THE RUSSIAN CHALLENGE TO THE EUROPEAN SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Edited by
Roger E. Kanet

The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment

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palgrave
macmillan

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ISBN 978-3-319-50774-3 ISBN 978-3-319-50775-0 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017934083

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This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Preface

The editor wishes to express his sincere appreciation to the authors of the contributions that comprise this volume for their central role in the project, for the quality of their analysis, and their positive responses to suggestions for revision and updating to strengthen the quality of their contributions. The idea for this volume emerged along with preparations for two ISA (International Studies Association) panels jointly entitled 'Peace or Conflict in Eurasia' held at the annual ISA meetings in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, on Wednesday, 16 March 2016. All of the contributors to this volume were able to share their views and to comment on one another's papers, thereby helping to sharpen the focus of the emerging chapters and the overall collection.

This volume is part of an informal series of books[1] dealing with Russian foreign and security policy published over the course of the past decade, or so (primarily by Palgrave Macmillan), in which many of the contributors to this volume have been involved. In most cases the volumes evolved much as this one, from a group of integrated papers prepared originally for and presented at a workshop or set of conference panels, at which the authors were able to share their ideas and contribute to the depth and quality of the analysis and to benefit from comments from colleagues in the audience. Through these interactive sessions we have emerged as something of an informal research group and, more important, have produced an increasingly comprehensive picture of the evolution of the foreign and security policy of the Russian Federation.

On behalf of the authors and myself I wish to thank, as well, the many others who have contributed to the publication of this volume, in particular the editorial and production staff of Palgrave and the anonymous readers consulted by the publisher.

Note

1. The projects referred to include the following: Roger E. Kanet and Matthew Sussex (eds) (2015) *Power, Politics and Confrontation in Eurasia: Foreign Policy in a Contested Region*; Sussex and Kanet (eds) (2015) *Russia, Eurasia and the New Geopolitics of Energy: Confrontation and Consolidation* (2015); Kanet and Rémi B. Piet (eds) (2014) *Shifting Priorities in Russia's Foreign and Security Policy*; Kanet and Maria Raquel Freire, Guest Editors (2012) *Russia in the New International Order: Theories, Arguments, Debates.* A special issue of *International Politics*, 49(4); Freire and Kanet (eds) (2012) *Russia and Its Near Neighbours*; Kanet and Freire (eds) (2012) *Competing for Influence: The EU and Russia in Post-Soviet Eurasia*; Kanet and Freire (eds) (2012) *Russia and European Security*; Kanet (ed) (2010) *Russian Foreign Policy in the Twenty-first Century*; Freire and Kanet (eds) (2010) *Key Players and Regional Dynamics in Eurasia: The Return of the 'Great Game'*; Kanet (ed) (2009) *A Resurgent Russia and the West: The European Union, NATO and Beyond*; Kanet (ed) (2007) *Russia, Re-Emerging Great Power*; and Kanet (ed) (2005) *The New Security Environment. The Impact on Russia, Central and Eastern Europe.*

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: The Russian Challenge to the Security Environment in Europe

Roger E. Kanet

A quarter of a century ago the collapse of the Soviet political-economic system supposedly introduced, in the words of then US President George H.W. Bush, 'a new world order' that would be characterized by collaboration, negotiations and the peaceful resolution of differences. It was widely and optimistically expected, among many in both Russia and in the West, that democratization would come to Russia and that the Russian Federation would be successfully integrated into the Western-dominated security, political and economic systems. As we well know today, these expectations did not materialize. In fact, over the past decade Russian relations with the USA and Europe have deteriorated precipitously, to the point where Russia has used military force to challenge Western policies in various parts of post-Soviet space and NATO has committed itself to strengthening its military presence in countries bordering Russian territory.

The present volume brings together a group of analysts from Russia and the West to examine the factors that have led seemingly inexorably to the current confrontation between the Russian Federation and the West and to what some have even termed a 'new cold war' (Lucas 2014). Individually, they approach the topic of the deterioration of Russian-Western relations

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_1

and the growing Russian challenge to the West-dominated post-cold war order that emerged in Europe and the rest of the world from a variety of theoretical perspectives which, they believe, will help to shed light on what occurred to turn the expected 'new world order' and integration of Russia into the existing international system of 1991 into the confrontational relationship that currently characterizes those relations.

It makes a difference in the factors that one emphasizes and the conclusions that one reaches about Russian policy depending upon the theoretical approach that one takes – whether one focuses on attitudes and values and domestic political and economic factors, as a neoclassical realist or constructivist, or, rather, on the interaction of states in the international system as a structural realist, whether one's orientation is that of an offensive or defensive realist.[1] In the current volume, which focuses on Russian relations with the West and attempts to explain the factors that have undermined that relationship over the past quarter century, the authors bring quite different assumptions and theoretical frameworks to the analysis.

In many respects the study of Soviet and Russian foreign policy has been something of a 'stepchild' in the field of the social sciences over the past half century. While political scientists and international relations specialists attempted to pursue a more 'scientific' and 'theory-based' approach to the study of domestic and international politics – often based upon research methods drawn from economics – in order to generalize about behaviour across political systems, analysts of Soviet and Russian politics were much more concerned about explaining the idiosyncrasies of Soviet and Russian society and politics. Immersion in the history and culture of Russia was the primary approach taken by these scholars. The result was a growing gap between political scientists and what were termed Soviet or Russian area specialists.

The challenge in the past quarter century to the dominance of positivist-oriented analysis in the IR field presented by constructivism and by an array of post-modernist perspectives has closed much of the gap between students of Russian foreign policy and their generalist colleagues. In recent decades books and articles concerned with Russian foreign policy have drawn increasingly upon the theoretical insights of constructivism in their analysis. Ted Hopf's 2002 study, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow 1955 and 1999*, presented an extended treatment of the importance of ideas, norms and issues of identity in the making of Soviet/Russian foreign policy. More recently other analysts, such as Timofey Bordachev (2008), Valentina Feklyunina

(2008), Andrei Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist (2009), and Regina Heller (2012), have effectively employed the central tenets of the constructivist critique of realist and other positivist approaches to international political analysis to explain some of the vagaries of Russian foreign policy.[2] Several of the contributors to this current volume, Alexey Bogdanov and Maria Raquel Freire in particular, frame their analysis of Russian policy explicitly within the context of constructivist arguments about the impact of norms and values in international affairs. Yet, classical realism, which takes into account both systemic factors emphasized by structural realists, but tempered by the understanding that domestic factors, such as norms and values, also play a very important role in influencing policy choices. In the following pages, the chapter by Nuray Ibryamova and Mehtap Kara is framed explicitly by neoclassical realist assumptions, while chapters by John Berryman, Nikita Lomagin and Stanislav Tkachenko are influenced by such an approach.

In a way, however, the various approaches to the analysis of Russian foreign policy do not break significantly with past theoretical assumptions and frameworks. Foreign policy analysis became an outlier in international relations as the field moved towards more abstract and so-called scientific analytic approaches. It is heartening to observe the closing of this intellectual gap,[3] with the emergence of constructivist and neoclassical realist approaches to analysis. Earlier analysts of Soviet and Russian foreign policy pursued their subject within the context of a set of assumptions about human behaviour and foreign policy that finds clear resonance in constructivism and neoclassical realism. One needs to only turn to the work of the late George Kennan (1961) or Vernon Aspaturian (1971) for examples. As I have noted elsewhere, 'Both approached the subject of Soviet policy from the perspective of the specialist steeped in the history and culture of Russia. Both were concerned about clarifying for their respective audiences the reasons for Soviet behaviour. They organized their data roughly within the framework of what would now be termed neoclassical realism – with clear assumptions about the factors that motivated the decisions of Soviet leaders. However, they were not interested in theory in the sense of developing generalizations about human behaviour that would hold across cultures. They were interested in understanding and explaining Soviet foreign policy behaviour' (Kanet 2012).

In many respects the critics of structural realism who attacked the epistemological foundations of neorealism and other mainstream theories of International Relations a quarter of a century ago helped to re-establish the place of history, culture, and ideas in the study of international politics.

They opened for analysts of Russian foreign policy the opportunity to move from the periphery of the social sciences back towards the centre – albeit a newly defined theoretical centre.

The chapters that comprise this volume are not explicitly theoretical or methodological in nature. Their purpose is to explain the factors that have contributed to the growing cleavages between the Russian Federation, on the one side, and the European Union and the USA, on the other. Given the significant diversity of the backgrounds of the authors, it is understandable that the following chapters bring not only differing methodological perspectives to the analysis, but quite different 'takes' on the nature of Russian policy and, thus, the central factors that explain the deterioration of Russian-Western relations in the past decade, or so.[4]

Although the authors differ, sometimes significantly, in their overall assessments of the factors of central importance in driving the growing confrontation between Russia and the West, several themes cut across most of the chapters that follow. First is the argument that the West has substantial responsibility for the deterioration of relations, beginning already in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the USSR when it largely ignored Moscow's oft-repeated security concerns. A second central point made most clearly in the chapter by Aleksandar Jankovski is that Russia and the USA, despite the growing hostility, have continued to exercise restraint and to cooperate on key issues of international concern. A third theme that runs through most of the chapters emphasizes the importance of 'great power identity' for Russian policy makers, as well as the centrality of norms in the expanding confrontation between Russia and the West. A fourth issue dealt with by several of the authors, but especially by Mikhail Molchanov, concerns the hypocrisy of the West, specifically the European Union, in demanding exclusivity in any special economic relationship with post-Soviet states which would in effect cut them off from their 'natural' market in Russia and turn them into 'peripheral' members of the Western economic community. Finally, most of the authors, most clearly Stanislav Tkachenko, focus on Russia's inherent weakness in its struggle with the West and the willingness of its leadership to engage in 'brinksmanship' in challenging Western incursions into Russia's 'special areas of interest', as then President Medvedev noted (2008), and asserting Russia's role in regional and global affairs.

The chapters that comprise the first part of the book focus on the specific issue of the Russian challenge to the international order, especially in Central and Eastern Europe and post-Soviet space more generally, in the years

following the end of the Cold War and the implosion of the former Soviet Union. In the second chapter, 'Growing Confrontation between Russia and the West: Russia's Challenge to the Post-Cold War Order', Suzanne Loftus and Roger E. Kanet track the gradual deterioration of Russian-US relations, with emphasis on Russia's growing resistance to what it saw as direct challenges to Russian interests. Over time, as its resource base improved, Russia has been more assertive in challenging Western initiatives. The confrontation is based in part on great power competition, but also on very different conceptions of the nature of governance, at both the state and the international levels. Loftus and Kanet are not confident that relations will improve in the near future, short of Western acceptance of Russia's expanded role in Eurasian and global security.

In Chapter 3, 'Preserving Peace among the Great Powers: Russia's Foreign Policy and Normative Challenges to the International Order', Alexey Bogdanov focuses not only on the normative aspects of Russian-Western relations and on the centrality of the idea of sovereignty to Russian policy, but also on the importance of the competition between Russia and the West, especially the EU, to re-establish a form of hierarchy throughout post-Soviet space. Two visions of that hierarchy clash and form the basis of the conflict. As Bogdanov argues, 'the incipient Russian hierarchy transforms radically the strategic landscape of the post-Soviet space, provoking both scholars and decision-makers to take a fresh look at the nature of current security challenges in the region'.

Lilia Arakelyan, in Chapter 4, 'EU-Russia Security Relations: Another Kind of Europe', argues that the failure of the Eastern Partnership initiative to implement long-awaited political and economic reforms in its partner states resulted from the fact that the European Union was more interested in containing Russia in the region that historically had been under direct control from Moscow rather than enhancing relations and closer integration with the partnership countries. As a result, only Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine signed the Association Agreement with the EU. Moreover, Moscow became increasingly hostile towards the West, painted Russia as a defender of traditional values in contrast to 'decadent' capitalist culture. It is important to recognize, she argues, that this was a long-term process based on the Russia's refusal to accept a subsidiary position in a Europe dominated by the Euro-Atlantic states.

In Chapter 5, 'A Cold Peace between Russia and the West: Did Geoeconomics Fail?', Nikita A. Lomagin examines the ways in which Russia has used its economic dominance within post-Soviet space and beyond to achieve political objectives. After a brief discussion of the place of economic

sanctions in international affairs, Lomagin examines in some detail the Russian response to Western sanctions after the Ukraine Crisis, as well as Russia's earlier use of economic pressures, primarily against post-Soviet states, in the effort to accomplish political goals. Although Russian geo-economic policy has been only partially successful, it has become an integral part of Russia's effort to defend its perceived interests in post-Soviet space and beyond.

Chapter 6, 'The Coercive Diplomacy of Vladimir Putin (2014–2016)', by Stanislav Tkachenko, examines the increasing willingness of the Russian regime under President Vladimir Putin to employ the threat and the use of limited military pressure to accomplish its political goals. In many respects Tkachenko is examining the other side of the relationship on which Lomagin has focused – the strengths that Russia, as the weaker side in the competition, has drawn upon to pursue its interests, including re-establishing a multipolar international system. Tkachenko is especially interested in demonstrating that increasingly Russia has not merely been reactive to Western challenges. The coercive diplomacy of Russia's leaders represents a new thrust of Russia's policy, driven by the willingness to protect its vital interests in the former Soviet republics and benefit from equal relations with the USA and major European powers. Yet, coercive diplomacy, in his view signifies Russia's weakness in the contest with the West.

As a group the first five chapters in Part I of the book all focus on the factors that have contributed to the growing confrontation, at virtually all levels, between the Russian Federation and the West and the means that the former has employed in pushing forward its interests. At the centre of the confrontation are two visions of the future of Europe and Eurasia in almost complete opposition to one another and the willingness to date of both sides to push forward these visions. However, in the final chapter of the first part of the book, Chapter 7, titled 'The Russian Federation and the United States: The Problem of International Order', Aleksandar Jankovski alerts us to the fact that the confrontation continues to be tempered by an awareness among the protagonists that they have 'responsibility' for ensuring that their divisions do not challenge the very existence of the international system and of humankind itself. Basing his argument on insights drawn from the English School, he demonstrates that 'for all the irritants, the relations between the two great powers have continued to be remarkably orderly *and constitutive of international society*'. They recognize their indispensable role in collaborating in the workings of the common good of international society.

The chapters that comprise the second part of the book examine 'The Ukrainian Crisis and Beyond in the Restructuring of Russian Relations with the West'. They begin with Chapter 8, 'Russia and the European Security Order: Impact and Implications of the Ukraine Crisis', by John Berryman, which provides an important lead in to the issue of the impact of Russia's military intervention in Ukraine. He tracks in some detail twenty years of NATO's encroachment eastward and the growing challenges that the West has generated to Russia's sense of security.

In Chapter 9, 'Ukraine and the Restructuring of East-West Relations', Maria Raquel Freire draws upon the norm literature to track the deterioration of Russian relations with the West, in particular as it relates to the Ukraine crisis. She emphasizes the West's attempts to serve as the diffuser of norms, norms strongly and increasingly resisted by Moscow. The increasingly hostile discourse between the two sides has solidified the sense of security conflict on both sides.

Mikhail Molchanov continues the detailed discussion of the Ukraine crisis in Chapter 10, 'Regionalism and Multivectorism in Europe's Borderlands: The Strange Case of Ukraine'. He demonstrates quite conclusively that Ukraine would have been much better served economically to have joined the Russian-sponsored Eurasian Union, where there were markets for its heavy industrial product. The West has done Ukraine a serious disservice by in effect forcing it to abandon a foreign economic policy that balanced relations with both Russia and the West in favour of an either-or decision. As is the case of most of the other authors, he is pessimistic about the future of both Ukraine and of Russian relations with the West.

The final substantive chapter in the book, Chapter 11, 'Russia and Turkey: Power, Individuals, and Identities in the Syrian Conflict', by Nuray Ibryamova and Mehtap Kara, extends the discussion to the place of Russia's involvement in Syria in the conflict with the West and to the involvement of Turkey in the emerging security environment. The authors focus on both the systemic and internal factors that have driven the policies of the two countries, including shifting senses of national identity and of their role in the region and the world and the ways in which their mutual relations impact on the Russian-Western relationship.

The book concludes with a twelfth chapter entitled 'Russia and the Future of European Security' in which Andrei Tsygankov responds to and builds upon the earlier chapters by drawing upon five major themes

concerning the factors that have led to the growing impasse between Russia and the West and the prospects for future relations. It is these overlapping themes that tie the volume together.

Overall the following chapters attempt to make sense of the dramatic changes that have occurred in Russian relations with the West in the quarter century since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The positive relationship that many expected to evolve soon soured and now is characterized by what some analysts see as a revival of cold war hostilities minus the ideological component. The answers presented by the contributors to this volume differ in many respects. However, they all contain the overlapping element of what one can only term great power competition for regional influence, even dominance that, virtually by definition, pits the two sides against one another.

Notes

1. For a discussion of the impact of theoretical perspectives on the analysis of Russian foreign policy and for analyses based on alternative frameworks, see the special issue of *International Studies* coedited by Kanet and Freire (2012). The current discussion draws upon that special issue.
2. See, also, Andrei Tsygankov's (2012) major study of Russian foreign policy.
3. Needless to say, epistemological and methodological differences continue to divide the academic international relations community. What is important for those concerned with Russian foreign and domestic politics is the fact that, with the intellectual changes in the social sciences in recent decades, they have once more been admitted inside the tent.
4. As noted in the Preface, all of the authors were able to share their interpretations, and at times differences, in person in several panels at a scholarly conference before preparing final drafts of their contributions. They have also benefitted from the comments of anonymous external readers contacted by the editorial staff at Palgrave Macmillan.

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PART I

The Russian Challenge to the Security Environment in Europe

CHAPTER 2

Growing Confrontation Between Russia and the West: Russia's Challenge to the Post-Cold War Order

Suzanne Loftus and Roger E. Kanet

Introduction

The power balances in the world are changing; at least, that is one of Russia's objectives. After the Cold War the USA emerged as the dominant superpower advocating a world order in which Russia would be forced into a secondary role, at best. In fact, for the first decade after the collapse of the USSR, Russian security interests were largely ignored by the USA and its European allies (Kanet 2010, 2015; Loftus and Kanet 2015). This collapse in power capabilities was a significant disappointment to Russia, since it was no longer seen as a dominant world power and could not exert much influence in international security developments, even in areas that it viewed as especially important along its borders. As Vladimir Putin noted in a speech to the Russian

An earlier version of this article was presented at the annual meetings of the International Studies Association, Atlanta, Georgia, on the panel entitled 'Peace or Conflict in Eurasia: Challenges to the Existing Security Environment in Eurasia,' 16 March 2016.

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_2

Parliament in 2005, the collapse of the Soviet Union was the 'major geopolitical disaster of the century' (Putin 2005). From the very outset of his presidency five years earlier, Putin had made it an objective of his presidency to restore Russia's importance on the global scene (Kontseptsiia 2000) and to re-establish a multipolar international system in which Russia played an important role.[1] Russia's increasingly assertive, even aggressive, behaviour over the course of the past decade has directly challenged the existing post-Cold War security order in Eurasia. Moscow has repeatedly surprised Western leaders as Russian actions have challenged accepted Western norms of international behaviour, such as its military incursion in Georgia in 2008, its annexation of Crimea and *de facto* invasion of eastern Ukraine in 2014, and most recently the air strikes that it has been conducting in Syria in support of the embattled President Bashar Al-Assad since fall 2015.

Initially, the Russians claimed that their air strikes in Syria were intended to combat terrorist groups, namely the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, ISIS, which is also a foreign policy goal of Western countries. However, Russia's objectives clearly include the targeting of other anti-Assad rebel groups that the USA had been supporting in the fight against Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad[2] and has turned the conflict in Syria into something similar to a proxy war between Russia and the West.[3] Nevertheless, the fact that ISIS is a common enemy has kept the conflict between the Russian Federation and the West from escalating out of control. Russia's intervention in Syria has benefited Mr. Putin in the sense that it has succeeded in diverting the public's attention away from Russia's actions in Ukraine and its poor management of the economy internally. In addition, the fact that it is participating in a global affair of this proportion is forcing the USA and Europe to engage with Russia rather than continuing to isolate it as part of its strategy after the Russian intervention in Ukraine. What is the future of US-Russian relations and how will this affect the global order in the near future based on today's trends? The argument that we develop in the following pages is that the West is too divided, unwilling and unable to act in ways that will successfully shift Russian foreign policy behaviour. Short of a Russian economic collapse – the result of changes in the global market and prices for energy more than of Western sanctions – President Putin and his new advisory team ('Putin's Personnel Moves' 2016) will continue their commitment to undermining the USA and Western-dominated international system that has been in place now for a quarter of a century, and to re-establishing Russia's role as a major international actor. Western efforts to contain Russia have failed and are unlikely to be more successful in the future (Kanet 2015). Will the outcome of the West's inability or unwillingness to

contain Russia, and Russia's newfound aggressive behaviour, represent a viable shift in the global order formed after the end of the Cold War? Or is this a temporary global dynamic that will die down, as Russia's structural problems worsen and as the USA changes leadership?[4]

US-Russian Relations and Foreign Policy Issues

The relationship between the USA and Russia has grown increasingly tense, even hostile,[5] even prior to Russian intervention in Ukraine and Syria. Russia and the USA have very different regimes and differing views and objectives concerning global affairs; thus, maintaining a good relationship is challenging.[6] However, if the two countries focus on collaborating in the areas where they share common interests, they can manage to co-exist. These areas include nuclear and conventional military issues such as making sure that North Korea and Iran do not acquire nuclear weapons and fighting against global terrorism. In the recent past, Russia and the USA have worked together on eliminating the stockpile of chemical weapons of the Assad regime and on the negotiations that led to the overarching agreement intended to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

The area where Russia and the USA have had the most difficulty cooperating has been on the issue of NATO expansion and its role, and the threat that Russia believes it poses to its relations with neighbouring states and to Russian security. This is an issue that Russians view as directly relevant to their commitment to achieving once again great power status and as central to their sense of self and their security.[7] Even though the West has reassured Russia that a further enlarged NATO would not represent a threat to Moscow, Russian political leaders, starting with President Putin, are convinced that the West – through NATO and European Union (EU) expansion and their support for efforts at democratization – is interfering in its sphere of influence, as they believe that post-Soviet space is a sphere of privileged interest for them.[8] The wars in Georgia and Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea are clear examples of this view and demonstrate Russia's rejection of the post-cold war European security order (Stent 2016).

Moreover, Russia has repeatedly criticized US foreign policy around the world for being too dominant and imperialistic, especially in the Middle East. Russia denounced US support for opposition forces in the Middle East during the Arab Spring and NATO military action in Libya which led to the ouster of Muammar Al Qaddafi. Speaking at the Valdai Discussion Club in fall 2015 President Putin noted that the disorder in

Iraq, Syria, and North Africa and the formation of the Islamic State demonstrate the failure of the West to think through the consequences of interfering in authoritarian states. Putin is concerned that chaos in the Middle East will encourage extremist movements near Russia or in Russia itself (Putin 2015).

For its part, Russia has become increasingly involved in the Middle East and has managed to secure some 'friends' in the region. Some of the leaders of the Middle East visited Moscow in the second half of 2015, such as the leaders of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, to sign arms agreements with Russia (Amos 2015; AFP and *Times of Israel* Staff 2015). In addition, Saudi Arabia has said that it will invest up to 10 billion dollars in Russia's agricultural sector (Stent 2016). Israel and Russia have also maintained a steady dialogue about the war in Syria, making sure that their jets do not clash with each other and sharing the general idea that Assad should stay in place because what would come after him could be even more detrimental to Israel's security. Russia's actions in the Middle East are also a way to shift the attention from the crisis in Ukraine and changing its role from conflict instigator to global leader in fighting terrorism. However, Russia's attacks on Syria could have adverse effects because Putin is supporting a Shia regime and Russia has a very large Sunni population which is increasingly joining ISIS. The number of Russian citizens who have joined ISIS has reached 2,400, with a comparable number from other former Soviet states (Stent 2016; Brannen 2015). On the other hand, one of Russia's objectives is to eliminate the Russian jihadists and prevent them from returning to Russia to disrupt the political system there.

Although the USA and Russia support different sides in the war in Syria, the terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015 led to a failed agreement between Putin and Obama to try to end the war through diplomacy. Yet, Putin has succeeded in getting Washington to engage more closely with Russia on Syria and the USA seems to have succeeded in obtaining at least a partial collaboration with Moscow on this issue. Has Russia changed the rules of the game in Ukraine and Syria? Is there room for Russia on the global frontier? How does the conflict in Syria contribute to progress in that conflict and how will that affect relations between the East and the West? Will Russia sustain this new momentum? Will the USA allow Russia to become more powerful or will it move towards trying to contain it?

American Leadership

Although there are certain similarities between the foreign policies of Barrack Obama and George W. Bush, American leadership under the former has evolved significantly in the past seven years. Some perceive this change negatively, while others see it as a positive development. Critics of Obama have said that his leadership is weak and that he has allowed Russia to take advantage of a power vacuum in the world where the USA used to have more presence. However, according to Gideon Rose (2015), the president is neither a 'soft-headed idealist', a 'cold blooded realist', nor a 'naïve incompetent', as he has been portrayed by many. Instead, he is best understood as an 'ideological liberal with a conservative temperament' and has tried to overcome the negative consequences of Bush's reckless overexpansion and belligerent unilateralism with a short-term retrenchment strategy. In the later years of his presidency, Obama has been presented with opportunities that would likely have resulted in major military interventions in the past, but he responded by refusing to intervene, or merely authorizing the minimum possible involvement. Examples of such reluctance include the situations in Syria and Ukraine. Rather than putting 'boots on the ground', Obama has usually selected the use of drones, sanctions and negotiations as his prime strategies. Critics, including the columnist Charles Krauthammer (2009), have said that Obama 'deliberately chose a foreign policy designed to produce American decline'. Other critics have said that the nation's enemies are being emboldened and are surging forward and that American values in the world are increasingly being challenged. On the one hand, it might be true that the US global role has been downsized, but on the other, this does not mean that the administration has abandoned US grand strategy. Obama stated at the UN General Assembly in 2013 that the USA was prepared to use all elements of power including force to secure US interests and that it was important for the USA to achieve goals such as regional peace, democracy, human rights, and prosperity. However, he stated that these objectives could not be achieved through unilateral American action, particularly not through military action. His advice is to pursue these objectives through group efforts and policies that would create sustainable incentives and move things forward over time (Obama 2013).

Regarding the annexation of Crimea, the Obama Administration has refused to recognize the land grab and organized targeted sanctions against Russia and supported the government in Kyiv. Obama's decision to react in this manner is based on the political reasoning that Ukraine is a core interest for Russia, but a peripheral one for the West. Therefore, although it was necessary

for Russia to pay for its aggression, it was not necessary for the USA to go to war over the issue. Concerning the Middle East, the USA has realized that anything it does can result in a costly disaster. Whether it is intervening in Iraq, intervening in Libya, not intervening in Syria, or relying on drone strikes in Yemen. If every move is going to result in a disaster, it may be time to consider altering US foreign policy, which Obama has tried to do by playing a constructive role from the sidelines rather than getting involved directly; a sign of prudence, not weakness. Using diplomacy to re-establish relations with Iran and Cuba, it is hoped, will in the long run contribute to the emergence of open societies. According to John Ikenberry, instead of seeing cooperation as an alternative to US leadership, American strategists have come to see that alliances, partnerships, multilateralism, and democracy, backed by American power and leadership, have demonstrated the resilience of the liberal order (see Ikenberry 2014).

Russia and the European Union

Unlike its negative reactions to NATO expansion, Russia initially did not oppose the EU's expanding involvement in post-communist countries and, no doubt is encouraged by the problems that may contribute to its demise, not least the British decision to leave the EU. In fact, it was not until after the admission of the post-Communist states of the Baltics and Central Europe and the 'colour revolutions' in several post-Soviet states that the Russian position shifted. As former Soviet clients began to reorient their trade with the West and both the EU and the USA provided growing support for Western-oriented 'democratic' movements in places like Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan, Moscow came into growing competition, even conflict, with the EU (DeBardeleben 2009; Larivé-Kanet 2013). The Russians came to view Western support of usually corrupt Russian-oriented regimes in other post-Soviet states as a Trojan horse aimed ultimately at bringing down the current regime in the Russian Federation itself. As then Prime Minister Putin noted:

> As far as 'color revolutions' are concerned, I think that everything is clear. It is a well-tested scheme for destabilizing society. I do not think it appeared by itself . . . We know the events of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine . . . They are transferring this practice to Russian soil in a natural manner (Putin 2011).

Increasingly in recent years the Russian Federation and both the EU and the USA and NATO have been engaged in a contest for influence in post-Soviet

space. Russian military intervention in both Georgia in 2008 and in Ukraine since 2014 were motivated, at least in part, by Moscow's commitment to stop the continued expansion of Western involvement into what Moscow views as the legitimate Russian sphere of influence.[9] As we show further, it was the shifting government in Kyiv, supported by the West, and the challenge to Russian plans for a new integration project in former Soviet space that triggered Moscow's military intervention in Ukraine and the occupation and absorption of Crimea. Before moving on to this discussion though, it is vital to mention that Europe is divided on relations with Russia and has no unified policy towards it. The high dependence on Russian gas and the rise in Europe of pro-Russian right-wing parties have not helped, nor will the exit of the UK from the organization.[10]

Russian Incursions into Georgia and Ukraine

In the run-up to the military confrontation between Moscow and the Georgians in 2008, the USA had been pushing for NATO membership for both Georgia and Ukraine – the Georgia and Ukraine of the colour revolutions headed by Western-oriented governments interested in strengthening their ties with both NATO and the EU. Moreover, as part of the Partnership for Peace program, the USA had helped the government of Mikheil Saakashvili upgrade its military facilities to the point where he decided to resolve once and for all by military means the issue of the secessionist provinces of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

It is not fully clear whether Georgia or Russia made the initial move that resulted in military conflict in August 2008.[11] What is clear is the fact that the Russians destroyed the Georgian military and then officially recognized the independence of both of the secessionist provinces. The message to Georgia, as well as to the USA, NATO, and Ukraine, was clear; Russia was willing to use all the means at its disposal, including its military power, to stop the continued eastward encroachment of NATO and presumably the EU.

Despite the modest improvement in Russian relations with the USA after Barack Obama assumed the presidency in early 2009, issues that divided Moscow from the West continued to arise. Possibly the most important concerned presidential candidate Putin's decision to push for the creation of a Eurasian Union during his presidential campaign in 2011. The purpose of the Union was to integrate the economies of former Soviet states into a Moscow-centred organization that would supposedly contribute to the

modernization and economic expansion of the member countries. Crucial for the success of the proposal would be the membership of Ukraine, which has the largest economy by far after Russia's among the potential members. This brought Russian policy directly into conflict with the Neighbourhood Policy of the EU in both Ukraine and Armenia, both of which the EU was courting for special relationships that, *de facto,* were exclusive and would have precluded those countries committing themselves to any integration project with Russia and the Eurasian Union (Casier 2016).

Although Ukraine had seemingly committed itself to an Association Agreement with the EU, in fall 2013 President Yanukovych announced that Ukraine would sign a strategic partnership agreement with Russia rather than that with the EU. The result was widespread domestic opposition that led eventually to Yanukovych's flight from the country in February 2014 and the election of a new, Western-oriented government and to Russian military intervention, including the incorporation of Crimea into the Russian Federation and support for the ongoing secessionist efforts in Eastern Ukraine.[12] It was these actions by the Russian government that led to a broad range of economic sanctions imposed on Moscow by the USA and the EU and to the continuing deterioration of relations.

The Failure of the Sanctions

The sanctions that the West has placed on Russia have not proven to be very successful and have also been counterproductive in some ways.[13] The first round of sanctions succeeded in making Russia more aggressive, since it almost immediately absorbed Crimea into the Russian Federation and upped its military support for rebels in Eastern Ukraine (Ashford 2016). In addition, although the sanctions have succeeded in weakening Russia's economy, those primarily suffering from this weakened economy are the ordinary citizens of Russia. Putin's cronies have managed to keep their wealth relatively intact while the rest of the population suffers from cuts in wages and social benefits. With sanctions and, even more importantly, the precipitous fall in the price of oil by more than 70 percent, Moscow had to cut its budget on health care, infrastructure, and government salaries (Russia's Economy 2016; Ashford 2016). In addition, the Russians also imposed their own set of sanctions which barred European and Western products from coming into Russia which, in turn, increased the cost of food within Russia. The value of the ruble has fallen 76 percent against the

dollar since restrictions and inflation occurred (Russian Economy 2016). However, despite these sanctions, Russia has taken some measures to weather the crisis by providing emergency capital to banks, allowing the ruble to float freely and making targeted cuts to the state budget while providing fiscal stimulus through increased spending on pensions. The IMF actually expects growth to return to the Russian economy (Russia's Economy 2016).

The sanctions have had adverse effects on Western economies and geopolitical interests. As a result of reduced exports to Russia, it is predicted that the German state would lose close to 400,000 jobs over the next few years. In addition, US financial institutions have been required to freeze tens of millions of dollars in assets of sanctioned individuals, which has had an impact on US banks. To add to that, the USA has dropped certain joint ventures with Russian energy companies which has led to the loss of access to billions of dollars of investments. Western firms have also been kept out of unconventional drilling projects in the arctic and elsewhere; Rosneft acquired 30 percent of the North Atlantic drilling projects belonging to the Norwegian company Statoil. Rather than the continuation of these harmful sanctions, an alternative strategy should be thought up such as increasing Europe's energy independence and creating a new security order in the world (Ashford 2016).

Turning East

In the midst of all this economic upheaval, the Kremlin has turned to China in search of better alternatives (Lomagin 2015). Putin visited the country to sell a 30-year $400 billion gas deal with China, demonstrating that Russia has alternatives to the European gas market. Moscow and Beijing also agreed to a 150-billion-yuan currency swap, allowing companies such as Gazprom to trade commodities in rubles and yuan in order to avoid US financial regulations. Western sanctions have made Chinese lenders cautious about Russian firms though. Chinese foreign direct investment in Russia more than doubled in 2014 but collapsed during the first half of 2015. Russian gas export volumes have increased, making Russia China's largest supplier, but falling oil prices have cut revenues significantly... Additionally, though China is Russia's largest trading partner, Russia is not included among China's top five trading partners, a dynamic which allows China to dictate the trading conditions between the two countries, which is not entirely in Russia's interests. Getting closer to

China may lead Russia to become dependent, which is a situation Russia fears and would like to avoid. Russia maintains strict restrictions on business out of fear that the Chinese will take control of Russia's Far East while the Chinese businessmen complain about the restrictions imposed on hiring foreign labourers. So, though Russia's 'eastern pivot' has been initiated, it is moving at a much slower pace than was previously hoped. ('Russia's Far East' 2016; Ashford 2016; Fu Ying 2016; Gabuev 2016).

The Russian Economy

On January 21, 2016, the ruble dropped to more than 85 to the dollar, although it rebounded by summer to 65 to the dollar. Russia's economy, which is heavily dependent on oil and gas, had a difficult 2015, as the price of oil fell from its mid-2014 peak of over $100 a barrel to less than $40 and led to a collapse of exports and government revenues. *The Economist* estimates that *GDP* shrank by nearly four percent, inflation ran close to 13 percent, the ruble lost half its value against the dollar in the second half of 2014 and then dropped a further 20 percent in 2015 ('Russia's Economy' 2016).

According to the assessment of *The Economist*, the worst is over for the Russian economy. The turbulence in the oil market has led to a new reality, that the energy-driven growth model has been exhausted. Russian businesses seem to be doing slightly better than when the crisis first started and their foreign debt has fallen by a third since 2014. The banking sector is looking better as well, thanks to certain policies implemented by the central bank. The big oil companies have coped with a weak currency since their operating expenses are priced in rubles but most of their revenues are in dollars. Total oil production in Russia grew by 1.4 percent in 2015 which reached record highs and oil giants such as Rosneft, Lukoil, and Bashneft made higher profits than in 2014 according to Moody's. The government's situation is not so rosy though, as the mid-2016 price of oil at $30 a barrel would lead to a deficit of about seven percent. If the government runs out of ready cash, Putin may be tempted to print rubles which would boost inflation and would sap the purchasing power of Russian firms and families. The cuts in government spending that have resulted from the drop in the price of oil have led to the decline in quality of life for ordinary Russian citizens. Real wages fell by an estimated nine percent in 2015 and four percent in 2014, the first dip since Putin came to power in 2000. GDP per person is down from a post-soviet peak of close to 15,000 in 2013 to around 8,000 this year. More than two million

people fell into poverty in 2015. Spending has dropped significantly as retail sales declined 13 percent in November and foreign travel dipped by 30 percent. In addition, the price of heroin has doubled in the past year. Foreign direct investment fell from $40 billion in early 2013 to 3 billion in the second quarter of 2015. Agricultural output is stagnant. The first most dramatic phase of Russia's crisis may indeed be behind it, but for ordinary Russians the next phase will not seem much better (Russia's Economy 2016; Focus Economics 2016a, 2016b).

Putin's Domestic Politics and Russian National Identity

Despite the failing economy, Putin's approval ratings are still high. In fact, they reached the highest level ever after the initial airstrikes in Syria (Eremenko 2015).[14] After the Soviet collapse, the desire of Russians to regain self-respect has been just as powerful as their desire to live well. Putin's actions in the world today have responded to this desire and he has come to embody Russia's re-emergence as a great power. Nevertheless, discontent is starting to well up as some protests have occurred from pensioners and loan holders. These protests have so far remained apolitical, as the Russian people are more likely to blame the prime minister or local officials than President Putin. United Russia as a party is losing popularity, and Putin is distancing himself from the party nearing the autumn parliamentary elections, as a 10 percent dip in approval ratings is forecasted (Sharkov 2016; 'Putin's Popularity' 2015). In Russia, social protest is unlikely to bring about significant change. The most likely way to introduce a change in the system would come from modernization attempts from above. It is a country where making plans has always been difficult, since uncertainty is perpetual. This has cultivated a culture of people who simply hope for the return of better times during economic downturns while the cronies at the top continue to see a more than healthy cash flow. The one-man rule in Russia is legitimate and has been a part of Russian culture for as long as the country has existed. Even protesters legitimize this system of rule, as the long-distance truckers against the new road taxes in the last months of 2015 appealed to the president to help resolve their problems, thus legitimizing a system that basically lacks effective political institutions.

Economic decline in Russia will not necessarily lead to mass political or social protests. While there may be some local discontent, it will not turn

political because the country lacks the tools and channels for that to happen. People are uninformed and fail to see the connection between domestic and foreign policies, and the economic challenges they face from the weak ruble to high inflation. Issues that may require a bigger-picture strategy in the future include mass refugee migration to Europe which may affect xenophobic tendencies, Russia's aging population which will bring down the pension system, and another interesting trend that could appear concerning its 'self-sufficiency'. As Russia becomes more self-sufficient and indifferent to the plight of its citizens, relations in society will start becoming more horizontal and will self-organize to help the destitute, the sick, and the uneducated. Meaning new centres of legitimacy will emerge to fill the gaps where the state is absent, which could have secondary effects. Today's Russia, with all of its political restrictions, makes it impossible to modernize unless the process comes from the top. Until then everyone is just in 'waiting mode' (Kolesnikov 2016a).[15]

Thus, mass protest is unlikely to occur. Putin's approval ratings are very high and Russia has always been an autocratic system with the exception of its attempt at democratization in the 1990s. Andrei Tsygankov (2014) along with many other analysts, asserts that the Russian people prefer this style of governance and, therefore, will not rebel. He maintains that it is a mistake for Western scholars to see Russia's state system as dysfunctional or one needing to be replaced by a Western style competitive system. Westerners often think that Russia's system is based on personalist rule that silences the opinion of the population and is prone to being unstable and breeding political chaos. Tsygankov claims that the strong state, as other political systems, is an institutional arrangement that takes into consideration the interests of the common citizen and tries to strike a balance to achieve the common good. Strong states try to achieve this balance by relying on a centralized power rather than on checks and balances. A strong state can be successful if it effectively orients its resources towards the common good. Democratization in Russia in the 1990s turned out to be a disaster and caused much political chaos. Tsygankov concludes that Russia needs a strong state to survive, as it is composed of various cultures and traditions and has sustained strong external pressures in the past and emerged as a great power in the world. In addition, Russia emerged as a late developer and has needed to keep up with more modern economies.

The Russian Revival and the Western Response

Today, American global dominance is being challenged by the most significant shift in great power relations since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Moreover, the British decision to leave the EU creates great uncertainty about future economic and political developments in Europe. Putin has intervened in Syria to show that, unlike the USA, Russia can be trusted to get things done in the region and win friends by offering Iraq an alternative to the USA. The struggle is also over legitimacy, as Putin wants to discredit America's dominance of the international order. The USA argues that popular discontent and the Syrian regime's abuses of human rights disqualify President Bashar Al-Assad from power. Putin, on the other hand, plays down human rights issues because he sees this as an excuse for the West to interfere in sovereign countries, including Russia itself. The Obama Administration seemingly takes comfort from Russia's weak economy but, nevertheless, a declining, nuclear armed, former superpower can cause a lot of harm. Moreover, as relations between the two states continue to deteriorate, cooperation on issues of common concern weakens as well. Evidence of this comes from the Russian announcement that it will not join with the USA in its newest efforts to resolve the conflict in Afghanistan. In the words of the Russian Special Envoy on Afghanistan, Zamir Kabulov, 'We won't join the useless events and we've already told the Americans. I don't see any sense in it. Honestly speaking, we're already tired of joining anything Washington starts. We have told them constantly on the unlikelihood of this or another step, and then they actually do fall apart' (cited in Sputnik 2016).

However, despite tensions, the USA and Russia are not experiencing another 'Cold War' as many authors have described or feared to be the case. The world is simply not where it was during those times. Tsygankov (2016b) notes that today, major powers are not inclined towards the same risky behaviour they may have pursued in the past for their core interests for the following reasons. First, the cost of confronting the USA's superior military is reason enough to deter serious warfare. In addition, Moscow is more interested in working with major powers and being accepted as one of them, not challenging them. This is the reason why they have insisted on Western recognition of their status as a major and equal world power. Its actions are not a drive to destroy the foundations of international order, but rather to be more fully included in it and to have a voice in its future.

Another factor concerns the fact that the USA has important interests in preventing regional conflicts from escalating, as it seeks regional stability. Moreover, the contemporary world order has no rigid structures of alliances as existed after the Second World War, for example. International coalitions are mostly formed on an ad hoc basis today.

There is no fundamental conflict of values and ideologies with the exception of ISIS and other extremist groups which most of the world is generally agreed to fight. The biggest cultural divide between the East and the West is the idea of liberal democracy versus autocratic tendencies, and this is not an idea for which either the West or the East is willing to engage in direct conflict (Tsygankov 2016a). How the West should respond to Russia is a question of great importance.

According to Karl Elias Götz, the leading views on how to perceive Russia's behaviour range from seeing it as a revisionist state with imperial ambitions, a victim who seeks security and honour, or a troublemaker dominated by a self-serving elite (Götz 2016). The truth most likely lies somewhere between these three views. Russia has been convinced that the West has not included it in important decision-making roles taken in the course of the past quarter century and that NATO and the EU have encroached on its territory. In this respect it could be considered a victim who is trying to assert itself against the 'bullying' of the West. At the same time, however, Russia's economy is weak. Therefore, the fragility of Vladimir Putin's regime is a powerful motivator for him to try to regain Russia's influence and status in any way possible. Russia's annexation of Crimea and its actions in eastern Ukraine and Syria, have all succeeded in diverting the Russian public's attention away from Russia's internal problems and towards the heroicness of their president's actions in his efforts to regain relevance in the world. The analytic perspective used to view Russia's actions will determine the adequate response selected by the USA and the West, whether through containment strategies, engagement, or 'constrainment' strategies (Götz 2016).

If operating from the perspective that Russia is aggressive and imperialistic, the West should take a firm stance to curb these ambitions by reinforcing their military presence along NATO's eastern flank, by supplying the government in Kyiv with weapons and military hardware and increasing NATO's commitment to Ukraine to deter Russian aggression (Motyl 2015). Also, the EU and the USA would have to assist Ukraine's economic transition and apply harsher economic and diplomatic sanctions on Russia (Braun 2014). This, to a very substantial degree is what the USA and NATO have been doing over the past several years.

This strategy is not ideal, since it isolates Russia from the West and encourages its aggressive behaviour even further, as we have seen after the introduction of economic sanctions on Russia. Therefore, we must look to other foreign policy responses. Engagement on the other hand would entail the West's pursuing more accommodating policies and seeking rapprochement with Russia by scrapping any plans to expand NATO further into Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, because the Russians see this as a threat and may heighten tensions even further. Secondly, this entails abstaining from making any political or military commitments to Kyiv and backing away from encouraging it to join any kind of Euro-Atlantic structure. This approach would also require the lifting of economic and diplomatic sanctions against Russia. This increased dialogue would enable more cooperation between Russia and the West on important issues of mutual concern, such as fighting terrorism, dealing with climate change, preventing nuclear proliferation, and the management of instabilities in the Middle East and the crisis in Syria. Whether the Russians would respond as hoped is another issue. Sanctions have resulted in a propaganda tool for the Kremlin to depict the West as an enemy and blame them for Russia's economic downturn to the Russian population. Ivan Krastev and Mark Leonard have made an excellent point about this. 'The economic costs of sanctions,' they argue, 'will allow Putin to hide the failures of the Kremlin's economic policies. Sanctions also provide Putin cover to push for managed isolation from globalization through policies designed to nationalize the internet, prohibit foreign ownership of the media, and limit travel' (Krastev and Leonard 2015, p. 53).

Constrainment, a half-way policy between engagement and containment, may be the best policy option that the West should adopt. The West would engage with Russia politically and economically in order to promote a certain degree of cooperation and respect between nations. However, Putin's regime is weak and vulnerable and all the muscle flexing that it does cannot hide the fact that the political order in Russia is increasingly fragile. Therefore, Russia is not as large a threat as some believe it to be. Despite this fact, it has still nevertheless succeeded at threatening the dynamic of powers in the world.

However, as some have argued, Russia might be flexing its muscles as a response to its failing economy. Russia is a revisionist power experiencing domestic insecurity which may be partially triggering its aggressive behaviour. Russia's economic conditions are problematic, and internal

political stability cannot be ignored at this time. Aggression fuelled in part by domestic crisis could potentially result in daring, reactive and impulsive behaviour, argues Robert Kaplan (2016), which is much harder to predict and to find counter measures against. As is well known, in 2014 the price of oil collapsed, and slow global growth reduced the demand for Russian natural resources, while the West imposed damaging sanctions on Russia. The result, as discussed earlier, has been a full-blown economic crisis where the ruble has lost more than half of its values against the US dollar. Russia has relied on its natural resource production for decades, as well as a manufacturing sector that makes consumer goods for the domestic market only. Its service sector remains underdeveloped. In the late 1980s, when the economy was hit by a crisis, then Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev responded by opening up the political system only to see the results of anarchy and the collapse of the Russian empire. Putin has seen this as the example to be avoided and has decided to respond in the opposite manner: by keeping the political system closed and distracting the masses with displays of Russian power in the near abroad, and now beyond. Putin is well aware of the economic problems within his country and is therefore strategizing that his foreign policy must become increasingly more creative and calculating, because, the more chaos that occurs abroad, the more it seems that there is an autocratic stability within the country. Although Russians may be aware that a freer society is better in the abstract, because of past examples in Russia itself, they fear such a transition. The problem for Putin is that no matter what he does abroad, he will not be able to stop the domestic economic decline unless internal restructuring occurs. This economic decline may encourage infighting among the ruling elite, if their wealth begins to decline. In addition, given the absence of strong institutions, enough turmoil could cause Russia to fragment, with its highly diverse population including the heavily Muslim North Caucasus and Russia's Siberian and far eastern regions experiencing political upheaval. This instability could also affect Jihadist movements near or within Russia.

Europe looks less and less likely to able to provide any kind of firm response to Russia's actions. Europe has been experiencing political division, exacerbated by Britain's decision to leave the Union, and is continuing to suffer from slow growth and an inability to pursue the reforms that would overcome its economic and political crises. In addition, the refugee flows and terrorist threats of 2014 and 2015 also affect the EU's division, as the

different members are divided on how to respond. This disunity will simply contribute to the existing disorganized response to Russia. Slow economic growth in Europe, along with its political problems, will intensify right wing and left wing nationalist movements, which all use unmet economic expectations as rhetoric, further destabilizing the region. As mentioned in the introduction, the West is not unified in terms of dealing with Russia and is, therefore, unwilling or unable to contain it (Kaplan 2016).

Conclusion

Russia's aggressive foreign policy has demonstrated an anti-American stance that the USA can do little to influence. Neither Russia, nor the USA or the EU wants the type of isolation that characterizes North Korea's relations with the rest of the world. If Russia really wants to re-establish itself as a world power and sustain its rebellious attitude, it is going to have to support its loud barks with substantial economic strength. In terms of world affairs, Russia is succeeding in changing the rules of the game, but largely because the current US administration has decided not to respond as assertively, since it has decided that it would prefer encouraging a more inclusive world order that equally relies on the decisions of many of the important players in the world.

If the West engages with Russia and responds to the latter's demands to be more involved in the decision-making process of world affairs, Russia will more likely tone down its assertive behaviour. Its aggressive behaviour seems to be part of a shock and distract strategy, – to shock the West and distract its population and thereby create an environment which is more cooperative. However, if Russia continues to be noncompliant, this approach will likely backfire and lead to increasing isolation.

Notes

1. The issue of the emergence of a new multipolar world order is of major importance for Russian analysts. See, for example, Fyodor Lukyanov's introduction to a series of articles on this topic (2016). Moreover, the decision of the British people to leave the EU adds another important factor to the mix. Although the results for the EU's place in the global system are not at all clear, it is safe to imply that Europe's role in world affairs, including its relations with the Russian Federation, will not strengthen in the foreseeable future, as the organization focuses on the complexities of the 'divorce'.

2. Russian bombing attacks on rebel groups in support of the Assad government's campaign to regain control of the city of Aleppo are evidence of Soviet objectives – that is, the reassertion of control over areas under rebel control (Coffee 2016).
3. In fall 2015, Presidents Obama and Putin traded accusations concerning intervention in Syria (Eilperin and DeYoung 2015).
4. Robert Kaplan has argued that the Russian Federation is likely to collapse because of its internal problems and, thus, concludes that Russia's expanded role is ephemeral (Kaplan 2016).
5. In early February 2016, Prime Minister Medvedev said that the expansion of Saudi-led involvement in Syria, in conjunction with the West, had the potential of leading to a Third World War (Medvedev 2016).
6. Richard Sakwa notes that what he terms the 'new Atlanticism' represents a Western commitment to exporting Western values that, in turn, challenge Russia's role in former Soviet space (Sakwa 2015).
7. For discussions of status and respect as determinants of Russian foreign policy see the work of Tsygankov (2012), Feklyunina (2012), Heller (2012), Moulioukova and Kanet (2015), and others.
8. In a speech justifying Russian military intervention in Georgia, then President Medvedev noted that Russian foreign policy was based on five principles, one of which was the fact that former Soviet space was a region of 'privileged' Russian interests. See Medvedev (2008) and Berryman (2011).
9. Several recent volumes focus on this contest for influence in what is the common neighborhood of both Russia and the EU. See, for example, Piet and Simão (2016); Kanet and Sussex (2015); Kanet and Freire (2012). See the interesting study of a group of scholars from Romania (Chifu and Tutuiano 2017).
10. For discussions on Europe's dependence on Russia for energy supplies and the attempts to generate a common EU-wide approach to energy relations with the Russian Federation, see Moulioukova-Kanet (2015), and Feklyunina (2012). Right-wing nationalist parties in Europe have been supported increasingly by the Russians (Polyakova 2016).
11. For discussions of the factors leading to the war, see March (2012), Dunlop (2012), and Nygren (2011).
12. One of the many useful analyses of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict is that by Menon and Rumer (2015).
13. For the argument that the demonization of Putin and other pressures on Russia are not likely to have the impact of shifting Russian policy, see the cogent article by Tsygankov (2016b).
14. According to polls in spring 2016, 82 percent of Russians supported President Putin's current policies. (Interfax 2016).

15. The previous discussion draws upon Kolesnikov (2016a, 2016b). For an assessment of the growth of authoritarianism in Putin's Russia during his second term as president, see Umland (2012).

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CHAPTER 3

Preserving Peace Among the Great Powers: Russia's Foreign Policy and Normative Challenges to the International Order

Alexey Bogdanov

Introduction

Maintaining peace and preventing 'major wars' are, apparently, the ultimate goals of international life, constituting the essence of any international order. Although the extant theoretical approaches suggest different explanations of the causes and preconditions of 'great-power peace', most of the existing interpretations emphasize structural factors, stressing the destructive impact of 'anarchy' on the prospects of international security. International relations (IR) scholars, sharing this view, assume that constraining anarchy by establishing some sort of supranational authority and diminishing anarchy's negative impact on international stability should contribute substantially to the protection of peace and avoiding large-scale inter-state conflicts. Three major ways to achieve this goal are usually debated in the course of the academic discussions:

1. Escaping anarchy as a 'state of nature' through the establishment of supreme sovereign authority ('world governance' or the 'concert of nations').

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_3

2. Worldwide promotion of democratic principles and liberal values through the establishing of supranational multilateral institutions, regulating international relations (primarily in the field of economy and security) and restraining the nation-states' sovereignty and 'egoism'.
3. Dominance of a single great power, whose supremacy facilitates the imposition of hierarchical order, assuming that secondary states, following, largely, the security reasons, cede some of their sovereign functions to the hegemonic power,[1] which, in turn, provides economic and security benefits for the subordinates, in particular, and for the international system, as a whole (Lake 2007, p. 61). In this case, the costs of using competitive strategies are too high for the less powerful states and, hence, they become more prone to 'bargain' with the dominant power,[2] seeking to preserve the existing status quo and to exchange their loyalty on various privileges, escaping any overt confrontation both with the hegemon (Kang 2003/2004, p. 172) and with each other. Overall, this approach emphasizes the consensual nature of hierarchy, originating from 'relational authority', which is conceived as a kind of 'social contract', preconditioning that the superordinate power provides order in exchange for consent and loyalty of the secondary states.

In this chapter, I discuss the impact of Russia's policy towards post-Soviet space (and Ukraine, particularly) on the established international norms and regional security environment. Investigating current security challenges in Europe, I stress the linkage between the 'international structure' and 'sovereignty', which, in my view, affects decisively the prospects of international peace across the region. I start with drawing a distinction between 'anarchy', as a structure, under which states are sovereign and perform security functions themselves, and 'hierarchy' – a structure, under which the subordinate states cede some of their sovereign functions to a preeminent power or to a supranational legal authority. My next point is the proposition that, since the early 1990s, the collision of 'anarchical' and 'hierarchical' tendencies has been unfolding on the post-Soviet space. I propose that the former is caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of a number of 'newly independent states', while the latter is conditioned by the gradual restriction of these states' sovereignty as a result of the impact of two processes – the expansion of Euro-Atlantic transnational institutions (European Union, EU and North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO) and the gradual restoration

of Russia's 'sphere of influence'. This understanding provides a 'structural' explanation of the origins and causes of current tensions between Russia and the Western powers around the post-Soviet space as a whole and, particularly, around Ukraine. The prospects for peace and security in Eurasia are viewed in the context of the two orders' collision – (1) Euro-Atlantic hierarchy, embodied in supranational norms and institutions, constraining the member-states' sovereignty and political autonomy and (2) the emerging single-power hierarchy, relying both on Russia's increased might and economic influence of transnational bodies (Eurasian Economic Union and Customs Union), controlled from Moscow and designed to strengthen the mutual dependence of the post-Soviet states within the centralized, Russia-led regional order. I also propose that this collision engenders the fundamental normative challenges to the post-Cold War European international order, questioning the mere foundations of the existing legal frameworks. Hence, the incipient Russian hierarchy transforms radically the strategic landscape of post-Soviet space, provoking both scholars and decision-makers to take a fresh look at the nature of current security challenges in the region.

The Nature and Sources of 'Hierarchy' as an International Structure

Despite the salience of 'anarchy' as one of the key concepts in IR theory,[3] some scholars argue that this notion has substantial problems in dealing with extraordinary concentrations of power, which invoke authoritative decision-making, undermining the anarchical nature of international society (Clark 2009, p. 464). Others point out that the modern international system, apart from being anarchical in its nature, has historically involved numerous formal and informal hierarchies, including both gradations according to the distribution of power and status (world powers, great powers, middle powers) (Dunne 2003, p. 304) and more 'relational' arrangements such as empires, protectorates, spheres of influence and supranational institutional bodies, having significant autonomy and embodied in economic (free-trade zones) and security areas – military agreements, formal alliances and confederations (Weber 1997, p. 322). Not surprisingly, many IR scholars consistently try to explain how hierarchically structured systems function, how they emerge and come to decline, why these systems are stratified one way or another and how hierarchies impact such politically important phenomena as 'war' and 'peace' (Keene 2007, p. 311). The most common understanding stresses the stabilizing

role of 'hierarchy' as a sort of international structure, under which political actors (the nation-states) are formally differentiated according to their influence and capabilities (Waltz 2010, p. 114). This approach also accentuates that some states within the system (less powerful, 'secondary' units) are subject to the domination of the others, and the privileges, rights and authority are distributed unequally among them. In sum, the essence of this understanding may be described by the argument of David Lake, who convincingly proves that a dominant power may provide benefits to subordinate states, ensuring their security and prosperity in exchange to the compliance with its rule. The core of the political order, resulting from these relationships, comprises the specific 'bargain', presupposing that 'both the dominant and subordinate states understand that the dominant state has the right to make certain demands, rooted in its "special responsibilities"[4] for social order, and the subordinate state has an obligation to comply with those commands if made' (Lake 2009b, p. 38).

Investigating the nature of the international order in Europe after the 2014 Ukrainian crises, I also use 'hierarchical lenses', assuming that post-Soviet anarchy has been gradually replaced by much more centralized and restrictive international arrangement. Dealing with 'hierarchy', I rely on two meanings of this theoretical concept, which are crucial for the appropriate understanding of this phenomenon. The first understanding sees 'hierarchy' as a political structure, based on sharp power asymmetry among the states composing the international system. This sort of structure is maintained through single-power dominance, preventing second-tier states from resorting to competitive strategies ('free-ride', 'balancing behavior' etc.), facilitating cooperation and strengthening mutual commitments (especially in the security area) among them. Moreover, hierarchy entails some degree of control exerted by the dominant actor over the subordinate states' sovereign domain, including their foreign policy and, partially, their domestic affairs. In this sense, hierarchical structures promote 'restrictive international order', restraining the great-powers' competition, creating incentives for international cooperation and coordinated regulation of common problems (Kegley, Raymond 1994, p. 144).

The second approach considers 'hierarchy' as a political form, including specific identities and understandings, conditioning the states' behaviour within the international system. From this perspective, hierarchy represents a 'socially constructed political order, produced by identity, constitutions and normative understandings held by a dominant actor' (Cooley 2005, p. 33). This understanding is founded on the conviction that the

preeminent power's authority depends on its status and ideological influence, not merely material resources and coercive capabilities. Hence, this approach deals with so called 'informal hierarchies', which normally do not entail any formal system of governance, resting instead on the superordinate/subordinate relationship, in which the former is entitled to command or lead, while the latter obeys, and both sides recognize this as legitimate (Hobson, Sharman 2005, p. 93). Not surprisingly, the powerful states often seek to establish ideational legitimacy over subordinate polities, avoiding the use of force and preferring to rely on shared understandings and common values (MacDonald, Lake 2008, p. 172). Consequently, hierarchical orders are normally supported by the preeminent states' ideologies, promoting transnational values and norms, which often collide with the principle of territorial sovereignty. Moreover, the establishment of hierarchy inevitably alters the distribution of the regime type within these political orders, because the great powers, following their security concerns, strive to 'shape the regime type of the subordinate states and impose peaceful foreign policies on them' (MacDonald 2015, p. 559). To achieve this goal, the dominant powers within the hierarchical arrangements often try to institute various forms of 'divided sovereignty', making the interference into the sovereign domain of the subordinate states a common and, ultimately, legitimate practice. In this case, a hegemonic actor accepts the sovereign being of its subordinates, but in a restricted manner, claiming the right to use force to reorder their domestic affairs (Keene 2013, p. 1077), if necessary. As a result, intervention becomes common practice (or even the institution) of a hierarchical political order,[5] often based on the claiming of an internationally recognized right – self-protection, preserving the balance of power, protection of nationals or oppressed minorities (Donnelly 2006, p. 150) and so forth.

Regarding the issue of this chapter, I assume that current relations among the post-Soviet states (including Russia) entail the patterns inherited from the Soviet period, when one superpower's overwhelming supremacy invoked the establishment of a restrictive hierarchical order within its sphere of influence. This dynamic, as the Cold War experience has revealed, generates substantial tension between the principle of the nation-states' sovereignty and the purpose of maintaining international order, favourable for the dominant power. As long as maintaining order in this system presupposes creating and preserving the spheres of influence, the interventionist behaviour becomes the sustainable feature of the dominant powers' policies (the Soviet Union in Hungary and Czechoslovakia,

the USA in Central and Caribbean America), normally justified by the urgent need to prevent emerging challenges to the key norms, values and principles comprising the ideational core of a given political order (Finnemore 2003, p. 127). For this reason, the dominant power's intervention was one of the key patterns of the Soviet order, aimed to provide the satellite's loyalty and the Soviet Union's security. The major features of that order, critical for my further observations, may be described as follows:

1. Commitment to Communist ideology and 'communist way of development' (state-planned economy, prohibition of private property and enterprise, the Communist party's vanguard role as the embodiment of the universal laws of human development).
2. Rejection of the 'nation-state' idea and neglect of nations' right for sovereignty. Proclaiming 'Soviet citizenship' as a universal identity for all ethnic groups and nationalities inhabiting Soviet Union.[6]
3. The so-called Brezhnev doctrine claiming that security and peacekeeping functions are concentrated in the hands of Soviet Union, having legitimate right to use force in order to provide satellites' loyalty and defend Communist ideals and values within its sphere of influence. At the same time, intervention can be avoided by not deviating from state socialism (Wendt, Friedheim 1995, p. 694), that is to say, by following the certain behavioural pattern in domestic affairs, sanctioned by the dominant state.

Thus, the following key aspects of the Soviet hierarchical order may be outlined – (a) the appeal to the transnational identity; (b) the restrictions of subordinate states' sovereignty (especially in order to preserve the 'socialist gains' of the community of states, led by Soviet Union) and (c) the claim of the 'special responsibility' of the dominant actor for the destiny of subordinate polities and its stance towards efforts of states within the community to form a grouping, which does not include the hegemon. This order, obviously, was founded not merely on Soviet military might and economic power but also on mutual expectations and shared understandings of appropriate behaviour. Thus, the relations between Soviet Union and its satellites in Eastern Europe should not be reduced to the military predominance of the Soviet Union, since the leaders of the satellite states acknowledged them as legitimate. This legitimacy was reinforced by the shared belief that the Soviet Union is the

'birthplace of Communism, the leader of the socialist camp, the vanquisher of fascism, the main bulwark against the encircling capitalist powers... embodied a new and better world destined to spread across the globe' (Hobson and Sharman 2005, p. 77). This ideational foundation and shared sense of 'mission' in sustaining hierarchical relations within the socialist camp contributed decisively to the persistence of the idea that the Soviet Union should be regarded as 'having a unique right to exercise crucial sovereign prerogatives on behalf of members of Soviet bloc'. Therefore, these hierarchical relations depended largely from the Soviet leaders' belief, that they were entitled to command, and the satellite states leaders' consent to accept this authority, presupposing their duty or obligation to obey (Hobson and Sharman 2005, pp. 75–76).

Contending Hierarchies and the Prospects of 'Order' on the Post-Soviet Space

After the demise of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the 'post-Soviet space' as a new geopolitical reality, anarchy (the absence of central authority) became the major feature of the relations among the 'newly independent states'. The breakdown of the Soviet hierarchical order caused a profound structural shift (in the distribution of power and the political regimes alike), which provoked significant normative changes, combined with the formation of the new security challenges. Thus, the degree of tensions (both actual and potential) between the 'newly independent states', which resorted to the strategies of 'free-riding' and 'self-help' under conditions of an anarchical environment, drastically increased. Consequently, the problem of international peace on the post-Soviet space invoked serious security concerns among the so-called Western powers, which sought to provide for peaceful democratic transition in these states and to diminish the negative effects of the post-Soviet anarchy on European security. To achieve this goal, the USA and the major European powers have launched the process of NATO and EU enlargement aimed at imposing a set of normative restrictions on the new member-states, such as the commitment to liberal democracy and human rights, market economy and free-trade principles, collective security and so forth. In this sense, definitely, the EU as a supranational project 'exerted a powerful socializing influence' on all formerly authoritarian applicant states (including the post-Soviet ones), which have had to 'negotiate accession criteria explicitly cast in terms of democratic governance and respect for human rights in order to subsequently compromise their sovereignty by

enmeshing themselves in supranational authority structures' (Hobson and Sharman 2005, p. 79). This socialization process, assuming the promotion of the aforementioned values, norms and principles, was implemented through the so-called harmonization policy, aimed at bringing the institutions, practices and standards of any potential member-state into accord with those of the 'Euro-Atlantic community'. As a result, the member-states' sovereignty has been constrained by the numerous binding transnational institutions (e.g. common citizenship and currency, supranational judicial review and qualified majority voting) and authority structures (European Commission, European Court of Justice[7] and so forth).

Figuratively speaking, after the brief moment of anarchy in the early 1990s the post-Soviet states faced 'hierarchy from the West', which has 'absorbed' some of them, restrained their sovereignty and facilitated their economic and security interdependence. By the beginning of the 2000s, however, the failure of a democratic transition and the consolidation of authoritarian regimes in most of the post-Soviet states (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Central Asian and South-Caucasian republics) became evident. Moreover, Russia's rise, expressed in its rapid economic growth and increased military expenses coupled with non-liberal domestic changes (political centralization and strengthening of 'authority vertical', first of all), has fundamentally transformed the strategic landscape of the post-Soviet space. The local international structure rapidly shifted from anarchy to hierarchy with Russia as a dominant state, having special interests and responsibilities across the region and trying to promote hegemonic ideology and identity throughout the post-Soviet space. Some politicians, for instance, even proposed the idea of Russia's transformation into a 'liberal empire' that would dominate economically and culturally the post-Soviet space. Following this view, Moscow had to promote Russian culture and defend the rights of Russian-speakers in neighbouring countries, encourage the expansion of Russian companies in the 'near abroad', and support democratic institutions and civil liberties in the former Soviet republics (Chubais 2003) as a part of Russia's 'historic mission'. In other words, Russia, due to its political, social and economic modernization, is bound to lead the post-Soviet space, ensuring security and prosperity within the region.

At the same time, the Russian political elite perceived very negatively the process of the EU's and NATO's eastward expansion, considering it as 'the result of purposeful Western programs aimed at expanding the West's geopolitical dominance in Europe and directly undermining Russia's role

and its long-term security' (Kanet 2011, p. 214). Besides, Russian political elites' perceptions were strongly affected by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), initiated after May 2004 enlargement of the EU and intended to stabilize the new eastern frontier of the community. Overall, this initiative suggested a security agenda, which differed substantially from the Russian approach to regional security issues. The initiative was formulated in a unilateral manner and the 'nature of the policy did not suggest a "regional" approach that Russia would help to shape in the future' (DeBardeleben 2011, p. 247). Besides, the ENP treated Russia as an object of the policy, viewing all the post-Soviet states as single category, without differentiation and prioritization (Dynkin, Arbatova 2016, p. 84), so that Russia found itself among the states, having much less power and influence. Moreover, the launching of the ENP by Brussels was viewed by Moscow as a covert effort to establish a sphere of influence in the Black Sea (Karagiannis 2014, p. 412). Not surprisingly 'given Russia's post-imperial complexes and its obsession with status, Moscow's response was predictably negative' (Dynkin and Arbatova 2016, p. 84).

In response to these developments, during the 2000s and 2010s Russia has been consistently developing initiatives aimed at establishing supranational authority structures – the *Customs Union* (Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan) and the *Eurasian Economic Union*[8] (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia), providing common tariff policies and customs procedures, harmonizing legislation and regulations on finance, labour and safety standards (Krickovic 2014, p. 507). These projects embody the Russian leadership's strong commitment to the establishment of a single economic area on the post-Soviet space, so that Russian capital and goods could move more efficiently across borders, and within which Moscow could set the overall agenda (Gvosdev, Marsh 2014, p. 193). Hence, these initiatives constitute the substantial part of Russia's economic hierarchy, based on the dependency relations, presupposing that 'subordinate polity cedes some measure of authority over its external economic relations and domestic economic policy to the dominant state'. Following this logic, today's 'Russia's relations with Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic, which are locked together in a Customs Union with a common external tariff, administered solely by Moscow' (Lake 2009a, p. 57), provides a remarkable example of 'weak' dependency. In this sense, the Eurasian Union may be viewed as a reflection of Moscow's post-imperial attitude, 'one that continues to see the newly independent states of Eurasia as within the Kremlin's sphere of influence

rather than as sovereign nations' and considering regional integration as 'an attempt to keep its new satellites within its orbit, strengthening the Kremlin's control and constraining the autonomy of its new subjects' (Gvosdev and Marsh 2014, p. 191).

Another critical feature of Russia's hierarchy is ideational in nature and is closely linked with the resurgence of Russian identity at the beginning of the twenty-first century. By the late 2000s the emergence of the 'Russian World' idea in political, public and academic discourses has proved the existence of widely shared attitudes towards a rethinking of the Russian people's role in the world. The understanding of the 'Russian World' as a complex sociocultural phenomenon, unifying Russia's 'civilizational field', and a 'transnational community, united by its commitment to Russia and loyalty to Russian culture' (Tishkov 2007, p. 5) is founded on the sense of national unity and, first of all, on common language. As Vladimir Putin once stated, the 'Russian language – is a language of historical brotherhood of nations . . . This language is a vital space of multi-million "Russian world", which is much broader than Russia itself', as far as 'the idea of "common world" has always been the foundation of Russian people's spirituality, irrespective of ethnicities and confessions' (Putin 2007). The core of the 'Russian world', according to the Russian leader, comprises the nations of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, united by a 'common cultural, value, civilizational foundation', the nations, which destiny has been determined by the 'spiritual achievement' of Prince Vladimir, who had made the historical decision to adopt Christianity (Putin 2014). Notably, the idea of the 'historical unity' of the 'Russian world' has acquired an additional sense after the Crimean referendum on independence in March 2014, when Vladimir Putin unambiguously reminded his hearers of the history of the reunification of Germany in the early 1990s, having claimed that 'during political consultations . . . our country unequivocally supported sincere and uncontainable striving of the Germans for national unity . . . ' and now expresses the hope, that 'the citizens of Germany will also support the striving of Russian world, historical Russia for the restoration of unity . . . ' (Putin 2014). Therefore, appealing to 'Russians' as a transnational ethnic identity, Putin de facto claims, that the spiritual and cultural unity of Russian-speaking population on the post-Soviet space, first, may be considered as a premise for political unity (Russia, Ukraine and Belarus as 'brotherhood nations') and, second, should be protected from eventual oppression or discrimination. Generally, as Yuri Teper convincingly proves, the official Russian discourse, interpreting the events

of the Ukrainian crisis (especially the addition of Crimea), is marked by prevalent use of the ethnically laden word 'Russians' in reference to the populations of Russia, Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, and, hence, reveals the overall 'ethnicisation' of the Russian leadership's rhetoric, stressing a 'moral obligation' of Moscow to support and protect ethnic Russians, even beyond Russia's borders (Teper 2016, p. 384). In my view, this discourse represents a specific legitimation mechanism, resting, among other things, on three core imperatives (one might call them the 'P' principles) –

1. To *put* together the nations of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, dissociated after the dissolution of the Soviet Union
2. To *promote* the Russian language and Russian culture (both in the 'near abroad' and globally)
3. To *protect* the Russian-speaking population (within the post-Soviet states, first of all).

These principles justify the establishment of transnational unity and, obviously, disregard the national borders that emerged after the end of the Cold War within the post-Soviet space. They also set the new criteria for legitimate action, emphasizing Russia's 'mission'[9] to integrate and pacify the whole region. Thus, commenting on the forthcoming Crimean referendum on independence, Valentina Matvienko, the Chairman of Russia's Federal Council, overtly advocated this idea in the following manner:

> Ukraine is a home of millions of Russian-speakers . . . whose lives are now in real danger. Russia cannot stand aside, it cannot remain indifferent . . . if serious threat to life and safety of the inhabitants of Crimea remains. . . . So we have every reason, responsibility and obligation [to take appropriate actions]. Russia now has a special mission to protect the Russian-speaking population. (Matvienko 2014)

These obligations and 'mission' justify (to a certain degree, of course) Russia's actions, especially those which hardly fit the existing international legal frameworks. In other words, the importance of these claims resides in their pretension to restrict sovereignty of less powerful post-Soviet states by establishing a set of conditions, making violation of these states' sovereign rights justifiable (if not legitimate). In this sense, one of the

prominent and often cited statements of Vladimir Putin on Ukraine seems to be very indicative: 'Millions of Russians and Russian-speaking people live in Ukraine and will continue to do so. Russia will always defend their interests using political, diplomatic and legal means. But it should be above all in Ukraine's own interest to ensure that these people's rights and interests are fully protected. This is the guarantee of Ukraine's state stability and territorial integrity' (Putin 2014).

The core idea of this statement is very close to the 'responsibility to protect' principle and affirms Russia's determination to defend the 'Russian world' as a historically unique transnational unity. Besides, the Russian president views Ukrainian language policy, which downplays the importance of the Russian language and fails to give it official status, as a kind of 'massive violation of human rights' adequate to trigger the self-determination process. In this sense, Putin's argument 'transforms self-determination from an unusual and extraordinary remedy for severely oppressed peoples to a potentially regular occurrence that could be applicable to almost any minority around the world' (Burke-White 2014, p. 71), despite the eventual destructive outcomes. It is no less important that Vladimir Putin, proclaiming this idea, de facto extends Russia's sovereignty over the other state's territory, appealing to the notions of 'historical nation' and 'historical sovereignty', stressing the urgent need to prevent NATO from 'running the show' on 'our historical territories' (Putin 2014).

Hence, the establishment of Russia's economic and ideational hierarchy on the post-Soviet space makes analytically useful comparisons with the Soviet sphere of influence, founded on the similar premises (power disparity, the dominant state's security concerns) and patterns (the promotion of transnational identity, restrictions on the subordinate states' sovereignty, claiming for the 'special responsibilities' over the region). Some scholars, relying on the analysis of Russia's actions in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014), reinforced by the Russian elites' rhetoric, set forth the thesis on the emergence of 'Putin's doctrine', which views the protection of Russian-speakers within the former Soviet Union as a paramount goal of Russia's foreign policy. As Emmanuel Karagiannis argues, 'this is the Russian equivalent of the Monroe Doctrine; the former Soviet space is to be a Russian sphere of influence . . . ' and 'it has potential application in all post-Soviet republics, excluding the Baltic republics which are members of NATO and the European Union . . . ' (Karagiannis 2014, p. 415). Mette Skak provides an additional argument in favour of a new Russian 'Monroe doctrine',

pointing out that the idea of Russia's 'privileged interests' within the post-Soviet space, based on the special historical relations, friendship and neighbourhood, corresponds directly to the concept of 'sphere of influence' (Skak 2011, p. 147). In whole, these arguments assume that Russia, seeking to address its national security challenges, tries to restore (in some respects, at least) the major patterns of the Soviet-led order, founded on the idea that the subordinate states should be prevented from developing any long-standing security relations and deep economic ties with the 'opponent' (NATO members, the USA, major European powers). At the same time, it seems to be evident that the emerging Russian hierarchical order advances a much more 'informal' understanding of Russia's 'sphere of influence'. Thus, Russian leadership does not seek to prevent *any* supplemental political or economic ties between post-Soviet countries and the 'West', as long as Russian vital interests are protected (Gvosdev and Marsh 2014, p. 193). At the same time, as both the 2008 war with Georgia and 2014 Ukrainian crises revealed, if Russia perceives its core interests are at stake, it may resort to extraordinary measures (including military action) in order to maintain its control over the critical area. This assumption, in turn, inspires the comparative effort to clarify the degree to which 'Soviet' and 'Russian' visions of order coincide or diverge. The table below contains the comparison of similarities and distinctions between 'Soviet' and 'Russian' hierarchical orders. As one can see, both orders appeal to transnational identities, while Russia's claim is ethnocentric rather than cosmopolitan. Both orders admit the violation of the nation-states' sovereignty in cases of 'misbehavior', though the reasons to do that are different. Finally, 'Soviet' and 'Russian' orders alike promote 'special responsibilities' justifying the active, in some respects 'messianic', foreign policy of the dominant power (Table 3.1).

Apparently, the incipient Russian hierarchical order in its essence reproduces some major features of the Soviet sphere of influence. Thus, proclaiming transnational identity, which disregards the existing territorial borders of the 'newly independent states', this order constrains their sovereignty, prescribing desirable patterns of behaviour and prohibiting the undesirable ones. At the same time, 'Russian hierarchy', if compared to the Soviet order, seems to be much a more 'revisionist' arrangement, questioning the existing national borders of the 'newly independent states' that emerged as a result of the Soviet Union's disintegration.

Nevertheless, current security challenges in Europe come not from the post-Soviet states' weakness and their inability to remain fully sovereign,

Table 3.1 The 'Soviet' and 'Russian' Hierarchies

	'Soviet hierarchy'	*'Russian hierarchy'*
Transnational identity	Socialist ideology and the idea of 'proletarian internationalism'.	The 'Russian world' idea, appealing to the spiritual and cultural unity of the Russian-speaking population on the post-Soviet space and globally.
Restrictions on states' sovereignty	Deviation from 'state socialism' or rejection of socialist ideals. Boundary-maintaining policy.	Strengthening ties with NATO and violation of Russian-speaking population's rights. Boundary-questioning policy.
'Special responsibilities'	Promotion of Communist ideals, counteraction to 'capitalist expansion'.	Protection of Russian-speaking population on post-Soviet space. Counteraction to NATO expansion.

but rather from the rapidly increasing tensions between 'Russian' and 'Euro-Atlantic' hierarchies. These structures aim to impose 'order' on the post-Soviet space, making the 'newly independent states' adopt specific patterns of international behaviour, but diverge fundamentally in their understandings of the ways of achieving this goal. Both 'Russian' and 'Euro-Atlantic' orders seek to encompass the post-Soviet states (especially Ukraine) within the hierarchical arrangements, restricting their sovereignty and prescribing behaviour consistent with certain rules, norms, principles and values. It seems obvious that the collision of the two hierarchies facilitates the emergence of new normative imperatives, which substantially differ from the norms and principles, essential for the anarchical structures, placing the nation-states' sovereignty in the foreground. On the contrary, the new norms prescribe that both international and domestic affairs of the subordinate states should be ordered in a specific manner (for instance, the 'pro-Western' or 'pro-Russian' orientation of a ruling elite, integration with Euro-Atlantic structures or cooperation with Moscow and Russia-led institutions). In the recent past, for example, these imperatives provoked several 'colour revolutions' as a result of West-supported 'regime change' policy on the post-Soviet space (Georgia in 2004, Ukraine in 2005, and Kyrgyzstan in 2006). These changes included, among the other things, the covert external support for loyal politicians during electoral campaigns, and the financing of non-governmental organizations involved in political activity. In response, the

Russian leadership resorted to assertive foreign policy, viewing the USA's policy aimed at promoting democracy across the post-Soviet space as an attempt to squeeze Russia out of its positions within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and 'to further undermine Russia's role and status in Eurasia', neglecting Russia's desire to be 'treated as an equal partner in relations with the United States and the European Union' (Tsygankov 2015, p. 280). Not surprisingly Russia still views any support for democracy on the post-Soviet space provided by the Western powers as a direct challenge to its regional pre-eminence, founded on the loyalty of pro-Russian regimes in Eurasia closest to Moscow (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia) (Table 3.2).

As Table 3.2 illustrates, confronting 'Euro-Atlantic' and 'Russian' orders promote fundamentally different ideologies and identities suggest completely different grounds for the restrictions on the subordinate states' sovereignty, and proclaim very distinct 'responsibilities' for the post-Soviet space and European region as a whole. Besides, these contending hierarchies rely on different sources of legitimacy – while the 'Euro-Atlantic' order appeals to 'universal values', irrespective of national, ethnic, religious or any other peculiarities, the 'Russian' order promotes the idea of ethnic consolidation and assigns to Russia the duty ('responsibility') to protect its nationals across the post-Soviet space. The Russian perception stresses cultural and historical ties

Table 3.2 The competing hierarchical orders on post-Soviet space

	Transatlantic 'institutional' hierarchy	*Russia's 'single-power' hierarchy*
Transnational identity	Supranational liberal values (democracy, market economy, rule of law, human rights).	Ethnocentric idea of a 'Russian World'.
Restrictions on states' sovereignty	Economic and security policies should be subjected to shared norms and standards (free-trade, market competition, collective security, etc.).	Recognizing the right for self-determination of national minorities (Russians, first of all), facing the threat of oppression or any other form of discrimination.
'Special responsibilities'	Promoting democracy and peace in Europe and its nearest neighbourhood. Key aspect – inclusion of the post-Soviet states into Euro-Atlantic economic and security order.	Protecting the Russian-speaking population within post-Soviet states. Inclusion of post-Soviet states into Russia-led institutions.

between the 'brethren nations' of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, while considering Western powers' policy as an attempt to destroy these bonds by entangling the post-Soviet states in Euro-Atlantic structures. In turn, the USA and the European powers 'tend to assume the universality of their values and reject those of Russia as old-fashioned and not well-suited for the modern world' (Tsygankov 2015, p. 288). In other words, Western powers advance a 'universalist' understanding of order and security, which opposes Russia's 'particular' vision of how regional stability should be achieved and maintained. Both visions disregard national boundaries and view the nation-states' 'traditional' sovereignty rather as a rudimentary obstacle for international peace, rather than as the cornerstone of national security in the twenty-first century. Moreover, these two orders tend to promote their core norms and to institutionalize favourable patterns of behaviour among the post-Soviet states. This tendency inevitably results in dangerous confrontation, threatening regional security environment and shattering the established institutions, aimed to prevent international violence and provide peace in Europe.

Conclusion

The events of the 2014 Ukrainian crises and the subsequent rise of tensions between Russia and the 'Western powers' provide evidence that both sides of the conflict essentially follow the behavioural patterns that were intrinsic to the period of bipolar confrontation between 'socialist' and 'capitalist' camps in the second half of twentieth century. Both Russia and the 'Western powers' have demonstrated a strong determination to impose distinctive international orders on the post-Soviet states, constraining their sovereignty in the economic and security area and seeking to strengthen their mutual interdependence within the specific political and economic hierarchies and, thus, to prevent these states from resorting to what they view as dangerous competitive behaviour. However, as the Cold War rivalry convincingly demonstrated, the hierarchical orders are hardly prone to peaceful coexistence, especially if they are grounded on completely different (or even incompatible) principles and values. This historical experience, in my view, provides IR scholars with useful lessons of great importance for the appropriate understanding of current tensions between Russia and the 'West'. At the same time, it should be noted, that, unlike the Cold War era, when the two superpowers recognized their respective spheres of influence, the post-Soviet space today represents a highly contested

area. The opposing sides do not share any mutually recognized understanding on the rules and principles, which should comprise a common approach to regional security. While the 'Western powers' are still committed to the strategy of containing Russia through the expansion of a collective security regime (based on liberal values) on the post-Soviet space, Moscow seeks to restore its lost geopolitical standing, trying to establish a centralized, ethnically based order (rather conservative in its nature) that stresses national (instead of supranational) security and the importance of military might and defence spending. It emphasizes the dominant power's sovereignty and, at the same time, questions the sovereignty of less powerful states. Hence, the security environment in Europe in the near future will depend heavily on Russia's and the Western powers' ability to negotiate the normative foundation of the international order in Europe. In this process both sides face several challenges generated by the confrontation between the two hierarchical orders, aiming to gain the control over the international relations within the post-Soviet space:

1. Managing contending identities which erode the nation-states' sovereignty through the establishment of the supranational principles, governing the relations among them. Besides, these identities facilitate the emergence of two sets of norms, prescribing completely different patterns of behaviour for less powerful states on the post-Soviet space – to enhance cooperation with the former 'patron' (Moscow) or to develop relations with Euro-Atlantic structures, collaborating with Brussels and Washington. In the case of Ukraine this hard choice caused the deep crisis of sovereignty and statehood, which aggravated the regional security environment and provoked further tensions between Russia and the 'West'.
2. The emergence and strengthening of Russia's hierarchy provokes the division of sovereignty of some post-Soviet states (Georgia and Ukraine, first of all). At the same time, Russia still lacks the legitimacy necessary to consolidate a favourable hierarchical order and to attach validity to its claims for 'special responsibilities' on the post-Soviet space. The appeal to the idea of a 'Russian world' has substantial impact on the domestic audience, but not the international one. Russia's increased regional ambitions coupled with the lack of internationally recognized legitimacy create a serious danger of new military conflicts on the post-Soviet space. The only way

for Russia to regain or to restore legitimacy is to prove itself as an effective 'public good' provider, which is able to make an essential contribution to international security in confronting such transnational threats as Islamic State (ISIL) and global terrorism at large.

3. The collision of 'special responsibilities' proclaimed within the opposing hierarchical orders that are competing for the control over the same region – the post-Soviet space – and providing divergent visions of its future. The major security threat generated by this tension is a revision of the territorial order established after the end of Cold War. As the Ukrainian crisis has unambiguously demonstrated, the competition for power and influence on the post-Soviet space produces extremely destabilizing effects that threaten the overall security environment within the region. Consequently, the major counterparts involved in the current crisis should negotiate a new agreement about the norms of appropriate behaviour and the ways of their implementation. In other words, the prospective security landscape in Europe should be founded on mutual restraints, and the new normative order should be based on shared understandings about permissible/impermissible conduct ('substantive norms') and how these norms should be applied ('procedural norms'). Otherwise, the controversies between the two contending visions of order in Europe will inevitably sharpen, provoking further erosion of 'sovereignty' as a key institution of the international society.

Notes

1. For an argument in favour of 'world governance' and 'concert of nations', see Rosenau, Czempiel (1993) and Rosecrance (2001). For key primacist arguments, see Wohlforth (1999) and Brooks, Wohlforth (2008); for an argument for multilateralism, see Ikenberry (2001).
2. It is important to note that a preeminent power may exert influence on the secondary states' international behaviour (or domestic affairs) without establishing any higher authority over them, using different kinds of violence and direct (or indirect) pressure. However, as J. Hobson and J. Sharman point out, 'when a large state establishes formal authority over the means of violence within these adjacent polities, endorsed as legitimate by both sides, their sovereignty is no longer intact' (Hobson and Sharman 2005, p. 76). These specific authority relations, inherent, in particular, for the Soviet sphere of influence, substantially change the

nature of inter-state relations, displacing the 'anarchy' (based on the principle of inviolacy of the nation-states' sovereignty) by the 'hierarchy', presupposing partial cession of the subordinate states' sovereign rights to the dominant power.

3. The most comprehensive definition of 'anarchy', in my view, is provided by Charles Kegley and Gabriel Raymond, who describe it as a specific condition, under which the states 'have supreme power over their territory and populace, and no higher authority stands above them holding the legitimacy and coercive capabilities required to undertake the extractive, regulative, and distributive functions that governments normally perform in domestic political systems' (Kegley Ch., Raymond G 1990, p. 9).
4. As K. Waltz put it, 'the smaller the number of great powers, and the wider the disparities between the few most powerful states and the many others, the more likely the former are to act for the sake of the system and participate in the management of, or interfere in the affairs of, lesser states' (Waltz 2010, p. 198).
5. For the detailed analysis of military intervention as an institution of international hierarchy, see, for instance Ralph (2010).
6. In particular, this principle was expressed in the so-called equalization doctrine, founded on the commitment to integrate each of the 15 Soviet republics on an equal basis, and provided the ideological basis for peripheral political, economic and social development. Following this doctrine, article 19 of the 1977 Soviet Constitution claimed, that 'the government promotes the strengthening of the social homogeneity of society, the obliteration of class differences, of existing differences between city and countryside, between mental and physical labor, and the all-sided development and convergence of all nationalities of the USSR'. To support integration Soviet hierarchy promoted ideological homogenization through a nationalities policy that privileged and promoted titular Soviet nationalities in each republic (Cooley 2005, p. 67–68).
7. Remarkably, the presence of transnational juridical institutions seems to represent one of the major features of hierarchy. As Eric Grinavisky and Ami Hsieh point out, 'if the international system has judicial institutions whose decisions invoke compliance, either because these institutions have material resources for enforcement or they are perceived to be legitimate by international society, then the system loses its anarchic character' (Grinavisky, Hsieh 2015, p. 701).
8. Particularly, the current edition of Russia's National security strategy describes the Eurasian economic community as the core of economic integration on the post-Soviet space, the instrument of realization of large industrial, energy, infrastructural and other joint projects, having regional significance (Strategy of National Security 2009).

9. It is also worth mentioning that this new Russian messianism is often seen by its proponents as an alternative to the idea of American exceptionalism and, more widely, as an ideological tool for challenging Western hegemony. Following this logic, they argue that the real cause of the current 'new Cold War' between Russia and the USA is the collision of two messianic projects, having common roots in Christian tradition (Engström 2014, p. 357).

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CHAPTER 4

EU-Russia Security Relations: Another Kind of Europe

Lilia A. Arakelyan

Introduction

The Ukrainian crisis in late 2013 became a litmus test for the so-called democracy and state-building processes in the post-Soviet space. When Moscow realized that Kiev was slipping away from Russia's orbit into the Western sphere, it suddenly stopped playing a diplomatic cat-and-mouse game with Ukraine and the West to show 'who really wears the pants' in world politics. However, the consequences of Ukrainian 'disobedience' went far beyond the state itself, as I argue in this chapter. The Euromaidan revolution ended the shaky peace that was established between Russia and the West after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. This chapter examines whether or not we can consider the new competition between Moscow, Washington, and Brussels as a new Cold War, as well as seeks to establish who is responsible for the current power confrontation in the 'shared neighbourhood'. Although, the main focus of this chapter is on the power confrontation between Russia and the European Union (EU) over their shared neighbourhood that reached its apotheosis in the Ukrainian crisis, I want to make it clear that EU expansion in Eastern Europe is tied up with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) expansion in the post-Soviet space and with US discontent with Mr. Putin's regime.

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_4

The White House put pressure on European leaders to play a key role in anti-Russian sanctions over the Ukrainian crisis; therefore, this study will also consider Washington's foreign policy towards Moscow and the six countries that compromise the EU's Eastern Partnership (EaP) region: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine as my empirical focus.

This chapter argues that regional security functions in the shared neighbourhood have been transformed dramatically since the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis. The EaP initiative, which once was considered as the most ambitions of the EU's efforts to project its normative capacities in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, failed to implement successfully long-awaited political and economic reforms in its partner states. One of the reasons for the EaP fiasco is the fact that EU was more interested in containing Russia in the region that historically had been under direct control from Moscow rather than enhancing relations and establishing closer integration with Yerevan, Baku, Tbilisi, Minsk, Chisinau, and Kiev. As a result, only Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine signed the Association Agreement with the EU; the rest of the partner states headed towards semi- (as in case of Armenia) or full-fledged authoritarianism (in case of Belarus and Azerbaijan).

In addition, a threat of Russian revanchism that surfaced in the early 2000s has now become a political reality in the post-Soviet space. Furthermore, the Kremlin maintained a hostile stance against the West and painted Russia as a defender of traditional values in contrast to 'decadent' capitalist culture in the USA and Europe. However, it would be wrong to suggest that Moscow's manifestation of animosity towards the West happened overnight. While the EU offered Russia a strategic partnership in 1999 followed by a privileged status in EU external relations in 2003, it was crystal clear since the beginning of their relations that Moscow and Brussels had different visions of Russia's role in the post-Soviet space. Russia viewed itself as a regional and global leader, whose interests could not and should not be ignored, whereas the EU considered its largest neighbour as a stepping stone to the Union's eastward expansion.

In the following argument I show that in order to understand the political crisis in Eurasia, which has strained Moscow's relations with the West to the lowest point, one should start with the analysis of Russia's and the EU's foreign policies and their interests and expectations in the region after the end of the Cold War. I argue that the Kremlin cannot be blamed

solely for the current distrust and tensions between Moscow and Brussels. The EU's lack of consistency in its external relations with the EaP countries, as well as inability of the former Soviet Union (FSU) states fully to embrace democratic forces in their nations have also contributed to the new confrontation between Russia and the West.

This chapter proceeds as follows: First, using process-tracing and historical explanation techniques, I will examine Russia's and the EU's foreign policies in their overlapping neighbourhood to show the conceptual misperceptions that have contributed to a geostrategic competition between Moscow and Brussels over the post-Soviet space. Then, I will discuss the EaP countries' success or failure in 'promoting regional stability through trade agreements and democratic institution-building' (Park 2014). I will address the aforementioned issues by using the level of analysis method, which includes the role of leaders and the beliefs of Russia, the six EaP partners, and the West (the individual level of analysis), domestic politics and economics (the domestic level of analysis), and the current events in the international arena (the systemic level of analysis). Finally, this argument concludes that Eurasia needs a different security architecture that will be embedded in broader regional and global dynamics, and will consider the interests not only of Russia, the EU, and the USA but also the six countries that I analyse in this study.

We Will Build a New World, Our World!

Many scholars in the EU start their analysis of EU-Russia relations since the end of the Cold War (Marsh and Rees 2012; De Pedro and Viilup 2015; and many others). They argue that Brussels' attitude towards Moscow at the time was warm and friendly: The EU signed an Agreement on Trade and Economic and Commercial Cooperation with the Soviet government in 1989 and then, five years later, a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement set the legal basis of relations between Russia and the EU. They maintain that Russia viewed the EU mainly as an economic actor rather than as a normative power, which hindered closer security cooperation between them (Marsh and Rees 2012, p. 81). Russian scholars and analysts (Fedorov 2005; Pankov 2008; Butorina 2013) consider EU-Russia relations as a zero-sum game; accordingly, if Russia's geopolitical interests in the 1990s were dismissed by its European partners because of the country's difficult economic and political situation, the 2000s gave rise to a new Russia that made its presence

felt across Europe and beyond. This study maintains that in order to explain the current antagonism between Moscow, Washington, and Brussels, one should dig more deeply into historical and ideological stereotypes that divided the Asian and European continents.

Heartland Theory that Influenced the West

This study employs a process-tracing technique, which refers to the analysis of intermediate steps in a process to make inferences on how that process took place and how it caused the outcome of interest (Bennet and Checkel 2015, p. 4). It is important to note that process tracing is related to historical explanation, which draws on theories to explain each vital step that contributes to generating the result. In this regard, let us briefly discuss Harold Mackinder's Heartland Theory, which maintains that the vast resources of Central Asia – 'the great pivot' – will serve as a geostrategic tool for the state that controls it to become 'the empire of the world' (Mackinder 1962, p. 150). This chapter argues that the Heartland theory is still influential in the current foreign policies of the three great powers that I examine: Russia, the EU, and the USA. After all, Mackinder's theory can be seen as a provocative reflection on foreign affairs between the West and East aimed at exploring the policy relevance of geography in aiding statecraft (Pascal 2004, pp. 330–336). Yet, it was the 'rimland', the Atlantic nations, which maintained a grasp on world power from the second half of the fifteenth century rather than heartland (Huldt 2010, p. ix). After the end of the Cold War, the West tried to influence the countries of Eastern Europe and South Caucasus to follow the liberal-democratic path as the rest of the 'rimland', using economic and political means. However, as has been pointed out before, institutions promoting economic interdependence cannot quickly be leveraged to build greater trust and reciprocity in the region, since actors both within the shared neighbourhood and outside it continue to use trade strategically (Sussex 2012, p. 35). As a result, the EaP's efforts to promote new regional dynamics in the post-Soviet space have fallen prey to Moscow's attempts to restore and sustain hegemonic pre-eminence in Eurasia. The following section seeks to support the argument that the EU's failure to ensure Russia's strategic partnership in the region that Mackinder called the 'Eurasian heartland' prompted Moscow to take more proactive, and, as some would argue, aggressive actions to secure its hegemony in the area. This brings us back to the

point that Eurasia, the 'World Island' to Mackinder, is still central to the foreign policy of Russia, EU, and the USA.

In 1904, Sir Harold Mackinder, a British geographer, came up with the idea that the earth will forever be divided into two antagonistic spheres: land and sea. He placed the natural repository for global land power into the Eurasian 'heartland', the territory of the former Russian empire. Correspondingly, this theory was favourited not only by the followers of Eurasianism and neo-Eurasianist approaches who emphasized Russia's uniqueness and antagonism towards 'the Roman-German civilization' (Gennady Zyuganov, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, Evgeny Primakov, Aleksandr Dugin, and many others) but also by European and American policymakers before, during, and after the end of the Cold War (Clover 1999, pp. 9–10; Fettweis 2000). Nicholas Spykman, a Yale University professor and one of the forefathers of containment policy, altered Mackinder's theory, stating that: 'Who controls the Rimland (heartland in Mackinder's theory) rules Eurasia, who rules Eurasia and controls the destinies of the world' (Spykman 1944, p. 43).

The idea of strengthening the Rimland to contain the hostile power (the Soviet Union at the time) was furthered by the prominent scholar of Cold War history, John Lewis Gaddis, who maintained that the containment policy evolved from challenging the Soviet expansion into the rimlands by concentrating defence on crucial points, including Western Europe and Japan (Gaddis 1982). One might wonder whether the Cold War era's containment policy is still relevant today and how it influenced the relations between the Russian Federation and the West after the fall of the Iron Curtain. I maintain that the Cold War mentality was one of the reasons that EU-Russia relations were doomed to failure from the start in 1991. Western Europe and the USA feared the Soviet Union for such a long time that, when Russia headed towards democratic reforms and market liberalization in the 1990s, Western policymakers were more concerned with making sure that Moscow was not playing a leading role in world politics than with the reforms themselves. Well, it did not take long to let the Jinn that the West was still afraid of out of the bottle.

The Role of Individual Leaders in East-West Confrontation

When the first popularly elected leader in the country's history, Boris Yeltsin, handed the Russian presidency to the unknown former KGB (Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti) agent, Vladimir Putin, by resigning at the

end of 1999, history was made. Mr. Putin recentralized power in a steep vertical authoritarian structure with the help of a tight-knit circle that came with him from St. Petersburg, mainly from the security services (siloviki), eroded the basic individual freedoms guaranteed under the 1993 Russian constitution and, thus, slowly but surely closed the political space in Russia. In fact, Putin and his team established a regime that would control privatization, restrict democracy, eliminate an independent media, and civil society (Ostrow et al. 2007).

Conventional wisdom holds that Russia has never been a democratic state, despite all attempts of Boris Yeltsin to liberalize the country's economic and political system in the 1990s (Ostrow et al. 2007). But, if Boris Yeltsin and his government made some efforts to democratize the Russian state, although those attempts did not bear fruit, Vladimir Putin made a U-turn, taking Russia back to its historically authoritarian tendencies with no room for freedom of any kind. Mr. Putin's plans to 'make Russia a great power again' benefited from favourable economic conditions resulting from global increases in oil prices and demand at the beginning of his presidency. For many Russians, Vladimir Putin became a president who brought stability to their country and stood up to the West.

Starting with the Russian-Georgian war of August 2008, Western leaders realized that Russian officials are not going to tolerate 'big brother' behaviour from the West, and are ready to undertake military actions to prove their right to Eurasian hegemony, despite international rules and norms. Some analysts would argue that the Putin's doctrine was born at the time, and a five-day long war against Georgia was a 'dress rehearsal for Russia's invasion in Ukraine' (Whitmore 2016). After all, East-West relations had rekindled fundamental issues concerning both the globalization and fragmentation of world politics. The former drives nations economically, socially, and politically towards greater integration, the latter tears up regions, and countries to focus on their interests and concerns (Spiegel et al. 2009, pp. 6–7). During the Yeltsin presidency, the Russian state's security was associated with the idea of belonging to a group of democratic nations, and Moscow's leaders considered joining NATO and the European Community as the prime national security interest rather than restoring the Soviet Union. During Putin's presidency, the main focus in Russia's foreign policy became the protection of the Near Abroad and opposition to NATO and EU expansion to Eastern Europe.

Russia's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Space in the 1990s

After the end of the Cold War, Russia was a disorganized and broken state, which desperately tried to establish friendly relations with the USA and create a free market economy under the Yeltsin presidency. In Boris Yeltsin's own words, Russia tried 'to join the civilized world' on an equal footing with the rest of major powers, mainly the USA and the EU. Unfortunately, the Western countries were not as enthusiastic as Russia's leadership about the idea of a new international order based on mutual confidence, cooperation, and binding agreements between the East and West. Although, the USA and its allies decided that American national interests would be best served if Washington would support the neo-liberal market reforms in the Russian Federation, in the meantime the Western powers preferred not to have Moscow in the front ranks in the international status order. Otherwise, the reshaping of the Cold War bipolar world into a more complex system would disrupt the liberal international order that was built in the second half of the twentieth century.

Meanwhile, Russian policymakers during the Yeltsin presidency envisioned the state as a part of Europe, hoping that integration between the EU and former Soviet states would assume a complementary form (Sherr 2016). The Kremlin announced its readiness to implement market reforms and to establish functioning democracy, in order to prove to Europe and the USA that the new, democratic Russia was a more reliable partner than the FSU (Arbatova 1997, p. 462).

However, during the 1990s Russian interests were downplayed by Washington and Brussels, while the USA undertook a couple of policy actions that simply ignored Moscow's interests: the NATO eastward expansion, military intervention in former Yugoslavia, the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the emplacement of a missile defence system in Central Europe, a series of gas pipelines projects in the Caspian Sea region designed to bypass Russia (Kanet 2010, pp. 61–62). As a result the so-called Kozyrev doctrine in Moscow's foreign policy, adopted in April 1993, which asserted interest in strategic rapprochement and partnership with the West, was replaced with the Primakov doctrine that offered a more pragmatic approach and pushed Russia towards a more aloof position with the Western powers. Moreover, the Russian policymakers started to identify themselves more with state interests in the Near Abroad, as a new (or well-forgotten old) goal of Russian foreign policy. Primakov's appointment in 1996 as foreign minister indicated a critical break with Yeltsin's early attempts to integrate

with the West as an approach towards the restoration of Russia as a major power in its former sphere of interests and in the international arena. In the 2000s Vladimir Putin furthered Primakov's doctrine and placed a high priority on Moscow's dominance in Eurasia through military-strategic, economic, and political leverage.

Despite the fact that Medvedev adopted a more liberal approach in Russia's foreign policy during his tenure, Western policymakers still believed that then Prime Minister Vladimir Putin remained omnipresent behind the scenes (Kozhanov 2012). Mr. Putin's return to the presidency in 2012 only made it clear that Medvedev's tenure was nothing else but just the gambit (rakirovka) needed to manipulate the law to serve Putin's authoritarian agenda (Remington 2014, p. 1). In fact, Russian authorities have tightened control over the media and the opposition, solidified the hold of Eurasianism, and undertook an anti-Western stance. During his third presidential administration Mr. Putin's foreign policy doctrine has rested on three geostrategic imperatives: Russia must remain a nuclear superpower, a great power in all aspects of international activity, and the political, military, and economic leader of its region (Aron 2013).

In 2016, Vladimir Putin has turned the tables on Washington, naming the expansion of NATO as a threat to Russian national security and openly accusing the EU and the USA of supporting an 'anti-constitutional coup d'état in Ukraine' (Putin 2016). There are three important factors to consider that led to the recent deterioration of the East-West relations: the leadership style of Vladimir Putin, Russia's economic growth in the first five years of the twenty-first century, and the Ukrainian crisis that propelled a resurgent Russia to annex Crimea and to provide arms supplies and send military back up to pro-Moscow rebels in eastern Ukraine. However, as the political situation in Ukraine continues to deteriorate, it becomes clear that the EU also shares its responsibility for the current state of affairs within the EaP partner states (Table 4.1).

The EU's Foreign Policies

The history of European integration reflects the tensions between the role of supranational organizations and the power and the interests of national governments, which in turn reflects the dichotomy of the two most prominent political theories about European integration: (neo) functionalism and intergovernmentalism (Spolaore 2013). Ernst Haas's seminal work *The Uniting of Europe* (1958) presented a starting point of an

Table 4.1 The Origins of the recent deterioration of the East-West relations

Systemic level	*Domestic level*	*Individual level*
The struggle for a multipolar world between Russia and USA	Economic change in Russia during the Putin's presidency and more assertive foreign policy bolstered national pride, and led Kremlin to restore its influence in post-Soviet space.	Vladimir Putin replaced Boris Yeltsin in December 1999, and took a more aggressive stance towards the West. He also consolidated power and neutralized potential opposition within Russia
Ideological conflict between West and East, reinforced by Vladimir Putin in order to bring the former Soviet states back to Russia's orbit.	EU and NATO expansion to Eastern Europe facilitated Putin's revanchist plans in post-Soviet space, and the creation of the Eurasian Union.	Before the Ukrainian crisis, US President, Barak Obama, introduced The 'Russian Reset', his first foreign policy initiative aimed at improving US relations with Russia in 2009 that never materialized. The reset was doomed by Putin's shifting view of the USA and by growing criticism of Putin's authoritarian regime by American officials.

institutionalist theory of organizational evolution and change that drew upon David Mitrany's functional approach to peace (Mitrany 1966; Haas 1958). At the time, Mitrany's functional theory focused on those areas of interstate activity that were less controversial: the economy and technology. He maintained that an interdependent community of nations could be united through cooperation on economic and technical levels. Thus, according to Mitrany, 'while functional neutrality is possible, political neutrality is not'. Haas's neofunctionalist theory sought to explain the political regional integration process that emerged in Western Europe after World War II, as well as to challenge the realist accounts of inter-state cooperation. In this regard regional integration in Western Europe was recognized as a process where states entered *voluntarily* into arrangements with their neighbours to create new forms of engagements and new techniques to resolve conflicts between one another (McGowan 2007). Burfisher et al. (2004) maintain that the

world economy after World War II had become much more integrated with the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1958 and its evolution into the EU by the treaty of Maastricht in 1992 (Burfisher et al. 2004, p. 2). In the 1950s the European Coal and Steel Community united the European countries economically and politically to secure lasting peace. According to Fraser Cameron, historical reconciliation was a crucial element in developing the necessary political will for cooperation, and, ultimately, for integration. In other words, the ultimate for the success of the EU, was a historical reconciliation between France and Germany that was achieved by years of sustained political effort from the both government officials (Cameron 2010).

However, while European integration ensured peace in Western Europe (at least over the last six decades), the EU's ambitious foreign policy initiative, the EaP, has fallen short of expectations to forge close ties with these states (Park 2014). Furthermore, the Ukrainian crisis has called the EaP into question after Brussels's failed attempts to reach an Association Agreement with Ukraine facilitated Maidan, a change in government, and Russian intervention. Only after Ukraine's political crisis and Russia's annexation of Crimea, Western policymakers have called for Brussels to work closely with Moscow in the future and to refrain from inflaming divisions by its eastward expansion initiatives (Park 2014).

It has been argued that it was Russia who gave impetus to the EaP. In this view the August 2008 Russia–Georgia war and the January 2009 Russia–Ukraine gas dispute were a signal to Poland and Sweden to create a new EU initiative that would gradually get the countries of Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus to be involved in EU policies and programmes and prepare them to integrate with the Union market (Adamczyk 2010). Consequently, if the Russian government paid little attention to the European Neighbourhood Programme, that changed entirely with the foundation of the EaP in 2009. For instance, Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Foreign Minister, condemned the establishment of the EaP without Moscow's participation, and compared it to the creation of the 'EU zone of interest in Eastern Europe'. Before the Ukrainian crisis, EU officials ignored Moscow's concerns regarding the EaP initiative and encouraged the partner states to sign the Association Agreement with the Union that would preclude them from participating in economic integration projects with Moscow. This either-or dynamic put Yerevan, Baku, Tbilisi, Minsk, Chisinau, and Kiev at the disadvantage of having to choose allegiances and reassured Kremlin that the EaP was

launched to undermine Russia's interests in the region. It did not help that the underlying objective of the EaP initiative remained unclear to the EU itself and was contingent on different priorities, usually determined by the dominating group interests within the Union.

Les Six

The EaP is an open cooperation between the EU and six countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine with the core objectives to form a political association establish and develop a free trade area, and remove the existing visa regime. The EaP was launched on May 7, 2009 as a tool to enhance cooperation and to support reforms in the Eastern Neighbourhood of the EU, as well as to control a south energy corridor from the Caspian region to Europe bypassing Russia (Arakelyan 2014). In its foreign policy the EU prefers bilateral relationships manifested in the accession processes, where Brussels uses its economic and normative power to create a set of asymmetrical bilateral relationships between itself and the candidates, including the direct projection of norms and values (Haukkala 2010, p. 161). The EU's normative hegemony is not limited to future member states, but has also been applied in various bilateral cooperation agreements with the FSU states. However, since membership was not formally on the table for EaP countries, the Union's asymmetric bilateral approach has been proven weak and inefficient in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. According to Michael Leigh, one of the architects of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) initiative, Brussels set high requirements for EaP states to implement EU standards of business regulation, governance, and human rights in return for too small financial and political rewards (Arakelyan 2015, p. 77). Moreover, the six EaP member states fell victim to a power game between the EU vis-à-vis Russia, when Vladimir Putin announced his plans for launching the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) in January 2015, and 'invited' all the former Soviet states to join his regional project. The Putin government claimed that the new economic regime would establish the general rules and norms of post-Soviet states' behaviour to facilitate cooperation and promote trade in the region. However, the EEU is more unattractive and less viable than expected by not having Ukraine, the second largest economy of any of the former Soviet states, as its member, which significantly undermines the economic and trade potential of the block. In addition, Russia's economy slipped recently into recession

amid Western sanctions and the drop in oil prices; thus, the persistent weakness of the Eurasian Union's most important member state[1] will continue to hold the union back. In fact, by the time the regional block was founded in 2015, the ruble had lost more than 20 percent of its values against the dollar (40 rubles per one US dollar), and Russia's economy contracted by 3.7 percent. Moreover, over the past two years, low oil prices and Western sanctions had strained not only Russia's economy but also the economies of the Eurasian Union's member states. For instance, in 2015 growth in Kazakhstan, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan slowed to a respective 1.2, 3.0, and 3.5 percent (Stratfor 2016). Belarus GDP fell by 3.1 percent, Russia's by 3.7, while in total the Eurasian Union member states GDP fell by 3.2 percent (Stratfor 2016; Koska 2016). The first year of the EEU also failed to bring trade liberalization due to economic contraction in Russia. Trade inside the Eurasian Union fell by 26 percent, plagued by trade disputes, sanctions regimes, and a regional economic crisis. In addition, Russia decided to liberalize gas and oil only in 2025, which means that the member states continue paying duties to Moscow on its exports of oil products based on oil imported from Russia. To date the Eurasian Union has fallen short even of the Kremlin's expectations; Russia has been hit by a recession, Ukraine signed an Association Agreement with the EU, and its member states, Armenia and Belarus, again sought close ties with Europe and USA. In this regard, we shall conclude that Russian foreign policy in Eurasia followed three main objectives: to consolidate power in the near abroad by using 'hard power' or hybrid war in Ukraine, and 'soft power' targeting the vulnerability of the remaining EaP partner states:

Armenia

Conventional wisdom holds that Armenia was bullied into the EEU by the Kremlin in 2015. It was already discussed that recent Western sanctions and the oil price shock have battered not only Russia's economy but also those of its allies, and Armenia is not an exception. The slowdown in Russia affected Armenia through foreign trade, remittances, and foreign investment. The more serious issue for once opened and liberalized Armenian economy is to adopt higher tariffs and more protectionist policies of the other EEU members (Belarus, for instance, was always a supporter of protectionist policies). In the meantime, in the first half of 2015, exports to Russia fell by 47 percent, and to Belarus

and Kazakhstan by 30 and 33 percent, respectively (Karapetyan 2015). Imports from Russia also fell by 15 percent, since spending power contracted due to a recession, and specifically because Armenian migrants in Russia have sent less money home. According to Gagik Makaryan, chairman of the Armenian Worker's Union, Moscow has gained an unfair advantage over the Eurasian Union's member states since a cheaper ruble made Russian goods so much more competitive in the region in comparison with the partner states. As a result, Armenians who supported the membership in the Eurasian Union only three years ago, now consider the pact as a zero sum game. While many believed that Kremlin used Yerevan's heavy dependence on Russia's economy as well as the security concerns over the Nagorno Karabakh conflict to bring Armenia into the new union, this study also suggests that Armenia's political regime, dominated mainly by oligarchic groups, was reluctant to undertake the political changes that would have been required had they initialled the Association Agreement with the EU. For instance, Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson argue that in order to build a healthy economic and social system, a country needs to establish 'inclusive economic institutions that enforce property rights, create a level playing field, and encourage investments in new technologies and skills' rather than 'extractive economic institutions that are structured to extract resources from the many by the few' (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012). Since the mid-1990s, Armenia has been ruled by a privileged elite, oligarchs, a group numbering around 40, who dominate industries ranging from banking to mining, and who also hold an unprecedented political power in the country As in Russia and Ukraine, Armenian oligarchs have parlayed their wealth into public office, and many political parties in the country are closely associated with leading tycoons who also enjoy parliamentary immunity (Aghajanian 2012). It has also becomes a tradition for Armenian oligarchs based in Russia to come back to their motherland on a 'business mission'; Ara Abramanyan (the current president of the Union of Armenians in Russia), Samuel Karapetyan (the owner of the Tashir Group, whose brother Karen Karapetyan was appointed new prime minister of Armenia in September 2016), Ruben Vardanyan (former CEO and controlling shareholder of the investment bank Troika Dialog), just to name a few Armenian-Russian tycoons who are actively involved in Armenian politics and making sure that the country is not changing its pro-Russian course (Gabrielyan 2015) (Fig. 4.1).

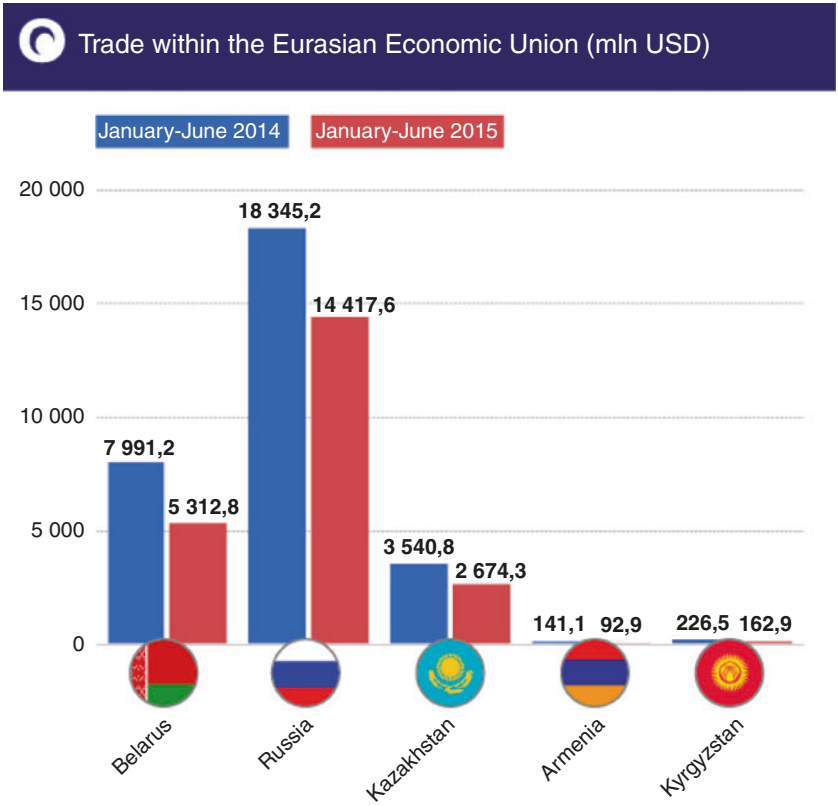

Fig. 4.1 Trade within the Eurasian Economic Union (min USD)

Source: BelarusDigest.com

The same is true about the Azerbaijani and Belarusian governments that also prefer to team up with the friendly authoritarian Putin regime, while a closer relationship with Washington and Brussels would require unwanted democratic changes in their political systems. Armenia is also considering signing an association agreement with the EU without its free trade component. Johannes Hahn, EU commissioner for ENP and Enlargement, announced that Yerevan and Brussels are currently conducting negotiations about signing the Association agreement without its free-trade component, while also discussing issues related to migration,

Fig. 4.2 Growth of Armenian GDP

Source: http://www.tradingeconomics.com/armenia/gdp-growth-annual

human rights, economic reforms, and EU support to Armenia. Moreover, according to the head of the EU delegation to Armenia, Ambassador Traian Hristea, the country is one of the largest recipients of funds per capita within the framework of the EU Eastern Partnership Program (Fig. 4.2)[2]

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan, while making very limited progress in implementing the ENP Action Plan since it contradicts its repressive political system, serves as a key player for European energy security. In order to implement the Southern Gas corridor, the EU is ready to turn a blind eye to Baku's human rights violations and even the restriction of the operations of NGOs in the country, which are dealing with fundamental freedoms. However, the West once again uses a double standard and did not impose economic sanctions against Azerbaijan, as it had in the case of human rights violations in the cases of both Russia and Belarus (EU Commission Report 2015). Moreover, Azerbaijan is making progress on WTO accession and has already joined the WTO Information Technology Agreement. In the same vein, since Azerbaijan was reclassified by the World Bank as an 'upper-middle income' country in February 2014, Azerbaijan's exports to the EU were subject to the 'most favored nation' trade rules (European Commission 2015).

Georgia

Georgia was the only country among the three South Caucasian states that initialized the Association Agreement with the EU in Vilnius in November 2013. Moreover, Georgia expects a visa-free regime with the EU in 2016, which can be considered as a big victory for a country that has two breakaway regions, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as possible accession candidates for the EEU. Georgia represents the most interesting case among the three South Caucasian states, since the country is the only state in the region that is able to pursue closer ties with the EU. However, the evidence shows that Russia's influence in Georgia is growing stronger, since, despite Tbilisi's current pro-European course in foreign policy, the West is reluctant to continue its eastward expansion in order not to anger Putin. Many analysts believe that Russia uses its 'soft power' in Georgia with the help of the Georgian Orthodox Church that had repeatedly denounced the 'moral decadence' of the West, and advocated closer ties with Orthodox Christian Russia in order to pursue 'shared spiritual and cultural values' (Rukhadze 2016). Russia also uses its TV channels and cyberspace to promote anti-Western and pro-Russian sentiments in the country. Thus, Georgia, along with Armenia and Azerbaijan, remains caught in tug-of-war between Moscow, Washington, and Brussels, and does her best not to follow the Ukrainian fate.

Belarus

Belarus, a founding member of the EEU that was launched in January of 2015, has the longest record of cooperation with the Russian Federation among the six Eastern European partner countries since the disintegration of the USSR in 1991. Belarus with its reputation as Europe's last dictatorship has been included in the EaP from the beginning of the initiative in 2009, but the country's participation with the EU has been limited due to restrained relations with Brussels over human rights, the absence of the rule of law, and many other indicators of an authoritarian regime. Within the EaP, Minsk is also excluded from bilateral cooperation with the EU but can participate in multilateral cooperation platforms (Petrov and Van Elsuwege 2014). Although Belarus always prioritized Eurasian integration over European, President Alexander Lukashenko was not overly pleased with Putin's annexation of Crimea. Lukashenko even called on the USA to play a central role in the Ukrainian recovery, and announced that Belarus

would not become Moscow's 'north-western' province (Chilcote and Kudrytski 2015). After the Ukrainian crisis Belarus found itself in a very challenging situation. On the one hand, the country does not want to get into conflicts with its closest ally, Russia. On the other, Minsk has to maintain good relations with its neighbours, war-torn Ukraine and the EU. Probably, as a token of appreciation for helping to broker a Ukrainian cease-fire deal in February 2015 by hosting the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, Germany, and France in Minsk, in February 2016 the EU ended five years of sanctions against Belarus due 'to improved human rights', which again can be considered as another attempt by Brussels to maintain ties with one of its 'wandering sheep'.

Moldova

Moldova, the poorest country in Europe, has been considered a success story of the EaP, since it was able to withstand Russian pressure despite 'the wine war' (Moldova lost 28 percent of its market when Moscow banned imports of Moldovan wine, the second time in under 10 years), and the frozen conflict in the breakaway region of Transnistria. However, the recent political instability in the country over a $1 million corruption scandal has triggered mass demonstrations and the arrest of Vladimir Filat, who served as Prime Minister in 2009–2013. Vladimir Filat of PLDM (The Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova) clashed with Vladimir Plahotniuc revealing the dirty secrets of Moldovan coalition politics: agreements on the divisions of key executive and public positions, political control over the judiciary and many other violations (Skala 2015). The former government led by ex-Prime Minister Valeriu Strelet, collapsed on October 29, 2015 after losing a parliamentary no-confidence vote, and was replaced by former IT minister Pavel Filip, a close friend of Vladimir Plahotniuc, as the new minister. The recent political crisis proved once again that a country of 3.5 million people wedged between Ukraine and Romania is also politically divided between EU-oriented parties such as the Democratic Party, Liberal party, and Liberal Democratic Party, and Russia-oriented parties like the Socialists, Communists, and Our Party (Stratfor 2016). Moldova is still plagued with corruption and abuse of power as any other former Soviet state, despite the fact that the country 'successfully' implemented the EaP initiatives. Which means that EU is just trying to change the façade but not the interior of partner states. The country's weak state institutions and public administration, an ineffective judiciary

and law-enforcement agencies used by oligarchs who continue to influence local politics despite the pro-European course of Moldova. Kostanyan (2016) argues that Moldovan elites lack the will to change a political system that serves its own interests, while the EU has ignored the abuses of the successive governments for years. Moreover, the EU's support for the period 2004–2020 may amount to as much as 746 million euro. In addition, beyond the EaP initiative, Europe secured 1.9 billion euro worth of grants and loans at the donors' conference in 2010. Eventually, the new EU leadership tried to change its policy towards Moldova and demanded to prioritize reforms that would address the politicization of state institutions, and systemic corruption. However, Moldovans long enough associated the EU with the local corrupt politicians, and, as a result, the support for European integration has declined dramatically over recent years, now only 40 percent population support close ties with Europe, while 44 percent are in favour of Eurasian integration (Kostanyan 2016).

Ukraine

Ukraine can be considered a failed case or a success story for either Russia or the EU, depending upon what factors one would like to take into account. There are indicators that Moscow achieved its goal to hinder its integration into the Western system and a democratic transition of the country, which is war-torn and missing a big chunk of its territory, politically and ethnically divided, and, ironically, has been rejected by Europe. On April 6, 2016, Dutch referendum voters opposed a political, trade, and defence treaty with Ukraine.[3] However, the Dutch NO vote in the referendum will have limited impact on the Association Agreement signed by Ukraine and the EU in November 2015 (Jarabik 2016). But there is a bigger problem with the Dutch NO; Ukraine and its citizens could feel unwanted in Europe despite all the sacrifices they have suffered and might welcome back the same power that destroyed half of the country.

I conclude that the EaP was never meant to have extensive transformative power, since the EU sought to engage the three countries of the South Caucasus, and Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine in the areas of greatest interest such as the energy sector and administrative reforms. Unfortunately, the domestic issues in these countries are not a big concern for Brussels.

The Future of Eurasia

In 1989 Francis Fukuyama famously announced the end of history and the victory of liberal capitalist democracy over communism. At the end of the day, even in their sweetest dreams, the Western capitalist states did not anticipate the bloodless end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Despite the fact that the USA was also caught off guard by the demise of the 'Evil Empire,' it did not take long for Washington to figure out that now it could take under its liberal umbrella the former Soviet states, including Russia, in the same fashion as it had the Western European states and Japan after World War II. It turned out to be a bad idea, and, in the case of Ukraine, a dangerous idea, doomed to failure from the start. What Fukuyama forgot to consider, and with him the rest of the Western world, is that history tends to follow a well-known cycle: states rise, they peak, they decline, they collapse . . . and sometimes they rise again, especially with the help of a strong leader. Despite the current Western sanctions against Moscow that have inflicted an increasing toll on the Russian economy, Putin's regional integration plans and his grand strategies in the Near Abroad, including the South Caucasus, can be considered successful. Russian president Vladimir Putin was not only able to reinstate the Russian state, bully the European-oriented Armenia into the bloc, contain Azerbaijan, and Georgia, keep on a short leash Belarus, annex the Crimea, and be considered the most trustworthy foreign leader in Moldova, but he also made the EU and the USA take into consideration Russia's interests while dealing with the former Soviet states. It is hard to predict what will happen in the near future in Eurasia. There is a possibility of an outbreak of a new war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh, as well as more Russian 'land grabs' in Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. But one thing is clear – Russia is back in the Great Game and will no longer be ignored.

Conclusion

Moscow's relations with Brussels have reached their lowest point since the end of the Cold War. The current state of affairs is a major concern for scholars specializing in Eurasian studies, since there is a possibility that history will repeat itself. While the Ukrainian crisis of 2013 led Russia to undertake a more assertive and, some would argue, aggressive position in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, this chapter also showed that the Cold War

mentality was always present in Western powers' relations with Moscow even before the annexation of Crimea. Once the Kremlin had abandoned the never implemented democratic and market reforms in Russia, it also dragged along some of the FSU states. However, as we have shown, Moscow cannot be blamed solely for the current distrust and tensions between Russia and the West. The EU's lack of consistency in external relations with the FSU states and inability of these countries to embrace democratic forces in their nations have also contributed to the new confrontation between Moscow, Washington, and Brussels. There is an urgent need for the creation of a different security environment in Eurasia that will be embedded in broader regional and global dynamics and will consider strategic interests not only of the three great powers but also the six countries that I analyse in this study. Whether it will emerge is a question that will only be answered in the future.

Notes

1. The Eurasian Union has a population of 179 million people and a gross domestic product of about $1.9 trillion. However, Russia accounts for the vast majority of those numbers: 143 million people and a 1.6 trillion GDP.
2. A program of financial assistance to Armenia was recently launched in Yerevan, and about $88.6 million is intended to strengthen the borders, adapting legislation, and dealing with poverty.
3. The Netherlands holds the presidency of the Council of the EU from January 1 to June 30, 2016.

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CHAPTER 5

A Cold Peace Between Russia and the West: Did Geo-economics Fail?

Nikita A. Lomagin

As Angela Stent recently remarked, for all of Russia's domestic problems – a shrinking economy, a high rate of capital flight and brain drain – it has projected a surprising amount of power not only in its neighbourhood but also beyond (Stent 2016, p. 106). Though the military dimension of Russia's power attracts more and more attention as a result of wars in Georgia and Ukraine and, in particular, the military intervention in Syria, the economic dimension of Russia's power is still largely ignored. Vladimir Putin has not kept his agenda and instruments of foreign policy a secret. Since 2004 he repeatedly used economic instruments as one of the main tools to protect Russia's national interest in the near and far abroad. In December 2015, for example, he delivered a strong message to Turkey in the annual address to the Federal assembly after the Turkish air force downed a Russian war plane in Syria. 'Our actions will always be guided primarily by responsibility – to ourselves, to our country, to our people. We are not going to rattle the sabre. But, if someone thinks they can commit a heinous war crime, kill our people and get away with it, suffering nothing but a ban on tomato imports, or a few restrictions in construction or other industries, they're delusional.

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_5

We'll remind them of what they did, more than once. They'll regret it. We know what to do.' (Putin, December 3, 2015).[1]

Russian Premier Dmitri Medvedev went even further, when he commented on the crisis with Turkey at the Munich Security Conference in February 2016, 'To be blunt, if something like this happened, say, in Soviet days, there would have been a real mess – if not, God forbid, a serious war, then definitely a bad mess. There would have been a retaliatory strike and so on. It's simply that now different decisions were made. In this respect, Russia's course is absolutely peaceful, and even though it was a clear provocation, when the plane might have flown in for a few seconds and immediately left and was shot down in Syrian airspace, Russia did not retaliate militarily' (Medvedev 2016b).

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union Russia has joined practically all key global economic organizations, including the Internalization Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and promoted ambitious integration projects in Eurasia in addition to attempts to play a decisive role in Shanghai Cooperation Organization and influential contact groups such as the G20 and BRICS. As 'a joiner' in global economic organizations and having deeply integrated into the global economy, Russia became exposed to external factors already by the end of twentieth century and suffered greatly during the Asian economic crisis of 1998 and the global crisis of 2008. Since that time Russia has been promoting its own agenda in post-Soviet space, focusing on two key integration projects – the Eurasian Economic Union and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. In 2013, these plans collided with the EU ambition to absorb some neighbouring states – in particular Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Armenia – into its sphere of economic influence. The result of this clash of two integration projects was the most serious crisis in and over Ukraine and resulted in a cold peace between the West and Russia.

The extensive use of economic and political sanctions and counter-sanctions in contemporary world politics became a widespread phenomenon, in order to reach certain foreign policy goals: the protection of human rights, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as in the cases of Iran and North Korea or issues related to respect of territorial integrity, as in the case of sanctions by the West against Russia after crisis over Ukraine[2] or punishment for what is viewed as military misbehaviour (the aforementioned case of Russian sanctions against Turkey).[3]

In February 2016, two week-long standstills between Russia and Poland and later between Russia and Ukraine over transit of trucks

delivering goods from Europe to Russia and Kazakhstan put under risk one of the broadly discussed advantages of Russia's location as a potential bridge between Europe and Asia.[4] Not surprisingly China tested a route to bypass Russia as a part of its ambitious new Silk Road via Ukrainian ports on the Black Sea.

According to the Ministry of Economic Development of Ukraine, trade volumes of Ukraine with the Russian Federation, previously the largest trading partner, contracted by half (from 24.3 percent of total trade in 2012 to 12.7 percent in 2015) mainly due to the introduction of trade restrictions after the 2014 events, and losses in trade to Ukraine amounted to about $98 billion. Still, Russia is amongst the top five trade partners of Ukraine together with the European Union (EU), Turkey, China and Egypt. The big five amounts for more than 60 percent of all Ukrainian exports (WTO 2016b, p. 10).[5] According to the Russian government, the world has undergone a change in paradigm in international economic relations, and traditional schemes are no longer effective. 'Political expediency is taking priority over simple and clear economic reason', Dmitri Medvedev said.

> The code of conduct is revised ad hoc to suit a specific problem or task or is bluntly ignored. I'll just point out how the International Monetary Fund adjusted its fundamental rules on lending to countries with overdue sovereign debt when the issue concerned Ukraine's sovereign debt to Russia. Talks on creating economic mega-blocs could result in the erosion of the system of global economic rules.

And following a widespread argument of anti-globalists, the Russian premier went on by saying that globalization, 'which was a desired objective, has to a certain extent played a cruel joke on us. Even a minor economic shift in one country now hits whole markets and countries almost immediately. And global regulation mechanisms cannot effectively balance national interests.'

Summing up Russia's dissatisfaction with the current situation in economic relations with the West, Medvedev pointed out that 'we regret that the practice of unilateral economic pressure in the form of sanctions is gaining momentum. Decisions are taken arbitrarily and at times in violation of international law. This is undermining the operating foundations of international economic organizations, including the World Trade Organization. . . . This is a road to nowhere. Everyone will suffer, mark

my words. It is vitally important that we join forces to strengthen a new global system that can combine the principles of effectiveness and fairness, market openness and social protection' (Medvedev 2016a).

Contrary to the original meaning of a cold peace introduced in 1952 in order to shed light on special type of relations *within* the cold war, most contemporary commentators draw a sharp line between the two terms, focusing rather on a new mood between members of a globalized economy rather than referring to a new zero-sum game between the West and Russia. Though there is much in common with the cold war period in terms of rhetoric and sustained hostility, there is no serious attempt by the Kremlin to challenge the ideological and economic foundations of the world order. But the key question remains – whether a cold peace might mean what it originally meant, a sustained truce without a settlement? ('Communists' 1952).

If Russia feels so uneasy in the current sanctions' war with the West, it is also clear that Moscow understands the ease of bringing pressures on extremely fragile economies, such as those of the former Soviet republics which might be easy targets for any kind of economic pressure be it market access, migration regime in receiving states, transit or prices on key energy resources, first and foremost, natural gas and electricity.

Does the war of sanctions and counter sanctions between the West and Russia and the Turkish case of the downed Russian plane and following sanctions by Moscow represent a new phenomenon in relations between the West and Russia? What role do economic tools play in Russia's foreign policy? How effective or risky is this policy? What are the limits of Russia's economic power and how long is the conflict likely to last? This chapter aims at the analysis of economic power as one of the key instruments of Russian foreign policy. It argues that, although Russia's economy is in decline,[6] Russia surpasses its main competitor in the region, the EU, in its ability to deliver to its neighbours since the collapse of the Soviet Union general market access, a free visa regime and access to its labour market, energy subsidies, rapid financial assistance on easy terms which are not comparable with those offered by the IMF, World Bank or EBRD and for this reason are viewed in the West with unhidden criticism.[7]

The chapter examines different aspects of relational power advanced by Joseph Nye, namely commanding change, controlling agendas, and establishing preferences in post-Soviet space, which is called in all Russian foreign policy documents a top priority aimed at reaching the highest level of economic and later political integration. The second section

presents an examination of Russia's economic capabilities in post-Soviet space tailored to the twenty-first century. We focus on such regionally important indicators as market access, migration and foreign labour absorption capacity, availability of financial resources. Another dimension of Russia's economic might (market access) will be evaluated in the final part of the chapter, which deals with the issue of the West sanctions[8] and Russia's counter sanctions against the EU.

Economic sanctions are not a new foreign policy phenomenon. In international conflicts they aim to elicit a change in the policies of foreign governments by damaging their economy. However, sanctions are not costless for the sending economy not only because of possible counter-sanctions but also because domestic firms involved in business with the target countries might incur collateral damage.

The theoretical framework of this analysis is based on the standard realist argument that economic interdependence can create a vulnerability that puts security at risk. When the state expects mutually beneficial trade to continue, that balance shifts in favour of maintaining or expanding trade. When the state expects that its trade partner might eventually use its growing market power to undermine the state's security, the state will consider self-help options to extricate itself from this position of vulnerability.

Though Russia's elite learned some lessons in using economic means in its foreign policy from the Soviet period, it substantially enriched its arsenal by learning from the Western powers, in particular from the USA. Being the biggest economy in the world enables the USA to have both the strongest sticks and the juiciest carrots in order to make other actors in the world behave according to US interests. The paper will also address the issue of efficiency of using economic sticks and carrots in cases of the post-Soviet states – Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and some republics of Central Asia. We argue that energy subsidies and generous loans in some cases were less effective than various bans and restrictions.[9] The only exception was Belarus, which never tried to leave the orbit of Russian foreign policy. Other key economic instruments at Russia's disposal, such as a very liberal migration law or general market access are not addressed properly.[10] The literature on the political economy of development in the former Soviet Union and its allies puts the biggest group of former centrally planned economies into a category which possesses one or two characteristics, and sometimes both. First, the societies in question started at a relatively low level of socioeconomic development (and this

definitely true in case of newly independent states of Central Asia, Moldova), and second, the transition from central planning to the market has been less successful than in the more advanced nations of Central Europe and in many cases was worsened by high level of corruption. State ownership of most of the productive assets in form of the so-called national champions in Russia provides a vital tool to deal with rather weak neighbours who, by and large, have simply joined the ranks of the so-called developing world and continue to have some features of less developed countries (Friedan and Lake 2000, pp. 379–380). Moreover, some experts note the quite broad spectrum of economic tools that the Soviet Union used vis-à-vis its allies in Central and Eastern Europe and even in relations with Finland (Juhani Laurila 1995).

Geo-economics in the Post-Cold War Period

Edward Luttwak asserted before the collapse of the Soviet Union that the waning of the Cold War has reduced the significance of military power in international affairs. Summarizing a supposed consensus within the Western foreign policy community in 1990, he posited a transition from geopolitics to geo-economics:

> Everyone, it appears, now agrees that the methods of commerce are displacing military methods – with disposable capital in lieu of firepower, civilian innovation in lieu of military-technical advancement, and market penetration in lieu of garrisons and bases.' Thus, the coming geo-economic age will not be one of harmonious global interdependence, but rather an age of continued state rivalry where 'the logic of conflict' will be expressed in 'the grammar of commerce' (Luttwak 1990)

This observation is not a new idea in IR. Economic strength has always been an instrument of political power, although the association between military and economic power are increasingly intimate. Marx compared the use of the economic weapon as an instrument of political power with the replacement of cannons by capital ('the dollar diplomacy' of the USA). Attempts to solve international problems by the application of economic principles divorced from politics are doomed to sterility.[11]

One of the persistent factors of Russian foreign policy for at least two centuries has been focused on economic interests and economic domination. As Ivo Lederer noted half a century ago:

> It would be a gross oversimplification . . . to think of security primarily in terms of the balance of pressures reflected in frontier changes, for there were other considerations of the stature of major interests that motivated Russian policies. The most influential was the desire to assure for Russia favorable conditions for economic growth. On no subject has there been more general agreement among Russian leaders than on the importance of economic strength to national security, although many different views have been expressed as to the nature of economic strength and the best means of achieving it . . . It is no doubt possible for a landlocked country to engage in active commerce, but the brief periods of crisis in which Russia has had to rely largely on its Arctic ports have only reinforced the conviction that no country in Russia's position can well afford to lose control of its maritime outlets (Lederer 1962, pp. 14, 15; Von Laue 1954; Russian Federation Marine Doctrine 2015).

In the crisis in Syria and Russia's extensive use of military forces, it seems that the economic power instrument became irrelevant, thereby leaving the Russian leadership with limited economic tools to achieve specific policy aims. As Bobo Lo argued more than 10 years ago, 'The irony is that it is Russia's economy, so long dismissed as a basket-case, that allows it to continue to act as a regional superpower, and, increasingly, as a significant international player' (Lo 2003, p. 69).

For President Putin management of the economic agenda became a central component of Moscow's relations with the international community and its outlook on the world. The Kremlin sees nothing incompatible in using economic instruments to achieve long-standing political and strategic objectives. The former economic advisor to Putin, Andrei Illarionov, even argued that since the mid of 2000s the world had to deal with 'Russia, Inc.,' where geo-economics and geopolitics are interrelated entities. The fact that a lion's share of Russia's GDP is produced by the so-called national champions, where the state directly or indirectly occupies the dominant position, makes this proposition quite convincing.

Ironically such a strategy did not produce the expected pay offs in the long run – the Ukrainian elite did not become pro-Russia because of generous energy subsidies from 1991 till the mid-2000s (annually, Russia gifted up to $5.5 billion to Ukraine) nor did Russia succeed in

building a full-fledged union state with Belarus. Russia's Foreign policy concepts of 2008 and 2013 stipulate economic instruments as one of the key factors in contemporary world politics. But even FPC (2008) reads, 'Together with the military power of States, economic, scientific and technological, environmental, demographic and informational factors are coming to the fore as major factors of influence of a state on international affairs.' FPC (2013) goes further by putting economic instruments in the centre of power relations. First, it almost repeats the previous concept: 'Economic, legal, scientific, environmental, demographic and IT factors become as important for states in influencing the world politics as the military power':, but then it puts forward a new set up of interstate relations pointing out that 'At a time when it becomes increasingly important for states to diversify their presence in the world markets in order to guarantee their economic security, we are witnessing imposition of various unjustified restrictions and other discriminatory measures.'

Russia believes that economic interdependence of states is a key factor of international stability, and goes further trying to legitimize her ambitions in post-Soviet space by arguing that 'new centers of economic growth and political power increasingly take responsibility for their respective regions. Regional integration becomes an effective means to increase competitiveness of the participating states. Networks and associations, trade pacts and other economic agreements, as well as regional reserve currencies serve as instruments to enhance security and financial and economic stability' (FPC 2013).

Russia's Economic Tools

There is no lack of literature on Russia's foreign policy tools. As far as economic instruments are concerned, the bulk of publications is devoted to energy in general, and to Russian oil and gas in particular.[12] Gas diplomacy is presented as the main 'weapon' of Moscow in its relation with Europe and many post-Soviet states. The EU's fear of Russian gas even resulted in a new aspect of energy strategy which requires an endorsement by Brussels of all contracts signed with Gazprom. Amidst the crisis over Ukraine, the Commission conveyed a very provocative 'stress test' estimated for the first time what would happen if there was no Russian gas for the next six months. Results were published by the Commission in mid-October 2014. The report presents the results of a modelling exercise conducted by 38 European countries, including EU

member states and neighbouring countries. It analyses different scenarios, in particular a complete halt of Russian gas imports into the EU. It noted that Bulgaria and Finland would end up with gas supply shortfalls of 100 percent, while Estonia would miss 73 percent; Lithuania (59 percent), Hungary (35 percent), Romania (31 percent), Poland (28 percent), Greece (18 percent), Slovakia (17 percent), Latvia (15 percent), and Croatia (12 percent) would also suffer. But the impact is less worrying than it looks at first glance due to possibilities of using storage vats (currently 90 percent full in most of Europe) as well as of interconnectors to move gas round the EU; buying more liquid gas on spot markets; increasing imports from Norway; and switching to other fuels (first of all, biomass) European Commission (2014).

Russia's long-term accession to the WTO revealed that at least 65 member states had serious stakes in Russia by taking part in the negotiation process.[13] The US Chamber of commerce has published a survey about US business interests in Russia, and the biggest economies of the FSU, in particular Ukraine and Georgia, that reveal their interests in getting some concessions from Russia, in particular in the field of trade in energy and reduction of various non-tariff barriers in trade. Of course, the spectrum of states which benefit from trade with Russia cannot be reduced to WTO only. A half of post-Soviet states still are out of this institution, although Russia is their main trade partner.[14]

Some states (in particular, China, Japan, Pakistan, and India) are looking for diversification in their energy supplies. Russia with its vast natural resources is indispensable partner. Thus, providing access to (strategic) resources is yet another tool of Russian economic policy. The government made it clear that exceptions for Subsoil law can be made, if companies will invest in Russia's energy sector. Deputy Prime-Minister Arkadii Dvorkovich stated that Russia is willing to let Chinese and Japanese investors take majority stakes in large-scale oil and natural gas projects. Before the crisis over Ukraine, Russia rarely allowed significant foreign ownership of major onshore oil and gas fields, which it deems strategically important assets. But Western sanctions have squeezed the flow of financing to the oil and gas industry, prompting Moscow to court Asian investment. A number of Chinese companies have since acquired Russian energy concessions. In 2016, Japan was also invited to invest.[15]

Russia's vast space and her location between the two biggest markets – EU and Asia – create an excellent opportunity for Russia's growing status as one of the key transit states. In this respect the Northern Sea Route and

Russia's place in the Chinese project of building a Silk Road might play a crucial role.

Membership in the WTO also gives Russia legal instruments to fight effectively against voluntarily used anti-dumping procedures by developed states (primarily the USA and the EU) thus equalizing the toolbox of legal instruments related to both market access and market protection. Geo-economics means not only abstract economic power (GDP, etc.) but also the institutional framework which allows the state to project its power. For instance, the EU introduced the third energy package exactly to downgrade Russia's predominance in its gas market by creating institutional barriers: the requirements to disentangle trade in gas from its production and transportation and to guarantee a competitive condition in line with anti-trust laws. In order to keep its market, share in the EU, Russia has no alternative but to honour those new requirements, though they contradict WTO law and its basic principle of national regimes. Thus, geo-economics is the complicated mechanism of the interaction of economic actors in order to get both political and economic gains.

The Migration Regime – One of the Key Economic Instruments of Russia

Migration policy in Russia under President Putin has evolved from a restrictive one at the beginning of his term in office, when the country faced severe security risks related to the second Chechen war and international terrorism, to one of the most liberal in the territory of the former Soviet Union (FSU). Uncertainty in the late 1990s and the war on international terrorism fuelled feelings in the Kremlin that Russia was a sort of 'besieged' state where illegal migration was one of the most pressing 'soft' security threats. While the 2000 National Security Concept of the Russian Federation emphasized migration as a challenge, rather than as a chance to solve the urgent demographic issues in Russia, a more active approach to solving the demographic and labour market concerns has appeared since 2004.

The authorities decided both to stimulate the country's birth rate (e.g. the 'National Project' which grants 'maternity capital' of US$10,000 to a family with two or more children) and to change the stance towards immigration by opening the doors for labour migration and the settlement of ethnic Russians residing in the territory of the FSU. A special national

program was started in 2006 for the accommodation of ethnic Russians who had immigrated. Labour migration has been more substantial, as it compensated for about half of Russia's loss in population in 2007 (contrary to just 13 percent in 2006). According to the 2007 United Nations Report, Russia is the second biggest importer of labour after the USA with 12.9 million immigrants who work mostly in construction in big cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Following the new 2007 migration laws 2.1 million foreigners received work permits in Russia. While legal migration has grown, it is estimated that illegal migration fell twofold. This should have positive effects for the collection of tax revenues, as well as for the improvement of the conditions for labour migrants. The new migration rules are simpler and more transparent, allowing for better migration control than ever before following the collapse of the USSR. The old quota system for immigration existed until 2013 when the Federal Migration Service of Russia introduced an even more liberal law allowing foreigners to buy work permits for a very modest 1000 RUR a month ($14) which makes the Russian migration law one of the most liberal, not only in the region, but also in the world. As a result, over the last several years, Russia has become a migration magnet for Eurasia (Lomagin 2007). Millions of people, not only ethnic Russians, have flooded into Moscow, St. Petersburg and other Russian cities, from the South Caucasus and Central Asia in particular, in search of work and a better life. Since 2000, Russia's greatest contribution to the security and stability of its vulnerable has been through absorbing the surplus labour of these states, providing markets for their goods, and transferring funds in the form of remittances (rather than foreign aid). Central Asian states, in particular, are fearful of the social consequences of large numbers of labour migrants returning to the region from Russia, if there were to be a political backlash against migrants or a Russian economic downturn. This migration to Russia has become a safety valve for the whole region.

The inclination to a migration model of development (contrary to service, industrial or resource-based models) became remarkable not only with regard to the Central Asian states of the CIS, but also for western and central regions of Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. According to some expert estimates, annual money transfers from Russia to these CIS states before 2014 reached $10 to 12 billion. In this respect, Russia plays the same role for the CIS states as

the USA does for Latin America, Germany for the Balkans, Turkey, and humanitarian migrants from Libya, Iraq and Syria since 2013, and France for North Africa, Saudi Arabia and other oil-rich states of the Gulf, as well as for Egypt, Pakistan and Palestine.

As a result of the migration model of development Georgia, Moldova and some regions of Ukraine have lost in general competitiveness of their industries. According to the Head of the Federal migration service of Russia, there are 2.6 million Ukrainians in Russia who can be divided into four categories. The first category includes those who come privately to relatives. The second category is those who come to Russia to work. The third are those running from call to service and participation in military operations in Donbass and Luhansk. And the last category, refugees from the southeast of Ukraine, constitutes over one million people. These are about 40 percent of all migrants who arrived from Ukraine and are in Russia today (Romodanovsky 2015).

The bulk of revenues in most post-Soviet states comes from migrants.[16] According to the World Bank data, in 2015 worldwide remittance flows are estimated to have exceeded US$601 billion and Russia is the third biggest remittance-sending state only after the USA and Saudi Arabia with $32.6 billion. As a share of GDP, the small developing economies of post-Soviet space represent extremely high remittance dependency and can easily fall victim of external turbulence. The importance of remittances from Russia in GDP for post-Soviet states is quite high – Tajikistan (42 percent), the Kyrgyz Republic (30 percent), Moldova (26 percent), Armenia (17.9 percent) and Georgia (12.0 percent) (OECD 2016). It is worth noting that Ukraine is also highly dependent on remittances with $6.2 billion in 2015 which is exactly twice as much as the World Bank's current investment project portfolio in Ukraine (World Bank 2016b).

Table 5.1 highlights Russia's foreign policy priorities and main economic instruments in order to achieve key objectives in post-Soviet space. The focus is placed on both integration projects and the non-NATO status of former Soviet republics. Economic tools vary from country to country and sometimes Russia has opted for simultaneous usage of several instruments from a box of sticks and a box of carrots. The common interest of all post-Soviet states is access to the Russian labour market. Comparatively high salaries in Russia alongside with visa free regime made Russia a main magnet for migrants, not only in post-Soviet space but also in Eurasia.

Table 5.1 Russia's foreign policy priorities and main economic instruments

State	*Interests*			*Instruments*			*Loans*
	Hard security (fighting terrorism CSTO, military bases)	*Eurasian Economic Union and soft security (drugs, illegal migration, etc.)*	*Status of compatriots (dual citizenship) and of Russian language*	*Energy subsidies*	*Market access*	*Liberal migration regime/visa regime*	
Kyrgyzstan	x	x	x		x	x	x
Ukraine	Black Sea Fleet, non-NATO status	Transit of gas and oil	x	x[17]	x	x	x
Belarus	CSTO, military bases	transit	x	x	x	x	x
Kazakhstan	CSTO	Status of Caspian Sea[18]	x	none	x	x	none
Armenia	CSTO, military bases	x	x	x	x	x	x
Tajikistan	CSTO, military bases	x	x	x	x	x	x
Turkmenistan		Status of Caspian Sea natural gas projects with China	none	none	none	none	None
Azerbaijan	non-NATO status, missile defence	Status of Caspian Sea	x	none	x	x	x
Moldova	non-NATO status	Transdnistria	x		x	x	x
Uzbekistan	terrorism	x	x		x	x	x
Georgia	non-NATO status	None	x	x	x	x	

A Time for Muscle-Flexing: Cases of Russia's Market Rejection

Following the 1991 Soviet collapse, tensions increased after the election as president of Georgia in 2004 of Mikheil Saakashvili, who campaigned to bring the country into NATO – a red line for Russia – and made noises about reigning in two rebel regions backed by Moscow. Around the time that the water and wine bans were imposed in 2006, a Russian tabloid printed full-page ads advising Russians to stay away from Georgian wine, mineral water and food. Then Russia's chief sanitary doctor Gennady Onishchenko said the decision to ban Borjomi mineral water had been prompted by lab tests of the water on sale and checks that had exposed 191 Borjomi bottles without documents needed to reflect the quality and safety of the product. 'Checks that uncovered batches of the mineral water Borjomi without proper documents gave me grounds for ordering the customs service to ban imports of this mineral water into Russia,' Onishchenko said (Sputnik International 2006).

> The damage to the Georgian economy was huge, for Russia was the biggest market for Borjomi, where the company controlled about 10% of the Russian mineral water market. 'I had hoped the situation with [Georgian] wine would not be repeated, as it is a more civilized market, but the producers' inertia forced me to give up these hopes, 'Onishchenko said (Sputnik International 2006). It was purely political,' former Russian minister and top economist Yevgeny Yasin said. 'They were looking for a way to punish Saakashvili.' The effects of the bans were severe, although robust foreign investment and state spending helped keep the country's economy growing. Georgia's wine exports plunged from $81.4 million in 2005 to $29.2 million in 2007 and have not fully recovered, reaching $64.9 million in 2012, according to government statistics. Mineral water exports suffered less and rebounded robustly, dropping a bit from $32.5 million in 2005 but reaching $59.3 million in 2012, as Borjomi looked further abroad for buyers. Winemakers did the same, with some success, but they are thirstily eyeing a chance to once again tap the market in Russia, with its population of 144 million. The failure of Mikhail Saakashvili to gain reelection after the August War of 2008 and following rapprochement between Tbilisi and Moscow paved the way for reopening the market for Georgian wine and mineral water though there is still no visa-free travel regime for citizens of Georgia to come to Russia (Gutterman 2013).

> During the crisis over Ukraine some Western-leaning countries that had joined the EU's sanctions were also targeted by Russian counter-sanctions, but Georgia was not on the list in 2015 because the Kremlin thought Georgia's contribution to the sanctions were insignificant. But the situation changed when the EU decided to extend its sanctions until June 23, 2017, and Georgia and five other countries followed suit. The sanctions ban on the import of goods from Crimea, prohibits investing in the island and bans tourism services there. The most sensitive economic area for Georgia would be to hit its wine export, which boomed in 2013, after a change of government led to improved relations between the neighbouring countries, reopening the huge Russian market for Georgian wine-makers, and also Borjomi, the famous producers of mineral water.
>
> Russian lawmakers representing the far-right Liberal Democratic Party, which is led by Vladimir Zhirinovsky, said Russia can easily do without Georgian wine and mineral water. 'We have to develop Crimea, where unlike Georgian wine, we can produce wine without any chemical impurities' (DFWatch Staff 2016)

'Milk War' with Belarus

The factors that led to Russia's muscles flexing with Minsk were different from those with Tbilisi. Minsk was and is in the orbit of Russia and has never seriously tried to escape. The reason for conflict was the unwillingness of the Belarusian leadership to allow Russian business to privatize some of Belarus's major milk producers. Milk in Belarus plays a significant role in the economy, as the country ranks at fifth in the world milk market, and the President's Property Administration owns several dairy plants. Milk and dairy products are important exports for Belarus' agricultural sector, which employs one out of 10 people in the nation of 10 million.

Despite the large scale of production, Belarus exports milk mainly to Russia, thus rendering Belarus's position vulnerable to pressure. The response to this by the Belarusian government was to start talks with the EU on certification of Belarusian milk standards according to EU norms. But, the chances to get a significant market share in the EU are doubtful. According to Michael Griffin from FAO, the EU itself has increased its milk production by 1.3 percent to 165.7 million tonnes in 2016 and significantly reduced farm gate prices in many member countries ('Milk and milk products' 2016).

The reaction of Russia was to send along her health inspectors, headed again by Gennady Onishchenko who had previously banned the import of several food products of Polish, Moldovan, Latvian and Georgian origin. Onishchenko advised Moscow to ban all imports of Belarusian dairy products, claiming they fell short in proper certification. The Russian authorities banned Belarusian milk and dairy imports and sales on June 6, 2009. These developments deepened a politically charged dispute between the two ex-Soviet neighbours which are linked through a special treaty of alliance. Onishchenko's announcement came a day after Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko claimed that Russia made a $500 million loan contingent on its recognition of independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia from Georgia. In late May 2006, Russia's finance minister, Alexei Kudrin, withheld the $500 million, the last instalment of a $2 billion loan, warning that the country could face default by the end of this year unless it overhauls its economic policy. Mr Lukashenko reacted angrily, 'If it's not working out with Russia, let's not bow down, let's not whine and weep,' he told a gathering of economic officials the next day, BelTA reported. 'Let's look for our happiness in a different part of the planet' (Barry 2009). According to Reuters, the relations between Belarus and Russia had been at low since 2007, with Minsk being upset at rising prices for Russian gas and Moscow by Lukashenko's rapprochement with the EU. In response Lukashenko accused Russia of trying to take control of Belarus' industries and destroy its sovereignty, adding that a long-discussed confederation of Russia and Belarus would create 'another Chechnya'. The Belarus Foreign Ministry said the ban was 'discriminatory trade restrictions violating international agreements'. Lukashenko and his delegation refused to travel to Moscow for the summit of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) of seven ex-Soviet states at which a plan for a joint rapid-reaction force was approved on April 14, 2009 (Barry 2009). The Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov described the Russian ban as purely economic problem, criticizing Lukashenko for linking it with 'issues of military and political security that answer to the interest of all CSTO members'.

Later, in 2010 the Kremlin once again for a short time imposed restrictions on the import of Belarusian dairy products. In 2014 Russian Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev threatened Belarus with an anti-dumping investigation of potential subsidies in the dairy industry. So, milk always remains the focus of elites in Russia and Belarus. Most Belarusian milk products end up on Russian shelves. In the first half of 2013, Belarus

exported more than $1 billion in dairy products to Russia, about 95 percent of total dairy exports. The situation with extremely high dependence of Belarussian milk producers on access to the Russian market has not changed until now. Milk production remains one of the biggest priorities for agriculture. Over 10 years Belarus increased its milk production from 4 to 6.5 million tonnes, and now it ranks fifth in the global trade of milk with 4 percent of the market. However, the export of milk has almost only one direction, which is to Russia.

The New Game Between the EU and Russia: Sanctions and Counter Sanctions

The European Council considers the annexation of Crimea to be illegal and, since March 2014, the EU has adopted and gradually extended sanctions against the Russian Federation, due to its role in the deliberate destabilization of Ukraine and escalation of the conflict. These involve diplomatic measures such as cancelling EU-Russia summits; asset freezes and visa bans applied to companies and individuals; banning investment in and prohibiting imports from and exports to Crimea and Sevastopol; and specific financial and economic sanctions targeting sectoral and economic cooperation with the Russian Federation. In March 2015, the European Council linked the duration of those economic restrictions to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements.

The implementation of EU-Russia bilateral and regional cooperation programmes has been largely suspended. Only projects dealing exclusively with cross-border cooperation and civil society are maintained. According to the Russian government, by the end of 2015 economic losses from these sanctions reached about $80 billion. It substantially contributed to economic recession in Russia and might have the same negative effect in the future. But did the Russian authorities change their political position? Obviously, they did not. As a response to anti-Russian sanctions imposed by the West, Moscow has imposed an embargo on agro-food products from the EU (Information Note 2014).[19] The one-year ban covered almost all meat products (beef, pork, poultry, and certain sausages), milk and dairy products, fruits and vegetables, as well as fish and crustaceans. The EU has conducted a comprehensive analysis related to this ban and economic impact on member states. The EU confirmed that restrictions put serious pressure on the agriculture and food sector for two reasons.

First, Russia is the second biggest commercial market (the banned products on the Russian market constitute 4.2 percent of all EU agro-food exports), representing in total a value of about €11.8 billion in 2013, that is, 10 percent of all EU agro-food exports. The agro-food products covered by the Russian ban represent a value of €5.1 billion in 2013 exports, that is, 43 percent of EU agro-food exports to Russia.

Some sectors and EU member states (in particular, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Finland) are more heavily affected – that is, 29 percent of EU fruits and vegetables exports, 33 percent of cheese, 28 percent butter. Second, there is a possible cascade effect leading to oversupply on the internal market given the volumes involved, and the quantity of perishable products banned in full harvesting season. The EU admitted that though alternative market opportunities will exist for some of these EU products, rerouting will take time. The overall temporary restrictions applied by Russia potentially put at risk €5 billion worth of trade and affected the income of 9.5 million people. In a global perspective, the ban affected 4.2 percent of total EU agro-food exports but, depending on the sector, this share can represent a considerable part of EU exports in the sectors concerned (see Table 5.2).

The ban has already had an immediate negative impact on prices in some sectors. Oversupply situations and the so-called psychological effects of the announcement of the ban put pressure on local distributors. The analysis by the EU experts shows that 'not only countries which were traditionally exporting substantial quantities to Russia are affected, but that oversupply may also spread into the internal market as a result of producers and operators' efforts to find alternative markets in the EU and because of the time necessary to find new markets outside the EU (Information Note 2014).

Table 5.2 EU exports to Russia as share of production, 2013

Products	*EU production used domestically (%)*	*Ban affected exports to Russia in EU production (%)*	*% of banned exports to Russia in total EU exports (%)*
Fruit and vegetables (in value)	90	3.0	29
Cheese	92	2.7	33
Butter	95	1.7	28
Pork	90	2.0	20
Beef	96	0.5	25
Poultry meat	90	0.7	6

The Russian ban on fruits and vegetables was the most severe. This effect was immediate, as for many products the harvest was ongoing or about to start in the EU and Russia is traditionally an important destination for EU fruit and vegetables. The country represented almost 30 percent of the EU's fruit and vegetable exports in 2013. The main products concerned are apples, tomatoes, peaches, nectarines, pears but also mushrooms, cucumbers, sweet peppers and cabbage among others. Russia was also a growing market for fresh apples, pears and tomatoes for which sales increased during the last decade.

In 2012–2013, the EU supplied 25 percent of Russian fruit imports and 34 percent of vegetable imports. The main EU suppliers for fruits were Poland (7 percent), Spain (6 percent), Greece (4 percent), Italy (3 percent) and Belgium (2 percent) and for vegetables the Netherlands (10 percent) Poland (9 percent), Spain (8 percent), and Belgium (2 percent) (Information Note 2014). Russia has sourced vegetables and fruit in particular from Turkey, Serbia, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. To the EU's surprise, candidate and third countries did not refrain from measures which are aimed at exploiting new trading opportunities arising from the introduction of the ban. The most affected dairy products are cheese (257.000 tonnes or 33 percent of total EU cheese exports) and butter (37.000 tonnes or 28 percent of total EU butter exports). The banned dairy products amount to some 1.5 percent of total EU milk production in milk equivalent, which is a significant share of the total 9 percent of EU milk production which is exported. As noted, for the dairy sector cheese is the product most affected by the ban. Russia is an exclusive trading partner for cheese for Finland and the Baltic countries (about or over 90 percent of these countries' cheese exports) which also represents for each of these EU member states around or above 20 percent of national cheese production (e.g. around 35.000 tonnes for both Finland and Lithuania). Cheese exports to Russia also represent a high share of other EU member states cheese exports: 42 percent for the Netherlands (corresponding to 8 percent of national production), 38 percent for Germany (corresponding to about 2 percent of national production) and 43 percent for Poland corresponding to less than 4 percent of national production). Close to half of the butter exported to Russia comes from Finland (17.000 tonnes covering 95 percent of Finland's butter exports). In total, producers of diary food staff in Finland have reported losses at $200 million ('Finskie molochniki' 2016).

The EU meat sector was confronted with SPS-related (Secure Pork Supply) trade restrictions from Russia even before the imposition of the recent ban. Relatively high producer prices for all meats, moderate feed costs and – until now – good export demand from other markets than Russia limit the immediate impact of the current ban. However, the Commission remains vigilant as regards the medium and long term effects the ban might have on these sectors. For pork, EU exports to Russia are banned since February 2014 (SPS – African Swine fever). The EU Commission started a WTO procedure against this measure.[20]

Russia is the first destination of EU exports for beef, rising to 25 percent of all EU beef meat exports. The EU' most relevant beef products for the Russian market are breeding animals and low value products (trimmings, offal and fats). The ban affects the export of fresh, chilled and frozen beef but not the exports of live animals, offal or fats. The products affected directly by the ban represent less than 1 percent of EU production. In June 2014, Russia had already issued a sanitary ban on beef offal and trimmings (due to the detection of pig meat in a consignment). Poultry meat is the least affected of the meats sector, as exports to Russia amount to 0.7 percent of EU production (or about 6.5 percent of EU's total poultry exports).

Thus, the impact of the Russian ban on EU farmers was significant. It is worth noting that Russian consumers suffered, as well. First, it took retailers some time to substitute for EU agro-products, and, secondly, due to the same 'psychological effect' nominal prices have increased by 20 to 35 percent. The Ministry of finance of Russia directly tied this phenomenon with the import ban (Minfin 2014). In order to find alternative markets outside the EU, the Commission has offered additional promotion measures to support export diversification. According to the Commission, major gains have been achieved in exports to the USA, China, Switzerland and other key Asian markets such as Hong Kong and South Korea. Nevertheless, 'some sectors in some EU states remain under particular pressure.' The most recent studies show that firms that were directly exposed to Russian counter-sanctions, that is, previously exported certain agricultural or food products later targeted by counter-sanctions by the Russian Federation, were not able to recover their loss by expanding sales to new or existing destinations aside from Russia (see Crozet and Hinz 2016). As before, the Commission continues to monitor the situation and stands ready to act in support of European farmers. But the main issue here is not only direct financial losses of farmers as a result of the food

ban imposed by Russia – they somehow can be lowered by appropriate support from Brussels – but the growing anxiety of people living in rural areas of the Union. Besides the direct impact of the embargo on the EU farmers, there is also the so-called collateral damage. Authors of a CEPII Working Paper on the impact of the Russian sanctions (2016) did shed light on the importance of possible damage of these diplomatic tools, that is, the costs that sanctioning countries inflict on themselves. By using monthly UN Comtrade data, they evaluated the broad impact on exports to the Russian Federation by all major trading partners – sanctioning or not – in a structural gravity framework. Main finding is the overall costs to total US$60.2 billion from the beginning of the conflict until mid-2015, with 76.7 percent incurred by EU countries. Importantly, the products that are targeted by the Russian embargo account only for a small fraction of the total loss while the bulk of the 'lost trade', 83.1 percent, is incurred through non-embargoed products, and can hence be considered 'collateral damage'. This suggests that most of the impact of the diplomatic conflict on exports can be considered as collateral damage (Crozet and Hinz 2016, p. 46).[21]

When and how sanctions will be lifted? In his remarks at Munich Security Conference 2016, Prime Minister Medvedev (2016b) said that Russia will not ask for forgiveness: 'We are discussing all of this, but our position is simple. I've repeatedly laid it out: We will not ask for anything. You know our literature very well. There is a wonderful quote from Mikhail Bulgakov's Master and Margarita, when Woland says: 'Never ask for anything. They'll make the offer themselves, and give everything themselves.' So we'll never ask for these sanctions to be lifted. They'll come and say: Let's finally put an end to this.' (cited in Medvedev 2016b).

Concluding Remarks: The Limits of Russia's Economic Power

Usually, the essence of economic policy is modernization of the economy, increase of national wealth and the well-being of citizens through the growth of productivity, investments, and a new quality of human capital, and of course, keeping and expanding markets. One of the key features of current development in Russia is economic slowdown. The ruble has depreciated to record lows, as oil prices declined. The Cassandra in the state-controlled Sberbank, the Russian the country's largest financial

institution, German Gref, said at the Gaidar Economic Forum in Moscow on January 15, 2016, 'We find ourselves among the countries that are losing, the downshifting countries' (cited in Matlack 2016).

The government, which gets nearly a half of its revenue from oil and gas, is scrambling to plug a 1.5 trillion rubles ($19.2 billion) hole in its budget. The IMF forecasts the economy will shrink 1 percent in 2016, after contracting 3.7 percent in 2015. Finance Minister Anton Siluanov predicts a 15-year period of stagnation and declining competitiveness as the situation has created 'an atmosphere of extreme nervousness', as Economy Minister Alexei Ulyukaev told President Vladimir Putin on Jan 26, 2016 (cited in Matlack 2016). In order to stabilize oil prices, Russia has made an unprecedented move towards cooperation with OPEC and revealed its readiness to freeze oil production at the current level, although in the past Moscow not only rejected an offer to join the cartel but also was reluctant to negotiate anything related to production of oil.[22]

A second limitation is the fact that Russia is not the only economic actor in the region. This means that one has to assess Russia's *relative* economic power in comparison with other major actors such the EU, the USA and China which is trying to project its economic power in the region, especially in Central Asia. But there are, at least, several spheres in the economic domain where Russia still dominates in its relations with other post-Soviet states: energy supplies (or energy subsidies), market access, migration regime and transit. The USA and EU often use sanction regimes against post-Soviet states for various infringements of law and oppression of the opposition. Contrary to the West, Russia and China do not restrict their activity in post-Soviet states and elsewhere for lack of democracy.

Though Russia-Ukraine trade contracted threefold in 2015, Ukraine-EU trade did not grow as a result of the Association agreement, but declined by about 30 percent (see World Bank 2016a). This means that the EU has not yet become a real alternative to the Russian market for Ukrainian goods (see the graph on investments, migration, joint ventures, etc.)[23] Thus, there are serious limits of Russia's economic power, but it is still enough to resist foreign pressure and to dominate post-Soviet space.

One of the main lessons that Russia has learned from the ongoing crisis over Ukraine and still limited sanctions war with the West is that the common neighbourhood of the EU and Russia – that is, post-Soviet space – is and will remain an arena of contestation, unless the idea of a 'big Europe' from Lisbon to Vladivostok receives its second life.

Since it is closely integrated into world economy, Russia has paid substantial price since 2014 for overdependence of its financial and energy sectors on the West. Sanctions hit Russia's economy hard – direct losses reached more than $80 billion, while overall costs can be substantially higher. Together with huge structural problems and low prices on major export goods, sanctions put Russia into a deep recession which has almost emptied the national reserves. Still, Russia remains the biggest economy in post-Soviet space with practically the same economic instruments in its toolbox, thereby allowing to retain the status quo. Russia is capable of using effectively economic sticks (deportation of 'illegal' migrants or to put ban on import of particular goods – fruits, wine and dairy products – for alleged violations of sanitary norms) using primarily highly centralized economic institutions and national champions which occupy 'commanding heights' in the Russian economy. Thus, the ability to reward or to punish by using economic means has become one of centrepieces of Russia's contemporary foreign policy.

Russia's liberal migration regime and easy access to the Russian labour market will remain one of the main trump cards in the Kremlin's game for dominance in Central Asia, where social and political stability depends heavily on remittances from Russia. This factor will be important in the near future, although remittances from Russia to the Commonwealth of Independent States declined as a result of the economic slowdown in Russia and the depreciation of the ruble. As for the EU, its adjusted strategy towards the region still puts forward liberalization and democratization reforms that can hardly be welcome by authoritarian elites. In other words, while Russia plays the game of pragmatism, the EU has become one of the most ideological actors in global politics.

In order to dominate by economic means in certain regions, it is not necessary to be the biggest global economy. As structural realists have pointed out, in politics *what matters is first and foremost relative power of states.* Thus, well-tailored economic policies to every particular actor might be enough to achieve the expected outcome be it just one tool (access to the labour market) or a set of tools (general access to the market, subsidies, loans and credits).

With a complicated demography and the need for millions of workers, Russia will enjoy the privilege of having a point of leverage with many states of Central Asia. The same is true with Belarus for milk products and energy subsidies, and with Georgia and Moldova for export of their wine and fruits. Ukraine is a much more complicated case. Although it seems

that Moscow has already almost exhausted its arsenal of economic means in order to make Kiev change its policy, one thing is clear; Ukraine's overall losses as a result of the new geopolitics are the biggest, if not in absolute terms, then surely in terms of per capita. If one can expect change in policy in all affected actors, it will occur in Ukraine. Association with the EU cannot bring this state tangible benefits overnight, and ongoing economic crisis can evolve into a political one. Kiev can hardly expect any concrete concessions from Russia.

Certainly, today Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov would agree with Edward Luttwak, who suggested in 1990 that the then coming geo-economic age would be an age of continued state rivalry where 'the logic of conflict' will be expressed in 'the grammar of commerce' (Luttwak 1990). In Lavrov's view, in its Russian policy, the West is driven by the same realist goal – to dominate or contain Russia – by other, namely economic, means and advance its geopolitical space closer to the Russian border. 'This is the essence of the systemic problems that have soured Russia's relations with the United States and the European Union' (Lavrov 2016).

Notes

1. Economic relations worth about $35 billion and a potential to grow up to $100 billion declined substantially within a few month after the Russian war plane was downed by Turkish air forces. The Turkish president Erdogan even said that for two killed pilots Russia has preferred to sacrifice not only her business interests but also to lose a devoted friend (Redzhen Taiip Erdogan 2016).
2. The most recent move by the US government was a warning of some top US banks not to bid on a potentially lucrative, but politically risky, Russian bond deal, saying it would undermine international sanctions on Moscow (U.S. Warns Banks 2016).
3. The impact of sanctions on Turkey is substantial. According to Bloomberg, non-performing loans at the nation's lenders climbed to 3.18 percent of total credit in January 2016. The rise in bad loans is compounding the challenges for Turkey's $814 billion banking industry as a combination of currency depreciation, Russian sanctions and waning tourist visits amid a spate of terrorist attacks weigh on the economy (Courcoulas 2016).
4. At the beginning of 2016 Ukraine and Russia blocked the mutual transit of trucks within the overall sanction actions that have a reciprocal nature. However, from February 25, 2016 the transit was resumed.

5. The Ukrainian Ministry of economic development spoke about the losses of Ukraine from trade restrictions imposed by Russia and put the figure at $98 billion as of April 2016 (Ministry 2016).
6. The Ministry of Economic Development of Russia foresees negative growth at 0.5 percent in 2016.
7. Fred Kaplan called Russia's generous loan of $15 billion to Ukrainian President Yanukovych at the end of 2013 a bribe to stop him from signing an association agreement with the EU. – See Kaplan (2016).
8. In total, 37 countries including the United States, the EU, and Japan take part in sanctions against Russia over the Ukrainian conflict.
9. This proves the point advance by Machiavelli in his 'Prince' that 'it may be better for a prince to be feared than loved' but the prince is in greatest danger 'when he is hated'. Machiavelli, The Prince, chapter 17. - constitution.org (accessed on September 10, 2016).
10. See Hill (2006); Lo (2003); Zartman (2010); and Blank (2013).
11. See the work Marx, Lenin, Carr, Nye and other top analysts on the issue of power. Of special relevance here is Carr (1984).
12. See, for instance, the studies by Stulberg (2007); Nye (2011); Åslund (2010); and Sussex and Kanet eds. (2015).
13. The EU negotiated as a single actor. For a detailed account of this issue see, for instance, Lomagin et al. (2012).
14. See the statistics on Russia's Economic Ministry webpage (2016).
15. See also Russia open (2016).
16. For a comparison between Russian and EU migration policy, see OECD (2015).
17. By 2004 energy subsidies to Ukraine reached $5.5 billion per annum.
18. Including Trans-Caspian projects.
19. In response to sanctions introduced by the West against Russia over the crisis in Ukraine Moscow has put into effect a ban on agricultural products in August 2014. On June 25, 2015, Russia decided to prolong the ban until August 2016 and in summer 2016 this measure was extended up to the end of 2017.
20. For a discussion of the Russian Federation's measures on EU exports of live pigs and pork products due to African Swine Fever, see (WTO 2016a).
21. Similar findings were made by the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO), which concluded that: the macroeconomic effects of the trade loss, amounting to €34 billion in value added in the short run and €92 billion in the longer run, are much more a result of a general worsening of trade relations between the EU and Russia. Nevertheless, the observed decrease in exports and tourism expenditure of approximately €44 billion due to sanctions was estimated to result in a loss of 0.9 million jobs in the short term. A longer term view suggests that up to 2.2 million jobs (around 1 percent of total employment) could be lost. See (Szczepański 2015).

22. In the 1990s this was not even considered for two main reasons. First, Russia was willing to join a family of civilized nations (see the Constitution) which none of the OPEC states belong to, and, second, joining OPEC contracted the interests of the new-born Russian oligarchs who did not want to be tied by anything both at home and abroad. Membership in a cartel by definition could limit oil production of Yukos, Lukoil and other biggest private oil companies in Russia. On Putin's main task of fighting the oligarchs as the main security threat to Russia in 2004, see Goldman (2004).
23. For a fuller discussion of this issue, see the chapter by Stanislav Tkachenko in this volume.

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CHAPTER 6

The Coercive Diplomacy of Vladimir Putin (2014–2016)

Stanislav L. Tkachenko

Introduction

Since the Five-Day War between Russia and Georgia in August 2008 many intellectuals and politicians have advanced their attempts to understand the sources of power and weakness of 'Putin's Russia'. The purpose of my analysis is to contribute to the understanding of Russia's diplomacy as a crucial element in rebalancing global politics towards multipolarity. Its aim is to accommodate the declining unilateralism of the USA with the rising power of the BRICS and find a proper place for Russia in the changing architecture of global security. My goal is twofold. First, I would like to move beyond the traditional view on Russian foreign policy as predominantly reactive. The coercive diplomacy of contemporary Russian leaders represents a new thrust of Russia's policy, driven by the willingness to protect its vital interests in the former Soviet republics and benefit from equal relations with the USA and major European powers. Second, this research initiates a theory building process to formulate the complex global and national environment that frames Russian foreign policy since 2011. To explain this fundamentally new features of Russian diplomacy, this article establishes a typology of resources, restraints, and concerns of

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_6

Russian political elites involved in the foreign policy decision-making process. Since the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in December 1991, the challenge of finding the appropriate place for Russia in the international system has never disappeared from the agenda of its leaders (Hale 2016). Several strategies for accomplishing the goal have been tested in the prior quarter of century. In the 1990s the idea was to integrate Russia into the global system as a US junior partner. In 1999–2003, after the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bombing of sovereign Yugoslavia in March–June 1999 another view dominated: to concentrate on radical economic reforms, which could transform Russia into an economic powerhouse for the former USSR republics. The period of 2004–2011 (from the first Maidan Revolution in Ukraine to the return of Vladimir Putin as the President of Russia) was characterized by the revival of nationalistic and isolationist rhetoric, as well as by the intensive search for a modus operandi with the USA (the 'Reset' initiative). Finally, since the return of Vladimir Putin to the Kremlin in spring 2012, the strategic line of Russian foreign policy has consisted of confrontation with the US-led West to secure the Kremlin's search for new rules of the game in global multipolar politics.

The coercive diplomacy of contemporary Russia is a complex of measures, which includes the use of *military force, for achieving Russia's goal of joining* the highest league of global politics and security as an equal partner with the USA and other global leaders. Therefore, coercive diplomacy is an instrument for making corrections in the existing global balance of power, which the Kremlin considers as inappropriate and unfair.

Russia's conceptualization of 'the highest league of global politics and security' consists of a number of great powers whose security interests have to be respected by all members of the league and could not be ignored without drastic consequences for global or regional stability. Moscow sees the USA, China, India, the European Union, and itself as members of the league.

The post-World War II international system has changed its structure several times. The original hopes for global coexistence of the USA and the USSR were soon replaced by a bipolar global architecture with centres in Washington and Moscow. US hegemony entered a zone of turbulences in the early 1970s, marked by the collapse of the Breton-Woods monetary system and the war in Vietnam. After the early 1970s, the USA turned inward in their trade and economic policies, confirming the hypothesis of American hegemonic decline. The idea of a trilateral international political and economic system (the USA, Western Europe, and Japan) to save

Western hegemony was growing in the 1980s. The emergence of unrestricted US unilateralism, followed by the end of the Cold War and the collapse of USSR, seemed to put these processes away. Nevertheless, the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and the inability of the USA to deal effectively with challenges to international stability have undermined the foundations of US unilateralism. The language of military deterrence, containment of enemies and their economic isolation has returned to the vocabulary of the American leadership during the presidency of George W. Bush. His neoconservative policy continued to be mostly unilateral. However, the failure of US plans to transform select regions of the world (Afghanistan, Iraq, Georgia) cleared the way for changes in the world security architecture, and the term 'multipolarity' was pushed to the centre of global politics by the Russian leadership in an attempt to balance US unilateralism.

The context of the general political economy is also important for our analysis. Today both the USA and Europe are suffering from relative decline of their economic, monetary, and trade power. Even relative US military strength is less impressive than in previous decades. Simultaneously, China and Russia are growing both economically and militarily (Trenin 2015). Their ambitions to play a prominent role in international relations are getting more obvious. The Western sanctions imposed on both China (1989) and Russia (2014) serve to strengthen their mutual interest in military cooperation and even modest forms of economic integration (free trade zone). In some cases, the accommodation of the outer world to the growing power of these two nations are smooth (inclusion of the renminbi into the IMF basket of currencies) and done via routine diplomacy on a multilateral level. In other cases, changes face fierce US opposition and involve conflict and the use of traditional instruments of power politics. The contemporary Russian coercive diplomacy has its origins precisely in these motives for finding a new global balance of power.

The following discussion is divided into three sections. The first reviews scholarship on coercive diplomacy in IR theory and provides a definition of coercive diplomacy. The second section provides an analysis of external factors encouraging Russian coercive diplomacy in the post-USSR period and describes the original 'Chechen' model of Russia's coercive diplomacy. The final section identifies and discusses Russia's coercive diplomacy since February 26, 2014 and explains the phenomenon of its effectiveness.

Coercive Diplomacy – Definition

During the past quarter century (1991–2016) Russian foreign policy has been characterized by foreign politicians and scholars differently. In the 1990s the most frequent terms for its assessment have been 'unstable', 'unreliable', and 'lacking of values'. After 2000 and the election of Vladimir Putin as the President of Russia, there were several years of 'silence', even if a lot has been written about 'siloviki' and 'chekisty'. The period of uncertainty about the characterization of Russian foreign policy ended in 2004, and since then the key term in discussing Russian foreign policy has been 'assertive'. Russia's 'assertiveness' had a negative connotation, and the idea was to demonstrate dissatisfaction, for example, with Moscow's attempts to secure Viktor Yanukovych as the President of Ukraine in the highly disputed Ukrainian elections in November 2004. Still, Ukraine was not the sole example of growing conflict between the West and Russia. Other examples of 'Russian assertiveness' – opposition of Moscow to the 'colour revolutions' in neighbouring Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and in Russia itself, its military operations in South Ossetia and Abkhazia in August 2008, 'energy diplomacy' towards the European Union and Ukraine.

Russia's harsh reaction to the February 2014 *coup d'état* in Ukraine was followed by the revision of the characterization of Russian foreign policy. A new term was proposed by US officials and picked up by the media and scholars – *coercion*.[1] Sometimes, there is another, more radical definition for contemporary Russian diplomacy – *aggression*. But, we should note that the latter is not very popular yet and is used by a few officials from the USA and its allies. In today's global media we may instantly find hundreds of examples, when Russian foreign policy is called 'coercive'. Even more, in some cases the Kremlin's diplomacy is considered as positive or at least efficient. For example, an article on Russian diplomacy in the influential newspaper *The Asian Times* (Hong-Kong) on September 16, 2015, that is, even before Russian military involvement into the crisis in Syria, starts with following sentences: 'On Syria, Moscow is driving the Barack Obama administration nuts. This is coercive diplomacy at its best' (Bhadrakumar 2015).

We suggest that it is obvious that the words 'Russia' and 'coercion' will be used together for many years to come. That is why the primary aim of this chapter is to analyse the extent to which the characterization of post-2014 Russian diplomacy as 'coercive' is relevant, and what

crucial changes in the global vision and daily practice of Russian diplomacy we may expect in the short term.

We consider coercive diplomacy as an instrument of persuasion by threat of the use of force (Davies 2012, p. 313). In a broader sense in this research we include into definition of 'coercive diplomacy' a wide range of non-violent actions like economic, trade, and visa sanctions, which should be considered as 'gateway' to further deterioration of bilateral interstate relations with a prospect of military conflict at the end of the road.

Coercive diplomacy puts special emphasis on economic sanctions as a 'peaceful' instrument of international pressure, which, in the case of effective implementation, potentially may, in fact, destroy a national economy, provoke social unrest, and lead to regime change in a targeted state (Hufbauer 1983; Dashti-Gibson 1997). At the same time, as noted by J. Kirshner, we should try to disaggregate both target and sender states in order to more clearly deconstruct the coercive power of economic sanctions and their long-term consequences (Kirshner 1997).

The Liberal school in International Political Economy insists that the greater the economic difficulties brought to bear on the state, which become the target of sanctions, the greater is the possibility that the target state will comply with the demands of the adversary (Hufbauer 2000). For the past twenty-five years, the USA have acquired considerable experience in the coercion of their opponents, first of all, in imposing on them economic, monetary, trade, and other types of sanctions. Compared to the US-led sanctions imposed on Iraq and Iran, Russia's economic sanctions against Georgia (since October 2006), Turkey (since November 2015), and Ukraine (since January 2016) seem quite moderate. These measures have been taken as a signal of discontent with the Russophobic actions of ruling elites of these countries.

Studies of coercion are too often concentrated around a clear-cut dichotomy between success and failure (Allen 2011). A more detailed look into the original intentions and results of coercive actions show that it is a very rare situation when any side of the conflict obtains what was originally expected (Baldwin 1985). In some respects, academic debates that address coercion in global politics, and coercive diplomacy as its main tool, have never moved much beyond the realist/idealist debate with its traditional overwhelming attention to national security goals. Meanwhile, the realist/idealist framework, with its special interest in the identification and comparison of state goals as casual factors, does not catch many significant factors that can stimulate or impede the foreign policy agenda

of the Russian Federation. Unlike military instruments of state power, diplomatic tools should be differentiated by their efficiency of persuasion, as well as by groups to be influenced by diplomatic demarches. A cost and benefit analysis in the majority of conflicts suggests the need to avoid direct violent confrontation and to consider concessions as the 'lesser evil' to full-scale war.

Russia's growing experience with the use of coercive diplomacy opened the way for moving beyond the traditional choice in interstate relations: either diplomatic threatening or military actions. Today the leaders of Russian foreign policy are trying to achieve the best possible diplomatic results in international conflicts at that moment relying on (hidden) military operations, but bargaining on the essence of conflict and its solution is not yet finished. This moment of uncertainty about future policy of Russia gives its leaders a space for aggressive foreign policy actions. Such a large-scale use of coercion by the Russian Federation in conflicts with neighbouring powers (Georgia, Ukraine, and Turkey) is a new phenomenon for international relations.

Democratic peace theory traditionally pays special tribute to coercion and the creation of conditions for the favourable use of violent measures (Small 1976; Bueno de Mesquita 1992). The argument of the theory is straightforward: even if democratic states may have some problems in obtaining approval for using military force in the international arena from multiple stakeholders in domestic politics, as soon as the approval is guaranteed – diplomatic threats of these democracies towards their opponents become real. Because the economic power of democracies prevails over the resources of their opponents (countries with non-democratic regimes), the only prospect for any conflict, where largest democracies of the world are involved, is their victory.

The political bias of the democratic peace theory has always been self-evident for its critics in realist nationalist and Marxist schools of thought. Meanwhile, multiple cases of the US crushing its non-democratic adversaries via diplomatic pressure, especially after the collapse of the USSR, confirm the basic findings of this theory. In recognition of non-democratic nature of its political system, Russian coercive diplomacy towards its neighbours is designed to send a message to the White House – there are limits for the projection of American power. Inside these limits are Russia itself and the countries of the former USSR, which may ignore US coercion.

The notion that the strategic purpose of coercive diplomacy is to change the policies of other states, and the major instrument for that is the threat of the immediate use of military force, has become widespread in academic literature (George 1991; Art 2003). In 1998, Charles Kegley and his colleagues observed that, since early 1980s the norm of international law on non-intervention had eroded, opening the way for the protection of human rights and peace enforcement (Kegley 1998). No doubt the main victim of such a shift in world politics is sovereignty as one of the corner stones of contemporary world politics. Another victim is the right of nations for self-determination.

Meanwhile, attention to the concept of coercive diplomacy should be explained by the fact that it may become an attractive alternative to military conflicts. Coercive diplomacy measures (diplomatic threats, war games in one's own territory near borders of the target country, sweeping economic sanctions) still keep hopes that an interstate conflict may be limited to mutual threats, diplomatic demarches, and sooner or later political compromise in establishing a new peaceful status quo.

Our analysis of Russian coercive diplomacy starts with the Five-day War in South Ossetia and Abkhazia in August 2008 and in its current version since the Crimean crisis in 2014. It leads us to the observation that Moscow's interpretation of coercive diplomacy is different from the traditional one popular in the West. The key distinction is that Russian leaders simply do not believe that non-violent coercive diplomacy will lead to effective change of the existing status quo for one favourable to Russian interests. This perception is based on the view that even the most talented negotiators are not able to 'renegotiate' the consequences of the collapse of the USSR and change Russia's image as a country defeated by the West in the Cold War. The Russian Federation needs another type of argumentation to insist on changing the post-Cold War status quo.

The least conflictual solution, promoted by Dr. Sergey Karaganov and his colleagues, would be a 'Big Deal' between the Russian Federation and the West, which might settle all existing contradictions between them and establish firm rules of the game (Karaganov 2009). If a 'Big Deal' is not possible, it is a time for a different type of activities: military demonstrations, military interventions into neighbouring states, proxy wars. That is, contemporary Russian coercive diplomacy would lead to the renunciation of traditional diplomacy in favour of a combination of different tactics, including military enforcement at some stage.

The consequences for international stability from Russia's military operations abroad as part of its coercive diplomacy are rather limited. The main reason for that is Russia's strategic preference: The Kremlin looks to change the previous status quo into a new one, which is slightly better than the earlier one, but still keeps conflict 'frozen'. There would be no 'victory' in the conflict, but just some changes favourable for Russia. In this case, it would be much easier for the USA and Western Europe to accept Russia's coercion as a 'done deal'. Even the targeted and defeated country has something to discuss in this situation. Its presence at a negotiation table would provide a future settlement with badly needed legitimacy. That is why Georgia since 2008 is been taking part in the 'Geneva format' (with Russia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the USA, the EU, the UN, and OSCE), as well as Ukraine since August 2014 in the 'Normandy format' (with France, Germany, and Russia).

A key element of coercive diplomacy for a contemporary state is the willingness to use military force, even if on a limited scale. This is the key characteristic of contemporary Russian foreign policy. Therefore, its coercive diplomacy is diplomacy at the brink of military conflict. On the one hand, it says something about assertive and even aggressive nature of Russian foreign policy. Nevertheless, it is also a clear invitation to an opponent to discuss the aspects of the conflict through diplomacy instead of immediately using military force.

Coercive diplomacy is a privilege for genuinely sovereign states, their distinguishing marker in contemporary politics. This fact gives us another perspective for the role of the UN Security Council. Coercion has been a crucial element for the enforcement of norms and rules in the international community historically. Today two permanent members of the Security Council (the UK and France) are subordinating their foreign policy priorities and strategic interests to those of the USA. Their ability and willingness to use coercion without US permission is illusive. India and Japan, those economic and demographic power put them into a group of the most powerful sovereign states, which are outside of the UN Security Council, reject of using coercion internationally.

It is also important to note that the process of establishing a new international security system is going rather well outside the framework of the United Nations. After having been pushed to the periphery of diplomatic discussions on issues of global security, Moscow was forced to apply coercive diplomacy instruments to return to the negotiation table. What we see here is a creeping process of the destruction of existing

international norms because they are seen from the Kremlin as unfair. Russia plays the role of troublemaker for purposes of its own security, although the benefits of that challenge often go also to Beijing, New Delhi, and Brasilia. Still, Russia enjoys the benevolent neutrality of China, India, and other BRICS partners, as well as more evident support from member-states of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).

Post-Soviet Period: Changing Perception of 'Power' in Contemporary Russia

The Soviet Union did utilize coercive diplomacy, especially after the Second World War. There was a number of its military interventions into 'satellite countries', where the Soviet army was sent to crush oppositional political and popular movements (East Germany in 1953, Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968). The system of institutions for the regulation of global security during the Cold War was subordinated to the UN Security Council at the top of the pyramid. Within the framework of the UN Security Council, as well as by bilateral US-Soviet diplomatic dialogue, many conflicts were settled and mutual interests respected. Starting from the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, this system effectively guaranteed that any conflict between Washington and Moscow would be managed 'in a civilized way', that is, avoiding deadly military confrontation. The weak element of the system was that it allowed and even encouraged US-Soviet 'proxy wars' as well as a nuclear and conventional arms race.

This system was destroyed in the early 1990s without significant opposition from Moscow. It was followed by a transition period (1992–1999). NATO's War against Yugoslavia in March 1999 sent a clear message to Moscow that it is a new post-USSR era arrived, in which the USA had a monopoly on coercive diplomacy in any region of the world. The bombing of a sovereign state's capital at the centre of Europe was an attempt of the US-led unipolar world to confirm its monopoly on coercion across borders of sovereign states.

Despite the formidable military power of the USSR, its diplomacy had no real experience in using coercive diplomacy. There were almost no examples of successful Soviet interventions abroad (Afghanistan, multiple examples of missions of Soviet military advisors to North Korea, Vietnam,

and African states). In all cases, the long-term consequences of Soviet military engagements abroad did not bring sustainable results favourable to the Soviet Union, even if immediate military outcomes of interference looked victorious.

Not long after the shock to the structure of the international security system from the bombing of Yugoslavia in spring 1999 the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 on the USA turned around the 'unipolar moment', opening a way to real and effective multipolarity. Full understanding of the global dimension of these terrorist attacks and the need for international dialogue to deal with newly emerged threats did not occur instantaneously. Still, already during his Presidential campaign of 2008, future US President Barack Obama recognized that to deal with the rapidly changing threats to international security, the USA and its allies needed to establish a new set of international institutions. Since then the major powers of the world have been invited to discuss this challenge.

The Russian Federation sees itself as a great power rising after two decades of military and economic decline. That is why Moscow's principal goal in the international arena is to consolidate its great power potential inherited from the USSR. The strategy of rapprochement with the USA to establish collaborative relations with the only superpower and with US-dominated alliances (NATO, Western European Union), failed dramatically. Growing Kremlin irritation with the George W. Bush administration's unilateralism reached its peak in November–December 2004 during the Ukrainian Orange Revolution. Since then Russian leaders have intensively opposed the West's export of democracy to post-Soviet countries as the key threat to regional security. In addition, the Iraq War, which was launched in March 2003, had already demonstrated the crisis of the existing Euro-Atlantic structures. Moscow found itself in a group of strong opponents of US unilateralism together with Berlin and Paris. The most typical examples of Russian coercive diplomacy could be found in recent events in Ukraine and Syria. They represent the culmination of Russian coercive diplomacy that began well before the intervention in South Ossetia in August 2008. Earlier example of coercive diplomacy can be found inside Russia, in the response to events in Chechnya in 1999–2001. In the late 1990s, the majority of Russian and foreign experts considered the Chechen problem as unresolvable. 'The Chechen Curse' was threatening the territorial integrity of Russia and even its very existence. At that time Russian leaders discovered a combination of diplomatic and military practices for the settlement of the conflict. Western leaders

reacted only to the negative news coming from Chechnya, they 'were disturbed by information about human rights violations in Chechnya, casualties among the civilian population, and the prevention of international observers and independent media from being able to follow the situation' (Zaslavskaya 2011, p. 279). However, the combination of diplomatic and military practices used in Chechnya established a few years later a unique and successful model of coercive diplomacy. We argue that Russia repeated the same pattern later, in Georgia, Crimea and Ukraine, Syria, and currently in Turkey. Of course, there were modifications from the original 'Chechen Model', but it was only due to the peculiarities of international relations compared to domestic politics. There are five key elements in this model:

First: the demonstration of superior military power and limited military victory. For the Kremlin the key verifier that a conflict is over on favourable terms is the re-establishment of territorial control and the partial military defeat of the adversary. 'Territorial control' and 'military defeat' may sound like terms from previous centuries, but the Chechen case took these patterns back to day-to-day realties. 'Control' and 'defeat', both partial, not total, are key elements of coercive diplomacy as well as of conflict management. The model also includes finding at the beginning of a conflict's 'military' stage a politician in the enemy's camp, who is ready to start negotiations with Kremlin. This role was performed in autumn 1999 by Akhmat Kadyrov, the Mufti of Chechnya and one of the leaders of the anti-Russia opposition. His motivation was obvious for the local public: to avoid further casualties among the military and civilian population, even if Chechen radicals called him a 'traitor'. The Chechen example shows that it is possible to present military defeat not as 'total' but just as 'partial', as the failure of small group of 'radicals' to find common ground with legitimate authorities, to demonstrate military power and to find a partner for dialogue in the opponent's camp.

Second: the rejection of the celebration of 'victory' over the defeated enemy. According to traditions of the twentieth century, total war needs total victory (Hobsbaum 2002, p. 31). Contemporary Russian coercive diplomacy rejects that view. There were no 'unconditional surrender declarations', 'victory celebrations', 'victory parades', and widespread 'awarding of heroes'. This has been Russia's political innovation. There are no doubts that the Russian army defeated international terrorists and local radicals in Chechnya. However, neither army nor society celebrated that victory. Military and political deprivations of Ukrainian army's units in

Crimea (February–March 2014) were broadcast live by international TV channels and web cameras of civil activists all around the world. Even Condoleezza Rice and Robert Gates, who have never demonstrated any signs of sympathy for Russian foreign policy, had to admit in *The Washington Post* that the operation of Russian Air Force Units in Syria was a humiliation for the USA: ' we should never have gotten to a place where the Russians are warning us to stay out of their way' (Rice 2015). However, Russia did not celebrate this victory. Such policy leads to rapid de-escalation of conflict, open way for its peaceful settlement.

Third: the readiness to consider 'transitional deals' as inherently valued, and in some cases as optimal for keeping a favourable status quo. Experts like to ask rhetorical question: 'How can Vladimir Putin, with a sinking economy and a second-rate military, continually dictate the course of geopolitical events?' (Rice and Gates 2015). For a proper answer we should study how the Russian leadership has concentrated diplomatic efforts and military resources available in one place and at one time. This is a risky policy, but if everything is done professionally, it may bring positive results. It is because of the risky nature of coercive diplomacy, Russian leaders prefer 'transitional deals', and in almost all of the cases President Vladimir Putin was personally involved in negotiations: the Minsk negotiations concerning Ukraine on August 26, 2014 and February 12, 2015; talks on Syria with US President Barack Obama in New York on September 29, 2015; negotiations with Turkish President Recep Erdogan in Saint Petersburg on August 9, 2016. Agreements at these negotiations could be considered as 'transitional'. Still, it was as much as Russia could get at the moment of negotiations. So, the key leitmotiv of Russian coercive diplomacy is: 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush'.

Fourth: the personal involvement of President Vladimir Putin in decision-making and management of coercive diplomacy. In a recent documentary film 'Crimea: The Way Back Home', which was based on a long interview by Vladimir Putin about the Crimean crisis in February–March 2014, he explained in detail why his personal involvement in all stages of the conflict was a crucial precondition for its success. From his point of view involvement of the highest official (the First Person) was a powerful signal to everybody involved in the operation that it was not his or her personal risk, but the political will of Russia and all available resources would be employed. With 'blessing' from the president, ministers have not been afraid to act decisively, and

ordinary performers of these giant operation knew that Russian authorities would not change their mind in the process, and not cheat.

Fifth, and the most important: already at the initial stage of a conflict Russian leaders can formulate explicitly what they want as its final result. In using coercive diplomacy Russian leaders have learned how to formulate its 'simple aims' in a realistic way. After securing 'simple aims', more ambitious plans for Moscow's coercive diplomacy come almost automatically. Still, achievement and preservation of 'simple aims' is the most important objective for a conflict. In Syria, the aim is to keep Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in power and to stop the epidemic of 'the Arab Spring'. In Ukraine, Russia is looking for a neutral status of this country as well as for leaders who will be supportive of the strategic interests of Russia and independent from US pressure. Russia's aims could be formulated in an even more dramatic way: it is searching for anybody in Kiev, who will be '*handshakeable*', that is, for a self-sufficient partner. As soon as the simple aims of the Kremlin are achieved, Russia will find resources to develop a political and security dialogue with Kiev and restart economic and trade relations.

As an instrument of coercive diplomacy, Russia concedes the possibility of limited military conflicts. From the political perspective, losing a military conflict may have dangerous ramifications for a leader, who insisted on the transformation of a diplomatic conflict into a military one (Bueno de Mesquita 1995). In reality, only a few risk-taking politicians are likely to make that choice. However, there are two requirements for successful 'coercive diplomacy' – the vast majority of population should support it and the risk of failure should be moderate. These two conditions were met in August 2008 in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and later, in 2014–2016, in Crimea and Syria.

For almost three quarters of a century, the USSR and today the Russian Federation have had a dream that the USA, as the master-builder of global security, will take seriously into considerations Soviet/Russian national interests. The bombing campaign in Yugoslavia and two US-inspired *coups d'état* in Ukraine (2004 and 2014) clearly demonstrated to the Kremlin that Washington openly ignored Russian security interests. We may guess that in late 2004 Kremlin leaders made a crucial decision: conflict with the USA in the post-Soviet area is unavoidable and Russia should be ready for it. Even more important, Russia needs indirect conflict with the USA (proxy war) to demonstrate its power in the post-Soviet area. If the conflict is in this area, Russia has favourable environment for coercion.

In the 'CIS area' the Kremlin may project its power (economic, military, soft power) in the most efficient way. On the other hand, the resources of US diplomacy in the region are rather limited and their use is associated with significant risks and costs. So, the Kremlin's decision to be ready for confrontation with Washington was perfectly logical; that is why coercive diplomacy has been pursued by Moscow since 2004.

Today, in the CIS as the region of Russia's 'privileged interests', its diplomats do not think about 'face saving' for the USA in those conflicts where the two countries are the key stakeholders, as in Ukraine and Georgia. Previous Russian attempts to assist 'American partners' in 'saving face' are now considered as irrelevant to new conflicts between two nations. Russia did provide diplomatic assistance to Washington at the final stage of military operations in Yugoslavia (June 1999), as well as in September 2013, when Barack Obama badly needed an excuse for non-intervention in Syria after remarks about drawing 'red lines', which Bashar al-Assad had crossed by using chemical weapons. The motto of the Russian diplomatic service today is: 'never again', no more assistance to Washington in difficult situations. Instead of 'face saving' for US diplomacy in Ukraine, Russian leaders are looking for a humiliating 'defeat' of US ventures in Tbilisi and Kiev. For Russian leaders these conflicts should continue until new 'rules of the game' for Europe and Eurasia have been formalized. Russia utilizes coercive diplomacy in Ukraine and Syria today in the attempt to force US diplomats to sit down at the negotiation table and start equal dialogue. Nowadays the Kremlin is ready to wait as long as it takes to get positive results, probably for years. Public opinion in the country generally supports this stance.

The distinctive features of Russia's coercive diplomacy today include its *complex nature*, that is, concentration not just on threats and occasional military operations (Georgia, Crimea, Syria), but on a broader set of actions, including sales of the most advanced weaponry to opponents of Washington (Iran, Venezuela), financial assistance (member-states of the Eurasian Economic Union), the opening of domestic markets for friends (Serbia, Vietnam), and their closing for opponents (the EU, the USA);

Generous utilization of public diplomacy instruments for engaging foreign citizens in dialogue along lines of Russia's interests is another aspect of the policy, as is r*espect for sovereignty as the highest value in international arena*, which was typical for previous historical periods and is returning to the centre of interstate relations at the insistence of Russia and China.

Ignoring the rights and interests of small states, which Moscow considers as semi-sovereign, (e.g. small states in Central and Eastern Europe, which are members of NATO) is also a part of the policy, as is maintaining the *status quo in the post-Soviet area and neighbouring regions of the world* as the most enabling environment for contemporary Russia.

Vladimir Putin and Russia's Coercive Diplomacy Since February 26, 2014

The power of the Russian president to manage foreign policy unilaterally is enshrined by Article 86 of its Constitution. There is almost no space for involvement in foreign policy decision-making for the Federal Assembly (Parliament) and a rather small space for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Russian diplomats are managers rather than artists. The peculiarity of the situation is that there are few occasions annually (a maximum four times in recent years) when the Russian President speaks on foreign policy issues. This artificial information vacuum concerning what exactly the President of Russia thinks about global affairs is a remarkable feature of its coercive diplomacy. An atmosphere of rumours around the real intentions of the Kremlin clears a way for the famous 'unpredictability' of Russian diplomacy and uncertainty about the decision-making process.

The theory of strategic conflict avoidance claims that *successful domestic politics* is a crucial precondition for effective coercive diplomacy (Smith 1996). Efficiency of the execution of military force across their national borders by the ruling elites may be enhanced by public support. According to the theory, the optimal condition for success exists when there is nationwide cross-party consensus on a military operation as an instrument of coercive diplomacy.

US history knows several cases of such a consensus in the twentieth century (the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War). On the contrary, in the twenty-first century attempts of the US authorities to obtain such a consensus were rather unsuccessful. It was especially visible during initial stages of the Iraq War (2003–2004), as well as during debates on a possible military operation in Syria (August–September 2013). In counter distinction from the US Administration, Russia's Presidential Administration put opinion polls results into the centre of its analysis when decisions on using military force have been made. For example, at each phase of the Crimean crisis (February–March 2016) and

later, at the initial period of the military operation in Syria, opinion poll results played a role in giving a green light for Russian military operations.

Another crucial precondition for efficient coercive diplomacy is a *favourable situation in targeted country.* In each case of Russia's coercive diplomacy, a targeted country (semi-independent Chechnya, Ukraine, and ISIS and other opposition forces in Syria) was in deep political crisis, on the brink of collapse or immediately after *coup d'état.* These opponents at the crucial moment of the conflict have been too weak and did not have foreign allies to rely upon in confronting Russian coercive diplomacy measures, both political and those referred to as 'hybrid war'. One of the reasons for the Kremlin to go forward with coercion was geographical proximity to Russia of all three regions or the existence of Russian military bases on the territory of the conflict, as well as little interest from 'far abroad', that is, from Washington, to confront Russia and provide real protection to its protégés.

Recognizing the crucial role of a military air force as an instrument of coercion, the Russian Federation in Syria effectively *connected military tactics and political strategy* in its use of its national Airspace Force, known as VKS, in an unstable and explosive region of the Middle East. This sent a message, originally to ISIS and only later to Ankara during the Turkish-Russian confrontation in November 2015–July 2016.

Finally, since November 24, 2015, the date of the downing of a Russian SU-24 bomber by a Turkish F-16 fighter jet, the Kremlin sent a strong message to Turkey by starting to bomb areas populated by Turkoman people as well as fuel tanker trucks with ISIS oil going to the Turkish market. The Russian VKS played a crucial role in bringing Turkey and its leader Recep Erdogan to the negotiation table in Saint Petersburg with public apologies for the downing of the Russian fighter jet and killing two servicemen by pro-Turkish insurgents. So, the Kremlin's coercive diplomacy in the Turkish case did not reach the point of a search for a loyal leader and use of military force of pro-Russian proxies on the territory of Turkey. However, our analysis of Russia's coercive diplomacy shows that these measures could have been utilized at a later stage of conflict.

If we go beyond the 'Presidential diplomacy' of Russia, the question is whether coercive diplomacy has changed the protocol and diplomatic style of Russia's official representatives abroad? Do they follow strict instructions from Kremlin or keep a space for improvisations? There should be no doubt that Russian government representatives at the Ministry of Defence as well as diplomats at the Foreign Ministry, suffered a lot of insults from

their US 'partners' in 1990s. So, they are looking for 'revenge'. Current Russian foreign policy needs a new diplomatic style to practice coercion, but we still know nothing about that style. We find a rare description of Russian low-level practice of coercive diplomacy an article by Charles Krauthammer in his description of US-Russian communication during the 2015–2016 Syrian conflict. In this case we learn how Russia has informed US regional troops in Iraq about the beginning of its air campaign against ISIS in Syria: 'a Russian general knocked on the door of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and delivered a brusque demarche that the attack (of Russian warplanes on targets in Syria – S.T.) would begin within an hour and warning the U.S. to get out of the way' (Krauthammer 2015). Even if this event never happened or the description is not accurate, it does not change the fact that Russian diplomats are happy to humble their US colleagues in 'zones of privileged interests'. Until both the US and Russian diplomats elaborate a new *modus operandi* for their bilateral relations, all contacts between Washington and Moscow again I do not see how may turn into exchanges of this type.

Differences in national style in the use of coercive diplomacy in the USA and Russia are becoming more and more visible and their origins we may find in 'cultural patterns' of the two states and the history of their diplomatic services. Russian diplomacy traditionally pays special attention to 'honour' and 'prestige' of the state (Tsygankov 2014), trying to avoid any situation when it may look like Russia is 'losing public face'. In Russian diplomacy, it is hardly possible to find a situation when a high-level official publicly demanded something from foreign partners and was publicly refused. On the contrary, the majority of messages of US leaders to their Russian colleagues are public appeals and demands, which Russia ignores or publicly rejects.

Three major reasons could explain the phenomenon of the effectiveness of Russian coercive diplomacy:

1. *Coercive diplomacy rests upon wide popular support of Vladimir Putin and his foreign policy.* Multiple opinion polls show that the level of support of Russian diplomacy actions in Ukraine and Syria have always been well beyond 50 percent level. Vladimir Putin several times was declared as the most influential politician in the world. He is popular among conservative political parties and movements across Europe and political elites in the Global South.

2. *Successful military reform of 2008–2015*, which changed the structure of Russian military forces and provided them with advanced weapons. Efficient coercive diplomacy demands strong military power and the Russian Federation has acquired it.
3. *The Institutional structure for a modern state* has been established in Russia since 2000. It still needs further modernization and probably it will take another generation for the Russian people to finish that process. However, basic elements of efficient system of governance are already in place.

Conclusions

The coercive diplomacy of the Russian Federation today is an amalgam of two interrelated processes: (1) growing foreign policy ambitions and (2) the ignoring by Western powers of Russian national interests. If it were more powerful economically, Russia could choose less a conflictual strategy for the establishment of a multipolar system with Moscow as one of its few centres. Being rather cautious in using military power across national borders, Russian leaders demonstrate a readiness to use coercion only in those cases when the essential interests of national security are at stake and there is no hope that Washington and its European allies will consider these interests seriously. There is no isolationism as driving elements of Russian foreign policy. What we may find there is a willingness to defend its vision of multipolarity and a commitment to respond to unfriendly Western actions.

The possibility of sending 'meaningful signals' that Russia is considering the use of military force against US proxies, who threaten Russian national interests, could become an asset for the Kremlin's diplomacy in the future. For this reason, the US State Department rejects any possibility for Moscow to use 'the language of coercion and aggression' in its communications with neighbouring countries. That is why Russian coercive diplomacy lacks its potentially key element – diplomatic persuasion to accept Russia's will. If a conflict is considered by Russia as of the utmost importance, its coercive diplomacy avoids a stage of 'diplomatic pressure' and goes from the initial expression of Russian concerns straight to demonstration of military power. So, real diplomacy (official and informal negotiations, mutual search for consensus, bargaining, etc.) is often not involved in interstate relations during the initial stage of conflicts. However, traditional diplomacy is especially in demand at later stage of

conflicts, when the 'game' is over and the consequences of the military defeat of Russia's opponents are obvious.

The reason for scepticism of Kremlin about efficiency of using traditional diplomatic pressure as initial element of coercion in conflicts, where the USA is stake-holder, is based on asymmetry of two powers. Russia is weaker than the USA in major dimensions of state power. Its economy is less than 10 percent of American, a few countries in the world call Russia its ally. Russian military forces still behind US military power in all spheres except of nuclear weapons. That's why there is no opportunity 'to convert' Russia's power into concessions in any diplomatic bargaining with the USA, even in neighbouring regions of Eurasia. The only option or Kremlin is to make sudden and unexpected actions and then to confront US diplomats with an accomplished fact. It follows by diplomatic actions (establishment of 'formats' and 'contact groups'), which looks like traditional diplomacy. But their purpose is to simulate 'diplomacy' while real intention is to put conflict on ice and detain results achieved due to Russia's sudden and unexpected actions.

It is difficult to predict the long-term consequences of Russia's current coercive diplomacy. As almost any economic or military conflict, coercion is a very risky way of regulating international relations (Pape 1996). It is impossible to foresee confidently how coercive measures will come across to other countries. What might be the reaction of the targeted state and the international community in general? That is why Russia's use of coercion in all cases appears as a reaction to threats/challenges from the USA. It is not a genuine strategy that evolves from the emergence of a conflict until its final solution. Even keeping that in mind, we should note Charles Krauthammer, who considered contemporary Russian coercive diplomacy as very efficient (Krauthammer 2015). For example, describing US attempts to contain Russia, relying upon US resources as well as the resources of European and Asian allies, Charles Krauthammer berated the '…ignominious collapse of Obama's vaunted campaign to isolate Putin diplomatically over Crimea' (Krauthammer 2015).

For the promotion of its national interests, especially in the CIS, which is considered by Russian leaders as its 'sphere of privileged interests', it is much more reliable to base its policy on a net of regional and sub-regional organizations, attracting resources of non-governmental organizations and business structures with their 'codes of behaviour' and institutions for accommodation of conflictual interests. Coercive diplomacy is a signifier of Russia's weakness as a modern state, not of its power in a globalized world.

Note

1. In an address to participants of the Riga Conference on November 7, 2015, at the plenary session titled 'Quo Vadis twenty-first century Russia', Dr Celeste A. Wallander, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director, Russia and Central Asia at the US National Security Council, in 10-minutes speech five times mentioned 'Russian coercion' and three times 'Russian aggression' ('Looking Back' 2015).

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CHAPTER 7

The Russian Federation and the West: The Problem of International Order

Aleksandar Jankovski

Introduction

Drawing on the English School of International Relations Theory (ES), five interrelated axioms constitute the theoretical basis for the arguments advanced in this chapter. First, international society exists to the extent to which states are 'conscious of certain common interests and common values, [and thereby] form society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of [principles, norms and] rules in their relations with one another, and share in the workings of common institutions' (Bull 1977, p. 13). Second, international society is a desideratum in its own right. It 'constitutes a rational political order for humanity taken as a whole.... [A] multiplicity of political authorities – a society of states – is the best arrangement for realizing the good for humanity taken as a whole.... A related but

This chapter draws upon the author's argument developed in 'Russia and the United States: On Irritants, Friction, and International Order,' International Politics, vol. 52, no. 2 (2016). It appears here with the permission of Palgrave Macmillan, the publisher of the journal.

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_7

contrasting account . . . argues that the justification for a society of states is that it allows for the flourishing of *different* conceptions of the Good' (Brown 2001, pp. 428–429). Third, 'states are grossly unequal in power'. Therefore, when 'certain international issues are . . . settled, the demands of certain states (weak ones) can in practice be left out of account, the demands of certain other states (strong ones) recognized to be the only ones relevant to the issue in hand' (Bull 1977, p. 199). The great powers, therefore, are 'powers recognized by others to have, and conceived by their own leaders and peoples to have, certain special rights and duties. Great powers, for example, assert the right, and are accorded the right, to play a part in determining issues that affect the peace and security of the international system as a whole. They accept the duty, and are thought by others to have the duty' (Bull 1977, p. 196). Fourth, and given the import of great power management to the maintenance of international society, it is their chancelleries which are charged with identifying points of overlapping interests leading to (i) the conclusion of international accords (Bull 1977, p. 164) and (ii) minimizing 'the effects of friction in international relations' (Bull 1977, p. 165). Finally, fifth, it is not always the case that great powers seek to 'minimize the effect of friction'. Crises can play – at times, to be sure – positive role in the maintenance of international society and international order (Bull 1977, p. 203).

If we accept these five axioms, and there is a theoretical warrant for so doing (see below), then the remarkable chill in the relations between the USA and the Russian Federation (RF) – introduced by the RF's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in March 2014 – ought to be re-examined. Friction is certainly present. RF and US-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) militaries were – noted the *New York Times* editorial board in mid-2015 – 'dangerously shadowboxing around their borders' (*New York Times* 14 May 2015). Events took a particularly dangerous turn on 24 November 2015, when a Turkish air-force F-16 shot down a Russian SU-24 on the Turkey-Syria border (BBC News 1 December 2015). The New Year did not bring about the cessation of the dangerous 'shadowboxing'. The 'US military [decided to] keep three heavy army brigades in Europe on a continuous basis, reversing Barack Obama's reduction of forces after concluding that Russian aggression poses an enduring threat to continental stability' (Ackerman 30 March 2016; see also Stewart 30 April 2016). And, on 5 Junes 2016 'NATO [states] beg[a]n [the] largest war game[s] in eastern Europe since [the] Cold War' (Duval Smith 6 June 2016). Anaconda-2016 – as the war games taking place in Poland were styled – amounted to '10-day military exercise, involving 31,000 troops and thousands of vehicles from 24 [states]' (Duval Smith

6 June 2016). As such Anaconda-2016 was '2 ½ times larger than any previous training in Poland in recent decades' (Stewart 15 May 2016). Finally, 'Poland has launched a 50 percent build-up of its own forces while demanding more support from NATO members. It has also formed new military partnerships with Ukraine and Romania as part of an increasing effort to deter Russia' (Stewart 30 April 2016).

By way of response, 'two Russian fighters buzzed at very low altitude the U.S. guided missile destroyer USS Donald Cook 11 times as it conducted drills only 70 kilometres off Russian territory' (Stewart 30 April 2016). President Putin ordered snap drills, taking place between 14 and 22 June 2016. The drill 'involved all four of Russia's military districts, with the focus on command and control structures as well as military arsenals. Russia's Defence Ministry notified the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) about the start of the drills, and Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov stressed that the inspections did not "threaten in any way our neighbours"' (*New Delhi Times* 28 June 2016). The Ministry of Defence of RF denied a claim, made by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, that the drill 'violated the "mechanism of military transparency" in Europe' (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 15 June 2016).

The received wisdom, then, is that the elements of friction and low-simmering conflict have been the dominant feature of RF-US relations since March 2014 – although, arguably, the downturn began earlier than Crimea. While acknowledging – and not wishing to minimize – the presence of the element of friction, the aim of this chapter is to advance a somewhat contrarian argument. I aim to show – as against the received wisdom – that for all the irritants and points of friction, the relations between the two great powers have continued to be remarkably orderly *and constitutive of international society*. Namely, the RF and the USA have continued to regard one another as great powers, and therefore indispensable members of international society, and have continued to 'cooperate in the workings of [the] common institutions' (Bull 1977, p. 13) of international society.

In the discussion that follows I focus on two international institutions: diplomacy and great powers management. More specifically, I show that the two great powers' heads of state and government and respective foreign ministries were engaged in constant communication, identifying points where the two states' interests 'overlap' and seeking to 'minimize the effects of friction' in RF-US relations. Moreover, I show that, as custodians of international society and international order, the two great powers – as befits their status – managed their relations with a view

towards limiting war and 'assert[ed] the right, and [were] accorded the right, to play a [*central*] part in determining issues that affect the peace and security of the international system as a whole'.

In view of the above-stated aims, I structure the chapter as follows. In the following section I lay out the theoretical background. I, then, undertake an empirical investigation to demonstrate that RF and the USA continued to 'cooperate in the workings of [the] common institutions' of international society: diplomacy and great power management. Finally, I conclude the chapter by engaging in a brief dialogue with some of the other contributors to this volume.

The Theoretical Background

The fundamental claim that I advance, it will be recalled, is that RF-US relations remain remarkably orderly irrespective of the constant presence of irritants and friction in their relations. That is, the 'element of co-operation and regulated intercourse among states' (Bull 1977, p. 39) is the dominant element in RF-US relations. This claim points to the centrality, on the theoretical plane, of the English School (ES) tradition in International Relations Theory (IRT) as a framework for understanding international politics. To what end ES? What is the value added of adopting this approach? ES becomes the preferred approach inasmuch as it is '*more faithful* than either of the other [two approaches] *to the complexity of international politics*' (Bull 1976, p. 106; emphasis added). Or, adds Barry Buzan, the approach 'works well as an empirical tool.... Here the case is that the concept of [international] society fits with the observed data and offers a way of understanding it that is not available using alternative concepts' (Buzan 1993, pp. 329–330). And, Martin Wight 'saw the Grotian approach to international morality, for example, as founded upon the recognition that the moral problems of foreign policy are complex, as against the view of the Kantians that these problems are simple, and the view of the Machiavellians that they are non-existent' (Bull 1976, p. 106).

ES is 'based on a tripartite distinction amongst international system, international society, and world society' (Buzan 2001, p. 474). The idea of the 'international system' finds its fullest expression in the works of scholars working in the Realist tradition of IRT – Machiavellians or Hobbesians – scholars whom Martin Wight and Hedley Bull label 'blood and iron and immorality men' (Bull 1976, p. 104). The idea of 'world society', situated on the opposite end of the theoretical spectrum from, and standing in stark

contrast to, the idea of international system is most fully elaborated by scholars working in the Liberal tradition of IRT – Kantians or revolutionists – scholars whom Wight and Bull label 'the subversion and liberation and missionary men' (Bull 1976, p. 104).

Lastly, the idea of 'international' society finds its most thorough articulation in the opus of scholars working precisely in the English School tradition of IRT – Grotians – scholars whom Wight and Bull label 'the law and order and keep your word men' (Bull 1976, p. 105). Grotians' analyses trace a middle road between the two extreme approaches pointing, thereby, to the desirability of this approach and its value-added for the present empirical study. On the Grotians' account, therefore, 'international politics ha[s] to be described *not* as international anarchy but as international intercourse, a relationship chiefly among states to be sure, but one in which there was not only conflict but also cooperation' (Bull 1976, p. 105). Thus, 'states, although not subject to a common superior, *nevertheless formed a society* – a society that [i]s no fiction, and whose working could be observed in [the primary] institutions such as diplomacy, international law, the balance of power and the concert of great powers' (Bull 1976, p. 105). And, as against Hobbesians, Grotians posit that 'States in their dealings with one another [are] not free of moral and legal restraints: the prescription [therefore] of the Grotians [is] that states [are] bound by the rules of this international society they composed and in whose continuance they had a stake' (Bull 1976, p. 105; emphasis added).

International order and international society are the two principal ontological facts of international politics according to Grotians. *First*, international order refers to a 'pattern or disposition of international activity that sustains those goals of the society of states that are elementary, primary, or universal' (Bull 1977, p. 13). And *second*, international society obtains when states are 'conscious of certain common interests and common values, [and thereby] form [international] society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of [principles, norms and] rules in their relations with one another, and share in the workings of common institutions' (Bull 1977, p. 13). The principal goal of international order is the maintenance of the very society of states. By contrast, the maintenance of the external sovereignty of the member states of the society and peace are of only secondary and tertiary importance, respectively. Hedley Bull explicates this point cogently:

> International society has in fact treated the preservation of the independence of particular states as a goal that is subordinate to preservation of the society

> of states itself; this reflects the predominant role played in shaping international society by the great powers, which view themselves as its custodians.... Thus international society has often allowed the independence of individual states to be extinguished, as in the great process of partition and absorption of small powers by greater ones, in the name of principles such as 'compensation' and the 'balance of power' that produced a steady decline in the number of states in Europe from the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 until-the Congress of Vienna in 1815. In the same way, international society, at least in the perspective of the great powers which see themselves as its guardians, treats the independence of particular states as subordinate to the preservation of the system as a whole when it tolerates or encourages limitation of the sovereignty or independence of small states through such devices as spheres-of-influence agreements, or agreements to create buffer or neutralized states. (Bull 1977, p. 17)

For their part, great powers play an indispensable role in managing international society and international order. Thus, inasmuch as 'states are grossly unequal in power, [when] certain international issues are ... settled, the demands of certain states (weak ones) can in practice be left out of account, the demands of certain other states (strong ones) recognized to be the only ones relevant to the issue in hand' (Bull 1977, p. 199). First, the central function that great powers management fulfils is the maintenance of the general, or systemic, balance of power. After all, great powers are, above all else, loathe to see the emergence of a hegemon which could 'lay down the law to others' (Bull 1977, p. 97) and turn international society into hegemony. Second, 'the management of great power relations in the interest of international order must be taken to embrace also the action they take to avoid crises carrying the danger of war with one another, or to control them when they occur' (Bull 1977, p. 202). Two related points about international crises may be advanced.

> It would be illusory [writes Bull] to imagine that great powers are always concerned to avoid dangerous crises, or to dampen these down when they occur. Crises are sometimes deliberately manufactured by the great powers, or deliberately brought closer to the point of war, because the preoccupation of the great power concerned is with securing diplomatic victory.... Furthermore, it would be mistaken to assume that crises, or the intensification of them, could never play a constructive role in relation to the purposes of international order. The maintenance of the balance of power ... would scarcely have been possible without the resolve of particular great powers, or

> combination of them, at particular times, to issue threats and so create or intensify crises. (Bull 1977, pp. 202–203)

As such, crises are presented as an *affirmation* – and *not negation* – of international society for we are reminded that absent the general balance of power we could 'scarcely' have international society. That is, 'the flourishing of *different* conceptions of the Good' of which Chris Brown writes can hardly be expected to materialize in the absence of a general (i.e. systemic) balance of power. And, the maintenance of the general balance of power necessitates, at times, the 'resolve of particular great powers, or combination of them, at particular times, to issue threats and so create or intensify crises'.

Third, great powers manage their relations with a view towards limiting war. This includes 'attempts' to (i) 'avert war by accident or miscalculation'; (ii) 'reduce misunderstanding or misinterpretation by the great powers of one another's words and actions'; (iii) 'settle or contain political disputes between[/among] the great powers by negotiation'; (iv) 'control competition in armaments, through tacit and formal arms-control agreements'; (v) 'prevent wars among the lesser powers which may expand to embrace the great powers, or, if they occur, to limit them geographically and end them quickly'; and (vi) 'more generally, to manage and direct the relationships of the lesser powers with one another and with the great powers, with this end in view' (Bull 1977, p. 206).

While not the only one, diplomacy is the central instrumentality through which great powers manage their relations with one another, and international society more broadly. By diplomacy we understand the 'conduct of relations between states and other entities with standing in world politics by official agents and by peaceful means' (Bull 1977, p. 156). Diplomatic relations are 'institutionalized', as against ad hoc, in the sense that they are 'maintained independently of particular items of business that arise, that they take place against the background of a permanent relationship among the parties involved, and that they are conducted on the basis of well-understood rules and conventions, in some cases having the status of law' (Bull 1977, pp. 159–160).

Diplomacy fulfils five functions. First, it 'facilitates communication between the political leaders of states and other entities in world politics' (Bull 1977, p. 163). This is a particularly important function as no international society can be formed without communication. 'Thus the most elementary function of diplomats is to be messengers; [and] as a condition

of their performing the function effectively, there arises the most elementary diplomatic convention or institution, perhaps the only one that is common to all historical international societies, the immunity of the envoy from being killed or constrained by the receiving state' (Bull 1977, p. 164). In fact,

> there is more to communication than the exchange of messages; messages have to be understood and interpreted. They have to convey mood and intentions as well as information. Their meaning depends on their context: the persons who send them and receive them, the circumstances in which they are sent, the previous history of exchanges on the subject. The significance of a message may lie in what it omits as well as in what it includes, in the choice of a phrase rather than another in conveying an idea (Bull 1977, pp. 172–173).

Crucially, notes Bull, '*Diplomatists are specialists in precise and accurate communication*' (Bull 1977, pp. 172–173; emphasis added).

Second, diplomats negotiate international agreements. These, notes Bull, are 'possible only if interests of the parties, while they may be different, overlap at some point and if the parties are able to perceive that they do overlap' (Bull 1977, p. 164). It is the job of diplomats, then – the 'specialists in precise and accurate communication' – to identify those points where states' interests 'overlap' and construct agreements around the same. Third, diplomats gather 'intelligence or information about foreign [states]' (Bull 1977, p. 164). Fourth, diplomats' communications and efforts at identifying points of overlapping interests are directed toward the 'minimi[sation of]…the effects of friction in international relations' (Bull 1977, p. 165). Finally, 'diplomacy fulfils the function of symbolizing the existence of the society of states' (Bull 1977, p. 166).

Summarizing, the most important theoretical takeaway is that international relations are orderly – and international society obtains – to the extent to which great powers' diplomats are in constant communication seeking common ground, minimizing the effects of friction, 'reduc[ing] misunderstanding or misinterpretation by the great powers of one another's words and actions', 'settl[ing] disputes', controlling and reducing armaments, preventing or limiting wars among the lesser powers, and managing the relations of the lesser powers. Finally, crises and instances of friction can perform a salutary function.

Empirical Investigation

Theory comports with reality. An examination of RF-US relations during the administration of President Obama (spanning, thus, the administrations of presidents Medvedev and Putin) shows that the great powers *never* ceased to cooperate in the working of the common institutions of international society – in particular, diplomacy and great powers management. As such, their relations were constitutive of, and nested in, international society. To empirically buttress my argument, I offer the following examples. *First*, RF and US diplomats cooperated in controlling and reducing armaments by signing and ratifying the New START treaty and completing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) on Iran. *Second*, as the custodians of international society and international order, the two great powers are managing their relations with a view towards limiting war. *Third*, they 'assert[ed] the right, and [were] accorded the right, to play a [*central*] part in determining issues that affect the peace and security of the international system as a whole'. In particular, the RF and the USA have been actively engaged in managing the conflicts in Libya and Syria. *Fourth*, the two great powers' chancelleries were engaged in constant communication, identifying points where the two states' interests 'overlap' and seeking to 'minimize the effects of friction' in RF-US relations – albeit it may be the case that the element of friction, while not unproblematic, has produced beneficial results for the international society as a whole.

Consider the following timeline of events commencing with President Obama's assumption of the Oval Office. The two great powers immediately engaged in intensive diplomatic exchanges. Nine days after the inauguration of President Obama, 'the Kremlin halted a deployment of missiles in Europe that threatened a new freeze in relations between the two nuclear powers. [Russian] Defence Ministry officials said that the decision had been taken in response to signals from Mr. Obama that he was reconsidering US plans for a missile defence shield in Poland and the Czech Republic' (Halpin and Baldwin 29 January 2009). President Barack Obama 'sent a secret letter to [the] Russia[n] president suggesting that he would back off deploying a new missile defence system in Eastern Europe if Moscow would help stop Iran from developing long-range weapons' (Baker et al. 3 March 2009; see also Halpin 4 March 2009). President Obama's communication also 'discussed talks to extend a

strategic arms treaty expiring this year and cooperation in opening supply routes to Afghanistan' (Baker et al. 2009; see also Halpin 8 July 2009).

The two presidents met for the first time on 1 April 2009 in London. They 'vowed a "fresh start" and announced their intention to cooperate on a variety of issues, *beginning with negotiations on a new arms control treaty*. In seeking to recast a relationship *that has been teetering on the brink of a new cold war*, the two leaders also promised to work together on the war in Afghanistan and efforts to rein in Iran's nuclear ambitions' (Cooper 2 April 2009; emphasis added). On the heels of their April meeting, the two presidents held a summit meeting in Moscow in July 2009. In advance of the meeting, President Medvedev observed that 'in addition to what we call disarmament issues, we naturally have an extensive agenda that reflects other concerns. *These involve interregional conflicts, efforts to overcome the international financial crisis, local conflicts and finally bilateral relations*' (Kremlin 5 July 2009; emphasis added). During the summit, the two sides 'signed an agreement . . . to cut American and Russian strategic nuclear arsenals by at least one-quarter, a first step in a broader effort intended to reduce the threat of such weapons drastically and to prevent their further spread to unstable regions. [They] agreed on the basic terms of a treaty to reduce the number of warheads and missiles to the lowest levels since the early years of the cold war' (Levy and Baker 7 July 2009). Furthermore, reflecting progress after the strain in relations stemming from the 2008 Russian incursion in Georgia and Russian objections to US defensive missile shield, the 'two sides agreed to resume military contacts suspended after the Georgia war and sealed a deal allowing the United States to send thousands of flights of troops and weapons to Afghanistan through Russian airspace each year' (Levy and Baker 2009). Finally, President Obama 'offer[ed] to scrap a missile defence shield in Eastern Europe if it helped to stop Iran building a nuclear bomb' (Halpin 8 July 2009).

On 17 September 2009, President Obama announced that he was abandoning the idea of stationing a missile-defence shield in Poland and the Czech Republic (Halpin and Philp 18 September 2009; see also Reid 18 September 2009). His gamble paid off 'as Russia [on 23 September 2009] opened the door to punishing new sanctions on Iran to halt its nuclear programme. Emerging from his first meeting with Mr. Obama since the Eastern Europe missile shield was scrapped, President Medvedev . . . conceded that "in some cases, sanctions are inevitable"' (Philp 24 September 2009).

Last-minute 'bargaining in Geneva between US and Russian negotiators failed to produce an agreement to replace . . . START, which expired [4 December 2009]'. The two presidents 'rushed out declarations that they would remain bound by the treaty until they agreed on its replacement. In a joint statement released by the Kremlin they said that Russia and the US would continue to work "in the spirit" of the treaty. The Kremlin said that Mr. Medvedev and Mr. Obama had spoken by telephone about the state of the negotiations adding that they expected the draft treaty to be ready soon' (Halpin 5 December 2009). Finally, on 26 March 2010, after several months of difficult negotiations, President Obama 'hung up the phone again with Mr. Medvedev . . . this time having finally translated aspiration ['trying to forge a new relationship with Russia, starting with a treaty to slash nuclear arsenals'] into agreement' (Baker and Barry 27 March 2010). The two states signed the New START treaty in the Prague on 8 April 2010 (Baker and Bilefsky 9 April 2010).

While completing work on the New START, the two great powers did not lose sight of the import of curbing Iran's nuclear ambition. On 18 March, 2010, Secretary Clinton travelled to Moscow. In addition to ironing out the last details of the New START with the Russian leadership, the Secretary sought to 'lock in Russia's support for additional sanctions against Iran'. The Secretary's counterpart, Minister Lavrov, 'also signalled that Russia remained receptive to tougher sanctions against Iran'. Still, the two interlocutors 'clashed publicly' 'over an announcement that Russia would complete a nuclear power plant in Iran'. While Minister Lavrov insisted that the 'project will be completed', the State Department's spokesman, Philip J. Crowly was quick to note that the USA was only opposed 'to the timing of the announcement' and not the fact that the RF was building the plant in Bushehr (Landler and Levy 19 March 2010).

On 18 May 2010, the White House announced that the USA, the RF, and the People's Republic of China (PRC) were *set* to 'impose a fourth set of sanctions on Iran over its nuclear programme' (Sanger et al. 20 May 2010). As part of the sanctions, 'an embargo [was] introduced on sale of certain types of heavy arms to Iran, including modern tanks, jets and offensive missile systems' (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 20 May 2010). Still, a mere day later, 19 May 2010, 'Russia seemed to strike a more ambivalent note when Foreign Minister Sergey V. Lavrov released a statement expressing cautious support for the draft resolution, but stressing that it is far from completion' (Sanger et al. 20 May 2010). That same day, during a telephone conversation with Secretary Clinton,

Minister Lavrov 'expressed his concerns at reports of US and EU intentions not to stop at developing a collective position on Iran at the UN Security Council and to introduce unilateral sanctions' (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 19 May 2010). The sanctions on Iran were imposed – via Security Council Resolution 1929 – on 9 June 2010 (UN News Centre 9 June 2010).

2011 also saw Libya and Syria emerge as trouble-spots. On 26 February 2011, the UN Security Council (UNSC) 'voted unanimously . . . to impose military and financial sanctions against . . . Gaddafi and his inner circle'. Still, Russia 'secured a provision precluding the United States and European powers from using the resolution as a pretext for military intervention in Libya' (Lynch 26 February 2011). By mid-March, 2011, the G-8 'failed to agree . . . on a no-flight zone or any other military operation to help the Libyan opposition, instead passing the problem to the United Nations Security Council' (Erlanger 16 March 2011). The Security Council, too, 'remained divided on [15 March 2011] over a proposed draft resolution that calls for a no-flight zone over Libya and authorises the use of force to halt the bombing of civilians by forces loyal to Col. Muammar El-Qaddafi' (Bilefsky 16 March 2011). The RF, the People's Republic, and the Federal Republic of Germany 'express[ed] reservations'. For its part, 'Russia, which has often opposed Security Council resolutions that it thinks impinge on another [state's] domestic affairs, has insisted that serious questions remain about how a no-flight zone would operate and who would enforce it' (Bilefsky 2011). And, 'American officials have also said they were reluctant to initiate military action against another Muslim [state]' (Bilefsky 2011).

However, the 'prospects of a deadly siege of the rebel stronghold in Benghazi . . . produced a striking shift in tone from the Obama administration, which [began] pushing for the United Nations to authorize aerial bombing of Libyan tanks and heavy artillery to try to halt the advance of forces loyal to . . . Qaddafi' (Landler and Bilefsky 17 March 2011). After difficult negotiations, 'by a vote of 10 in favour to none against, with five abstentions (Brazil, China, Germany, India, RF), the Council authorized Member States, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, to take all necessary measures to protect civilians under threat of attack in the country, including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory – requesting them to immediately inform the Secretary-General of such measures' (United Nations Security Council 17 March 2011).

Minister Lavrov travelled to the USA in July 2011. During the Washington talks, he 'proposed to [Secretary] Clinton a new strategy for conducting talks with Iran. And the secretary of state supported it' (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 18 August 2011). The '"Lavrov plan" envisage[d], in response to each concrete – rather than declarative – step by Iran, gradually reducing the sanctions imposed by the international community. To this end, Moscow and Washington agreed to draw up a kind of "road map" of responding steps' (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 2011).

A new 'round of talks with Iran' commenced on 21 January 2012 in Istanbul (Erlanger 21 January 2012). For his part, Minister Lavrov posited that in addition to the nuclear programme, 'the lifting of sanctions on Iran must also be on the agenda' (Peterson 21 January 2011). By 14 March 2012, the 'US . . . asked Russia to carry an ultimatum to the leaders of Iran, warning that upcoming six-nation talks on the Iranian nuclear programme will be the "last chance" for progress before it pursues a military option' (Weir 14 March 2012). Indeed, a 'diplomatic source told *Kommersant* that American and Israeli preparations for a military strike against Iran are well underway, and that the attack is almost certain to happen before [the] US presidential elections in November unless some major diplomatic breakthrough occurs' (Weir 2012).

The G8 foreign ministers meeting in Washington on 12 April 2012 produced 'no progress on [the] key issues' of Iran's nuclear programme and Syria (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 13 April 2012a). Minister Lavrov noted that he and Secretary Clinton were 'investing certain hopes in the meeting which will be taking place between the Group of Six and representatives of the IRI [Islamic Republic of Iran] in Istanbul on 14 April. . . . On the eve of the meeting in Istanbul', added Minister Lavrov, 'Iranian negotiators have said that they will bring along new initiatives on how to resolve the situation' (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 13 April 2012b).

Turning again to Syria, President Obama proposed, in late May 2012, a plan 'for the departure of President Bashar al-Assad . . . modelled on the transition in another strife-torn Arab country, Yemen' (Cooper and Landler 27 May 2012). Much, of course, depended on Russia; and, burnt by UNSC Resolution 1973, President Medvedev and, as of 2012 President Putin, 'blocked any tough United Nations Security Council action against Mr. Assad' (Cooper and Landler 2012). 'Russian leaders are fearful that Syria is their last bastion of influence. Syria is Moscow's

main Middle East ally, home to a Russian naval base and extensive Russian oil and gas investments'; moreover, Dimitri Simes, noted that 'The Russians now consider President Assad a liability. But Putin doesn't like having his clients removed one after another by the United States, and he considers Assad his client' (quoted in Cooper and Landler 2012).

Presidents Putin and Obama met on 18 June 2012. This was a remarkable meeting in several respects. In an extraordinary display of great powers management and diplomacy, President Obama sought to impress upon the Russian President that '*the United States does not want to come between Russia and Syria, a strategic ally that Russia views as its last real bastion of influence in the region*'. For his part, President Putin 'spent considerable time pointing to what the Russians view as failed examples of political transition in Egypt and Libya as well as their concern that the West does not have a credible plan for what would happen to Syria's various battling factions and ethnic groups if Mr. Assad stepped down from power' (Cooper 19 June 2012).

In addition to discussing Syria, the two presidents discussed the case of Iran. Still, the 'first meeting between these outsized personalities as leaders of their respective countries could not have come at a more fraught time. Russia and the United States are clashing over a series of difficult issues: the American deployment of a missile defence system that Mr. Putin considers a threat; pending legislation in Congress that blocks visas and freezes assets of Russian officials linked to human rights abuses; and statements from the State Department about the protests that greeted Mr. Putin's inauguration that left the Russian leader. But the biggest irritant of all right now is Syria'. Finally, the 'renewed tensions come as the United States is heavily dependent on Russian cooperation for its military operations in Afghanistan' (Cooper 2012).

Minister Lavrov met with his new US counterpart, Secretary Kerry, in Berlin on 26 February 2013 (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 26 February 2013). And, '[f]or the first time since 2009, there may be signs of a break in the deadlock over Iran's nuclear programme. Iran entered the latest talks with a slightly softened position [as] [e]conomic sanctions are biting hard in Iran' (Nasir 18 March 2013). Indeed, '[h]ints of progress were seen at the round of talks in Kazakhstan [in February 2013]'. The 5 + 1 'proposed . . . small steps that would slightly ease American-imposed restrictions (allowing Iran to again trade in gold and silver, and to obtain spare parts for civilian aircraft)' (Nasir 2013).

The National Security Adviser Tom Donilon 'conveyed' to President Putin – in April 2013 – a letter from President Obama. It '"is written in a constructive tone and has a number of proposals promoting bilateral dialogue and cooperation", the Russian leader's foreign policy adviser, Yuri Ushakov, told reporters after the get-together. Ushakov said the White House is sending "positive signals" to Moscow' (Englund 2013). For his part, 'White House spokesman Jay Carney said Donilon went to Moscow to discuss a "full range" of issues, including Syria, trade and nuclear non-proliferation' (Englund 16 April 2013). And, on 7 May 2013, the USA and Russia 'announced a new diplomatic effort . . . to bring together the embattled government of President Bashar al-Assad and Syria's opposition in hopes of ending a conflict now in its third year' (Gearan and Wilson 8 May 2013). The agreement was announced in Moscow, 'after a day of intense diplomatic meetings' between Secretary Kerry and Minister Lavrov (Lee Myers and Gladstone 8 May 2013). Putin and Obama met on 17 June 2013 in Enniskillen, Northern Ireland. While disagreeing on whether 'the Assad government had used chemical weapons against the rebels', the two 'presidents found some agreement on another divisive issue, Iran and its nuclear program. Both agreed that the victory of Iran's president-elect, Hassan Rowhani, could mean that "there will be opportunities to solve the Iranian nuclear problem", Mr. Putin said' (Calmes 18 June 2013).

Continuing the diplomatic work on outstanding problems, secretaries John Kerry (State) and Chuck Hagel (Defence) met in Washington with their Russian counterparts, ministers Sergei Lavrov (Foreign) and Sergei Shoigu (Defence). The principal accomplishment of the meetings in Washington between the two teams of 'top diplomatic and defence officials' was the 'promise to increase official contacts'; nevertheless, the summit between presidents Obama and Putin was cancelled (Shanker and Gordon 10 August 2013). Both top diplomats stressed the importance of the bilateral relationship, with Secretary Kerry noting that 'needless to say, [it is] a very important relationship, and it is marked by both shared interests and, at times, colliding and conflicting interests'; and Minister Lavrov noted that 'Moscow and Washington had a relationship of "mutual respect" and that there was no risk of a return to the cold war or of undermining "strategic stability" between the two [states]' (Shanker and Gordon 2013).

For their part, the top defence officials 'agreed to increase their direct dialogue, including instituting a regular series of videoconference calls,

and to increase [in] meetings of their senior policy officials' (Shanker and Gordon 10 August 2013). Finally, '[p]rogress toward a unified front to address the crisis in Syria was viewed as one litmus test of whether the Americans and Russians were working together. Mr. Lavrov said both sides had agreed to press ahead with a second set of talks in Geneva, and senior Obama administration officials agreed that Geneva was the appropriate forum' (Shanker and Gordon 2013).

On 9 September 2013 the RF made a 'surprise . . . proposal to defuse the American confrontation with Syria. . . . Mr. Obama cautiously embraced Russia's plan on Monday to avert a strike by having President Bashar al-Assad of Syria turn over chemical weapons to the international community, but it remained uncertain whether it would succeed. Russia has tried to intervene before other American-led military actions' (Baker et al. 10 September 2013; see also Shear et al. 10 September 2013). Steven Lee Myers noted that 'Russia has at least for now made itself indispensable in containing the conflict in Syria'. Indeed, Putin 'has boxed Mr. Obama into treating Moscow as an essential partner for much of the next year'. More specifically, 'Mr. Putin's palpable hostility to what he views as the supersized influence of the United States around the world explains much of the anti-American sentiment that he and his supporters have stoked since he returned as president last year after serving four years as prime minister' (Lee Myers 12 September 2013).

On 12 September 2013, President Assad 'announced publicly that his country had formally applied to join the chemical weapons treaty. According to the treaty's terms, Syria would be required to submit a declaration detailing the types, quantities and locations of all its chemical weapons and the locations of all facilities for producing them within 60 days of formally joining the accord' (Gordon and Lee Mayers 2013). Meeting with Minister Lavrov in Geneva, Secretary Kerry 'said that the normal procedures were far too slow because Mr. Assad's government had used chemical weapons against its own people' (Gordon and Lee Myers 13 September 2013).

27 September 2013 saw passage of a UNSC resolution 'aimed at coercing the government of . . . Assad to honour a pledge to give up its chemical weapons. . . . The measure was a compromise [reached] by the Council's five permanent members'. In a 'Western concession granted to Russia', the 'resolution [did] not automatically threaten the use of force if Syria reneges'. Indeed, Minister Lavrov 'pointed out that enforcement measures were not automatic; any punitive action would require a second

resolution. . . . The Russian foreign minister also said he hoped the resolution would provide momentum to convene a conference aimed at purging the Middle East of all such unconventional weapons' (Gladstone and Sengupta 28 September 2013).

A new round of talks on Iran commenced in Geneva on 15 October 2013. This was the 'first between Iran and the United States and five other world powers since the election of Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani'. Iran 'hint[ed]' that it will 'accept some constraints on [its] nuclear programme' but would 'want quick reciprocal steps to ease sanctions'. While 'prepared to reciprocate', the USA was 'reluctant to withdraw the most effective measures, especially sanctions that have cut off Iran from the international banking system, until the main issues are solved' (Gordon and Erdbrink 15 October 2013).

By 23 November 2013, 'Secretary . . . Kerry planned to fly to Geneva . . . to join in the talks on imposing a temporary freeze on Iran's nuclear programme, a sign that the negotiations are edging close to an agreement' (Gordon 23 November 2013). A day later, 24 November 2013, the 'United States and five other world powers announced a landmark accord . . . that would temporarily freeze Iran's nuclear programme and lay the foundation for a more sweeping agreement'. The duration of the agreement was six months with the idea being to 'give international negotiators time to pursue a more comprehensive pact that would ratchet back much of Iran's nuclear programme and ensure that it could be used only for peaceful purposes' (Gordon and Landler 24 November 2013)

Early 2014 witnessed Russia's takeover of Crimea (March 2014) and the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight 17 (July 2014). There is no denying the fact that these two events – and US/EU/NATO response – effected an incredible chill in the relations. Still, *diplomats worked feverishly to minimize the effects of friction*. Moreover, the two states continued to manage their relations with a view towards (i) ending the conflict in Syria, (ii) curbing Iran's nuclear ambition, and (iii) cooperating on a new threat – ISIL/ISIS. Thus, by 14 October 2014, Secretary Kerry 'said . . . that the United States and Russia had agreed to share more intelligence on the Islamic State, *as he sought to lay the basis for improved cooperation with Moscow. Just six months ago, Obama administration officials suggested that their goal was to isolate President Vladimir V. Putin following Russia's decision to annex Crimea and provide military support to separatists in eastern Ukraine. But Mr. Kerry made it clear that he would welcome expanded cooperation with Mr. Putin after a meeting [in Paris]*

with Sergey V. Lavrov' (Gordon 15 October 2014; emphasis added). The Secretary added that 'It is no secret that the United States and Russia have had our differences over Ukraine. . . . *We came together today in order to try to focus on those issues where we can find the capacity to be able to make a difference to other countries, to the world in general, and certainly to the relationship between Russia and the United States*' (quoted in Gordon 2014; emphasis added).

> In a solo news conference after the meeting, Mr. Kerry outlined his diplomatic strategy, which appeared to be *drawing in the Russians with proposals to cooperate on terrorism and global issues to try to lay a foundation for negotiations on tougher issues*. . . . Mr. Kerry said that he had proposed that the two sides intensify intelligence sharing on the militant group and other terrorist threats, and that Mr. Lavrov had agreed. Opening the door to cooperation in Iraq, Mr. Kerry said Mr. Lavrov had agreed to explore whether Russia could do more to support Iraq's beleaguered government as it battles the Islamic State – including by providing weapons. *The bulk of the conversation, Mr. Kerry asserted, was on issues other than Ukraine, including how to fight the spread of Ebola; matters involving North Korea, Afghanistan, Syria, and Yemen; and efforts to negotiate an agreement to constrain Iran's nuclear program*, which Mr. Kerry insisted was not out of reach. While White House officials had made it clear earlier this year that they were not cutting off all cooperation with Russia, they indicated that they were writing off the possibility of a constructive relationship with Mr. Putin – a possibility that Mr. Kerry on Tuesday seemed determined to keep open (Gordon 2014; emphases added).

Parsing the quote, we note – from among many remarkable things – that a mere seven months following Russia's take-over of Crimea, Secretary Kerry noted, in a solo news conference, that the 'bulk of the conversation, Mr. Kerry asserted, was on issues other than Ukraine'. Indeed, not only was Ukraine *not* on the agenda but the US Secretary of State sought to 'draw' RF into greater cooperation.

In Vienna, on 23 November 2014, a day in advance of the deadline to reach an agreement with Iran, 'American officials finally acknowledged . . . that the two sides would not reach a deal . . . but would . . . extend the talks a second time to explore a series of possible solutions' (Gordon and Sanger 24 November 2014). Minister Lavrov and Secretary Kerry met again, on 4 December 2014 'on the sidelines of the OSCE Ministerial Council session in Basel' (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 2014). The two

interlocutors discussed the ongoing Ukrainian and Syria crises, as well as the progress made on the question of the Iranian nuclear programme. It is particularly telling, however, that in its report of the meeting, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of RF noted that the '*harmony* of Russia's and USA's approaches at the talks between the [P5 + 1] AND Iran on [Iran's] nuclear *was confirmed*' (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 4 December 2014; emphasis added).

Lavrov and Kerry met on the 'sidelines of the 51st Munich Security Conference'; they also met, individually, with Javad Zarif, the foreign minister of Iran (BBC Monitoring Middle East 7 February 2015). In early March 2015, Lavrov, Kerry, and Zarif met in Geneva and Montreux (BBC Monitoring Middle East 27 February 2015). The foreign ministers of the P5 + 1, and foreign minister Zarif, met in Lausanne at the end of March 2015. 'Diplomats [were] working to agree on a preliminary framework accord by the end of March, to be followed by a comprehensive deal by 30 June [2015] that includes all technical details' (BBC Monitoring Middle East 28 March 2015).

The Lausanne meeting produced, in the words of Minister Lavrov, 'a political framework that determines solutions to the most acute problems. . . . In response, sanctions are being lifted from Iran' (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union 6 April 2015). 'Talks among technical experts and deputies [took place] almost continuously for months, in an effort to fill in the many blanks in a broad framework for a possible deal the ministers . . . agreed to in early April [in Lausanne]. But the most difficult questions could be answered only by the top diplomats from the negotiating [states]' (DeYoung and Morello 16 July 2015). Finally, the deal was sealed on 14 July 2015 (Gordon and Sanger 13 July 2015; Gordon 4 August 2015) after 18 days in the 'resplendent Palais Coburg hotel' (Borger 15 July 2015).

In May 2015 Secretary Kerry 'travelled to Russia . . . to meet with President Putin'. The Secretary sought to

> discuss whether it is possible for the two sides to work together on a political solution for the conflict in Syria. . . . The meeting . . . represents another attempt by the Obama administration to pursue a political solution to Syria after years of frustrated diplomacy and deepening violence there. It is also another twist in the United States relations with Russia. The Obama administration has sometimes sought to isolate Mr. Putin because of his military intervention in Ukraine, but has also sought to carve out areas

> where the two sides might cooperate. 'This trip is part of our ongoing effort to maintain direct lines of communication with senior Russian officials and to ensure U.S. views are clearly conveyed', said the State Department, which added that the subjects will include 'a full range of bilateral and regional issues, including Iran, Syria and Ukraine' (Gordon 12 May 2015).

Again, we note that the foregoing quote is perfectly illustrative of the extent to which ES theorizing captures the essence of international politics. Diplomacy, it will be recalled, is essentially about 'communication' and identifying points of overlapping interests directed towards the minimization of 'the effects of friction in international relations'. That's precisely what the Secretary's trip was all about. Additionally, we again must take note of the fact that the two sides – perfectly, once more, in keeping with ES theorizing – included 'a full range of bilateral and regional issues, including Iran, Syria and Ukraine'.

And, notwithstanding the rhetoric of not being able to 'envision a constructive relationship with Mr. Putin because of the use of military force in Ukraine . . . [i]n practice, however, the Obama administration's Russia policy has all along sought to identify areas of potential cooperation, such as in the Iran nuclear talks in which Mr. Kerry has worked with Sergey V. Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, even as the United States has imposed economic sanctions on Russia because of Ukraine' (Gordon 12 May 2015). Indeed, the 'tone' of the talks was described as 'cordial'. 'Talks of isolating Russia because of its intervention in Ukraine appeared to have been relegated to a past chapter of relations. Instead the emphasis was finding new ways to collaborate, particularly on Syria. Mr. Kerry expressed hope on that front that American and Russian officials would deliberate "with increased focus and purpose"' (Gordon 13 May 2015).

On 23 October 2015, Lavrov and Kerry met in Vienna 'to explore a possible political solution to the civil war in Syria [although] they were well aware of the biggest obstacle: Russia wants Syria's president . . . to stay, while the United States wants him to go' (Rosenberg and MacFarquhar 24 October 2015). And two months later, on 15 December 2015, the Secretary visited Moscow 'in [an] effort to organize a new round of talks aimed at ending the Syrian civil war *that could also align the United States and Russia more closely in strategies for fighting the Islamic State*' (Kramer 16 December 2015; emphasis added). The US Secretary 'met for nearly four hours . . . with

President...Putin.... [The] diplomats said they had narrowed a gap defining which Syrian militias belong on a terrorist list....'

On 15 July 2016, during a meeting between Secretary Kerry and Minister Lavrov in Moscow, the 'United States and Russia announced a tentative deal...to coordinate airstrikes against the Islamic Republic and the Nusra Front, Al Qaeda's affiliate in Syria' (Harris 16 July 2016). The proposed 'joint military command centre staffed by military and intelligence officials...generated deep unease at the Pentagon and in some quarters of the State Department' (Harris 2016). It is telling that Secretary Kerry held a meeting with Minister Lavrov, went to the US Embassy in Moscow so as to brief 'Obama administration's top national security officials through a secure communication' and then 'returned to the bargaining table and asked most of the aides from both countries to leave so he could speak more directly with Mr. Lavrov' (Harris 2016). There was also unease about the agreement given that the 'Nusra Front has been one of the most effective anti-Assad forces'. Nevertheless, Secretary 'Kerry made clear that defeating the Nusra Front was a major American priority' (Harris 2016).

Minister Lavrov and Secretary Kerry agreed on 'breaking up a solution to the Syrian crisis into several phases, the first being U.S.-Russian military cooperation on airstrikes against ISIS and Nusra Front'. The US government 'agreed to coordinate military airstrikes with Moscow, provided the latter refrains from attacking the moderate opposition, which is fighting the Syrian [government] and ISIS at the same time' (*Asharq al-Awsat* 28 July 2016).

Conclusion

While acknowledging the presence of friction, I have argued that this has *not* been the dominant feature of RF-US relations as of March 2014. Working within the Grotian tradition of IRT, I showed that for all the irritants, the relations between the two great powers have continued to be remarkably orderly *and constitutive of international society*. Namely, RF and the USA have continued to regard one another as great powers, and therefore indispensable members of international society, and have continued to cooperate in the workings of the common good of international society. More specifically, I showed that the two great powers' heads of state and government and respective foreign ministries were engaged in constant communication, identifying

points where the two states' interests 'overlap' and seeking to 'minimize the effects of friction' in RF-US relations. Moreover, I showed that as custodians of international society and international order, the two great powers – as befits their status – managed their relations with a view towards limiting war and 'assert[ed] the right, and [were] accorded the right, to play a [*central*] part in determining issues that affect the peace and security of the international system as a whole'.

To buttress my argument empirically I offered the following examples. *First*, RF and US diplomats cooperated in controlling and reducing armaments by signing and ratifying the New START treaty and completing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) on Iran. *Second*, as the custodians of international society and international order, the two great powers are managing their relations with a view towards limiting war. *Third*, they 'assert[ed] the right, and [were] accorded the right, to play a [*central*] part in determining issues that affect the peace and security of the international system as a whole'. In particular, RF and the USA have been actively engaged in managing the conflicts in Libya and Syria. *Fourth*, the two great powers' chancelleries were engaged in constant communication, identifying points where the two states' interests 'overlap' and seeking to 'minimize the effects of friction' in RF-US relations – albeit it may be the case that the element of friction, while not unproblematic, has produced beneficial results for the international society as a whole.

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PART II

The Ukrainian Crisis and Beyond in the Restructuring of Russian Relations with the West

CHAPTER 8

Russia and the European Security Order: Impact and Implications of the Ukraine Crisis

John Berryman

Introduction

In February 2014, Ukraine's elected President Viktor Yanukovych was violently ousted from power in Kyiv. Alarmed by what was seen in Moscow to be an 'extra-constitutional coup', managed in some degree by Washington, and concerned that the new authorities might apply for membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and terminate Russia's basing arrangements in Sevastopol, in a pre-emptive move Russia annexed Crimea. Military and intelligence support were then supplied by Russia to the armed insurgency in eastern Ukraine where more than 70 percent of the residents considered the new government in Kyiv to be illegal (IISS 2015a: 320; Berryman 2015). For defying the values and norms of a rules-based international order, not least the 1975 Helsinki Accords which declared Europe's borders to be 'inviolable', Russia was excluded from the G8, personalized sanctions were imposed on the inner circle of politicians and officials close to Putin, and meetings of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) were suspended (Allison 2014; Lukyanov 2014).

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_8

Reflecting on the recent record of Western interventions in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, Russian commentators concluded that by its intervention in Ukraine the Kremlin had opted to 'deprive the West of the monopoly over breaching the norms of international law' (Kortunov 2016: 6).

Apart from triggering these 'soft power' responses, the Ukraine crisis re-focused NATO's attention away from its post-9/11 'out of area' operations back to its earlier 'hard power' priorities of deterrence and collective defence in Europe. Russia's actions have, therefore, brought a renewed sense of purpose to NATO that had previously been seen to be on a 'long drift towards irrelevance' or an 'ordinary future' (Stephens 2010; Kaplan 2012; Lo 2015: 195). As NATO has scrambled to provide strategic reassurance to its small member states (and partners) located on or near Russia's 2,000-km post-Cold War border, stretching down from the North Cape to the Black Sea, the past two years have seen the most serious escalation of tension between Russia and the West since the end of the Cold War. As in earlier periods of the fluctuating relations between the Russian Federation and the West, a variety of Western and Russian commentators have detected the chill of a possible 'New Cold War' (Arbatov 2007; Lucas 2014; Legvold 2016; Kalb 2016).

To gauge the prospects for such a development, Russia's response to NATO's controversial 20-year-long post-Cold War eastward enlargement, the largest campaign of expansion in its history, must first be traced, focusing on the rival military postures and military exercises of Russia and NATO in Europe, before the impact of the Ukraine crisis on NATO's relations with Russia and the broader 'hard power' implications of the crisis for European security are examined. (The 'soft power' contributions of the European Union (EU) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) to the European security environment are treated in Chapter 4 and Chapter 10.)

Moscow and NATO Enlargement 1994–2014

Contrary to the geopolitical dictum that 'alliances are against, and only derivatively for, someone or something', the end of the Cold War did not see the demise of NATO, the world's pre-eminent security alliance boasting more than 350 committees and 8,500 employees (Liska 1962: 12). Instead, by 1994 a decision had been reached in Washington to extend NATO eastward (the rationale for which will be explored later in this

chapter). Meanwhile, with the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, between 1989 and 1994 Russia's western borders were pushed back 1,500-km as more than one million former Soviet troops, civilian personnel and family members withdrew from the former Soviet-bloc Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) states and the former Soviet states of Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – a vast geostrategic retreat characterized by one RAND analyst as 'one of the most extensive and least appreciated force withdrawals in modern times' (Litovkin 1994; Lambeth 1995: 94).

Consequently, in the immediate post-Cold War years, while Russia retained nuclear parity with the USA, the quantitative superiority enjoyed by the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact in the Cold War – and indeed the numerical superiority the armed forces of the Russian Empire had enjoyed in Europe since the seventeenth century – was now replaced by an almost threefold inferiority for Russian forces compared to Western forces in Europe. In place of 3.6 million Soviet armed forces, the armed forces of the Russian Federation fell to around one million, while NATO boasted armed forces of 3 million, of which approximately half were in Europe (Arbatov 1995: 136; Kagan and Higham 2002; Neuman 2008; Breedlove 2016: 97).

Driven by an awareness of its military and economic weakness, Russia's strenuous diplomatic efforts to block NATO enlargement proved ineffectual. However, to reassure Moscow the signing in May 1997 of the *Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation* stated that 'NATO and Russia do not consider each other as adversaries' and that NATO had 'no intention, no plan and no reason' to deploy nuclear weapons, and 'in the present and foreseeable security context' no commitment to 'further permanent stationing of substantial combat forces' on the territory of new NATO member states. NATO additionally refrained from undertaking contingency planning for the defence of Poland's sensitive border with Kaliningrad (NATO 1997; Michta 2006: 88; Berryman 2009: 168–169). Poland and the Baltic states later complained that these special assurances gave NATO's new allies a 'secondary' or 'unequal' security status and subjected them to constraints not affecting the older NATO allies (Yost 2014: 306 ftn. 56). Nonetheless, these assurances helped persuade Russia to acquiesce in this first stage of NATO's post-Cold War enlargement and Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic entered NATO in March 1999. (For more detailed analyses of the

prolonged NATO enlargement process see Berryman 1998, 2009, 2011; Smith 2006; Stent 2015; Yost 2014: Chapter 8.)

It should be noted that this first enlargement of NATO took place in the very middle of a three-month bombardment of Russia's 'ally', the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, by 1,200 NATO aircraft, largely American, flying 800 missions a day. The operation was less about the 'international community' seeking to relieve the suffering of the Albanian people of Kosovo and more about Washington demonstrating the post-Cold War credibility of NATO by conducting a successful 'out of area' operation without the authorization of the UN Security Council (Bacevich 2002: 104–105; Gowan 2000) Additionally, it should be noted that, while US defence industries looked forward to the prospect of equipping the new CEE NATO member states with NATO-compatible military equipment, worries were expressed that extending security guarantees to weak CEE states might suck the USA into what Lieutenant-General Barry McCaffrey termed 'some god-forsaken Eurasian quagmire' (Hillen and Noonan 1998: 30–33; Achcar 2000: 78; Talbott 2002: 98).

Three months later, on the anniversary of the opening of *Operation Barbarossa,* Hitler's offensive against the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, a defiant Russian General Staff mounted its first large-scale military exercise, Zapad *(West)-99.* Involving 50,000 command and staff personnel, five military districts and three fleets, the scenario envisaged NATO-launched air attacks on the territory of Russia and Belarus. In a sharp break from the previous Soviet declaratory policy of 'no first use' of nuclear weapons, Russia targeted tactical nuclear cruise missiles against those countries from whose territories the offensive was launched. Congratulating the military staffs at the conclusion of the exercise, President Yeltsin declared that for his part such a threat of large-scale military aggression against Russia was 'something for sci-fi books' (Kipp 2001).

NATO's second enlargement in 2004, part of a broader process of NATO/EU enlargement, saw the four CEE states of Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria, together with the former Soviet Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, three states with a pronounced hostility to Russia, enter the alliance. Recognizing Russia's continued weakness, as a realist Putin accepted that he had little choice but to pursue the 'politics of the possible' and acquiesce in this second stage of NATO's enlargement. NATO now embraced ten new member states, enhancing its presence in the Baltic and Black Sea and extending its security commitments to borders of the Russian Federation which lay less than 100 miles from Russia's second

city, the former imperial capital of St Petersburg, while the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad was now encircled by NATO states. Despite the risks of entering into defence commitments with states which were virtually indefensible, NATO continued to adhere to the constraints of the 1997 Founding Act and no contingency plans or full defence strategies for the Baltic States were prepared (Berryman 2009: 169–173). As Stephen Walt has observed: 'NATO expansion was never based on serious calculations of interest and capability: the United States and its allies simply assumed the Article 5 pledge to defend NATO's new members would never have to be honoured' (Walt 2014). Indeed, confident that NATO's new security undertakings would not be tested, in August 2004 Washington announced that in the coming decade an additional 70,000 US troops would be withdrawn from Europe, further reducing US forces in Europe from their Cold War level of 300,000 (Michta 2006: 104–105).

Although the Western Balkan states of Albania and Croatia were welcomed into accession talks at the 2008 Bucharest NATO Summit, bringing to 12 the number of states admitted to NATO in the post-Cold War years, Washington's reckless proposals for Georgia and Ukraine to be awarded Membership Action Plans (MAPs) were blocked. Leaving aside the problems posed by the internal political divisions within both states over NATO membership, fundamental questions were raised as to wisdom and feasibility of extending military guarantees to Ukraine, a state enjoying a 1,500-km common border with Russia only a few hundred miles from Moscow (Greene 2012: 11). While Russia's large-scale military exercise in the Caucasus, *Kavkaz- 2008*, and the subsequent Georgian War underlined the dangers of seeking to push NATO even further east, the exposure of the shortcomings of Russian armed forces in the war triggered Moscow's adoption in 2010 of an ambitious 50 trillion ruble ($720 billion) State Armament Programme to boost Russia's military spending by some 30 percent by 2020. The implications of Russia's modernized and upgraded regional security capability would become apparent in 2014 (Gressel 2015). Meanwhile, pessimistic as to the adequacy of its national defence preparations, Warsaw successfully leveraged its close bilateral relations with Washington to secure an additional US commitment to deploy Patriot missile batteries and approximately 100 American support troops in Poland (Kay 2010: 139).

The following year, the *Ladoga-2009* military exercises saw Russian amphibious and airborne operations against the Baltic states and Finland, while a western press report claimed that Russia's *Zapad-2009*

exercise included a Russian nuclear strike on Warsaw (with respect to the validity of this claim, see Keir Giles 2016: 19). Moscow insisted that the exercise had simply rehearsed interoperability within the framework of the recently established Belarus-Russian integrated air defence system, and Russia's Deputy Defence Minister, Dmitri Rogozin, suggested that 'Our NATO colleagues should agree with confidence-building measures in the close-to-border military activities proposed by Russia, rather than attempt to think up a new problem in our relations' (RIA Novosti 2009). Four years later, when 70,000 Russian and Belarusian troops participated in *Zapad-2013*, no nuclear element figured in the exercise.

In 2012 the Obama administration announced that it would remove two of its four remaining army brigades in Europe, leaving one in Germany and one in Italy. Washington indicated that it would compensate for these troop withdrawals by sending forces to Europe on a 'rotational presence' mode for joint training and exercises with other European allies (Cottey 2013: 72; Yost 2014: 353). However, in response to lobbying by Poland and the Baltic states, contingency plans for the defence of NATO's eastern flank were now prepared and in November 2013 6,000 troops took part in *Steadfast Jazz 13*, NATO's first live-fire military exercises in Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia – the biggest NATO manoeuvres since the end of the Cold War. The aim was to test the command-and-control systems for the 13,000-strong 'rotational' forces of the NATO Response Force (NRF), established in 2003 following the Prague NATO Summit but given little attention, and thereby reassure new NATO members that Article 5 remained the bedrock of the alliance (The Economist 2013; Blank 2015; Applebaum 2015: 40–41). By this stage, contrary to the endless assurances of Madeleine Albright, Alexander Vershbow, Condoleezza Rice and Joe Biden that the consolidation of democratic peace and development across Europe would make Russia more secure, NATO's eastward enlargement and missile defence programme were seen in Moscow as precisely zero-sum mechanisms, by which the West was consolidating its strong strategic position and sphere of influence in Europe vis-a-vis a weakened Russia (Simes 2014: 9; Yost 2014: 290, 355–356; Monaghan 2014). Claims that NATO enlargement would help consolidate the democratic transition of post-communist states were always subordinate to Washington's desire to have the discretionary use of the territories and infrastructure of NATO member states (Charap and Troitsky 2013: 51–52).

The Ukraine Crisis and NATO-Russia Relations

The 2014 Wales NATO Summit

In response to the Ukraine crisis in the spring of 2014, NATO air policing of the Baltic states was immediately quadrupled and 150 American F-15C *Eagle* fighters, British and German Eurofighters, Polish MIG-29s, Danish F-16s and Lithuanian air forces were deployed on a rotational basis from Siauliai Air Base in Lithuania (Hampton 2015: 142). However, it was not until the Wales NATO Summit in September 2014 that a Readiness Action Plan (RAP) was adopted to constrain Russia by providing strategic reassurance to those worried member states on NATO's eastern flank. Thanks especially to German opposition, Polish demands for permanent forward NATO military deployments were once more rejected as incompatible with the boundaries set by the 1997 Founding Act. However, it was agreed that to provide a stronger 'trip-wire' the 5,000-strong combat brigade contained within the NRF should be developed as a NATO 'Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF)', a 'spearhead' force capable of deploying in two to five days. It is envisaged that the rotation of overlapping units will create a 'persistent presence' just short of permanent NATO deployment, and to facilitate such rotations, NATO Force Integration Units (FIUs) have been established in Poland and the three Baltic states on NATO's northeastern periphery, and Romania and Bulgaria on NATO's southeastern periphery (Simon 2014: 68; Arnold 2016).

In the ongoing debate in NATO over burden-sharing and the inadequate contribution of European NATO members to the upkeep of the alliance, in 2011 US Defence Secretary, Robert Gates, warned NATO's European member states that they faced 'the very real possibility of collective military irrelevance' (Kay 1998: 48–50; Cottey 2013: 82). At the September 2014 Wales NATO Summit, his successor, Ashton Carter, noted that America, a nation of 320 million with a GDP of $17 trillion, allocated more than 4 percent of its GDP to defence and was responsible for more than 75 percent of all NATO defence spending. By contrast, the 500 million people of NATO Europe with a GDP of $20 trillion provided only 25 percent of NATO defence expenditure and their share of defence spending was steadily declining. Indeed, most of the states that entered NATO from 1999 saw membership as a mechanism for strategic bandwagoning or 'free riding', securing the USA as a guarantor of national

security and a partial substitute for their national defence policies, thereby facilitating a reduction in their defence spending. Hence, with the exception of Poland and Estonia, between the year of their accession and 2014 the proportion of GDP allocated to defence by the new NATO member states *fell* by more than a third. The Defence Investment Pledge launched at the Wales NATO Summit therefore urged NATO's European member states to meet the minimum NATO defence expenditure target of 2 percent of GDP, a target which currently is met by only four of America's 25 European allies – Britain, Estonia, Poland and Greece (Heisbourg 2010: 17–40; Webber et al. 2012: 106–107, 119; IISS 2015b; Lanoszka 2015; Grygiel and Mitchell 2016: 86–89; Arnold 2016: 86–87).

By this stage US ground forces in Europe had shrunk to 33,000 and the last of 6,000 US tanks had just been withdrawn from Europe. To help stiffen the resolve of its European NATO members, Washington now despatched the 700 men of the Texas-based *Ironhorse* armoured cavalry unit to Poland and the three Baltic states, equipped with 250 M1 *Abrams* main battle tanks, *Bradley* and *Stryker* armoured fighting vehicles and self-propelled howitzers (The Moscow Times 2014). And in June 2015 the USA initiated its modest European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) with the temporary deployment of three Boeing B-52H *Stratofortress* heavy bombers and two Northrop Grumman B-2 *Spirit* bombers to the UK and eight Fairchild A-10C *Thunderbolt* attack aircraft to Estonia (Malenic 2015).

NATO-Russia Military Postures and Military Exercises 2015–2016

To secure the rapid deployment capability and allied interoperability demanded by the RAP, the number and type of NATO and allied exercises in northeast Europe have been substantially increased and in the large-scale *Noble Jump, Trident Juncture* and *Allied Shield* exercises in 2015, and the *Anakonda* and *Brilliant Capability* exercises in 2016, transfers of more than 30,000 NATO troops to 'forward' positions in the Baltic Sea region were mounted (IISS 2016b). Although the obligations stipulated by the OSCE Vienna Document for member states to provide advance notification of military exercises (unless the exercises are snap tests of readiness) are being met, given the increased tempo of NATO military exercises in the Baltic Sea region concerns have been expressed that incidents and misunderstandings arising from such exercises close to

Russia's borders might have the potential to escalate into a more serious conflict. Conducting the annual NATO *Baltops* naval exercises off the Polish coast in June 2015, Lieutenant-General Ben Hodges, commander of US Army Europe, conceded that 'big exercises right on the… (Russian)…border heighten the chance of an accident or something unintended happening'. The *Baltops* exercise, which involved 49 naval vessels from 17 countries and 5,900 personnel, was conducted only 100 miles from the border with the Russian Federation exclave of Kaliningrad (MacAskill 2015). In a report published by the European Leadership Network in August 2015, a group of fourteen former Russian, German, British, French, Spanish and Turkish foreign ministers called for additional NATO-Russia initiatives to improve notification procedures and 'rules of the road' to avoid the possibility of unintended incidents in military exercises triggering an escalation to war (The Moscow Times 2015). This initiative has subsequently been taken forward in a series of publications by the European Leadership Network, underlining the dangers posed by the new military postures and exercises of NATO and Russia (see, for example, Kuleska 2016).

Despite the presentation of the measures agreed at the Wales NATO Summit as 'the most significant reinforcement of the alliance's capacity for collective defence since the end of the Cold War', critics have been unimpressed by the modest scale of NATO's response (Breedlove 2016: 102–103). They have urged that the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act should be abandoned and a permanent 'trip-wire' force of American and West European forces should be established in proximity to the Russian border, that heavy armoured and mechanized forces should be despatched to Germany and Poland, and that NATO's naval forces in the Baltic Sea and Black Sea should be reinforced. Some critics have even advocated the adoption of a 'preclusive' forward strategy to defend NATO's eastern frontier by 'limited war' and urged the development and deployment of new tactical and theatre nuclear weapons in CEE and the Baltic states (Grygiel and Mitchell 2014a, 2014b; Colby 2015; Kroenig 2015; Colby and Solomon 2015–2016; Giles 2016: 66; Arnold 2016). Responding to some of these criticisms, in early 2016 it was announced that the 'rotational' forces of the NRF would be tripled in size to 40,000, with the US contribution trebled from 4,000 to 12,000 troops, that pre-positioned US heavy weapons in eastern Europe would be doubled to 500 units, that the modest Royal Navy presence in the Baltic would be doubled, and that the Pentagon would quadruple the funding of

its ERI to $3.4 billion in the 2017 fiscal year, taking that year's US defence budget to $582.7 billion (Evans 2016; Philp 2016; Arnold 2016).

Confronted by NATO's enhanced forward military presence in northeastern Europe and the increased tempo of its military exercises along Russia's borders, unsurprisingly the December 2014 Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation identified the build-up of NATO military capabilities and the bringing of NATO military infrastructures to Russia's borders as direct threats to the national security of the Russian Federation. Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu announced that two new divisions would be located in Russia's Western Military District, promised to add an additional division to the Southern Military District by the end of 2016, and stepped up the tempo of large-scale 'snap' military exercises of 30–80,000 Russian troops in territories proximate to Russia's western borders (IISS 2016a: 164–166). Additionally, *Iskander*-M short-range surface-surface ballistic missile platforms, S-400 *Triompf* anti-aircraft systems and K-300 *Bastion*-P coastal defence anti-ship cruise missiles have been deployed to create Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) bastions in the Crimea, the Kaliningrad region and the Artic, while the Russian air force has undertaken increasingly assertive reconnaissance patrols in the Baltic Sea, the North Sea, the Black Sea and the Arctic, albeit still at a fraction of the mission levels seen in the Cold War (RT 2015; IISS 2015c; Gressel 2015: 12; Kuleska 2016; Fruhling and Lasconjarias 2016).

Against the backdrop of this remilitarization of the NATO-Russia frontier in northeastern Europe, a RAND corporation report of February 2016 confirmed that Russia could overrun NATO's new 'trip wire' forces in the Baltic states in less than three days, in the process inflicting heavy casualties. Noting that when American troops exercise in the Baltic states or Georgia or Ukraine they are operating as close to the Russian heartland as Wehrmacht *panzers* had reached in 1941–1942, the report concluded: 'It can be hoped that Russia's double aggression against Ukraine is the result of a unique confluence of circumstances and that it does not portend a more generally threatening approach to the West' (Shlapak and Johnson 2016).

The same month also saw the broadcast in the UK of a BBC Two programme, *World War Three: Inside the War Room,* which traced a hypothetical western response to Russian meddling in the Baltic states, escalating to the brink of nuclear war, and May 2016 saw the publication of *2017. War with Russia: An Urgent Warning from Senior Military Command,* a fictional work by General Sir Richard Shirreff, former

Deputy Supreme Allied Command Europe, tracing the build up to war between Russia and the West in 2017 (Doctorow 2016; Shirreff 2016). In response to Dmitri Medvedev's mild observation that the world seemed to be slipping into a 'New Cold War', Lithuania's combative President, Dalia Grybauskaite, a former Komsomol leader and European Union Commissioner, retorted that in view of Russian aggression in Ukraine and Syria the West was facing a *hot* war (Johnston 2016; Trenin 2016a).

In the months running up to the July 2016 Warsaw NATO Summit, following the installation of an interceptor and radar site at Deveselu in Romania in May 2016, completing the second stage of the US/NATO European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) missile defence system, Putin re-emphasized that since the system posed a threat to Russia's strategic nuclear forces it would be targeted by Russian forces as would the third stage of the system scheduled for installation in Poland in 2018 (IISS 2016c: 213–214; NATO 2016). And in June 2016 it was announced that four multinational battalions, comprising up to 4,000 American, British, German, French and Canadian troops, would be deployed on a rotational basis to Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and eastern Poland (Waterfield 2016).

At the July 2016 Warsaw NATO Summit, NATO reiterated its claim that, while the conduct of its military exercises on the very borders of Russia was in conformity with the terms and spirit of the Vienna Document, Russia's calling of large-scale exercises 'close to NATO territory' (i.e. just across the *Russian* border!) were in breach of the spirit of the document. NATO's self-serving conclusion was that it was 'Russia's exercises, not NATO's, which are a threat to stability' (NATO 2015: 11–12; IISS 2016b; The Economist 2016; Lough 2016). Since the Warsaw NATO Summit, calls have been made for renewed and more ambitious NATO military exercises within Russia's A2/AD bastions – a course of action which would certainly intensify the escalatory dynamics of military tensions (Jankowski 2016).

In sum, if the Ukraine crisis and the September 2014 Wales NATO Summit marked the end of NATO's post-Cold War partnership with Russia, the July 2016 Warsaw NATO Summit marked a deepening of the militarization of the NATO-Russian confrontation in Europe. A clash between Russian and NATO armed forces therefore looks more likely now than at any moment over the past 25 years (Trenin 2016b). What, then, of the prospects for European security?

Implications of the Ukraine Crisis for European Security

In the view of Francis Fukuyama and other neoliberal institutionalists, the termination of the global ideological contest for influence which had driven the Cold War opened up possibilities for a global extension of democratic liberalism and a 'democratic peace'. By contrast, leading US realist scholars such as Robert Kagan, John Mearsheimer, Stephen Walt, Robert Kaplan and Andrew Bacevich have argued that the new world order will continue to resemble the great power struggles, wars and conflicts of the past (Bacevich 2002: 114–116; Kagan 2003; Kalb 2016: 9).

Realpolitik calculations certainly underpinned Washington's shaping of the security architecture of post-Cold War Europe. For the USA, eastward enlargement of NATO met three requirements. First, NATO would serve as a geopolitical instrument to maintain America's management of European security which it had secured in the Cold War, and block any attempts the EU might make to serve as the primary security actor in Europe. Second, it would serve as a neo-containment hedge to check any efforts by a 're-imperializing' Russia to re-establish its sphere of influence in the post-Soviet space and become a regional hegemon in Europe. Third, NATO enlargement would block security competition between Germany and Russia and reassure Germany's neighbours by preventing any re-emergence of Germany as a possible hegemon in Europe. As the leaked contents of the confidential *US Defence Planning Guidance* of 1992 (subsequently disowned) made clear: 'It is of fundamental importance to preserve NATO as the primary instrument of Western defense and security as well as the channel for US influence and participation in European security affairs. While the United States supports the goal of European integration, we must seek to prevent the emergence of European-only security arrangements which would undermine NATO' (New York Times 1992. See also Kay 1998: Chapter 5; Layne 2006: Chapter 5).

With NATO as the established institutional actor in the post-Cold War European security order, the multilateral partnerships and consultative forums of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the Partnership for Peace (PFP), together with the establishment of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC) in 1997 and its upgrade to the NRC in 2002, provided Russia with channels for only limited consultation (Kay 1998: 59–74). Moscow's proposals for

security governance of a 'Greater Europe', based on the non-bloc pan-European and Euro-Atlantic structure of the CSCE/OSCE, in which Russia would play a full part as an equal partner, were therefore easily dismissed in Washington and Brussels. As Derek Averre observes, 'the institutional settlement following the end of the Cold War was predisposed to a Euro-Atlantic understanding of order and Russia, mired in domestic problems and much less influential than during the Soviet period, was unwilling or unable to challenge this order' (Averre 2016: 702).

Whilst recognizing the erratic and chaotic character of Russian policy-making in the Yeltsin years, it has been argued that the West's condescending and triumphalist treatment of Russia as a defeated adversary at the end of the Cold War represented something of missed opportunity. Unlike the peaceful reincorporation of France into the Great Power Concert of Europe in the post-1815 decade, or the successful reintegration of Germany and Japan into the international community in the post-1945 decade, repeating the mistake of the 1919 post-World War I settlement which isolated Weimar, Germany, Russia was consigned to an isolated and peripheral position in post-Cold War Europe (Deudney and Ikenberry 2009/2010: 42–44; Kanet 2010: 154–155, 160–166; Cohen 2011: Chapter 7; Rynning 2015: 541–543).

Russia's dissatisfaction with the Euro-Atlantic European security framework underpinned President Medvedev's 2008–2009 abortive proposals for a legally binding European Security Treaty (EST). Open to all the states of the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian space from Vancouver to Vladivostok, as well as the international organizations of NATO, the EU, the OSCE, the CSTO and the CIS, Medvedev's proposals were seen to be a device to undermine NATO and consolidate Russia's 'spheres of privileged interest' and were therefore shunted into the deadlocked OSCE 'Corfu process'. Subsequently, it has been recognized that another opportunity may have been missed to establish a European security framework in which the Russian Federation could play a larger and more responsible role (Monaghan 2010; Mankoff 2010; Lomagin 2011; Berryman 2011; Yost 2014: 225–227, 266; Lo 2015). And following the Ukraine crisis it has again been suggested that, 'In the longer run, a new conference on European security must be called to formally end the post-Cold War era and establish a security system with Russia and Ukraine as key players' (Tsygankov 2015: 2. See also; Bahr and Neuneck 2015: 132).

In reality, prospects for serious discussions between Russian and Western officials on new institutional security architecture in Europe are

remote and there can be no expectation that the deliberations of the NRC, which resumed its work in April 2016 after a two-year absence, will pave the way for some sort of reconciliation between Russia and the West (IISS 2016a: 58–60; Monaghan 2016). Indeed, the suspension by NATO of the operations of the NRC in both the Georgian crisis and the Ukraine crisis, precisely when it was most needed, underlined its marginal role (Kortunov 2016: 3). However, an overhaul of the military to military work of the NRC could make a contribution to a confidence-building process (Legvold 2016: 147). Similarly, although the role of the OSCE has received a welcome boost, thanks to the work of its Special Military Mission (SMM) in Ukraine, 'ideas about a new grand bargain between Russia and the West, involving a fundamental redesign of the security architecture in which the OSCE might assume a central place, lack plausibility' (Lehne 2015).

Rather, as the military conflict in Ukraine escalated in the summer of 2014, following their meeting to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Allied landings in Normandy in World War II, the leaders of France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine met as the 'Normandy format' to take responsibility for the political management of the Ukraine crisis. The impasse over Ukraine has therefore shifted the focus away from a neoliberal institutionalist search for a new security architecture to the establishment of a modest Concert-style framework within which a resolution of the conflict in Ukraine can be pursued through the joint diplomatic efforts of nation states (Trenin 2014; Rynning 2015; Grygiel 2016).

While US pre-eminence within NATO is unlikely to be challenged in the near term, owing to the predominance of US military capabilities and the absence of any plausible alternative leadership, it seems likely that over time the US military presence in Europe will reduce as a consequence of the progressive US 'pivot' to East Asia (Yost 2014: 353). Nonetheless, it remains clear that a combination of American military power and the contribution of other regional powers will be necessary to prevent the emergence of a Eurasian hegemon – the central aim of US grand strategy. With respect to the containment of Russia, 'Keeping NATO in good shape is therefore both a cost-effective and strategically smart way for the United States to achieve its main goal' (Melby 2014: 45–49). Those calling for a withdrawal of American forces from Europe and an abandonment of NATO therefore remain, for the moment, minority voices (Cottey 2013: 73; Kay 2013; Bacevich 2016). However, there are clear indications that in many western and

southern European NATO member states public support for the maintenance of sanctions and the use of force to defend NATO allies against an emboldened Russia has been declining (Lucas 2016). In these circumstances, a Trump presidency in 2017 may generate some unexpected outcomes. In Moscow, meanwhile, the maintenance of sanctions is seen as evidence of western intentions to precipitate regime change in Russia, possibly in the run-up to the 2018 presidential elections (Legvold 2016: 118–119. See also; Berryman 2014). The future of European security therefore remains uncertain.

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CHAPTER 9

Ukraine and the Restructuring of East-West Relations

Maria Raquel Freire

Introduction

The context in which Russian foreign policy has been developing has changed. The domestic context in Russia has changed, with recentralization politics tightening again after Vladimir Putin's return to the presidency in 2012, and the direct impact on the political sphere of low in oil prices in recent years – in an economy still too dependent on energy resources. Changes in the international context include a new low in Russia-West[1] relations with European (in)security at centre-stage. Despite the dense level of political and economic integration between Russia and the West, the current state-of-affairs has pointed to difficulties in maintaining a friendly dialogue, and relations have been immersed in misunderstandings and conflicts. This includes Russia's intervention in

The author acknowledges funding for research from the Marie Sklodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks (ITN-ETN) of the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, under grant agreement 'CASPIAN – Around the Caspian: a Doctoral Training for Future Experts in Development and Cooperation with Focus on the Caspian Region' (642709 – CASPIAN – H2020-MSCA-ITN-2014).

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_9

Ukraine and the resulting sanctions imposed by the Western states. Ukraine became the example not to follow, but the turbulence in the Middle East, with Libya and Syria, in particular, raised a number of questions about the challenges arising from an increasingly unstable and less predictable international system. These differentiated contexts for Russian politics at the domestic and international level, despite affecting the decision-making and implementation processes, do not point to fundamental changes in Russia's traditionally defined foreign policy goals. These are framed in the well-known guiding lines of Russia's assertion as a great power in the international system, the definition of the latter as polycentric and conferring on Russia a relevant place in international decision-making, with a particular role in the definition of areas of primary influence (the Commonwealth of Independent States – CIS), and the protection of Russians abroad. Broadly sketched, these principles have been the backbone of Russia's foreign policy for 20 years in both its cooperative moves with the West and in its contestation to Western policies. The goals remain, the methods have changed.

This chapter looks into these changes, seeking to understand how Russia's relations with the West have been evolving, particularly in the context of the Ukrainian crisis, and what this tells us about European security. The argument draws on norms' literature, particularly on norm-diffusion, and the role of the norm-maker and norm-taker (concepts borrowed from Checkel 1999), and its co-constitutive nature, along with norms' acceptance/resistance, adaptation/contestation. Starting from a post-rationalist approach to norms' dynamics and the way they affect and are affected by politics, the chapter looks into how Russia and the West have been building relations after the Cold War, at the constant intersection between norms' acceptance and resistance. This framework assists in better understanding Russian actions and reactions towards the West and the configurations of European security that have resulted from these processes. The role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), later renamed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the various strategic partnerships signed, and the Russian proposal for a European Security Treaty are relevant in this regard. Ukraine will be the test case for discussing European security, what it means, what it entails and what it misses.

The way in which security is conceptualized and articulated in discourse and practice has differed, both in the West and in Russia. Similarly, discourse and practice have served different purposes. The formula of the 'othering', naming the 'other' as the 'enemy' or as the 'partner', for example, aims at providing legitimate ground for action/reaction, independently of a real, constructed, or perceived threat. The chapter adopts a social constructivist approach to security, where norm-diffusion through adaptation/resistance practices provides the framing for the analysis of the development of Russian relations with the West – the latter defined as the constitutive 'other' in Russian discourse.

The chapter looks into the evolution of the European security architecture after the end of the Cold War, with the reinvention of NATO, the restructuring of the OSCE, the establishment of the CSTO, besides the building of 'strategic partnerships' as central pillars of the post-Cold War remapping of security. I will argue that in the process of consolidating European and Western security, insecurity dynamics were created by inclusion/exclusion processes that have extended in time. From Russia's point of view, the current security architecture in Europe is unbalanced, unrepresentative, and unable to respond to current challenges. The proposal for a new Security Treaty for Europe, the establishment of the CSTO and the drafting of the 'greater Europe' proposal, are examples that attest to this reading of Russian responses. From the West's perspective, Russia has been socialized in different contexts, becoming a member of the Council of Europe, signing the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with the European Union (EU), or becoming a part of the Russia-NATO Council. These interactions are understood as informal integration mechanisms and the inclusion of Russia in Western multilateral institutions. The readings about European security from the eyes of the West and Russia are clearly different, in ways that this chapter brings to light and seeks to contextualize for a better understanding of the current status of relations. How do processes of norms' adaptation and contestation frame Russia-West relations? What do the several 'strategic partnerships' established between Russia and Western institutions mean? How does Ukraine play into the eventual redefinition of European security? What does this imply in Russia-West relations? Seeking answers to these questions, this chapter aims at unpacking distinct interpretations of security, normative order, and international status, discussing the state-of-affairs and possible ways ahead in Russia-West relations.

Norm Diffusion: The Political Dynamics of Normative Acceptance/Resistance

The role of norms, culture, and identity in political change has been widely acknowledged in the literature (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Katzenstein 1996; Jepperson et al. 1996). The combination of material and ideational factors in policy-shaping and making has gained research ground, in the face of static power conceptions limited in the framing of motivations, identities, and normative considerations. As Kowert (2010) makes clear, this approach fits the constructivist focus on 'the social constitution of agents (i.e. *identity*) and the regulation of their behaviour (i.e. *norms*)'. The intersubjective analysis of political evolution through this normative outlook, combined with material readings of power, provides a more thorough picture of foreign policy decisions. These are made at the intersection of domestic and international politics, though as argued elsewhere this interrelation needs not be symmetrical (Freire 2012). The case of Russia is quite relevant in this regard, as the interlinkages between the domestic and the international are clearly visible in its foreign policy: ideally domestic strength, translated in economic growth, social cohesion, and political stability, provide the ground for the expression of Russian power and influence in the polycentric international system. In fact, and despite status seeking in the international dimension, foreign dealings are an important share of Russia's internal consolidation through the reinforcement of nationalist goals regarding the 'great Russia' status. These dynamics will become clearer with the analysis of the case of Ukraine.

Cross cutting foreign policy, norms have become a fundamental part of global governance, providing frames of reference for guiding policies and actions at the international level. Norms can be defined as 'collective expectations about proper behaviour of actors with a given identity' (Jepperson et al. 1996, p. 54; see also Finnemore 1996; Koschut 2014). Norms evolve, adapting themselves to the context and reshaping the latter. This dynamic nature of norms informs processes of socialization and resistance. The 'norm-maker' and the 'norm-taker' are not unidirectional or necessarily part of an asymmetrical relationship of subservience. '[N]orm-takers also seek to promote and internationalize their own beliefs, values and principles' (Bettiza and Dionigi 2015, p. 622). Norm-diffusion as a process through which norms 'travel' but which does not assure adoption and implementation in the 'destination', allows for these differentiated responses to take place – acceptance/resistance, adaptation/contestation.

The theoretical readings about how norms 'travel' has evolved from the 'conversion' approach of norm-makers, socializing norms in an imposition format, where Western neo-liberal principles were travelling as the ones to prevail, to a more complete approach to the bi-directional relationship between norm-makers and norm-takers, as the dynamics are not only of absorption and adoption but also of resistance, contestation, and adaptation, allowing reinterpretation (Reidel 2015, p. 319; Bettiza and Dionigi 2015, p. 623; Checkel 1999; 2005; Finnemore 1996; Katzenstein 1996).

The most relevant input arising from this evolution in the debate points to the fact that Western norms are not uncontested and that their projection is not unlimited. In fact, in accord with Checkel's views (1999), 'domestic agency is fundamental to understand different types of reception of norms, so their international dimension solely is not enough to understand adaptation'. Diffusion can take place in different formats, both cooperative and competitive, such as rewards and coercion (see e.g. Lenz 2013, p. 213). The way that these processes play out in West-Russia relations is fundamental to an understanding of the continuous construction of this relationship, in moments of both collaboration and competition. Moreover, as the context and different dimensions of power are also fundamental elements in the norm-diffusion process (Engelkamp and Glaab 2015, p. 203), this framework helps in unpacking the norm-making and norm-taking processes. The case of different interpretations and significance of concepts such as democracy or intervention is clear in this regard, with Russian-Western meaning-attribution not always coinciding. For example, 'the collective understanding of meaningful peaceful behaviour must ultimately result in peaceful practices such as the demilitarization of common borders or the removal of tanks by political actors in order to generate mutual trust', meaning that norms are object of political selection and might become part of the normative guidance, or when competing, eventually be delegitimized (Koschut 2014: 344). The reinterpretation and delocalization of norms has impact in relations and in the broader configuration of European security as analysed in the next section.

Russia and the West: The Aftermath of the Cold War

The end of the Cold War did not mean the end of the old order. The West and Russia sought to overcome the enormous gap separating them, particularly in ideological terms, a dimension which permeated the whole political, economic, social, and security reasoning. Old organizations

were reformed: NATO found a new *raison d'être* and the NATO-Russia Council was later created, and the CSCE gave way to a renewed OSCE. The PCA with the European Communities was signed, and a partnership agreed to of Russia with the USA. Russia became also a member of the Council of Europe. Western norm-diffusion seemed to be the rule after the crumbling of the Soviet system, with Russia's socialization in Western principles and democracy-building becoming part of the narrative. The Western norms and values seemed to gain ground as part of the transformations taking place in the post-Soviet space where the discourse became Western-friendly.

However, this Western-led atmosphere did not last long. Transition processes were enmeshed in difficulty and Western support in material and non-material ways did not come to the extent expected. Western norm-diffusion started facing contestation, which has prevailed until the present. In Moscow anti-Western rhetoric regained its place, side-by-side with more pro-Western supporters (Russian Federation 2000). Throughout the post-Soviet space, even in the most pro-Western states, criticism about Western-norm 'imposition' was voiced, regarding, for example, the negotiations of the initial agreements with the EU and their aftermath.[2] The Russian recognition of the CIS space as an area vital to its national interest also contributed to this detachment, with comments about Western interference permeating political discourse. In this setting, foreign policy in Russia clearly stated that the CIS is an area of primary relevance for Russia and that a more balanced approach than the very initial Western-oriented one required the development of relations with Asian countries and organizations. The Middle East was also presented as a key area, and later the addition of Latin America and Africa to the Russian foreign policy agenda, shows regained relevance of these regions in Russian politics. From 1993 the main foreign policy guidelines were set, and they have remained unchanged structurally, although the tone has shifted very much in tune with the status of relations with the West. In fact, the hardening of relations with the West has been highlighted in the wording of Russian security documents, with more recent foreign and security documents highlighting the destabilizing role of NATO, including its identification as a major threat to Russia's security; Western interference in the post-Soviet space – for example, by support to the colour revolutions and Western-oriented regimes; and differences in roles and goals in Ukraine, just to name a few (Russian Federation 2013; Russian Military Doctrine 2014; Russia National Security Strategy for 2016 2015).

The old discourse concerning the 'enemy' and of 'threat' soon made its reappearance and remained in Russian official discourse. NATO has been often described by Russian officials as perpetuating the dynamics of exclusion of Russia from strategic European security decisions. Official documents identify NATO enlargement as the primary external threat to Russia (Military Doctrine 2014), and the NATO-Russia Council was not understood in Moscow as an inclusive mechanism, but instead as an addition of Russia to discussions with no real power (in terms of veto and in terms of influencing decisions). Moreover, security norms promoted in Europe, including through NATO, were contested. The movement of armoured vehicles and military equipment closer to Russian borders or the anti-ballistic missile defence project of the USA are such examples. The establishment of the CSTO back in 1992, led by Russia, was at some point described as the 'NATO of the East', when the decision to create a collective rapid reaction force was made. At the time, in February 2009, then President Dmitry Medvedev commented that these forces 'will not be less powerful than those of NATO' (Medvedev cited in RT 2009). More recently, with the events in Ukraine, tensions have risen, including the suspension of the work of the NATO-Russia Council (Statement by NATO Foreign Ministers 2014), and military manoeuvres by both NATO states and Russian forces. The 'collective understanding of meaningful peaceful behaviour' that Koschut (2014, p. 344) talks about has not become enrooted in Russia-NATO relations. Nor has the course of 'transformation' that Rynning (2015, p. 542) mentions was the starting point for NATO-Russia relations, a process of transformation of these two actors into a new international order that did not mean transformation in line with convergence.

The OSCE, praised and contested as a security norm-maker, has been charged by Russia with replicating the Western discourse and of bowing to Western principles and excluding other visions. In the case of Moldova-Transnistria negotiations, the non-recognition of self-determination has been a subject of Russian criticism, despite the sovereignist principle that Russia has been citing to support non-intervention in internal affairs and respect for the territorial integrity of states. Norms of sovereignty – where traditionally a Westphalian conception prevailed – have been the subject of diverging interpretation according to context, with Ukraine-Crimea representing again an important example. In fact, whereas for the West Crimea was annexed, for Russia it was reintegrated; whereas for the West Ukraine's territorial integrity was violated, for Russia Crimea was legitimately and historically part of the Russian Federation; whereas for the West the move

was illegal in the eyes of international norms, for Russia the move complied with the protection of minorities abroad. The establishment of the CSCE back in 1975 at Helsinki, in a very particular context of the Cold War period was an achievement. And it bore fruit, since it helped bridge differences and provided a forum for dialogue, despite the many difficulties it faced. It was the recognized norm-maker on European security issues in face of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. It allowed arms reduction agreements to be signed, military confidence-building measures to be adopted, an inclusive reading of European security to be shared. In the current context of tension between Russia and the West, as well as already back in 2008 when relations were at a very low, and of which Georgia became then the symbol of disagreement, there have been calls for a Helsinki II to take place.

Then President Medvedev's proposal for a European Security Treaty (2008) (Kremlin 2009; RFE/RL 2009) was clearly conveying the message – European security cannot be complete without Russia. In 2008 when the proposal was made public it was restrictive in terms of membership (excluding the USA, for example), and in its final formulation after several iterations it became too wide (including international organizations, such as NATO and the CSTO). The Treaty proposal never became a real agenda item, but it became very symbolic in its meaning. Russia was asking for a role and place in European security: it was underlining the feeling of exclusion from European security dealings still at the hands of NATO, thus seeking also to limiting US influence, and signalling the need for a pan-European security system to be developed. Through this new arrangement, Russia would assure that no security decisions would be made without taking into account all members interests, therefore assuring its right of oversight on European security (Kanet and Freire 2012).

This idea of a restructuring of the security system has been high on the Russian agenda, and the issue of Ukraine has been added to the discourse. Sergei Karaganov, the Russian representative to the OSCE Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security as a Common Project (Ministerial Council in Basel, December 2014), has been voicing for a new security architecture, stretching to China, and bringing the Asian dimension in (see Tanner 2015). To some extent this reflects central elements of the Security Treaty proposal, whereas it widens geographically the scope of the proposal, highlighting the increasing relevance of the Asian dimension in Russian politics. The argument is that interdependence along with successive failures to build a system of pan-European security point to the need to move forward.

> The old system is withering away, partly because of the Ukraine crisis, even though some are trying to use it for reviving now defunct institutions and approaches. But there is no need to reject all of its elements. It would be more reasonable to raise a new structure within it, including through accelerated creation of a Community of Greater Eurasia, and a broad dialogue on the future within the Eurasian Cooperation, Development and Security Forum. (Karaganov 2015)

The Russian positioning in Ukraine was, therefore, not a surprise move, as the dissatisfaction with the state of affairs had been signalled earlier. The war in Georgia in 2008 became one of the clearest expressions of Russia's willingness to use military power to be listened to as a relevant player in European security. Ukraine, in a more aggressive manner, reiterated this desire. Thus, independently of how divisive the proposal for the security treaty became, it gained a new place in the discourse. The division of understanding between Russia and the West underlined the need to rethink ways for new possibilities for cooperation. In the wording of Lukin (2015, p. 65), 'we shall have to get back to the idea of a "Helsinki II" discussion over charting a new road map, showing the path towards a united Europe. Of course, this is still just a possibility, not an inevitability. But it is far more realistic than nostalgic, neoimperial dreams of Russian grandeur'.

With regard to the EU, its post-Cold War process of expansion and reaching out to Central and Eastern European states, as well as the Baltic countries, resulted in the movement of its borders closer to Russia. The process was not read as unfriendly, although Russia became critical of the normative 'cover' the EU used towards its new neighbours in the so-called shared neighbourhood – the Eastern Partnership countries. With a 'no' to Russian accession to the EU (DeBardeleben 2013, p. 45), both parties signed the PCA back in 1994 (ratified in 1997), that politically and legally framed bilateral relations. With an expiry date of 10 years, the PCA became after a decade an automatically renewed document, without much substance. The inability of Russia and the EU to renegotiate the new wording of a framing agreement for the relationship clearly demonstrates how the strategic dimension of this relation is relevant, but the partnership dimension is lacking. The Four Common Spaces and roadmaps for implementation (Council of the EU 2005) became guiding documents in the development of relations, but the dragging of negotiations on a new PCA (whatever its new naming) is telling. On the way

Russia has described the EU as a hegemonic bloc that creates new border lines in Europe – the 'wider Europe approach' it has been promoting in its neighbourhood reflects its ambitions, according to Russian sources (Averre 2016, p. 3). It also limits the enlarged multipolar Europe model Russia has been promoting – the 'greater Europe' approach (Sakwa 2012, pp. 315–316), where the EU, Russia, and Turkey would be centre-poles of norm-making.

This Russian view is in line with its integration into the BRICS,[3] a political club that allows voice and place to non-Western countries. Nevertheless, the contestation of Western norm-making does not mean that the BRICS seek the demise of the West, or a replacement of Western-led institutions, as BRICS countries work and want to keep working with the West. The BRICS share the political objective of contesting the hegemonic posture of the West, which they understand as questioning the very principle of state sovereignty. As Laïdi (2012, p. 614) notes, '[w]hile they do not seek to form an anti-Western political coalition based on a counter-proposal or radically different vision of the world, they are concerned with maintaining their independence of judgment and national action in a world that is increasingly economically and socially interdependent'. In this sense, the BRICS are a very conservative group with regard to power sharing and autonomy, promoting national sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs as overriding principles. Moreover, they are also part of the liberal international order, which they themselves seem to be challenging, thereby rendering this challenge limited in its reach.

> Emerging powers have actively participated in existing international governmental organisations, albeit without weakening their sovereignty or giving in to binding targets and commitments that are not in their clearly expressed interests. They continue to call for a greater say in these international institutions and are more sensitive to manipulation or being dealt with on unequal terms. (Destradi and Jakobeit 2015: 68–69)

Russia clearly shares this perspective, with the proposal for a European Security Treaty or for the reforming of the OSCE demonstrating how it aims at playing a role both as a norm-maker and norm-taker.

The old Cold War order is not back. It has never really been overcome. This does not mean that there has been no positive evolution in Russian relations with the West, since there are many signals that attest to this. But, it underlines the lingering mistrust and 'otherness' readings that have been

perpetuated over time. These allow also the perpetuation of logics of exclusion/inclusion, just as before. The remnants of the walls that should have been discarded a long time ago have prevented the building of a constructive West-Russia relationship based on 'strategic partnerships' and normative principles charged with substance. The renewal of multilateral institutions after the end of the Cold War, particularly NATO and the OSCE, ended up as one more brick in the remnants of distrust. Rebuilding this relationship is much needed and urgent for European security. The case of Ukraine is illustrative in this regard.

Ukraine in West-Russia Relations: Back to Basics?

The crisis in Ukraine goes back to political discussions about the option of economic integration, with the EU through the signing of an Association Agreement (and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area associated with this) or integrating with the Customs Union with Russia. A country that since its independence in 1991 had pursued a multivectoral foreign policy, both negotiating and conceding to Russia and the EU, was confronted with the need for a choice. The 'and/and' policy gave place to an 'or/or' option. The steps back and forth in making this option only contributed to reinforce the division that it implied. The protests that started in Kiev and other cities in Ukraine soon escalated into violence, materializing the division inscribed in this opting-in/out approach. The mutual accusations about 'who' initiated clashes reinforced distancing, but most importantly violence showed the deepness of the divide. 'Karl Marx once described a situation where the weapon of criticism gives way to criticism by weapon' (Lukin 2015, p. 59). This quote expresses Russia's approach, fitting its foreign policy goals of maintaining a *droit de regard* in the CIS space and demonstrating its discontent towards an unfavourable context in West-Russia relations; it makes clear its desire to be recognized as a norm-maker and norm-influencer in the European space. However, this has been pursued with ambivalence, as this section analyses.

The demonstrations in Kiev and other Ukrainian cities soon escalated into violence, and led to a change in government. Moscow did not accept the 'forced resignation' of the then President Yanukovych and contested the political changes taking place as showing power being taken over by 'radical extremists' (BBC 2014). In the sequence of rapidly unfolding events, the Crimean Parliament elected a new prime minister (pro-Russia in his views) and voted in favour of secession with

the declared goal of protecting the population from the 'extremists'. The organization of a referendum conferred on these moves concrete substance. Taking place on March 16, the voters were requested to choose one of two options: (1) Do you support reunifying Crimea with Russia as a subject of the Russian Federation? or (2) Do you support the restoration of the 1992 Crimean constitution and the status of Crimea as a part of Ukraine? (BBC 2014). The results announced did not leave any margin for doubt, according to the counting of ballots, which expressed willingness to join Russia (The Guardian 2014). Russian President Putin stated very clearly that in light of the results, the signature of the reunification treaty two days later showed a simple disposition, 'we did what we had to do' (Putin 2015).

The annexation of Crimea in spring 2014 was the culmination of a process where Russian feelings of exclusion played loudly. It sought different goals in one and the same action: showing political willingness and strength allied to capability, both reassuring support at home and affirming the status-seeking goal as a great power in an unfavourable context. It also made clear to the EU the limits of its own neighbourhood policies, put NATO in a difficult position in terms of response to Russian moves, and sent a warning to other post-Soviet states about their political options. The overall message touches the central issue of European security, how it has been read as exclusionary, and how Russia wants a redrafting of security configurations to be more inclusive. The referendum held on March 16, 2014, where the majority of the population in Crimea voted for 'secession' (The Guardian 2014), was at the centre stage of dissent. Accused of violating fundamental norms of international law, Russia replied with a legally framed justification based on historical principles and an organized process that led to the free expression of self-determination. It was, in the words of President Putin, a process 'in full compliance with democratic procedures and international norms' (Address by Putin 2014). Moreover, criticisms arising from the West were described as mirroring Western self-contradictions. As Putin put the matter:

> Here is a quote from another official document: the Written Statement of the United States America of April 17, 2009, submitted to the same UN International Court in connection with the hearings on Kosovo. Again, I quote: "Declarations of independence may, and often do, violate domestic legislation. However, this does not make them violations of international law." (Address by Putin 2014)

Despite Russian claims that it fulfilled international law and sustained the rights and liberties associated to the self-determination principle, the process was immersed in criticism. In his speech on March 18, 2014, Putin noted that '[t]ime and time again attempts were made to deprive Russians of their historical memory, even of their language and to subject them to forced assimilation' (Putin 2014). Putin added that the referendum was 'fair and transparent, and the people of Crimea clearly and convincingly expressed their will and stated that they want to be with Russia' (ibid), and that this act was in line with 'the United Nations Charter, which speaks of the right of nations to self-determination' (ibid). Independently of historical and nationalist motivations associated to the speech on Crimea, seeking to justify and gain legitimacy for an action widely criticized as illegal, the borders regime in Europe was violated and Crimea was the material expression of this violation.

Russia has been a traditional norm-upholder of the European borders regime, as became visible at the time of the negotiations of the Helsinki Final Act (1975), or even when settling post-Soviet borders, with the signature of the Almaty Declaration (1991) or the Budapest Memorandums (1994). However, the Russians violated these agreements in that they established the legal framework informing relations between the newly independent states, with the Almaty Declaration including explicit mention of the respect for the territorial integrity of states and the inviolability of borders, and the Budapest memorandums, despite having their main focus on nuclear regulation, reinforcing the commitment towards the respect for Ukraine's independence, including the non-use of political, economic, or military pressure that might put into question its independence. The Ukrainian Constitution was also violated in the process, as according to art. 37, for any secession referendum to take place, it must be previously approved by the Ukrainian population. The Russian actions had, thus, both juridical consequences and political ones. Interestingly enough, the Russian annexation of Crimea did not bring wide support from abroad, with no CIS state endorsing the Russian move, and only six countries internationally recognizing the new status of Crimea as 'reintegrated' or 'rejoined' to Russia, namely Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Syria, Afghanistan, and North Korea (Business Insider 2016).

The manipulation of the borders regime resulted from the violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, thereby questioning the role of Russia as a norm-taker and norm-enforcer. Crimea's

annexation signals norm-contestation, showing ambiguity in interpretation: On the one hand, contestation of political change in Ukraine as well as of Western interference in the post-Soviet space, as drivers for Russian aggressive behaviour in Ukraine; on the other hand, this contestation approach revealed contradictions in Russia's own terms, as it has traditionally been a sovereignist power, opposing foreign interventions as interference in internal affairs. The borders' regime was part of Russia's socialized practices in its relations with the West, regarding which Moscow became a norm-diffuser. Crimea's annexation reversed the process and made of Russia a norm-contester of one of the dimensions it most valued regarding European security – respect for the principle of sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs. But the ambivalence extends further, as it seems simultaneously Russia is accepting the sovereignty norm, as it always did, but also resisting this when it understands its interests are at stake, particularly in the post-Soviet space. What this means for European security is that the security regime is under pressure – the annexation of Crimea and lingering instability in Eastern Ukraine have added to existing distrust between Russia and the West.

The principles of responsibility to protect and self-determination have been part of Russian rhetoric in support of intervention, read in Russian terms as not pinching the sovereignist principle that guides its domestic and foreign policy. However, this show of force does not hide the tension in the Russian approach: A conservative approach based on an anti-Western discourse of exclusion and imposition of norms and principles, and a reformist approach concerned with the backlash effects that this more aggressive policy might produce. In August 2014, Putin stressed that Russia should not 'fence itself off from the outside world', recognizing the need for keeping dialogue on and to overcome the consequences of the crisis in Ukraine, of which the sanctions have become a baseline (RFE/RL 2014). Moreover, Putin added that 'we should also not let them treat us with disdain', refocusing discourse on the inclusion/exclusion divide and demanding a different treatment from Western partners (Ibid). Putin's discourse after Crimea's annexation is very telling of the state-of-affairs in Russia-West relations. It summarizes the confrontation of foreign policy perspectives, where Russia demonstrates willingness and capability to project its political goals, read in the West as a combination of power politics, consolidation of influence and projection of an image of force that leads to

an understanding of Russia as simultaneously sovereignist and expansionist, as illustrated by Crimea, and thus not a 'partner' in matters of European security.

East-West Relations: Where To?

Russian foreign policy statements and actions point to two main ideas: On the one hand, Russia sees itself as having consolidated its domestic and international course as a great power, in a polycentric international system; on the other hand, it faces the constant duality of principles sustaining this vision, where the tension between goals and means has been clear. The sovereignist alignment, combined with a defensive-aggressive policy in the post-Soviet space, reflect the dilemmas Russia faces. The post-Soviet space is increasingly heterogeneous, Russia has limited influence in this area, and the goal of a pan-European security order is far from accomplished. Losing influence to the West in this area became a sensitive matter for Russia, with Georgia and Ukraine signalling the 'vital interests' it has in the area and that are in need of protection. The positioning of Russia in the face of unfavourable developments, opens up serious questions about the management of European security. By showing force Russia might create an immediate impact, but not necessarily gain leverage. The conflictual readings out of this defensive-aggressive posture play both favourably and unfavourably in Russian politics.

The need to find a diplomatic way to reignite political dialogue and cooperation in different areas seems to be acknowledged both in Russia and in the West. But the terms for this are not clear. Again the narrative of the 'self' and of the 'other' (Neumann 1995; 2006), the discourse on inclusion/exclusion, as it is pursued both in Russia and in the West, constitutes an obstacle to creative possibilities. The events in Syria reinforced the understanding that Russia is a relevant player, sitting with western powers at the table of negotiations. The immediate gain from Russian military airstrikes seems to be a more active diplomatic role. However, it is not clear that this equals the conferring of the status that Russia has been seeking. In the long run mistrust still pervades relations. And this might mean that Russia's gain in Syria, in terms of its role in security-building, might not extend much beyond that context. What would this mean? Generally, it would mean that Western-Russia relations still have a long road to run before matching perspectives

on European security might be found. This might also mean that the destabilising effect of the status of Russia-West relations might extend in time, with negative consequences for both.

Russia's relational definition to the 'Western other' has carried this dual weight of the politics of confrontation and cooperation. Reading the 'self' as excluded from Western security framings, such as NATO, since despite signing partnership agreements it has never been formally integrated into the Atlantic Alliance, Russia faces this inside-outside dynamic – it is a *sui generis* position of not being fully integrated, but also not fully excluded. This applies to other multilateral European institutions, as well, and contributed to the Russian decision to create the Eurasian Union as in the mirror image of the EU. The politics of dissension as well as the politics of cooperation have been constant in Russia-West relations. This is not new. Norm-diffusion has also been present in this relationship for a long time, along with norm-acceptance and norm-resistance dynamics. Again this is not really new. What is new is the ambivalence that these processes of resistance and socialization have brought to readings of European security, and how they informed the inclusion/exclusion narrative so strongly present in recent Russian discourse. The politics of resistance and reinterpretation in Russia have made this dimension clearer in recent years, particularly with Georgia and Ukraine marking a turning-point. The rhetoric of discontent gave place to concrete aggressive action as well as a tighter approach in terms of socialization/resistance dynamics, with politics of resistance and dissent prevailing. The self-reinforcing discourse of exclusion feeds national feelings at home and rhetoric built on civilizational goals and the great power status of Russia. It also feeds the anti-Western discourse that the BRICS have been empowering, or the NATO as 'enemy' image re-established in Military Doctrines and other fundamental documents in Russian foreign policy. This framing of a counter-Western move seeks simultaneously, however, to pave the way for a re-foundation of relations with the 'Western-other'. This otherness becomes blurred into the Russian self-European identification, and willingness to be included (on its own terms). Understanding this ambivalence that permeates Russian politics is fundamental to rethinking any steps ahead. Tsygankov (2015: 20) argues that the '[e]stablishment of common rules of behaviour with respect to Ukraine and other states in Eurasia has been long overdue (. . .)'. This points to the initial idea about how norms-design is central to European security. Who is included and how remains a central issue in relations between Russia and the West.

Concluding Remarks: Restructuring East-West Relations?

Russia-West relations are going through their most difficult time since the end of the Cold War. The events in Ukraine, including Crimea, challenged the main building blocks of a difficult relationship: existing partnerships that showed their emptiness, cooperation agreements that showed their vagueness, guiding norms that showed their inability to assure European security. Three main ideas come out of this analysis: First, the actions in Crimea constitute a serious violation of the borders' regime in Europe, and the lingering instability in Eastern Ukraine will not reinforce European security. To the contrary, these actions brought more insecurity to Europe, and might backlash on Russia, further isolating it. Second, the continuous criticism about the 'Western other' and the inclusion/exclusion feelings of Russians in the European security order were materialized through Russian actions, demonstrating Russia's willingness and capability to use force in defence of what it understands as its vital interests. The Western response was slow and mainly centred on the imposition of sanctions (with limited reach), leaving Russia the space for manoeuvring that allows it to amplify its claims. However, the aggressive Russian reaction in Ukraine, as analysed above, might play unfavourably to its great power status goal. A non-complying actor, not just resisting norm-socialization in European security, but also violating security regimes, might be read more as a foe than as a friend. Again, this immediate gain for Russia might revert into more demands for assurance from the West, as it has been feeding the long-time mistrust instead of reducing it. Third, thinking about restructuring Russia-West relations becomes each day more pressing. Despite the contradictory signals – for dialogue towards framing relations in a more cooperative tone, or that this is not possible in face of tough stances on both sides – there seems to be no other way than rethinking these relations and how it might be possible to break new ground. It is not easy to look forward in the current context, as the issues of lifting sanctions and finding a political solution to the situation in Eastern Ukraine need first to be agreed. However, rethinking the European security architecture in a more inclusive way, through a restructured security system where the OSCE might play a central role, and where Russia and the West might be better integrated in norm-making and norm-taking, socializing principles and means for actions, might be a first small step. Exclusion has shown not to be the right path. Maybe putting together an inclusive format could assist in slowly overcoming distrust and get the basis for starting building something new.

Notes

1. West is understood in this chapter broadly as including the USA, the European Union (EU), and the Atlantic Alliance. Despite differences in relations between Russia and each of these actors, the chapter looks at the broader relationship between the Western 'whole' and Russia.
2. Interviews conducted by the author (2006 and 2007) in Georgia and Azerbaijan regarding the process of implementation of the Action Plans and negotiations of the Association Agreements with the EU.
3. BRICS stands for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

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CHAPTER 10

Regionalism and Multivectorism in Europe's Borderlands: The Strange Case of Ukraine

Mikhail A. Molchanov

Regionalism and multivectorism are key parts of East European states' post-communist reconstruction and redefinition of foreign policy. Both principles are based on the reassertion of the national interest through non-confrontational engagement with external powers. Regionalism goes beyond economic integration with neighbouring powers and means finding one's rightful place in a community of kindred nations. Multivectorism means building mutually beneficial relationships with all partners without unduly privileging one over the other. It is basically a drive to universalize and streamline the international relations of a country on a non-preferential basis. While regionalism implies selectivity in the choice of a country's partners, multivectorism balances that with evenness and impartiality in the conduct of foreign policy. Normally, the two principles should complement each other and co-exist in a non-contradictory fashion. In the case of Ukraine, however, both got corrupted and came into a conflict. Multivectorism became a cover for foreign policy oscillation between

Parts of this chapter are based on Molchanov (2016).

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_10

Russia and the West. The search for a regional community of belonging spawned an opportunistic policy of siding with the largest and least scrupulous sponsor. Ukraine eventually lost on both fronts: abandoned its eastern/Russian vector of foreign policy for the sake of European integration and was not given any accession timeline by the European Union (EU). Rather than working in tandem, the two principles of foreign policy mutually self-destructed. The chapter looks at why and how this has happened and draws both theoretical and practical, policy-oriented conclusions from the case.

The Promise of Multivectorism

On a typical summer day in 2016, major Western news outlets would exhibit the headlines like 'Trump and Clinton Have No Idea How to Deal with Putin' (Foreign Policy, 24 August), 'How to Counter the Putin Playbook' (The New York Times, 30 July), 'Deterring Putin Is Better Than Going to War with Him' (Newsweek, 25 August), 'Cyber Espionage: A New Cold War?' (The Financial Times, 19 August), and 'Are Russia, China and the U.S. Headed Toward a New Cold War?' (US News & World Report, 26 July). Clearly, something is amiss in the relations between the world powers today. Since the worst days of the Cold War, the tensions between Russia and the West had never run that high. The appearance of the Wikipedia article 'Cold War II' speaks for itself: finally, dark prophecies regarding 'Putin's Russia' and its alleged 'threat to the West' (Lucas 2014) have been seemingly borne out by events.

How did it come to this? Twenty-five years ago, at the height of the Gorbachev perestroika and later, through the first years of the post-communist Russia's admiration of all things western, the Cold War seemed as ancient a history as the Crimean war between Russia, Great Britain, France, and the Ottoman Empire. Yet, in February–March 2014, Russia did annex Crimea, this time without a fight, from Ukraine, thus changing the political order in post-war Europe for good. The West responded with economic sanctions and military deployments on the Russian borders. Ukraine responded with an undeclared war on the pro-Russian areas of Donbass, rhetorically disguising the state-sanctioned slaughter of its own civilian citizens with a term 'anti-terrorist operation.' Russia updated its security strategy. The current version explicitly indicates that North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) expansion and its approach to Russia's borders create a threat to the country's national security. Moreover, the document accuses the West of exhibiting

a negative influence on the realization of Russian national interests citing specifically the 'support given by the U.S. and the EU to the unconstitutional coup d'état in Ukraine' (Strategiia 2015).

The unravelling of the post-Cold War world order that was launched by the US-led 'humanitarian' interventions in the former Yugoslavia, picked up speed with the collapse of the Middle Eastern regimes targeted by the US 'war on terror'. Then came Ukraine's so-called Maidan revolution, once again actively encouraged and supported by the USA. Russia had responded in kind, by breaking the rules of the game that had already been broken by the western endorsement of R2P ('responsibility to protect') and such institutions of global governance as the International Criminal Court. In the end, not only the US-led 'unipolar moment' has passed, but the opportunity to move toward the global 'concert of powers' has been foreclosed as well. A foreign policy-specific indication of this shift has been the rather untimely collapse of multivectorism – the newly independent states' (NIS) strategy of the unbiased and even partnership with all powers of consequence in today's world.

The rise of multivectorism could have been predicted, which is more than we can say about its premature demise. A key part of the reconstruction and re-conceptualization of foreign policies of the post-Soviet states revolved around the necessity to build mutually beneficial relationships with all major states, thus leaving the legacy of the Cold War behind. The need to balance between regional and global and between the old and new centres of power in the world imposed special demands on foreign policy and diplomacy. These got articulated in the concept of multivectorism, which was originally developed specifically to describe international behaviours of vulnerable post-communist regimes. More recently, it was applied to other developing countries, such as Turkey, India, or Brazil (Barysch 2010; Carmody 2013).

Foreign policy multivectorism has been an adaptation strategy. It attempted to go beyond the politics of alliances and toward its opposite – the politics of the impartial and even engagement of foreign partners. It reflected the impact of liberal ideas in international relations with their emphasis on economic interdependence, cooperation, and the power of international institutions and norms in mitigating conflict. The first decade after the end of the Soviet Union saw NIS governments embracing such neoliberal concepts as the 'end of history' and 'end of ideology', which, coupled with a rather naïve belief in the inherent benevolence of the world capitalist society, had prompted them to turn away from each other, while courting friends from afar.

Parallel to that, they promulgated various ideologies of 'national sovereignty and independence' and used them to buttress their own claims to power. Paradoxically, external liberalism co-existed with internal nationalism and statism. Through the conflation of the national idea with the idea of a strong state post-Soviet leaders sought to legitimize oligarchic, semi-authoritarian, and the authoritarian regimes they established.

However, with the disbanding of the Soviet Union the familiar backing disappeared. No longer part of an ideologically united family of nations, the post-Soviet states were left out in the cold. A new family had to be found fast, and this is where the competition of regionalisms started. Ukraine in particular represents an interesting case study illuminating the promise and shortcomings of the multivectorism strategy in foreign policy and the unexpected competition between regionalism and multivectorism. The unfortunate unravelling of Ukraine's attempt to balance between the East and the West – the two major 'vectors' of its foreign policy, while seeking to get a foot into Europe's door via the so-called Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the EU (DCFTA-EU), serves as an apt illustration of deeper dilemmas that plague the construction of a new, cooperative world order in the twenty-first century.

Ukraine Between East and West

Ukraine's 'return to Europe' had been proclaimed the country's main foreign policy goal as early as 1991, and reconfirmed by all post-independence administrations, including that of Yanukovych. At the same time, Ukraine has always courted Russia and created the false impression of its readiness to join in various regional integration initiatives promulgated by Moscow. Together with Boris Yeltsin and Stanislau Shuchkevich of Belarus, Ukraine's first President Leonid Kravchuk was one of the founders of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Although Ukraine has never ratified the CIS Charter, it participated in most CIS activities and twice, in 2003 and 2014, headed the CIS Council of the Heads of State. It remained part of the CIS joint air defence system and contributed personnel and equipment to joint military exercises with Russia and other CIS members. Until Crimea's 'homecoming' to Russia, the Black Sea Fleet (BSF) and the Ukrainian navy regularly carried out military exercises together. Defence industries in Ukraine and Russia stayed connected by myriad ties. Trade with Russia has been crucial for

Table 10.1 Russia's share in Ukraine's foreign trade (goods and services; percentage of the total)

Years	*Exports*	*Imports*	*Total*
1996	38.1	47.0	41.0
1998	31.3	45.8	38.5
2000	30.8	39.2	34.7
2002	29.0	35.5	30.0
2004	23.8	39.2	29.5
2006	24.9	29.5	27.6
2008	27.6	22.0	23.3
2010	24.3	34.7	32.2
2011	29.5	34.2	32.7
2012	28.0	31.5	29.8
2013	26.3	28.9	27.7
2014	20.3	22.3	21.3

Sources: Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine; National Bank of Ukraine; UkrStat

the country's prosperity. The CIS took 35–45% of Ukraine's exports in 2000–2014, with Russia alone accounting for 24–26% of the total (see Table 10.1.)

The EU-28 share was roughly comparable until 2014, when it finally took more than 30% of Ukraine's total exports. However, increased trade with the EU cannot entirely replace the loss of the Russian market. Ukraine's total exports declined by 14% in one year, and the marginal increase of exports to the EU could not compensate for the 9% loss on the Russian side. In three years (2012–2015), exports shrunk from $69 billion to $22 billion. Finding new buyers for hardware built specifically with Russia's needs in mind is not an easy task. Goldman Sachs analysts noted that Ukraine's losses were especially pronounced in 'many of the very specialized goods, such as machinery and military technology . . . integrated with Russian supply chains' (Krasnolutska 2015a).

The debate on Ukraine's identity had picked up following the so-called Maidan revolution and the inauguration of the decisively anti-Russian policies by the post-Maidan elites. Both domestic media and the country's western sympathisers claim that 'Ukraine has been part of Europe for nearly a millennium' (Raffensperger 2016); that the new government in Kiev is 'pro-western', 'pro-EU', and full of 'pro-European aspirations'. Yet, Ukraine's 'reformers' failed to develop a genuine pro-European drive

even after the 'Maidan' revolt. The country has lagged behind other East European states in 'self-selecting' itself for EU membership. Its readiness to join with Europe, as demonstrated by the degree of approximation of the legislative norms and political practices to the European standards has been low. The 'pro-European reformers' have shown themselves as corrupt as their 'authoritarian' predecessor Viktor Yanukovych and his cronies. The exposure of secret offshore accounts of the sitting President Petro Poroshenko in the so-called Panama papers, the revelations of siphoning-off of the foreign aid and the incessant under-the-carpet fight for political rents and patronage lead many to an obvious conclusion: corruption in Ukraine undermines democracy and takes the country further away from the 'community of the civilized nations' it purportedly wants to join.

In 25 years that have passed since independence Kiev's record of governance has been rather bleak. Corruption has become endemic, to the point that it is now institutionalized as an integral part, if not the foundation, of the established political and economic system. With the central government increasingly showing itself incapable of ruling over the large swathes of territory, variously controlled by pro-Russian separatists, right-wing militias or criminal groups, the country is at risk of becoming a failed state. According to a nation-wide poll, 84% of the population mistrusts the state; 79% has no faith in the government (Polese 2016). In the international arena, Ukraine had oscillated between Russia and the West, showing the lack of a clear strategy of foreign policy, until Russia's annexation of Crimea finally dealt a death knell to Ukraine's 'eastern vector'. What factors may account for this lack of fortune?

Ethno-Regional Divisions

A key domestic factor is the country's regional and ethno-linguistic divide. Ukraine from the first days of independence hosted two ethnic nations-in-the-making: the Ukrainian-speaking (Ukrainophone) and the Russian-speaking (Russophone) populations. While the Russophone population leaned toward Russia and the CIS, the Ukrainophone population, especially its westernmost part and elites in Kiev, leaned toward the West. The Russian language was the preferred means of communication for close to 60% of the population, including more than 17 million Ukrainians. The three major ethno-linguistic groups in Ukraine by mid-nineties were Ukrainophone Ukrainians (40%), Russophone Ukrainians (33–34%), and Russophone Russians (20–21%) (Arel and Khmelko 1996, p. 86).

Linguistic divisions overlapped with territorial: most Russian speakers lived in Ukraine's east and south, while the western regions of Galicia and Volhyn have been historically devoid of any significant Russian influence. There is little wonder that the language question became a staple in Ukraine's electoral cycle (Molchanov 2002, pp. 227–230; Wolczuk 2014). Election after election, people voted in large numbers for closer ties to Russia and Belarus, while nationalist elites did everything in their power to thwart these aspirations.

Federalism could be one way to solve the problem. It could mean Ukraine's opting for closer affiliation with *both* the EU *and* the Eurasian Union, providing a sort of bridge between the two. Even now, a few years into the civil war with the pro-Russian 'republics' of Ukraine's east, the only way out seems to be through multilateral negotiations that would equally involve Russia and the West, as well as the pro-Russian and pro-western forces in Ukraine itself. In other words, for a lasting peace to happen, political and cultural sensibilities of Ukraine's Russian minority should be fully taken into account. Instead, authorities in Kiev chose the path of cultural assimilation and discrimination of the Russian-speaking population, while promoting the Galicia-based Ukrainianness for the whole country. Ukraine's 'European choice' was couched as an anti-Russian project. The ruling elite's insecurity was at the bottom of a decision that split Ukraine apart.

Economic Interdependence

Turning away from the association with Russia will cost Ukraine a fortune in the short term, while the long-term prospects remain uncertain. Economic connections to Russia ran too deep to be ignored. At the start-up of independence, about three-fourth of Ukraine's economy had been fully integrated in the highly centralized economic complex of the former Soviet Union. Sister republics took 84% of Ukraine's exports and provided 72% of its imports. The bulk of this trade was conducted with the Russian Federation. Not only did Ukraine remain completely dependent on Russia's oil and gas supplies but also on the export side as well, 90% of all high value-added goods produced in Ukraine were sold to Russia. By the turn of the century, more than one-third of Ukraine's total trade was still tied to the Russian market (Molchanov 2002, pp. 235–236).

When President Yanukovych started negotiations on association with the EU, the Russian Federation took 30% of Ukraine's exports of goods,

versus 27% for the whole of Europe. In the same year, 2011, more than 35% of Ukraine's imports of goods came from Russia, while the share of the whole of Europe, EU-27 and EFTA combined, and was 2% less (State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2012, pp. 22, 29).

In 2000 Russia supplied 75% of Ukraine's gas and 80% of domestically consumed oil. Moreover, Ukraine has 15 nuclear reactors, which have relied predominantly on nuclear fuel assemblies imported from Russia. The country's energy import dependency, although down from 45.8% of total consumption in 2004, remained at a rather high 39% level (Balmaceda 2007, p. 10; IEA 2012, p. 21). Russian gas imports share for 2015 totalled 37%.

Russia has been the largest buyer of Ukraine's machinery exports. Until recently, it absorbed about two-third of Ukraine's heavy machine-building exports and half of all of its machinery exports. Yet, Russia has also been dependent on cooperation with enterprises of Ukraine's military-industrial complex, which supplied and serviced Russia's strategic missile forces, provided combat helicopter engines for the air force and produced gas turbine engines for the navy. Implementing full import substitution for these inputs will take at least three years.

The West is Ukraine's largest creditor and, collectively, the largest investor, while Russia has been the primary supplier of energy, the largest market for high value-added exports and the fourth-largest investor officially (Finance.UA 2014). Unofficially, it is probably the largest, as Russian business groups have significant interests in Ukraine's industries, infrastructure, real estate, communications, and the like.

In the past, Ukraine's chronic excesses of imports over exports forced Russia to supply trade credit, sell energy at discount prices, and accept I owe you as payment. The combined value of energy subsidies, credit subsidies, and transit fee subsidies for 1992–2008 could be as high as $25.9 billion, with a more conservative estimate of $12.6 billion (Krasnov and Brada 1997). In the 2000s, gas subsidies alone amounted to $16.91 billion (Suzdaltsev 2011). If annualized, that was enough to cover near 2% of Ukraine's GDP year after year. On a country-by-country basis, Russia remained Ukraine's largest market in 2014 (WITS 2015). Bearing in mind that the economic linkages between the two countries go very deep and are sometimes impossible to replace, Russia is central to any projection of Ukraine's development.

This dependence is mutual. The World Bank's estimate put Ukraine as Russia's fourth largest import partner for 2010–2014 – after China,

Germany, and the USA. Ukraine owns a vast pipeline network that Russia uses for its oil and gas deliveries to Europe. No less than 10–12% of the EU total gas supply is pumped through this network. Russia's armed forces have been dependent on Ukraine's defence contractors, which supplied helicopter motors, cargo planes, and gas turbine engines for battleships; built tank aiming systems, boosters, and navigation equipment for strategic missiles; provided air-to-air missiles and other parts for fighter planes. Implementing full import substitution for these inputs will take three to five years, and will cost Russia billions of dollars.

The Losses of Aligning with Europe

In 2014, for the first time since the end of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the former Soviet states collectively ceased to be Ukraine's largest trading partner and were replaced by the EU states. If, in 2013, Ukraine's trade with the CIS took 36% of the total, or 5% more than the trade with the EU, the next year EU countries replaced the CIS as the number one trade partner, while the CIS countries took the second place with 29% of the total (Ukrinform 2015).

As a result of this realignment, the structure of Ukraine's exports has changed: the share of high value-added goods and services, machinery in particular, which would be destined for Russia and the CIS, withered away, while primary commodities – maize, crude sunflower seed and oil, wheat, semi-finished iron, and iron ores – are now the top five products for foreign trade. This represents a sharp reversal of an earlier tendency toward diversification of exports, which was powered by machinery sales to the CIS.

In 2000s, up to 90% of all high value-added goods produced in Ukraine were sold in Russia. In 2001–2006, machinery exports to Russia grew by 2.3 times and accounted for 22.5% of all export receipts (Komkov et al. 2010, p. 77). In 2010, 5% of all Russian imports of machines and appliances came from Ukraine – the share that would have grown to 8.7% by 2020, and more than 10% by 2030, had Ukraine joined the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) (Ivanter and Geets 2012, Tabl. 15). Until very recently, two thirds of Ukraine's heavy machine-building exports, and near half of total machinery exports, went to Russia.

President Poroshenko has described the DCFTA, the trade agreement with the EU, as 'a guarantee of strengthening the economic sovereignty of our state and long-time prosperity' (Interfax-Ukraine 2015). However, increased trade in agricultural products, raw materials and semi-finished

goods does not anchor growth in technology-intensive sectors. Replacement of Russia with the EU spells the end to Ukraine's aircraft manufacturing, production of engines and generators, locomotives and rolling stock, pressure vessels for nuclear power plants, defence wares, and the like. Almost none of this is needed in Europe, whose technical standards Ukrainian manufactures, in most cases, do not meet. In those few cases where standardization could be achieved relatively quickly, such as in aviation or aerospace industries, potential European investors have shown little interest in the emergence of a new competitor. The failed negotiations between the Antonov aircraft manufacturer and several German firms illustrate this point (Yegorov 2004, pp. 158–162).

Russia remained Ukraine's largest trade partner until 2012. The next year was the first when trade with the EU exceeded trade with the Russian Federation. In 2014, Europe took 31.8% of Ukraine's exports and supplied 40% of imports, entrenching itself as Ukraine's main trade partner (Mission of Ukraine to the European Union n.d.). Russia accounted for slightly more than one-fifth of Ukraine's exports, and 22.5% of the imports.

Optimistic observers celebrate the opening of the European markets as a sure sign of the upcoming industrial modernization (Åslund 2015, pp. 45–46; Khomei 2015). Yet serious challenges persist. First, modernizing Ukraine's high value-added sectors is not on the EU agenda. Second, Europe has opened its markets only partially and in a restrictive manner, while demanding near complete elimination of protective measures from Ukraine. Finally, a substantial increase of European direct investments into the Ukrainian economy was far from assured under the best of circumstances, since the present situation of the unresolved conflict in Donbass and the loss of free trade privileges with the Eurasian Union makes Ukraine an unattractive destination.

The reorientation of Ukraine's trade away from Russia and the CIS thus portends the loss of manufacturing capacity in high – and medium-high technology industries. Almost 40–50% of exports to Russia (36–40% over the past five years) consisted of machinery and transport equipment. Moreover, Russian supplies often kept Ukraine's manufacturers going. For example, two-thirds of the Antonov aircraft components were Russian-produced (Hadjian 2014). Meanwhile, exports to the EU are dominated by base metals, vegetables, and mineral products. Machinery and appliances made only 9.6% of Ukraine's sales in Europe in 2014 (Mission of Ukraine to the European Union n.d.). This represents just

above one-fifth of Ukraine's machinery exports. In comparison, sales to the Russian market brought in $5,491 million in 2013 and $3,259 million in 2014, which accounted, respectively, for 52% and 44% of the country's total machinery and appliances sales abroad. Altogether, Ukraine's high-tech sectors made $7 billion in 2013 and $4.1 billion in 2014 on the CIS exports (Kraïna Liberalna 2015; National Bank of Ukraine 2015, p. 79). For the foreseeable future, therefore, the more Ukraine abandons the CIS/EAEU market the less machines and appliances it will be able to sell.

Ukraine's exports to the EU have been declining since 2011; imports from the EU – since 2013. In 2015, exports to the EU fell by 23% despite the preferential tariff regime extended to Ukraine under the terms of DCFTA. The decline of trade with Russia affected overall health of the economy: the country's total exports decreased by 35% year by year; imports – by 38.5%. The loss of the Russian market has shrunk the share of high value-added goods, which made near 40% of all Ukraine's exports to Russia in 2013. That same year, only 9% of Ukraine's exports to the EU consisted of electrical machinery and equipment, while the top three positions were occupied by ferrous metals (24.5%), cereals (10.4%), and mineral products, such as ores, slag, and ash (10.3%). The DCFTA has further worsened the terms of exchange: in 2014, Ukraine's exports to the EU featured primarily agricultural products (28.7%), base metals and articles thereof (24.4%), and mineral products (17.2%), whereas 23% of its European imports consisted of machinery and appliances. Half of Ukraine's trade with the EU now is in primary products; whereas three quarters of the EU trade with Ukraine is in manufactured products (European Commission 2015, p. 2; Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine 2015).

The former head of the National Bank of Ukraine notes that the country has been unable to find new markets in Europe. Even Poroshenko's economic advisor and former deputy chief of staff, Yuri Kosyuk, agrees: 'There was no opening of the markets . . . This so-called zone of free trade works in one direction only . . . Europe protects its market, while Ukraine has lost!' (Medvedchuk 2016). To illustrate the point, only 72 Ukrainian companies are allowed to export food of animal origin to the EU, while 39 of the licences for agricultural exporters are for honey (Petro 2016). Products historically sold to Russia and the CIS are either uncompetitive or unnecessary in Europe. Machinery and appliances rapidly descend to the bottom of the nomenclature list of Ukraine's exports. The sales of metals and metal products cannot but suffer from the continuing warfare in Donbass.

Deindustrialization, which the EU is both uninterested and unable to reverse, brings agricultural products to the top:

> To the shame of the once powerful industrial republic, the main export commodity in 2015 turned out to be corn. Since the start of the year, its sales brought in more than $2 billion. Ukraine's second top export is sunflower oil. Products with a high degree of processing, e.g. those of machine building, chemical and food industries, are reduced to less than 10 %. Ukraine has de facto turned into a resource appendage for Asian and African countries (Arbuzov 2015).

Given the completely ruinous results of Ukraine's economic affiliation with the EU at the cost of losing Russia, a reasonable question to ask might be, why did it do it? Among the many potential answers, one stands out quite prominently: because it was forced to, by its western partners. Yet, the 'western partners' is a rather nebulous phrase that covers many actors. In this analysis, I want to draw attention to the one group of Ukraine's western partners which proved to be particularly vociferous in its demands of what the government of Ukraine should or should not do – the Western diaspora of Ukrainian emigres, currently under the leadership of a particularly xenophobic group of Russia-haters.

Western Diaspora

Ukraine's ties to the West are ties of dependency. Western domination can be seen in the inordinate influence that the Ukrainian diaspora of the Anglo-American world has over its old home country. The largest Ukrainian diaspora groups in the West reside in Canada (1.2 million) and the USA (1 million). Such organizations as the Ukrainian American Coordinating Council, Ukrainian Federation of America, Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, the US-Ukraine Foundation, Action Ukraine Coalition, Ukrainian National Information Service, The Washington Group, and the US-Ukraine Business Council have played a decisive role as lobbyists for the diaspora interests in Washington and Kiev alike, shaping both the substance and the direction of the US-Ukraine relations. In Canada, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC), together with the Ukrainian National Federation of Canada, Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association, and several dozen other organizations of nationalist persuasion, has sought 'to influence

policy decisions of the governments of Canada and Ukraine' (Ukrainian Canadian Congress n.d.b, *Engaging Ukraine*).

Most of these organizations are descendants of the verifiably fascist[1] Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), still in existence today as OUN, KUN (Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists) and KMOUN (Kiev City Organization of OUN). These were transplanted back to Ukraine from their overseas exile locations soon after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and, using diaspora financial and organizational resources, spawned or promoted a number of daughter organizations, such as the State Independence of Ukraine, the Social National Party of Ukraine (currently, Svoboda), and the Stepan Bandera All-Ukrainian Organization 'Tryzub' ('Trident').

In the early years of independence, diaspora returnees sat on the council of advisers to the Ukrainian president, represented Ukraine at the board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), became consultants to the Ministry of Defence, headed key educational institutions in the fields of public and business management, staffed western embassies, presided over the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine, and headed NATO's information and documentation centre in Kiev. Diaspora dollars propelled transformation of the initially moderate Popular Movement of Ukraine (Rukh) into an ethno-nationalist organization fully aligned with the OUN's ideological platform (Satzewich 2002, pp. 205–206; Kuzio 1997, p. 218). Diaspora activists took active part in the preparation of the Constitution of Ukraine, spearheaded judicial and legal reforms, and led several projects with Ukrainian legislators, government officials, military commanders, journalists, and policy experts. Ukraine's Ambassador in the USA was happy to report that 'many Ukrainians who work in the FBI, CIA and similar agencies provide Ukraine with practical assistance' (Shcherbak 1998).

Ukrainian emigres found their way to Kiev's offices of the largest multinational corporations and mediated the disbursement of the American and Canadian foreign aid to Ukraine. In 1999, the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, since 1980 under the Banderite leadership, received $180,000 from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to run a 'nationwide civic information' campaign in preparation for Ukraine's presidential elections that year. In 2000, the Government of Canada awarded $2.7 million to the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies to implement the Canada Ukraine Legislative and Intergovernmental Project (Satzewich 2002, p. 207). In 2004, the diaspora raised no less than $1 million in support of the 'orange revolution' through its own credit unions (Koinova 2009, p. 56) and organized the disbursement of $65 million of the US budgeted money to

the organizations and individuals opposed to the election of a pro-Russian candidate as Ukraine's president (Associated Press 2004). Since the 'orange revolution' of 2004, both Washington and Ottawa spent millions of dollars on 'democracy promotion' in Ukraine. In most cases, diaspora activists became directly involved in these projects' implementation.

As an official statement by the UCC goes, 'the majority of Ukrainians in Canada have considered Russia . . . their historical enemy' (Ukrainian Canadian Congress n.d.a, *Community profile*). This Russophobic attitude has been transferred in full to modern Ukraine and precipitated its current conflict with Russia. Diaspora returnees and influencers invested significant resources in rewriting the history of Ukraine as a history of constant victimization at the hands of the 'Russian enemy'. In Canada, parliamentarians of Ukrainian descent sponsored legislation to recognize the famine of 1932–1933 that swept across several Soviet republics, Russia included, as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people. Big champions of the Ukrainian national cause across the western world are veterans of military formations that fought the Soviet Union in World War II, starting with the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the Nazi Schutzstaffel (SS), also known as the SS Galizien division.

When Russophobic complexes of such magnitude are brought onto a weak and vulnerable country it is bound to change. Thus, Yushchenko's conferral of the state honour of 'Hero of Ukraine' upon Nazi collaborators Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych (the commander of the Wehrmacht Nachtigall battalion), provoked protests across Europe. The honour was subsequently withdrawn by president Yanukovych. However, these same personae of the two 'long-dead Ukrainian fascists' (Snyder 2010) reappeared to command allegiances of the striking force of Ukraine's 2014 revolution – the ultra-nationalist Svoboda and the extremist Right Sector groups. Svoboda stated its intention to liberate Ukraine from the 'Muscovite-Jewish mafia' (Blumenthal 2014). The Lviv city council demanded to reinstate Bandera and Shukhevych as 'heroes'. This did not resonate well with the population of Donbass, where a 'Banderite' has been traditionally synonymous with a 'Nazi.'

In foreign policy, the nationalist lobby dismantled the pragmatic 'multivector' orientation that Ukraine had before. This echoed with the Cold War reflexes of a good part of the European and American officialdom, and led to the confrontation between Russia and Ukraine, which started with the Brussels bureaucracy's false claim that the EU Association Agreement with Ukraine was incompatible with the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union.

Dilemmas of Regionalism in Eurasia

Ukraine's attempts to negotiate mutually compatible trade agreements with Russia and Europe alike were thwarted by the West. It was the Brussels bureaucracy that was 'putting brakes to a more innovative approach of the EU neighbourhood policy which would involve Russia' (Gotev 2014). Instead, 'the European Union actively promoted the notion that accession was a "civilisational choice" between Russia and Europe', going out of their way to turn Ukraine's regional integration choices 'into a loyalty test' (Petro 2013). As a result, what could have been a technical issue of adjusting tariffs between the Russia-led Customs Union and the EU turned out as a geopolitical competition for Ukraine between Russia and the West. It is clear that the West had started it.

Would Ukraine be better off as a member of the Eurasian Union or as a participant to the DCFTA-EU? According to one study, the biggest gains for Ukraine would ensue from a scenario of joining the Common Economic Space with Russia and benefitting from the technological convergence effects of integration while keeping its own national currency. Ukraine could benefit from increases in machinery manufacturing and exports to the Eurasian Union member states; the import substitution effects; cheaper energy prices, and a better potential for growth in metallurgy, chemical industry, and agriculture. The sum total of welfare gains for the Ukrainian economy could be as high as extra 6–7% in GDP growth by 2030. Meanwhile, joining the DCFTA-EU was estimated to be detrimental for Ukraine, with up to 1.5% losses in GDP comparing to a non-affiliation scenario (Eurasian Development Bank 2012).

The pro-western scholars disagree. They claim that Ukraine's joining with Russia would bring a loss of 0.5% of welfare in the medium term and 3.7% in the long term, while participation in the DCFTA-EU would bring welfare up by 4.3% in the medium term, and by 11.8% in the long term. DCFTA-EU is praised for its promise of 'new business opportunities . . . duty-free access to the largest world market' and 'better domestic investment climate'. Joining with Russia is disparaged on the grounds of its slowing the pace of modernization and making Ukraine pay new tariff compensations to the affected countries within the framework of its World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments (Movchan and Giucci 2011).

Oleksandr Shepotylo (2013) argues that the ECU-DCFTA differences are small in the beginning, but increase rapidly over time. In the long run, he projects the 18% growth in exports under the ECU scenario against the 36% growth under the DCFTA-EU scenario. However, his paper does not estimate the proportionate change in imports, and says nothing about the balance of trade which, by all accounts, deteriorates under the EU-affiliation scenario. Even so, Shepotylo admits that the best route for Ukraine to increase the country's well-being is by boosting its exports to other CIS states: 'Surprisingly, the highest unrealized potential is in exports to CIS countries.... any integration scenario indicates that Ukraine severely under-exports to Russia' (Shepotylo 2013, p. 21). Yet another counterintuitive conclusion follows: so long as Ukraine does not worsen its market access to Russia, it would be best to expand its trade to the EU and ECU alike under the DCFTA-EU scenario.

Alas, the premise that the free trade agreement with Russia will survive the launch of the DCFTA-EU has proven unwarranted. Moscow has erected trade barriers against Ukraine's imports, just as it warned it would do. As a result, exports to Russia went down from 15% of Ukraine's GDP in 2012 to 11% in 2014. Importantly, the EU's trade with Ukraine did not rise (European Commission 2015, p. 3), whereas Russia's trade fell substantially. In 2014, the bilateral trade turnover halved, and continued falling through the next year, shrinking by 2.2 times more in the first half of 2015. The loss of the export niches in the east had cost Ukraine $18 billion over the 18-month period (National Bank of Ukraine 2015; EspresoTV 2015).

The postulated increases in Ukraine's welfare are provisional on successful adjustment to the European standards, implementation of necessary reforms, and getting enough of foreign direct investment to modernize the country's economy at a price of significant social and economic dislocation. Ignoring the short-term (5–10 years) costs of economic restructuring is a typical feature of such analyses.

The IMF World Economic Outlook shows whose economic strategy worked better: while Russia's GDP grew 1.6 times, Ukraine's economy in 2014, measured as GDP at constant prices, was actually smaller than it was in 1992. The Russian economy benefitted from import substitution measures. No serious attempts at import substitution were implemented in Ukraine. The 'Maidan' backfired and undermined the country's chances of European integration. As far as the Russia-led Eurasian integration goes, it seems to be well on its track, even without Ukraine.

Between Economics and Geopolitics

Until 2014, Ukraine had a choice between two strategies of economic development: one based on import substitution, state-led development, and exploitation of its comparative advantages in high value-added goods within the Eurasian Customs Union with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan (ECU); and another, focused on the sales of primary commodities – mostly metals and foodstuffs – to the countries of the EU. The Maidan revolution dispensed with the first option. The second option bodes ill for advanced sectors of the economy, yet promises modernization to those industries that survive: agriculture in particular.

At the same time, DCFTA-EU might well bring more agricultural produce from the EU to the Ukrainian market, while exports to the EU might not have as much luck. After all, the EU does not have to adopt Ukrainian standards; it is Ukrainians who must adjust. While they are adjusting, the annual pork and poultry imports from the EU could rise by 22.4% and 6.1% respectively. The annual sales volume of domestic producers in the domestic pork market has been predicted to shrink by 4.89 thousand tons. Adding livestock production and vegetable production together, the total cost of Ukraine's agricultural modernization and implementation of the EU standards may be as high as €900 million over 10 years (Heyets, Ostashko, & Shynkaruk 2014, pp. 4–5). In the meantime, EU farmers will have the benefit of early market penetration, leaving Ukrainian producers out in the cold.

It was anticipated that reorientation to the EU would cost Ukraine no less than $4.6 billion a year in lost exports to Russia alone (Shynkaruk 2014, p. 37). The benefits from DCFTA-EU will not and cannot cover that gap. One EU-sympathetic study predicts welfare enhancing effects of tariff elimination within a seven to 10-year horizon, but only if one of the two scenarios will materialize: either (a) substantial cutbacks in social spending with the resultant 'strong output decrease in public services' or (b) increased infusion of additional foreign aid. Even so, 'food-processing and production of non-metallic mineral products, agriculture, fishery and petroleum refinement reduce their output in all simulations because of a high initial level of protection and low export shares' (Frey and Olekseyuk 2014, p. 521). Parallel to that, the loss of the Eurasian market would send ship building, aerospace, chemical, metallurgical, and railway transportation industries into a tailspin.

These warnings notwithstanding, the government in Kiev responded to the western pressure and signed an association agreement with the EU. This

decision was dictated by western geopolitics, not economics. Economically, the EU does not consider Ukraine a candidate country and will not extend it the EU Instrument for the Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). Ukraine's link to the EU reverses an earlier tendency toward diversification of exports, which was powered by machine building and heavy industry sales to the CIS market. A number of import substitution projects based on cooperation with the Customs Union countries have been abandoned, and the chance to develop domestic high value-added industries lost with them.

The pervasive mantra of association with the EU as the only way to modernize Ukraine's ailing industries and infrastructure is false on more than one count. Realistically inclined observers acknowledged that relying solely on DCFTA trade effects will not significantly alter the trajectory of the GDP growth (or, under the current circumstances, decline) and the volumes of production in Ukraine. These will need to be boosted by progressive reforms, institutional changes, large investment inflows, and transfer of technologies.

Unfortunately, none of this seems to be happening. Corruption persists, making it, in the assessment of Transparency International, Ukraine's number one security threat. The Prosecutor General office, which was supposed to be disbanded some time ago per EU recommendations, is 'making things worse by openly and aggressively undermining reform', according to the US Ambassador Geoffrey Pyatt. Corporate raidership, obscure privatization deals, selective justice, blackmail, and extortion by state officials continue unabated, as if the 'revolution of dignity' never happened (Krasnolutska 2015b). Investments are flowing out, rather than in, creating a false picture of the positive balance of trade in services with the EU (Shynkaruk, Baranovska, and Herasimova 2014, p. 90). In addition to the loss of $14 billion in 2013–2015 because of fund outflows, the devaluation of the national currency diluted the accumulated stock, destroying no less than 4% of total value in foreign direct investments over a nine-month period (UNIAN 2015). The transfer of advanced technologies has not been happening on any noticeable scale, and there is no reason to expect that it will pick up any time soon.

The West refused to admit that Ukraine's close partnership with Europe did not have to preclude cooperation with Russia and the EAEU. It was this refusal and fear of a 'resurgent Russia' that made such aggregation of interests impossible. The 'othering' of Russia brought net losses to all parties and started a civil war in Ukraine that the West essentially condones (Molchanov 2015). The strange case of Ukraine's

choosing to abandon its biggest trading partner and, until recently, largest sponsor for practically useless promises of 'European choice' may serve as an illustration of a simple proposition: Couching regional integration in a language of zero-sum games for regional hegemony contaminates economics with geopolitics and leaves everyone worse off than before.

Conclusion

Judging by all indications, the crisis in Ukraine will be simmering for a long time. This crisis was started by the West, and Russia is not the one to take the blame for the current state of affairs. However, the way out of the present conundrum is hardly possible without Russia's participation. Just as the West should convince Kiev to stop attacking separatist strongholds in Donbass, so should Russia convince its clients to stop all attempts to expand beyond their present area of control. While the separatist republics will not embrace the idea of reunification with Ukraine, they may be convinced to focus on their internal problems.

Ukraine's internal problems are manifold, but the key to many of them is the economy. The country's prosperity may only be assured if it gets an unobstructed access to both Russian and the European markets. For this to happen, some sort of a free trade agreement between the Russia-led EAEU and the EU should be concluded. Western economic sanctions against Russia do not help, and they should be phased away in parallel to the stabilization of situation in Ukraine's east. Legitimation of Russia's rule in Crimea may take some time, yet it is already obvious that the peninsula will not be returning to Ukraine's embrace. A military solution to this problem is not feasible. Consequently, rather than waging a holy war against the 'Russian aggressor' in Donbass, Kiev should focus on rebuilding the rest of the country. Normalization of relations with the separatist areas must become a priority, while the question of sovereignty can be put on a back burner. At the end of the day, Ukraine's future lies, as always, with its ability to serve as a reliable bridge between Europe and Eurasia. Regionalist policies should not undermine the promise of multivectorism. Membership in one regional association must not preclude development of economic ties with another regional association. If Ukraine is successful with this bridging mission, it will succeed internally as well. Negotiating some sort of a civilized division of powers agreement with the separatists is much easier when the parties are not engaged in a mortal combat. On the other hand, the incentive to stick to the

self-proclaimed 'statehood' will be much weaker if Ukraine shows itself capable of serving as a link between the two regional blocs of nations. Resurrection of Ukraine's traditional multivectorism on a new, regional basis will help the economy and propel the much-needed national consolidation.

Note

1. See Katchanovski 2015; Rudling 2016.

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CHAPTER 11

Russia and Turkey: Power, Individuals, and Identities in the Syrian Conflict

Nuray Ibryamova and Mehtap Kara

The relationship between Russia and Turkey went through dramatic changes during 2015–2016 and continued to evolve in the face of tumultuous domestic and regional developments. The downing of Russian plane Su-24 in November 2015 by Turkey was a pivotal moment in the relationship, as it marked the reversal of largely positive relations, and had wide-ranging implications for the region and beyond. For over a decade, Turkey and Russia had been able to prevent their deep differences on regional politics from spoiling their bilateral relationship. Their economic, commercial, and energy collaboration advanced despite Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its unwavering support for Syria's Assad regime. This remarkable trend came to an end when the plane was shot down, only for relations to be restored seven months later. The rapprochement that began in the summer of 2016 was further solidified after Russia's support for Erdoğan's government in the aftermath of the attempted *coup d'etat* in Turkey in July 2016.

This chapter looks at the developments in the Russo-Turkish relationship in 2015–2016, especially with respect to the Syrian conflict. It argues that factors such as relative power, individuals in leadership positions and their perceptions, and identities contributed to the collapse of the

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_11

relationship and the subsequent reconciliation. The next section of the chapter discusses the suitability of neoclassical realism as well as ideational concepts for explaining the Russo-Turkish relationship. The following sections look at the power differential between the two states, the role of individuals as well as state-society relations, and identities in the Russo-Turkish conflict. Finally, the chapter discusses the implications of recent developments for relations of both states with the European Union (EU) and the US.

Identities and Interests in International Politics

The analysis in this chapter uses a modified neoclassical realist perspective to try to explain the very complex nature of the Russo-Turkish relationship. The role of relative power positions and interests have an overriding importance in this relationship driven by pragmatism, but factors such as the individual leaders' perceptions, state, and national identity also play a role. In other words, a paradigm that accounts for both material and ideations factors is best suited for explaining the recent changes in the relationship; it is for this reason that this chapter takes the liberty of using neoclassical realism mixed with an element of constructivism. Tsygankov (2015), for instance, has proposed that power and values combine to give a more powerful explanation of Russia's policy towards Ukraine. Along similar lines, this chapter argues that neoclassical realism provides a solid basis for explaining the relationship between Russia and Turkey. It also argues that identity, as has been recently re-conceptualised under the guidance of dominant political leaders, also needs to be taken into consideration, if we are to have a more comprehensive understanding of the behaviour of these two states.

Neoclassical realism is a term introduced by Gideon Rose (1998) to describe a theoretical perspective, the proponents of which occupy a middle ground between pure structural realists and constructivists. Taking realism as their starting point, its adherents argue that the scope and ambition of a country's foreign policy is driven first and foremost by its place in the international system and, specifically, by its relative material power capabilities. Rose, however, argues that the impact of such power capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex, because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level; this is why they are neoclassical (Rose 1998, p. 146). Rose explains, 'neoclassical theorists assume that states respond to the

uncertainties of international anarchy by seeking to control and shape their external environment' (Rose 1998, p. 152). The central prediction of this perspective is that, over time, the amount of relative material power resources states possess will determine the magnitude and scope of their foreign policies; as their relative power rises, so will their search for influence abroad, and vice versa.

That said, neoclassical realists recognise that system-level analysis alone cannot account fully for the behaviour of states; to fill the void, they look at domestic-level variables that play an intervening role. Among those, the role of state leadership, state-society relations, and ideology play an important role. As Rose points out, 'foreign policy choices are made by actual political leaders and elites, and so it is their perceptions of relative power that matter' (Rose 1998, p. 147). In a similar vein, Bynum and Pollack assert that individuals shape not only the foreign policies of their own states but also affect other countries' reactions to them. 'Individual personalities take on added significance when power is concentrated in the hands of a leader, when institutions are in conflict or in times of great change' (Bynum and Pollack 2001, p. 109).

Statesmen like Vladimir Putin and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who have been the unquestioned, dominant personalities in their respective countries for over a dozen years, also help re-define societal identities as well as the self-perception of the state and its role in the international system. While neoclassical realism does not address directly issues of identity, it does consider individuals' perceptions as important intervening variables. Specifically, perceptions are understood as being important in determining and understanding not only the actions of a state but also the counter-actions of their counterparts in international politics. This chapter will look into the perceptions of dominant individuals and how these have had an impact on re-defining state identities.

Identities are important because they are increasingly recognised as important elements of states' foreign policies. Wendt defines identities as 'relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self' (Wendt 1992, p. 397). For constructivists, understanding the construction of identities and interests is key to understanding action and change in the international system. Born out of the interplay between domestic and international environments and factors, identities are about the collective meaning actors have about themselves and others (Checkel 1997, p. 473). Identities and norms are intrinsically related as actors tend to engage in behaviour assumed to be appropriate to their identities. Wendt posits that

interests are closely related, as 'identities are the basis of interests' (Wendt 1992, p. 398). In contrast to rationalist theories where interests are given, constructivists tend to look at interests as endogenous; in other words, given their identities, actors will recognise the need to act in certain ways depending on the situation. In other words, we need to know who we are before we know what we want. Identities are formed through a process of interaction and are socially constructed; therefore, they are not fixed. As states' identities change, so do their interests. In addition, identities are based on self-'other' relations: in order to know who 'we' are, we need to define the 'other'. The security and interests of states depend on how they perceive themselves *vis-a-vis* the 'other' (Wendt 1992, p. 400). Given the importance of identities, it can be expected that the self-perception of states will influence their actions. Therefore, the conduct of foreign policy has a strong relationship with national identity (Prizelz 2004, p. 8). From this perspective, then, it is important to see how Russia and Turkey define themselves as international actors in general and with respect to the Syria crisis in particular.

The Russo-Turkish Relationship Before and After the Downing of Su-24

Beginning in the early 2000s, and especially after 2004, the two countries developed a relationship based on pragmatism: while political disagreements existed and geostrategic rivalries continued, the economic relationship grew substantially, primarily based on trade and tourism, along with growth in investments. A notable feature that accompanied these burgeoning economic relations was the regularity of summits between Putin and Erdoğan, and their successors. In terms of trade, Turkey was the fifth most important trade partner for Russia, accounting for approximately 5% of total trade; by comparison, China accounts for 7.5% (European Commission, Directorate General for Trade 2016, p. 8); there were several energy deals signed, including Turkish Stream, which had been designed to meet rising Turkish demand (55% of Turkey's oil comes from Russia), a Russian company had been designated to build the first Turkish nuclear power plant, there was visa-free travel for citizens of the two countries (Russians account for approximately 30% of all tourists to Turkey's Mediterranean coast). Turkey had abstained from joining the Western embargo on Russia over the Ukraine crisis. Öniş and Yılmaz argue that

the economic cooperation between the two countries survived in the face of political disagreements over Syria, Crimea, the Georgian war, as well as Nagorno Karabakh, due to the 'support of powerful stockholders, both within the state as well as outside it, in terms of private sector coalitions that benefit tremendously from such economic interaction' (Öniş and Yılmaz 2016, p. 83). The relationship that Russia and Turkey had prior to the downing of the Su-24, then, was based on mutual economic gains, supported by broad segments of business elites, while both countries steered away from confrontation on the political issues on which they differed.

The Downing of the Russian Jet and Its Impact on the Russo-Turkish Relationship

It is within this context that on November 24th Turkey shot down a Russian Su-24, which had briefly entered its airspace. Russian aircraft had frequently infringed on Turkish airspace prior to the incident, prompting Turkey to summon the Russian ambassador; incursions into Turkish airspace continued after the shoot down as well. The reaction from Moscow was swift: within days, Russia took series of retaliatory measures. President Putin characterised the shoot down as back stabbing and support for illegitimate groups in Syria. He stated that 'today's loss is linked to a stab in the back delivered to us by accomplices of terrorists' (Osborn and Astakhova 2015). Russia alleged that Turkey had benefited from illegal oil sales from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), maintained a constant liaison with the leadership of ISIS, and conducted backdoor negotiations (Russia Today February 2016b, para 2). Russia accused the Turks of everything from delaying Russian maritime movement through the Bosporus – a violation of the Montreux Convention – to shadowing Russian combatants in the Mediterranean. Russia's Defence Ministry warned that Turkey was conducting illegal activities on its Syrian border, as well as of supplying ISIS in Idlib and Aleppo with manpower and weaponry (Russia Today 2016a).

Beyond the rhetoric, the Russian response to the Turkish shoot down included a mix of military, economic, and diplomatic actions, all of which projected legitimacy. It insisted that Turkey apologise for the incident, accept the blame and compensate the pilot's family. Russia also sought, unsuccessfully, UNSC condemnation of Turkish actions. On

November 28th, 2015, President Putin issued an executive order, (Executive Order No. 5 83, 201), which banned the import of specific agricultural produce, raw materials, and food products from Turkey; it also banned charter air flights. Visa-free travel for Turkish citizens was suspended and travel agencies were ordered to suspend the sale of travel packages to Turkey. Sanctions also targeted Turkish construction, engineering, and trucking companies, tourism-related industries, and research activities (Ministry of Economic Development 2015). Even more importantly for Turkey, Russia cancelled the proposed Turkish Stream natural gas pipeline, which would have channeled gas to Turkey and Europe underneath the Black Sea and circumventing Ukraine (Russia Today 2015).

In addition to the economic sanctions imposed on Turkey as a response to the shoot down of the Su-24, as is common with great powers, Russia did not hesitate to flex its military power. Moscow moved S-400 surface-to-air systems to Syria to provide a tactical level anti-access, area denial capability against the US-led coalition and the Turks. Russia threatened to employ its navy to destroy any targets that were deemed to pose a danger. A Russian ship displayed defensive weapons while transiting Turkish straits. On another occasion, a Russian naval vessel fired warning shots at a Turkish fishing vessel it deemed to have come too close. Russia's response was nothing short of a power display that required respect and fear for the retaliation it can cause.

In the meantime, Turkey saw an increase in refugee flows from Syria, which it blamed on Russia's 'vile, cruel, and barbaric' aircraft, bombing targets without discriminating between civilians and soldiers. Then Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu went so far as to liken Russia's behaviour to that of a terrorist organisation, forcing civilians to flee. Thus, Ankara joined the EU's calls to Russia to end the 'weaponisation of refugees'. Ankara was especially concerned about the Russian air support for the militia fighters of the Democratic Union Party (PYD), thereby supporting their territorial gains (The Guardian 2016, para 4).

Within the short period that they were in place, the Moscow-imposed sanctions hurt the Turkish economy in terms of trade, tourism, investments, and 'suitcase trade'. According to estimates, during the period of November 2015–January 2016, Turkish exports to Russia contracted by 48.6% and imports by 27.7%. There was also an observable decrease in the number of Russian tourists visiting the country, with a drop of 18.5% in November and December 2015 alone. Had the sanctions continued during 2016, the impact on the Turkish economy would have been

considerable, with estimates varying between $2.3 to $8.3 billion and 0.15% to 0.9% of annual GDP growth (Sönmez 2016; Alpaslan et al. 2015).

Seven months later, in June 2016, Turkey initiated a rapprochement with a succession of two letters from Erdogan to Putin, followed by a meeting of the two in St. Petersburg in August. The second letter stated Erdogan's sympathy and condolences to the family of the killed Russian pilot and offered a direct apology (Kremlin 2016). This and subsequent gestures appeared to have met Russia's demands, paving the way for a return to more harmonious relations. These initial steps towards reconciliation were further strengthened when Russia was the first country to condemn the attempted coup against the Turkish government on July 15, 2016. Soon thereafter it was announced that many of the sanctions on trade and tourism imposed by the Russian government would be lifted.

At the same time, disagreements on a range of political issues remain, Syria being a principal matter of concern. Specifically, it appears that the Turkish incursion in Syria and the capture of Jarablus was not coordinated either with Moscow or with Damascus, leaving Russia deeply unhappy about the scope of the operation (Stepanov et al. 2016). Thus, it is fair to say that the current rapprochement was driven more by economic concerns, leaving the political disagreements largely intact.

Explaining the Russo-Turkish Relations in Light of the Syrian Crisis

The following sections discuss several variables that can help explain the dynamics of Russia's relationship with Turkey during the past several months, especially as it pertains to the Syrian crisis. It will begin with a discussion of the importance of the power differential between the two countries, and continue with the imprint that Putin and Erdoğan have had in the framing of the two countries' foreign policies. Finally, it looks at the significance of state and national identities in the behaviour of both countries.

Relative Power

Both Russia and Turkey have experienced changes in their role in international politics during the past quarter of a century. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation emerged as its

successor on the international scene, albeit with reduced stature; it also inherited the structural problems that that had plagued the USSR. The transition to a multi-party system and market economy presented unprecedented challenges and took a significant toll on the public, the majority of which regretted the loss of a superpower status. Having been a major player in international relations for centuries, Russia's decline in the 1990s was a tough reality to accept for a large segment of the population and the country's leadership alike. Particularly jarring were the perceived snubs of legitimate Russian concerns and interests, the most important among which was the expansion of NATO to the countries of the former Warsaw Pact, and then to the three Baltic republics. Since then, one of the principle drivers of Russian foreign policy has been a restoration of the country's status as a great power that plays a major role in international politics on an equal footing with the US. Turkey, on the other hand, experienced a period of sustained economic growth, which allowed it to play a more active role in the region. While Russia has been acting as a great power to be reckoned with, Turkey has seen itself as an emerging power in its region.

Russia's economic growth in the 2000 s combined with high energy prices, fuelled its resurgence on the international scene. As a consequence of its economic growth, Russia has seen its military expenditure steadily increase to 5.4% of its GDP in 2015, from a low of 3% in 1998; despite the drop in energy prices, it increased its spending by 7.5% compared to the previous year, bringing the total to $66.4 billion – the fourth largest in the world. The increase in the material base was reflected in Russia's perception of its role as a great power as well, consistent with Russia's ambition for 'increased responsibility for setting the international agenda and shaping the international system', as stated in its most recent Foreign Policy Concept (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation 2013). Russia has steadfastly rejected the legitimacy of a unipolar world and worked towards the emergence of a multipolar – or polycentric – one (ibid). In official documents and statements by President Putin and other foreign policy officials, there is a call – presumably to the US – for tackling problems on the basis of equality and mutual respect. It could well be argued that one of the principal reasons behind Russia's behaviour vis-a-vis the West is the conviction that its legitimate interests were not taken into consideration, especially during the 1990s.

In this context, and with still relatively limited means, especially compared to the US, Russia has become more active in the conduct of its foreign policy; it has been especially proactive in shaping its 'Near Abroad'. This is evidenced by the Georgian war, the intervention in Ukraine and the subsequent annexation of the Crimean peninsula into Russia. Russia also played an active role in the negotiations on the Minsk Agreements, aimed at finding a cease-fire in eastern Ukraine. The intervention in Syria follows this line of foreign policy moves and shows that Russia is willing to play a role in shaping the international system beyond its neighbourhood.

Moscow's intervention in Syria can be seen as part of its drive for increased influence abroad. Russia's role as a great power with an expanding sphere of influence and its interests in the Syrian conflict were in direct conflict with those of Turkey, especially with respect to the regime of Bashar al Assad, which led to the downing of the Su-24 as well as the subsequent tensions over the Turkish incursion into Syria. President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov have indicated two main reasons for Russia's intervention in Syria: first, Russia considers fighting international terrorism to be in its national interest, especially in view of the fact that more than 4,000 people from the former Soviet Union have joined ISIS and could pose danger to Russia should they choose to go back, and second, in response to the Syrian government's request for assistance (Kremlin, September 2015).

The latter point has been repeatedly underlined by Russian officials, as has been its backing of the Assad regime. Russia's relationship with Syria dates back to the days of the Cold War, when the Soviet Union had strong commercial, military, and economic ties with Damascus. Nowadays, Russia has economic and political interests in the region; it also has a naval presence in Tartus, on Syria's west coast. Russia's support for the Assad regime placed it in direct conflict with Turkey's interests, which had made Assad's removal a *sine qua non* for the resolution of the conflict. On occasion, it has also cooperated and provided support for Kurdish groups fighting ISIS in Syria, whose successes on the battlefield and progress in creating a self-governing zone along the Turkish border has alarmed Ankara.

Turkey's Foreign Policy as an Emerging Power

If Russia has sought to re-establish itself as a great power, then Turkey's rapid economic growth for much of the 2000 s placed it in the group of

newly rising powers. The chief architect of Turkey's foreign policy since the AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, or Justice and Development Party) came to power in 2002 was Ahmet Davutoğlu, an academic, who took turns first as a foreign minister, then as a prime minister, before being ousted in early 2016.

As famously discussed in his book, *Strategic Depth,* Davutoğlu (2001) saw an opportunity for enhancing Turkey's role in the international system by re-assessing the country's strategic position in the context of the systemic transformation taking place in world politics and a new strategic vision. This new approach aimed at regional integration with Turkey's neighbouring countries that share common history, particularly with the Islamic world. Davutoğlu argued that, by using proactive peace diplomacy, Turkey must engage in conflict resolutions in all regions. In this regard, Davutoğlu believed that Turkey's multiregional foreign policy could turn it to a regional power and eventually to a global power (Davutoğlu 2001, pp. 501–507).

In the early phase of the Syrian crisis, Turkey adopted a wait-and-see policy and worked to convince Assad to implement reforms (AUC Cairo Review 2012). However, as a response to Syria's shooting down of a Turkish jet in 2012 (Demir 2012), Turkey changed its rules of engagement towards Syria. Turkey closed its embassy in Syria on March 26, 2012 and a few days later hosted the second 'Friends of Syria' meeting in Istanbul (AUC Cairo Review 2012). These conferences were formed to help Syrian opposition as a response to the UN Security Council's inability to take actions against the Assad regime due to the veto of China and Russia. By hosting the conference, Turkey showed its support for the Syrian opposition group the Free Syrian Army, or FSA.

The People's Protection Units (YPG), the armed wing of the PYD – which has become the umbrella organisation of Syrian Kurdish groups – are the main allies of the US-led coalition and enjoy occasional military support from Russia. Turkey considers the PYD and YPG to be terrorist organisations affiliated with the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which is also considered to be a terrorist organisation by Turkey, the EU, and the US. The prospects of the Kurds gaining a contiguous region in northern Syria along the Turkish border that also has access to northern Iraq is a nightmare scenario for Ankara, given its large and restive Kurdish minority. Ankara was especially concerned about a 'Kurdish takeover of Northern Syria and the likelihood of the region becoming a new base for the Kurdistan Workers' Party' (Kohen 2012). Turkey has been accused

of trying to prevent this development by assisting radical Islamic groups against the Syrian Kurds. In this regard, the AKP elites failed to resolve the long lasting Kurdish problem in its democratic reform agenda.

Russia's increased military support for Assad's forces and Turkey's increased drive for regime change in Syria contributed to the deterioration of relations between Turkey and Russia. Increased military activities on the Turkish-Syrian border led to further escalation of tensions culminating in the downing of the Su-24 on November 24, 2015. Turkey's action could be perceived as a warning against Russia's air campaign against rebel groups in Syria, which commenced in September 2015. The Turkish military intervention in Syria from August 24, 2016 was not unexpected, given the bombings conducted in Turkey by ISIS as well as the advances of the YPD. The intervention – named Fırat Kalkanı, or Euphrates Shield – and takeover of Jarablus not only aimed at eliminating ISIS and supporting the FSA but also targeted the US-backed PYD-YPG and its deployment in the Turkish-Syria border regions (Dalay 2016). While Washington called on the Turks to refrain from clashing with the YPG, Moscow was critical of the scope and territorial reach of the operation.

Individuals and State-Society Relations

Presidents Putin and Erdoğan have been the dominant political personalities in their respective countries since 2000 and 2002, respectively. The two leaders have shaped policies and have sought to re-define their nations' identities. It is also their perceptions – along with Ahmet Davutoğlu's, in Turkey's case – of their countries' power positions and identities as well as those of the other powers that determine their role in the Syrian conflict. Putin's ability to shape Russia's domestic and foreign policy landscape has been rooted both in his constitutional powers and personality strength. The president's powers have been enhanced during Putin's terms in office allowing him control over foreign policy as well dominance of domestic affairs, leading to the centralisation of political power. Many of Putin's beliefs, as articulated in speeches and interviews, reflect his visions of Russia as a global power with a strong state, respected by the West. Towards that goal, Putin has had the support of a significant portion of Russia's elite, including those espousing a statist view of foreign policy, and has sought to shape civil society as malleable to the state. One of the main foreign policy perspectives in Russia, statism sees the necessity of maintaining a strong, independent state able to govern and preserve the social and

political order. While not anti-Western per se, the West is frequently seen as 'the Other', presenting an existential threat to Russia, whether that is in the form of NATO, the Missile Defense Shield, or Ukraine; statists frequently draw attention to military and economic capabilities in order to exact the respect of the West. Statists, much like Putin himself, see Russia's strength and great power status as a principal foreign policy goal (Tsygankov 2010). The strong rhetoric, the imposition of economic sanctions and demonstrations of military power in the aftermath of the shoot down of the Su-24, made it clear that Russia wanted to be seen as exacting punishment from Turkey for attacking a great power's military equipment. Russia was to be respected based on the fear of reprisals it promised to unleash, as evidenced by the economic retaliation and military posturing.

In a similar manner Turkey's political landscape has been dominated by President Erdoğan, although its foreign policy for much of the 2000s was shaped by former Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu. Erdoğan has also sought to shape Turkish society along more conservative Islamic values. Erdoğan's political leadership is often described as 'single man administration' or 'one-man rule' by critics due to his desire to shift from a parliamentary system to a presidential system for the purpose of consolidating his political power. Following the attempted coup in July 2016, Erdoğan's grip on Turkish politics has been solidified, even though it had been widely criticised as increasingly authoritarian for several years prior to that.

The failed coup, led by a small group in the military, was an attempt to overthrow the AKP government. Erdoğan and his followers claimed that Fetullah Gülen, a long-term US-based Islamic cleric, was behind the coup attempt; they argued that Gülen's followers formed the so-called Fethullah Terrorist Organization (FETO). Gülen's followers who held influential positions in government institutions, including education, the police, judiciary, military, and secret services, were alleged to have created a parallel state, which needed to be eliminated. As a result, in the aftermath of the coup attempt 'tens of thousands of public sector workers have been suspended or dismissed, with many having their passports cancelled. There has also been a massive reshuffle of the military', (BBC, Turkey's Coup Bid 2016) with hundreds of high ranking officers dismissed. Business groups with links to Gülen were also 'cleansed' in order to prevent further financing of the movement.

The relative weakness of political and governmental institutions in both countries, coupled with a weak civil society and its lack of autonomy, facilitate the rise of strong, authoritarian-leaning individuals who dominate foreign and domestic policy agendas. That is why the domestic context,

as well as the perceptions of individuals, are important to consider in analysing foreign policies. Putin's and Erdoğan's dominance, left unmitigated by the lack of strong institutions and viable civil society, has enabled them to chart both the domestic and foreign policies of the two countries, and perhaps most importantly, shape their national and state identities. The next section of the chapter discusses how the identities inform the interests of a state; particular attention is paid to Erdoğan and Putin's influence on the changing character of Russian and Turkish societies as well as how the two states view themselves as international players. It also looks at how identities influence interests with respect to the Syrian conflict.

Putin and Russia's Identity

Historically, both Russia and Turkey were seen as Europe's 'Other'. For Russia this was most evident during – although not limited to – the years of the USSR (Kundera 1986, p. 33), while Turkey's 'otherness' dates back to the Ottoman Empire's move onto the European continent. As the two countries' relationship with the West changed, so did their perception of identities, values, and norms *vis-a-vis* those espoused by the West. Scholars have argued that, in Russia's case, changes in the internal and external environments have led to re-definitions of 'self' and reordering of priorities, which in turn, has led to changes in foreign policy (Prizel 2004). Historically, the debates surrounding Russia's identity have evolved between Romantic nationalist and European-oriented liberal views (Neumann 1996). Vladimir Putin has played an important role in this process of re-interpretation, declaring Russia to be its own, separate civilisation.

In speeches, articles, and documents, Putin has continuously emphasised the distinctiveness of Russian identity. He has frequently pointed out the uniqueness of Russia as a 'state-civilisation' while contrasting it with the 'Western' one. The difference is established not only in terms of values and the Russian way of life but also by contrasting Russian understanding of democracy with views on sovereignty, rules, morals, and practices managing international relations with Western ones. The emphasis on distinct civilisational values has affected Russia's foreign policy, expressed as opposition to Western global hegemony, special relations with Asian and Middle Eastern countries, and founding of the Eurasian Union (Tsygankov and Tsygankov 2010, p. 237)

For instance, in his 2012 article published originally in *Izvestia*, Putin listed a number of elements of Russian culture: respect for government,

prioritisation of the common good and public interests; he also defined the country's unity as 'the sovereignty of the Russian people, rather than the supremacy of individuals and groups, across its entire territory' – features that align with the statist view of foreign policy. Putin further argued that the unipolar world was over and the global economic and political problems call for cooperation among countries, especially the permanent members of the UN Security Council.

> In these conditions, Russia can and must play a deserving role, dictated by its civilizational model, great history, geography, and its cultural genome, which seamlessly combines the fundamentals of European civilization and the centuries-old experience of cooperation with the East, where new centers of economic power and political influence are currently rapidly developing. (*Russia Today*, February 2016a)

The ideas of a strong state and great power status have been important elements of Russia's identity. A closer look at several speeches given by Putin as well as his article from 2012, show several other common themes: sovereignty, Russia's uniqueness and contrast with the West, and patriotism. Other themes include territorial integrity, the rejection of a unipolar world, and emphasis on international law and cooperation among states to solve global problems. This idea of Russia's standing in the world as a great power serves as an ideational basis for Russia's pursuit of economic and military power; it aligns with its rhetoric and behaviour on the international scene. It also helps to explain its involvement in the Syrian conflict and relationship with Turkey.

The Redefinition of Turkish Identity

Since the establishment of the Turkish Republic, leaders' beliefs and perceptions of others have played an important role in Turkish foreign policy decision-making mechanisms. During the AKP rule Turkey's new identity has been re-formulated mostly by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Ahmet Davutoğlu. The AKP governments have aimed to redefine Turkish identity by establishing a new set of foreign policy principles. There were emerging economic and social actors during the AKP administration that reshaped Turkey's national identity. These rising religious social actors favour Turkey's Muslim neighbourhood (Hurriyet Daily News 2009). The AKP's focus on Islamic values in its foreign policies and

party orientation represents the interest of the middle class in society and ideologically brings together conservative Islam (traditional Sunni), nationalism, economic liberalism, and social democracy (Kalaycıoğlu 2002, p. 45). These social categories led to the 'Islamic social engineering' in Turkey (Göle 1996). Since the establishment of the party in 2001, the AKP decision making elite decided to follow a more moderate Islamic ideological line than that of previous Islamist parties. They initiated a new Islamic movement without crossing the secularism hardline by integrating their Islamist movement into mainstream politics. Erdoğan called his party ideology 'conservative democracy' rather than 'Muslim democrats' and set his political agenda based on political liberalisation (Taşpınar 2012). The AKP as a part of its election manifesto strongly emphasised Turkey's entry into the EU (Şen 2004). The AKP's leaders chose to focus on democratisation and Europeanization of the Turkish political system.

In addition to this new orientation, two long-standing, fundamental elements of Turkish state identity are particularly relevant and help explain Turkey's policies towards the Syria conflict: territorial integrity and ethnic identity. One of the most important examples is the *Sèvres Syndrome* (Jung 2003; Göcek 2011; Alpay 2009), which became the basis of the security culture in Turkish politics. Both domestic policy and foreign policy were shaped by leaders' perceptions based on past fears of imminent territorial disintegration of the Republic. Therefore, the perceptions and inclinations of the state leaders have been overwhelmed by the 'Sevres Syndrome' after the traumatic experience of the Treaty of Sèvres on August 10, 1920 at the end of the World War I. Namely, the Treaty sought to partition the Ottoman Empire among the Allies, along with Greece, Armenia and the Kurds, leaving only a small portion of heartland Anatolia in Turkish hands. As a result, the inviolability of the borders of the Turkish state have been deeply ingrained both in national consciousness as well as in state policies.

After the establishment, the new republic faced many internal challenges 'religious fundamentalism and ethnic separatism posed real threats to the young Republic' (Sözen 2006). Historically, the most important ethnic separatism faced by the newly established Turkish republic was 'the Kurdish rebellion under the Sheikh Said (1925)' (Jung 2003). These uprisings started against Turkish authorities because under the new Turkish Republic 'the 1924 constitution defined a "Turk" as anyone living within the boundaries of Turkey and attached to Turkey by bonds of citizenship. Legally, the state would be indifferent to a citizen's religious or ethnic identity' (Kirişçi 2004, p. 276). Hereby, ethnic groups

other than Turkish, such as Kurds, were excluded from Turkish citizenship, so mainly Kurdish originated rebellions started to occur in Anatolia. As a result, the Kurdish issue became one of the most important challenges to Turkish foreign policy and it remains as such even today. Erdoğan took more concrete steps towards the Kurdish problem and in 2009 started 'Kurdish opening (Kürt açılımı)'–later dubbed as 'democratic opening (demokratik açılım)'. This initiative aimed to resolve the Kurdish problem and guarantee the minorities their rights in Turkey; presently, this initiative appears to be in tatters, as evidenced by the wave of recent bombings. The process has largely failed, with Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım declaring in September of 2016 that there is "'no solution or anything' and that the government will pursue kinetic methods until the very end to annihilate the PKK" (Gürcan, Al-Monitor 2016). It also sets the basis for Turkey's primary interests in Syria: preventing the formation of a self-governing Kurdish region along its border. Turkish identity thus defined also led to an 'open door policy' for Syrian refugees. Approximately two million Syrian refugees have been admitted to Turkey with, 'religiously, ethnically, and politically acceptable backgrounds' (Korkut 2016, p. 1) to the ideology and identity of the AKP government.

Russo-Turkish Relationship and Implications for the West

The Russo-Turkish relationship has certainly had its ups and downs, and the interests of the two countries with respect to the Syrian conflict add to this complexity. Their views of Assad's regime are conflicting: while Russia insisted that it was the only alternative, Turkey saw Assad's removal as *sine qua non* for the resolution of the conflict. In this, the US position was closer to the Turkish, rather than the Russian one. This also had an impact on whom the two states supported: for a number of years Ankara cultivated a relationship with groups opposing Assad, even if they were Islamists, while Russian military support enabled the recent gains made by the Syrian army against ISIS. It is also possible that the rapprochement with Ankara will limit Russia's cooperation with PYD and YPG, which is of primary importance to Turkey. The main US ally on the ground in Syria, on the other hand, has been the YPG, whose successes against ISIS leading to the creation of a *de facto* autonomous area along the Turkish border is unacceptable to Ankara. Ironically, this

is where Russian and Turkish as well as the Syrian regime's interests coincide: their preferred end game is Syrian territorial integrity.

Incirlik airbase, located in Southeast Turkey, is the main base of the US-led anti-ISIS coalition campaign; the base also keeps six NATO storage sites for US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe (Russia Today, 30 July 2016b). The significance of Incirlik airbase for operations against ISIS cannot be underestimated: it allows US aircraft to get to their target area much more quickly than taking off from anywhere else in the region (Shogol and Pawlyk 2016). US officials have also noted that Incirlik allows coalition forces to conduct better surveillance over Syria and to act on received intelligence faster (Baldor 2016). The reliance on Incirlik has long limited Washington's ability to take more critical stances on Erdoğan's policies.

After the coup attempt, the Turkish government cut off power to the Incirlik base because they believed that rebel military forces took control of the base, forcing coalition forces to scale down their operations against ISIS. The base was surrounded and put on lock down for security check without any explanation. These actions as well as the rise of anti-Western sentiment in Turkey in general, have led members of Congress to consider moving US personnel and military equipment out of Turkey and into other Middle Eastern countries – a proposal that had already been floated by US foreign policy experts. The reason for these discussions, according to US Representative Dana Rohrabacher is that, 'Erdogan is purging pro-Western people throughout the country who are in a position of influence. He himself has become more aggressive in his Islamic leanings, and there is a reason for us to be seriously concerned' (Ybarra 2016).

The ongoing turmoil in Turkey has strained further relations with Washington, in part because there are supporters of Gülen in the US who believe that his movement is the modern, more moderate face of Islam (Fuller 2016). The reprisals were criticised by the US and other Western countries as well, as they raised already existing concerns for Turkey's democratic credentials. The dismissals in the military alone eliminated a significant number of contacts. Criticising the scale of purges, Secretary of State John Kerry went so far as to suggest that Turkey's NATO membership might be questioned – something that the administration later denied. The purges in Turkish institutions also raised concerns about the fight against the Islamic State in Syria as they affected the top military brass as well as soldiers and mid-ranking officers; trust between the military, police and intelligence services was severely compromised as a result to coup

attempt (Ergun 2016). While Turkey submitted a formal extradition request, Washington made it clear that Gülen would be handed over only if there was persuasive evidence that Gülen was indeed involved in the failed coup attempt, a position that intensified anti-American sentiments in the country. Compared to Russia's immediate support for the government and the post-coup measures, Erdoğan and its allies saw the Western response as a betrayal, which in turn led to denunciation of the West, and especially, the US.

There is a distinct understanding that Turkey, once a reliable NATO ally, is willing to strike out on its own, even if it means going against the interests of the US. Anti-Americanism is at an all-time high in Turkey, not in the least because government officials, including Erdoğan, pointed the finger at the US for being behind the attempted coup. The rapprochement with Russia is yet another instance that has given NATO officials pause. From a Russian perspective, the reconciliation with Turkey suggests possible weakening of the alliance, especially given the domestic developments in the country. It enhances Russia's standing in the region and reaffirms its status as a great power; it also shows that the US is no longer able to dictate the developments in the Middle East, nor can it resolve the Syrian conflict by itself.

Turkey's relationship with the EU has been equally contentious. One of the most visible aspects of Turkey's relationship with the EU during 2015–2016 has been the agreement on Syrian refugees. Per this agreement, all new refugees crossing to Greece would be returned to Turkey; Turkey, which hosts well over two million Syrians, also agreed to take measures to prevent additional refugees from reaching the EU from Turkey; while the EU promised up to 6 billion Euros in aid, acceleration of the roadmap towards visa-free travel for Turkish citizens to the EU; re-energising Turkey's accession process and further work toward upgrading the Customs Union (European Commission 2016). As a consequence of the agreement, the influx of refugees from Turkey to Greece has dwindled to manageable numbers. With lack of progress in the area of visa-liberalisation due primarily to Ankara's refusal to change its terror laws, however, the Turkish government has not shied away from threatening to withdraw from the agreement. Given the European public's sensitivity to migrants, the refugee problem empowers Ankara and, at the very least, limits the response options EU governments can have *vis-a-vis* its policies. In sum, the refugee flow from Syria, exacerbated by Russia's air strikes, as well as NATO's reliance on Incirlik air base make Turkey a critical partner for both the US and the EU, enhancing its negotiating power.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the complicated and changing Russo-Turkish relationship in the context of the Syrian conflict. Prior to Russia's involvement in the conflict in the fall of 2015, pragmatism formed the basis of the strong economic and energy ties between the two countries. Russia's intervention in the conflict in support of the Assad regime is in direct conflict with Ankara's stated goal of his removal as a basis for a solution to the conflict. Turkey's priority has been to prevent the formation of a contiguous Kurdish zone along its Iraqi and Syrian borders – a policy informed by its definition of national identity and territorial integrity dating back to the foundation of the republic. The breakdown of Russo-Turkish relations had a negative impact on the potential for cooperation to stem the violence in Syria as well as on US-led military operations. It also showed the limits of US power and influence in the face of perceived national interests of other great or emerging powers. For the time being, the crisis appears to have been contained and Russo-Turkish relations restored. That said, a number of geostrategic differences remain, as does the economic imperative; therefore, it is likely that the Russo-Turkish relations may revert to the pattern established prior to the downing of Su-24: one of growing economic and energy cooperation and uneasy political accommodation of conflicting interests.

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PART III

Conclusion

CHAPTER 12

Russia and the Future of European Security

Andrei P. Tsygankov

This volume assembles chapters on the critically important topic of European security and Russia's role in it. For the first time since the end of the Cold War we are witnessing a fundamental change in the system of international relations known as the US unipolar domination. The crisis in Ukraine became both the expression of the change and the focal point of Russia-West disagreements on various political, economic, and security-related issues.

That the theme of Russia-West relations is discussed in the European security context strikes me as the right choice. Of all the regions in which Russia plays a prominent role – Europe, Eurasia including Central Asia and the Caucasus, the Middle Eastern region, and the Asia-Pacific – Europe is arguably the most important in terms of generating the potential for change in the international system. Nowhere else is the USA's role as dominant and nowhere is Russia as much at home and prepared as strongly to assert its interests. In Central Asia, Russia shares power and influence with China and other prominent nations. China also figures prominently in the Asia-Pacific. Given that Russia has had fewer disagreements with China than with the West, the growing Russia-China ties contribute to stability, rather than to discord within the international

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R.E. Kanet (ed.), *The Russian Challenge to the European Security Environment*, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50775-0_12

system. Finally, the Middle East is distinct both in terms of multiple players involved in the region's politics and an instrumental role that the region plays in Russia's geopolitical calculus.[1]

Contributions by the authors whose chapters appear in this volume can be usefully summarized by way of answering five essential questions about European security and Russia.[2]

1. Should the content of the Russia-West conflict in Europe be described as a new Cold War?
2. How risky or orderly is a new coming change in the international system? In particular, is the likelihood of a great power war high or low?
3. What are the roots of the contemporary Russia-West conflict? Should those roots be traced to the Ukraine conflict or do they precede the conflict?
4. What are the main causes of the Russia-West conflict? Who shares most of the blame? For instance, is it Russia or the USA or both or neither of them that is mainly at fault?
5. What developments should be expected in the future? Which policy should the West pursue toward Russia – cooperation, containment, or a combination of both of them?

As the volume's contributors wrestled with these questions, they formulated important insights, deepened our understanding of the central issues of the book, and posed stimulating questions for further research. The fact that the book's authors did not fully agree with each other makes their contribution all the more valuable, as it is only through debates and disagreements that we are able to formulate our own informed conclusions. I will highlight the points of contention, as I discuss the authors' contributions.

Most contributors to the volume are in agreement that the contemporary Russia-West conflict should not be described as a new Cold War.[3] Suzanne Loftus and Roger E. Kanet found that, although there are few examples of US-Russia cooperation, the two sides are going through different political dynamics in their relations. Russia has emerged as the leading challenger of the international system centered on the US global interests and values, yet there is still a long way before the system will show signs of a genuine transformation toward a Cold War-like bipolarity. Nikita Lomagin focuses on the economic dimension of Russia-West

relations and provides a detailed analysis of Russia's geoeconomic tools of asserting their interests such as access to their markets and various forms of sanctions. He also finds that the notion of the Cold War is an overstatement pointing to various aspects of Russia's and the West's mutual interdependence and competition with players outside these two sides. Yet, Lomagin thinks that the two sides' economic relations are not likely to improve principally any time soon, thereby suggesting the metaphor of 'a cold peace' for describing these relations.

Alexander Bogdanov's position diverges from the arguments just described and is the closest to calling the Russia-West conflict a new Cold War, although he is skeptical that Russia will manage to sustain it. He argues that at least in the former Soviet region one can observe a genuine political and normative competition of two hierarchical orders, each centered on Western/American and Russian/neo-Soviet values. Bogdanov finds that these regional orders are symmetrical and radically opposed in terms of state-level and transnational ideology and ways to preserve their security. However, he acknowledges that, unlike the Cold War era, the USA today refuses to accept Russia's sphere of regional influence. He also recognizes the limitations of the established Cold War-like relations by pointing to Russia's internal economic weakness and problems with the legitimacy of Russia-centered regional order.

With respect to the question of risks and likelihood of war, most authors agree that such risks are high, given the intensity of Russia-West conflict and a possibility of various military accidents. Loftus and Kanet as well as Stanislav Tkachenko and John Berryman point to high risks of a military conflict. In particular, Tkachenko draws our attention to Russia's coercive foreign policy that has emerged since 2008 and is employed in both military and non-military forms. He argues that such a policy contains a very high share of risk because it results from Russia's weakness, low institutionalization of decision-making, and is the last resort in asserting the Kremlin's interests. Precisely because the Kremlin exhausted all other means of promoting its values and interests, it is not likely to back down.

In their chapter on Russia-Turkey relations, Nuray Ibryamova and Mehtap Kara analyze a different kind of risk – the one associated with a possible bilateral military conflict between Russia and the NATO member. The Turkish decision to shoot down a Russian Su-24 provoked a tough response from the Kremlin and severely strained the two nations' relations. To the USA, the action by Turkey both questioned its judgment as a member of NATO and presented Washington and the Western military

alliance with the extremely difficult choice if Moscow were to escalate the conflict with Istanbul. The more recent improvement in relations between the two countries and Turkey's dissatisfaction with the West's response to the failed coup may have the potential to bring the two countries closer together.

Alexander Jankovski takes a radically different position regarding the risks that inhere in current Russia-West relations. Building on insights from the British School of international relations, he finds that, rhetoric aside, order and cooperation in the two sides' relations prevail over elements of disorder and conflict. Unlike Tkachenko, he finds the Kremlin to be generally rational, cool, and collected in its actions and likely to avoid any excessively dangerous provocations because of Russia's political dependence on cooperation with the USA and other Western nations. Jankovski draws examples of such dependence from Russia-US cooperation on nuclear issues, Iran, and regional stability in the Middle East. The argument can be developed further by exploring how agreement on some issues among great powers does not preclude them from moving in the direction of a military conflict. One does not exclude the other.

The third critical question concerns the roots of the contemporary Russia-West conflict and the role played by the crisis in Ukraine. Here, the contributors are in general agreement that the Ukraine crisis may be the culmination, but not the root, of Russia-West political conflict. Lilia Arakelyan reveals the geopolitical logic behind the European Union (EU) policies of Eastern Partnership as preceding the Ukraine crisis and generating mistrust in relations with Russia. She argues that the EU policies aimed primarily at preventing Russia's influence, rather than promoting stated goals of 'good governance, democracy, and economic integration'. John Berryman also points to the West's actions as contributors to mistrust on part of Russia. In particular, he documents the role of NATO expansion and the West's 'soft power' policies of regime change as ways to undermine Russia's influence in Europe. Maria Raquel Freire identifies a Russia-West contestation of security norms and the Kremlin's insistence on reordering European security principles along the inclusive lines of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), rather than NATO behind the East-West crisis. Finally, Mikhail Molchanov describes the dysfunctional nature of the Ukrainian state and the polarizing foreign policies that had been pursued by Ukrainian elites with radically different international

priorities long before the Euromaidan uprising took place. He demonstrates that rather than facilitating Ukraine's adjustment to a complex international environment and the need to develop strong economic ties with both Russia and Europe, the EU sought to force Kiev to make a decisive choice between them (in favor of the EU associate membership agreement). The latter put extreme pressures on Ukraine and heightened Russia's suspicion toward the West.

All these arguments indicate that Russia and the West have been locked in serious economic and geopolitical disputes long before the 2014 crisis – disputes that were never seriously addressed pushing toward a major confrontation. Of course, Russia's response to the crisis – the annexation of Crimea and the support provided for separatists in Donetsk and Lugansk – exacerbated the crisis and made it even more difficult to resolve it on mutually acceptable terms. The West's subsequent reaction in the form of imposing sanctions against the Russian economy and members of its political class, on the one hand, and providing various forms of support and encouragement for Kiev and its use of force against the East, on the other, further contributed to the escalation of conflict in Ukraine.

This partly answers the fourth question posed on the main causes of the Russia-West conflict. As becomes evident from the above discussion, the answer to this question must avoid simplifications such as 'it is all the Kremlin's fault' or, alternatively, 'the West is the one to blame'. The issue is much too complex and should take into consideration several critically important factors, including the lack of sensitivity toward Russia's concerns exhibited by both the USA and the EU, Russia's own failed policies toward both Ukraine and the West, and problems with Ukrainian state-building following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In various ways, the chapters in the present volume contribute to developing a complex understanding of the European security crisis.

Finally, one must ask about the future implications of the Russia-West crisis and policy choices that Western nations face in their relations with the Kremlin. On this issue, there is also a divergence of perspectives and opinions as expressed by the book's authors. Some of them indicate, as Tkachenko's chapter does, that Russia is acting out of desperation and is unlikely to be disciplined by punishments such as economic sanctions, military build-up on Russia's borders, or arming Kiev. If so, the West should avoid actions that may be read as provocative by the Kremlin and should strengthen a political dialogue with Russia. If Russia indeed proves internally weaker than it says, then such logic should prevent the Kremlin

from engaging in provocative behavior and ultimately prompt it to seek stronger ties with the West. Here, there are a number of unresolved questions raised by several contributors, such as the effectiveness of Western sanctions. For instance, the chapters by Loftus/Kanet and Lomagin each question the idea that the West's economic sanctions were in any way decisive in preventing the Kremlin from escalating the conflict in Ukraine. Other contributors such as Arakelyan, Bogdanov, and Freire recommend rethinking European security in a more inclusive way by strengthening cooperation with Russia in order to develop trust and stabilize the West-Russia relations.

Another available policy option is containment pursued in a more or less rigorous form. For instance, Loftus and Kanet propose what they call 'constrainment', or a half-way policy between engagement and containment. They recommend that the West engage with Russia politically and economically in order to develop cooperation and respect, yet sustain military deterrence and preserve firm security commitments to Western allies in Europe. Others have advocated a return to a robust containment similar to the one practiced during the Cold War (Baker 2014).

Yet another policy choice is to continue elevating costs for Russia aiming to deter it from future provocative actions, such as that in Crimea and the eastern Ukraine – whether it is toward Ukraine or other states in the region including the Baltics, Moldova, or Georgia. For instance, some experts argue that even containment of Russia may not be sufficient to prevent future destabilization of Europe (Kross 2016). The assumption here is that the Kremlin may have sufficient support at home to invalidate containment. Russia, therefore, will have the capacity to be aggressive in its foreign policy and – short of the West's powerful response – may continue to perceive the West as weak and unable to muster the will to stop Moscow's aggression. This reasoning implies the need to go beyond containment and try actions aimed to alter the existing balance of power, for instance, by arming Russia's neighbors and engaging the Kremlin in an economic competition and arms race that it would find difficult to sustain. This option is reminiscent of Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative that was introduced, in part at least, with the idea of undermining the Soviet Union by provoking its unsustainable military spending. It assumes that the Kremlin is rational in its decisions, yet it may be tempted to engage in a symmetrical and ultimately self-defeating arms race.

The latter choice of going beyond containment is not advocated in this volume and is not yet practically attempted by the West. However, NATO's decision to move four additional battalions to Poland and the Baltics in order to raise the costs of Russia's potential military expansion may have a potential to move in this direction. As Berryman shows in his chapter, several observers advocated the adoption of a 'preclusive' forward strategy to defend the Western alliance's eastern frontier by 'limited war' and deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in Eastern Europe and the Baltic states. The problem with such decisions is that Russia is certain to view them as indicative of the West's offensive strategy aiming to achieve the larger objective of dismantling Russia's political regime and system of values.[4] If NATO is to be successful as a European security alliance, then the West must find a way not only to defend its own perceived values and interests but also to recognize those of Russia. The contemporary strategy of deterrence and defense articulated in the Warsaw summit is not likely to safeguard the two sides from future dangerous crises especially if NATO continues expansion and deployment of missile defense systems in the regions adjacent to Russia. The declared approach of a dialogue will not work if it is accompanied by promotion of the West's interests at the expense of those of Russia. Short of including Moscow as an equal participant in various political and security projects, Russia-West relations will remain frozen at best and, given the level of fear and mistrust, may even escalate into a full-blown military conflict.

The solution to the Russia-West conflict in Europe must be complex to account for the complexity of its root causes and main actors' responsibilities. Both the concerns and the responsibilities of Russia and other participants in the conflict must be fully addressed – ideally at an international conference that would result in a new set of legally binding obligations. For such a development, however, Russia and the West remain too far apart in terms of their perceived interests, institutions, and, most importantly, level of mutual trust. Any expectations of a robust settlement of the crisis would therefore be excessively optimistic. Indeed, in the current security climate one can expect further crises between Russia and the West in other areas of Europe and outside. For the foreseeable future, while the world continues to move away from US international dominance toward new global and regional power balances, the best we can hope for is sufficient cooperation between main actors to prevent escalation of disagreements between them. In the meantime, new rules for a new international system are likely to emerge informally and in process of continued global competition.

Notes

1. Many scholars have justifiably argued that Russia's intervention in Syria is best understood in the context of Russia-West disagreements that culminated in the Ukraine conflict.
2. Except for the chapter by Nuray Ibryamova and Mehtap Kara that analyzes Russia-Turkey relations in the Syria setting all chapters in the volume are directly focused on Russia and the West.
3. Several scholars favored such description. See, for example, Lucas (2014) and Legvold (2016).
4. For example, see *Der Spiegel*'s interview with Sergei Karaganov (2016).

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