Europe-Asia Studies
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ceas20

Russia's International Images and its Energy Policy. An Unreliable Supplier?

Valentina Feklyunina [a]
[a] University of Newcastle upon Tyne
Published online: 02 Apr 2012.

To cite this article: Valentina Feklyunina (2012) Russia's International Images and its Energy Policy. An Unreliable Supplier?, Europe-Asia Studies, 64:3, 449-469, DOI: 10.1080/09668136.2012.661923

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2012.661923

EUROPE-ASIA STUDIES
Vol. 64, No. 3, May 2012, 449–469

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Russia's International Images and its Energy Policy. An Unreliable Supplier?

VALENTINA FEKLYUNINA

Abstract

In recent years, the Russian authorities have invested significant effort into promoting a positive image of Russia as an energy supplier. Yet, Russia's behaviour sometimes seems to contradict the declared aim of improving this image. A particularly interesting case is the way the Russian authorities and Gazprom handled the dispute with Ukraine over gas prices in December 2008–January 2009, when the transit of Russian gas to a number of EU member states via Ukraine was seriously affected. This essay argues that in order to understand Russia's position during the crisis, one should take into account the impact of international images on Russian politics, in particular self-images and constructed images that the Russian authorities have been projecting in the West and in Russia itself.

THE QUESTION OF RUSSIA'S RELIABILITY OR UNRELIABILITY AS an energy supplier to the European Union (EU) has become a rapidly developing area of research. To a significant extent, the increasing interest in this topic was triggered by Russia's dispute with Ukraine, the main transit country for the Russian gas supply to Europe, over gas prices in the winter of 2005–2006. During Vladimir Putin's second presidential term, and in the first years of Dmitry Medvedev's presidency, Moscow's relations with the West were often described as deteriorating. Russia's growing self-confidence and assertiveness in the international arena, the emphasis of its leadership on their willingness to defend the country's national interests, and particularly a far more proactive policy in the states of the former Soviet Union, gave rise to growing concerns over the future of Russia's relations with the European Union (Marsh 2008). In the context of the significant dependence of a number of EU member states on imports of Russian natural gas, much scholarly research has focused on the analysis of the possible motivations of the Russian authorities and Gazprom, Russia's state-controlled gas monopoly. Are they purely economic? Are they geopolitical? Are they a mixture of both, and if so, which ones are central and why?

Following the 2006 gas crisis, some scholars argued that the Russian leadership resorted to using Russia's vast energy resources in order to put pressure on political opponents in the former Soviet Union. In the opinion of Margarita Balmaceda, for instance, the Russian government was 'using energy dependencies ... in order to pressure former Soviet republics into not pursuing ''too close'' relations with the West

ISSN 0966-8136 print; ISSN 1465-3427 online/12/030449-21 © 2012 University of Glasgow
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2012.661923

and into agreeing to Russian-led integration initiatives and otherwise following policies considered desirable by the Russian leadership' (Balmaceda 2008, p. 8). In the case of Russia's energy relations with the EU, the situation is significantly different: while the EU is dependent on Russian supplies, Russia in turn is dependent on the EU which is its largest importer (Proedrou 2007). However, this interdependence is viewed by some scholars as still giving Russia some substantial leverage over the EU (Baran 2007; Ericson 2009). This leverage is arguably used by the Russian government 'to obtain economic and political gains' (Baran 2007, p. 132). Moreover, Russia's proactive energy policy, combined with the re-emergence of the great power discourse in Russian society, is interpreted as an indication of the Kremlin's intentions to turn Russia into an energy superpower—a concept that has received substantial attention in the academic literature (Monaghan 2007). It should be mentioned though that some scholars argue against this view, as the vision of Russia as an energy superpower, in their opinion, 'exaggerates Russia's ability to use oil and gas as ''weapons'' to augment Russian influence over its neighbourhood and on the world stage' (Rutland 2008, p. 209; Goldthau 2008).

The predominance of political or geopolitical considerations in Russian energy policy has been disputed in a number of studies. For example, Stern has argued that 'Gazprom's motivation for taking such a hard line with Ukraine (and other CIS countries) was overwhelmingly economic' (2006, pp. 15–16). At the same time, Russian foreign policy in general, despite the noticeable deterioration of Russia's relations with the West, is often described as based on economic pragmatism rather than geopolitical ambitions. Dmitry Trenin even compared Russia to a 'super-corporation' or 'Russia Inc.' (2007, p. 95) meaning that the country's actions are often meant to satisfy the private economic interests of those in power, although these interests are positioned as national interests. Another position emphasises the impact of internal power struggles in Moscow and in transit countries. In this view, Russia's gas disputes with Ukraine in 2006, as well as with Belarus a year later, 'reflect behind-the-scene conflicts between powerful factions' in Russia and in its neighbours rather than 'the exercise of an ''energy weapon''' (Guillet 2007, p. 4).

Although acknowledging the significance of the impact of economic, geopolitical or 'private interest' factors on Russian energy policy, this essay argues that these explanations overlook another dimension of Russian foreign policy which can have a considerable effect on Russia's actions in the international arena, including its energy policy—the Kremlin's ambitions to enhance the country's soft power and the impact of images—perceived, constructed and self-images—on the actions of the Russian authorities. Soft power, defined by Joseph Nye (2004, p. 256) as 'the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments', is often analysed in scholarly works in the USA context. According to Nye (2004, p. 256), soft power is based on 'the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced'.[1]

[1]One should note that in recent years some scholars have also advocated the use of a new term—'smart power'—which has been defined as 'the capacity of an actor to combine elements of hard power and soft power in ways that are mutually reinforcing such that the actor's purposes are advanced effectively and efficiently' (Wilson 2008, p. 115).

Nye's definition, however, has been criticised by some scholars for its disregard for the role of non-state actors, particularly multinational corporations and NGOs in enhancing America's soft power. Alexandre Bohas (2006, p. 409), for instance, has argued that 'the main characteristics of soft power consist of subjugating peoples culturally and expanding through non-state actors'. This appears to be particularly relevant in the American context, as Hollywood and Madison Avenue have often been described as 'America's soft power ground zero' (Snow 2009, p. 5). Nye's definition has also been criticised for its vagueness in relation to the nature of attraction. What makes a particular idea or policy attractive and how can this attraction be achieved? It has been suggested that 'attraction is constructed through communicative exchange' (Mattern 2005, p. 585). According to Janice Mattern, the 'reality' of attractiveness is 'a sociolinguistically constructed "truth" about the appeal of some idea; an interpretation that won out over many other possible interpretations through a communicative process' (Mattern 2005, p. 585).

Whilst studies of the role of soft power in the context of the USA have been abundant, there have been considerably fewer attempts to apply this concept to other, especially non-Western countries. Moreover, some studies have questioned the very applicability of the soft power concept to any context other than the USA. For example, as Smith-Windsor has argued, 'the attempt to adopt an American-engendered concept for Canadian policy purposes has resulted in more problems than clarity' (Smith-Windsor 2000, p. 55). An interesting exception in this regard is China, as a growing number of studies have analysed the efforts of the Chinese authorities to rely on soft-power resources (Schmidt 2008; Wang 2008). The focus on the analysis of soft power in the Russian context, on the contrary, has been limited. Very few studies have examined the attempt of the Russian authorities to enhance Russia's soft power (Popescu 2006; Feklyunina 2008), and most of them have focused almost exclusively on the role of soft power in Russia's relations with the former Soviet countries, with a particular emphasis on Russia's efforts to increase its economic attractiveness in the area (Hill 2004; Tsygankov 2005, 2006). Andrei Tsygankov, for instance, using a slightly broader definition of soft power than the original definition of Joseph Nye—power based on 'political legitimacy, economic interdependence, and cultural values' (Tsygankov 2006, p. 1081)—argues that the Russian authorities have resorted to soft power with the aim of promoting stability and security in the region.

This apparent gap in the academic literature is surprising in the context of the pronounced sensitivity of the Russian leadership to the negative character of Russia's international image and their continuous efforts to improve it with the help of an energetic public relations (PR) campaign. One should mention that the country's image in Western countries has been at the centre of public discussion in Russia since Putin's first term in office, and the task to project a more favourable image has been very high on the agenda of the Russian authorities since then. The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (2008), for instance, emphasised projecting 'an objective image' of the country and 'promoting the Russian language and culture' in foreign countries as being among the main objectives of Russian foreign policy (Kontseptsiya vneshnei 2008). One of the key elements of Russia's projected image is the image of Russia as a reliable energy supplier (Feklyunina 2008). The PR campaign

is targeted primarily at the EU institutions and member states due to the EU's status as the largest importer of Russian gas. However, Russia's behaviour sometimes seems to contradict the declared aim of improving the image. Thus, we are faced with a puzzle: if the Russian leadership is concerned with the country's image to such a significant extent, why does Russia take actions that have the potential to considerably undermine its reputation as an energy supplier? A particularly interesting case is the way the Russian authorities and Gazprom handled the dispute with Ukraine over gas prices in December 2008–January 2009, when the transit of Russian gas to a number of the EU member states via Ukraine was seriously affected. As Gnedina and Emerson argue, the crisis 'has confirmed the absolutely intolerable situation in which a commodity of strategic importance ... has become uncertain and erratic ... as a result of disorderly commercial and political relations between Russia and Ukraine' (2009, p. 9). Moreover, one can agree with the view that this event inflicted an 'irreparable damage' to the images of both Russia and Gazprom (Pirani *et al*. 2009).

Why did the Russian authorities risk damaging Russia's image as an energy supplier despite the perceived importance of the image problem? This essay will argue that a merely economic explanation is not sufficient to understand the actions of the Russian authorities in this regard (although economic considerations did play an extremely important role in the crisis). Even less plausible is the idea, often voiced in the Western mass media, that the crisis was yet another demonstration of Russia's use of its energy resources as a geopolitical weapon against 'pro-Western' Ukraine. The essay will seek to demonstrate that in order to understand the crisis, one should take into account the impact of international images on Russian politics, in particular self-images and 'constructed' images that the Russian authorities have been projecting in the West, but most importantly in Russia itself. The essay will begin with an analysis of Russia's existing images in the EU and will consider possible factors that might have affected varying perceptions of Russia's reliability among EU member states. It will then proceed to examine the measures that the Russian authorities have taken to improve the negative image, and will discuss the character of Russia's 'constructed' image. The third section of the essay will focus on Russia's position during the gas crisis with Ukraine in the winter of 2008–2009 and the PR campaign that was conducted by the Russian authorities and Gazprom to support the energy policy. This will be followed by an analysis of the impact of international images on the development of the gas crisis. The essay will conclude with a discussion of the role of international images in Russian energy policy-making in general.

Unreliable supplier?

Since the turn of the century, Russian political elites have considered Russia's negative image in the West as a serious security threat and a significant obstacle to the country's integration into the world economy. A particular concern has been caused by the negative character of Russia's image as an energy supplier. This can be explained by the extremely important role that energy exports, particularly exports of natural gas to EU member states, have played in the country's economy. In 2007, for instance, the energy sector generated approximately 64% of Russia's export revenues (House of Lords 2008, p. 45). Moreover, as Dmitry Medvedev acknowledged when leaving

Gazprom's Board of Directors after his election as Russian President in 2008, about 20% of the Russian federal budget was formed by Gazprom's revenues.[2] Although the Russian authorities have continuously emphasised the need to diversify the economy, it still remains hugely dependent on energy trade (Hanson 2007). Moreover, in the context of Russia's considerable recovery after a decade of political chaos, economic hardships and perceived humiliation in the international arena of the Yel'tsin era, Russian political elites have considered energy trade as one of the most effective ways to regain the status of a great power. This view was reflected in a number of Russian official documents. The 'Energy Strategy of the Russian Federation for the Period until 2020' (adopted in 2003), for instance, stressed that Russia's energy resources were 'an instrument of domestic and foreign policies'. According to this strategy, 'the country's role on the world energy markets largely determines its geopolitical influence' (Energeticheskaya strategiya Rossii 2003). Thus, the Russian political elites have been very sensitive to any negative changes in Russia's image, particularly in Gazprom's image in the European Union.

As we have already mentioned, Moscow's dispute with Kyiv over the gas crisis in 2006 had a significant impact on Russia's image as an energy supplier. The reaction of the Western mass media to Russia's actions during the crisis was predominantly negative. With very rare exceptions, Gazprom's decision to increase gas prices for Ukraine was portrayed as the Kremlin's way of punishing Ukraine for its pro-Western and pro-democratic choice. *The Times*, for instance, published an article entitled 'Fears of New Cold War as Russia Threaten[ed] to Switch off the Gas'.[3] Many Western politicians hurried to accuse Russia publicly of using its energy resources as a political weapon.[4] Furthermore, a number of commentators, although acknowledging Kyiv's contribution to the development of the crisis, particularly Ukraine's rampant corruption, considered Ukraine to be mostly a victim of the Kremlin's aggression and wrote about 'Russia's willingness to use its considerable energy resources for political blackmail' (Smith 2006, p. 1; Baran 2007). However, there were other interpretations of the crisis as well. As argued by a former high-ranking British diplomat who was interviewed for this study, Russia's decision to raise the price was justified but 'the way they did it got them the worst publicity they could think of'.[5] One of the reasons for the negative reaction from the West, in his opinion, was an acceptance of a centuries-old stereotype that in case of a conflict Russia would necessarily very quickly resort to force. Since the Russian authorities were not happy with Ukraine's pro-Western orientation, it was suggested, they punished it by turning off the gas.[6] In a similar vein, Stern suggested that Gazprom's motivation was predominantly economic, but warned that, in the case of future conflicts between Russia and any transit country, Russia's decision to cut gas supplies would inevitably be seen by the Western mass media as politically motivated (Stern 2006, p. 16).

[2] *Vremya novostei*, 28 May 2008, p. 4.

[3] *The Times*, 30 December 2005.

[4] See, e.g. the reaction of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (US Department of State 2006).

[5] Anonymous interview with a former high-ranking British diplomat, London, 14 December 2006.

[6] Anonymous interviews with former high-ranking British diplomats, London, 12–14 December 2006.

The extremely negative coverage of Russia's position during the crisis came to a large extent as a shock to the Russian authorities who had expected that most attention would be focussed on the negative role of Ukraine, rather than on Russia.[7] Following the dispute, Gazprom was often considered in the West as an arm of the Kremlin. This vision was further reinforced as a result of former President Putin's close attention to Gazprom's actions. A Russian commentator with first-hand experience of working in the Russian energy sphere wrote about Putin's personal involvement in Gazprom's decision-making, referring to him as a 'gas president' or 'Gazprom's chief manager' (Milov 2005). Even those commentators who acknowledged the importance of economic considerations in Russian energy policy, did not view Gazprom as a commercial organisation, but rather as a commercial instrument of achieving political aims (Baev 2008; Umbach 2010). According to Baev, the Kremlin, albeit being more concerned with extracting profits at the time, could potentially 'consider the ''weaponisation'' of its energy instruments' (Baev 2008, p. 69). In this context, Gazprom's proposed pipeline projects, such as the Nord Stream or South Stream, that seek to minimise transit risks for the Russian Federation by going along the Baltic and the Black Sea respectively, were often met with suspicion. Zeyno Baran, for instance, in the report commissioned by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament, argued that 'South Stream does not enhance European energy security; instead, it increases Russian influence over Europe, creating vulnerability for member states in taking decisions on issues relevant to the Kremlin' (2008, p. 30).

While discussing Russia's international image, it would be a simplification to speak of there being a single image in the EU. Rather it would be more correct to speak about competing images in the mass media, in public opinion, and the images held by political and business elites in member states, as well as in EU institutions. As the scope of this essay does not allow analysis of these images in detail, let us examine the attitudes towards Russia's role as an energy supplier in the public opinion of a number of EU member states. One can expect that negative and positive attitudes towards Russia in this regard may be linked to the level of dependence of a particular member state on Russian gas supplies. It should be mentioned that in 2006, imports from Russia accounted for approximately 42% of total EU gas imports. In comparison, imports from the other three largest suppliers—Norway, Algeria and Nigeria—accounted for 24.2%, 18.2% and 4.8% respectively (EUDG 2009, p. 31).

As Table 1 demonstrates, member states differ significantly in their dependence on Russian gas supplies. In a number of countries, particularly in the Baltic states and in Central Europe, the share of Russian gas in total gas imports is extremely high, reaching 100% in Bulgaria, Finland and some other countries. However, if one looks at the share of Russian gas imports in total gas consumption, the situation looks less dramatic. Moreover, if one examines the share of Russian gas in total domestic energy consumption, this number is even less significant (Solanko & Sutela 2009). At the same time, other member states, such as Spain or Sweden, are dependent on Russian supplies to a considerably lesser extent or not at all.

Attitudes towards Russia in the public opinion of a number of these countries can be demonstrated by the results of the series of public opinion surveys, *Transatlantic*

[7]Anonymous interview with a senior Russian PR practitioner, Moscow, 30 January 2007.

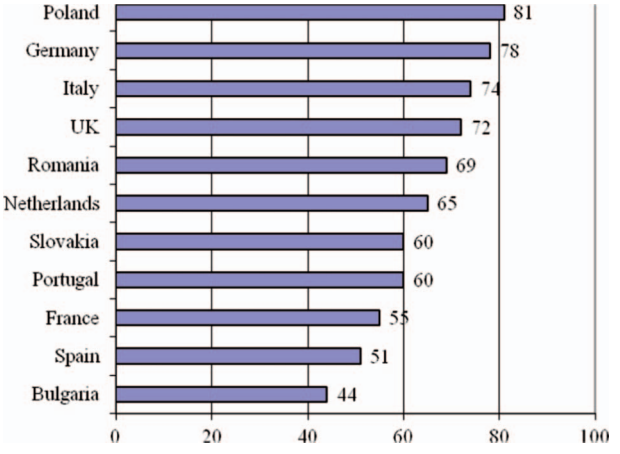
TABLE 1
DEPENDENCE ON IMPORT OF RUSSIAN GAS IN EU MEMBER STATES, 2007

EU member state	*Gas import from Russia (billion cubic metres)*	*Share of total gas import (%)*	*Share of total gas consumption (%)*
Austria	5.6	74.87	62.92
Bulgaria	3.1	100.00	100.00
Czech Republic	6.43	74.51	72.25
Finland	4.3	100.00	104.88
France	7.63	22.60	18.21
Germany	35.55	42.46	42.99
Greece	2.89	100.00	72.25
Hungary	7.85	74.90	66.53
Ireland	0	0.00	0.00
Italy	23.8	32.85	30.59
Latvia	1.6	100.00	n/d
Lithuania	3.4	100.00	89.47
Netherlands	2.3	12.20	6.18
Poland	6.2	66.67	45.26
Portugal	0	0.00	0.00
Romania	2.5	52.08	15.24
Slovakia	5.8	100.00	98.31
Slovenia	0.56	50.91	n/d
Spain	0	0.00	0.00
Sweden	0	0.00	0.00
United Kingdom	0	0.00	0.00

Source: compiled by author from BP (2008).
Note: this table illustrates trade movements via pipelines only, and thus does not take into account the gas volumes sold by Gazprom's subsidiaries to ultimate consumers in a number of EU member states. According to the table, for instance, the UK did not import Russian gas in 2007. However, Gazprom's official documents indicate that Gazprom's subsidiary, Gazprom Marketing & Trading Retail (GM&T), began supply to ultimate consumers in industrial and commercial sectors in the UK through the Balgzand Bacton Line (BBL) gas pipeline (pipeline between the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) (Gazprom 2008c).

Trends, that were conducted by the German Marshall Fund and the Compagnia di San Paolo (Italy) in a number of European countries (German Marshall Fund of the United States 2008). Figure 1 illustrates the results of a survey that asked participants in 11 EU member states to what extent they were or were not concerned about Russia's role as an energy provider. A number of points should be made in this regard. First, as one can see from the diagram, the number of those concerned with Russia's role is high in all of these countries. Even in Bulgaria, the country with the least share of participants who expressed their concern, the figure reaches almost half of the sample (44%), which indicates that the problem of Russia's image is substantial indeed. Secondly, the level of dependence on Russian supplies is not necessarily reflected in the level of concerns. In Bulgaria and Slovakia, for instance, despite their extremely high level of dependence on import of Russian gas, the number of those concerned with Russia's role as an energy supplier (44% and 60%, respectively) is considerably lower than in Poland (81%) or Germany (78%) where this dependence is less significant.

Thus, dependence on Russian supplies cannot be seen as the only crucial factor in explaining negative attitudes towards Moscow's actions in the energy sphere. One can argue that another significant factor is the existing deep-rooted negative image of



Source: German Marshall Fund of the United States (2008).

FIGURE 1. PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO WERE CONCERNED ABOUT RUSSIA'S ROLE AS AN ENERGY PROVIDER, 2008

Russia as Europe's 'Other' which took centuries to develop and which is an essential element of national identity in a number of European countries (Neumann 1999), and which results in distrust of Russia's intentions in the international arena. An interesting case in this regard is the UK: although it only very recently began to buy Russian gas and the level of dependence is not significant, the number of those respondents who expressed their concerns with Russia's role as an energy provider is very high, amounting to 72%. It should be mentioned that among the British political elite, fears that Russia would use energy to put pressure on other countries in case of a serious disagreement in foreign policy were widespread long before Moscow's dispute with Kyiv in 2005–2006. This can be illustrated by the words of Richard Ottaway, a British MP from the Conservative Party. While discussing Russia's opposition to the US and the UK in the UN Security Council regarding the war in Iraq in 2003, he expressed his opinion that 'tremendous leverage could have been used with the United Kingdom if Russia could say that it was free to turn off our energy supply overnight'.[8] Russia's dispute with Ukraine was then viewed by many as confirmation of this threat.

At the same time, these public attitudes could be an indication of the high position the problem of energy security has on the mass media agenda. In this regard, it is interesting to note an extremely high level of concern with Russia's role as an energy provider in Germany (78%) despite its 'special relationship' with Russia and the fact that it is often seen as an advocate of Russian interests in the EU. It should be mentioned that in Germany, unlike in most other EU member states, there is a relatively strong pro-Russian lobby that has a noticeable influence on the German foreign policy towards Russia. The leading role in this lobby is played by the

[8]*House of Commons Hansard*, 16 September 2003, Column 753.

Ost-Ausschuss der Deutschen Wirtschaft (the so-called Eastern Committee of the German Economy) which represents German economic interests in Eastern and Southern Europe, the Baltic states and Central Asia. Among its members are a large number of German companies that do business with Russia. Being interested in maintaining a good political climate for German–Russian relations, these companies try to soften the feeling of the 'threat from the East' that exists in the German mass media. E.ON Ruhrgas and Wintershall, shareholders in the Nord Stream project, are an example of this approach. Burckhard Bergmann, Chairman of the Executive Board of E.ON Ruhrgas, for instance, in his article on energy security emphasised the need to have good political relations with all energy suppliers and transit countries, meaning first of all Russia. According to Bergmann, Russia is a reliable energy supplier and there is no danger in the increasing dependence of the EU on Russian gas. On the contrary, cooperation with Russia will help Europe solve the problem of energy security (Bergmann 2007).

On the whole, there is a significant difference between public opinion, the mass media and political elites in EU member states in perceptions of threats that Russia can pose. While the mass media focus on geopolitical considerations and the possibility that the Russian authorities would pressure consumer-countries into conducting pro-Russian policies by threatening to stop energy supplies, political elites have more fears in relation to Russia's underdeveloped infrastructure, under-investment in researching new gas and oil fields and other technical problems that may considerably limit Russia's potential as an energy supplier.[9] However, the issue of the geopolitics of oil and gas is becoming more important, to a significant extent in response to Russia's disputes with Ukraine and Belarus.

Constructing the image

Seeing negative perceptions of Russia's energy policy as a serious obstacle for Russia's economic development, the Russian government launched an energetic PR campaign that aims to improve the country's image. The PR campaign has become particularly intensive in the European Union. However, since the Russian Federation has not had sufficient finances to modernise this propaganda apparatus it inherited from the Soviet Union, it has had to operate within a much tighter budget.[10] This factor determined two main features of the PR campaign. Firstly, it has focused on a limited number of key countries—primarily the G8 members and CIS countries, but also China, India and the Middle East countries—which are viewed as particularly important for Russian foreign policy. Secondly, it has been targeted mostly at elites (politicians, potential investors, journalists and researchers) rather than at the masses. According to a senior Russian propagandist, the target group of the campaign is no more than 50 people in each key country, with the exception of the United States where this

[9]Anonymous interviews, London, 12–14 December 2006; Brussels, 5–7 June 2007; Berlin, 15–17 July 2007.

[10]The Soviet Union spent enormous sums of money on its foreign propaganda and thus could afford to have a sophisticated propaganda machine with a wide network of various organisations (Clive 1988).

group is larger.[11] The campaign is conducted on two levels: some of its elements are more general, while others are specific to particular countries and issues. Examples of the more general 'vehicles' are a number of projects launched by the news agency RIA Novosti, such as the English speaking TV channel 'Russia Today' or the journal *Russia Profile*. One of the central PR components of this category is the Valdai Discussion Club (also a RIA Novosti project)—a semi-informal annual meeting of the Russian President (and now the Prime Minister as well) and prominent politicians, with Western experts in Russia. Moreover, in an attempt to enhance the attraction of Russian culture in foreign countries, in 2007 the Russian authorities established the *Russkii Mir* (Russian World) Foundation. Its main objective is 'to popularise the Russian language' and 'to support Russian studies programmes abroad'.[12]

The extremely negative effect of Moscow's dispute with Ukraine on Russia's image turned out to be crucial for the PR campaign. According to the President's Deputy Press Secretary, Dmitrii Peskov, the Kremlin 'simply understood at that one moment that our argumentation was not being heard. At the same time, representation of the Ukrainian side was picked up everywhere' (see McKenna 2006). The Russian authorities came to the conclusion that work on the improvement of Russia's image should rely more heavily on the services of Western PR companies since they had more expertise in dealing with the Western mass media. Thus, the PR company Ketchum was commissioned to provide information support for Russia's presidency at the G8 summit in St Petersburg in July 2006—where energy security was chosen as one of the key topics to be addressed. In this regard, Ketchum's task was to advise the Kremlin on communications before and during the summit and to coordinate the work of its two sister companies—Brussels-based GPlus Europe and Gavin Anderson & Company—which were also involved in the Kremlin's campaign.[13]

Although it is very difficult, if not impossible, to measure the results of the services provided by these companies during such a short period of time, the Russian authorities considered them to be positive and prolonged the contract after the G8 summit. Moreover, following the example of the presidential administration, Gazprom also signed a contract with Ketchum, GPlus Europe and Gavin Anderson in 2007.[14] As a state-controlled company, Gazprom had significant difficulties in conducting an effective PR campaign (Orlov 2002). One of the main challenges was the need to coordinate any actions with the state authorities, which resulted in very slow reaction to negative changes in its image. The decision to commission the same group of Western companies was meant to solve this problem as they would be able to conduct a coordinated image campaign.

In addition to this broad PR campaign, there have also been a number of country-specific projects, such as PR campaigns by Gazprom's subsidiary companies in Germany and the UK—Gazprom Germania and Gazprom Marketing & Trading Retail, respectively—and issue-specific projects such as the promotion of a positive image for the Nord Stream pipeline. In recent years, Gazprom launched a number of

[11]Anonymous interview with a senior Russian propagandist, Moscow, 30 January 2007.
[12]*Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 23 June 2007.
[13]*Financial Times*, 30 April 2006.
[14]*Vremya novostei*, 20 August 2007.

subsidiary businesses that became parts of the Gazprom Group. These companies, wholly owned by Gazprom, have facilitated Gazprom's operation in foreign markets and, among other functions, have aimed to promote a positive image of Gazprom in their respective countries. Gazprom Germania GmbH has been particularly active in this respect. The company sponsors a large number of cultural events in Germany ranging from the 'Russian Language Olympics' to guest performances by Russian artists. It has also achieved a vast amount of publicity by becoming the main sponsor of the German football club FC Schalke 04. According to Sergei Fursenko, chief executive of 'Lentransgaz':

> the club's image, its history, its unique bond with its fans and the international ambitions of its team harmonise well with the spirit of Gazprom. We are convinced that our sponsorship will be an important step to optimise the brand awareness of GAZPROM and to improve the way it is perceived on European markets.[15]

This increasing focus on brand awareness mentioned by Fursenko illustrates an extremely important shift in the direction of Russia's PR campaign in recent years. As mentioned above, the overall PR campaign targeted primarily elites rather than public opinion. However, Gazprom's ambitions to gain access to gas distribution systems within the EU necessitated broadening the scope of the campaign. The logic behind this shift is that Gazprom's attempts to provide gas to ultimate consumers in EU member states can be substantially impeded by the negative image of Russia as an energy supplier. To overcome these negative perceptions, Gazprom has focused on projecting the image of a company as a commercial organisation whose activities are based on purely economic considerations.

What image does Russia's PR campaign seek to construct? One of its key elements is Russia's reliability as an energy supplier. The Russian authorities view the fears of the EU's dependence on Russian supplies as extremely unjustified and as an illustration of a narrow approach to the problem of energy security. In Putin's words, 'energy security means not just security for the consumers but also for the producers'.[16] Thus, the PR campaign has emphasised the interdependence of Russia and the EU and the need to reassess the very definition of energy security. According to Putin, it should be based on the idea that 'the globalisation of the energy sector makes energy security indivisible. Our common future in the area of energy means common responsibilities, risks and benefits' (Putin 2006). In this context, Russia's diversification projects, such as the Nord Stream or the South Stream, are positioned as Russia's contribution to enhancing the EU's energy security as they will make the EU less dependent on transit countries. Moreover, any concerns over these projects posing a potential threat to European energy security are portrayed by the Russian authorities as politically motivated. While commenting on the negative reaction of some EU member states

[15]Gazprom Germania, no date, 'Gazprom Concludes Main Sponsor Contract with Schalke 04', available at: http://www.gazprom-germania.de/english/sponsoring/schalke04.php, accessed 10 July 2007.

[16]'Transcript of Meeting with Participants in the Third Meeting of the Valdai Discussion Club', 9 September 2006, available at: http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/09/09/1209_type82917type84779_111165.shtml, accessed 3 May 2009.

towards the Nord Stream project, Putin argued that 'there are no interests that are being infringed upon, the struggle against this project can only take on a political character'.[17]

While emphasising Russia's reliability, the PR campaign at the same time has promoted the image of Russia as a country that is ready to defend its national interests. It sends a message that Moscow will not tolerate interference or external pressure on its energy policy. In Putin's words, 'everyone should understand that these are, above all, our national resources, and should not start looking at them as their own'.[18] Moreover, it stresses the idea that the EU's cooperation with Russia should be built on a fair basis. This approach is particularly evident in the position of the Russian authorities regarding the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) and its Transit Protocol which would open Russia's transit infrastructure to third parties. Moscow's decision not to ratify the treaty, although it was signed in 1994, is justified by a lack of reciprocity that the treaty implies. This emphasis on its own resources contributes to the vision of Russia as an energy superpower. One can argue, however, that this aspect of Russia's PR campaign sends a somewhat conflicting message to target audiences. On the one hand, Russia is positioned as a reliable supplier whose actions are based on pragmatic considerations. On the other hand, the constructed image contains an element of assertiveness which sometimes outweighs the more positive and business-like characteristics of reliability, pragmatism and stability.

Russia–Ukraine gas crisis: limits of PR effectiveness

So far we have discussed the significance of Russia's image problem and the efforts of the Russian authorities to improve the country's image with the help of PR measures. Let us now turn to the Russia–Ukraine gas crisis of January 2009 and examine the support provided by PR for Russia's actions during the dispute.[19]

According to Gazprom, Ukraine's company Naftogaz Ukrainy failed to clear its debt to Gazprom in the last months of 2008. Moreover, the Russian and the Ukrainian sides failed to reach agreement on 2009 gas prices and transit tariffs. As a result, Russia's exports to Ukraine were cut on 1 January 2009, while its supplies to Europe via Ukraine continued at the normal level. Later Gazprom accused Ukraine of siphoning off gas which was meant for Europe, and as the situation was not resolved, on 6 January it significantly reduced gas exports to 16 member states and Moldova. As the crisis developed, Gazprom cut supplies completely the following day in response to the reported blocking of pipelines by Ukraine (RIAN 2009a). As a result, gas shortages caused considerable economic problems in a number of EU member states, particularly in the Balkans, Hungary and Slovakia. Only on 19 January were 10-year supply and transit contracts between Moscow and Kyiv signed. The flow of

[17]'Transcript of Meeting with Participants in the Third Meeting of the Valdai Discussion Club', 9 September 2006, available at: http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/09/09/1209_type82917type84779_111165.shtml, accessed 3 May 2009.

[18]'Transcript of Meeting with Participants in the Third Meeting of the Valdai Discussion Club', 9 September 2006, available at: http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/09/09/1209_type82917type84779_111165.shtml, accessed 3 May 2009.

[19]For a detailed discussion of the actions of both Russia and Ukraine, see Pirani *et al.* (2009).

Russian gas to Ukraine and Europe resumed the following day, reaching normal levels on 22 January (Pirani *et al*. 2009).

Whilst during Russia's dispute with Ukraine in the winter of 2005–2006 the Russian authorities had not put much effort into presenting their case to the Western mass media and political elites in EU member states, this time they began an intensive information campaign long before the crisis. The PR support of Gazprom's actions was carefully planned and on the whole very well executed. When it became clear that there was a possibility of a serious dispute with Kyiv, Alexander Medvedev, Deputy Chairman of Gazprom and Director General of Gazprom Export, visited Brussels and a number of national capitals in the EU for consultations about the developments of Moscow's negotiations with Kyiv regarding Ukraine's debt and difficulties in Gazprom's negotiations with Naftogaz. Moreover, in order to make Russia's position on the issue easily accessible for Western journalists, Gazprom took a number of actions to disseminate information on the developing crisis as widely as possible, including the launch of a webpage *GazpromUkraineFacts.com* which published official statements by the Russian side dating back to November 2008.[20]

Before the crisis reached its peak, Gazprom's representatives gave a large number of press-conferences where they emphasised Russia's intentions to prevent any shortages of gas supply to EU member states even if Naftogaz failed to clear its debt (Gazprom 2008a). At the same time they publicised those statements by Ukraine's officials or representatives from Naftogaz which could be seen as not constructive. On 18 December, Gazprom's CEO Alexei Miller sent a letter to the company's customers and partners in the EU informing them about the mounting tensions between Moscow and Kyiv and presenting the position of the Ukrainian side as deliberately aggravating the crisis (Gazprom 2008b).

As the dispute intensified in January 2009, one of the key elements of Gazprom's PR campaign was to draw maximum publicity to the alleged siphoning of Russian gas by Ukraine. To prevent any accusations of providing biased information, Gazprom commissioned an independent international company, SGS, to register the volumes of gas at the entry to and then at the exit of the Ukrainian pipeline system. This measure was meant to add credibility to Gazprom's position and made it easier for Moscow to portray Ukraine's actions as 'theft'. As Alexander Medvedev put it in his statement on 5 January, 'we are forced to use such terms as ''gas theft'' as these facts have been registered by an independent international company. Despite Ukraine preventing specialists from accessing its gas measuring stations, measurements of incoming and outgoing gas [volumes] have led us to this conclusion' (RIAN 2009b). Moreover, Gazprom went on to stress Ukraine's responsibility for any gas shortages in the EU and for violations of the existing transit agreements. In particular, it made an effort to draw maximum publicity to its decision to file a lawsuit with the Stockholm Arbitration Court (RIAN 2009a). The main idea of the PR campaign was neatly summarised in the title of an article published under Alexander Medvedev's name in *The Wall Street Journal* (Medvedev 2009)—'Russia is Trying to Get Gas to Europe. Ukraine is the Obstacle'.

[20]See http://www.gazpromukrainefacts.com/, accessed 8 December 2011.

The extent to which the Russian authorities were concerned with maintaining Russia's image as a reliable energy supplier can be clearly demonstrated by the fact that Prime Minister Vladimir Putin was acting as the main spokesman for the Russian side for the duration of the crisis. His personal involvement in presenting Moscow's case guaranteed unprecedented media attention for Russia's interpretation of the events. On 8 January, Putin gave a press conference for Western journalists where he presented a large number of documents related to the crisis and reiterated the most significant points of Russia's information campaign which can be summarised as follows. Firstly, Gazprom's motivations in the dispute were purely economic and Russia never considered energy to be a political weapon. Secondly, Russia had always been a reliable supplier to Europe and it had always fulfilled its contractual obligations, even during the Cold War. Any crises resulted from attempts by transit countries 'to conquer their place under the sun which they do not always do in a correct, civilised or market way'. Thirdly, all the responsibility for the crisis lay with Ukraine. Among the factors that led to the crisis were, according to Putin, a power struggle in the Ukrainian elite, corruption and 'political collapse'. Fourthly, Ukraine intended to blackmail Russia by threatening to block gas supplies to Europe from the very start of the dispute. Finally, the crisis could have been avoided if the EU had been more supportive of Russia's diversification projects. In Putin's words, 'if we had already built [the Nord Stream pipeline], if no-one had impeded our construction of the pipeline under the Baltic Sea, this pipeline would be working now'.[21]

On the whole, Gazprom and the Russian authorities put enormous effort into advocating Russia's position in the dispute, which was particularly noticeable compared to the lack of any information in support of Gazprom's actions during the 2006 gas crisis. To some extent, one can agree with Vladimir Frolov (2009), president of the PR company LEFF Group, that 'Russia [won] round 2 of [the] gas fight'. The media coverage was more balanced as a number of Western media outlets acknowledged the 'sound logic' behind Gazprom's 'harsh tactics'. For example, according to *Forbe*s magazine, 'the situation points not to the problem of reliance on Russian gas but on that of using a single main route—via Ukraine—for the transportation of that gas'.[22] However, once again the conflict damaged Russia's image to a much more significant extent than the Russian authorities had expected. Vladimir Putin, while addressing Western journalists at his press conference, blamed them for deliberate misinterpretation of Russia's actions during the crisis: 'I don't know what you will write', he said. 'And I don't know what instructions you will get from your bosses. But it looks as if there are some instructions since the assessment of Russia's actions—that Russia cut supplies—is not objective'.[23] Moreover, the

[21]'Predsedatel' Pravitel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii V.V. Putin provel vstrechu s predstavitelyami inostrannykh SMI', 8 January 2009, official webpage of the Government of the Russian Federation, available at: http://www.government.ru/content/governmentactivity/mainnews/archive/2009/01/08/8560908.htm, accessed 25 April 2009.

[22]*Forbes*, 6 January 2009.

[23]'Predsedatel' Pravitel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii V.V. Putin provel vstrechu s predstavitelyami inostrannykh SMI', 8 January 2009, official webpage of the Government of the Russian Federation, available at: http://www.government.ru/content/governmentactivity/mainnews/archive/2009/01/08/8560908.htm, accessed 25 April 2009.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation expressed its 'bewilderment' with the statements of the European Commission which described both Russia and Ukraine as responsible for the crisis (RIAN 2009c).

Images and Russian energy policy

Despite a vigorous PR campaign to present their case the Russian authorities did not prevent serious damage being incurred to Russia's image as an energy supplier. It is not the aim of this study to assess whose actions—Russia's or Ukraine's—bear more responsibility for the crisis. It is worth mentioning, nevertheless, that Pirani *et al.* (2009) in their study of the crisis argue that such factors as internal conflicts between the elite groups in Kyiv, corruption and the failure of Naftogaz to pay the debt to Gazprom in time, played a significant role in the emergence of the crisis. However, in their opinion, Moscow, 'by turning the issue of technical gas into one of principle, and describing this gas as ''stolen''', contributed to the further escalation of the dispute (Pirani *et al.* 2009, p. 33). The most interesting question then is why the Russian authorities decided in favour of this, according to Pirani *et al.* (2009, p. 33), 'unnecessarily risky and commercially irrational action'. As demonstrated earlier in the essay, Gazprom's leadership and the Russian authorities were confident of the correctness of their position. At the same time, they must have been aware of the possible consequences of the continued crisis for Russia.

The most significant consequences for Russia were the following. First, serious damage to Russia's reputation as a reliable supplier would make it extremely difficult for Gazprom to realise one of its key objectives in the EU, namely to gain access to ultimate consumers. Prior to the crisis, Gazprom had had some success in seeking access to gas distribution systems in Europe, particularly in south-eastern Europe, Germany and the Netherlands (Ericson 2009). However, its image as a commercial arm of the Kremlin had caused significant difficulties on a number of occasions. In the UK, for instance, its alleged intention to bid for the UK's largest gas distribution company Centrica or for supply contracts with the National Health Service led to a wave of negative publicity and probably prevented Gazprom from securing its position in the UK.[24] Secondly, Russia's negative image as an energy supplier would inevitably give rise to renewed fears of the EU's dependence on Russian supplies. This, in turn, could lead to intensification of the EU's attempts to promote diversification projects that would decrease this dependence such as the Nabucco pipeline project. Thirdly, a prolonged crisis would cause substantial financial losses for Gazprom: Pirani *et al.* estimated its sales losses resulting from cuts of supply as approximately $100m per day (2009, p. 33). Moreover, Gazprom could face penalties and damage claims, which would make its losses even greater. Most importantly, however, negative perceptions of Russia as an energy supplier would inevitably damage Russia's image in the EU in general, which could contribute to further tensions between Russia and the EU far beyond the energy sphere.

[24]See, for example, *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 May 2007; *The Guardian*, 11 June 2007; *The Sunday Times*, 30 April 2006.

In this context, one might expect that the Russian authorities and Gazprom would have chosen not to escalate the crisis further. As Pirani *et al*. (2009, p. 34) argue, 'the Russian side, despite its conviction that it was legally and contractually in the right, could have stepped back and, albeit with a loss of political ''face'', accepted a lower price from Ukraine for its gas'. Thus, a purely economic explanation—that Ukraine was the largest single importer of Russian gas, and at the time of a severe economic crisis and lower oil prices, it was particularly important for Gazprom to raise gas prices for Ukraine and collect its debt from Naftogas—does not seem to be sufficient. Pirani *et al*. suggest that one of Moscow's objectives was to bring the problem of Russia's dependence on transit countries into a wider discussion and 'to embroil Europe in the dispute with Ukraine, in the hope of joining with Europe to impose a new regime on the Ukrainian transport system' (Pirani *et al*. 2009, p. 35). This seems to be a plausible argument although the costs of a damaged image still appear to outweigh the benefits for Russia. One can argue that in addition to these 'objective' goals, the decision of the Russian authorities not to step back could have been affected by a number of more 'subjective' factors.

Firstly, the self-image of Russia as a strong country and as a great power that has become particularly pronounced among the Russian political elites and in Russian society in general in recent years (Feklyunina 2008), could have made it more difficult for the Russian authorities to justify an early compromise with Kyiv. Moreover, the view that the Russian side had lost the information war to Ukraine during the 2006 crisis—which was to a large extent a defining moment for the Kremlin's attitudes to soft power and PR—could have made it more compelling for the Russian authorities to try and prove their case when they felt that they were in the right.

Secondly, projecting an image of Russia as a strong country is an extremely important element of the Kremlin's information campaign at home. It should be mentioned that Putin's popularity as Russia's President was, to a large extent, based on the perceived success of his foreign policy. According to the results of a public opinion survey in Russia by the Moscow-based Levada Centre in 2007, the overwhelming majority of respondents (74%) named 'strengthening of Russia's international positions' as the most significant achievement of Putin's presidency. Thus, successful foreign policy is one of the key sources of legitimacy for the present regime (Levada Centre 2007, p. 73).

Moreover, the 2009 gas dispute with Ukraine was extremely high on the media agenda in Russia. According to another survey, conducted by the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Centre (VTsIOM, *Vserossiiskii tsentr izucheniya obshchestvennogo mneniya*), 90% of respondents either closely followed the events or at least had heard something about them. When asked who was responsible for the crisis, a large majority of participants chose Ukraine (63%) while only 17% of respondents believed that responsibility rested with both Russia and Ukraine, and an even smaller number blamed Russia only (5%). What is more, when asked an open question regarding why the transit of Russian gas though Ukraine had been stopped, most respondents also accused Ukraine. Among the most popular answers were 'Ukraine was stealing gas' (15%), 'Ukraine's debts' (13%), 'Ukraine's intention to reduce gas prices' (7%), 'Ukraine's ambitions, Ukraine's foreign policy' (7%), 'Ukraine's impunity, irresponsible policies of the Ukrainian authorities' (7%), 'domestic politics in Ukraine,

struggle for power between its leaders' (7%) (VTsIOM 2009). While one can argue that the attitudes discussed above are, to a large extent, the result of the Kremlin's propaganda, they nevertheless may be seen as somehow limiting possible choices for the Russian authorities. Following the Orange Revolution, Ukraine was continuously positioned in the state-controlled mass media as hostile towards Russia. Under these circumstances, the Russian authorities would be less inclined to demonstrate what might be perceived as weakness by agreeing to an early compromise with Ukraine.

Thirdly, although Russia's position during the crisis seems to have significantly undermined its image as a reliable supplier, it still may be seen as sending a very important message which is consistent with Russia's PR campaign in general, namely that Russia was ready to defend its national interests and that it would not succumb to external pressure. As noted earlier in the essay, Russia's 'constructed' image is somewhat contradictory as it contains both business-like and assertive characteristics. It appears that during the crisis the latter element of Russia's projected image outweighed the former. This emphasis on strength may be seen as some sort of an overreaction to Russia's perceived weakness in the 1990s. All the factors discussed above made the option of losing political face far less favourable for the Russian authorities. It can be argued that the self-image of Russia as a strong power that was humiliated by the West in the recent past, the promoted image of Ukraine as hostile towards Russia in the domestic information campaign, and particularly the increasing emphasis on Russia's readiness to defend its national interests, all contributed to the decision of the Russian authorities to take a more assertive position during the 2009 crisis. Although Russia's image as a reliable supplier was seriously damaged following the 2009 gas crisis, the PR campaign to some extent succeeded in positioning Russia as a country that would not succumb to external pressure, such as from Ukraine. This message was particularly important for the domestic audience. In the context of the economic crisis, the major source of the regime's legitimacy—economic prosperity and stability—was losing its significance. It can be suggested therefore that the Russian authorities used their tough position towards Ukraine as a way to enhance their legitimacy in the eyes of the Russian electorate.

Furthermore, one can argue that the Russian authorities were confident that the crisis would damage Ukraine's image in the EU to a much more significant extent that that of Russia. Positioning Ukraine as responsible for the crisis due to its 'political collapse' was an important element of the information campaign. It was beneficial for the Russian authorities in at least two aspects. On the one hand, the image of Ukraine as a corrupt, politically and economically unstable country could potentially make it more difficult for the Ukrainian leadership to negotiate Ukraine's accession to NATO or the EU. On the other hand, the image of Ukraine as an unreliable transit country would facilitate Russia's attempts to promote its diversification projects as Russia's contribution to enhance European energy security. Having succeeded in some aspects, the Russian PR campaign was nevertheless less effective than the Russian authorities expected it to be. Unlike the 2006 gas crisis, when Russia's interpretation of the events was not adequately presented at all, the 2009 crisis demonstrated the over-reliance of Moscow on PR measures and the over-estimation of their possible results.

Most importantly, the inability of the Russian authorities to persuade Western audiences of their interpretation of the crisis was not an isolated case but rather one of a number of PR disasters that had happened in recent years. Another example was Russia's military conflict with Georgia over South Ossetia in August 2008, only several months before the gas dispute. The Russian authorities sought to present the actions of the Georgian leadership as 'aggression and genocide' against South Ossetia and Russia's actions as an attempt 'to prevent a humanitarian disaster'.[25] However, they largely failed to make their case, as the coverage of Russia's actions in Georgia by the Western mass media was predominantly negative. Some commentators have argued that 'Russia's military victory was accompanied by major failures on both the diplomatic and media fronts' (Antonenko 2008, p. 26). In both cases, while the Russian authorities attempted to present Russia's position in the conflict as 'right' or 'attractive' as opposed to the 'wrong' position of the other side, be it Georgia or Ukraine, their message was unsuccessful. To use Mattern's concept of the 'reality' of attractiveness as 'a sociolinguistically constructed "truth"' (2005, p. 585), their interpretation of Russia's position, particularly Russia's reliability and predictability, did not win over other, more negative for Russia, interpretations.

One can argue that in a situation of a crisis, positioning Russia as a strong state has been more important for the Russian authorities than positioning it as a reliable partner. This brings us back to the central paradox of this essay: if the Russian authorities seek to enhance Russia's soft power by promoting a more favourable image of the country, why do they take actions that have the potential to considerably undermine this favourable image? It seems that the answer to this question lies in their vision of the role of images and soft power in international relations. On the one hand, the Russian authorities have attempted to increase Russia's attraction by focusing on those areas that are traditionally associated with soft power, particularly on promoting Russian culture and supporting studies of the Russian language. This direction of their work is, however, relatively new, and it is yet to be seen how successful it can be. On the other hand, they have largely limited measures to enhance Russia's soft power to actions of state-controlled actors, such as RIA Novosti or Gazprom. Most importantly, however, their emphasis on strength in Russia's projected image suggests that their approach to the role of images is probably closer not to soft power, but rather to the 'politics of prestige' in the tradition of *realpolitik*, defined by Morgenthau as 'the policy of demonstrating the power a nation has or thinks it has, or wants other nations to believe it has' (1956, p. 71). Choosing between Russia's 'attractiveness' as a reliable partner or as an energy supplier that would be prepared to compromise if necessary, and Russia's 'prestige' as a strong country that would not succumb to external pressure, the Russian authorities have repeatedly opted for the latter. Therefore, they have been prepared to take actions—both in the energy sphere and beyond—that would contradict Russia's image as a reliable

[25]'Interview of Dmitry Medvedev with BBC Television', 26 August 2008, available at: http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/08/26/2131_type82915type82916_205790.shtml, accessed 17 August 2009.

partner if those actions were perceived as maintaining or enhancing Russia's image as a strong country.

University of Newcastle upon Tyne

References

Antonenko, O. (2008) 'A War with No Winners', *Survival*, 50, 5.

Baev, P. K. (2008) 'Russian Super-Giant in Its Liar: Gazprom's Role in Domestic Affairs', in Cornell, S. E. & Nilsson, N. (eds) (2008) *Europe's Energy Security: Gazprom's Dominance and Caspian Supply Alternatives*, Washington, DC & Stockholm, Central Asia–Caucasus Institute, Silk Road Studies Programme), available at: http://www.isdp.eu/publications/index.php?option=com_jombib&task=showbib&id=5252, accessed 9 December 2011.

Balmaceda, M. M. (2008) *Energy Dependency, Politics and Corruption in the Former Soviet Union* (London & New York, Routledge).

Baran, Z. (2007) 'EU Energy Security: Time to End Russian Leverage', *The Washington Quarterly*, 30, 4, Autumn.

Baran, Z. (2008) *Security Aspects of the South Stream Project*, Report Commissioned by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament, Hudson Institute, Center for Eurasian Policy, available at: http://www.hudson.org/files/publications/Baran-South%20Stream%20for%20EP.pdf, accessed 2 May 2009.

Bergmann, B. (2007) 'Verlässlicher Versorger. Energiepartnerschaft mit Moskau: Warum wir Russland auch weiterhin vertrauen', *Internationale Politik*, 62, 3.

Bohas, A. (2006) 'The Paradox of Anti-Americanism: Reflection on the Shallow Concept of Soft Power', *Global Society*, 20, 4, October.

British Petroleum (BP) (2008) *BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2008* (British Petroleum), available at: http://www.cfr.org/energy/bp-statistical-review-world-energy-june-2008/p17223, accessed 9 December 2011.

Clive, R. (1988) *The Soviet Propaganda Network: A Directory of Organizations Serving Soviet Foreign Policy* (New York, St. Martin's Press).

Energeticheskaya strategiya Rossii (2003) 'Energeticheskaya strategiya Rossii na period do 2020 goda', *Utverzhdena rasporyazheniem Pravitel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, 28 August, No. 1234-r. (Moscow, RIA TEK), available at: http://www.minprom.gov.ru/docs/strateg/1/, accessed 7 September 2007.

Ericson, R. E. (2009) 'Eurasian Natural Pipelines: The Political Economy of Network Interdependence', *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 50, 1, January–February.

European Union, Directorate-General for Energy and Transport (EUDG) (2009) *EU Energy and Transport in Figures* (Brussels, European Commission).

Feklyunina, V. (2008) 'Battle for Perceptions: Projecting Russia in the West', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 60, 4, June.

Frolov, V. (2009) 'Russia Wins Round 2 of Gas Fight', *Moscow Times*, 13 January.

Gazprom (2008a) 'Transcript of Sergey Kupriyanov Press Teleconference', *Ukrainefacts*, 26 November, available at: http://www.gazpromukrainefacts.com/content/transcript-sergey-kupriyanov-press-teleconference, accessed 29 April 2009.

Gazprom (2008b) 'Gazprom Sends Letter to European Customers', *Ukrainefacts*, 19 December, available at: http://www.gazpromukrainefacts.com/content/gazprom-sends-letter-european-customers, accessed 29 April 2009.

Gazprom (2008c) *Annual Report 2007* (Moscow, OAO Gazprom), available at: http://www.gazprom.ru/documents/Annual_Eng_2007.pdf, accessed 1 May 2009.

German Marshall Fund of the United States (2008) 'Transatlantic Trends 2008', available at: http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/2008_English_Top.pdf, accessed 10 December 2008.

Gnedina, E. & Emerson, M. (2009) *The Case for a Gas Transit Consortium in Ukraine: A Cost Benefit Analysis*, CEPS Policy Brief 180 (Brussels, Centre for European Policy Studies).

Goldthau, A. (2008) 'Resurgent Russia? Rethinking Energy Inc', *Policy Review*, 147, February–March.

Guillet, J. (2007) 'Gazprom as a Predictable Partner. Another Reading of the Russian–Ukrainian and Russian–Belarusian Energy Crises', *Russie. Nei. Visions*, 18 (Paris, IFRI Russia/NIS Center).

Hanson, P. (2007) 'The Russian Economic Puzzle: Going Forwards, Backwards or Sideways?', *International Affairs*, 85, 5, September.

Hill, F. (2004) *Energy Empire: Oil, Gas, and Russia's Revival* (London, The Foreign Policy Centre).

House of Lords (2008) *The European Union and Russia*, 14th Report, European Union Committee (London, Stationery Office).
Kontseptsiya vneshnei (2008) 'Kontseptsiya vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii, 12 July 2008', *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, 8–9.
Levada Centre (2007a) *Obshchestvennoe mnenie—2007* (Moscow, Analiticheskii Tsentr Yuriya Levady).
Marsh, S. (2008) 'EU–Russia Security Relations and the Survey of Russian Federation Foreign Policy: One Year On', *European Security*, 17, 2–3, June.
Mattern, J. B. (2005) 'Why "Soft Power" Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 33, 3, June.
McKenna, T. (2006) 'Tour Touts Russia's G8 Presidency Stint', *PR Week*, 11 December, available at: http://www.prweek.com/us/news/article/609226/Tour-touts-Russias-G8-presidency-stint/, accessed 6 March 2007.
Medvedev, A. (2009) 'Russia is Trying to Get Gas to Europe. Ukraine is the Obstacle', *The Wall Street Journal*, 16 January.
Milov, V. (2005) 'Ekonomika. Gazovyi prezident', *Novaya gazeta*, 26 December.
Monaghan, A. (2007) 'Russia's Energy Diplomacy: A Political Idea Lacking a Strategy?', *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 7, 2, June.
Morgenthau, H. (1956) *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf).
Neumann, I. (1999) *Uses of the Other: 'The East' in European Identity Formation* (Manchester, Manchester University Press).
Nye, J. (2004) 'Soft Power and American Foreign Policy', *Political Science Quarterly*, 119, 2, pp. 255–70.
Orlov, D. (2002) 'Problemy gosudarstvennogo PR v Rossii', *Marketing, reklama i PR*, 8 April, available at: http://www.marketing.spb.ru/conf/2002-02-lbs/tspt.htm, accessed 22 January 2009.
Pirani, S., Stern, J. & Yafimava, K. (2009) *The Russo–Ukrainian Gas Dispute of January 2009: A Comprehensive Assessment* (Oxford, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies).
Popescu, N. (2006) *Russia's Soft Power Ambitions*, CEPS Policy Brief 115 (Brussels, Centre for European Policy Studies).
Proedrou, F. (2007) 'The EU–Russia Energy Approach under the Prism of Interdependence', *European Security*, 16, 3–4, September–December.
Putin, V. (2006) 'Energy Egotism is a Road to Nowhere', *The Wall Street Journal*, 28 February.
RIAN (2009a) 'Khronika gazovogo konflikta. Situatsiya na utro 16 yanvarya 2009 goda', 16 January, available at: http://rian.ru/gas/20090116/159378686.html, accessed 4 May 2009.
RIAN (2009b) 'Europe a Hostage to Ukraine's Heedless Behaviour', 6 January, available at: http://en.rian.ru/world/20090106/119385213.html, accessed 4 May 2009.
RIAN (2009c) 'MID vyrazil nedoumenie otsenkami Evrokomissii prichin "gazovogo krizisa"', 22 January, available at: http://rian.ru/gas/20090122/159848255.html, accessed 4 May 2009.
Rutland, P. (2008) 'Russia as an Energy Superpower', *New Political Economy*, 13, 2, June.
Schmidt, J. D. (2008) 'China's Soft Power Diplomacy in Southeast Asia', *The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies*, 26, 1.
Smith, K. C. (2006) *Security Implications of Russian Energy Policies*, CEPS Policy Brief 90 (Brussels, Centre for European Policy Studies).
Smith-Windsor, B. A. (2000) 'Hard Power, Soft Power Reconsidered', *Canadian Military Journal*, 1, 3, Autumn.
Snow, N. (2009) 'Rethinking Public Diplomacy', in Snow, N. & Taylor, P. M. (eds) (2009) *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, New York & London, Routledge).
Solanko, L. & Sutela, P. (2009) 'Too Much or Too Little Russian Gas to Europe?', *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 50, 1, January–February.
Stern, J. (2006) 'The Russian–Ukrainian Gas Crisis of January 2006', *Oxford Energy Comment* (Oxford, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies), available at: http://www.oxfordenergy.org/2006/01/the-russian-ukrainian-gas-crisis-of-january-2006/, accessed 13 December 2011.
Trenin, D. (2007) 'Russia Redefines Itself and Its Relations with the West', *The Washington Quarterly*, 30, 2, Spring.
Tsygankov, A. P. (2005) 'Vladimir Putin's Vision of Russia as a Normal Great Power', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 21, 2, April–June.
Tsygankov, A. P. (2006) 'If Not by Tanks, Then by Banks? The Role of Soft Power in Putin's Foreign Policy', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 58, 7, November.
Umbach, F. (2010) 'Global Energy Security and the Implications for the EU', *Energy Policy*, 38, 3, March.

US Department of State (2006) 'Russia Should Act Responsibly in Dispute with Ukraine, Rice Says', 5 January, available at: http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2006/January/20060105160612btruevecer0.5403864.html, accessed 2 May 2009.

VTsIOM (2009) *Moskva i Kiev: 'kholodnyi mir' posle 'gazovoi voiny'*, All-Russian Public Opinion Research Centre, 21 January, available at: http://wciom.ru/arkhiv/tematicheskii-arkhiv/item/single/11245.html?no_cache=1&cHash=66bf61ec48, accessed 27 April 2009.

Wang, Y. (2008) 'Public Diplomacy and the Rise of Chinese Soft Power', *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616, 1, March.

Wilson, III, E. J. (2008) 'Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power', *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616, 1, March.