2013).[10]

Moreover, the lack of reliable year-round scheduling of transit through the NSR also acts to reduce the route's importance by international shipping companies, especially those carrying goods from China westward to Europe. Since the vast majority of Chinese products destined for Europe are of a containerized nature, the seasonality of the NSR and, therefore, its unreliability and unpredictability as a shipping route, will limit its use as an East-West conduit for Chinese consumer products. Furthermore, due to their extremely high time-charter costs per day, certain vessels–for example, seismic and LNG ships–would find prohibitively expensive any delay in transit through the NSR (Keil & Raspotnik, 2013).

At the same time, however, the ruling Russian elite considers the NSR to be of significant economic value in the near- to medium-term, as evidenced by the quote from President Putin at the beginning of this section. The Putin administration has recently demonstrated its view that the NSR is a strategic asset as well, having made plans recently to inaugurate regular naval patrols along the northern route; in late 2013 the Minister of Defense revealed the policy shift after sending the Russian Northern Fleet's flagship vessel, the "Pyotr Velikiy" ("Peter the Great"), through much of the NSR. The stated reasons for the patrols include helping to stop the flow of unwanted drugs and migrants into the northernmost reaches of Russia, while also extending Russia's sovereign claims to sparsely traveled coastal waters in its far

[10] Additional expenses that must be factored in include extremely high insurance rates for shipping, as well as the environmental cost associated with an oil tanker being holed by an iceberg. According to Michael Frodl, an advisor to insurers from the consultancy, C-Level Maritime Risks, "It's still simply too risky a proposition for standard commercial insurers …. And the risks haven't been figured out enough to price insurance correctly" (Saul, 2013).

north; it will also allow the country to exert sovereign claim to seabed resources in areas adjacent to its continental shelf.[11] Thus, the result is an increasing militarization of the Arctic region.

Russia's Arctic Strategy to 2020

Before discussing China's Arctic interests, this article will briefly analyze Russia's Arctic strategy. In support of Russia's claims on Arctic resources and transport corridors the Putin administration published the second iteration of an acknowledged Arctic strategy. Entitled "The Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and National Security up to 2020," the document mainly sets forth a conceptual foundation for the development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF). As such, the document mostly discusses purely domestic concerns, e.g., investment in critical infrastructure in the region, protection of indigenous communities and their cultures in the AZRF, sustainable development in pristine Arctic environments, etc. (The Development Strategy, 2013). The strategy also discusses in detail possibilities for greater foreign scientific and geological cooperation in the region. Increased international cooperation in the areas of search and rescue, resource extraction, and environmental protection are all discussed.

At the same time, however, portions of the new strategy raise certain questions or concerns. For example, Russia's stated desire to develop numerous floating nuclear power stations is underscored in the document, apparently without regard to neighboring countries growing apprehension concerning nuclear power generation. Included as well are statements regarding Russia's intent to legally define Moscow's claims in the region, while making somewhat veiled attempts to support these claims with the "… provision of military security, protection, and protection of the state border of the Russian Federation in the Arctic" (The Development Strategy, 2013).

Within a week of the adoption of the new Arctic strategy, President Putin addressed a gathering of Defense Ministry officials. His remarks there included "the militarization of the Arctic" as a new Russian security concern of the same order as perennial Russian concerns like a further eastward expansion of NATO or the continued deployment of a global missile defense system (Rasshirennoe, 2013).[12] To be sure, Russia's ruling elite deplores further NATO activities in the old northern

---

[11] For example, these may include the Mendeleev and Lomonosov ridges, two seabed formations that, if recognized as part of the Russian shelf, would extend Russia's claims to fossil fuel, additional non-hydrocarbon resources, and perhaps transport routes well into the Arctic Ocean.

[12] Putin's exact words at the Defense Ministry Collegium were the following: "Одновременно предпринимаются методичные попытки тем или иным образом расшатать стратегический баланс. Фактически запущен второй этап создания глобальной системы ПРО Соединённых Штатов Америки, зондируются возможности для дальнейшего расширения НАТО на Восток, существует и опасность милитаризации Арктики" (Rasshirennoe, 2013).

flank of the Cold War, as well as a new arms race in the globe's extreme north; however, according to one Russian defense analyst, it is the Russians who have made significant attempts to modernize their military facilities in the Arctic Circle region (Baev, 2013).

Of course, Russia's neighbors have long been worried about decaying nuclear-powered submarines in the High North, as well as aging nuclear warheads in the Kola Peninsula. However, recent moves by Russia's leaders are perhaps raising eyebrows among the Arctic Eight powers, as well as other states with an emerging Arctic presence of their own. For example, in September 2013 Russia reopened a military base in the New Siberian Islands that had been shuttered at the beginning of the 1990s. Commenting upon the re-christening of the Cold War-era base, President Putin declared that the facility was being re-opened as these islands have become an "… important point in the Arctic Ocean, a new stage in the development of the Northern Sea Route" (Russia Reopens…, 2013). Upon its re-opening Russia also conducted major naval exercises around the archipelago, while Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu proclaimed, "We arrived there, or, more accurately, we have returned there forever" (Russia Reopens, 2013).[13]

Moreover, Russia's Northern Fleet, tasked with protecting its Northern territories, will receive an additional 40 ships and logistics vessels by 2020, which include a destroyer, large landing vessels, and six multi-purpose nuclear and conventional submarines, among other vessels (Padrtova, 2014). Russia is also beefing up its coast guard along its northern frontier, and has taken a decision to form two Arctic motorized infantry brigades–totaling nearly 10,000 troops–to protect its sovereign claims in the Arctic (Pugliese, 2012). Furthermore, the Russian military deployed air defense forces and MiG-31 high altitude interceptors on the Novaya Zemlya archipelago, the main island of which served previously as a testing site for Soviet nuclear explosive devices (Russia Building, 2013).

An additional airbase in the Franz Josef Land archipelago is also being rebuilt. Airfields at Naryan-Mar, Alykel, Vorkuta, Tiksi, Anadyr, and Rogachevo are all scheduled for renovation and modernization. According to Lt. General Mikhail Mizintsev, head of the new National Defense Control Center, Russia's near-term Arctic plans involve "… the building of 13 airfields, one land test range for the Air Forces, 10 radar sites and direction centers" (Russian Army, 2014).

To be sure, such developments have served to put some Western military analysts on edge, particularly when they are accompanied by alarming statements from high-ranking Russian government officials. As Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin stated in mid-2013, "Active development of the Arctic shelf will unavoidably lead to a conflict of interest between states aspiring for resources. It is possible this conflict will exceed the diplomatic limits" (Rogozin: Active Development…, 2013). Even more precarious, the former Russian representative to NATO uttered, "It is also quite possible that Russian oil and gas production

[13] In late 2012, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin stated that Russia risked its sovereign claims to the Arctic–its resources, transport corridors, etc.–by the mid-21st century, unless it asserted its national interests there (Russia Reopens, 2013).

facilities may become targets of secret acts of sabotage by rival countries" (Rogozin: Active Development, 2013).

Still, perhaps many Russian government elites, specialists, and political pundits would rather aver that recent Western actions in the Arctic are the cause of Russian rearmament program in the region. As Tatiana Zamyatina (2014), a scholar at the noted Institute of U.S. and Canada Studies, recently remarked,

> As for the security of Russia's Arctic shelf is concerned, the region has been largely unprotected in military terms: there were no tracking systems, radars, ground troops or naval forces. In the meantime, pretty close to it is the U.S. bastion in Alaska, with its intelligence means, missile defense systems and naval forces. Apart from that, the Scandinavian countries have created their own military bloc inside NATO to protect their interests in the near-Arctic zone. Anti-Russian exercises have been held regularly there. Therefore the measures being taken to enhance the security of Russia's Arctic shelf are Russia's proportionate response to Western challenges (n.p.).

Sanctions and Russia's Arctic Ambitions

As a result of Russia's annexation of Crimea and support for separatists in eastern Ukraine, a series of sanctions were placed on Russian energy companies and banks by Western governments during the summer and fall of 2014. The sanctions' intent was to punish Russia by robbing its fossil fuel-dependent treasury of revenues from future oil exports; by making it harder for government-controlled oil companies–chiefly among these being Rosneft–to gain access to both Western bond markets and to advanced technologies and expertise associated with oilfield exploration, development, and recovery, particularly in hard-to-reach offshore deposits, the European Union, United States, Canada, and Norway hoped to discourage Russia from continued support of eastern Ukrainian separatism and efforts to undermine the fledgling, pro-Western government in Kiev.

In response, Russia isn't sitting idly by. For one, it is attempting to "Russify" offshore oil production–that is, developing an import substitution approach–to cultivate a domestic alternative to Western specialization in this area. For example, the government has established a "hierarchy of procurement placing domestic and Asian companies first, U.S. companies last," according to Alexis Rodzianko, the head of the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia (Kramer, 2014). Secondly, Russian companies have purchased stakes in Western oil exploration and servicing companies, in order to gain the technology and expertise from the inside.

Importantly to this analysis, the Russian government entered negotiations with the Chinese to sail drilling rigs from the South China Sea to Russia's offshore basins (Kramer, 2014). China may also provide Russia advanced technologies that Beijing "refines" as a result of its own ties with Western oil companies. And, it is certain that China's state-owned banks will provide loans to Russia's cash-strapped oil producers. Indeed, Rosneft itself, as well as the Russian banks VTB, VEB, and the

Russian Agriculture Bank all signed agreements recently with China ExIm bank to open lines of credit (Soldatkin, 2014).

Thus, the sanctions regime has had several unintended effects, while not succeeding in deterring Russia in supporting the rebels in eastern Ukraine. To be sure, Russia's activities in the Arctic have been more limited recently than expected, but this is surely more a result of lower hydrocarbon prices and a slowing Chinese economy than the sanctions effectiveness. Perhaps the main effect of sanctions has been to push Russia further into the arms of the Chinese–particularly in the Arctic arena as the next section will detail–thereby ultimately undermining both Western oil/gas majors' positions in the Far North and U.S. foreign policy aims, more generally.

China's Arctic Interests: Origins

Not being an Arctic littoral state, China's involvement in the Arctic region is more recent than Russia's or that of other Arctic states. China's first polar interest appeared in 1984, the year it launched research expeditions to Antarctica, later founding three research stations on the icy continent. Its first scientific sojourn to the Arctic came more than a decade later, in 1995; the next year, China began an affiliation with the International Scientific Committee on North Pole Research, an organization that includes as members all five Arctic littoral states and three additional Arctic states (The Development of China's, 2007). Three years later, the first state-led Chinese effort to scientifically explore the Arctic took place aboard the Ukrainian-built icebreaker, later renamed "Xue Long" ("Snow Dragon") (Manthorpe, 2011); the three-month expedition included 124 members of China's scientific community, traveling over 14,000 nautical miles through Arctic seas (Backgrounder: Chronology, 2008).

In 2003, Beijing sponsored a second scientific expedition to the Arctic; a year later, China established its first (and only) scientific research station–the Yellow River ("Huanghe") station–on the Spitsbergen archipelago.[14] China concluded three additional Arctic expeditions in the ensuing years, in 2008, 2010, and 2012; during all of these expeditions, primary scientific emphasis focused on marine biology, climate change, and hydrographic and hydrologic research, with increasing involvement of foreign researchers.

Since then, Beijing has quietly, but steadily, developed a growing interest in the region, particularly since scientific reports began predicting a greater likelihood of a substantially ice-free Arctic by the end of the current decade. In June 2013, for example, China announced the establishment of the China-Nordic Arctic Research Center (CNARC) in Shanghai; its purpose is to support scholarly exchanges between China and other littoral states, climate change research, and cooperation

[14] Though sovereign control over Spitsbergen lies with the Kingdom of Norway, as a signatory to the Svalbaard (Spitsbergen) Treaty since 1925, China is allowed unfettered access to those islands lying north of the Arctic Circle.

for sustainable development of the Arctic region (Zhenghua, 2013).[15] This development came shortly after China's bid to become a permanent observer of the Arctic Council (AC), an intergovernmental body that seeks a common understanding on economic, environmental, and social issues affecting the area, was accepted by the eight members of the organization in May.[16]

In July 2014, 128 scientists took part in China's sixth Arctic expedition, one that placed eight short-term research stations on the Arctic ice (Wang, 2014). The next year, China revealed plans to build an observatory in Canada's Northwest Territories; the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS), will support polar science and related technologies (Wang Ru, 2014). 2015 also saw Beijing send three separate research expeditions to the Arctic and near-Arctic regions (China's Participation, 2015). More recently, China's State Oceanic Administration announced plans for its seventh Arctic research expedition; this time their Arctic scientific sojourn was jointly planned and conducted with significant Russian participation (Pettersen, 2016b).

China's Arctic Interests: Cooperation with Nordic States

By joining the AC in 2013, China demonstrated its desire for a much closer Arctic relationship with its Nordic partners in Europe. To be sure, China's interests in the Arctic are not only limited to scientific research, climate change, and sustainability issues, but also include interests in resource development and new shipping routes through the NSR. Recently, China has negotiated a number of agreements with its Nordic partners and some of these will be examined before turning attention to China's growing relationship with Russia in the Arctic region.

Denmark was perhaps the earliest Nordic state to support China's bid to join the AC. As early as 2011, the Danish ambassador to China suggested that Beijing has "… natural and legitimate economic and scientific interests in the Arctic," including especially China's interests in mining, fishing, and sea route development near or on Greenland (Denmark Welcomes, 2011). For its part, Greenland's parliament facilitated foreign investment in uranium and rare earth minerals mining easier by lifting bans on these activities (Greenlandic Minister, 2013). In 2014, Erik

---

[15] Based at Shanghai's Polar Research Institute, the CNARC opened in December 2013 and coordinates its research activities with 10 research institutes from China, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Finland, and Sweden. Besides research on sustainability and climate change, the CNARC explores issues related to Arctic shipping, resource exploitation, economic cooperation, and policy/legislative issues (China-Nordic Arctic Research, 2013).

[16] Besides China, India, South Korea, Japan, Italy, and Singapore also became permanent observers at the AC. Although not a full voting member of the body, becoming a permanent observer allows China to speak and offer testimony at AC meetings, as well as to take part in agenda-setting activities (Xinhua Insight, 2013). As Tang Guoqiang, former Chinese ambassador to Norway, stated the granting of permanent observer status allows China to "…strengthen its cooperation with countries surrounding the Arctic in scientific research, the opening of new shipping routes, and resource exploration," all important areas of Chinese interest (Xinhua Insight, 2013).

Lorenzen, the Danish Arctic ambassador also re-iterated Denmark's welcoming attitude toward greater Chinese investment in such endeavors (Bigger Chinese, 2014). Within a year of Lorenzen's statement, China's General Nice Group negotiated a $2 billion plan to take over a large iron ore mine in Greenland, the first project of its kind by an Asian country in the Arctic (Du, 2015).

Another first had come two years earlier, when Iceland became the first European country to sign a free trade deal with China in April 2013 (Xinhua Insight, 2013). Within months of the landmark treaty, the Icelandic prime minister stated that Iceland "… seeks opportunities to work closer with China when it comes to doing research and even doing business in the Arctic" (Interview: Iceland, 2014). Iceland followed up by allowing China's China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC) to operate oil and gas exploration projects off its northeast coast, the first time Chinese exploration in the Arctic was undertaken (Du, 2015); as a result of the deal CNOOC Iceland, a subsidiary of CNOOC, will hold a 60% share in the offshore projects. Though Norwegian-Chinese relations had been cool since Norway awarded the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize to the Chinese dissident, Liu Xiaobo, China apparently warmed to involving Norway's Statoil in plans to exploit the Icelandic lease (Fouche, 2013).[17]

Although China's involvement in the Nordic Arctic is still in its early stages, it seeks opportunities to play a constructive role in this region, according to Jia Guide, Deputy Director General of the Department of Treaty and Law in the Chinese Foreign Ministry. Cooperation at the Arctic Council with its Nordic partners has expanded beyond scientific research and cultural arenas to include resource development and shipping (China Seeks, 2014). Indeed, speaking to the third Arctic Circle Assembly in late 2015, China's Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Ming exclaimed Beijing's intent to be a "major stakeholder in the Arctic" (China's Participation, 2015).

China's Arctic Interests: Cooperation with Russia

Due to the sanctions imposed upon Russia by Western governments, Moscow in recent years has hurriedly negotiated a host of offshore extraction agreements and infrastructure projects with companies from China, a country that now declares itself a "near Arctic state" (Higgins, 2014). Yet, these agreements were not the first demonstrating a higher level of association between Russia and China in the Arctic.

Back in late 2009 Moscow and Beijing struck a joint investment agreement for the construction of a huge shipyard in the Russian Far East to produce offshore oil and gas rigs for the Yamal and Shtokman (now shuttered) gasfields (New Mega-

[17] For its part, China views the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed with Iceland as a model for future opportunities between China and other European countries. In the meantime, the Iceland FTA allows the tariff-free export of Chinese products to other EU countries. It also encourages additional Chinese investments for developing production facilities in Iceland, as well as for those in upgrading Iceland's transport infrastructure, as China views Iceland as a key Arctic trans-shipment hub (FTA Offers, 2014).

Shipyard, 2009). China reportedly also joined Russia in 2010 in constructing a satellite project ("Arktika") to monitor developments in the Arctic region. Several months later the two inked a long-term arrangement concerning the transit of oil and gas through the Arctic (Manthorpe, 2011).

For their part, Chinese oil companies have little experience operating in harsh, Arctic-like climates, but their excellent financial position–and the absence of sanctions against Western investment–provides them a unique ability to team up with Western oil majors that do have such knowledge, and thereafter invest in key technologies needed for offshore oil/gas exploration under Arctic conditions.

Thus, on his first trip abroad as President, Xi Jinping visited Moscow, signing a number of agreements, including one that created a cooperative association between Rosneft and CNPC, the first Arctic oil or gas deal signed with an Asian country (Zhou, 2013). As part of the deal, Rosneft and CNPC will explore three fields in the Barents and Pechora Seas. Later the same year, PetroChina gained a 20% stake in the giant $27 billion Yamal LNG project.[18]

Two developments, however, spurred heightened Chinese interest in the Arctic in 2014. The first has been mentioned before, i.e., Western sanctions against the Russian oil and gas industry. The second was the 2014 annual strategic assessment issued by the Chinese military in which it was noted that "the Arctic region has rich oil and gas resources and quick and convenient shipping conditions, which has important meaning for ensuring the sustained development of China's economy" (Chinese Army, 2014).

Within months, China's CNOOC signed a major exploration and development deal with Russia's Rosneft to explore waters deep into Russia's Kara Sea. As well, CNOOC signed another agreement, this time to build equipment for the liquefaction process on Novatek's Yamal LNG project (China Signs, 2014). PetroChina, whose parent company is CNPC, also stated their interest in further oil/gas extraction projects with other oil/gas companies in the Arctic (China's Energy Giant, 2015). It's believed that the company is interested in oil exploration in the Dolginsky field in the Pechora Sea; the tract is licensed to Gazprom Neft', whose general director, Aleksandr Dyukov, noted, "We continue to look for a partner. We need a financing partner, who will share the risk with us. More than likely, this will be an Asian company that will partner with us" (Gazprom Neft' Opredelitsia, 2014). Furthermore, Russia also declared their interest in China's participation in LNG projects in the Gydan peninsula; Novatek's Arctic LNG-1, Arctic LNG-2, and Arctic LNG-3 projects were announced in late 2014, with an estimated construction start date of 2018 (The Arctic Dimension, 2014).

Then, in early 2015, Arkadiy Dvorkovich, Vice-Chairman of the Russian government, announced that the government would allow Chinese investors to hold a majority stake in strategic oil and gas fields. Existing restrictions require foreign

[18] The French oil company, Total, also has a 20% stake in the LNG project, with the remaining 50.1% share held by Novatek, Russia's largest privately held gas company. (The Chinese Development Bank obtained an additional 9.9% share in the Yamal project in 2015; this gives China ownership of almost one-third of the total project.)

investors to hold minority shares in oilfields that might produce more than seventy million tons of oil or in gasfields that may yield more than fifty billion cubic meters of gas. However, Dvorkovich stated then that "… if there is a request for control, we will consider it" from our Chinese partners (Russia May Accept, 2015).[19]

Moreover, China reportedly has made significant investment stakes in two additional Arctic endeavors, the Belkomur railway, linking the Urals to the White Sea via the hydrocarbon-rich, northern Komi Republic, and Arkhangelsk port facilities, which would serve as the final transit stop along the Belkomur (Thompson & Ohanyan, 2017).

In other developments, Sovcomflot, Russia's largest shipping company, maintained that only one of its LNG carriers will serve the Yamal LNG project; the rest of the project's LNG carriers will be owned and operated by Chinese concerns (Staalesen, 2015b).[20] Another area in which China was given a key role in the development of the Arctic shelf was a late 2015 agreement in which China would produce much of the technology needed for offshore oil and gas development projects in Russia. Since Western sanctions have affected Russia's ability to acquire more than 65% of the equipment needed for offshore oil/gas production, Russia is now looking to China to replace this technology. The only caveat, according to Deputy Prime Minister Arkadiy Dvorkovich is that such technologies must be produced in Russia proper (Made in China, 2015). These significant developments come on the heels of an agreement for CNPC to increase its share in the Yamal LNG project by 9.9%, for a combined 29.9% total share.

China's Shipping Interests

With approximately 90% of its traded goods shipped by sea, the Chinese government stands to save billions of dollars in costs, if reliable transit through the NSR (or the Central Arctic Shipping Route [CASR]) becomes a possibility.[21] An Arctic transit route would save shipping companies $7 to 12 billion in insurance premiums (Zhou, 2013). Thus, China is very keen on helping Russia to develop the NSR infrastructure.

China first mentioned in 2010 its intention to significantly "boost" its Arctic presence for use as a potential shipping route. As we have seen with regard to Arctic resource exploitation, the Chinese government early on was much more skeptical

---

[19] Western oil partners were specifically excluded from this same consideration. Indeed, Western oil majors haven't been given majority (or equal) control of Russian oil/gasfields since the demise of TNK-BP in 2013.

[20] China's Sinotrans Shipping and Merchants Energy Shipping struck a joint venture agreement with Greek Dynagas in 2015 to build five Arctic LNG vessels to ship gas from the Yamal LNG project to China; the year prior, China LNG and Teekay LNG Partners signed an agreement to build six LNG carriers for the route (China Shipping Firms, 2015).

[21] For example, Beijing projects their trade to grow to almost $8 trillion by 2020; according to these estimates, if 10% of that figure is shipped via the Arctic, transportation cost savings would equal tens of billions of dollars per year (Zhou, 2013).

about the role of Russia as a partner in its Arctic shipping exploits. For example, a Chinese government researcher commented in 2010 that, "China is geographically disconnected to the Arctic, which is a large disadvantage compared with littoral countries. China would not like to see it (the shipping route) controlled by a country or a certain group" (Yu, 2010).

For its part, Russian naval forces warily accompanied the "Snow Dragon" in September 2012, as the Chinese research vessel transited the entire length of the NSR for the first time (Chinese Icebreaker, 2012). When the Chinese cargo ship, "Yongsheng" completed a similar journey in August 2013, Russian press releases displayed a certain degree of skepticism regarding the transit.

Since the imposition of sanctions by the West in 2014, however, and Russia's resulting "pivot to the East," the two governments have slowly begun to see more eye-to-eye on the importance of mutual development of the NSR and related infrastructure projects. For example, in May 2015 Chinese authorities noted keen interest in buying the Arkhangelsk Sea Port, as well as the Yenisey River Shipping Company from Norilsk Nickel (Staalesen, 2015a).[22] In addition, the Jilin provincial government foresees teaming with both Russia and North Korea to ship products from its manufacturing centers to Europe, via the NSR. Russia and China also signed an agreement more recently that grants the Chinese company, Poly Technologies, a concession to build 712 miles of the Belkomur railway (Pettersen, 2015).

All of these developments were followed in the winter of 2015 by two other important developments. After the Yongsheng cargo ship completed a record-setting 20,000 mile round-trip journey from Rotterdam to Tianjin, the China Ocean Shipping Group Company (COSTCO) manager Cai Meijiang stated that the company is "… considering increasing the number of ships sailing via the new path" (China Mulls Routine Navigation…, 2015). This was followed in December by a statement from Dmitriy Rogozin, the Vice-Chairman of the Russian Government (and Chairman of Russia's Arctic Commission), in which he explained that a new "cold Silk Road" was under development and desired further Chinese investment in order to bring it to fruition (Rogozin: Severnyi, 2015; Staalesen, 2015c).[23]

---

[22] These sales of important Russian infrastructure assets mirror similar Chinese interests elsewhere; Beijing is interested in port facilities at Kirkenes, Norway, as well as a rail line from Kirkenes to Rovaniemi, Finland (Staalesen, 2015b).

[23] These events were important, despite the fact that NSR transits witnessed a sharp downturn in the 2014 and 2015 shipping seasons.

Conclusion: Russia and China in the Arctic, Cooperation or Competition?

With regard to the Arctic, China and Russia have in the past viewed each other's activities in the Arctic with some degree of suspicion. In particular, differing perspectives on commerce and shipping in the region, as well as seabed resource extraction, have earlier caused the two countries' overall warming relationship to undergo some significant strains.

For one, Beijing was initially rather wary of Moscow's attempts to extend its claims to the Arctic shelf under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 2007. Apparently, Beijing was concerned when Russia began an attempt to extend its shelf, perhaps as far as the North Pole in some areas. Some Chinese scientists saw these claims as a Russian overstep in sovereignty extension, viewing these claims to the Arctic shelf as a "challenge" to Beijing (Terekhov, 2010).

For its part, Russia was concerned with China's perceived intent to assert control over the 12% of Arctic hydrocarbon reserves not claimable by littoral states. As one Russian expert mentioned in 2010, "They (China and other non-littoral states) want their slice of the pie, i.e., in the open part of the Arctic basin" (Terekhov, 2010, p. 2). More recently, Igor' Sechin, Chairman of Rosneft and close ally of President Putin, uneasy about China's Arctic ambitions, remarked in 2013 that Russia faced "plenty of competition," not only from littoral states, but also from "… countries which seem to be far from the Arctic …. The struggle for resources is getting tougher" (Glava Rosnefti, 2014).

As a major exporter, China was also engaged in the debate early on regarding access to potentially lucrative Arctic shipping lanes. China proclaimed its commercial interests in the north Pacific and Arctic Oceans, worried as it was (as Wu Zhenfu, a professor from the Dalian Maritime University, stated concerning China's interests), that "(W)hoever has control over the Arctic route will control the new passage of world economics and international strategies" (Manthorpe, 2011, p. A6). Apparently, China's leaders worried that, should the NSR become a normal route for trans-oceanic shipping, Russia's control over the region might make traversing the NSR prohibitively expensive; therefore, Beijing forcefully proclaimed its interests in keeping transit costs reasonable and shipping lanes open (Jakobson, 2013; Mitchell, 2013).

However, although the two countries have not seen eye-to-eye in the past in the Arctic, since mid-2014 a significantly closer relationship has indeed developed between China and Russia there. Since that time–a time that obviously coincides with the imposition of sanctions against Russia's energy industry and Russia's "pivot to the East"–no longer does one often read in the official Russian press of fears of Chinese economic or military intentions in the region (or beyond). Instead, Chinese investment and involvement in infrastructure projects all along the "cold Silk Road" have been announced with great fanfare. What is more, as we have seen, hydrocarbon exploration and project development has been an especially important and high profile arena of activity in the new Sino-Russian relationship in the Arctic.

To be sure, Russia's goal of "mastering the Arctic"–a vital part of the Russian leadership's plan for the country's economic resurgence–requires significant capital investment; without the possibility of attracting Western capital for the vast majority of these projects, China's financial participation balances Russia's investment need.

Thus, this Arctic case study suggests that not only is it possible for China and Russia to move beyond an uneasy association of convenience toward a genuine partnership in areas of mutual interest–despite several continued difficulties confronting the overall relationship–but also that the Western-backed sanctions regime has acted as a catalyst for closer Sino-Russian relations.

References

Agrawal, R. (2014, September 18). Made in China and India: Can Xi and Modi Merge World's 'Factory' and 'Back Office?' *CNN*. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/17/world/asia/xi-modi-india-china/index.html?iref=allsearch

Akita, H. (2011, October 31). Japan in Middle, as Russia, China Set to Spar over Arctic. *The Nikkei Weekly*. Retrieved from http://www-lexisnexis-com.proxy.kennesaw.edu/lnacui2api/api/version1/getDocCui?oc=00240&hnsd=f&hgn=t&lni=5454-NRF1-DYBD-M3VD&hns=t&perma=true&hv=t&hl=t&csi=270944%2C270077%2C11059%2C8411&secondRedirectIndicator=true

Alexandrova, L. (2014, July 16). BRICS Summit Decisions May Change World Economic Climate. *ITAR-TASS*. Retrieved from http://itar-tass.com/en/opinions/763338

Alexeev, I. (2013, March 7). Russia Draws Up Business Plans to Revive the Northern Sea Route. *Opednews.com*. *Johnson's Russia List*, 8 March 2013, #43.

Amos, H. (2014, October 9). Will Western Sanctions Stop Russia's Arctic Oil Expansion? *Moscow Times*, p. 1.

Backgrounder: Chronology of China's Arctic expedition.(2008, July 13). *People's Daily Online*. Retrieved from http://en.people.cn/90001/90781/90879/6449076.html

Baev, P. (2013, August 15). Putin's Blurred Arctic Vision. *Moscow Times*. Johnson's Russia List, #149.

Bennett, M.(2013, January 15). Russia Roars Ahead in Race to Develop Arctic Shipping Lanes. *Alaska Dispatch*. Retrieved from https://www.adn.com/arctic/article/russia-roars-ahead-race-develop-arctic-shipping-route/2013/01/15/

Bering Strait Shipping Route to Slash Voyage Times Between Asia and Europe. (2013, August 22). *The Moscow Times*. *Johnson's Russia List*, 22 August 2013, #154.

Bhadrakumar, M. K. (2017, July 23). A New Normal in Russia-China Military Cooperation. *Indian Punchline blog*. Retrieved from http://blogs.rediff.com/mkbhadrakumar

Bigger Chinese Role Sought in the Arctic. (2014, July 19). *Xinhuanet.* Retrieved from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-07/19/c_133496160.htm

Burrett, T. (2014). National Interests Versus National Pride: The Russo-Japanese Northern Territories Dispute. *Problems of Post-Communism*, *61*(5), pp. 14 - 31.

Byers, M. (2013, August 28). How the Arctic Could Transform World Trade. *The Nation*. Retrieved from http://nation.com.pk/28-Aug-2013/how-the-arctic-ocean-could-transform-world-trade

Central Asia's Silk Road Rivalries. (2017). *International Crisis Group*. Retrieved from https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/central-asia/245-central-asias-silk-road-rivalries

Chazan, G. (2014, September 8). Sanctions Help Russia Overcome its China Paranoia. *Financial Times*. Retrieved from https://www.ft.com/content/4c04e91c-34f3-11e4-ba5d-00144feabdc0

China Mulls Routine Navigation through Arctic to Europe. (2015, October 26). *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://europe.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-10/26/content_22289246.htm

China-Nordic Arctic Research Center set up in Shanghai. (2013, December 10). *Xinhuanet.* Retrieved from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-12/10/c_132957412.htm

China Seeks Pragmatic Cooperation with Arctic Countries. (2014, November 2). *Xinhuanet.* Retrieved from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-11/02/c_133759443.htm

China Shipping Firms, Dynagas in Talks to Build $1.6 bln Arctic LNG Vessels. (2015, September 22). *Reuters*. Retrieved from http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFL5N11S08B20150922

China Signs $1.6b Engineering Deal for Siberian LNG Project. (2014, July 11). *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2014-07/11/content_17728838.htm

China's Energy Giant Willing to Cooperate in Arctic Resources Extraction.(2015, January 20). *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2015-1/20/content_19354336_2.htm

China's Participation in Arctic Affairs on Basis of Respect, Cooperation: FM. (2015, October 17). *Xinhuanet.* Retrieved from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-10/17/c_134721678.htm

Chinese Army Think-Tank says Arctic Energy Would Help Economy. (2014, June 18). *Reuters*. Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/18/china-arctic-idUSL4N0OZ36720140618

Chinese Icebreaker Concludes Arctic Expedition.(2012, September 27). *Xinhuanet.* Retrieved from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-09/27/c_131876712.htm

Clark, P. (2013a, July 25). Arctic Melt is 'Economic Time Bomb.' *The Financial Times*, p. 4.

Clark, P. (2013b, September 18). Arctic Summer Ice to Go by 2050, Fears UN. *The Financial Times*, p. 5.

Crooks, E., & Chazan, G. (2012, September 4). Energy: Drills, Chills, and Spills. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from https://www.ft.com/content/7a4d24fc-f5c0-11e1-a6bb-00144feabdc0

Darden, K. (2016, January 28). Is there a Non-West for Russia to Lead? *PONARS Eurasia*. Retrieved from http://www.ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Pepm417_Darden_Jan2016.pdf

Dawson, C. (2014, October 30). Northern Shipping Volume Increases as Arctic Ice Melts. *The Wall Street Journal*, p. B4.

Denmark Welcomes China in From the Arctic Cold. (2011, October 28). *Reuters*. Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/10/28/us-china-arctic-idUSTRE79R28S20111028

Du, J. (2015, January 13). General Nice Group to take over Greenland mine. *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://africa.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2015-01/13/content_19301924.htm

Duben, B. (2015, July 8). Why Russia's Turn to China is a Mirage. *Reuters*. Retrieved from http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2015/07/08/why-russias-turn-to-china-is-a-mirage/

Emmerson, C. (2010). *The Future History of the Arctic*. New York, NY: Public Affairs.

Emmerson, C. (2012, July 12). *In Search of Arctic Energy*. Panel conducted at The Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, D.C.

Espionage Returns to Cold War Levels in Melting Arctic. (2014, June 11). *The Toronto Star*. Retrieved from http://www-lexisnexis-com.proxy.kennesaw.edu/lnacui2api/api/version1/getDocCui?oc=00240&hnsd=f&hgn=t&lni=5CM7-4HB1-JBTY-W0K0&hns=t&perma=true&hv=t&hl=t&csi=270944%2C270077%2C11059%2C8411&secondRedirectIndicator=true

Farchy, J. (2015, October 14). China's Great Game: In Russia's Backyard. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from https://login.proxy.kennesaw.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.kennesaw.edu/docview/1732892276?accountid=11824

Ferdinand, P. (2007). Sunset, Sunrise: China and Russia Construct a New Relationship. *International Affairs*, *83*(5), 841-867.

Fouche, G. (2013, November 13). "China, Norway may team up in search for Arctic oil. *Reuters*. Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/13/us-iceland-oil-china-idUSBRE9AC0MW20131113

Frank, V. S. (1947). The Territorial Terms of the Sino-Russian Treaty of Nerchinsk, 1689. *Pacific Historical Review*, *16*(3), 265-270.

Friedman, N., & Puko, T. (2014, October 30). Shale Shines Light on Natural-Gas Liquids. *The Wall Street Journal*, p. C7.

FTA Offers Multiple Opportunities for Iceland, China. (2014, November 2). *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2014-11/02/content_18844419.htm

'Gazprom Neft' Opredelitsia s Partneryom po Dolginskomu Mestorozhdeniyu. (2014, October 3). *RIA Novosti*. Retrieved from https://ria.ru/economy/20141003/1026818123.html

Glava 'Rosnefti' Igor' Sechin Obespokoen Rastushchei Aktivnost'iu Kitaia v Arktike. (2014, June 6). *PortNews*. Retrieved from http://portnews.ru/news/181671/

Goble, P. (2013a, August 7). Window on Eurasia: 'Melting of Permafrost is Converting Much of Russia into a Swamp'. *Johnson's Russia List*, #143.

Goble, P. (2013b, August 14). Window on Eurasia: 'How Many Icebreakers Does Russia Need?' *Johnson's Russia List*, #148.

Goldstein, A. (2001). The Diplomatic Face of China's Grand Strategy: A Rising Power's Emerging Choice. *The China Quarterly*, *168* (Dec.), 835-864.

Greenland PM Says Big Potential in China's Arctic Presence. (2011, November 5). *ScandAsia.com* Retrieved from http://scandasia.com/9797-greenland-sees-big-potential-in-chinas-arctic-presence/

Greenlandic Minister Woos Chinese Investment.(2013, November 6). *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2013-11/06/content_17085100.htm

Halligan, L. (2014, May 28). Invisible Hand: Russia-China Gas Deal Spells Trouble for the Dollar. *Business New Europe*. Retrieved from http://www.bne.eu/content/story/invisible-hand-russia-china-gas-deal-spells-trouble-dollar

Hamilton, J. (2012). *In Search of Arctic Energy*. Panel conducted at The Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, D.C.

Hartwell, C. (2015, May 18). Russia and China are Frenemies both in Central Asia and Globally. *Russia Direct*. Retrieved from http://www.russia-direct.org/opinion/russia-and-china-are-frenemies-both-central-asia-and-globally

Higgins, A. (2014, September 29). Chinese Bid for Land Worries Norwegians. *International New York Times*, p. 1.

Hille, K. (2016, February 10). Russia and China: Friends with Benefits. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from https://www.ft.com/content/f8959924-cab6-11e5-a8ef-ea66e967dd44

ITAR-TASS. (2013, April 9). Shell Becomes Gazprom's Partner on Russia's Arctic Shelf. *Russian Press Review*. *Johnson's Russia List*, #65.

Ice-class Tanker to Bring Cargoes from Baltic Sea to South Korea by Northern Sea Route for First Time. (2013, September 17). *Johnson's Russia List*, #169.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2013). *Working Group I Contribution to the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report, Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis*. *Summary for Policymakers* Retrieved from

http://www.climatechange2013.org/images/uploads/WGIAR5-SPM_Approved27Sep2013.pdf

Interview: Iceland to Work Closer with China on Arctic Development: Icelandic FM. (2014, March 4). *People's Daily Online.* Retrieved from http://en.people.cn/90883/8555007.html

Jakobson, L. (2013, May 19). Beijing's Arctic Goals Are Not to be Feared. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from https://www.ft.com/content/3dfd6f16-bef1-11e2-87ff-00144feab7de

Katakey, R., & Kennedy, W. (2013, March 31). Russia Lets China into Arctic Rush as Energy Giants Embrace. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, p. A4.

Keil, K., & Raspotnik, A. (2013, September 8). The Myth of Arctic Shipping–Why the Northern Sea Route is Still of Limited Geo-Economic Importance. *The Arctic Institute*. Retrieved from https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/northern-sea-route-limited-geo-economic-importance/

Koranyi, B. (2013a, May 29). Ice Levels, Rule Changes to Boost Arctic Northern Sea Route. *Johnson's Russia List*, #97.

Koranyi, B. (2013b, May 31). Analysis–Oil Executives Tune Out the Call of the Wild Arctic. *Johnson's Russia List*, #117.

Korepin, S. (2011, August 11). Might Russia Welcome Global Warming? *Center for Strategic and International Studies*. Retrieved from http://csis.org/blog/might-russia-welcome-global-warming

Krainova, N. (2010, December 2). For Russia, Global Warming Benefits 'Outweigh' Negatives. *The Moscow Times*. Retrieved from http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/for-russia-global-warming-benefits-outweigh-negatives/425466.html

Kramer, A. E. (2013, September 15). "Russia Preparing Patrols of Arctic Shipping Lanes." *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/15/world/europe/russia-preparing-patrols-of-arctic-shipping-lanes.html

Kramer, A. E. (2014, October 30). The 'Russification' of Oil Exploration. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/30/business/energy-environment/russia-oil-exploration-sanctions.html

Kravtsova, Y. (2013, September 26). Russia Pushes for Further Arctic Exploration. *Moscow Times*. Retrieved from https://themoscowtimes.com/news/russia-pushes-for-further-arctic-exploitation-28022

Lukyanov, F. (2015, May 28). U.S. and Russia back to Cold War Diplomacy. *The Moscow Times*. Retrieved from https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/us-and-russia-back-to-cold-war-diplomacy-46867

MacFarquhar, N., & Herszenhorn, D. M. (2014, May 20). Ukraine Crisis Pushing Putin toward China. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/20/world/europe/ukraine-crisis-pushing-putin-toward-china.html

Made in China for Russian Shelf. (2015, September 29). *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from http://barentsobserver.com/en/energy/2015/09/made-china-russian-shelf-29-09

Manthorpe, J. (2011, January 3). China and Arctic's Future. *Windsor Star*, p. A6.

Medred, C. (2014, November 2). Experts Predict Ice-Free Arctic by 2020 as UN Releases Climate Report. *Anchorage Daily News*. Retrieved from https://www.adn.com/arctic/article/expert-predicts-ice-free-arctic-2020-same-day-un-releases-climate-report/2014/11/02/

Menon, R. (2009). The China-Russia Relationship: What it Involves, Where it is Headed, and How it Matters for the United States. *A Century Foundation Report, volume*(issue), 1-46.

Milne, R. (2013a, June 10). Oil Deal Fuels Beijing's Arctic Drive. *The Financial Times*, p. 5.

Milne, R. (2013b, July 22). Melting Ice Opens Arctic Trade Route. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from https://login.proxy.kennesaw.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.kennesaw.edu/docview/1407750420?accountid=11824

Mitchell, T. (2013, August 12). "Chinese Cargo Ship to Attempt Historic First Transit of Northeast Passage. *The Financial Times*, p. 1.

National Security Presidential Directive and Homeland Security Presidential Directive No 66 /Homeland Security Presidential Directive No 25, and Department of the Navy. (2009). *Memorandum for Distribution–The U.S. Navy Arctic Roadmap* (3140 / Ser. N09/9U103038).

New Icebreaker to Improve China's Polar Research.(2011, November 4). *People's Daily Online*. Retrieved from http://en.people.cn/90882/7635308.html

New Mega-Shipyard in the Russian Far East will Build Offshore Rigs. (2009, October 16). *The Russian Oil and Gas Report*, p. 3.

Ostrovsky, A. (2015, September 15). Russia-China Cooperation: Problems and Prospects. *Valdai Discussion Club*. Retrieved from http://valdaiclub.com/news/Russia-China+Cooperation%3A+Problems+and+Prospects/

Padrtova, B. (2014). Russian Military Build-up in the Arctic: Strategic Shift in the Balance of Power or Bellicose Rhetoric Only? *Arctic Yearbook 2014*. Northern Research Forum. Retrieved from http://www.joomag.com/magazine/arctic-yearbook-2014/0329972001414484578?preview

Palmer, B. (2012, January 23). Global Warming Would Harm the Earth, But Some Areas Might Find it Beneficial. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/global-warming-would-harm-the-earth-but-some-areas-might-find-it-beneficial/2012/01/17/gIQAbXwhLQ_story.html

Paniev, Y. (2014, May 14). Russia and Nicaragua to Cooperate on Construction of Interoceanic Canal. *Russia Beyond the Headlines*. Retrieved from https://www.rbth.com/international/2014/05/14/russia_and_nicaragua_to_cooperate_on_construction_of_new_intero_36645.html

Panin, A. (2014a, October 29). How Slumping Oil Prices Hit Russia's Sanctions-Struck Oil Industry. *Moscow Times*. Retrieved from https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/how-slumping-oil-prices-hit-russias-sanctions-struck-oil-industry-40861

Panin, A. (2014b, November 11). China Gets Upper Hand in Gas Deals Amid Russia-West Tensions. *Moscow Times*. Retrieved from https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/china-gets-upper-hand-in-gas-deals-amid-russia-west-tensions-41201

Parker, E. H. (1896). China and Russia. *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review*, *2*(3), 12-20.

Pettersen, T. (2015, September 4). Russia and China Sign Agreement on Belkomur Railroad. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from http://barentsobserver.com/en/business/2015/09/russia-and-china-sign-agreement-belkomur-railroad-04-09

Pettersen, T. (2016a, February 3). American-Chinese Cooperation on Northern Sea Route. *The Independent Barents Observer*. Retrieved from http://thebarentsobserver.com/arctic/2016/02/american-chinese-cooperation-northern-sea-route

Pettersen, T. (2016b, February 9). China Wants to Join Russia in Arctic Expedition. *The Independent Barents Observer*. Retrieved from http://thebarentsobserver.com/arctic/2016/02/china-wants-join-russia-arctic-expedition

Polarizing Proposal: Bye-bye 'Arctic' Ocean, Welcome 'Russian.' (2012, July 26). *Russia Today*. Retrieved from https://www.rt.com/news/arctic-russian-ocean-resources-076/

President Putin Pledges to Increase Trade with China and Asia to Rebuke Sanctions. (2014, November 13). *The Real News Network*. Retrieved from http://therealnews.com/t2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumival=12648

Pugliese, D. (2012, August 16). Canadian Government Does Not See a Military Threat in the Arctic, Says DND. *Ottawa Citizen*, p. 1.

Putz, C. (2016, March 10). China's Silk Road Belt Outpaces Russia's Economic Union. *The Diplomat*. Retrieved from http://thediplomat.com/2016/03/chinas-silk-road-belt-outpaces-russias-economic-union/

Rangsimaporn, P. (2006). Russia's Debate on Military Technological Cooperation with China: From Yeltsin to Putin. *Asian Survey*, *46*(3), 477-495.

Rasshirennoe Zasedanie Kollegii Ministerstva Oborony. (2013, February 27). *President of Russia's website*. Retrieved from http://www.kremlin.ru/news/17588

Rogozin: Active Development of Arctic Shelf to Cause Conflict of Interest, Sabotage. (2013, June 28). Interfax. Johnson's Russia List, #118.

Rogozin: Severniy Morskoi Put'–Perspektivniy Proekt Raboty s KNR. (2015, October 12). *RIA Novosti*. Retrieved from https://ria.ru/east_economy/20151012/1300440612.html

Rossiia Obespokoena Aktivizatsiei NATO v Arktike. (2011, July 6). *RIA Novosti*. Retrieved from https://ria.ru/defense_safety/20110706/397987672.html

Rotnem, T. E. (2014). The Sino-Russian Axis: 'Strategic Partners' Now, Rivals in History. In D. C. Chau & T. M. Kane (Eds.), *China and International Security: History, Strategy, and 21st Century Policy* (Vol. 1, pp. 181-196). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Publishers.

Russia-China to Sign 30 Agreements Next Week. (2014, May 16). *The BRICS Post.* Retrieved from http://thebricspost.com/russia-china-to-sign-30-agreements-next-week/#.Wh8FA3n_rX4

Russia and China to Build Cooperation with $10 Billion in New Development Funds. (2017, July 5). *bneIntellinews.com* Retrieved from http://www.intellinews.com/russia-and-china-to-build-cooperation-with-$10-billion-in-new-development-funds

Russia Building Its Military Presence in the Arctic. (2013, September 17). Russia Beyond the Headlines. Retrieved from https://www.rbth.com/politics/2013/09/17/russia_building_its_military_presence_in_the_arctic_29907.html

Russia May Accept Majority Chinese Control of Oil and Gas Fields. (2015, February 28). *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2015-02/28/content_19677625.htm

Russia May Continue Arctic Shelf Exploration in 2015 to Submit Claim to UN: Explorer.(2014, October 16). *RIA Novosti*. Retrieved from http://en.ria.ru/russia/20141016/194155982/Russia-May-Continue-Arctic-Shelf-Exploration-in-2015-to-Submit.html

Russia Reopens Military Base to Control Key Part of Arctic: Putin. (2013, September 16). *RIA Novosti*. *Johnson's Russia List*, #169.

Russia Strengthens Ties with Vietnam. (2013, December 12). *Stratfor: Global Intelligence*. Retrieved from http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia-strengthens-ties-vietnam#axzz3EpCstxax

Russia to Seek Expansion of Continental Shelf Limit: Minister. (2014, October 29). *RIA Novosti*. Retrieved from http://en.ria.ru/russia/20141029/194800682/Russia-to-Seek-Expansion-of-Continental-Shelf-Limit-Minister.html

Russian Army Beefs Up Arctic Presence over Western Threat. (2014, October 29). Retrieved from http://rt.com/news/200419-russia-military-bases-arctic/

Russian Government Starts Free Land Giveaway in Country's Far East. (2017, February 1). Retrieved from https://themoscowtimes.com/news/russian-government-starts-free-land-giveaway-in-countrys-far-east-57002

Sale, R., & Potapov, E. (2010). *The Scramble for the Arctic: Ownership, Exploitation, and Conflict in the Far North*. London, England: Frances Lincoln Limited Publishers.

Saul, J. (2013, October 17). Icebergs, Insurance Hamper Top of the World Shipping Route. *Johnson's Russia List*, #186.

Shotter, J. (2013, September 7-8). OMV Makes Big Oil Discovery in Untapped Arctic Waters. *The Financial Times*, p. 13.

Soldatkin, V. (2014, October 13). Russia Signs Deals with China to Help Weather Sanctions. *Reuters*. Retrieved from http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/10/13/russia-china-banks-idUKL6N0S82EJ20141013

Staalesen, A. (2015a, May 20). Norilsk Nickel Sells Arkhangelsk Sea Port. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from http://barentsobserver.com/en/business/2015/05/norilsk-nickel-sells-arkhangelsk-sea-port-20-05

Staalesen, A. (2015b, August 11). Greeks Cut Arctic Deal. *The Barents Observer*. Retrieved from http://barentsobserver.com/en/energy/2015/08/greeks-cut-arctic-deal-11-08

Staalesen, A. (2015c, December 14). Aiming for Year-round Sailing on Northern Sea Route. *The Independent Barents Observer*. Retrieved from http://thebarentsobserver.com/2015/12/aiming-year-round-sailing-northern-sea-route

Staalesen, A. (2016, January 7). More Chinese Money for Yamal. *The Independent Barents Observer*. Retrieved from http://thebarentsobserver.com/industry/2016/01/more-chinese-money-yamal

Strokan, S., & Mikheev, V. (2015, September 24). Going Eastward. *Russia Beyond the Headlines*. Retrieved from http://rbth.com/international/2015/09/24/troika_report_pope_francis_may_help_defuse_russia-west_dialoge_49529.html

Tang, S. (2000). Economic Integration in Central Asia: The Russian and Chinese Relationship. *Asian Survey*, *40*(2), 360-376.

Terekhov, A. (2010, March 3). China Aspires to Russian Arctic Regions. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, pp. 1-2.

The Arctic Dimension of the Russia-China Alliance. (2014, November 14). *The Independent Barents Observer*. Retrieved from http://www.rcinet.ca/eye-on-the-arctic/2014/11/14/the-arctic-dimension-of-the-russia-china-alliance

The Development of China's Marine Programs: IV. The Development of Oceanographic Science, Technology and Education.(2007, October 15). *People's Daily Online.* Retrieved from http://en.people.cn/90840/92283/92301/6283443.html

The Development Strategy of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation. (2013, April 14). *The International Expert Council on Cooperation in the Arctic*. Retrieved from http://www.iecca.ru/en/legislation/strategies/item/99-the-development-strategy-of-the-arctic-zone-of-the-russian-federation

Thompson, J., & Ohanyan, N. (2017, June 1). With China's Help, Russia Pursues Decades-Old Dream of Arctic Railway. *Arctic Deeply*. Retrieved from https://www.newsdeeply.com/arctic/articles/2017/06/01/with-chinas-help-russia-pursues-decades-old-dream-of-arctic-railways

Trenin, D. (2015, April 9). From Greater Europe to Greater Asia? The Sino-Russian Entente. *Carnegie Moscow Center*. Retrieved from http://carnegie.ru/publications/?fa=59728

United States Geological Survey. (2008). *Circum-Arctic Resource Appraisal: Estimates of Undiscovered Oil and Gas North of the Arctic Circle*, (Fact Sheet 2008/3049).

Vanderklippe, N. (2014, January 21). Non-Arctic Nations Merit Say in Region, China Argues. *The Globe and Mail*, p. A1.

Vorobyov, A. (2017, July 11). China and Central Asia: Growing Friendship at Russia's Borders." *Russian International Affairs Council*. Retrieved from http://russiancouncil.ru

Vorontsova, Veronika and Mariya Vasil'chenko. August 6, 2013. "Ona Rastaiala." Novye Izvestiia. Retrieved from https://newizv.ru/news/society/06-08-2013/186801-ona-rastajala

Wang, H. (2014, July 12). Dragon on a Mission. *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2014-07/12/content_17767846.htm

Wang, R. (2015, March 26). China and Canada Expect More Collaboration on the Arctic. *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2015-03/26/content_19911768.htm

Weaver, C. (2014, September 26). Moscow Court Seizes Yevtushenkov's Bashneft Shares. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/27620c38-457a-11e4-9b71-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3H5lXUiO8

Xinhua Insight: Arctic Council Observer Status Guarantees China's Legitimate Rights. (2013, May 16). *Xinhuanet*. Retrieved from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/indepth/2013-05/16/c_132387742.htm

Yu, M. *March 2*(2010, May 16). China 'Seeking to Boost' Arctic Presence for Possible Shipping Route. *Global Times*. Retrieved from http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/508909.shtml

Zakharova, A. (2013, March 9). Global Warming: Benefits or Problems? *The Voice of Russia*. Retrieved from http://voiceofrussia.com/2013_03_09/Globalwarming-benefits-or-problems/

Zamyatina, T. (2014, October 30). Russia Focuses Efforts on Expanding Presence in Arctic. *TASS*. Retrieved from http://tass.com/opinions/763474

Zhenghua, W. (2013, June 6). China to Build Research Center for Arctic Region. *China Daily European Edition*. Retrieved from http://europe.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-06/06/content_16573303.htm

Zhou, S. (2013, March 14). Arctic shipping lanes open up. *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2013-03/14/content_16307084.htm

Journal of Global Initiatives
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp. 140-161.

Political Homophobia as a State Strategy in Russia

Nikita Sleptcov

Abstract

This article examines the current state strategy of political homophobia used by the Russian government to create a sense of national identity by scapegoating Russian homosexuals as "foreign agents," reinforcing the power of the governing elite, and distracting people's attention from government misconduct.

Introduction

> "West will fall in the same way as the Roman Empire fell before it, because in the Roman army it all started with the fact that the soldiers were no longer engaged in battles and indulged in "the charms of homosexual love." (State Duma deputy Vitaly Milonov in an interview to the Russian News Service)[1]

Political homophobia as a state strategy is a phenomenon that has attracted scholarly attention at the beginning of the 21st century as more states across the globe resort to it in their domestic policies.[2] In the case of Russia discussed below, I show that political homophobia as a modular oppressive strategy has been used to legitimize the current authoritarian political regime, to unify national identity, and to present the country's particular values as distinct from those of the West. In order to show what Wiess and Bosia call the "modular" character of political homophobia, I rely on current research in the area of political homophobia, analyze Russian homophobic legislation, and compare Russia to Poland , a country that also previously introduced similar legislation and employed similar rhetoric of political homophobia.

In this paper I argue that political homophobia as a state strategy is embedded into Russian history and since 2012 has been actively employed by the Russian authorities. This paper is an opportunity to look at the current homophobic outburst as a deliberate political strategy carefully crafted in Russia. In my

---

[1] Previously being a member of St. Petersburg city hall, Milonov was the main sponsor of the city "gay propaganda law."

[2] See. Weiss, M. L., & Bosia, M. J. (2013). *Global Homophobia: States, Movements, and the Politics of Oppression*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.

understanding of political homophobia, I will rely on the work of Wiess and Bosia (2013) who understand political homophobia as a

> purposeful [strategy], especially as practiced by state actors; as embedded in the scapegoating of an "other" that drives processes of state building and retrenchment; as the product of transnational influence-peddling and alliances; and as integrated into questions of collective identity and the complicated legacies of colonialism. Specifically, we target the overt deployment of homophobia in political rhetoric and policy as a remarkably similar and increasingly modular phenomenon across a wide range of cases. (p. 14)

In their definition, Bosia and Weiss highlight the modular nature of political homophobia, that is, exhibiting similar characteristic across cases where present. I argue that the new round of political homophobia that was launched approximately in 2012 with regional and federal legislation exposes the modular character of Russian political homophobia. Approaching homophobia as explicitly the deliberate and modular political strategy offers a different way to understand the power dynamic that goes beyond one case, one country.

Homophobia as a political strategy in not unknown to Russian politics. During the Soviet period, Stalin skillfully used homophobia to attack political opponents and consolidate power (Healey, 2002; Healey, Baer, & Stella, 2008). With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Iron Curtain, the young democratic government in Russia was more focused on stabilizing the economy than on building political participation. "Shock therapy" aimed at changing the economy and "the initial impoverishment that came along with it had more of a 'demasculinizing' effect, as many men could not meet the new market-derived standards for masculine achievement" (Sperling, 2014, p. 60). The effect was so profound that some scholars called it "crisis in gender identities, and particularly masculinity" (Goscilo & Strukov, 2010, p. 11). Together with the loss of the status of superpower and, as a result, diminishing role of the country in international affairs, led to the fact that "Russia in the 1990s was quite often portrayed not as a mother but rather as a woman of easy virtue; prostitution became a metaphor for the country's foreign policy" (Riabov & Riabova, 2014, p. 25). Therefore, one of the earliest political acts undertaken by Putin when he became president in the early 2000s was the change of discourse to include patriotic terms and images to reinstate Russian masculinity on the political level and consolidate public support.

The state strategy of political homophobia, among other policies of nation building, was deployed in 2012 as a response to the ideological vacuum that had been created by the collapse of the Soviet Union. I argue that modern Russia under the rule of President Vladimir Putin has deployed political homophobia as part of a range of policies aimed at (re)creating a sense of national identity that is not based on western liberal values.

Being essentially an "imagined community" of separated individuals, nations are constructed through language and discourse (Anderson, 1983, p. 15; Martin, 1995; De Cillia, Reisgl, & Wodak, 1999). Because they are "mobilized into

existence through symbols invoked by political leadership" (Dryzek, 2006, p. 35) discourses are powerful tools in constructing, perpetuating, transforming, or dismantling national identities (De Cillia, Reisgl, & Wodak, 1999). Therefore, discursive practices of homophobia used by the political leadership in laws and public speeches constantly recreate a sense of national identity distinct from the West with its emphasis on liberal values (Healey, Baer, & Stella 2008, pp. 6-7).

To denote the gradual shift toward a politics of nationalism, I introduce the term "conservative heteronationalism". Analogous to Jasbir Puar's (2007) homonationalism, heteronationalism deploys heterosexuality as a modular type of sexual behavior forming the basis of nation where queer sexualities are not included into the process and become marginalized as unproductive sexualities (Foucault, 1990).[3] The conservatism is expressed by the desire to look for role models of sexual behavior in history, which is selective and biased. Conservative heteronationalism is a state strategy that occurred in the Russian Federation under Putin. A main objective in the deployment of modular political homophobia is to create a collective identity for Russian nationalists.

For Bosia and Wiess (2013), political homophobia is connected to the legacy of colonialism. Russia has never been colonized by a foreign power. However, the period of the 1990s was characterized by the majority of common people as the country's 'quasi-colonialization', turning it into 'a raw material appendage of the West' (Kotz, 1999). I argue that the feeling of lost sovereignty and independence was the trigger that contributed to the formation of a public demand for a new type of leadership that would not be directly associated with the West, and therefore in the public eye would not look dependent. The people were searching for a hero, someone who could bring the lost pride and political status back to them. Putin was such a figure, whose "self-assertion as a tough, strong, masculine, and, above all, patriotic leader protecting Russia" was seen as capable of rectifying the status-quo (Sperling, 2014, p. 78).

I associate the deployment of political homophobia in Russia with the impact of internal as well as external factors. The introduction of conservative rhetoric into Russian domestic politics is closely related to the international milieu around Russia in the mid-2000s. The relations between the West and Russia started to deteriorate after the famous Munich speech the Russian president Putin delivered during Munich Security Conference in Germany on 10 February 2007. Putin criticized the West in general and the USA in particular for "monopolistic dominance in global relations" (Lekic, 2007). The speech marked the beginning of a policy of deterrence in the relations between Russia and the West and the further events (the Russian-Georgian war, the chain of color revolutions in the countries of the former USSR and so on) laid the foundation for mutual distrust (Koshkin, 2016, p. 6). The speech reignited the suspicion of the NATO enlargement among Russian elite as well as Russian population (Jégo, 2008;

[3] Thus heteronationalism is based, in part, on the idea that the result of the sexual behavior is pleasure and not the birth of children.

Kryshtanovskaya, 2008; Neef, 2016). Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who replaced Putin in early 2008, in his address to the Federal Assembly the same year expressed the concerns saying that "Russia's strength is being tested" by the NATO members (Medvedev, 2008).

The Putin administration changed its rhetoric toward a more critical position on the West (Shimov, 2017). Confrontation with Western countries required a change in internal discourse, which happened with the gradual introduction of the language of traditional values. People impoverished and humiliated in the 1990s politics of "shock therapy" welcomed the changed course. "Russia is getting up from its knees" became a slogan of growing anti-westernization in the country (Rubov, 2008). The new ideology of conservative traditional values involved many actors such as the ruling United Russia party, Cossacks, and most importantly the Russian Orthodox Church, whose position on homosexuality has traditionally been hostile (Zorgdrager, 2013). The Russian Orthodox Church, politically disempowered during the soviet times, became engaged in politics after the collapse of the USSR in 1991 but did not gain political prominence until the late 2000s when the newly invigorated Russian Orthodoxy has been deployed to play a crucial part in the new politics of conservatism (Anderson, 2007; Mitrokhin, 2009; Willems, 2006).

I argue that the launch of political homophobia in Russia has been closely connected to changes in the country's foreign policy due to deteriorating relations with Western countries and the necessity to legitimize the current political regime inside the country. Conservative heteronationalism, enshrined in the legislation, excludes queer Russians from the definition of a truly Russian citizen. LGBTQ advocacy groups, funded from abroad, are deemed "foreign agents" serving interests of Russian adversaries. Such a hostility from the government promotes societal homophobia within the nation and marginalizes the status of Russian queers.

Literature Review

Homophobia as a social phenomenon has been a scholarly focus from many different perspectives. Scholars have been studying the interconnections between states and the homophobic attitudes of the population and their effect on LGBTQ rights activists (Frohlich, 2011). Homophobic attitudes have been also scrutinized from the position of relations between Christianity and homophobia (Birken, 1997) and homophobia and masculinity (Stein, 2005). Bosia and Weiss (2012) pioneered the study of homophobia as a modular and deliberate political strategy that has taken place in different parts of the world.

There is a growing body of scholarship focused particularly on examining homophobia in Russia from the political standpoint. There is scientific research in the area of history (Ashwin, 2000; Engelstein, 1995; Healey 1993, 2002, 2003; Healey, Baer, & Stella, 2008) and the sociology of homosexuality in Russia (Baer, 2002, 2009). This literature suggests a perpetuated feeling of homophobia within

the Russian population due to the historical legacy of homosexuality in Soviet times and negative discourse produced by the state today.

There is also a significant amount of research in the area of masculinity and its nexus to the political regime, attitudes, and culture (Clements, Friedman, & Healey, 2002; Makarychev & Medvedev, 2015; Riabov & Riabova, 2014; Sperling, 2014). Sperling (2014) argues that masculinity plays a key role in legitimizing the Russian political regime. She writes,

> In the contemporary Russian case, the Kremlin deployed a legitimation strategy that included stressing Putin's machismo–a strategy that bled over into popular cultural productions of the same ilk.[…] Traditional masculinity, therefore, enables male political leaders (and some female ones as well) to assert their power over others who can be identified or characterized as traditionally feminine.[…] Political actors employ widely familiar cultural notions of masculinity, femininity, and homophobia (heteronormativity) as political tools in their performance of legitimacy. (Sperling, 2014, p. 3)

Researchers also note a growing influence of the Russian Orthodox Church as an authoritative actor in producing homophobic discourse and reinforcing traditional gender roles (Sperling, 2014; Stähle, 2015; Zorgdrager, 2013). Taking into consideration the fact that the majority of the population identify as orthodox Christians, the Church's position on social issues has a significant impact on societal perception.

Scientists have studied the role media plays in the construction of homophobia within the Russian context (Persson, 2015). Media has a significant influence on people's attitudes toward such social issues (Gainous, 2007; Venzo & Hess, 2013). Gomillion and Giuliano (2011) have examined how the media has influenced self-realization, coming out, and current identities of American homosexuals "by providing role models and inspiration" (p. 330). There is also a body of research on discursive practices within local LGBTQ communities developed in response to societal homophobia in Russia (Kondakov, 2011, 2013a, 2013b). The use of such discrete language helps Russian queers stay unnoticed in the hostile environment. For example, the usage of the phrase "byut v teme" ("to be in the theme") which means to belong to the LGBTQ+ community. For a person who does not know, this phrase does not carry any obvious semantic load, for an initiate, this kind of "fluid" identity allows one to avoid the daily hostile and homophobic environment (Kondakov, 2013b).

In my research, I place Russia within a broader international context in order to show that current homophobic discourse and "anti-gay" legislation passed in 2013 is not unique to Russia and represents a wider attempt of different authoritarian states to use homosexuality politically to their advantage. [4] However,

---

[4] The federal law "For the Purpose of Protecting Children from Information Advocating for a Denial of Traditional Family Values" of June 11, 2013 and enacted on June 30, 2013.

unlike in places like Uganda or Egypt, Russian homosexuals are hostages of complicated foreign policy games between Russia and the West. I argue that the politics of homophobia launched by Putin is a direct consequence of deteriorating relations with the United States and Western Europe.

Methods

In this study, I analyze regional as well as federal legislation that was developed between 2006 and 2013 in Russia and which were aimed at regulating queer public visibility. An examination of legislation is particularly important because it denotes both the will of the legislator and demonstrates the perpetuation of political homophobia in the law. For example: the Law of the Region of Ryazan dated June 15, 2006 N 66-03, "On the Changes in the Law of the Region of Ryazan"; "On the Administrative Violations"; and several other nearly identical bills adopted by Arkhangelsk in 2011[5], Kostroma[6], Saint Petersburg[7], Novosibirsk[8], Magadan[9], Samara[10], Baskortostan[11], and Krasnodar[12] in 2012, and Irkutsk[13] and Kaliningrad[14] in 2013. In addition to these, I consider the federal law "For the Purpose of Protecting Children from Information Advocating for a Denial of Traditional Family Values" which was unanimously passed on June 30, 2013.

---

[5] Law of the Arkhangelsk Region of December 15, 2009 N 113-9-OZ "On certain measures to protect the morality and health of children in the Arkhangelsk region"

[6] Law of the Kostroma Region of February 15, 2012 N 193-5-ZKO "On Amendments to the Law of the Kostroma Region "On Guarantees of the Rights of the Child in the Kostroma Region and the Code of the Kostroma Region on Administrative Offenses"

[7] Law of St. Petersburg of February 29, 2012 N 238 "On Amendments to the Law of St. Petersburg" On Administrative Offenses in St. Petersburg"

[8] Law of the Novosibirsk Region of June 14, 2012 N 226-OZ "On Amendments to Certain Laws of the Novosibirsk Region"

[9] Law of the Magadan Region of June 9, 2012 N 1507-OZ "On Amending Certain Laws of the Magadan Region in the Protection of Minors from Factors Negatively Affecting Their Physical, Intellectual, Mental, Spiritual and Moral Development"

[10] Law of the Samara region of July 10, 2012 N 75-GD "On Amendments to the Law of the Samara Region" and "On Administrative Offenses in the Territory of the Samara Region"

[11] Law of the Republic of Bashkortostan of July 23, 2012 N 581-з "On Amending the Law of the Republic of Bashkortostan," "On Basic Guarantees of the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Bashkortostan.".

[12] Law of the Krasnodar Krai of July 3, 2012 N 2535-KZ "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Krasnodar Region in Part of Strengthening Protection of Health and Spiritual and Moral Development of Children."

[13] Law of the Irkutsk Region of April 24, 2013 N 29-OZ "On Amendments to the Law of the Irkutsk Oblast "On Certain Measures to Protect Children from Factors Negatively Affecting Their Physical, Intellectual, Mental, Spiritual and Moral Development in the Irkutsk Region"

[14] Law of the Kaliningrad Region of January 30, 2013 N 199, "On Amendments and Additions to the Kaliningrad Oblast Law "On Protection of the Population of the Kaliningrad Region from Information Products Harming the Spiritual and Moral Development," and Law of the Kaliningrad Region of January 30, 2013 N 196, "On introducing amendments to the Kaliningrad Oblast Law 'The Kaliningrad Oblast Code of Administrative Offenses'"

All of these laws. I argue, are discriminatory and anti-democratic nature. The legislative measures establish social disparity in traditional and non-traditional relations by prohibiting public displays of affection between same-sex partners, which contradicts the principle of non-discrimination of international human rights law (explain further, cite references). Homosexuality is defined as corrupting the youth. The aforementioned Ryazan law directly states that it creates "measures aimed at ensuring intellectual, moral and mental safety of children in the Ryazan region" (Law of Ryazan oblast, dated June 15, 2006 N 66-03). The state hierarchizes sexuality by defining homosexuality as an influence that corrupts minors. Such a discourse produces a notion of the correct sexual behavior that transcends into the political realm, reinforcing the heteronationalistic nature of the nation-building. Discuss more.

The laws contain outdated, explicitly offensive language. Instead of using internationally appropriate term "homosexuality," the laws utilize the Russian term "homosexualism," which pertains to a set of ideas or ideology. The term is often used by policy-makers to dismiss same-sex relations as a deliberate strategy to undermine their inclusion in Russian society. The Kaliningrad law is to some extent unique. Not only does it use the word "sodomy" and put homosexuality together with pedophilia, it also forbids "propaganda" related to "non-traditional relations" among all the citizens of the region, not just minors. The St. Petersburg law also uses the word "sodomy" to denote same-sex practices among men.

The language utilized by the legislators aims at restructuring sexuality on a political scale, subjugating homosexuality to heterosexuality. It allows for deployment of political homophobia in order to create a sense of national unity based on sexuality. Conservative heteronationalism reflected in the legislation portrays the Russian nation as purely heterosexual. Russians who do not fit the category are deprived of recognition and representation.

Political Roots of the Institutionalization of Homophobia in Russia

Political homophobia as a strategy of the Russian state cannot be understood without reference to the destructive experience of the demasculinization of the country that eventually led to the welcoming of authoritarianism. In this case, Vladimir Putin used sexual minorities in order to construct an image of an external threat and its internal "agents." However, not only homosexuals were portrayed that way. Russian NGOs that receive funding from foreign sources were also marginalized and labeled as "foreign agents."

Historically, the Soviet regime used the political ideology of communism to lessen anxiety about the future of the society by creating and sustaining a stable hierarchy of gender roles where masculinity was a central organizing norm. In many ways, the current conservative turn and the emergence of the authoritarian regime of Vladimir Putin find their political inspiration in the earlier periods of the Soviet history (Cannady & Kubicek, 2014; Lukin, 2009; Prozorov, 2005). The use of an external threat helped the government to demand loyalty within the country and provided a sense of unity to the nation. A perpetuated feeling of paternalism

placed the state in a position of decision-maker in every aspect of human life. Adrian Ashwin (2000) speaking about governing gender norms, notes that

> in the case of women, their role was defined as worker-mothers who had a duty to work, to produce future generations of workers, as well as to oversee the running of the household. Men, meanwhile, had an at once more limited and higher-status role to play. They were to serve as leaders, managers, soldiers, workers–in effect, they were to manage and build the communist system–while the state assumed responsibility for the fulfilment of the traditional masculine roles of father and provider, becoming, in effect, a universal patriarch to which both men and women were subject. In this way, masculinity became socialized and embodied in the Soviet state, the masculinity of individual men being officially defined by their position in the service of that state. (p. 1)

The fall of communism and disintegration of the country resulted in a deep feeling of de-masculinization and loss of identity. The previously existing gender roles carefully crafted and transmitted through generations were shaken by the significant economic and political turmoil. Additionally, the abrupt and substantial impoverishment of the population and the decline in male life expectancy negatively affected the ability of men to provide not only for their families but to the nation as well (Riabov & Riabova, 2014). The loss in the Cold War with the West left a deep wound in the consciousness of the population. It also led to a sense of demasculinization which, as Riabov and Riabova (2014) argue, had two effects,

> first, there was a significant weakening of the country's international position because of the nation's defeat in the cold war, the collapse of the USSR, and the Russian army's defeat in the war in Chechnya in 1994–1996. Second, human trafficking reminded Russian men that they were unable to take care of their nation's women. Moreover, Russia in the 1990s was quite often portrayed not as a mother but rather as a woman of easy virtue; prostitution became a metaphor for the country's foreign policy. (p. 25)

The weakening economy of the country compelled Russian leaders to turn to Western countries in order to seek financial support. This reinforced the image of an impoverished country begging from its neighbors with an outstretched hand and painfully harmed the national pride of Russians. The lost status was further reinforced by Western countries expansion of NATO and the bombing of Yugoslavia despite protests from Russia. No longer acting from a position of strength (a traditionally masculine notion), Russian society harbored some resentment against Western democracies.

Flush with victory in the Cold War, in the early 1990s Western European countries failed to fully engage Russia in the democratic process and the work of

European institutions. Weak ties between the European institutions made it unfeasible to influence the Russian government on issues such as gay rights[15] (Ferrari, 2016). However, some European institutions such as the Council of Europe in the early 1990s demanded decriminalization of homosexuality before it could welcome Russia (Bohan, 2014). The Yeltsin administration in 1993 excluded "muzhelozhestvo" (male-to-male sexual practices) from the Code of Criminal Offence.[16] The emergence of LGBT activism in post-Soviet Russia could have been a first step towards the inception of a statewide LGBT movement. Yet, as Laurie Essig (1999) notes, it was not the birth of the movement, but rather a miscarriage (p. 67). After the abrupt emergence of the LGBT movement in the 90s by the beginning of the 2000s, it was almost invisible (Essig, 1999; Nemtsev, 2008).

Decriminalization did not lead to de-stigmatization of Russian gays and lesbians. Baer (2009) writes, "Western-style homosexuality, or what Altman has referred to as the "global gay," has become a convenient symbol of Western cultural imperialism, involving the encroachment of Western values (overt sexuality, non-reproductive sex, and consumerism) and Western political concepts (tolerance, diversity, and civil rights)" (p. 6). For the government, juridical decriminalization of homosexuality was a tool in negotiations with international organizations and foreign governments. Therefore, homosexuality was used politically in two ways. In domestic affairs, the government was silent about rights of homosexuals in order not to attract unnecessary criticism of the public. In foreign affairs, homosexuality was used to show ongoing democratization of the country.

The growing visibility of sexualities on TV and on the streets of Russian big cities quickly ignited a feeling of domestic homophobia within the population. Homosexuality, in particular, was seen as "a foreign import, that is, a direct effect of Western influence" (Healey, Baer, & Stella, 2008, p. 6). As Massad (2002) observes, "by inciting discourse on homosexual and gay and lesbian rights and identities, the very ontology of gayness is instituted in a discourse that could have only two reactions to the claims of universal gayness: support them or oppose them without ever questioning their epistemological underpinnings" (p. 374). The majority of Russians show strong animosity toward same-sex practices and visibility of homosexuals.

It is important to emphasize that the decriminalization of homosexuality in Russia was not a response to a growing LGBT activism. On the contrary, Russian gay and lesbian groups, that started emerging as early as 1993, were weak and disorganized nationally. As Bosia and Weiss (2012) suggest there is a clear pattern of the diffusion of global homophobia because "in no context in the world are LGBT citizens the threat they are made out to be; the ubiquitous specter of married, child-rearing gay men or lesbians inflates a tiny, often meek and nearly–or fully invisible minority, to nation-destroying stature, much as anti-semitism has done,

[15] Russia decriminalized homosexuality in 1993 while excluded it from the list of mental illnesses in 1999.

[16] Here and after all translations from Russian into English are mine.

and frequently at the same time" (p. 20). This is certainly true for the Russian Federation of the 2000s when domestic homophobia became a strategic political tool. When this happened, the homophobic discourse and policies received overwhelming support from the general public for whom gays and lesbian were a symbol of Western liberalism (Koshelev, 2012; Levada-Center, 2015).

Therefore, the 1990s became a lost period for LGBT activism in Russia. In the circumstances of a weak and dependent state, LGBTQ activists failed to push the government to deliver rights to Russian gays and lesbians. The society, feeling deprived of their masculine nature, associated homosexuality with demasculatinity. As a result, a politics of compliance with the West in exchange for scarce resources turned the Russian population against Western values. The government later used such attitudes to support a carefully crafted state strategy of political homophobia.

Putin's Conservative Turn and Institutionalization of Homosexuality in Russia

At the beginning of his presidency in the 2000s, Vladimir Putin attempted to combine politics of "friendly relations" with the West and "patriotism" for his domestic constituencies. Although Putin's Russia was allowed into many European and international political institutions, the country's voice was barely heard by the Western counterparts. The last straw was a round of NATO expansion in 2007 with the inclusion of South and East European nations bordering Russia. This move was perceived as unfriendly and even aggressive by the Russian political elites. The offensive character of NATO and the reluctance to treat Russia as equal pushed the Putin administration into isolation and the search for a new ideology for domestic consumption. To unite the nation, the Kremlin turned to the ideology of conservative heteronationalism.

Conservative heteronationalism in its Russian version represents an attempt to create of sense of national identity based on the construct of traditional values and heteronormativity. In such a social construct "nontraditional (that is, non-heterosexual and non-heteronormative) sexual relationships are understood to be socially inferior" (Wilkinson, 2014, p.372).

With the growing conservative heteronationalism, homosexuals again appeared to be the focal point of the policies of exclusion. In order to posit Russia against the West, the government needed to identify a Russian group of people that would represent non-Russian values influenced by the West and serving as agents of Western corrupt influences within the country. Such tactics of carefully crafted state homophobia facilitates the state's objective of uniting the society around its national leader. Writes Stähle (2015), "feared, condemned and demonized, homosexuality has been used for contesting power relations, articulating Russia's sovereignty and defining the Self and the Other" (p. 52). Politically, it allowed the government to shift public attention to the minor problem, whereas the real social and economic issues remained without substantial public criticism. The parastatal media effectively accomplished the task. LGBTQ-

rights organizations, in particular, became an exclusive aim of governmental criticism as agents of the western countries, especially the Unites States. It found support among the population.

Russian researcher, Igor Kon, connects the initial conservative turn in 2005-2006 that started when Ryazan Regional Assemble (Ryazanskaya Oblastnaya Duma) adopted a supplement to the local Law on Administrative Offenses to the current round of homophobia, claiming that it is organically linked to other forms of Soviet-Russian xenophobia (Kon, 2010; Nagel, 1998).[17] The law used the Soviet derogatory term "homosexualism" combined with the outdated term "sodomy" that has religious connotations and the relatively new "lesbianism" which was not used previously.[18] The law was contested in the Constitutional Court in 2009. In its decision the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation on January 19, 2010, declared, that

> … as such the prohibition of the propaganda–as a purposeful targeted and uncontrolled activity of the dissemination of information that may damage the health, moral and spiritual development, including misconceptions about the social equivalence of traditional and non-traditional marriage–among persons deprived due to their inability to critically evaluate such information cannot be considered as violating the constitutional rights of citizens (Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, 2014).

In 2012, the decision was appealed to the UN Human Rights Committee (HRC). The Committee decided that "the applicant's conviction under the Ryazan Law on Administrative Offenses (Ryazan Region Law) which prohibits public actions aimed at propaganda of homosexuality among minors violated her right to freedom of expression, read in conjunction with her right to freedom from discrimination, under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)" (International Justice Resource Center, 2012). However, that decision did not

---

[17] Zakon Ryazanskoi oblasti ot 15.06.2006 N 66-03 "O Vnesenii izmenenii v Zakon Ryazanskoi Oblasti "Ob Administrativnih Pravonarusheniiah" [Law of the Region of Ryazan dated 15.06.2006) N 66-03 "On the Changes in the Law of the Region of Ryazan "On the Administrative Violations"] Retrieved May 27, 2013 from the Region of Ryazan website: http://ryazan.news-city.info/docs/sistemsj/dok_oeqrlo.htm

[18] It should be noted that The Russian language often uses words "homosexualism" and "lesbianism" while in relation to heterosexual practices the word "heterosexuality" is used. The suffix "-ism" in many languages (Russian is not an exception) is used to create ideological concepts (socialism, capitalism, feminism, etc.). I would argue that artificially made mistranslation of homosexuality aims at showing political nature of the homosexual practices as if homosexuality was an ideology.

change the situation since the UN HRC does not have an effective leverage to pursue Ryazan Administration to change the law.

Several other Russian regions followed the example – Arkhangelsk in 2011, Kostroma in 2012, St. Petersburg in 2012, Novosibirsk in 2012, Magadan in 2012, Samara in 2012, and Krasnodar in 2012–and adopted similar regional gay propaganda laws. Some of them are particularly important for analysis. St. Petersburg, considered the most European among Russian cities, adopted anti-gay law "On Amendments to the Law of St. Petersburg On administrative offenses in St. Petersburg" on March 30, 2012. Being homophobic in its very nature, the law also uses the outdated repressive language, interpreting the "LGBT" acronym as "sodomy, lesbianism, bisexuality, transgenderism" (Sperling, 2014, p. 299).

The federal law "For the Purpose of Protecting Children from Information Advocating for a Denial of Traditional Family Values," that unanimously passed the State Duma (one deputy abstained) put an end to regional legislative initiatives on June 30, 2013. The law became known as the "gay propaganda law" or the "anti-gay law."It mainly faced criticism from abroad, while inside the country only a small number of democratically oriented organizations and human rights groups opposed the legislation and tried to appeal it but did not succeed.

The vagueness of the language of the legislation opened up the possibility for authorities to eliminate almost all actions related to LGBT community–not only pride parades and other public marches, but also festivals, seminars, conferences, publishing, even the organizations themselves could be closed. Potentially, these legislative changes aim to erase all non-normative sexualities from the public sphere to sustain the Russian nation as purely heterosexual. As Healey (2003) argues, "Russians created a national sexual mythology that celebrated their own natural purity and located Russia between the dangers of a neurasthenic Europe, and a depraved and 'backward' East" (p. 4).

The state explicitly politicized homosexuality, thereby making it a political force that is capable of influencing politics and hence change it. Homophobia lifted to the level of state policy created a scapegoated group of Russian homosexuals who became "representatives" of the Western culture, alien and dangerous to Russian state and society. Now they were the agents of the foreign government, traitors, and spies. The accusation of homosexuality deprives oppositional politicians of a chance to be elected. Governmental and Orthodox groups are often used to attack NGOs that work to shed light on government misconduct. Suspicion of promoting LGBTQ rights is utilized as an excuse for such actions. The Putin Administration uses homosexuality and those groups to blame the West for attempts to change the current political regime in Russia. It allows the leadership to intensify censorship and to suppress protest activity.

Human Rights Regime

Another major factor facilitating the creation of state homophobia policy is Russia's indifference toward international norms and its own commitments. Russia is not part of the European Union, an organization that imposes some

legislative regulations on its members including regulations aimed at the prevention of homophobia. Even within the EU, there are cases like Poland, which attempt quite successfully to defy the EU recommendations and launch state homophobia after nationalists came to power in the mid-2000s. The United Nations institutions of human rights are weak and powerless in their ability to impose any kind of policies protecting people from deliberate policies of state homophobia. As Picq and Thiel (2015) insist, there has been no global treaty that would explicitly recognize rights of gays and lesbians within the worldwide context. This is not least due to countries such as Russia, where homophobia received state policy support. The only institute that can influence Russian legislation is the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), decisions of which Russia has to respect by the virtue of being a part of the Council of Europe and signing the treaty sanctioning superiority of the Court's decision in respect to domestic laws. However, I argue that the dearth of legal and political mechanisms that are at the disposal of the international community leaves Russian homosexuals vulnerable to the machinery of the state. The state effectively uses Western critique of Russian LGBTQ policies to strengthen its own power by exposing interests of foreign governments as interfering with Russian domestic affairs and attempts to change the political regime inside the country. Homophobia is an excuse used to weaken an already faint Western influence in Russia that creates more severe conditions for homosexuals while strengthening the power and influence of the leadership, and diverting public attention from domestic problems.

The Russian Constitution of 1993 declares that "in the Russian Federation recognition and guarantees shall be provided for the rights and freedoms of people and citizens according to the universally recognized principles and norms of international law and according to the present Constitution" (The Constitution of the Russian Federation, 1993). The recognition of and the emphasis on "universally recognized principles and norms" de jure puts Russia within a broader context of human rights regime embraced by the countries of Europe. In Article 15, it states that "the universally-recognized norms of international law and international treaties and agreements of the Russian Federation shall be a component part of its legal system. If an international treaty or agreement of the Russian Federation fixes other rules than those envisaged by law, the rules of the international agreement shall be applied" (The Constitution of the Russian Federation, 1993). This means that where the domestic laws are silent, international norms should be used to clarify blind spots. The provision would allow what Kollman (2013) calls socialization of international norms in Russia. Socialization is a "staged process of norm creation, promotion and internalization" that facilitates dissemination of same-sex unions and marriage laws within the European continent (Kollman, 2013, p. 73). She notes an important role of national and international human rights activist groups in the socialization of norms and adoption of national legislation protecting rights of homosexuals. However, unlike in Europe, Russia's weak LGBTQ community lacked the organizational and financial support necessary to successfully campaign for the promotion of gay rights legislation or set aside same-sex union laws until the mid-2000s when it faced a backlash from the

government in the form of state homophobia. As discussed, the state perceives attempts to define any human rights regime as an encroachment on its sovereignty. Timid attempts by gay rights activists to hold public events were not just banned by the government, but were also used as evidence of how corrupt and dangerous Western influences are at undermining the country's moral and family values. The traditional value discourse that was subsequently produced sought to justify a departure from the policy of Europeanization.

On February 28, 1996, the Russian Federation joined the Council of Europe. Its entry meant that the country became part of the continental legal space with commitments arising from the generally recognized norms of European law. Today Russia is involved in more than 30 European conventions, among them the European Convention on Human Rights of November 4, 1950. Despite the fact as Kollman (2013) notes that the Convention never explicitly stated gay rights as human rights, it nevertheless imposes some restrictions and obligations on countries that signed it. For Russia, its provisions with some reservations started applying in 1998. One of the major provision installs jurisdiction of ECHR.

Since its creation, Russia along with Turkey and Poland have all had lawsuits filed against them. After the mayor of Moscow banned gay parades in the city in 2006, 2007, and 2008, Russian gay rights activists filed a lawsuit against Russia. In 2010, the ECHR upheld the claim of one of the leaders of the Russian gay movement, Nikolai Alekseev. The Court found a violation of articles of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights: Article 11 ("Freedom of assembly and association"), Article 13 ("The right to an effective remedy"), and Article 14 ("Prohibition of discrimination"). In its decision the ECHR ordered the Russian side to pay Alekseev 12,000 euros and reimburse the costs in the amount of 17,500 euros.

These and other human rights cases that Russia lost compelled the authorities to publicly denounce the court's decision as political and deliberately anti-Russian. In 2007, the chairman of the Constitutional Court Valery Zorkin stated that "the European Court of Human Rights, replacing the Supreme Court, the Arbitration Court and the Constitutional Court of Russia, performs the role of national authority, which is contrary to its nature and purpose" (Savina & Ivanitskaya, 2007, p.1). In 2010 Chairman Zorkin and then President Dmitry Medvedev said that Russia did not give the ECHR power over Russian sovereignty to make decisions about Russian legislation. Zorkin (2010) emphasized that,

> having no direct precedent, the decision on the granting a parental leave to a male soldier for child care, the Strasbourg Court, in this case, used the legal position from the case of "Smith and Grady v. The United Kingdom," which granted the dismissal from the armed forces of homosexuals. Of course, in the Russian Federation, as in any modern country, sexual minorities are protected by the principle of legal equality, that all are equal before the law and the courts; State guarantees equality of rights and freedoms, regardless of sex (Art. 19 of the Constitution). However, the "enthusiasm" of the modern European legal systems in protecting rights

> and freedoms of homosexuals acquired grotesque forms. Sometimes this can lead to a tragedy, as it happened recently in Serbia, where rejection of the gay pride parade in the traditionally Orthodox country resulted in riots. (p.1)

The position of the Chairman of the Russian Constitutional Court presents Europe as aiming to change Russian values and impose a gay agenda. Regardless of the fact that most of the cases in the European Court against Russia did not concern rights of gays and lesbians, the justification used to criticize the Court was often connected to homosexuality. Even slight, timid attempts to promote gay rights within the country caused a massive backlash used to justify not only tougher measures towards Russian homosexuals but a massive criticism of European institutions and their human rights doctrines.

In 2014, the ECHR again attracted criticism when President Putin highlighted that gays and lesbians may threaten national security. He responded that just like the United States, Russia has the right to comply or not comply when "it is advantageous and necessary to ensure our interests" (Putin, 2014). He also noted that the Court's decisions are most often political. In 2015, a group of State Duma deputies appealed to the Constitutional Court to assess the possibility of recognition and enforcement of judgments of the ECHR that contradict the provisions of the Constitution and the legal positions of the Russian legislation. The court decided that "Russia may exceptionally depart from the execution of entrusted obligations if such derogation is the only possible way to avoid the violation of fundamental constitutional principles" (Mikhailova & Makutina, 2015). On December 15, 2015, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a bill allowing the Constitutional Court to wholly or partially ignore the ECHR's decisions.

Despite the fact that the Russian Federation is a member of many European political institutions including the Council of Europe, the EU as a whole as well as its individual members have very limited mechanisms of influence over Russia's attitude towards Russia's gay community. Unlike in the case of Poland that at the beginning of the 2000s had to go through the EU inspection and change its laws in order to become a member, Russia did not experience such pressure. However, similarities exist in the cases of Russia and Poland. Both countries have experienced the impact of totalitarian communist ideology. Communism in its Soviet version was an ideology "where 'the other'–any other–is reflexively identified as hostile and created by immutable forces of history, something to be feared and ultimately crushed" (Hayden, 2016). The sense of suspicion of "the other" and the fear of the overthrow of the regime from abroad deeply penetrated the ruling class psychology in Russia which was socialized during the Soviet period (Hmelevsky, 2014; Shevtzova L.F., 1996).

There are also some peculiar similarities in the positions of churches in both states. In the Russian Orthodox Church as well as the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, both Churches stressed national identity in opposing gay rights. In Russia, as Stähle (2015) argues, "the Russian Orthodox Church made a significant

contribution to the articulation of traditional family values and moral standards, arguing that Russian society was endangered by individualism, consumerism, secularism, and homosexuality" (p. 52). The position of the Russian Orthodox Church was outlined by Patriarch Kirill (2013) who depicted attitudes toward homosexuality in Western Europe as "dangerous apocalyptic symptom" and highlighted the necessity to "ensure that sin is never sanctioned in Russia by state law because that would mean that the nation has embarked on a path of self-destruction" (p.1) .

Poland used the rhetoric of "propaganda of homosexuality" approximately five years before the same homophobic discourse was deployed by the Russian politicians. In the case of Poland however, there was a response and efforts of joint actions of European institutions and community to pursue the government to soften their homophobic rhetoric and policies. But those efforts proved weak even within the EU boundaries. The nationalist-led government did not stop using homophobia to oppose the EU until it fell in 2007 (Weiss & Bosia, 2013). The weakness of the European legal and political systems does not allow them to influence Russian politics. This is especially true of verbal attempts to point out any Russian government misconduct with respect to homosexuals. Even an eminent intergovernmental organization such as the UN lacks the capacity to drive its members to adopt national legislation prohibiting homophobia and promoting rights of gays and lesbians. There is no "legal binding global treaty" that would explicitly recognize rights of LGBTQ community worldwide and by the virtue of the UN, authority prohibits homophobic policies of certain states (Picq & Thiel, 2015, p. 54)

Lack of the enforcement power of the UN is due to its origin as a post-world war institution, perpetuating the realist political vision of countries as winners and losers. The only body that has the power of decision-making–the Security Council–does not concern itself with human rights or LGBTQ rights. Even if it had to deal with such issues, the Council is divided between two often opposing forces of the Western democracies on the one side and Russia and China on the other.

The General Assembly consisting of all member-states is an even more polarized institution. It became clearly visible in 2008 when only 66 of the 192 countries "mainly from Europe and Latin America endorsed a non-binding declaration of human rights, sexual orientation, and gender identity" (Picq & Thiel, 2015, pp. 54-55). The Declaration faced opposition from Russia and some other countries. The United Nations Human Rights Council, the body whose main goal is to oversee and protect human rights around the globe, also adopted a resolution on June 30, 2016, on "Protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation, and gender identity" (Human Rights Watch, 2016, p. 1) Russia, which lost its seat in the Council in 2016, voted against the resolution (Roth, 2016). The symbolic victory of LGBTQ community perpetuated by the adoption of the resolutions, has, unfortunately, little power to change homophobic legislation that exists in Russia.

Thus it is evident that the international human rights regime, created by multiple institutions, has little impact on Russia. In the absence of significant leverage over Russian politics, attempts by European and international organizations to combat the state homophobia are either neglected by the state or used to justify tougher measure to protect national sovereignty and identity. Voices of human rights advocacy groups, international institutions, and politicians are not heard in Russia. On the contrary, the state by the means of controlled media produces a homophobic discourse that portray gay rights as part of a larger attempt to undermine national sovereignty from abroad.

Conclusion

State homophobia in Russia is being used to create a sense of national unity in the face of "the other" portrayed as the collective West with its values, discourses, and policies. The regional "anti-gay propaganda" laws that were finalized by the enactment of the federal law banning so-called propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors follows from the idea that the Russian nation is a heterosexual nation, and homosexuality is non-Russian. However, homosexuality is not simply non-Russia, it is Western. This anti-Western homophobic discourse produced by politicians has existed within public consciousness since the Soviet times. Accompanied by societal homophobia, the government scapegoats LGBTQ rights activists within the country. Any attempts by international groups and governmental bodies from abroad to point out government misconduct is criticized as the desire to influence the internal politics of the country, undermine the foundations of its constitutional regime, and violate the democratic will of the Russian people. This strategy is used primarily as an excuse for non-fulfillment of decisions from the International Court of Human Rights in confrontation with UN decisions to protect the rights of LGBTQ people. Domestic audience perceives it as a sign of strength rather than weakness.

The government also uses such state homophobia to divert public attention from domestic problems. Blaming the West for the struggling economy is currently one of the main strategies the government employs (Polunin, 2017; Rapoza, 2014). In this situation, Russian homosexuals are presented as Western agents that are paid to destroy family values and national identity. The current Russian policy is to build the nation based on conservative heteronationalism characterized by stable gender norms, traditional family values, the aggressive rejection of non-normative sexuality, and opposition to the West. That approach helps stabilize the regime during difficult times of international instability.

References

Anderson, J. (2007). Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church: Asymmetric Symphonia? *Journal of International Affairs, 61,* 185-IX

Asal V., Sommer U., & Harwood, P.G. Study of the Legality of Homosexual Acts. *Comparative Political Studies, 46*(3), 320-351.

Ashwin, S. (2000). *Gender, State and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*. London, England: Routledge.

Baer, B. J. (2002). Russian Gays / Western Gaze. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, 8*(4), 499-521.

Baer, B. J. (2009). *Other Russias. Homosexuality and the Other Russias Crisis of Post-Soviet Identity*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Birken, L. (1997). Homosexuality and Totalitarianism. *Journal of Homosexuality, 33*(1), 1.

Bohan, M. (2014). The problem of Tolerance of the Russian Society towards Homosexual Relations. In N. Belousova (Ed.), Personality in Modern World (First, pp. 313–319). Moscow: Ural State Pedagogical University.

Bosia, M. J., & Weiss, M. L. (2012). Political Homophobia in Comparative Perspective. Western Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 1–33.

Cannady, S., & Kubicek, P. (2014). Nationalism and legitimation for authoritarianism: A comparison of Nicholas I and Vladimir Putin. *Journal of Eurasian Studies, 5*(1), 1-9.

Clements, B. E., Friedman, R., & Healey, D. (2002). Russian masculinities in history and culture. New York City: Palgrave.

Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation. (2014). *Decision on the case on the verification of the constitutionality of part 1 of Article 6.21 of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Russian Federation in connection with the complaint of citizens NA Alekseyev, Ya.N. Evtushenko and D.I. Isakov*. Retrieved from http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody=&nd=102359056&intelsearch=%CA%CE%C0%CF

De Cillia, R., Reisgl, M., & Wodak, R. (1999). The Discursive Construction of National Identities. *Discourse & Society, 10*(2), 149-173.

Dryzek, J. S. (2006). Revolutions Without Enemies: Key Transformations in Political Science. *American Political Science Review, 100*(4), 487.

Engelstein, L. (1995). Soviet Policy Toward Male Homosexuality. *Journal of Homosexuality, 29*(2-3), 155-178.

Essig, L. (1999). *Queer in Russia: A Story of Sex, Self, and the Other*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Ferrari, A. (2016), Putin's Russia: Really Back? Milan, Italy: Ledizioni LediPublishing.

Foucault, M. (1990). *The history of sexuality: An introduction* (Vol I, Robert Hurley, Trans.). New York, NY: Vintage.

Frohlich, S. (2011). Homophobias: Lust and Loathing across Time and Space. *Anthropologica, 53*(2), 349-352.

Gainous, J. (2007). Who's Ambivalent and Who's Not? Social Welfare Ambivalence Across Ideology. American Politics Research, 36(2), 210-235.

Gomillion, S. C., & Giuliano, T. A. (2011). The Influence of Media Role Models on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Identity. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 58, 330-354.

Goscilo, H., & Strukov, V. (2010). Celebrity and glamour in contemporary Russia : shocking chic. Routledge.

Hayden, M. V. (2016, November 6). Former CIA Chief: Trump Is Russia's Useful Fool. *The Washington Post*: 1. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/former-cia-chief-trump-is-russias-useful-fool/2016/11/03/cda42ffe-a1d5-11e6-8d63-3e0a660f1f04_story.html?postshare=5081478200327255&tid=ss_fb&utm_term=. bee81154fb0b

Healey, D. (1993). The Russian Revolution and the Decriminalisation of Homosexuality. *Revolutionary Russia, 6*(1), 26-54.

Healey, D. (2002). Homosexual Existence and Existing Socialism New Light on the Repression of Male Homosexuality in Stalin's Russia. GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, 8(3), 349-378.

Healey, D. (2003). What Can We Learn From the History of Homosexuality in Russia? *History Compass, 1*(1), 1-6.

Healey, D., Baer, B. J., & Stella, F. (2008). How Should We Read Queer Russia?. *Kultura: Russian Cultural Review (Special issue)*, 2.

Hmelevsky, Y. (2014). Five Minutes Before 'Nuclear Midnight', or On The Question of 'Export of Democracy (Revolutions)' And a Position of National Elite in Crisis Situations. *Questions of national legislation*, 1(1), 248–254.

Human Rights Watch. (2016, November 7). *UN Makes History on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity*. Retrieved from https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/06/30/un-makes-history-sexual-orientation-gender-identity

International Justice Resource Center. (2012). *UN Human Rights Committee:* "Homosexual Propaganda" Conviction Violated Freedom of Expression. Retrieved from http://www.ijrcenter.org/2012/12/03/un-human-rights-committee-homosexual-propaganda-conviction-violated-freedom-of-expression/

Jégo, M. (2008). Pourquoi la Russie a peur de l'OTAN. Retrieved October 28, 2017, from http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2008/04/16/pourquoi-la-russie-a-peur-de-l-otan-par-marie-jego_1034941_3232.html

Kollman, K. (2013). *The Same-Sex Unions Revolution in Western Democracies*. Manchester, England: Manchester University Press.

Kon, I. (2010). Homophobia as a Litmus Test of Russian Democracy. *Russian Social Science Review, 51*(3), 16-37.

Kondakov, A. (2011). Same-Sex Marriages inside the Closet: Deconstruction of Subjects of Gay and Lesbian Discourses in Russia. Socio-Legal Series, (1). Retrieved from http://opo.iisj.net

Kondakov, A. (2013a). Resisting the Silence: The Use of Tolerance and Equality Arguments by Gay and Lesbian Activist Groups in Russia. *Canadian Journal of Law and Society / Revue Canadienne Droit et Société, 28*(3), 403-424. Retrieved from http://doi.org/10.1017/cls.2013.3

Kondakov, A. (2013b). The Silenced Citizens of Russia: Exclusion of Non-heterosexual Subjects From Rights-Based Citizenship. *Social & Legal*

Studies, *23*(2), 151-174. Retrieved from http://doi.org/10.1177/0964663913505315

Kosheleve, R. (2012, March). The Law prohibiting homosexual propaganda enacted in St. Petersburg. Russian Information Agency (RIA News), 30. Retrieved from https://ria.ru/society/20120330/609834303.html

Koshkin Andrei, N. A. (2016). The geopolitical triangle of relations between Russia, the European Union and the USA: A glance at the future. Vlast, 4, 5–13.

Kotz, D. M. (1999). Russia's Financial Crisis: The Failure of Neoliberalism?, 28–32. Retrieved from http://people.umass.edu/dmkotz/R_Fin_Crisis_99.pdf

Kryshtanovskaya, O. (2008). Russian elite is in transit. Retrieved October 28, 2017, from http://polit.ru/article/2008/07/31/rus_elita/

Lenskyj, H. J. (2014). *Sexual Diversity and the Sochi 2014 Olympics: No More Rainbows*. Hampshire, England: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Levada-Center. (2015). The number of people supporting the ban of homosexual propaganda rose to 77%. *Interfax News*, 16. Retrieved from http://www.interfax.ru/russia/442040

Lukin, A. (2009). Russia's New Authoritarianism and the Post-Soviet Political Ideal. *Post-Soviet Affairs*, *25*(1), 66-92. Retrieved from http://doi.org/10.2747/1060-586X.24.1.66

Makarychev, A., & Medvedev, S. (2015). Biopolitics and Power in Putin's Russia. *Problems of Post-Communism*, *62*(1), 45-54. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10758216.2015.1002340

Massad, J. (2002). Re-Orienting Desire: The Gay International and the Arab World. *Public Culture*, *14*(2), 361-386. Retrieved from http://publicculture.dukejournals.org/cgi/doi/10.1215/08992363-14-2-361

Medvedev, D. (2008). Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. Retrieved October 28, 2017, from http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/1968

Mikhailova, A., & Makutina, M. (2015, November 3). *The State Duma Will Allow Russia to Ignore All International Decisions*. TV Channel RBK. Retrieved from http://www.rbc.ru/politics/02/12/2015/565eec879a79477f3b3550a3

Mitrokhin, N. (2009). The Russian Orthodox Church in Contemporary Russia: Structural Problems and Contradictory Relations with the Government, 2000-2008. Social Research, 76(1), 289–320. Retrieved from http://doi.org/Article

Nagel, J. (1998). Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *21*(2), 242-269.

Neef, C. (2016). "We Are Smarter, Stronger and More Determined", Interview with Putin's Foreign Policy Advisor Sergey Karaganov. Spiegel Online. Retrieved from http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/interview-with-putin-foreign-policy-advisor-sergey-karaganov-a-1102629.html

Nemtsev, M. (2008). How Did a Sexual Minorities Movement Emerge in Post-Soviet Russia? An Essay: An Essay (L. Essig, Ed.). Düsseldorf, Germany: VDM Verlag. Retrieved from https://www.amazon.com/Sexual-Minorities-Movement-Emerge-Post-Soviet/dp/3639005589

Patriarch Kirill. (2013). His Holiness Patriarch Kirill We Have to Ensure That Sin Is Never Sanctioned in Holy Russia by State Law. *The official website of the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate*. Retrieved from http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3113641.html

Persson, E. (2015). Banning Homosexual Propaganda: Belonging and Visibility in Contemporary Russian Media. *Sexuality and Culture*, *19*(2), 256-274.

Picq, M. L., & Thiel, M. (2015). *Sexualities in World Politics: LGBTQ Claims Shape International Relations*. Abington, England: Routledge.

Polunin, A. (2017). Russia is getting poorer and blames West for it. Retrieved October 28, 2017, from http://svpressa.ru/economy/article/172126/

Prozorov, S. (2005). Russian conservatism in the Putin presidency: The dispersion of a hegemonic discourse. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, *10*(2), 121-143. Retrieved from http://doi.org/10.1080/13569310500097224

Prozorov, S. (2005). Russian conservatism in the Putin presidency: The dispersion of a hegemonic discourse. Journal of Political Ideologies, 10(2), 121–143. http://doi.org/10.1080/13569310500097224

Puar, J. K. (2007). *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Putin, V. (2014). Putin Does Not Rule out the Possibility of Entering the Russian Federation from under the Jurisdiction of the ECHR. Retrieved from http://www.interfax.ru/russia/391379

Rapoza, K. (2014). On Economy, Russia Shoots Self In Foot. Retrieved October 28, 2017, from https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2014/12/07/on-economy-russia-shoots-self-in-foot/#23c646112901

Riabov, O., & Riabova, T. (2014). The Remasculinization of Russia? *Problems of Post-Communism*, *61*(2), 23-35. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.2753/PPC1075-8216610202

Riabov, O., & Riabova, T. (2014). The Remasculinization of Russia? Problems of Post-Communism, 61(2), 23–35. http://doi.org/10.2753/PPC1075-8216610202

Roth, R. (2016, November 7). Russia Loses Seat on UN Human Rights Council by 2 Votes. *CNN.com*. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2016/10/28/politics/russia-loses-seat-un-human-rights-council/

Rubov, O. (2008). Russia is rising from its knees? Remasculinization and the new Russian Identity. Lichnost, Kultura, Obshestvo, 3–4(42–43), 250–257. Retrieved from https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=12971265

Savina, E., & Ivanitskaya, A. (2007). *Valery Zorkin Addressed the Eurocourt*. Kommerant: Retrieved from http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/780943

Shevtzova L.F. (1996). Dilemmas of Post-Communist Society. Polis, 5, 80–91. Retrieved from https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=5078038

Shimov, Y. (2017, February 6). Phantom pains of greatness: What has changed in the relations between Russia and the West since the time of the Munich speech of Vladimir Putin. Profil. Moscow. Retrieved from http://www.profile.ru/politika/item/115035-fantomnye-boli-velichiya

Simon, J. (2008). NATO enlargement and Russia in A. Braun (ed.) *NATO-Russian Relations in the Twenty-First Century*. London, England: Routledge.

Slobodan Lekic. (2007, February 11). Putin Accuses U.S. of Sparking Arms Race. The Associated Press. Washington D.C. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/10/AR2007021000363.html

Sperling, V. (2014). *Sex, Politics, and Putin: Political Legitimacy in Russia*. New York City, NY: Oxford University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.com/books?id=M2u6BAAAQBAJ&pgis=1

Stähle, H. (2015). Between Homophobia and Gay Lobby: The Russian Orthodox Church and Its Relationship to Homosexuality in Online Discussions. *Digital Orthodoxy: Mediating Post-Secularity in Russia*, (14), 49-71.

Stein, A. (2005). Make Room for Daddy: Anxious Masculinity and Emergent Homophobias in Neopatriarchal Politics. *Gender & Society, 19*(5), 601-620.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation. (1993). Retrieved November 3, 2016, from http://www.constitution.ru/en/10003000-01.htm

Venzo, P., & Hess, K. (2013). 'Honk against Homophobia': Rethinking Relations between Media and Sexual Minorities. *Journal of Homosexuality, 60*(11), 1539-1556. Retrieved from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24147586

Weiss, M. L., & Bosia, M. J. (2013). *Global Homophobia: States, Movements, and the Politics of Oppression*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Wilkinson, C. (2014). Putting 'Traditional Values' Into Practice: The Rise and Contestation of Anti-Homopropaganda Laws in Russia. *Journal of Human Rights, 13*(3), 363-379.

Willems, J. (2006). The religio-political strategies of the Russian Orthodox Church as a "politics of discourse." Religion, State and Society, 34(3), 287–298. http://doi.org/10.1080/09637490600819390

Zakon Ryazanskoi oblasti ot 15.06.2006 N 66-03 "O Vnesenii izmenenii v Zakon Ryazanskoi Oblasti "Ob Administrativnih Pravonarusheniiah" [Law of the Region of Ryazan dated 15.06.2006) N 66-03 "On the Changes in the Law of the Region of Ryazan "On the Administrative Violations"]. Retrieved from http://ryazan.news-city.info/docs/sistemsj/dok_oeqrlo.htm

Zorgdrager, H. (2013). Homosexuality and Hypermasculinity in the Public Discourse of the Russian Orthodox Church: An Affect Theoretical Approach. *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology, 74*(3), 2142-2139.

Zorgdrager, H. (2013). Homosexuality and hypermasculinity in the public discourse of the Russian Orthodox Church: an affect theoretical approach. International Journal of Philosophy and Theology, 74(3), 214–239. http://doi.org/10.1080/21692327.2013.829649

Zorkin, V. (2010). The Limit of Compliance. *Rossiyskaya gazeta*, N 5325 (246). Retrieved from https://rg.ru/2010/10/29/zorkin.htm

Journal of Global Initiatives
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp. 162-175.

Is "This Guy" a Dictator? On the Morality of Evaluating Russian Democracy under Vladimir Putin

Amir Azarvan

Abstract

Is it morally defensible to single Russian president, Vladimir Putin, out as a dictator? The popular impression that he is a dictator has been used to legitimize a dangerously adversarial policy towards what a U.S. Army general described as "the only country on earth…that could "destroy the United States." I argue that this perception is in some ways misleading, and has contributed to escalating tensions with Russia, which is both unnecessary and harmful both to Russia and the U.S.

Introduction

> Vladimir Putin is a dictator. He's not a leader. Anybody who thinks otherwise doesn't know Russian history and they don't know Vladimir Putin. Hillary Clinton knows exactly who this guy is. John McCain said, I look in his eyes and I see KGB.
>
> Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA)

On five separate occasions during the 2016 vice presidential debate, Senator Kaine referred to Russian President Vladimir Putin as a dictator (White, 2016). Such remarks, expressed by those who form what I call the "American anti-Putin community" (or AAPC), are becoming increasingly commonplace in American politics. The popular impression that Russian President Vladimir Putin is a dictator has been used to legitimize a dangerously adversarial policy towards what a U.S. Army general described as "the only country on earth" … that could "destroy the United States" (*KyivPost*, 2015). I argue that this perception is morally indefensible, misleading, and has contributed to escalating tensions with Russia, which is unnecessary and harmful both to the United States and Russia.

In the next two sections, I will introduce my working definition of "dictatorship" and will explain the moral framework employed in this study. I then situate (in the following sections, Democracy and Human Rights in Post-Soviet Russia and What Public Opinion Can Tell Us) the Putin regime in its relevant context by examining trends in the areas of human rights repression, democratic change, corruption, and public opinion. Next, I address (in Sincerity or National Security: Must We Choose?) the question of whether Russia poses a threat to U.S.

national security, in which case some may argue that our moral requirements in foreign policy ought to be relaxed. I conclude (in A Call for International Empathy) with a brief summary, as well as the suggestion that a foreign policy that is more ethical *and* beneficial to our national security may depend on our willingness to acquire greater international empathy.

Defining Dictatorship

There are political contexts in which certain words connote far more than - or, in some cases, express something quite different from – what their denotative meanings indicate. This is certainly true of the term dictatorship. While it formally denotes "a form of government in which one person or a small group possesses absolute power without effective constitutional limitations" ("Dictatorship", 2017), modern society takes it to mean a lot more. In its contemporary usage, dictatorship can be defined as a political regime characterized by "extraconstitutional authority seized for selfish purposes and exercised over unwilling subjects" (Harris, 1938). In this paper, my use of the term corresponds to the latter, more clearly pejorative meaning.

The Moral Starting Point of My Analysis

Before continuing, I wish to state a key working assumption informing this investigation: *In foreign affairs, we should act in accordance with our stated moral values as consistently as possible*. I write "as consistently as possible" because there may be occasions on which our values are in tension with one another, and we are forced to prioritize among these conflicting values. For instance, one might argue that although leaders should not generally mask their true intentions while conducting foreign policy, it may be necessary to make insincere appeals to democracy in order to generate public support for a policy of hostility towards a country that poses - or is perceived as posing - a national security threat. In other words, when leaders are compelled to choose between sincerity and security, the latter ought to be preferred (be that as it may, I will briefly explain why I do not believe that Russia actually does pose such a threat to the United States).

Also, given the moral requirement to apply our values consistently, we must, if we wish to determine whether this requirement is being met, be able to systematically compare cases, in this case, between Putin and his contemporaries and/or his predecessor. Acting on the belief that Putin is a dictator is, therefore, morally indefensible unless we are willing to behave similarly towards other leaders who are equally or more dictatorial.[1] I suggest that each time we condemn President

[1] Suppose I unfriended someone on Facebook on the grounds that he supported Donald Trump–whom I depicted as a vile racist–while remaining friends with those who are just as or more openly supportive of him. Aside from the question of whether my characterization of the president is accurate, most people would rightfully view my inconsistency as morally problematic.

Putin as a dictator we open ourselves up to the moral criticism that we are not applying our professed moral principles in a consistent manner.

As for the particular bases of comparison that I will be examining, I have chosen to focus on trends in the following areas: human rights repression, democratic consolidation, corruption, and public opinion. I will explain how these areas relate to the connotative meaning of dictatorship discussed earlier.

Democracy and Human Rights in Post-Soviet Russia

Human Rights Under Putin

In its most recent yearly report, Amnesty International (AI) painted a grim picture of human rights conditions in Russia, marked by increased restrictions on civil liberties, torture, and other ill-treatment in prisons, failures to respect the rights of refugees and asylum seekers, and abuses in Chechnya, Ukraine, and Syria (Amnesty International, 2017). Since 2004, the country has been classified as "not free" by Freedom House in its annual Freedom in the World report.[2] Human Rights Watch (HRW) puts the matter quite boldly: "Today, Russia is more repressive than it has ever been in the post-Soviet era" (Human Rights Watch, 2017).

This last statement is particularly germane to this discussion, as it points to a comparison. As I argued, it is necessary to be able to compare cases systematically in order to determine whether we are applying our values consistently across them. Qualitative reports issued by organizations like AI or HRW do not lend well to such comparisons. Fortunately, however, the Political Terror Scale (PTS) numerically codes annual human rights reports published by AI and the U.S. State Department (SD) according to systematic criteria.[3] Countries are scored from 1-5, where 5 means that "terror has expanded to the whole population," and that "the leaders of these societies place no limits on the means or thoroughness with which they pursue personal or ideological goals" (Political Terror Scale, 2016).

Have human rights' conditions improved under Putin, or worsened? The answer depends on which series of coded reports one turns to. As Table 1 reveals, AI's average score was higher in the first eight years of Putin's presidency than over the corresponding length of time under Yeltsin - pointing to an increase in repression - while the SD's score was lower.

Of course, the PTS is but one indicator of human rights repression, one that focuses on "personal integrity rights," examples of which include political imprisonment, extrajudicial executions, torture, and disappearances. Among other categories of human rights (and time does not permit to exhaust all of them), it does not measure the repression of civil liberties. Under the latter category, press freedom merits special – but by no means – exclusive attention. Between 2002 (the

---

[2] To access Freedom in the World data, visit https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2017

[3] To access Political Terror Scale data, visit http://www.politicalterrorscale.org/Data/Download.html

first year that Freedom House began collecting data on this variable) and 2016, Russia's press freedom score steadily worsened from 60-83 (100 being the worst possible score).[4]

Table 1: *Average Political Terror Scale Scores Under Presidents Yeltsin and Putin*

Source of Coded Reports	***Under Yeltsin (1992-1999)***	***Under Putin (2000-2007)***[5]
Amnesty International	3.4	4.1 *More repression*
U.S. State Department	4.1	3.9 *Less repression*

Source: Political Terror Scale.

One factor that is often emphasized concerning this trend is the murder of journalists. According to data provided by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), an American-based NGO, 24 journalists have been murdered under presidents Putin and Medvedev (as of May 28, 2017).[6] While it ought to go without saying that one death is one too many, it is helpful to put this figure in a comparative context. A direct comparison would involve contrasting the number of murders during the length of Yeltsin's tenure analyzed by the CPJ with the number slain over the same length of time under Putin.[7] The Yeltsin and Putin periods did indeed differ, but only by one life: 13 journalists were murdered under Yeltsin, and 14 under Putin. However, if the length of Yeltsin's tenure analyzed by the CPJ were contrasted with the Putin and Medvedev presidencies combined, we would discover that the yearly average number of journalists slain diminished, albeit slightly, from 1.6 to 1.4.

The American anti-Putin community (AAPC) will naturally be inclined to question the relevance of the latter comparison by noting that Yeltsin ruled during a very different, tumultuous period, in which all manner of socioeconomic and political evils were supposedly inevitable. But this seems to presuppose that Yeltsin does not bear much of the responsibility for the tumult itself, as well as its varied consequences. The difficulties of the 1990s were not, at least in their entirety, the necessary growth pains of transitioning from the Soviet political and economic model, but were to some extent the result of policies actively pursued by Yeltsin.

---

[4] To access Press Freedom data, visit https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/freedom-press-2016

[5] In 2015, the latest year in the PTS dataset, the AI variant of the PTS dropped to 3. Otherwise, neither the AI and SD score has changed from 4 since 2008.

[6] Although the CPJ's database compiles all documented killings, I restrict my attention to murders. To access the CPJ's database, visit https://cpj.org/killed/

[7] Thus, the periods investigated were 1/1/1992-December 30, 1999 (under Yeltsin), and December 31 2000-May 6, 2008 (under Putin). I included Putin's time as acting president in the latter period.

Indeed, as Stuckler and Basu (2013) point out, the dramatic increase in poverty and reduction in life expectancy witnessed in Russia following the collapse of the Soviet Union "did not occur everywhere in the former Soviet sphere. Russia, Kazakhstan, and the Baltic states … which adopted economic shock therapy programs … experienced the worst rises in suicides, heart attacks and alcohol-related deaths" (para. 12).

By no means do I wish to suggest that journalist killings have ceased to be a problem, and it is to be admitted that a more thorough comparison would involve a careful examination of the circumstances of each documented murder. Having said that, the AAPC's representation of the problem brings to mind the following hypothetical scenario. Imagine two pairs of friends. In each pair there is a drug addict. In the first pair, the addict's friend is responsible for nurturing his addiction, or at least does little to free him from it. In the second, the friend is helping the addict slowly wean himself from his addiction. The AAPC tends to liken Putin to the addict's friend in the first pair. Perhaps, however, it is time to consider the possibility that he is in certain regards comparable to the addict's friend in the second.

Democratization Under Putin

To what extent is Russia governed democratically? To arrive at an answer, I relied upon a modified version of the Polity score, which is based on the openness and competitiveness of elections and institutional constraints on the chief executive's power (Marshall, Gurr, & Jaggers, 2016). This measure takes on values ranging from -10 (strongly autocratic) to 10 (strongly democratic). As Figure 1 shows, Russia's Polity score has never exceeded 6, and persisted at its most recently-recorded level of 4 since 2007 (see Figure 1).

Two points are worth noting with respect to this data. First, although Russia has, by Western standards, a very low Polity score, it is not ruled by an absolutely autocratic government (as are U.S. allies Bahrain, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia). Thus, if one remains faithful to the actual meaning of dictatorship, which, again, involves *absolute* political power, then it would be absurd to describe Russia's government as dictatorial. Nor will it do to opt for "partial dictatorship," as this term would be an oxymoron (perhaps "democratically challenged" is more fitting).

Second, while singling Putin out as a dictator seems to imply that his regime is more authoritarian than that of his U.S.-allied predecessor, the fact is that Russia's Polity score has been higher under the former than under the latter. As Sakwa (2008) notes, "although the aim of Yeltsin's reform was the creation of a capitalist democracy, his methods were divisive and on occasions flouted basic democratic norms and appeared to be an inverted form of the authoritarian order that he sought to overcome" (p. 49). And yet, as we will soon see, this fact does not appear to have invited stronger condemnations of the more "dictatorial" Yeltsin.

Figure 1. Regime Trends in Russia (1992-2015). Source: Polity IV Project.

Furthermore, one of the first things one notices upon reading Polity IV Country's Report (Center for Systemic Peace, 2010) is that its negative assessment of Russian democracy rests largely on appearances: "it *appears* as if the Unified Russia bloc is using its current situational advantages to effectively restrict competition and establish itself as a dominant party" (p. 5); "Although Putin's manipulation of the 2008 presidential elections did not directly violate the constitution, he did *appear* intent on circumventing the mechanisms that ensure competitive executive recruitment" (p. 2); and "[His] *apparent* indifference to democracy continues" (p. 2). Such appearances all too easily translate into objective facts in the minds of those who are predisposed to criticizing the Putin government.

But what is to be made of conclusions drawn by those assigned to monitor Russian elections? Do they not speak to the absence of genuine democracy in the country, despite the façade of electoral institutions? Although observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) concluded that the 2016 parliamentary vote "was more transparently administered than previous elections," it was marred by "an array of shortcomings" (Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, 2016, para. 1). As for the most recent presidential election, the OSCE (2012) alleged that, in spite of the government's effort to improve electoral transparency, Putin' victory was predetermined.

Following Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland's (2010, p. 69) classificatory scheme, by which a regime is categorized as either democratic or dictatorial, one might conclude that Russia's recent electoral experiences demonstrate that the country's regime falls under the latter group. "For a regime to be democratic," they argue, "both the chief executive office and the legislative body must be filled by elections. Contestation occurs when there exists an opposition that has some chance of winning office as a consequence of elections" (Cheibub, Gandhi, & Vreeland, 2010, p. 69; see also Przeworksi, Alvarez, Cheibub, & Limongi, 2000, p. 16). Such

"contestation" did not seem to have transpired in the latest presidential election. According to an OSCE observer, "there was no real competition and abuse of government resources ensured that the ultimate winner of the election was never in doubt" (Organization for Security & Cooperation in Europe, 2012, para. 6).

But even if one accepts Cheibub et al.'s dichotomous classification, it remains to be determined whether Russia is *less* democratic under Putin than under Yeltsin. As I have explained above, this, too, is a morally relevant issue. Although the OSCE did not monitor the 1996 presidential election, evidence suggests that it was no less problematically run. It was widely reported that Yeltin's campaign "was secretly managed by three American political consultants who on more than one occasion allegedly received direct assistance from Bill Clinton's White House" (Wilson, 2016, para. 4). Further, Russia's notorious oligarchs stated on record that their objective was to get "Yeltsin a second term by any means necessary" (Shuster, 2012, para. 7). His victory is all the more suggestive given that his approval rating was initially at 6% at the start of his campaign; lower even than Joseph Stalin's (Randolph, 1996).

A Question of Sincerity

Although the U.S. government, assisted by the media's "generally uncritical coverage of U.S. foreign policy" (Hook, 2010; see also Aday, 2014), seems to have more or less successfully promoted the notion that Russia is being governed by a dictator, the United States has maintained friendly relations with a number of countries that are also deemed unfree (e.g., see Ritter, 2014). Several of these have even lower Freedom House scores than Russia. These countries, together with their parenthetically noted Freedom House scores, include the following: Azerbaijan (14), Bahrain (12), Ethiopia (12), Tajikistan (11), Saudi Arabia (10), Equatorial Guinea (8), and Uzbekistan (3).

This invites the charge that Russia's real or perceived authoritarianism is merely a smokescreen, a ruse to legitimate a policy of hostility towards a country that is increasingly challenging U.S. hegemony. At a minimum, it does not appear that democracy promotion tops the list of the U.S. government's foreign policy priorities, nor does it seem to be a top priority for the general American public (Drake, 2013). We have seen how Yeltsin can scarcely be described as a less "dictatorial" president than his successor. Nevertheless, the former's U.S. counterpart "was strongly inclined not only to like Yeltsin but also to support his policies, in particular, his [supposed] commitment to Russian democracy" (United States Department of State, n.d.). Even after the bloody standoff with the Russian Duma in 1993, when "tanks set fire to a Parliament filled with civilians" (Cockburn, 1993, para. 6), President Clinton "vowed that the United States would not waver in its backing for the Russian President as he sought to restore order," pinning the blame for the violence on Yeltsin's political opponents (Jehl, 1993, para. 1).

Corruption in Russia

That I would dare to use corruption data in order to partially *redeem* Putin might leave the reader gasping for air in a fit of hysteric laughter. However, while Russia is consistently rated among the world's more corrupt countries in Transparency International's annually-updated Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), our indictment of Putin, in particular, appears to presuppose that corruption overall has *worsened* under him.[8] However, this does not appear to be the case. On a 1-10 scale, whereby the higher the country's score, the less corrupt it is, Russia's average CPI score was no lower during the first four years of Putin's presidency than under the last four years of his predecessor's, but was in fact slightly higher (see Figure 2).[9]

Figure 2. Russia's Corruption Perception Index Score (1996-2016). Source: Transparency International.

The AAPC may prefer to stress the fact that Russia was near the bottom 25% of countries in the 2016 CPI, but it is at least equally helpful to point out that its most recent score – while still comparatively low - was its highest on record. "The Yeltsin period," Sakwa (2008) argues, "was one of rampant corruption, despite several desultory attempts to halt the frenzy" (p. 165). Yet, as far as CPI scores are concerned, the most that Putin could be faulted for, perhaps, is not presiding over a more rapid and steady improvement.

---

[8] To access Corruption Perceptions Index data, visit http://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016

[9] The scores were 2.45 and 2.41, respectively. The reason for this particular temporal comparison is that Transparency International's data covers only the last four years of Yeltsin's presidency.

What Public Opinion Can Tell Us

To reiterate its connotative meaning, the term dictatorship signifies absolute power over unwilling subjects. To call Putin a dictator is, therefore, to imply that he governs against the will of the Russian people. The best way to test this claim – the best available means of ascertaining the willingness of a people to be ruled by a particular regime – is to consult public opinion data.

According to the World Values Survey, no more than 45% of Russians believed that having a democracy was a good thing,[10] lending credence to the notion that Russians are not culturally prepared for a democracy.[11] However, this figure jumped to 66% in 2006, and increased by another percentage point in 2011. In other words, it appears that a democratic culture is developing, even if Russians still trail behind Americans in their support for democracy. Interestingly, while Russia's Polity score dropped from 6 to 4 in 2007, Russians' perception of their level of democracy *increased* somewhat between 2006 and 2011. It could, therefore, be argued that Russians' conception of democracy differs from that on which traditional measures are based.

Table 2 displays less encouraging data. Americans express much greater confidence in their justice and law enforcement systems. The difference between Russians and Americans is especially stark with respect to the police. Twice as many Americans as Russians have had confidence in their police. With respect to the judiciary, Russia's already low level of confidence declined from 2006-2011.

Table 2: *Institutions in which Confidence is Comparatively Lower in Russia*

Confidence in the Police					***Confidence in the Justice System***				
	2006		2011			2006		2011	
	Russia	US	Russia	US		Russia	US	Russia	US
A great deal or quite a lot	32	68	32	68	A great deal or quite a lot	36	55	32	68
Not very much or not at all	64	29	64	30	Not very much or not at all	58	41	64	29

Source: World Values Survey.

[10] To put this in perspective, the comparable figure in the United States was 85%.

[11] For a critique of this view, see *Out of Order: Russian Political Values in an Imperfect World*, by Ellen Carnaghan, 2007, University Park, PA: Penn State University Press.

However, Russians have had greater (and growing) confidence in their national government and legislature than Americans (see Table 3). Of course, in both Russia and the United States, confidence in each of these institutions falls below a majority. Nevertheless, while there is no cause for celebration in either country, the implicit assumption that Russians are more politically dissatisfied than their American counterparts is by no means entirely correct.

Table 3: *Institutions in which Confidence is Comparatively Higher in Russia*

Confidence in the National Government					*Confidence in the Parliament*				
	2006		2011			2006		2011	
	Russia	US	Russia	US		Russia	US	Russia	US
A great deal or quite a lot	43	37	47	33	A great deal or quite a lot	27	20	31	20
Not very much or not at all	52	57	47	65	Not very much or not at all	63	75	59	77

Source: World Values Survey.

If the data presented in Table 3 on perceptions of confidence speaks to the willingness to be governed, and if such willingness is understood to be a defining trait of a dictatorship, then, in particular regards to these two political institutions, the inescapable conclusion is that the United States bears this dictatorial trait in greater measure than Russia.

The Popularity of President Putin

Special attention must be devoted to the notorious popularity of President Putin himself. For having cited Putin's remarkably high level of support among Russians, President Trump was mocked by his predecessor:

> "When the interviewer asks him [Trump], 'why do you support this guy [Putin]?' He says, 'He is a strong guy. Look, he's got an 82 percent poll rating.' Well, yes, Saddam Hussein had a 90 percent poll rating. If you control the media and you've taken away everybody's civil liberties, and

> you jail dissidents, that's what happens," Obama claimed, addressing the crowd at a Hillary Clinton campaign event in Philadelphia (RT, 2016, para. 3).

While suspecting that the Kremlin's "tight control over the media" may influence Russian public opinion, Politifact (which cannot reasonably be accused of serving as a mouthpiece for either Trump or Putin) acknowledges that Trump correctly estimated Putin's popularity (Carrol, 2015). Even after adjusting for the "possibility that respondents have been lying to pollsters out of fear or social expectations," Western pollsters confirm that Putin's high public approval is not a myth (Carrol, 2015, para. 23). The truth is that Russians are happy under their president, at least much more so than Americans are under theirs. This adds another wrinkle to the claim that Putin governs an unwilling populace and is, on that account, a dictator.

Sincerity or National Security: Must We Choose?

Not only is "dictator talk" misleading, but it arguably renders our country less secure. Earlier, I noted that there may be occasions on which we are compelled to choose among conflicting values. While it is generally true that we should not employ double standards in the area of foreign policy, might it be necessary to do so in order to generate public support for hostile actions against a supposedly aggressive Russia? While Keene (2017) believes that Putin is "a modern-day Russian czar," he is skeptical of the claim that he heads "a regime wedded to an ideology bent upon dominating and transforming the world into its own image" (para. 8). Indeed, Putin's military actions have been restricted to areas in which there is a large population of ethnic Russians or Russian citizens. While these actions may undermine America's hegemony in the region, they do not appear to pose a threat to its *national security*, at least no more so than the West's vilification of Putin has done. According to Cohen (2017), "demonizing Putin is gravely endangering America" (para. 2). For one thing, "by treating the Russian president as a 'rogue' or 'outlaw' leader, it is ruling out Putin as an essential U.S. national security partner, which any Kremlin leader should be" (Cohen, 2017, para. 2).

Conclusion: A Call for International Empathy

While both sides of this debate may agree that Russia is not a posterchild for democracy, I have argued that ascribing the term "dictator" to Vladimir Putin is misleading and unnecessarily and dangerously polemical. The American public should therefore resist the demonizing narrative put out by the AAPC. We should abandon our self-righteous views on Russia, as well as other countries whom (we are told) are our adversaries. Rather than viewing Russia's actions through a Manichean prism of world politics, we should opt for a more sophisticated and less manipulative lens, one that places these actions in their appropriate and continuously evolving contexts. Ignoring the historic, socioeconomic, and political

contexts in which Russian behavior is situated may entail the effect of reducing public empathy for our (supposed) adversary; facilitating the adoption of a simplistic view by which Russia's actions are attributed mainly to the evil that is believed to be inherent - or at least more pronounced - in it. Empathy requires the development of a deeper more nuanced understanding of others that certainly goes beyond the overt demonization that has often characterized U.S.-Russia relations. Research has demonstrated the positive role of empathy in resolving interpersonal conflict (e.g., see Navidian, Bahari, Kermansaravi, 2014). Future studies should explore its potential in mitigating conflicts at the international level.

References

Aday, S. (2017). The US Media, Foreign Policy, and Public Support for War. In The Oxford Handbook of Political Communication (pp. 315-332). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Amnesty International. (2017). *Annual Report 2016/2017*. Retrieved from https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/europe-and-central-asia/russian-federation/report-russian-federation/

Carrol, L. (2015). Donald Trump Is Right About Putin's Popularity in Russia. *Politifact*. Retrieved from http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2015/dec/20/donald-trump/donald-trump-right-about-putins-popularity-russia

Cockburn, A. (1993, October 5). A Democratic Russia Goes Up in Smoke: Yeltsin the Dictator Snuffs out Parliament with U.S. Approval; Why is the West Cheering? *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/1993-10-05/local/me-42283_1_democratic-russia

Center for Systemic Peace. (2010). *Polity IV Country Report* (Russia). Retrieved from http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/Russia2010.pdf

Cheibub, J. A., Gandhi, J., & Vreeland, J. R. (2010). Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited. *Public Choice, 143*(1/2), 67-101.

Cohen, S. E. (2016). The Imperative of De-Demonizing Vladimir Putin. *The Nation*. Retrieved from https://www.thenation.com/article/the-imperative-of-de-demonizing-vladimir-putin/

Drake, B. (2013). Americans Put Low Priority on Promoting Democracy Abroad. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/12/04/americans-put-low-priority-on-promoting-democracy-abroad/

Encyclopedia Britannica. (2017). Dictatorship. Retrieved from https://www.britannica.com/topic/dictatorship

Harris, T. O. (1938). *The Kingfish*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing.

Hook, S. W. (2010). *U.S. Foreign Policy: The Paradox of World Power*. City, State: CQ Press.

Human Rights Watch. (2017). Russia. *Human Rights Watch.* Retrieved from https://www.hrw.org/europe/central-asia/russia

Jehl, D. (1993, October 4). Showdown in Moscow: Washington; Clinton, Reaffirming Support for Yeltsin, Blames Rutskoi's Faction for the Violence. *New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/1993/10/04/world/showdown-moscow-washington-clinton-reaffirming-support-for-yeltsin-blames.html

Keene, D. (2017, January 2). Confusing Putin with the Old Soviet Threat. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/jan/2/confusing-vladimir-putin-with-the-old-soviet-threa/

KyivPost, (2015, Jul 22). "Senior US Military Officers Support Giving Lethal Weaponry to Ukraine to Repel Russian Aggression." Retrieved from https://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/senior-us-military-officers-support-giving-lethal-weaponry-to-ukraine-to-repel-russian-aggression-394007.html

Marshall, M. G., Gurr, T. R., & Jaggers, K. (2016). *Polity IV Project Dataset User's Manual*. Retrieved from http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/p4manualv2015.pdf

Navidian, A., Bahari, F., & Kermansaravi, F. (2014). The Relationship of Interpersonal Conflict Handling Styles and Marital Conflicts Among Iranian Divorcing Couples. *Global Journal of Health Science, 6*(6), 245-251.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. (2012). Russia's Presidential Election Marked by Unequal Campaign Conditions, Active Citizens' Engagement, International Observers Say. *Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe*. Retrieved from http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/88661

Political Terror Scale. (2016). Documentation: Coding Rules. *Political Terror Scale*. Retrieved from http://www.politicalterrorscale.org/Data/Documentation.html

Przeworski, A., Alvarez, M. E., Cheibub, J. A., & Limongi, F. (2000). *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty. (2016). OSCE Gives Mixed Review of Russian Ruling Party's Win. *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty*. Retrieved from https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-duma-elections-voting-putin/27997462.html

Randolph, E. (1996, July 9). Americans Claim Role in Yeltsin Win. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/1996-07-09/news/mn-22423_1_boris-yeltsin

Ritter, J. (2014). America's 25 Most Awkward Allies. *Politico*. Retrieved from http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/02/americas-most-awkward-allies-103889

RT. (2016). Obama Slams Trump's Appearance on RT, Compares Putin to Saddam Hussein. *RT*. Retrieved from https://www.rt.com/news/359234-obama-trump-rt-putin-hussein/

Sakwa, R. (2007). *Putin: Russia's Choice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Shuster, S. (2012). Rewriting Russian History: Did Boris Yeltsin Steal the 1996 Presidential Election? *Time*. Retrieved from http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2107565,00.html

Stuckler, D., & Basu, S. (2013, May 13). How Austerity Kills. *New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/13/opinion/how-austerity-kills.html

United States Department of State. (n.d.). Bill Clinton, Boris Yeltsin, and U.S.-Russian Relations. *U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian*. Retrieved from https://history.state.gov/milestones/1993-2000/clinton-yeltsin

White, D. (2016). Read a Transcript of the Vice Presidential Debate. *Time*. Retrieved from http://time.com/4517096/vice-presidential-debate-kaine-pence-transcript/

Wilson, J. (2016). Spinning Hillary: A History of America and Russia's Mutual Meddling. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/03/spinning-hillary-a-history-of-america-and-russias-mutual-meddling

Journal of Global Initiatives
Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp. 176-191.

Stanislavsky: Acting Lessons for Life and Leadership

Harrison Long

Abstract

An artist's creative work can become the primary lens through which he or she sees the world; it is a fundamental tool for interpreting life. But artistry can also teach a great deal about effective leadership. Based on the principles of Konstantin Stanislavsky, the father of modern acting, this essay reflects on five important lessons for life and leadership: The Power of Purpose, The Power of Context, The Power of Listening, The Power of Partnerships, and The Power of Community. After a year of studying Russian culture, history, and foreign policy, I believe these lessons can be applied on the international level as well as the personal. How might a Russian actor advise our leaders in Moscow and Washington? Read and find out.

A Brief History of the Stanislavsky System

European and American culture of the late 19th century touted science as a social panacea. As early 19th century Romanticism gave way to modern science, overblown, melodramatic acting began to fade, and a new dramatic form emerged: Psychological Realism. For the first time, theatre artists were social scientists, recreating life on stage to examine and diagnose society's ills (Bert, 1991, p. 363).

In March 1906, Konstantin Stanislavsky, co-founder of the world-famous Moscow Art Theatre (MAT), experienced a crisis on stage that would forever change the direction of modern acting. While playing the role of Dr. Stockmann in Henrick Ibsen's *Enemy of the People* (Benedetti, 2000, p. 35), Stanislavsky found himself thinking of business matters rather than living fully "in the moment" (Tcherkasski, 2007). Disturbed that he was cheating the audience, Stanislavsky nearly retired from the stage. Thankfully, he did not. Instead, he began to formulate an objective, *scientific* approach to performance, one that addressed the psychological complexities of the latest dramatic forms. Before that time, actor training consisted of "tricks of the trade" taught by experienced actors who merely indicated the results they wanted, but not the means to achieve them (Benedetti, 2000, p. 4). Stanislavsky's ideas, research, and his resulting actor training "System" transformed the art of acting and continues to do so in the present day.

Stanislavsky experimented with the actor's craft for over 60 years, attempting to identify an empirically derived, unified theory of acting. In theory, any actor can apply Stanislavsky's practices to achieve a highly developed, emotionally truthful embodiment of a living character. As Stanislavsky's ideas developed, his students

began teaching what they knew of "the System" throughout Europe and America (Bartow, 2006, p. xxiv).

In 1923, when the MAT appeared on Broadway, American acting schools slowly began to proliferate, each offering its own version of Stanislavsky's System; thus American "Method" acting was born (Gordon, 1994, p. 188). While there are many American branches of the Stanislavsky System, the three main schools were formed by Lee Strasberg, Stella Adler, and Sanford Meisner (Bartow, 2006, p. xxiv). All three teachers began with the intention of *revealing* Stanislavsky's System rather than developing their own. In truth, each highlighted a different developmental stage of Stanislavsky's 60-year process (Judd, Long, Maloof, Patillo, Wallace, & Wiernik, 2008).

Through the years, the Stanislavsky System has continued to evolve through teachers like Jerzy Grotowski, Michael Chekhov, Uta Hagen, and others. Sergei Tcherkasski (2007) of the St. Petersburg Theatre Arts Academy, suggests that studying various American acting techniques is like taking your family to Disney World: one day you might visit the Magic Kingdom, the next the Epcot Center, the next Animal Kingdom, but it's all *Disney World!* Similarly, the techniques of Adler, Strasberg, Hagen, or Meisner are all "*Stanislavsky World!"* (Tcherkasski, 2007).

Transferrable Skills

The benefits of Stanislavsky training reach far beyond the classroom or the proscenium arch. Actor training encourages students to observe the social forces governing the roles they play from day-to-day, both on and *off* the stage. Acting exercises sharpen a student's ability to critically observe the world. A foundation of solid performance skills not only helps students understand the fundamentals of theatrical artistry, it teaches the social consequences of human behavior. Furthermore, it is widely accepted that actor training, and other arts-based curricula cultivate transferrable skills that are highly sought after in the marketplace.

According to Steven Tepper (2014), dean of the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University, arts training develops the skills business leaders desire most, including creative problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, the ability to deal with ambiguity, the ability to adjust or revise work, and associational and analogical thinking. A study conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers Global (2016) reported that 77% of CEO's surveyed consider it difficult to find employees who possess essential creativity and innovation skills, skills we develop every day in artistic training. The Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (2011-2013) reports that, of 92,113 arts alumni surveyed, 80% believe artistic technique is important to their work, regardless of the nature of that work. The survey also notes that those who have worked or are currently working as professional artists score higher on a list of important professional competencies and skills, especially in the areas of business and entrepreneurship.

In 2016, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* published a popular essay by Tracey Moore entitled "Why Theatre Majors are Vital in the Digital Age." The

article, which celebrates the broad value of Stanislavsky training, points out that many theatre majors find their livelihood teaching presentation skills, conflict resolution, and collaborative problem-solving to corporate clients. Moore's argument in support of actor training, however, goes deeper than artistic merit or even the marketability of actor skills: "The actor's ability to envision multiple outcomes or motivations in a play must be based on the character's circumstances, not the actor's. That requires a kind of stepping into another person's shoes that social scientists say is dwindling among college-age students" (Moore, 2016, p. 2). As technology increasingly dominates our ways of relating in the world, actor skills such as concentration, self-reflection, imagination, and empathy help us to remember what it is to be human.

Powerful Lessons for Life and Leadership

Like many people who are passionate about their work, I see my craft as a metaphor for my place in the world; my identity as an actor and acting teacher shapes the way the world appears to me, and the means by which I function within it. Stanislavsky's ideas are the core of what I teach regardless of textual style or period. The wildly different plays of Tennessee Williams, George Bernard Shaw, Bertolt Brecht, Shakespeare, and Moliere all come to life effectively through Stanislavsky's approach. Moreover, Stanislavsky's lessons for actors provide a vehicle for self-examination and human understanding, as well as a way of interacting and collaborating with greater awareness. For me, the System has become far more than a method to approach my work as a teacher and professional theatre artist; it permeates all of my interactions, both in life and in the workplace. Simply put, actor training can teach us a lot about life and leadership.

The following five lessons are derived from Stanislavsky's System with examples of their efficacy provided from my own experiences as an actor, director, teacher, and administrator following in the footsteps of numerous theatre professionals trained in the Stanislavsky System.

Lesson One: The Power of Purpose

"Whatever happens on stage must be for a *purpose*." (Stanislavsky, 1964, p. 35)
One of the first things a new actor has to contend with is stage fright, the fear of looking foolish in front of an audience. We've all experienced this at one point or another - your knees shake, your mouth gets dry, your palms sweat. You're so worried about *how* you're doing you can't focus on *wha*t you're doing. Sometimes a less experienced actor allows his ego to take over: he gets so involved in trying to be the best actor on the stage, he loses track of his purpose for being up there in the first place.

Nerves are a natural physiological response to perceived stress. We all get nervous. So how do we harness our nerves onstage? It's simple: we take *action*. We focus on our purpose in the scene and take action to achieve it. Stanislavsky called our purpose the character's goal or objective.

Objective: What the character is trying to achieve, the character's goal or purpose.

Here's the irony: In order to play a character convincingly, an actor has to care more about achieving the character's goals than he does about impressing the audience with his talent. In other words, an actor must be committed to something more meaningful than protecting his own ego. On stage or off, *our character is defined by our actions*.

Action: the greatest acting teachers in history have always focused on action. Sanford Meisner (1987), who taught Robert DeNiro, Alec Baldwin, Robert Duvall, and Tina Fey said when "[you] are working to achieve a task, you're not focused on yourself," instead, "you're attached to something outside yourself." (Meisner, p. 24). The great Uta Hagen (1973), who also taught DeNiro (along with Whoopi Goldberg, Mathew Broderick, and Jason Robards), said "The sum total of your actions (what you do from moment to moment) reveals your character" (Hagen, p. 185).

The same can be said of leaders. A leader's goals and the way she goes about achieving them, can tell you everything about her character. A good leader is dedicated to something more important than her own ego; good leaders always keep the objective in mind.

In his Ted Talk entitled "The Walk from No to Yes," William Ury (2010), one of America's top conflict mediators, tells about the time he brokered a tough negotiation between Russia and Chechnya. The talks got off to a rocky start when the vice president of Chechnya insulted the United States in front of all the other negotiators. At first, Ury said he wanted to defend the United States, but then he remembered his objective. He hadn't come there to defend the United States, but rather to facilitate a peace agreement. So, he took a deep breath and thanked the vice president for his candor. Then, Ury gently reminded the group that the reason they had come together was to stop the war in Chechnya. Because Ury remembered his purpose, negotiations got back on track and they accomplished their objective.[1]

Good leaders and good actors know the power of a clear purpose. Leaders keep the objective in mind in order to know what action to take. But how do they determine that objective in the first place? They examine motives - their own and others. They engage in self-reflection. They gather the facts. Good leaders know: if you want to determine a strong purpose, if you want to make sure you're fighting for what you really need, you have to know the context.

Lesson Two: The Power of Context

Context is everything in the theatre. When I start work on a play, the first thing I do is sit down and read the script again and again. I research the history and events around when and why the play was written. I do this so I can understand the play's

[1] I learned about Ury's Ted Talk from Melanie Martin Long's (2015) video: Mastering Stage Presence: How to Present to Any Audience, Lecture 10: Playing Status Relationships.

context. In the theatre, we call context the Given Circumstances.

Given Circumstances–All the relevant facts that influence a character's behavior (Barton, 1993, p. 115).

Knowing the given circumstances means you've gathered all the facts. And those facts, that *context*, can make all the difference in how an actor chooses to play the scene. To illustrate, my fellow acting teacher, Allan Edwards, conducts a simple acting exercise. He asks his students to say the Pledge of Allegiance twice: the first time they recite the pledge just as themselves sitting in his acting class. The second time, however, the students are asked to imagine they are refugees from a land of oppression, immigrants who have worked many years to become naturalized citizens. With this new set of circumstances, the students speak the Pledge of Allegiance for the very first time as American citizens.

As you can imagine, the additional circumstances make a big difference in the way the actors speak. The first time through the pledge, the students seem slightly embarrassed and a little bit awkward. That's because they haven't been given a clear purpose. But the second time through the students seem reverent and committed, sometimes even emotional. It's very dramatic, and very interesting to watch.

Like good actors, good leaders must understand the power of context. Effective leaders make it a point to learn the relevant facts before deciding what action to take. Currently, the world is experiencing a critical time of change characterized by increased divisiveness on the global, national, and local levels. With the proliferation of electronic media sources, sources with varying levels of credibility and little accountability, gathering the facts has never been more difficult. Unfounded personal accusations, assumptions, and "fake news" obscure our ability to understand context.

An extreme example of misunderstanding context happened in December 2016. Edgar Maddison Welch burst into a Washington, D.C., pizza joint armed with a semi-automatic rifle. Welch was convinced children had been imprisoned in the restaurant's basement as part of a child sex ring run by Hilary Clinton (Haag & Salam, 2017). When no children were found, Welch surrendered to police revealing he had been spurred on by radio host Alex Jones, who also runs the website *InfoWars.com*. Apparently, Jones, a conspiracy theorist, had publicized the false "pizzagate" allegations and encouraged his audience to investigate for themselves (Killelea, 2017).

Voltaire once said, "Anyone who has the power to make you believe absurdities has the power to make you commit injustices." It has never been more important for leaders to get the facts straight, and to communicate those facts *accurately*. Knowing the facts means knowing the *truth*. Good actors are in touch with the reality they inhabit and react truthfully to it, even if that reality is a fictitious one.

"You may play well or you may play badly; the important thing is that you should play truly." (Stanislavsky, 1964, p. 14)

If a leader wants to determine the best course of action, she needs to get all the facts on the table.

What's the best way to understand context in this age of questionable information? You study the issue from every trusted angle, you consult the people who will be affected by your decision, and you consider *every* credible opinion on the matter. That means you have to listen.

Lesson Three: The Power Listening

Along with understanding the given circumstances, the larger context, it's important to understand personal context as well. After I've studied the play to learn all the given circumstances, after I've examined the script to determine all my objectives, it's time to start working with the other actors. The most important thing you can do at this point is to listen … *really* listen. If you do, you'll discover some important things about the play that never would have occurred to you on your own.

Actors *have* to listen to stay on track. If they don't, they forget the next line or even which scene comes next. (I can tell you from personal experience how terrifying it is to forget your lines!) When an actor is truly listening, she is spontaneous, unpredictable, authentic, and interesting! But when an actor *isn't* listening, her performance is stale, mechanical, and lifeless; she has all the dramatic appeal of a cinder block. But what *makes* us listen? We listen because we need to find out more information. We listen so we can decide what to do next.

We all *want* to be good listeners, but what does that really mean? Real listening is an active process, not a passive one. It means living in the "here and now." Listening means being open to the influence of the other person. Listening means taking the time to hear the *whole* thought rather than waiting impatiently until it's your turn to speak or present your agenda–that's the mark of the self-centered actor. The best acting is *re*active. The best actors respond to the reactions of their partner. In other words: the best actors listen!

Of course, effective listening is a quality of good leadership too. That's one of the best ways to gather the given circumstances, the relevant facts. But even the most credible sources of information are subject to bias. For that reason, good leaders must consider more than one point of view. Sometimes the most valuable information comes from the least expected source or is discovered in the least expected ways.

A few years ago, while serving as Interim Director of our School of Art and Design, the elevator broke down. Far from being an uncommon occurrence, this had been happening every two or three weeks for quite some time. This was an enormous problem because, on a few occasions, injured or disabled students or faculty had to be *carried* up or down the stairs to get to their next class.

The problem persisted, and every time the elevator stopped working our administrative assistant would kindly call the maintenance department who eventually sent over the repairman. This happened over and over again, but nothing seemed to permanently solve the problem.

One day, out of desperation, I asked the assistant to tell me when the elevator technician arrived. When I introduced myself as the School Director, his defenses shot up. It was clear that the poor fellow was used to being badgered and complained

at whenever he showed up to fix a campus elevator. It was clear that there was a history here. In the theatre, we call this history the character's "backstory."

Backstory: a character's offstage history that explains her/his behavior in the scene.

Sensing there was a backstory, I quickly reassured him that I only wanted more information. Once he knew I was willing to listen, he was happy to show me around and teach me about the problem.

By the end of our conversation we discovered something: all that was needed to fix the elevator was a simple maintenance check each month, which he kindly agreed to do. Do you know what? There hasn't been a problem with the elevator since!

Good leaders understand the power of listening. Good leaders know that everyone has a backstory. They try to understand the *whole person* and not just the surface issues. No matter how difficult or defensive a person may seem, it is important to remember that everyone is the hero of his own story.

But in order to understand personal context, you have to do more than hear the words someone is speaking, you have to *empathize*, you have to imagine what the other person is *feeling*. Sometimes the actor knows more than the character she is playing. Sometimes the actor may not even approve of his character's behavior. But in order to play the scene *truthfully*, Stanislavsky insisted that his actors avoid *judging* a character and choose to *empathize* with him instead. In essence, the actor has to listen deeply to the character. To accomplish this, Stanislavsky used a simple trick he called the "magic if."

Magic If: When the actor simply asks himself: "What would I do, if I were actually in the situation that the character is in?" (Stanislavsky, 1964, p. 46).

While they may not know the term "magic if," good leaders use it all the time. They listen so well they can imagine what it is like to be in the other person's shoes. Whether on the local, national, or international level, good leaders make it their business to study every side of an issue and learn how it impacts different constituents. Empathic listening is an important step in building the kinds of positive relationships that foster collaboration.

Lesson Four: The Power of Collaboration

Theatre is a collaborative art form; the director, writer, actors, designers, and technicians all work together to create a unified production. Every moment on stage is a collaboration between actors who, according to Stanislavsky, must respond authentically and spontaneously to one another. In fact, every performance is a collaboration between the actors and the audience (Stanislavsky, 1964, pp. 178, 180, 193, 294-295). Theatre simply can't exist in a vacuum. But … collaboration isn't always easy. Sometimes it is a tug-of-war, a battle over supreme authorship. No one understood this better than Stanislavsky, who constantly shifted roles from producer, to director, to designer, to actor, to teacher. Yet, Stanislavsky also knew that collaboration can magnify our creative efforts in astonishing ways.

The challenges of producing a play based on historical events illustrate how theatrical collaboration goes beyond the stage. Examining the past can be a difficult and painful process, but it is an essential one, especially when it unearths local history that many would like to forget or ignore. One particular production, *Parade*, conjured two of our most destructive, local demons: antisemitism and racism. Yet, despite the volatile subject matter, divergent communities came together to examine the past, understand the present, and envision a better future.

On the night of April 26, 1913, 13-year-old Mary Phagan was found dead in the basement of the National Pencil Company in Atlanta, Georgia. After a highly publicized trial Leo Frank, the factory's Jewish manager, was convicted of murder on sketchy evidence. After studying the case carefully, Governor John Slaton commuted Frank's sentence. But on August 17, 1915, a group of men abducted Frank from his prison cell and lynched him from an oak tree on the outskirts of Marietta, just a few miles from our campus. This true story inspired the Tony Award-winning musical, *Parade*.

As a resident of the town where Frank was lynched, I had been interested in the musical for a long time. I became even more interested when I realized two things: first, the musical had never been performed in Marietta. Secondly, 2015 was to be the centennial of Leo Frank's death. I began to see *Parade* as an opportunity to explore local history and perhaps generate some healing discussions in the process. But I knew what an ambitious project it was, and that our theatre department couldn't do it alone, so I began looking for partners.

It didn't take long to find others interested in exploring the Frank case. The resulting Seeking Justice Initiative, of which *Parade* became a part, was much more exciting than anything I could have conceived on my own. Our impressive list of partners included: The Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History, The Bremen Jewish Heritage Museum, The Museum of History and Holocaust Education, our own College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Temple, Atlanta, Leo Frank's home congregation. Through this experience, I learned that collaboration can prove powerful for several important reasons.

The first and most obvious reason is that sharing resources means you can do more with less. In the current economic climate, topflight organizations are eager to forge partnerships with like-minded collaborators. *Parade* benefitted enormously in this way. For example, one of our partners, the Bremen Museum, provided high-resolution slides of obscure historical images at no cost. These became an essential production element.

The second reason collaboration can be powerful is that it helps make the case for additional resources. Our university, like many other institutions, likes to fund projects that include more than one group. In this way funders get more bang for their buck. The fact that we were collaborating with several units on and off campus helped me convince our president to contribute an additional $5,000 to the project. As a result, we were able to have a marketing budget, hire sound support for our Temple performance, and fund a campus residency for Pulitzer Prize, Tony and Academy Award-winning playwright Alfred Uhry (*Parade, Driving Miss Daisy*).

Thirdly, collaboration opened our work to a much wider audience. Because each of our partners has a separate patron base, we were able to reach more people. In fact, our Marietta performance was completely sold out, far exceeding our box office projections. Because of our increased exposure, Playwright Alfred Uhry and I were invited to interview on Georgia Public Radio. *Broadwayworld.com* published a feature article on *Parade* and we even got a good mention in the international magazine *The Economist.*

The final reason partnerships are so powerful is that they increase impact. Reaching a wider audience certainly meant increased visibility for our College of the Arts. Furthermore, audience members who had attended the previous Seeking Justice events were primed to experience our work in a much more meaningful way. Most importantly, however, the *student* experience was enriched. As a part of the Seeking Justice initiative, our students were active participants as performers and technicians. They and other students attended panel discussions by experts, and were given a curator-led, private tour of the Southern Museum's Leo Frank exhibit.

Parade became powerful experience for many reasons, but most of all because collaboration helped us connect with our community in new ways. This leads me to my fifth, and final lesson.

The Power of Community

On June 22, 1897, Russian theatre critic and playwright Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko asked Konstantin Stanislavsky to meet him at a restaurant in Moscow, where they talked, uninterrupted for 18 hours. Both men were deeply concerned about the lack of discipline in the Russian theatre. That night, the two formed a partnership to create one of the world's greatest theatre companies, the MAT. Early on, company members lived communally at an estate in Pushkino, where they alternated between rehearsals and housekeeping duties (Gordon, 1994, p. 18). Living together so closely meant there were few distractions from the work. It also contributed to the collaborative spirit of the ensemble. Stanislavsky's goal was to create a true ensemble of players with no stars (Benedetti, 2000, p. 24). His goal was to create a community.

What is a community? Is it the town we live in? Is it our neighborhood? People often refer to the academic community, the online community or the arts community. For me, community is something that binds us together.

In 2011, I directed a play called *Splittin' the Raft*, an adaptation of *Huckleberry Finn* as told by Frederick Douglass. A generous grant from the National Endowment for the Arts made it possible to tour seven North Georgia communities, ranging from inner-city schools to rural mountain towns. The struggles we faced and the conversations we encountered prove the lasting and devastating legacy of American slavery.

Ours was the first production of *Splittin' the Raft* to be staged in the Deep South. Months of struggling to arrange tour dates taught me why. Some communities and schools were reluctant to host our production fearing the same kind of backlash Twain's novel has provoked since its publication (Long, p.136).

Still, this highly entertaining production allowed people to open up and approach difficult issues with a spirit of mutual respect. One student responded: "This production is a call to action." In an interview with the *Douglas County Sentinel*, Laura Lieberman of the Douglasville Cultural Arts Council, stated: "The message of *Splittin' the Raft* and the outstanding quality of this production are too important and relevant for our community to miss" (2011). Despite early resistance, *Splittin' the Raft* prompted productive, community-building dialogue about race, gender, and economic equity wherever we went.

On November 11, we loaded up the truck and drove over miles of winding mountain roads to our final tour stop at the Sautee Nacoochee Cultural Center in White County, Georgia. As more than one White County resident put it, "the name of our county speaks for itself." Today, much of the area is still owned by the descendants of the slave-owning Williams family. Only a few miles down the road from the center stands Bean Creek, a community largely still inhabited by descendants of the Williams family slaves. One Bean Creek resident told me, "There's a long and painful history of discrimination, some of which is relatively recent" (Long, H., 2015, p. 146).

At curtain time, the theatre filled quickly. There was a wide cross-section of locals in attendance (both white and black, rich and poor, from Sautee Nacoochee and Bean Creek). Kathy Blandin, the center's director, was pleased to see some of the "old families" in attendance, along with several people from the Bean Creek community, some who hadn't set foot in the building for several years because of recurring racial tensions.

The performance that night was among our most powerful. After the applause died down only a few people left the room. The audience *needed* to talk. The post-show discussion was particularly passionate. People who wouldn't typically find themselves in the same *room* with one another were having a serious discussion about race and class in their community.

At one point, however, a local white woman became agitated. She couldn't understand why we were going on and on about *slavery*, something that had happened so long ago. Strangely, she kept using the phrase "Am I living with Santa Claus or ….." For example: "*Am I living with Santa Claus* or hasn't that all been dealt with? *Am I living with Santa Claus* or are *those people* just avoiding responsibility? *Am I living with Santa Claus* or are they simply trying to live off my taxes rather than pay their *own* way?"

The air went out of the room. Everyone was stunned into silence. I was embarrassed for the woman and for all of us. Most of all, I was ashamed to face the Bean Creek folks who had reached out in good faith. How could someone hear so many stories of discrimination *from her own neighbors* and still miss the point? Then, something changed: Sabrina Dorsey from Bean Creek smiled at the woman. With humor and with gentleness, she raised her head and said, *"*Ma'am, with all due respect …. *you're living with Santa Claus!"* (Long, H., 2015, p. 146).

The room erupted with good-natured laughter and suddenly the woman began to relax and really *listen*. I'm not suggesting "Mrs. Santa Claus" underwent a full conversion that night, but there had been a clear turning point. By the end of the

conversation she understood something about the experience of her black neighbors that she hadn't considered before. For me, that understanding is "community."[2]

In order to build community, we have to let our true and imperfect selves come out into the open. We have to acknowledge what we *really* think and feel. We have to be open to opinions different from our own. We have to be relaxed enough and *trust* enough to let down our defenses. Only then can we risk being influenced by one another.

What does it take to build community? It takes respect. It takes trust. It takes commitment. It takes the courage to react with *honesty*. Interestingly, that's a lot like what Stanislavsky told his actors. You see, you build community in the theatre the same way you build it in life. Good actors and good leaders build community.

The Year of Russia

In May 2017, I had the opportunity to visit Russia for the first time with a faculty delegation from our university. This extraordinary trip was the culmination of our "Year of Russia" celebration which included weekly lectures, concerts, films, food, and panel discussions focused on various aspects of Russian culture, history, and foreign policy. These events were eerily relevant because they coincided with the 2016 presidential campaign and the early months of the troubled Trump administration. By the time we left for Moscow, many Americans were convinced Russia had meddled in the presidential election, but to what degree? I was eager to hear the Russian point of view. Despite my fascination with all of this, however, my primary preoccupation was, of course, Stanislavsky. After all, this was my pilgrimage to actor Mecca!

Russian culture is rich and beautiful. We strolled the streets of stately St. Petersburg and stood slack-jawed in astonishment at the masterworks housed in the Hermitage. I toured Anton Chekhov's estate, and, of course attended an outstanding production at the MAT! I was impressed by the pulsing vitality of modern Moscow with its sparkling skyline of glass superstructures. Whatever my personal feelings about Vladimir Putin, I understood his popularity; for many, Putin has restored Russian national pride and a general feeling of hope for the future.

We visited several universities where we attended lectures and panels on Russian foreign policy, domestic policy, and economic strategy. We toured the Kremlin, the American Embassy, and Russia Today, one of two top government-run news agencies. Everywhere we went, we were welcomed graciously and respectfully. Through all of this, Stanislavsky sat perched on my shoulder.

I was struck by how much we have in common with the Russian people, and by a few fundamental differences in the way we perceive the role of our nations in the world. Perhaps American playwright Lee Blessing explains it best in his cold war drama, *A Walk in the Woods*, about a series of fictitious conversations between

---

[2] This story was first recounted in my article Theatre across Communities: A Tale of Two Slave Cabins in the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 146-147.

Soviet and American negotiators in Geneva between 1984 and 1985. In 2013, I directed a production of the play at Atlanta's Serenbe Playhouse, a professional theatre company. To put this in historical context, the play ends a few months before Gorbachev courageously announced a unilateral moratorium on intermediate-range nuclear missiles, and proposed a freeze on *all* nuclear weapons testing (Tsygankov, 2016, p. xiv).

A Walk in the Woods

> BOTVINNIK: … Americans and Russians are just the same. But their history is different. What is history? History is geography over time. The geography of America is oceans–therefore no nearby enemies. The geography of Russia is the opposite: flat, broad plains–open invitations to anyone who wants to attack. Mongols, French, Germans, Poles, Turks, Swedes, anyone …. So, what is the history of America? Conquest without competition. What is the history of Russia? Conquest *because* of competition. How best to be America? Make individual freedom your god. This allows you to attack on many fronts–all along your borders, in fact–and maintain the illusion that you are not attacking at all. You don't even have to call your wars, wars. You call them "settling the west." … How best to be Russia then? Fight collectively. *Know* that you are trying to crush those around you. Make control your god, and channel the many wills of the people into one will …. Americans, who never had to confront themselves as conquerors, are still under the delusion that they are idealists. And Russians, who did have to confront themselves, are under the equally powerful delusion that they are realists. I'm speaking now of those in power. Common Americans and common Russians share a much simpler delusion: that they are peace-loving people. (Blessing, 1988, pp. 26-27)

A Walk in the Woods seems more resonant than ever, partly because we know what the characters do not: that the Berlin Wall would crumble, that the end of communism would give way to unforeseen freedoms - of markets, of technology, of information. On June 19, 2013, a few days before the opening night of our production, President Obama publicly stated that the dissolution of the Soviet Union had brought "a sense that the great challenges have somehow passed." In order to "move beyond Cold War nuclear postures" Obama called for reducing the number of deployed U.S. strategic nuclear warheads by one-third if the Russian government agreed to a similar cut. In Moscow, however, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin quickly responded, saying, "How can we take seriously this idea about cuts in strategic nuclear potential while the United States is developing its capabilities to intercept Russia's nuclear potential?"

Sadly, four years later, it is clear that President Obama was incorrect. In fact, the divide between our countries, it seems, is widening by the day. Despite our respective progress in the realm of individual freedoms, issues of poverty,

ecological devastation, and a possible nuclear disaster continue to threaten global stability. Homegrown terrorists and sophisticated cyber-warriors undermine democracy across the globe. In short, world peace seems just as tenuous now as it was then, if not more.

Recently, the U.S. Congress passed sweeping economic sanctions, which prompted a game of one-upmanship as both countries downsized each other's diplomatic corps (Gordon & Schmidt, 2017). While sanctions can be an important foreign policy tool, I wonder how much these are motivated, not by their potential effectiveness, but by the need of national leaders to appear powerful to their own people - to at least *appear* as if they are taking action? Wouldn't we accomplish more if our leaders began engaging more rather than less? After all, we are dealing with *people* here, people similar to ourselves. This is community at its broadest, most global level.

In his book titled *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*, distinguished professor of international relations, Andrei Tsygonkov, explains the complex framework of forces that influence Russia's fluctuating foreign policies in the post-Soviet era. Tsygankov concludes his text by advising Russia and the West to remain engaged and resist the tendency toward isolationism. Rather, they should:

> ... double their efforts to explain their international policies as consistent with their vision of the global world. … Isolationism cannot be practical in a world that has grown increasingly global in terms of both new opportunities and new threats. … staying engaged is not just an option, but a foreign policy imperative." (Tsygonkov, 2016, pp. 269-271)

Make no mistake, I find much of Russian foreign and domestic policy objectionable. Admittedly, it is as hard for me to set aside my judgments as it is for anyone. Still, like Tsygankov, I am just as skeptical that stifling communication, rather than promoting it, will have the desired effect. Our leaders must not lose track of their purpose. Our leaders must remember we can't move forward without *listening* to each other in empathy and respect.

As members of the world-wide community, there are many circumstances that provide the context for continued collaboration. Russia and the West are unified by our common global responsibilities, economic opportunities, the need for natural resources, and our shared efforts to counter terrorism. While I only spent two weeks in Russia, my experiences there have convinced me we share many common values.

How can we achieve lasting progress without trust, without the ability to look across the negotiating table and recognize ourselves in one another? How can we break through the gridlocks, both at home and abroad, brought on by our individual and collective need for power and security? With increased globalization, our futures are linked together more now than they have ever been. For that reason, there are no lasting unilateral solutions. Whether on the global, national, or local level, our leaders will do well to remember what Stanislavsky taught:

- the wisdom to choose a purpose greater than our own egos;
- the diligence to gather and *accurately represent* the facts in their full and complete context;
- the character to choose actions of integrity;
- the empathy to listen deeply and understand another's point of view;
- the understanding that, by working together, we can become greater than we are on our own; and
- the courage to reveal our *true* selves and to risk being influenced by one another.

Imagination refers to the actor's ability to accept new situations of life and believe in them. (Adler, 1988, p. 20)

At the center of Stanislavsky's System is perhaps the greatest lesson of all: the power of imagination. Imagination is important because it allows each of us, as leaders, to see beyond our current limitations and to visualize what we are capable of becoming. As Albert Einstein observed, "Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand." The opportunity to study Russia and engage with Russian students and scholars has inspired me to better understand today's shared global context as an interdependent community in need of greater collaboration. Imagine that!

References

Adler, S. (1988). *The Technique of Acting.* New York, NY: Bantam Books.

Barton, R. (1993). *Acting: Onstage and Off* (2nd ed.). Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace Publishers.

Bartow, A. (Ed.). (2006). *Training of the American Actor*. New York, NY: Theatre Communications Group.

Benedetti, J. (2000). *Stanislavski: An Introduction* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Bert, N. A. (Ed.). (1991). *Theatre Alive!.* Colorado Springs, CO: Meriwether Publishing LTD.

Blessing, L. (1988). *A Walk in the Woods*. New York, NY: Dramatists Play Service.

Bristow, E. K. (Ed.). (1977). *Anton Chekhov's Plays.* New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.

Brockett, O. G. (1995). *History of the Theatre*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Chekhov, M. (1953). *To the Actor*. London, England: Routledge.

Cook, L. (2017, August 30). NATO sending 3 monitors to Russia war-games but wants more. *The Chicago Tribune*. Retrieved from http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/sns-bc-eu--nato-russia-war-games-20170830-story.html

Figes, O. (2002). *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia.* New York, NY: Picador.

Gordon, M. (1994). *The Stanislavsky Technique.* New York, NY: Applause Theatre Book Publishers.

Gordon, M. R., & Schmidt, E. (2017, July 31). Russia's military drills near NATO border raise fears of aggression. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/31/world/europe/russia-military-exercise-zapad-west.html?mcubz=3

Haag, M., & Salam, M. (2017, June 22). Gunman in 'Pizzagate' shooting is sentenced to 4 years in prison. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/22/us/pizzagate-attack-sentence.html?mcubz

Hagen, U., & Franken, H. (1973). *Respect for Acting.* New York, NY: Macmillan.

Judd, M., Long, H., Maloof, J., Patillo, R., Wallace, J., & Wiernik, S. (2008). *Anton Chekhov: Theory and Praxis* (pp. 5-17). Kennesaw, GA: Self-published.

Killelea, E. (2017, February 21). Alex Jones' mis-infowars: 7 bat-sh*t conspiracy theories. *Rolling Stone*. Retrieved from http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/lists/alex-jones-mis-infowars-7-bat-sht-conspiracy-theories-w467509/former-fox-news-host-glenn-beck-is-a-cia-operative-w468041

Long, H. (2015). Theatre across communities: A tale of two slave cabins. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, *19*(1), 146-147.

Long, M. (2015). *Mastering Stage Presence: How to Present to Any Audience.* Lecture 10: Playing status relationships. The Great Courses. Chantilly, VA: The Teaching Company.

Meisner, S. (1987). *On Acting.* New York, NY: Random House.

Moore, T. (2016, April 3). Why theatre majors are vital in the digital age. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from http://www.chronicle.com/article/Why-Theater-Majors-Are-Vital/235925/

PricewaterhouseCoopers Global. (2016). *20th Public survey of 5,000 CEO's*. Retrieved from https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/ceo-survey/2017/deep-dives/ceo-survey-global-talent.pdf

Stanislavsky, K. (1964). *An Actor Prepares.* (E. Hapgood, Trans.). New York, NY: Routledge Press. (Original copyright 1936)

Stanislavsky, K. (2008). *An Actor's Work*. (J. Benedetti, Trans.). New York, NY: Routledge Press. (Original works published 1936 and 1939)

Stanislavsky, K. (2012). *My Life in Art.* (J. J. Robbins, Trans.). New York, NY: Routledge Press. (Original work published in 1924)

Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (2011-2013). *Survey of Over 92,000 Arts Graduates from American Institutions*. Retrieved from http://snaap.indiana.edu/snaapshot/

Tcherkasski, S. (2007, April 23). *The Seagull* in rehearsal [Master class]. Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, GA.

Tepper, S. (2014, May 6). *Work and Life Outcomes for Creative Graduates:*

Myths and Realities. [Power Point Presentation]. Cultural Policy Center, University of Chicago. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-we8FqOGDA

Tsygankov, A., (2016). *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity* (4th ed.). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Twain-based 'Splittin' the Raft' set at CAC. (October 30, 2011). *Douglas County Sentinel*.

Ury, W. (2010, October). *The Walk from No to Yes*. [Video]. TED Ideas Worth Spreading, Chicago, IL. Retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/william_ury

About the Contributors

Amir Azarvan is an assistant professor of political science at Georgia Gwinnett College. His work regularly explores the intersections between politics and Eastern Orthodox theology. His commentaries and scholarly work have appeared in such venues as *Inside Higher Ed*, *Truthout*, *Russia Insider*, and the *Catholic Social Science Review*. He is the editor of *Re-Introducing Christianity: An Eastern Apologia for a Western Audience*.

Peter Boettke is the BB&T Professor for the Study of Capitalism, and the Director of the F.A. Hayek Program for Advanced Study in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University. He is the author of *Why Perestroika Failed: The Politics and Economics of Socialist Transformation*, London: Routledge, 1993; and *The Political Economy of Soviet Socialism: The Formative Years, 1918-1928*, Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990. In 2012, Boettke received a doctorate honoris causa in Social Sciences from Universidad Francisco Marroquin. In 2013, Dr. Boettke received his second honorary doctorate from Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Romania.

Yuliya Brel is a PhD student at the School of Public Policy and Administration at the University of Delaware. Her primary research interests are the development of civil society and democratization in the Eastern and Central European countries and in the republics of the former Soviet Union. She is also interested in modern dictatorships and the problems of minority languages in Europe. Yuliya holds an M.A. in Germanic languages from Minsk State Linguistic University (Belarus), and an M.A. in Public Policy and Urban Affairs from the University of Delaware.

Rosolino Candela is a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Political Theory Project at Brown University. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from George Mason University, where he was a Graduate Research Fellow in the F.A. Hayek Program for Advanced Study in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. In 2015, he was a Visiting Ph.D. Student in the Department of Political and Social Sciences at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. His research interests include Austrian economics, Public Choice, the history of economic thought, and political economy.

Elena Glazunova is an Associate Professor, School of World Politics, Lomonosov Moscow State University and lecturer in the School of Social Sciences, University of California, Irvine. She is co-founder and of the Center for Development and Security Studies of MSU. Her most recent book is *Origins of International Development Assistance: H.Truman Point 4 Program (1949-1952)*.

Harrison Long began working in the professional theatre in 1986. His credits range from contemporary drama to musicals to Shakespeare. He currently serves

as Associate Dean for the College of the Arts and Professor of Theatre at Kennesaw State University. Harrison is a proud member of The Actor's Equity Association.

Kristina V. Minkova is currently a Senior Lecturer at the Department of American Studies, St. Petersburg State University. She has a Ph.D. in the History of International Relations and a Master's degree in Regional Studies. The primary research interests include: international trade as a highly influential aspect of world politics, the Soviet-American relations in the early post-war years, and different aspects of Canadian Studies.

Dan Paracka is Professor of Education in the Interdisciplinary Studies Department at Kennesaw State University, where he also coordinates the signature Annual Country Study Program for the Division of Global Affairs. His areas of scholarship center on processes of global learning and intercultural competence.

Michele Pigliucci has a Ph.D. in Culture and Territory and is a research fellow in Economical and Political Geography at the University of Rome "Tor Vergata", Department of Management and Law. His research fields are Geopolitics, History of Geography, and Geographical Information Systems.

Thomas E. Rotnem is both a Professor and Assistant Chair in the Department of Political Science and International Affairs at Kennesaw State University. He teaches courses in comparative politics, international relations, political risk management, comparative political economy, and Russian foreign policy. His current research interests focus upon Sino-Russian relations, Russia's Arctic policies, and territorial conflicts in the former Soviet space. Dr. Rotnem earned his Ph.D. in Political Science from Ohio State University, as well as a Graduate Certificate as Specialist in Russian Area Studies.

Nikita Sleptcov received his bachelor degree in political science from the Ul'yanovsk State University (Russia) in 2012. While a student, he received multiple awards from the Oxford Russia Fund Scholarship for excellence to support his studies. He also led the Ul'yanovsk Youth Branch of Russian political science association. After graduating, he worked in various political bodies in Russia until 2015 when he received a Fulbright Scholarship. Since then, he is doing his Master's in political science at the University of Louisville, Kentucky. His interests are political homophobia, political usage of homosexuality and sexual citizenship.

Journal of Global Initiatives

POLICY, PEDAGOGY, PERSPECTIVE

VOLUME 12 2017 NUMBER 1

ISSN 1930-3009