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RUSSIA in GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Vol. 6 · No. 3 · JULY – SEPTEMBER · 2008

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Any nation state will seek to produce its own version of history. This history – or rather, its interpretation, will be slightly different from that of one’s neighbors. Yet the writing of “national histories” should not proceed from adverse-ly directed historical materials, the philosophy of hatred or historical claims.

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The federal authorities have done much in recent years to strengthen the unity and territorial stability of the Russian Federation. However, the institutional and legislative guarantees for the country’s territorial integrity are quite unreliable. If an unforeseen political weakening of the federal center occurs, there is a high likelihood that the country’s federative structure will be shattered.

Controversy

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A “machismo” – completely down-to-earth, highly anti-idealistic and rigidly pragmatic – position by Russia cannot but evoke a strong response from the majority of the national elite and the general public. This hard stance looks especially appealing if one recalls the naïve idealism of the late 1980s and the political tossing about and humiliations of the 1990s.



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In Anticipation of Change

Fyodor Lukyanov, Editor-in-Chief

There is an anticipation of change in the world today, although no one can say exactly how things will change. This anticipation stems from the handover of power – already accomplished in Russia and which will soon take place in the United States; from new internal turbulence in the European Union; from the marked growth of China’s presence on the global stage; and from ever new signs of a crisis in various international institutions. All these factors bring about a general feeling of uncertainty but, at the same time, an underlying desire for something new – new institutions, new alliances and new types of mutual relations. For now, this is no more than a feeling, although it soon may take a clearer shape, considering the rapid developments in the modern world. Russia’s Foreign Minister **Sergei Lavrov** in his article rethinks the international situation and Russia’s place in it. “Psychologically, it is easy to understand those who wish to leave everything the way it is, in

order to die in the Europe or the America in which they were born,” he writes. However, “the rapid changes do not allow such a luxury,” he adds.

Alexei Arbatov comments on an article published in our previous issue and offers his own explanation of why the world system has lost its stability and how it can be restored.

Mark Entin and Andrei Zagorsky offer an in-depth analysis of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe – the structure which underlay the former European order and which is now in an obvious crisis. The authors argue that the organization’s potential has not been fully tapped yet and that it still can be useful to meet Russia’s interests. **Arkady Dubnov** writes about how another post-Soviet country – Kazakhstan – is trying to have the OSCE serve its interests. In particular, Astana will preside over the OSCE in 2010.

Azhdar Kurtov focuses on China which has been skillfully and very

consistently consolidating its political and economic positions wherever it finds it necessary, specifically in Central Asia.

Rafael Khakimov proposes tapping a resource that has been little used in Russia's foreign policy – namely, the Islamic factor, which the author argues has great potential.

Pavel Zolotarev turns to the history of the most controversial international project of recent time – missile defense. He believes that there still is a chance to turn missile defense from a bone of contention into a basis for constructive cooperation between Russia, the U.S. and the European Union. **Sergei Markedonov** analyzes the strategic positions of Azerbaijan, which has also been involved in missile defense discussions. **Sergei Minasyan** writes about the regional aspects of Russia's desire to withdraw from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. He believes that this decision, should it be made, would have a strong impact on security in the South Caucasus.

Sergei Markedonov analyzes the strategic positions of Azerbaijan, which has also been involved in missile defense discussions. **Sergei Minasyan** writes about the regional aspects of Russia's desire to withdraw from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. He believes that this decision, should it be made, would have a strong impact on security in the South Caucasus.

Yuri Golotyuk raises a very “cold” subject which is expected to become a “hot” problem – Russia's efforts to ensure its sovereignty in the Arctic. Growing competition for resources in that region and global

warming have added to the importance of the issue.

Toby Gati writes about Russia's huge potential in the area of renewable energy. **Angel de la Vega**

Navarro discusses whether global regulation is possible on the world energy market, while **Nodari**

Simonia focuses on “energy animosity” between the EU and Russia.

Vyacheslav Morozov analyzes how the European Union has changed over the last two decades and why its relations with Russia are so complicated today. In his view, the difficulty stems from the fact that Moscow and European capitals are guided by different logic, above all a historical one. **Anatoly Torkunov** writes about the difficulties of “historical policy.”

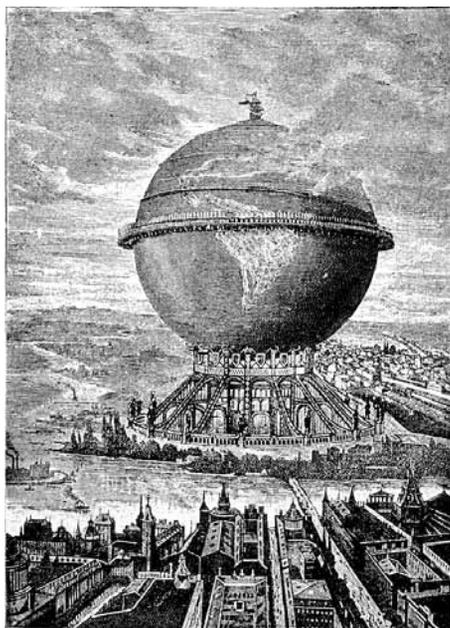
The same subject is analyzed in detail by **Alexei Miller**. **Valery Tishkov**

focuses on the national identity issue and on how this identity evolved in different periods of Russian history.

Olga Tynyanova argues that the unity of the Russian Federation still does not have a solid institutional and legal foundation, but rests, above all, on political factors.

Our next issue will focus on the future of Russian-U.S. relations, on a possible model for Russia-EU integration, on the prospects for interaction between Russia, India and China, and on other issues.

The World at Change



Design for a Colossal Monument in Memory of Christopher Columbus. *Niva* magazine, 1890

“The new stage is sometimes defined as “post-American.” But, of course, this is not “a world after the United States,” the more so without the U.S. It is a world where — due to the growth of other global centers of power and influence — the relative importance of the U.S. role has been decreasing, as it has already happened in recent decades in the global economy and trade.”

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Russia and the World in the 21st Century

Sergei Lavrov

In modern international relations it is difficult to find a more fundamental issue than the definition of the current stage in global development. This is important for any country in order to correlate a development strategy and a foreign policy with the vision of the world we live in. It seems that a consensus is already being formed on this score, albeit at the level of the expert community both in Russia and abroad. This is largely a consequence of debates, on which Russia insisted. Moreover, this emerging consensus largely reproduces the analysis which Russia offered as a starting position for discussion in Vladimir Putin's speech in Munich in February 2007.

It is already obvious that individual problems of world politics cannot be solved without understanding the "big issues" of global development and without reaching a common vision of them in the international community.

I will try to outline some of these issues, which are directly related to the building of Russia's foreign-policy strategy.

Sergei Lavrov is Russia's Foreign Affairs Minister. This article was written on the basis of his June 20, 2008 speech at the international symposium "Russia in the 21st Century," organized in Moscow by the Russian Council on Foreign and Defense Policy in partnership with the British think tank Policy Network, and the Alfred Herrhausen Society, within the framework of the latter's project "Foresight – Forging Common Futures in a Multi-Polar World."

THE END OF THE COLD WAR:
UNDER WHAT THE LINE WAS DRAWN?

There is already no doubt that the end of the Cold War marked the end of a longer stage in global development, which lasted for 400 to 500 years and when the world was dominated by European civilization. This domination was consistently led by the historical West.

As regards the content of the new stage in humankind's development, there are two basic approaches to it among countries. The first one holds that the world must gradually become a Greater West through the adoption of Western values. It is a kind of "the end of history." The other approach – advocated by Russia – holds that competition is becoming truly global and acquiring a civilizational dimension; that is, the subject of competition now includes values and development models.

The new stage is sometimes defined as "post-American." But, of course, this is not "a world after the United States," the more so without the U.S. It is a world where – due to the growth of other global centers of power and influence – the relative importance of the U.S. role has been decreasing, as it has already happened in recent decades in the global economy and trade. Leadership is another matter, above all a matter of reaching agreement among partners and a matter of ability to be the first – but among equals.

Various terms have been proposed to define the content of the emerging world order, among them multi-polar, polycentric and nonpolar. The latter characteristic is given, in particular, by Richard Haass.¹ It is difficult not to agree with him that power and influence are now becoming diffused. But even the former director of policy planning for the U.S. State Department admits that ensuring the governability of global development in the new conditions requires establishing a core group of leading nations. That is, in any case the matter at hand is the need for collective leadership, which Russia has been consistently advocating. Of course, the

¹ See his article "The Age of Nonpolarity. What Will Follow U.S. Dominance," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2008.

diversity of the world requires that such collective leadership be truly representative both geographically and civilizationally.

We do not share the apprehensions that the ongoing reconfiguration in the world will inevitably bring about “chaos and anarchy.” It is a natural process of forming a new international architecture – both political and financial-economic – that would meet the new realities.

One such reality is the return of Russia to global politics, the global economy and finance as an active, full-fledged actor. This refers to our place on the world energy and grain markets; to our leadership in the field of nuclear energy and space exploration; to our capabilities in the sphere of land, air and sea transit; and to the role of the ruble as one of the most reliable world currencies.

Unfortunately, the Cold War experience has distorted the consciousness of several generations of people, above all political elites, making them think that any global policy must be ideologized. And now, when Russia is guided in international affairs by understandable, pragmatic interests, void of any ideological motives whatsoever, not everyone is able to adequately take it. Some people say we have some “grievances,” “hidden agendas,” “neo-imperial aspirations” and all that stuff. This situation will hardly change soon, as the matter at issue is psychological factors – after all, at least two generations of political leaders were brought up in a certain ideological system of coordinates, and sometimes they are simply unable to think in categories beyond those frameworks. Other factors include quite specific, understandably interested motives pertaining to privileges that the existing global financial-economic architecture gives to individual countries.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MODELS: PLURALISM AND SYNTHESIS

Russia views itself as part of a European civilization with common Christian roots. The experience of this region offers material that can be used to simulate forthcoming global processes. Thus, even a superficial analysis suggests the conclusion that the overcoming of the Cold War has not solved the problem of ways for social devel-

opment. Rather, it has only helped to avoid extreme approaches and come closer to its solution on a more realistic basis — especially considering that ideological considerations very often distorted the effect of market forces, as well as the idea of democracy.

The rigid Anglo-Saxon model of socio-economic development has again started to fail, as it did in the 1920s. This time, the failure is due to the isolation of the U.S. financial system from the real sector of economy. On the other hand, there is the socially oriented Western European model, which was a product of European society's development throughout the 20th century, including the tragedies of the two world wars, the Cold War, and the Soviet Union's experience. The Soviet Union played no small role in this process, as it not only served as the "Soviet threat" that consolidated the West, but also motivated Western Europe to "socialize" its economic development.

Therefore, by proclaiming the goal of creating a socially oriented economy, the new Russia appeals to our common European heritage. This is yet more evidence of Russia's compatibility with the rest of Europe.

The end of the Cold War coincided in time with attempts to unify European development according to the Anglo-Saxon model. However, there is an impression that Europe will hardly give up its development model which meets its views of life and which has a more solid financial and economic foundation. Rebalancing is possible and, apparently, inevitable on both sides of the Atlantic. This brings to mind Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal policy, which marked a time of convergence in America's development.

Probably, a synthesis of various models — as a process, rather than a final result — will be a key trend in global development in the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the multiformity of the contemporary world, which reflects its more fundamental characteristic — cultural and civilizational diversity, will remain. One can also assume that in order to make the global "rules of the game" more effective in these conditions, they must be freed from ideology.

A different, unifying approach would lead to interventionism — a strategy that is hardly realistic, since its effectiveness can be achieved only in a transition toward global imperial construction.

Movement in that direction would increase tensions in global and regional politics and would exacerbate unsolved global problems — as seen from the current aggravation of the global food crisis.

These factors speak in favor of pluralism on a wide range of social development parameters as a non-alternative and, most importantly, non-confrontational way for the international community's existence at the present stage.

Whatever the circumstances of what is called the valorization of natural resources, this trend is creating conditions for moving toward equalization of development levels in the contemporary world. The task is to create modalities and mechanisms for the effective use of redistributed global financial resources for the purpose of universal development. Thus, sovereign wealth funds already participate in refinancing the U.S. banking system.

THE GAP BETWEEN THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ORDERS

International experts, including American ones, write about a “world turned upside down” and criticize the “weak dollar” policy. What is remarkable is the analysis of Henry Kissinger, who writes that “the International Monetary Fund as presently constituted is an anachronism” and who even points to the need of restoring moral aspects in economic and financial activities.

One cannot but agree with Kissinger's statement about the emergence of a gap between the economic and political orders in the world. But we must clarify something in this regard. First, there is no reasonable alternative to a global political architecture relying on the United Nations and the rule of international law. Let us not forget that the UN was created even before the beginning of the Cold War for use in a multipolar international system. In other words, its potential can be fully tapped only now.

Second, the global financial-economic architecture was largely created by the West to suit its own needs. And now that we are watching the generally recognized shift of financial-economic power and influence toward new fast-growing economies, such as China, India, Russia and Brazil, the inadequacy of this system to

the new realities becomes obvious. In reality, a financial-economic basis is needed that would conform to the polycentricity of the contemporary world. Otherwise, the governability of global development cannot be restored.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev spoke about this in detail in Berlin and at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum. The reform of international institutions will be among the subjects to be discussed at the upcoming Group of Eight summit in Hokkaido, Japan. So the urgency of the matter evokes no doubt among our G8 partners, either. Russia is ready to participate constructively in this joint work.

WINDS OF CHANGE: RUSSIA AND THE U.S.
I think that as soon as these big issues are duly grasped, it will be easier to solve all the other issues, including the range of problems in relations within the Euro-Atlantic region.

Fyodor Tyutchev [a 19th-century Russian poet] wrote that “by the very fact of its existence Russia negates the future of the West.” We can refute Tyutchev only by acting together – building a common future for the whole Euro-Atlantic region and for the whole world, in which security and prosperity will be truly indivisible.

New things scare people. At the same time, they are inevitable. And there is only one rational response to this challenge – accept this reality. When they scare us with the threat of “anarchy” in the contemporary world (which is very Russian-like, but done, as a rule, from the outside), they forget that any system can be self-regulatory. This requires effective, adequate institutions, which should be created.

I would like to make it clear: Russia, as no other country, understands the painfulness of the current changes. No one can get away from them. Moreover, as experience shows, adaptation at the level of foreign policy can only result from serious changes within the states themselves. Therefore Russia has quite realistic expectations regarding when changes should be awaited in the foreign policy philosophy of its international partners.

In contemporary conditions, it is hardly appropriate to speak in terms of “challenges” thrown down by some states to others. This

only results in too much focus in foreign-policy strategies on virtual dangers. The interdependence brought about by globalization motivates no one to “throw down challenges” to whomever. And Russia is the last one to need this: we have enough problems of our own, which we are well aware of; at the same time, we understand the interests of our partners. What is dangerous is a lack of cooperation and holding aloof from the problems of one’s partner – which makes collective actions to address common tasks impossible.

Each country and each nation have had enough national catastrophes and tragedies in their history. The longer the history, the more positive and negative events it comprises. I fully agree with Vladislav Inozemtsev who maintains that the Soviet Union and the United States, even when they confronted each other, remained remarkably alike. Often our actions, taken in the name of the assertion of opposite ideals, were remarkably similar in the means involved and their practical consequences.

There has always existed an interrelation between Russia and the United States. Alexis de Tocqueville predicted a common future for our countries way back in the 19th century. This interrelation also showed itself in the fact that after 1917 the U.S. gradually and even unwillingly replaced Russia in the European balance. It is another matter that there is currently no longer any need for Europe to have external balancers, be it Russia or the U.S. We understand this very well – and this is why we come out for equal relations in a tripartite format involving Russia, the European Union and the U.S.

In the 20th century, this interrelation was corroborated by convergence events that were not only limited to the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt and allied relations within the anti-Hitler coalition. Thus, the election of John F. Kennedy as U.S. president can be attributed, among other things, to America’s reaction to the Soviet Union’s rise – not only technological and military-technical, but also spiritual, at the level of an entirely new attitude to the world, which stemmed from Khrushchev’s Thaw and the completion of the postwar reconstruction. Kennedy made a bold attempt to overcome the logic of militarization of

foreign-policy thinking, of whose danger his predecessor had warned. Unfortunately, later the pendulum of foreign-policy philosophy swung toward politics based on instincts and ideological prejudice. Now everyone is wondering when this pendulum will swing back, which will show what kind of America the world will have to deal with.

Russian-U.S. relations would benefit greatly from the establishment of an atmosphere of mutual trust and mutual respect, which characterized the relationship between the presidents of the two countries over the last eight years but which not always showed itself at the lower levels. Paradoxically, there was more mutual trust and respect between the two states during the Cold War. Perhaps, it was because there was less lecturing then about what a state should be and how it should behave. There was awareness of the need – and the desire – to address issues that were truly significant for our two countries and the whole world.

We understand that America is facing difficult tasks. On the positive side, we see that the understanding is beginning to prevail that these are problems, above all, of America itself, including its ability to accept “a world with a diversity of voices and viewpoints.”² Intellectual rigidity will only restrain America’s inherent ability to adapt to changing realities. History “happens” to all countries and peoples, and this refers to Russia much more than to any other country. But this factor teaches tolerance, without which neither empires nor simply normal equal relations between states can survive.

It is gratifying that in the course of the current U.S. presidential campaign voices are growing louder in favor of preserving and developing the disarmament and arms control process. Such cooperation alone would be enough to ensure stability for our bilateral relations, until there is mutual readiness for their substantial modernization in accordance with the requirements of the times.

² See: Fareed Zakaria. *The Post-American World*, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2008, and his article “The Future of American Power” in *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2008.

EURO-ATLANTIC SPACE:
BETWEEN FRAGMENTATION
AND A COMMON FUTURE

The issue of the destiny of the diverse European civilization now presents itself in a new way. At the political level, there is a need for equal interaction among its three independent, yet related, component parts. The confrontational paradigm of intra-European relations of the Cold War era is giving way to a cooperation paradigm. This means tolerance of dissent, and pluralism of views and positions. Democracy is always historical and national by nature.

The proposals put forward by President Medvedev in Berlin are based on a sober analysis of the situation. The European architecture, established back in the Cold War years, prevents overcoming the negative dynamics set by inertia approaches of the past and by contradictions accumulating in European affairs. There remains only one thing to do, and that is to look further than what we have; that is, to try and create something that would unite the entire Euro-Atlantic region at the level of principles, by which we should be guided in our relations. After that, we will be able to move on. But without this clarity it will be difficult to create a critical mass of confidence that is required for building positive, forward-looking relations in our region. The importance of principles follows, for example, from the fact that at the annual OSCE ministerial meetings we have for years been unable to achieve any accord on reiteration by all states-parties of their adherence to the principles of the Helsinki Final Act. What more proof is required to prove the ailment of all Euro-Atlantic politics?

There is a need for a positive process, including convening a pan-European summit, in order to fill the political vacuum emerging in the Euro-Atlantic region, and to make up a positive agenda, which we lack so badly now. Over time, we could determine which elements of European architecture are promising and which are not, what stands in our way, and what we can take with us into the future. Why not insure ourselves, especially when much is still unclear? That would not be a means of pressure on any existing structure or organization. The matter at issue would be the creation of a new atmosphere of confidence

in our region, which could help to take a new look at the relevance of the arms control process, as well. Let us develop it on a modern universal basis, rather than along bloc lines. Otherwise, the legacy that we have inherited from the previous epoch will only create a feeling that a war in Europe is still possible.

We all should think and look around – this is the meaning of the pause that we suggest. But this means that all projects should be frozen where they are now, be it Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence, the implementation of plans to deploy elements of a U.S. global missile defense system in Eastern Europe, or NATO’s eastward expansion – because any desire to complete – at any cost and by a specific date – the implementation of what causes strong rejection among partners and what threatens to ruin established relations, will cause a reaction. This vicious circle must be broken.

What is the alternative? A further accumulation of “electricity” in the atmosphere of Euro-Atlantic relations? Do we really need to continue making blunders? Will it be good for all of us if we watch from the outside how, for example, the European Union proves its post-modernity, or NATO, its efficiency in Afghanistan? Likewise, we would not want our partners to remain aloof from the implementation of the project for Russia’s modernization.

Finally, we all should step over ourselves and stop the unnecessary talk about “veto power” outside the UN Security Council, about “spheres of influence” and the like. We can very well do without all that, as there are more important things where we undoubtedly have common interests. We must build confidence and develop skills for joint work in truly significant strategic matters. Then many things will look different. Let life decide and put everything in its place. What really depends on us and what demands political decisions is that we must stop sliding into the past, into an absurdity that we all will be ashamed of. And history will not forgive us, either. Is it not in our common interest to have “a coherent Europe,” all parts of which are united by “workable relations”³?

³ See: U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice’s article “Rethinking the National Interest,” *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2008.

TIME TO ADDRESS GLOBAL PROBLEMS
TOGETHER

Everyone has their own problems; everyone has something to do. The U.S. electorate is about to make a choice. The European Union is in the process of adaptation. In EU countries, processes of ethno-religious self-determination are ripening – both among the indigenous population and recent immigrants. “Rich” regions aspire to their independent existence in order not to pay for the development of “poor” regions within one and the same state. This is a serious test for the EU’s commitment to the ideas of tolerance and solidarity.

Psychologically, it is easy to understand those who wish to leave everything the way it is, in order to die in the Europe or the America in which they were born. But the rapid changes do not allow such a luxury. They presuppose, among other things, civilizational compatibility, and tolerance not only in word but also in deed. And this will be hard to achieve in conditions when militant secularism acts from positions that differ little from an official religion.

No less importantly, the time has come to address global problems which the world had no time to address during the Cold War. There were other, ideological priorities then. If not now, then when will we fight global poverty, hunger and diseases? The international community has not achieved much progress yet.

We see nothing in our approach that would be contrary to the principles of rationality, intrinsic in Europeans’ attitude to the world. Acting differently means piling up problems upon problems and making the future of Europe and the entire Euro-Atlantic region hostage to hasty decisions. That would be a huge waste of time, resulting in a multitude of lost opportunities for joint action. We are not hurrying anyone; we only urge all nations to think together about what is awaiting us. But a breakthrough into our common future requires new, innovative approaches. The future belongs to them.

Should Russia Leave the OSCE?

How to Revive the Helsinki Process

Mark Entin & Andrei Zagorsky

In 1986, a number of people in the U.S. political establishment raised the issue of the United States withdrawing from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the predecessor of the current Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Their arguments for their proposal sounded simple and attractive to many – the balance of the Helsinki process had been upset. In 1975, when signing the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Soviet Union achieved recognition of the inviolability of national borders, whereas the liberalization of the Soviet political regime, promised by Moscow, turned out to be superficial and temporary. In 1986, many thought that the Helsinki process was reversing.

This conclusion prompted U.S. congressmen to call on their president to withdraw from the Helsinki process. Lawyers from the State Department and the Library of Congress, who worked on this issue, concluded that technically it was easy to do. The president needed only to withdraw the U.S. signature from the Final Act, notifying all the participating states about it. However, the U.S. Helsinki Commission (which includes members of the Congress and government) found such a move precipitate and rec-

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commended refraining from it. The Commission presented the following arguments against U.S. renunciation of the Final Act.

First, U.S. renunciation would not annul the Final Act and would not stop the Helsinki process. Moreover, the U.S. would thus voluntarily waive the opportunity to influence the process and would let the Soviet Union take a dominant position in it. This circumstance would hardly displease Moscow, which from the beginning of the process “strongly preferred to have CSCE with the Americans looking on from the outside.”

Second, U.S. renunciation of the Final Act would produce a negative effect among U.S. allies in Europe, as well as neutral and non-aligned countries, which would interpret withdrawal as “a sign of decreased U.S. interest and influence in Europe.”

And finally **third**, U.S. withdrawal from the process could move the issue of human rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to the periphery of East-West relations. But this is precisely what American critics of the CSCE wanted to avoid.

The Commission proposed that the U.S. patiently and more actively pursue its goals within the framework of the Helsinki process. Official Washington eventually followed these recommendations. By 1989, there appeared signs of a breakthrough in the discussion of the human rights issue and political pluralism. The OSCE Vienna follow-up meeting in 1989 settled all issues of humanitarian cooperation, which had been heatedly debated ever since the Final Act was signed.

Twenty years later, Moscow seems to have changed roles with Washington. Today, Russian politicians complain about imbalances in OSCE activities: a geographic imbalance (the organization’s work is focused primarily “east of Vienna;” that is, in the countries of the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union) and a thematic imbalance (from Russia’s point of view, there is an unjustified overemphasis on human rights to the detriment of other areas, among them security, economy and environment).

Moscow is displeased about the autonomy of some OSCE institutions, above all the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) which monitors elections. The Russian

leadership openly accuses independent OSCE institutions of bias and double standards and says they have been “privatized” by Western countries, first of all by the United States. Now Russian politicians say that there is no use in such an OSCE and ever more loudly urge their government to withdraw from the organization.

Of course, the present situation does not exactly mirror the 1980s, and the OSCE today markedly differs from what it used to be. Now it is not just a series of conferences and meetings of experts, but a system of existing structures and institutions.

It is not clear, though, what Moscow wants to achieve. Does it want the OSCE to step up its activities “west of Vienna” or to just reduce their scope in the East? Does it want the OSCE to focus more on security in Europe or to curb its human rights efforts? One can assume that Russia would like the OSCE to pay less attention to human rights and more attention to security issues that evoke the Kremlin’s concern.

However, although the present situation does not literally repeat that of 1986, the dilemma now facing Moscow in many ways is similar to that faced by Washington more than 20 years ago: withdraw from the OSCE or persistently seek that the OSCE in its activities take into account issues of interest to Russia. These should include not only matters that have been harshly criticized by Moscow in recent years, but also more general trends in the organization’s development, which often remain beyond the framework of public discussions in Russia.

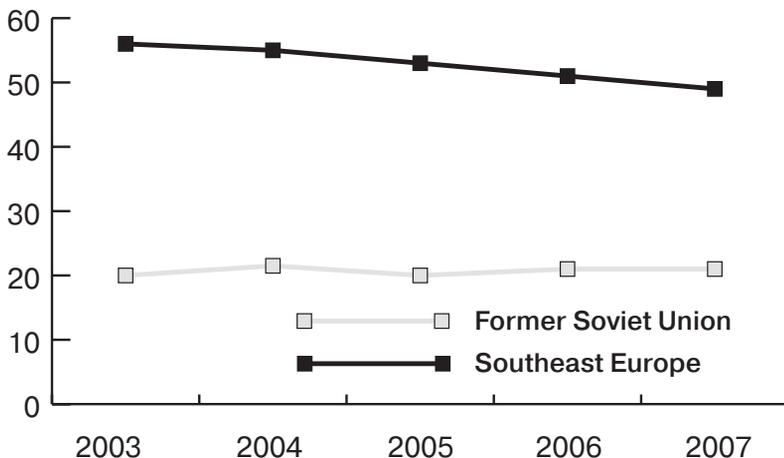
These include, in particular, a gradual reduction in the scope of OSCE activities and the increasingly prominent direct interaction of the U.S. and the European Union with OSCE members located “east of Vienna.” Against this background, the issue of the expediency of Russia’s withdrawal from the OSCE is not as simple as it seems to be.

SHRINKING OSCE ACTIVITIES

The idea that the OSCE focuses its activities only on the “East” (mainly in the form of missions and various centers and offices) is generally true, but it requires an essential specification. The main

region of the OSCE's field work has always been Southeast Europe, namely the countries of the former Yugoslavia and Albania. The territory of the former Soviet Union has never been a zone of any large-scale OSCE presence. Its Balkan missions in this decade account for half of the OSCE budget, whereas projects in the former Soviet Union make up about 20 percent (Graph 1). The same goes for the size of OSCE missions. In the last few years, the OSCE has sent 79 to 81 percent of its international staff working in the field to countries in Southeast Europe.

Graph 1. Allocations for Activities in Southeast Europe and the Former Soviet Union (% of OSCE unified budget)



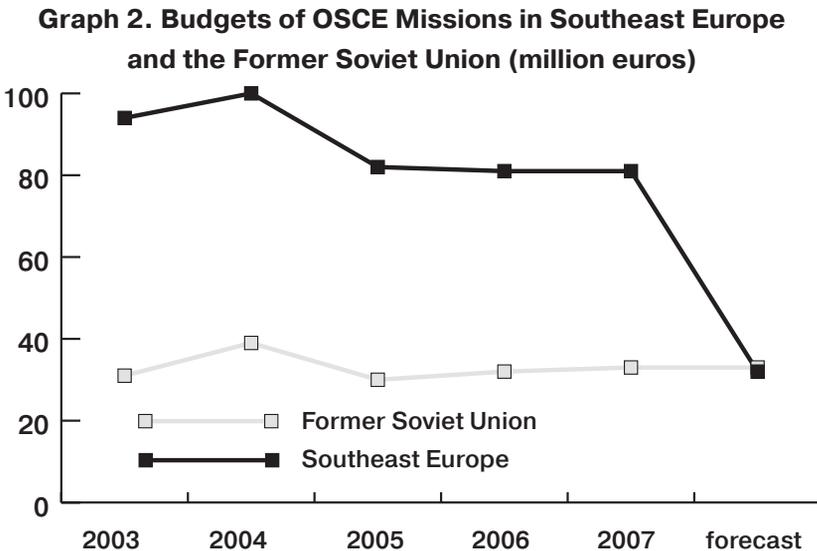
OSCE field operations peaked in the late 1990s-early 2000s. The financing of OSCE field operations has seen absolute and relative reductions since then: from €184 million in 2000 to €118 million in 2007, and from 87 to 70 percent of the OSCE unified budget over the same period. The organization's international staff has been decreasing accordingly. Both the rise and decline in OSCE field activities largely coincided in time with changes in the situation in the Balkans. The scale of the OSCE presence in the former Soviet Union changed little, except for recently, when it has been decreasing as well.

The largest OSCE mission was deployed in 1999 in Kosovo. In 2000, its international staff included 649 employees. In 2007, it had

dropped to only 283 employees. The mission in Croatia reached its peak in 1998 when it involved 280 employees. In 2007, on the eve of the mission's closure, this figure stood at a mere 30 people. In 2002, the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje involved 300 employees; in 2007, its staff included only 82 people.

The tendency to reduce the scale of OSCE field operations has been growing in recent years – primarily due to a downsized presence in the Balkans. In 2008, the OSCE closed its mission in Croatia, which has been replaced by an office in Zagreb. The future of the OSCE's largest missions to date – in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina – is still undecided. The European Union plans to take over some or all of their functions in the foreseeable future. OSCE activities in Macedonia have been decreasing, too.

This trend suggests that the OSCE will continue to cut its activities in the participating states. The closure or simple reduction of the missions in Kosovo and Bosnia is equivalent to an almost 50 percent reduction in funds related to OSCE field operations, and to a 50-plus reduction in OSCE international staff. Meanwhile, the curtailment of OSCE activities in the Balkans is not being compensated for by any significant build-up of an OSCE presence in the former Soviet Union (Graph 2).



The largest OSCE mission in the territory of the former Soviet Union is in Georgia. It accounts for about one-third of all OSCE expenses in the former Soviet Union. However, after the termination of the monitoring of the Russian-Georgian border, this mission underwent the most significant reductions. Its budget has been cut in half over the past five years, while the number of personnel has been reduced from 148 to 64 people (including staff under individual member-countries).

The scope of OSCE operations in other former Soviet countries – in Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia – is rather modest. The OSCE centers in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have the largest budgets and staff. But their aggregate budget is comparable to the budget of the relatively small OSCE mission in Serbia. At the same time, the strength of OSCE international staff in Serbia is 50 percent greater than that of the OSCE centers in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan taken together.

The trend toward a gradual reduction in OSCE activities “east of Vienna” is confirmed by a marked decrease – especially since 2007 – in extra-budgetary funds allocated by the participating states for the implementation of projects by OSCE missions. The largest cuts in extra-budgetary contributions to the OSCE came from the U.S. – more than by half in 2007. The reason for the move was not Washington’s disillusionment about the organization’s effectiveness, but the need to find additional funds for the implementation of other projects in other parts of the world.

The aforementioned figures are not needed to make an assessment of the OSCE’s work. The problem is not whether it was necessary to conduct registration and draw up electoral registers in Albania amid chaos and virtually from scratch, and to train local staff to do this work. The problem is not whether the financing of projects for assembling light weapons and small arms in Tajikistan was effective, or how useful the OSCE’s skills development programs for the Kyrgyz police were – and not even whether the OSCE should provide assistance in drawing up electoral registers, say, in France.

Also, it is not so important whether we give positive or negative assessments to the OSCE’s work “east of Vienna.” What is

important is that the peak of its activity is over. The scope of the organization's operations — above all, in the Balkans — has been steadily decreasing. This decrease is not compensated for in any way by stepped-up activities in the former Soviet Union. In particular, since the OSCE closed its Assistance Group to Chechnya and gave up election observation in Russia in 2007, the organization has not been engaged in any activity in this country.

If Russia's criticism was aimed at having the OSCE reduce its activities "east of Vienna," then this is happening today by itself. But if the Russian goal was to have the OSCE broaden its activities in the West, then this task requires a different solution.

NO OSCE, NO PROBLEMS?

The continued presence on the OSCE agenda of such issues as the rule of law, the formation and development of democratic institutions, human rights, and free and fair elections (in Belarus, Uzbekistan and some other countries) is often taken as an attempt to go against the "when-in-Rome" rule. This irritates the political class, which wants to continue living according to its own laws. This irritation sometimes translates into a desire to withdraw from the organization if it does not offer any tangible benefits in exchange. No wonder Russian politicians have such ideas as well.

Again, the matter is not how rational this desire is, but whether withdrawing from the OSCE would solve the problem and whether it would make the life of the Russian political elite more comfortable.

Moscow's withdrawal would hardly bring about the collapse of the OSCE. Actually, all of Russia's neighbors are interested in the organization in one way or another. Kazakhstan, which is to hold the OSCE chairmanship in 2010, is preparing intensively for this mission. Even Belarus and Uzbekistan, which have found themselves in political isolation in the West, view their presence in the OSCE as an important symbol of their involvement in the pan-European process, despite all "costs." However, these costs are not so great and in any case are controllable as the level, scope and quality of interaction with the OSCE and its institutions (the

nature of missions, their strength, the nature of projects, etc.) are determined primarily by member-states.

The attitude toward the OSCE could change, perhaps, only in Georgia, which now views the organization as an instrument of Russian policy. If Russia withdraws from the organization and thus stops influencing decision-making regarding the activities of the OSCE Mission to Georgia, official Tbilisi will only welcome such a turn of events.

So, even if Russia withdraws, the OSCE will continue its traditional activities, although perhaps on a still smaller scale than today. Moscow will no longer participate in shaping OSCE policies and it will finally lose its levers of influence over OSCE interaction with neighboring countries. While not working toward a substantial reduction of OSCE activities “east of Vienna,” including in the humanitarian sphere, Russia will hardly have this organization build up its efforts in the West (if we really want this, of course). Moscow will even lose the capacity to criticize the organization and demand its in-depth reform, while the OSCE will remain and will become a tool – perhaps, even in a greater degree than today – for advancing political and other know-how along the West-East line.

The “No OSCE, No Problems” principle does not work in practice. Humanitarian issues are on the agenda of many international organizations today, including the agenda of their cooperation with Russia and other post-Soviet states. If the OSCE weakens or dramatically reduces its activities in the territory of the former Soviet Union, this factor will speed up the formation of other mechanisms of Western political influence within the framework of direct EU/U.S. cooperation with the newly independent states. Today, these mechanisms are in a rudimentary state, but their emergence will affect these countries’ relations with Russia.

All OSCE participating countries – except for those in Central Asia – are members of the Council of Europe, whose efforts are focused on issues of strengthening democratic institutions and protecting human rights. The Council’s standards in this sphere are not lower – and in some aspects even higher – than OSCE

requirements. There is no doubt that the Council of Europe will be ready to assume the function of observing elections as well, which is now performed mainly by the OSCE. The Council will apparently adopt standards and technologies of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), which is so unpopular in Moscow, or will possibly take this organization under its wing.

The last few years have seen the EU step up its policy toward Russia's neighbors. Countries in Eastern Europe (Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus) and the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) are now targets of the European Neighborhood Policy, under which they themselves choose the pace and areas for closer integration with the European Union, without necessarily becoming full members. In 2007, the EU adopted a strategy also toward Central Asian countries, inviting them to build mechanisms for direct political interaction. All countries in the region, including Uzbekistan, did not fail to take advantage of this opportunity.

The rule of law, democratic institutions, free elections, and human rights are all priority issues in the EU's political dialog with its Eastern neighbors and with Central Asian countries. The agenda of Brussels' cooperation with Central Asian nations also includes issues traditional for the OSCE such as: the reform of law enforcement bodies and keeping their staff; modern methods and technologies of border control; and fighting drug trafficking, organized criminal groups, corruption, terrorist and extremist activities.

In other words, the European Union is already gradually entering the OSCE realm in its interaction with all former Soviet countries, including Russia. In relations with Moscow, Brussels also seeks to institutionalize the dialog and cooperation in the issues of human rights and the rule of law. These issues have been included in the European Commission's mandate for negotiating a new framework agreement with Russia and may prove to be a stumbling block at Russian-EU negotiations.

However, this kind of EU activity is not duly formalized and not effective yet. Brussels, which finances about 70 percent of expenditures related to the OSCE's work in former Soviet coun-

tries, prefers not to act independently, but via this organization. Yet one can now hear in the European Union ever louder voices of those who believe that it is time for the EU to take over the tasks that the OSCE is unable to cope with. If the EU backs up its “good governance” standard with the benefits of economic cooperation – the EU is the main trading partner of virtually all former Soviet countries – and with financing projects in various fields, this can make the EU a very influential development factor in the region. Indeed, over recent years, the OSCE has been lacking precisely an independent economic weight for stimulating interest among member states in cooperation.

Another important matter is the reform of the security sector and the establishment of democratic control over it. This is an element and condition for NATO’s interaction with newly independent states. The importance of this aspect of cooperation should not be overestimated, since the intensity of the participation of former Soviet countries in NATO’s Partnership for Peace program differs greatly. But this subject inevitably comes to the fore for countries that seek rapprochement with the Alliance and especially those seeking to enter it.

Therefore, Russia’s withdrawal and even the collapse of the OSCE would not solve any of the problems that Moscow would like to get rid of. This refers to the activities of the OSCE and other European and Euro-Atlantic structures in the territory of the former Soviet Union, and to Russia’s relations with these organizations. The transfer of Western political know-how over to the post-Soviet East would continue all the same. But the scope and nature of these activities in relations between Western countries and Russia’s neighbors in Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia would then be determined without Moscow’s participation. In addition, Russia would have a reduced capacity to get organizations involved in this process to be more active “west of Vienna.”

Russia’s withdrawal would have only one result: if it leaves the OSCE, Russia would stay aloof from these processes of its own free will and would lose its last chance to influence them.

HOW TO GET THE OSCE FOCUSED ON THE RUSSIAN AGENDA?

During his visit to Germany on June 5, 2008, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev proposed holding a pan-European summit to prepare a new “European security pact.” The idea of finding a new consensus among participants in the pan-European process has been in the air for over the past year. No doubt, its promotion is certainly important, but it should not push into the background the solution of practical issues that are vital for the further functioning of the OSCE.

The program for the organization’s in-depth reform, which Russia advocated until recently, provided for the implementation of the following institutional, legal and procedural transformations.

First, Russia insisted on an *institutional reform* of the organization aimed at establishing stricter control on the part of the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna over the organization’s basic structures, which operate independently on the basis of their own mandates (ODIHR, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the rather independent field missions). The Permanent Council makes decisions on the basis of consensus, and all the participating states have veto power.

Such a move would mean that all major decisions, which are now independently made by individual OSCE institutions, would need unanimous approval. For example, OSCE election observation missions would not be allowed to make public their assessments before they are discussed by the Permanent Council.

Second, Russia insisted on stronger political leadership and control by the Permanent Council over *mission activities*. In particular, the Council would audit the allocation of extra-budgetary funds to missions for specific projects and the expenditure of these funds (including the practice of secondment). The idea is to gradually phase out the deployment of missions in individual countries in favor of creating “thematic” missions that would operate in all OSCE member-states. Thematic missions would focus on joint counteraction to new security challenges (terrorism, drugs, weapons and human trafficking, etc.).

Third, Russia advocated streamlining the OSCE's operation and internal governance procedures, which often formed spontaneously on the basis of decisions made by the Ministerial Council and the Permanent Council. To this end, Moscow proposed making the OSCE *a legal entity*, adopting the organization's Charter (Russia distributed a draft Charter in the summer of 2007), and unifying standard procedures for governing various operations of the OSCE and its institutions. The respective functions should be concentrated in the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna. To this end, it is necessary to reorganize and strengthen the Secretariat, as well as the powers of the Secretary General, while preserving their accountability to the Permanent Council; change the personnel policy and increase the representation of countries located "east of Vienna" in the central structures, basic institutions and missions; and revise the scale of contributions to the OSCE budget and bring it in line with the participating states' solvency ratio, which would imply, in particular, reducing Russia's contribution.

In recent years, a broad coalition has formed in the organization that advocates its increased effectiveness through restructuring and improved governance. The discussion of these issues has brought about essential yet insufficient changes in the OSCE's operation.

However, many states find the requirements of Russia unacceptable, which actually propose confining autonomous OSCE institutions in a rigid corset of political consensus. This would make the organization's efficiency dependent on the success or failure of political bargaining between Russia and its OSCE partners, and would throw the organization back into the times that were not very successful for it, namely the 1980s.

A reform of the OSCE like this would be unpromising and unproductive. It would be more reasonable to think how the organization's seeming shortcomings could be turned into advantages.

The day-to-day activities of OSCE missions and institutions, performed irrespective of the course of political negotiations, open many opportunities for implementing projects of interest to Russia. To restore the balance in the organization's work, it would

be enough to intensify activities in sectors that are of priority for Russia, such as countering new challenges and threats to European security. Such activities must be made systematic and aimed at preparing specific practical conclusions and recommendations, which later could underlie decisions by the OSCE's Permanent Council and the Ministerial Council.

Organizing such activities with the participation of all interested member-states of the OSCE today does not require – at least, not always – a preliminary consensus. Reliance on the Secretariat and its units would allow this work to be done on the basis of extra-budgetary funding. If Russia now realizes the need to strengthen one or another field of OSCE activity, it needs only to allocate the required resources and to second its staff. One can be sure that Moscow's initiatives would meet with a positive response from many member-states and they would be ready to join in the funding.

Balance in OSCE activities can be restored without insisting that some field of its work be curtailed – these activities have recently been decreasing in any case. This goal should be achieved by initiating such OSCE activities that Moscow thinks better meet its interests and better reflect its views of how the organization should develop.

As a matter of fact, Kazakhstan embarked on this path a year ago, upholding its right to the OSCE Chairmanship. Astana proposed programs aimed at promoting the development of other Central Asian states, and came out with an initiative to take projects under OSCE auspices to assist Afghanistan in the struggle against drug trafficking.

Moscow will be able to improve the balance in OSCE activities just as much as it is ready to fund work required for this. However, this takes political will. If Moscow does not really want that, nothing will come out of it.

OSCE Battlefield

Kazakhstan's Road to the Top of Europe's Largest Organization

Arkady Dubnov

The pan-European process that was given the go-ahead at the Helsinki Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe in August 1975 will mark its 35th anniversary in 2010 and the signs are that congratulations on this occasion will be received by Kazakhstan as the country that will preside over the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in that year. For the first time in the history of this organization, its rotating chairmanship will go to a country that is not only Asian, but which also has a controversial list of problems with democracy and human rights – the areas that the OSCE traditionally places high on its agenda.

According to Muratbek Imanaliev, a former Kyrgyz foreign minister and current president of the Bishkek-based Institute of Public Policy, the accession of Central Asian countries to the European regional security organization in 1992 was “a historical and political caprice prompted by events of the early 1990s and by certain predilections of leading powers.” The Kazakh path toward chairmanship of the largest European organization has been full of twists and turns and it reflects not so much the rise of the country's national statehood, as the rivalry between Russia and the West for energy resources in the Caspian basin and Central Asia, plus the competition between Moscow and the Kazakh government for positions in energy markets and in the territory of the former Soviet Union.

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RAKHAT ALIEV'S CAVALRY CHARGE

In February 2003, Rakhata Aliev, Kazakhstan's ambassador to Austria and to the OSCE, made a request at a session of the OSCE Permanent Council to consider Kazakhstan as an aspirant for the organization's rotating chairmanship due to begin in 2009. Quite naturally, Aliev, a son-in-law of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, was not viewed as a regular diplomatic official, yet few people took his request seriously, as Astana's relationship with the OSCE was more than simply strained at the time.

Back in 1999, Nazarbayev openly accused OSCE representatives of meddling in his country's domestic policies after he had undergone sharp criticism for extending his presidential powers in an early election. He said in an interview with the Habar television channel that OSCE officials were acting like Soviet-era functionaries who would come to Kazakhstan from Moscow for inspections. Nazarbayev also made it clear that his country did not consider membership in the OSCE indispensable.

The U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment endorsed Resolution 397 in September 2000, voicing concern over the situation with human rights and democracy in Central Asia, including Kazakhstan, and calling into question their membership in the OSCE in the future.

Kazakh Foreign Minister Yerlan Idrisov responded in November of that same year as he addressed the eighth session of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Vienna. He accused the OSCE of giving much more attention to human dimension issues in detriment to military, political, economic and ecological issues. His conclusions sounded tough: the evolution processes in the OSCE did not meet Kazakhstan's requirements and the organization handed down predominantly negative, biased and tutorial assessments of the situation in the country.

Relations seemed to have returned to the old track and ambassador Aliev's unexpected statement was drowned in oblivion. In October 2003, Kazakhstan's mission to the OSCE released a confidential memorandum *On Reforming OSCE Operations in the Regions*. The six-page document accused the

OSCE of being overly bent on human rights. It also said the organization had “focused the bulk of its attention on human dimension issues in separate regions” and had “erroneously rejected dialog on these problems with the authorities of the countries in question, concentrating instead on independent assessments, often based on subjective judgments and unverified information.”

The memorandum leveled sharp criticism at OSCE country missions, whose members mostly contacted non-governmental organizations and human rights groups. Kazakhstan recommended forming missions in coordination with the authorities of each country in question and limiting their mandates to twelve-month periods with the possibility of extending them only through a decision of the OSCE Permanent Council. Moreover, it was proposed that mission personnel rely on governmental structures in their work.

The document emerged in the run-up to Nursultan Nazarbayev’s speech at a session of the Permanent Council, scheduled for November 20, 2003. Rakhat Aliev’s efforts to rally support for the memorandum among the ambassadors represented at OSCE headquarters failed to deliver results. On November 18, the presidential press service said: “Nursultan Nazarbayev has been admitted to the Republican Clinical Hospital in Astana for inpatient treatment for a catarrhal disease, and his visit to Austria scheduled for November 20, in the course of which he planned to address the OSCE, is henceforth postponed.”

It is not clear what motives were behind Aliev’s cavalry charge on the OSCE mechanisms. The proposals called into doubt the organization’s founding principles formulated in the humanitarian “Basket III” of the Helsinki agreements. However, it should be said that the events of five years ago anticipated the major motives of a brawl between Moscow and the OSCE during the Russian parliamentary and presidential elections at the end of 2007 and the beginning of 2008. One more possible reason for the breaking down of Aliev’s assault was a lack of active support from other CIS countries (although the preamble of the memorandum said it had been drafted in

cooperation with the Russian, Belarusian and Kyrgyz missions). Now Moscow is trying to counteract the OSCE alone, and it looks like Kazakhstan has no plans to support Moscow – something that will be discussed below.

“THE CLEANSING TIDE
OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS”

Astana’s approach began to change in 2004 when Rakhat Aliev and his wife Dariga Nazarbayeva, the eldest daughter of the Kazakh president, started cooperating with U.S. Global Options, a company which collaborated with some former U.S. high-ranking administration and defense officials. Some details of this came into the spotlight in spring 2008 following publications in the U.S. media.

The Wall Street Journal claimed, among other things, that Dariga tried to make Global Options instrumental in exerting influence on the course of an investigation into a corruption scandal, which the international media has labeled Kazakhgate. Its main figure, the U.S. financier James Giffen, is suspected of corrupting the highest Kazakh state officials, including Nazarbayev.

The president himself dismissed in May 2004 the reports on his involvement in Kazakhgate. U.S. ambassador to the OSCE, Stephan M. Minikes, made an undiplomatically straightforward remark when he visited Astana several days later. His diagnosis suggested that corruption was a malignant tumor eating away at the country from the inside. He also issued a prescription against it – to plunge into “the cleansing tide of the democratic process.” As the discussion of Kazakhstan’s application for the OSCE chairmanship was getting closer, Minikes urged the country’s leadership to grasp at this “great opportunity” and to clean up its reputation by ensuring free and fair parliamentary and presidential elections, due in 2005.

Sources close to Aliev claim it was precisely then – in 2004 – that his partners in Global Options recommended that he give up confrontation with the OSCE and start looking for a “European” path for his country.

New initiatives from Russian diplomatic quarters came at about the same time. They aimed at rectifying a situation where the OSCE had the function of an “instrument” in “serving separate countries or groups of countries”. The text of a joint statement by CIS members of the OSCE, with the exception of Georgia, initiated by Moscow, was made public at a session of the Permanent Council in July 2004.

The organization was reproached for its inability “to adapt to the reality of a changing world and to ensure an efficacious solution to security and cooperation problems.” Rebukes also concerned non-observance of the Helsinki principles, such as non-interference in internal affairs and respect for the sovereignty of separate states. CIS countries proposed working out “standardized unbiased criteria” for the “assessment of elections in the entire territory of the OSCE”, to reduce the size of observer missions to fifty members, and to forbid commenting on elections by mission members before the official publication of results.

“A RARE OPPORTUNITY”

The Kazakh parliamentary election on September 19, 2005 was intended to become the most decisive argument in favor of Kazakhstan’s bid for the OSCE chairmanship. Nazarbayev himself did his utmost to lobby Kazakhstan’s interests among the ambassadors at OSCE headquarters a week before the vote. Diplomatic sources in Vienna told the author of this article at the time that Nazarbayev was given to understand that Western countries would welcome Kazakhstan’s voluntary withdrawal of its application for chairmanship. Turkey, for instance, which aspired to the chairmanship in 2007, went back on its claim in view of an insufficient level of democratic freedom in the country.

Observers from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) issued an uncompromising verdict on the election in Kazakhstan, saying that it had failed to meet the international standards specified by the OSCE, but this assessment did not discourage Astana. “Tying the decision on chairmanship to the assessment of elections does have importance, but

one must also think about the prospects for democracy in Kazakhstan,” Kasymjomart Tokayev, the foreign minister at the time, said in an interview with the *Vremya Novostei* newspaper.

“Being a Eurasian country, Kazakhstan reflects the current character of the OSCE, as purely Asian countries of our region also have membership there,” Tokayev said. “Our country has done a lot of work in terms of moving toward democracy and it needs a bonus of some kind [...]. That is why we believe that Kazakhstan is a worthy candidate for chairmanship of this respected international organization.”

In May 2008, six months after Kazakhstan had received the much-desired right to hold the reins of the OSCE, albeit in 2010 and not in 2009, the country’s State Secretary Kanat Saudabayev talked about a “rare opportunity” the chairmanship would offer “for strengthening of the dialog between the East and the West.” “When we say ‘East’ in this case, we mean both OSCE member-states located east of Vienna and countries of the Muslim East,” Saudabayev said while sharing his geopolitical findings.

However, Kasymjomart Tokayev did not feel any special enthusiasm in November 2005, a month before the presidential election. “Our intentions will not materialize overnight,” he said in a comment on Western recommendations to democratize the electoral system in Kazakhstan. “I agree that the upcoming election must be fair and free of infringements on the rights of the opposition, although I do not have any doubts about the results of voting,” Tokayev said.

The results did look stunning, as the official returns showed that 91.01 percent of the electorate had voted in favor of President Nazarbayev. OSCE mission coordinator Bruce George said the election “did not meet a number of OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections.”

The prospects were far from bright for Astana until December 2006, when the destiny of Kazakhstan’s chairmanship was to be decided at a session of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Brussels. However, Britain’s new ambassador to Kazakhstan, Paul Bremmer, who arrived in Astana in January 2006, noted the

importance for Kazakhstan to show its commitment to the OSCE principles during the rest of the year. He indicated that more progress could be expected in the entire field of democratization. Bremmer recalled the ODIHR report on the presidential election that had highlighted some encouraging facts and had at the same time pointed out areas where more work was still needed.

Nazarbayev personally came to Brussels several days prior to the meeting to support his country's bid. He chose as a pretext for his visit to Belgium (his high status ruled out his presence at a ministerial meeting) the signing of a memorandum on mutual understanding between Kazakhstan and the European Union in the energy sector. After a meeting with European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, Nazarbayev said it would be extremely important to rally EU support for Kazakhstan's candidacy, since "peaceful coexistence among people of 130 different nationalities and 46 religions in Kazakhstan" presented the OSCE with invaluable experience. This statement put Barroso in a rather awkward position and prompted him to make a tough answer by saying: "I'm sorry, but the European Commission has absolutely no position on this, that's not our need to solve."

Despite support from Germany, France, Italy and the Netherlands, no consensus was reached in Brussels to award Kazakhstan the chairmanship in 2009. Britain and the U.S. voted against it, and attempts by Belgian Foreign Minister Karel de Gucht to persuade Astana to voluntarily postpone its bid until 2011 (he specially went to a CIS summit in Minsk before the session in Brussels in a bid to meet with Nazarbayev's representatives there) proved unsuccessful.

A decision was postponed until the November 2007 session that the Ministerial Council was due to have in Madrid. Germany's expert for Central Asia and the director of the Eurasian Transition Group, Michael Laubsch, said the failure of the meeting in Brussels was "unique" for the OSCE, as this was the first instance in the 30 years of the organization's history that its member-states would fail to reach a consensus on leadership within their ranks.

“OUR KAZAKH FRIENDS”
PLAYING THEIR OWN GAME

The year 2007 started out with dramatic events in Kazakhstan. Two top managers of Nurbank – where Rakhat Aliev, who by that time had been promoted to First Deputy Foreign Minister, was the largest shareholder – were kidnapped and quite possibly killed in January. In February, Nursultan Nazarbayev dismissed his son-in-law from the post and sent him to Vienna for the second time as ambassador to Austria and the OSCE. In late May, the president issued an order “to conduct a scrupulous investigation regardless of the official position and status of the people involved” into the kidnapping of the Nurbank managers. Aliev, who was accused of taking part in this and other crimes, managed to flee Kazakhstan and seek political asylum in Vienna. Nazarbayev’s reaction to this was pretty tough – he fired Aliev from all the posts, compelled his daughter Dariga to divorce the man in absentia and placed his former son-in-law on the international wanted list.

This situation made Nazarbayev forget about the bid for OSCE chairmanship for the time being, especially as on May 21 – several days before the institution of a criminal case against Aliev – Nazarbayev signed a decree that introduced amendments to the Kazakh Constitution. They envisioned among other things “a transition from a presidential to a presidential-parliamentary form of government” and allowed him to run for president an unlimited number of times.

It was obvious that Nazarbayev’s decision to declare himself *de facto* president for life, which heavily undermined the chances for Astana to get the much-desired OSCE chairmanship, was dictated by a fight for power among his closest associates and Rakhat Aliev’s stated readiness to compete for the presidential post in five years.

As the next step, Nazarbayev dissolved parliament – for the third time in 17 years – and scheduled early elections for August 18, 2007. Only one political force – the pro-presidential super-party Nur Otan – proved able to get past the seven-percent support barrier at the polls, thus returning the country to one-party

rule. Ljubomir Kopaj, the head of the OSCE mission to Kazakhstan, did not conceal his dismay, saying he did not know any democratic country where only one party would be represented in parliament.

However, it became clear the next day after the election that Astana had not forgotten the OSCE chairmanship project for good. Nazarbayev filled the vacant seat of the ambassador to Austria by sending Deputy Foreign Minister Kairat Abdrakhmanov there. In the very same days, Rakhat Aliev sent a SOS to his former counterparts in OSCE headquarters, urging them to prevent his extradition to his native country. He insisted that he “had always fought for a democratic European choice” for his country and had put forth the ambitious idea of chairmanship in the OSCE for that purpose. But now Kazakhstan was “rapidly turning into a monarchic and de facto police state”, the martyr for democracy warned.

As the November session of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Madrid was getting closer, one more intrigue – namely, whether or not the Austrians would hand over Nazarbayev’s former son-in-law – added to the guesswork about the prospects for Kazakhstan’s chairmanship bid. Aliev defended himself in every possible way, including through blackmail: he threatened that he might provide evidence on Kazakhgate.

Kazakhstan’s State Secretary Kanat Saudabayev, a former ambassador to the U.S., paid an extremely important visit to Washington. Astana reported that the U.S. had expressed interests toward “a further build-up of bilateral cooperation with Kazakhstan in the energy sector and ramification of export routes for Kazakh energy resources.” The announcement was intended to serve as a signal that Washington did not plan to jeopardize its interests in Kazakhstan by vetoing the country’s chairmanship in the OSCE.

Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin sent a letter on November 20, 2007 to his Spanish counterpart Miguel Moratinos, the OSCE’s Chairman-in-Office, a week before the session of the Ministerial Council. It said that “Kazakhstan reiterates its firm commitments to the fundamental principles of the OSCE.” Tazhin wrote that

his country “stands for the development of all three OSCE dimensions without diminishing the role and importance of any of them. [...] We must continue developing its human component in order to strengthen democracy in all participating states.” Tazhin reiterated that Kazakhstan “will continue the reforms that were launched in our country in 2007. They specifically encompass such spheres as the improvement of legal practices and the law on election, mass media, political parties [...]” The contents of the letter and the very fact that it had been sent remained confidential until the end of the Madrid meeting on November 30, when it appeared on the OSCE’s official website.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov did not know anything about Tazhin’s letter either when he sharply criticized the OSCE for continuing “to remain on the sidelines of the main developments” in the world. He unambiguously defended “our friends from Kazakhstan” against attempts to force them “to somehow additionally prove their ‘suitability,’ unlike all the others who have so far been approved without any problems for the role of ‘taking the helm’ of the OSCE.”

Unaware of the fact that the “Kazakh friends” had almost fully proved their “suitability” by then, Lavrov insisted on the adoption of new rules for ODIHR activity. Russia’s closest allies in the CIS, including Kazakhstan, had submitted a draft decision to the Ministerial Council on the adoption of “basic principles for the organization of ODIHR observation of national elections,” Lavrov said, urging others to “carefully study” a draft OSCE charter prepared by Russia’s allies.

Moscow was ready for an unconditional defense of Kazakhstan’s chairmanship bid for 2009 up to the blocking of the election of chairmen for 2010 and 2011. This meant that the organization would find itself without the troika of leaders as of the beginning of 2008 when Finland got the rotating chairmanship.

However, it was unnecessary to “plug the porthole with one’s own body,” as the Russians put it. This became clear when Marat Tazhin took the floor. He promised that his country would “duly take into account” the OSCE’s recommendations “while imple-

menting the program of democratic reforms;" in "working on the reform of Kazakhstan's election legislation;" in work on media legislation; and in implementing "the ODIHR recommendations in the area of elections and legislation concerning political parties." "We consider the human dimension to be one of the most important directions of the OSCE activity," Tazhin said, thus disproving the Russian thesis that the organization had over-focused on precisely this area.

Then he totally puzzled Moscow by saying that "as a potential Chairman" Kazakhstan "is committed to preserve ODIHR and its existing mandate and will not support any future efforts to weaken them." Also, it "will not be party to any proposals that are problematic for ODIHR and its mandate in the future."

The diplomatic efficiency of Astana and its Western partners scoured the pathos of Lavrov's report at the session, and all the draft documents he had proposed were rejected in Madrid. The situation did not leave Lavrov any room to maneuver and a compromise was reached in the course of his talks with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Nicholas Burns just two hours before the end of the summit: Kazakhstan would get the OSCE chairmanship in 2010, a year later than initially planned, while Greece would precede it in 2009 and Lithuania would follow it in 2011.

It is noteworthy that, according to information the author received from diplomatic sources at OSCE headquarters, the postponement of Kazakhstan's term to 2011 turned out to be unacceptable "for a well-known group of countries." They would not like to see a country, on which Moscow could exert substantial influence, standing at the helm of the organization in the year preceding the presidential election in Russia.

WITHOUT ADDITIONAL OBLIGATIONS

The Kazakhs perceived the victory in Madrid as the recognition of achievements made by the country and, primarily, by its president. "Nursultan Nazarbayev's charismatic figure and his activity are by far the biggest attractive assets of the Kazakh bid," Russian expert Yuri Solozobov claimed in summing up this position.

Strange as though it might seem, Akezhan Kazhegeldin, Kazakh prime minister from 1994-1997 and who has been living in exile in the West for almost ten years, expresses a similar position. Kazhegeldin, who held a range of consultations with leading European politicians at the end of 2007 and the beginning of 2008, is confident that Nazarbayev's figure, as well as the fully mature Kazakh elite and population, has put the country ahead of other Central Asian states in terms of readiness for sweeping democratic reforms along the evolutionary path, ruling out dangerous revolutionary shake-ups.

However, it turned out this spring that Kazakhstan had not taken a single step toward reforms, which Tazhin had promised in Madrid, over six months. Western European OSCE member-states supported a proposal to organize the monitoring of Kazakhstan's preparations for assuming chairmanship of the organization.

As for President Nazarbayev's willingness for reforms, a statement he made during an interview with Reuters in March 2008 offers a bright testimony. "We have been elected as a full-fledged member of the OSCE and we do not assume any additional obligations," he said. Subsequently, the phrase was mysteriously cut out of the Reuters newswire and only remained in the version provided by Kazakhstan's Habar news agency. There are grounds to believe it was cut out at the mutual consent of the sides so as to rescue Astana's Western partners from a rather awkward situation, since they regard the Madrid decision as overtures made to Kazakhstan in an expectation that it will fulfill its promises.

Of what Nazarbayev said, only the ending of his phrase became known: "I would like to create a democracy like in America, but where can I find enough Americans for that in Kazakhstan?"

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Kazakh-language website was blocked in Kazakhstan in early May and access to it was closed for a month. The government did not issue any answers to numerous inquiries from the radio's executives. The site was unblocked only after interference on the part of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Miklos Haraszti, who

sent a letter to Foreign Minister Tazhin expressing the hope that “the state Internet service providers were informed by your government that interference in providing service would violate Kazakhstan’s press freedom commitments.”

The foreign ministers of five countries – Spain, Finland and Greece as the current troika of the OSCE, as well as Kazakhstan and Lithuania that will take the helm at the organization in 2010 and 2011 respectively – met in Helsinki at the initiative of Finland, the current chairman, in early June 2008. This event did not have any precedents in the history of the OSCE and it was necessitated by a growing concern in the West over the absence of democratic reforms that Astana had promised. This time, however, Marat Tazhin did not make any promises similar to the ones he had made in Madrid. He only said that “the interests of all OSCE member-states, their correlation with the OSCE’s general agenda and relationship to the priorities set forth during previous chairmanships will be taken into account as Kazakhstan designs priorities for its chairmanship.”

It was quite apparent that Kazakh officials came to the conclusion that no one could take the right to leadership away from their country, even more so because the OSCE does not have a procedure for this.

On the other hand, Astana’s actions expose certain logic. The West will not likely want to spoil relations with Kazakhstan, thus putting in jeopardy its energy interests, in the first place, and pushing Kazakhstan into Russia and China’s embrace, in the second.

* * *

One will be able to put an end to the story of Astana’s ascent to the top of European security and cooperation in a year and a half from now when it officially gets down to its duties as OSCE chairman. However, there are already a few conclusions that might be of interest for Russian policies as well.

Like Russia, Kazakhstan faced a choice between fueling its conflict with the OSCE up to the point of a possible withdrawal from the organization, and trying to use it to enhance its nation-

al prestige and influence. Preference was given to the latter option, and Astana seems to be achieving its objectives so far. This success became possible because the OSCE is a political organization, first and foremost, and not a human rights watchdog, and that is why the strategic interests of member-states most typically outweigh abstract or idealistic considerations there. This means that countries presenting some interest to the leading players can efficaciously play on this.

It is also true, though, that Kazakhstan does not want to change the format of how the OSCE functions, something that Russia does. Astana will be satisfied with getting the political dividends proportionate to its geopolitical weight. As for Moscow, it is pursuing the goal of rewriting the rules of the game, and this is a far more complicated task per se. But it is equally true that Russia has incomparably more levers of influence than Kazakhstan does.

Chairmanship in the OSCE will become an important landmark in Kazakh foreign policy, and Astana will without a doubt try to use it to assert itself as a regional leader. For Russia however, this means problems rather than opportunities. An illustrative signal was seen in April when Kazakhstan ostentatiously refused to lift sanctions against Abkhazia and thus put itself in opposition to Russia. Moscow should obviously put aside hopes that Astana's term as OSCE chairman will help it to advance its own positions.

Victory Without Confrontation

China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Azhdar Kurtov

One might think there are no more myths in 21st-century world politics as a plethora of facts are made public by global information flows. However, a thorough analysis of the condition and dynamics of international relations challenges the veracity of such claims. Myth-making remains an integral part of both the lives of ordinary citizens and the sphere of activity of politicians and diplomats. The founding and development of probably the youngest of the major regional associations – the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) – supports this truth.

The leaders of SCO member-states never tire of praising the successful development of the organization, a view supported by a majority of experts from these states. Interestingly, the most pathetic remarks come not from the Russians or Chinese, but from specialists from Central Asia, in particular Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

It should be noted that remarks alleging a successful development of the SCO are common in other parts of the globe, but the opinions regarding this progress are mostly negative. For example, U.S. and European mass media keep presenting the strengthening of the SCO as a threat to efforts to promote “Western values” and an obstacle to the “correct” rearrangement of the world. The most alarmist commentators detect in the SCO a “second edition” of the Warsaw Pact reanimated by the will of Moscow and Beijing.

Most of these interpretations are a far cry from an adequate description of what is happening inside the Shanghai Cooperation

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Organization. But such is the reality of global competition which, among other things, has an ideological dimension. As a result, the SCO already has its own established mythology, while its geopolitical opponents have invented their own fantastic interpretation of this organization.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization officially appeared in the summer of 2001, but its origin dates five years earlier to 1996, when the so-called ‘Shanghai Five’ was set up. Still earlier, a group of countries was set up to settle territorial issues between China and former Soviet republics – the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Since 1992 the four designated members of the Commonwealth of Independent States had been trying to resolve the old demarcation dispute with China.

At the time of the SCO’s inception, all the new states that appeared after the breakup of the Soviet Union were in a deep crisis, whereas China was posting impressive growth rates. This factor, as well as the fear of the “yellow danger” inherited from the Soviet era, was a major concern to the political elites of Russia and Central Asian countries who believed Beijing could take advantage of the situation and make territorial claims.

But China acted otherwise – in the spirit of its foreign policy tradition. Beijing preferred gentle and ingenious moves, achieving two significant victories.

First, it succeeded in transforming a single multi-party negotiating process into separate bilateral formats.

Second, Chinese diplomats managed to introduce such a negotiating term as ‘disputed territories,’ meaning territories formally belonging to the Russian Empire and, successively, to the Soviet Union, but claimed by China.

As a result, a compromise was hammered out: the border problem was resolved by partial concessions to China on the part of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Now, SCO members have reasonable grounds to assert – unlike many modern states – that they have settled an old dispute in a civilized way. But, on the other hand, the result clearly indicates who really plays first fiddle in the organization.

The SCO documents formally proclaim the equality of all the members, but China undoubtedly plays the leading role. The Chinese economic potential, which is growing year after year, by far exceeds the economic indicators of its other partners. Moreover, an indisputable economic leader is always tempted to exploit cooperation to its advantage while promoting its own national interests. This is not to say that the other participants are destined to play an auxiliary role. The SCO can also be regarded as an organization with a mission to ensure security and development of the Central Asian region with the participation of two most significant neighbors – China and Russia.

Except for rare and short periods (such as the era of Tamerlane's empire), Central Asia hardly ever played a significant independent role in Eurasia's international relations. The region has always been an object of outsiders' regard and territorial ambitions. The greater part of the history of Central Asia is made up of contacts with the mostly Islamic world and pressure from China. In the past, Chinese warriors sometimes advanced as far as the Caspian Sea, but more often they had indirect influence upon the region – through nomadic peoples dependent on the Celestial Empire who lived in the territory of modern Mongolia and western Chinese provinces.

Nevertheless, Chinese policy had a tremendous role in the fate of Central Asia. For example, the Dzungar onslaught on Kazakh tribes was by no means arrested by the heroic feats of Kazakh strongmen, as so beautifully depicted in the movie "Nomad," but as a result of China's policy.

Central Asian political elites have been well aware of these circumstances. Several hundred years ago, the Russian Empire was able to engulf the region fast and bloodlessly, just because the other alternative meant control by the Celestial Empire. Russia was more attractive from the point of view of ensuring security and economic development.

Today, many assign this role to Beijing rather than Moscow. But the two powers are interested in keeping Central Asia free from the influence of the geopolitical forces located thousands of kilometers from it. Suffice it to recall that many assumed in the

1990s that the United States and West-European states were clearly outplaying both Russia and China here.

This is not the first time that Central Asian political elites have to choose between their patrons. The pragmatism of their foreign policy is strongly attached to the possibility of deriving maximum profit from cooperation with any large partners. By and large, the region has remained an object of outsiders' attention. Only smooth-tongued apologists of local political leaders, following the established tradition, continue to present the region as an important independent element of world politics. But how does the so-called 'multi-vector foreign policy' of Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan look in practice? It is a course toward deriving profit from trade in natural resources and political predilections with all foreign players interested in them.

It is China, not the United States, or, alas, Russia, that appears to be the most promising player at present. It is not by accident that Beijing brought forward the initiative to set up the SCO. It is its brainchild, the first international organization China fostered and is now holding in tremulous care.

Of course, China would have strengthened its presence in Central Asia without the SCO, but this organization lends the necessary legitimacy to Chinese foreign policy in the region. Beijing dresses it in beautiful garments, in full conformity with modern civilized principles of assistance to development, which are the guidelines — at least formally — of its rivals: the U.S. and the European Union.

Beijing has learned the skill of being on good terms with the leaders of Central Asian countries. Furthermore, Chinese strategists selected an extremely propitious moment for expanding contacts with Central Asian partners. The beginning of the 21st century saw marked changes in Russia. Amid an economic upturn, Moscow made it clear it would not continue Boris Yeltsin's course with respect to former Soviet republics based on open and unsubstantiated subsidizing of countries in the so-called 'Near Abroad.' It therefore began to implement a new approach in its relations with Ukraine, Transcaucasia and even Belarus.

Of course, the political elites of Central Asia realized that this would dash their hopes for further generous financial assistance, such as loans, for which payments could be deferred or rescheduled all the time.

As a result, local leaders began to look for fresh sources of compassionate benefits and new partners. In this sense, the United States and the European Union were not the best choice because their political regimes sharply contrasted with the authoritarian practice established in the region. Moreover, the United States quite openly used its presence in the region to put pressure on local governments, or, to use a diplomatic term, to “interfere in internal affairs.” Beijing not only did not seek to “democratize” the region, but, on the contrary, was looking for allies to rebuff such attempts on the part of Washington.

On the other hand, Central Asian political elites assumed that China, in tandem with Russia, was capable of ensuring their security. Membership in an organization together with China reduces the risk of encroachment on the part of China. In addition, China has, as does Russia, nuclear weapons and a powerful army. It is a member of the UN Security Council – i.e. it can provide real diplomatic or political assistance. Incidentally, this factor had an important psychological significance for Central Asia. Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan gained the opportunity to position themselves as equal partners (in their eyes) of the leading powers. This was a flattering assumption for regional leaders, which helped them play on this fact for propaganda purposes before their peoples.

Lastly, cooperation with China let them hope for generous financial injections because the Western states, which secured unhindered access to the riches of the region in the 1990s, were reluctant to make concessions to local governments. The conflict between Kazakhstan and a consortium of Western companies over the project to develop the Kashagan oil field was a striking demonstration of this trend. Moscow, as has been mentioned above, was also adjusting its economic policy. China emerged as not only an entirely new, but formally a quite advantageous financial partner.

The last circumstance needs to be underscored. Neither Russia nor even the United States or Western European organizations are capable of competing with China's financial practice in world politics. China, which is formally a market economy country, *de facto* has preserved the phenomenon of state paternalism. Chinese companies and banks that provide loans are backed by the entire power of the state. Chinese officials closely watch business in Central Asia and they are doing so better than Russia's bureaucracy.

Not only do the Chinese open credit lines worth hundreds of millions of dollars at very advantageous interest rates – 1 or 2 percent a year, but their officials do everything to make sure that the adopted decisions on investments are not shelved in offices, but get implemented. One can cite many examples when Russia-conceived projects in Central Asia got bogged down in bureaucratic coordination and were never implemented. But the Chinese, once a decision has been made, immediately allocate huge resources for putting it into practice. Their words match their deeds. It is not surprising therefore that it is China that is boosting its presence in the region. At the same time, one should note that multi-party cooperation is not what China is seeking within the scope of the SCO.

The multi-billion amounts of trade and investments within the organization are misleading figures. In actual fact, Beijing mostly focuses on bilateral trade and projects. In this sense, China acts as it did in the issue of state borders.

This factor has an explanation. It is no secret to experts that the growth of the Chinese economy often causes serious harm to its poorer neighbors. The various goods of Chinese origin, sold at dumping prices, flood markets not only in the United States and the European Union, but China's closest neighbors as well. The production boom of Chinese enterprises therefore actually blocks the development of a number of branches of industry in Central Asian countries, thwarting their intentions to export their own goods and services. They cannot enter world markets with their goods because those are already crammed with cheaper Chinese products.

None of China's neighbors, not even Russia, was able to gain a more or less firm foothold on Chinese markets. The thing is that

China is only interested in imports of raw materials, financial and bank capital and hi-tech products, such as modern weapons. Thus, China's western neighbors – Central Asian states that are SCO members – do not have the practical opportunity to make use of China's rapid economic development to their long-term advantage. In a certain sense, this group is facing an increasing risk of a slowdown in their development in the most competitive spheres of a modern economy. Simultaneously, they are under the threat of lapsing into the permanent role of raw-materials appendages of the Chinese economy.

At present, only two Central Asian countries – Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan – are intent on preserving and augmenting their processing industry, whereas Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan seem quite content with their function as suppliers of raw materials.

The entry of Chinese products into world markets, in particular the markets of its SCO partners, increasingly affects their economic prospects. Undoubtedly, partnership with China stimulates raw materials exports, but not the exports of industrial goods. This situation only strengthens the role of Russia and Central Asian states as suppliers of primary fuels, metals and timber. Indeed, for these sectors, the growth of demand on the part of China is an important factor of economic development. But aside from trade in raw materials, relations with China hardly ever contribute to a dramatic increase in the competitiveness of SCO economies. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, Chinese mutton is freely available on many markets across the country, and this imported food is already edging out local produce.

It is not accidental that China sought to lobby an advantageous configuration of economic cooperation within the SCO. At the session of the SCO Council of Prime Ministers on September 23, 2003, Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao proposed setting up a free trade zone on a long-term basis, in order to boost the flow of goods in the region, and ease trade restrictions, such as tariffs. A special emphasis was placed on energy projects, including surveys of new hydrocarbon deposits, joint use of hydroelectric power engineering resources and development of water industry facilities.

It should not be forgotten that Beijing boasts a range of considerable advantages over its SCO partners and is set to strengthen them. By purchasing power parity per GDP unit, SCO members' consumption of energy resources exceeds China's by 1.5 to 6 times. Per capita use of energy in Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan exceeds China's by 4.5 times, 3.6 times and 2.1 times, respectively.

Beyond the raw materials sectors, even such leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States as Russia and Kazakhstan are absolutely uncompetitive, as compared with China, because of the higher cost of labor. A fledging social sphere, unencumbered by retirement benefits for all, also gives China an edge. Another competitive advantage is that it often ignores the environmental requirements on emissions. Therefore, the success of the Chinese economy, in certain sense, objectively works against all the economies of its SCO partners in the processing branches, and sometimes in agriculture.

The problems of productive development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, securing a stable political situation in Central Asia and guarantees of Russian interests in the region have both concurrent and conflicting aspects. A stable Central Asia is advantageous to all SCO members. But this objective cannot always be achieved with a system that would be fair to all the participants. There always exist obvious or hidden advantages for one country, or several, but never for all.

At present, an overwhelming majority of economic projects developed and implemented within the SCO is geographically attached to the Central Asian region. At first glance, this approach is not devoid of logic, as it would embrace the maximum number of SCO members. But this creates an infrastructure that meets more Chinese interests than Russian. For example, a large portion of projects in the transport and energy sectors envisions investments in facilities in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, for the most part in areas close to the Chinese border. There are far fewer projects expanding communication ties between Central Asia and Russia.

On the one hand, it certainly implies progress toward the stability of the region. But on the other, in the event of possible future changes in foreign policy by the leaders of Central Asian countries, it will be China – not Russia – that will get the opportunity to use the additional levers – created under the SCO auspices – for economic influence on the situation.

There is no doubt that China – using multi-party cooperation within the SCO and its bilateral ties with countries of the region – is gradually asserting the advantageous and dominating idea: Central Asia should serve as energy donor for the Chinese economy. To attain this goal, China views its SCO partners – Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, as well as Turkmenistan – as potential sources of energy resources. Kazakhstan became the first candidate for a supplier – a country that practiced trade in its hydrocarbon resources at low prices due to a number of reasons in the mid-1990s.

Beijing has already joined the active struggle for Central Asian oil and natural gas. It has been acting in several fields, and this activity has adversely affected Russian interests. Traditionally, Central Asian oil and gas were supplied to Russia through trunk pipelines. Moscow has already had to agree to plans to dramatically increase by several times the price of Central Asian gas. The move was made in the face of a threat to divert supplies from the northern (to Russia) to the eastern direction (to China). In this sense, China is interested in encouraging competition between the exporters of hydrocarbons, following the example of the West, which also influences Russia with projects to supply Central Asian gas either to Europe bypassing Russia (the Nabucco project) or to southern Asia (the Trans-Afghan pipeline).

Of course, China's oil and gas expansion into Central Asia is still encountering a range of restrictions, which keep it from coming full force, like Western companies. For example, the pricing policy remains a vulnerable spot. Despite a noticeable growth in prices for primary fuels within China, they remain lower than the average European price. A considerable increase in gas consumption in China is possible if the central government undertakes to

compensate the difference between purchase and domestic prices. However, there is an option under which Central Asian gas suppliers might agree to fix special low prices for China, due to this or that reason. In that event, it would be a value-added energy cooperation for Beijing because it gives an opportunity to use it as a lever of pressure on Russia.

The development of economic interaction between China and Central Asian countries could result in a situation where China, which is gradually strengthening its presence in the region, will objectively build a system of domination in foreign economic interests of local political elites. It cannot be ruled out that it might create prerequisites for re-orienting military and military-technical cooperation from Russia to China. In a certain sense, the first moves in this direction have already been made: China gratuitously offers some countries military uniforms and auxiliary equipment (cross-country vehicles), and holds joint exercises of law-enforcement forces on a bilateral basis – for example maneuvers-2006 with Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

China, in its foreign policy, has always preferred to act cautiously, gradually creating the proper conditions for fulfilling the tasks set by its leadership. An ancient Chinese strategist wrote that the true commander should achieve victory without directly engaging the enemy. The incumbent Beijing leaders have learned this maxim well.

An Untapped Political Capital

The Islamic Factor in Russian Foreign Policy

Rafael Khakimov

Russians like to count the numbers of Muslims in the country. Vladimir Putin cited a figure of 20 million, while others protested saying: “No, only 17 million.” More pedantic counters reduced the number to 13 million, and those who do not particularly like Muslims insisted on 10 million – as if 10 million were nothing.

There is no way to explain Russia’s fate in the past and in the future without the Islamic factor. It is organic in Russia not only because Islam appeared on Russian territory earlier than Eastern Orthodox Christianity, but – more importantly – because it has become an inalienable part of society. Russia has had encounters with Islam from the very first years of its history, both at home and abroad.

Islam is typically associated with war – the conquest of the Caucasian peoples or the incorporation of Turkestan. One remembers the Tatars less frequently, although relations with them have not always been smooth either. People also recall wars with Turkey, the liberation of Bulgaria from the Ottoman yoke, and the Battle of Shipka. Few people know however that the Tatars served in the Tsarist Army and Navy and kept their own beliefs during their service. They had their own clerics, ate meals cooked specially for them without pork, and were decorated with orders having a special design without a Christian cross. It was not accidental that Soviet Russia’s first ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was an ethnic Tatar.

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Such historical facts are too many to recount, but the important thing about Islam in Russia – particularly among the Tatars – is that it has an original profile and has undergone reformation. ***There is no other country and no other people in the world that would be entirely influenced by reformed Islam (Jadidism).***

Gabdennasir Ibrahim uli Qursawi, an outstanding Tatar teacher of Islam, said in 1804 – and the notable educator Sihabetdin Morcani reiterated it later – that the Muslims had veered off from the Koran and had replaced the Holy Book with medieval traditions. Much at the same time and much the same thing was said in Saudi Arabia by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab. However, the latter's conclusions were made not in favor of reform. He put forth a very rigid interpretation of monotheism that would not tolerate any discrepancies with it even within the format of the same religion, to say nothing of its hostility toward other religions. His theory presupposed a toughening of ritual, an understanding of the jihad as a war on the unfaithful, etc. Wahhabism today has become synonymous with militant intolerance.

The Tatars chose a different path as they declared free thinking and openness of culture to be central categories. They made jihad synonymous with zealousness and fighting the disbelief within oneself and interpreted education as a mandatory attribute of a genuine Muslim. They declared the equality of men and women and took a tolerant stance toward the secular state and other religions. ***Wahhabism and Jadidism represent two radically opposite trends within Islam.***

Of course, some Tatars continue to espouse the so-called 'traditional Islam,' but it does not determine the vector of the Tatar people's historical development. What really matters is that ***Russian Islam is a treasure, especially regarding foreign policy.*** It is in high demand in European countries and elsewhere.

The Eastern policy was an important component of international affairs in Soviet Russia. Along with supplies of weapons and attempts to trigger revolutions in Muslim countries, Moscow wielded ideological and spiritual influence there – something that has been drowned in oblivion now.

In the 1920s, Mir Sayit Sultan Galiev, a Tatar Bolshevik, developed the ideas of ‘Islamic socialism,’ which were very popular in a number of Arab countries, above all in Algeria. French scholar Alexandre Bennigsen called Sultan Galiev an “ideologist of the Third World.” Stalin feared his authority. In the 1920s, state power in the Tatar Republic went over to Sultan Galiev’s followers. All of Central Asia and Turkey remained under the spell of his ideas. Stalin did everything in his power to expel him from the Bolshevik Party; he was imprisoned in 1923 and later executed. Shortly before his death, he foretold the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

The degree to which the ‘Islamic socialism’ theory was successful may be debated. It looks archaic today, yet one must reckon with the influence of the ideas of socialism that did not bypass a single country in the world at the beginning of the 20th century. The Arab countries hoisted the banner of ‘Islamic socialism’ during the anti-colonial war. They could not adopt atheism when they fought the bourgeois system. They linked progress to a socialism that would necessarily have an Islamic component.

After World War II, the Soviet Union played an exceptional role in the Middle East, in Arab countries and in the Islamic world in general. No serious question would be resolved unilaterally there at the time; the entire Western world had to reckon with the Soviet Union. The idea of global unipolarity was unthinkable; the existence of two camps kept Western expansionism in check. At times the contentions between socialist and capitalist countries would drive mankind to the brink of war, but they also allowed the Third World to look for its own path of development. Once again, the crucial thing was not the economic support or the training of specialists, but the wide dissemination of the ideas of socialism.

These glimpses of history show that Russia’s foreign policy embraced a strong ideological influence – in addition to diplomacy, military operations, export of armaments and revolutions.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Russia’s international role subsided; it began to recover after Vladimir Putin’s arrival in the Kremlin. However, Russia’s relations with the Islamic world today

lack clarity – as compared to relations with the West, NATO and the UN that reveal a systemic approach. The Russian mass media includes many publications about Islam or individual Muslim countries; Moscow continues to sell weapons; and there is no short supply of trips by officials to Muslim countries. Not only Iranian leaders but representatives of organizations like Hamas, too, make visits to Moscow. Still, there is a lingering impression that Russia has lost many of its former positions in the Islamic world and Russia's Eastern policy is patchy. The West allows itself to take one-sided decisions on many key issues.

Meanwhile, the number of Muslims across the world keeps growing steadily and all countries, including Russia, have to reckon with this.

Russia made a significant move when it joined the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) with observer status, yet its further activity in the OIC did not go beyond speeches at congresses and separate protocol meetings. Russia has so far failed to make the OIC an instrument of its foreign policy.

Meetings of members of the Islamic World and Russia Group of Strategic Vision have the form of scientific conferences that have no practical effect on politics. Trips that muftis and imams make to different countries are simply useless, as Muslim clerics most typically preach to one another, making spacious references to the Koran, issue well-meant resolutions and then go back home. Generally speaking, Russian Muslim clerics are overly pragmatic people who care little for spirituality and are mostly busy searching for funds to finance their organizations. The rare imams who do write books have a poor understanding of the subject; theology has become the realm of scientists.

The 'dialog of civilizations' launched under UN auspices is a thing worthy of approval, and yet it refers to the domain of good intentions in what concerns its contents. I have attended many forums devoted to this dialog and my conclusion is – to put it in plain words and add a bit of cynicism – it boils down to the appeal "Let's live like friends." The problem is that representatives of various religions just defend their positions – they simply can-

not do otherwise; and that is why all the conferences – regardless of where they are held – follow the same highly simplified script and lack creativity.

I would not like to comment on the efficiency of various research centers – their research papers are remarkable. However, policies are made elsewhere. They are bigger than precepts or concepts, which are easy enough to write. Policies are produced in the course of practical activity that matches a country's strategic interests. A policy's efficiency hangs on a comprehensive approach. When political constructs are combined with diplomacy, and when military and economic pursuits are backed up by certain ideas and the mass media, the cumulative effect emerges. This makes foreign policy efficacious.

Today, Russia has a historic chance to regain its influence in the Islamic world in the wake of a crisis in U.S. Eastern policy.

It has become commonplace to write about the importance of observing a balance of forces in relations with the U.S. However, remember that the U.S. spends more than \$400 billion on its armed forces, armaments, and defense production, while the rest of the world spends about \$200 billion for the same purposes. So, what kind of a balance can there be? There is no sense in engaging in a competition in that sphere, and the lack of armaments can be compensated for with a prudent diplomacy. International relations are not just saber rattling.

What does this actually mean? In conditions of unipolarity the U.S. embarked on an aggressive policy in the Islamic world. The placement of troops in Afghanistan did not invite any serious objections, but the presence of U.S. forces in Iraq and verbal assaults on Iran fueled strong protests in the Islamic world. As a result, the Americans fell into the captivity of their own foreign policy – counting on a rapid and purely military resolution to Middle Eastern problems has driven them into an impasse where they do not know the way out.

Western countries – which the Islamic world quite reasonably perceives as U.S. allies – cannot fill the vacuum in the political arena. Russia remains the only great power capable of doing so,

and yet it seems to be in no hurry to fill in the void. Moscow's foreign policy toward the Islamic world – at least its visible part – is reduced to defending Iran and to issuing declarative statements on Iraq.

U.S. President George W. Bush will not settle the Iraqi problem and will leave its solution to his successor. The new president will try to end the war and withdraw U.S. troops because of protests back home. At the same time, the Americans will launch a gradual restoration of their influence in Arab countries. Their interest is broader than ensuring oil supplies – it concerns the integrity of their foreign policy. ***No doubt experts have already rolled up their sleeves to draft a new concept of the U.S.-Islamic World dialog, which naturally will not allow any room for Russia.*** The unsuccessful Iraqi campaign will not weaken the intensity of future U.S. policies toward the Islamic community. The Americans will learn from their own mistakes and will try and restore trust with the aid of their allies in Arab countries. They will use economic levers and sophisticated diplomacy, and – when needed – the threat of force.

The propaganda of democracy has created a situation in which no country today would object to its principles. “Democratic pressures” are so efficacious that Russia has to offer excuses if criticism over its observation of human rights and breaches of democratic norms is heard. Democracy is now used to justify U.S. meddling in the affairs of any country. Washington pegs its entire foreign policy on a combination of the use of force with diplomacy and ideology.

However, the Islamic world wants a counterweight.

In spite of their differences – which are sometimes significant – Islamic countries are united in international organizations and this means they have united interests. Hence the policy toward them should be integral, not patchy. Islamic countries show definite signs of disenchantment with Russia's policy and that is why there exists an urgent need to design a strategy of more active work with them.

Tatarstan is working with the Islamic world actively enough and it has earned a definite authority with leading Islamic coun-

tries, yet this constituent republic of Russia does not have large enough resources to conduct a serious policy. Its activity is confined to the sale of commodities and the setting up of joint ventures. Nor is the list of commodities especially big: Kamaz trucks, helicopters, and many smaller items. Muslim countries view Tatarstan as an exotic place rather than a serious partner, since the trucks can be sold without any diplomacy. And yet Tatarstan, which is perceived as an Islamic republic, could be a mediator in Russian foreign policy. It has the additional advantage of being a place where Muslims and Christians live together peacefully, which is something quite rare.

There exists an important element of foreign policy activity, namely, the proliferation of a reformed Islamic ideology. Ideas in this vein are brewing in many of the Islamic states where rapid economic growth is taking place. Russia has a unique experience that enjoys high demand in Europe, and one cannot rule out that a number of Muslim countries will take an interest in it too. Turkey, for instance, is closely studying the experience of Tatar Islam. The Turks translate books, teach specialists in Jadidism and hold conferences. They are interested in any new ideas, as they must observe the principles of tolerance as a condition for gaining membership in the European Union. Along with this, traditionalist political forces are quite active in Turkey as well. This calls for a form of Islam that would satisfy the Muslim population and Europe likewise. Jadidism provides the right option: it shows a way toward tolerance and mutual understanding among different confessions, between the secular state and Islam.

As long as Islam increases its influence on global processes and the numbers of Muslims in Europe grow, so do the apprehensions. Conflicts on religious grounds have swept a range of European countries. Many migrants come from Morocco, Algeria and Kosovo where a rather rigid version of Islam is practiced. Their integration into the European cultural space gives rise to a multitude of conflicts. The mistrust toward Islam is also growing as terrorism becomes associated with this religion – not without the influence of the mass media. The Europeans do not trust the state-

ments coming from the leaders of various countries that terrorism and Islam are not synonyms. ***A new Berlin Wall is rising – this time between the West and the Islamic world.***

In conclusion, I would like to say just one more thing. Everything begins with education in religious institutions. Trips to some Western countries have shown me that the problems are the same everywhere: students are taught using textbooks from Islamic countries and on the basis of their experience, while European Muslims live among Christians in secular states. Thus the system of religious education runs counter to reality.

Meanwhile, Russia's experience shows a different situation. It embraces not only the historical tradition, but also the reform of Islam, new textbooks, teachers trained in the European tradition, and financing from own sources that helps slash the influence of undesirable foundations. The entire world is facing the latter problem and Russia's experience may come in handy here. This in turn means that Islam is Russia's big ***political capital***.

Will Russia be able to use this historic opportunity? It is difficult to say, yet it is clear that the near future is unlikely to present us with any other such chance.

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The Strategic Agenda



A Communist Party cell in the Soviet Arctic.
Smekhach, 1924

“ Beginning at least in the 1930s, the Soviet and then Russian military were the overlords of the Arctic, although the role that was attached to the region in the country’s strategic security would fluctuate depending on the foreign policy context. The nuclear truncheon has doubled the importance of the Arctic region for Russia. ”

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Missile Defense Challenges

How to Make a Strategic Problem Into a Strategic Advantage

Pavel Zolotarev

Missile defense has recently become one of the most acute problems of international politics. Plans by the United States to deploy a third position area in Eastern Europe for its national missile defense system triggered a sharp reaction from Russia, which threatened to take countermeasures. Europe is divided over the expediency of the American project and there are many skeptics in Washington as well. A retrospective view of the parties' attitudes to the missile defense issue will give a better idea of the current situation.

BACKGROUND

The missile defense issue first emerged after Nazi Germany attacked London with V-1 and V-2 rockets in the summer and autumn of 1944. It did not take the military long to come to the conclusion that the only real way of protection against those rockets was an antimissile system. However, it took almost 20 years between this conclusion (circa 1946) and the first test launches of antimissile missiles in the United States and the Soviet Union (1961-1962). The time was needed to develop radar technologies and build up the speed of countermissiles. Thus, from the outset, missile defense needed new technologies, which stimulated the search in a wide range of fields.

Both Moscow and Washington worked on two options – hard-kill systems and powerful explosions for destroying targets at long

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distances. The parties almost simultaneously came to the conclusion that the only acceptable result of defeat could be ensured by nuclear-tipped antimissile missiles. Also, both parties came to realize that it was prudent to limit the missile defense shield to several critical facilities. Until 1964, there were no doubts that the goal of missile defense was to destroy the opposing party's missiles — the Soviet Union or the U.S. The range of possible missile threats broadened once China became a nuclear power, but this did not affect the nature of missile defense systems.

In the middle of the nuclear arms race in the mid-1960s, a group of American politicians proposed limiting these systems. They feared that a successful attempt to create a missile defense system by either party could instill in it a dangerous illusion of its invulnerability and, in a certain situation, could tempt it to make an irrevocable decision to use nuclear weapons.

One must give credit to the United States which in 1966 came out with an initiative to limit missile defense systems. Pentagon chief Robert McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk and U.S. President Lyndon Johnson were the first to realize the need for such limitations.

For Soviet military-political leaders, new ideas were the last thing on their minds. Moscow worked hard to catch up with the U.S. in strategic nuclear armaments — and it had solid grounds for that. After the Soviet Union tested nuclear weapons, the United States started working on real plans for a nuclear war against it. The U.S. *Plan Trojan* provided for attacking the Soviet Union on January 1, 1950. At that time, the U.S. had 840 strategic nuclear bombers and over 300 nuclear bombs. However, staff exercises revealed that Washington was not ready to wage a preventive nuclear war; so the issue was withdrawn from the agenda.

In 1953, the Eisenhower administration adopted a “massive retaliation” doctrine. In December 1960, the first comprehensive blueprint (*Single Integrated Operational Plan or SIOP*) was drawn up, specifying how American nuclear weapons would be used in the event of nuclear war. SIOP provided for an all-out nuclear war against the Soviet Union, using an unlimited number of nuclear weapons.

In 1961, it was replaced with SIOP-2. The new plan provided for five interrelated operations:

- destruction of the Soviet nuclear arsenal;
- suppression of the Soviet air defense system;
- destruction of facilities and centers of military and state administration;
- destruction of large force groupings;
- attacks on cities.

The U.S. military-political leadership proceeded from the need to have strategic nuclear forces in such amounts that would ensure the implementation of the concept of “assured destruction” of the Soviet Union as a viable state.

The possibility of carrying out preemptive strikes against the main centers of state and military administration (“decapitation strikes”) and nuclear delivery vehicles (“counterforce strikes”) could enable Washington to minimize the likelihood of a retaliatory strike. The combination of planned preemptive strikes and the capabilities of a missile defense system created an impression that a victory in a war against the Soviet Union was achievable, while damage from retaliatory actions could be minimal.

In such circumstances, the Soviet leadership initially reacted warily to the U.S. initiatives for limiting missile defense systems. But the foreign-policy situation caused both states to look for ways to reduce tensions in their bilateral relations.

The essence of the Soviet position was to include U.S. forward-based armaments in the balance of strategic forces. The United States attached great importance to the issue of missile defense limitation. The U.S. approach, which provided for reducing the scale of deployment of missile defense systems, on the whole satisfied the Soviets. The then U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara convinced the Soviet leadership that a missile defense system was a destabilizing factor. Further discussions of this issue mainly concerned technical aspects, such as the quantity and location of deployment areas and particulars of missile defense system configurations.

The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM Treaty) and the Interim Agreement on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms

(SALT-I), signed in Moscow in May 1972, marked a qualitative change in Soviet-U.S. relations. Relations between the two countries stabilized because neither party could now launch a nuclear strike without an assured destructive retaliation.

Nevertheless, the establishment of acceptable levels for the development of missile defense systems did not stop the development of offensive nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union had to constantly respond to ever new challenges – in particular, it worked hard to catch up with the U.S. in the number of strategic nuclear armaments; respond to the introduction by Washington of independently targeted multiple reentry vehicles and to the deployment in Europe of American Pershing II missiles capable of delivering “decapitation strikes” against the Soviet Union; and it had to take other measures.

In March 1983, U.S. President Ronald Reagan unveiled a new U.S. missile defense program called Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). There are grounds to believe that this program – dubbed “Star Wars” – was intended to give a boost to the development of advanced technologies, which was actually achieved. But, whatever the case, the Soviet Union – which was struggling through economic and political problems – reacted to SDI in earnest and with strenuous efforts.

With the beginning of the process of détente, initiatives in the field of missile defense took a different tone. U.S. President George Bush Sr. proposed shifting the focus of SDI to missile defense for the U.S. and its allies, as well as for force groupings, against single and group strikes. The new system was called Global Protection Against Limited Strikes (GPALS). However, work on such a system required going beyond the limitations of the ABM Treaty. Within the framework of mutual consultations, Moscow proposed joint development and operation of a global protection system (GPS). At a U.S.-Russian summit in Camp David in February 1992, Russian President Boris Yeltsin proposed transforming SDI into an international project involving Russia. These proposals provided that GPS would be open to all states wishing to take part in its creation.

However, the United States tried to use the Russian proposal primarily to revise the 1972 ABM Treaty. It soon became clear that the U.S. was not ready to offer equitable cooperation in missile defense. Washington would not object to Russia's token participation in the system's creation or to its borrowing of some advanced technologies – but, apparently, for the sake of only one goal, namely, the renunciation of the ABM Treaty. Also, the U.S. ruled out the creation of an international system that would be controlled by anyone else but Washington.

The Russian proposals were turned down; but this factor did not damage Russian-U.S. relations, mainly due to the generally favorable political background. Moreover, both countries successfully developed cooperation in theater missile defense.

The administration of U.S. President Bill Clinton proposed a compromise version of a missile defense system – a limited national missile defense system to protect against single and group strikes. Due to its limited capabilities, such a system would not be a cause for concern for Russia and China, yet it required revising the ABM Treaty. At the same time, it must be admitted that Russia's official position did not provide for any compromises then. Some political forces in Russia once again raised the issue of a joint Russian-U.S. missile defense system, but this did not affect the official position.

At a Russian-U.S. summit in Moscow in June 2000, Russian President Vladimir Putin came out with an initiative to create a pan-European non-strategic missile defense system as an alternative to America's National Missile Defense (NMD). The United States agreed to consider this proposal – only not as an alternative to its own plans, but as an addition to NMD.

Russia's uncompromising position toward the ABM Treaty eventually caused the George W. Bush administration to withdraw from the treaty. Nevertheless, the two parties continued to speak about prospects for their possible cooperation in missile defense. Thus, in May 2002, when the parties signed the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions (SORT) in Moscow, they also adopted a Joint Declaration, in which they pledged to continue their cooperation on missile defense and on issues of strategic sta-

bility in the new environment. To this end, the parties decided to establish a Consultative Group for Strategic Security to be chaired by foreign and defense ministers. However, the group proved to be rather passive. Therefore, the aggravation of the situation because of Washington's plans to deploy components of its missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic was quite logical.

So, the entire history of Russian-U.S. relations in the sphere of missile defense gives grounds to mistrust the U.S. plans. The reasons for this mistrust are still valid.

SOURCES OF MISTRUST

The basic factor of mutual distrust between the two countries is the increased readiness of their strategic nuclear potentials in line with the task of mutual nuclear deterrence. Both countries have become hostages of Cold War weapons, above all ground-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), which cannot be placed in a reduced launch readiness status without violating the normal mode of operation. The parties' main plans for the employment of nuclear weapons provide for the mutual destruction of each other's facilities. All ground-based ICBMs are in a state of readiness for use in the "launch under attack" mode and can be employed on signals from missile warning systems.

Therefore, the system of "mutual assured destruction" must be maintained. Hence the inevitable need to keep the balance of strategic nuclear weapons and strategic defensive systems. All these factors lay the foundation for mutual mistrust and primarily Russia's mistrust toward the United States because it is constantly in the position of a country trying to catch up.

The following factors are behind Russia's mistrust:

The U.S. is trying to convince Russia that the new missile defense system will not be directed against it. However, statements like this run counter to Washington's doctrinal approaches to its defense policy. The United States has declared that it is proceeding not on assessments of threats to its national security, but on assessments of other countries' capability to pose such a threat. Russia is the only country that possesses the nuclear capacity to

destroy the U.S. There are no grounds to believe that Washington, which is building a multi-tiered and highly expensive missile defense system, does not have the possibility to deliver strikes against Russian strategic nuclear delivery vehicles.

All preliminary plans for cooperation and for joint creation of a missile defense system come across the U.S. desire to control that system alone. As already mentioned above, the United States is ready to admit Russia, on certain terms, to the creation of a missile defense system and to exchanges of advanced technologies and technical solutions – but not to the control of this system.

Elements of the missile defense system, planned to be deployed in Poland and the Czech Republic, may be only a first step to the deployment of the entire system on the European continent. This has analogies with NATO's arguments for its enlargement. Again, Russia is hearing reasoning about the right of every state to protection against possible missile threats. As a result, a large missile defense force may be deployed in Western Europe, which would upset the strategic balance of forces.

Moscow has repeatedly made it clear to Washington that Russia's territory allows for the building of a missile defense system with a structure that can best ward off missile threats from the south. However, the U.S. has displayed no interest in such cooperation. In addition, there is plenty of information about U.S. plans to deploy elements of its missile defense system south of the Russian border. These plans attest to a dual purpose of the NMD's structure – against threats from the south and against Russia.

According to estimates from Russian and U.S. experts, antimissile missiles with a velocity of 4.5 to 9 km/sec can destroy targets located at a distance of 2,000 to 2,500 km from where they are deployed (in this case, in northeast Poland). Therefore, elements of a missile defense system in Eastern Europe could be employed even against missiles deployed in Russia's Saratov, Chelyabinsk and Orenburg regions. Some experts assume that antimissile missiles with a velocity of 9 km/sec would be capable of destroying missiles launched from anywhere in the European part of Russia and their warheads.

In addition, Russian experts fear that the functional capabilities of the European elements of the U.S. missile defense system will markedly exceed the declared characteristics. It cannot be ruled out that antimissile missiles in Poland could be easily converted into strike missiles. The latter would need short flying time to the target to destroy critical facilities on Russian territory. It is also probable that antimissile missiles will be used to perform anti-satellite missions. There are no guarantees that they will not be used to destroy rockets launched from Russia's Plesetsk launch site.

Also, the planned radar in the Czech Republic will be capable of controlling all space and missile activities in the European part of Russia, including the Plesetsk test range, as well as in the Barents, White and Kara Seas; that is, the zone of operation of Russia's Northern Fleet.

The build-up of combat capabilities of a missile defense system is due to the development of space-related components capable of destroying warheads during their free flight phase. This will likely result in the emergence of a U.S. missile defense system capable of effectively countering retaliatory strikes by Russian strategic nuclear forces.

U.S. plans to create a significant breakout potential, along with operationally deployed strategic nuclear forces, and to build an effective national missile defense system may upset the strategic balance of forces between the two major nuclear powers. That would cause serious damage to strategic stability on a global scale.

At the same time, despite the great potential for mistrust, missile defense can help considerably to promote security amid conditions of nuclear multipolarity.

MISSILE DEFENSE IN THE ERA OF NUCLEAR MULTIPOLARITY

Nuclear multipolarity means the existence of several groups of states:

- officially recognized nuclear states (the U.S., Russia, Britain, France and China);
- unrecognized nuclear states which have openly declared that they possess nuclear weapons (India and Pakistan);

- states that do not admit that they possess nuclear weapons (Israel);

- states that have the motivation to possess nuclear weapons and the required research and technological potential (North Korea and Iran);

- “latent” states, i.e. those capable of developing nuclear weapons but – due to political or military considerations – are avoiding nuclear status and are refraining from moving into the ranks of nuclear states (Argentina, Brazil, South Korea and others).

The proliferation of missile technologies is inevitable, while possible energy problems make the proliferation of nuclear technologies inevitable as well. As a result, nuclear multipolarity will expand, and nuclear-missile threats will grow.

Missile defense systems can decrease the motivation to possess a nuclear-missile potential (through preventive devaluation of the significance of this potential), as well as reduce or prevent damage from a possible employment of nuclear missiles.

But the missile defense problem must be solved in a manner that will not upset the strategic balance of forces between major nuclear countries.

There are several peculiarities about building missile defense systems. It is sufficient to name the following:

- Nuclear-missile danger may arise from different geographical areas. Therefore, the architecture of a missile defense system must be flexible enough.

- A deliberate use of nuclear weapons by officially recognized nuclear states against each other is actually ruled out as it would be absolutely senseless. However, maintaining the balance of nuclear potentials may be of political importance for a long time yet, thereby influencing attitudes toward the emergence of a missile defense system in any country.

- Threats involving the use of short and medium-range missiles are particularly acute; however, one should not rule out the use of intercontinental ballistic missiles in the future.

- A missile defense system can be effective only if it is capable of hitting a target at various phases of the trajectory of a missile or warhead.

- An effective missile defense system cannot be created within one national territory because of the ambiguity of missile-threat directions and because of the need to engage targets at various phases of their flight path.

- The deployment of missile defense facilities outside of one's national territory will inevitably evoke apprehensions among states possessing a missile potential and located within the range of these facilities.

- Apprehensions caused by the deployment of missile defense facilities near one's national territory can be allayed if other states possessing a nuclear-missile potential participate in the control of these facilities.

- A missile defense system will be cost-optimal if it uses national missile defense facilities of states located near missile-threat trajectories.

- An optimal missile defense system is one built jointly by several states. Its control system must allow joint employment of national information systems and weapons, as well as participation in the command and control of combat crews assigned by partner states.

With regard to existing facilities and systems, it can be assumed that a joint (collective) missile defense system should include:

- national facilities of missile warning systems;

- national mobile (ground-, sea- and air-based) and stationary antimissile missile systems for defeating missiles at the active and passive phases of their flight trajectory;

- national ground-based antimissile systems, including radar targeting facilities, for destroying warheads of missiles at the passive and terminal phases of their flight;

- joint (multinational) facilities and control centers that will allow joint employment of national missile defense facilities of participating states.

Later, the missile defense system may include space-based weapons for destroying warheads at the passive phase of their flight trajectory.

Obviously, missile defense facilities deployed on national territory must be controlled by the host country, which, however, does not rule out their use within a joint system. Therefore, there is no

sense including missile defense facilities, intended to destroy warheads at the terminal phase of their flight trajectory, in a joint missile defense system. But there must be integration between information systems of the national missile defense system and elements of the joint system. The destruction of surviving warheads will be effective only if one knows the results of the joint system's actions.

If we proceed on the Russian-U.S. memorandum on the establishment of a Joint Data Exchange Center (JDEC) in Moscow, signed in June 2000, it is necessary to single out several important provisions of this document.

First, it is planned that the JDEC will be made open to representatives of other countries for participation.

Second, participants in the JDEC must notify each other about planned launches of missiles (test, combat/training, and research missiles), spacecraft, etc.

Third, at the initial stage, the JDEC must be equipped with national facilities for displaying data from missile warning systems, but later they are planned to be integrated.

In fact, the JDEC can serve as a basis for a joint missile defense control system. But is it possible in principle to jointly control such sophisticated systems? What if a jointly made decision takes too much time and proves to be too late? In connection with this, I would like to point out the following.

When time is limited, weapons of missile defense systems are effective only if employed in automatic mode. When time is short, it is not possible to effectively track targets, distribute weapons for their defeat, launch and target missiles if a missile defense system is operated in automated mode; that is, with user interaction.

Considering this peculiarity, the control center of a regional missile defense system can be assigned the following functions:

- collecting and keeping track of information on the state of national missile systems allocated for use as part of a unified regional missile defense system;
- changing the alert status of missile systems depending on information received from various sources, including national missile warning systems;

- collecting and analyzing information on the status of missions to defeat targets at various phases of their flight trajectory (for optimum employment of all available assets).

This set of functions makes it possible to raise the issue of a joint control center. Meanwhile, missile systems will operate in automatic mode, provided they are placed on the required alert status in advance.

Obviously, it is more important today to raise the issue of a regional missile defense system. The mobile nature of a majority of existing missile defense systems (S-300, S-400, Patriot, Aegis, etc.) makes it possible to build a system with a flexible architecture capable of being deployed on various missile-threat directions. Some experience has already been gained in this field. There are good reasons and technological groundwork for joint operation and control of existing national missile defense assets.

ARTIFICIAL DEADLOCK

The U.S. plans to deploy a missile defense system in Eastern Europe stem from hypothetical threats from intercontinental ballistic missiles, which may occur at an indefinite time in the future. Characteristically, elements of the U.S. missile defense system – to be deployed in Poland and the Czech Republic – are intended to protect U.S. territory only and have no relation to European missile defense. Nevertheless, joint efforts by Russia and other countries to create a European missile defense system have been suspended. Staying focused on the main principle – keeping the balance of forces between major nuclear powers – would provide a way out of the deadlock. However, this principle can be violated, which is the source of Moscow's concern.

Returning to the aforementioned peculiarities about building a missile defense system, the most effective way to solve the problem was proposed by the former Russian president. The establishment of data exchange centers in Moscow and Brussels and the inclusion of Russian radars in the system would lay the foundation to jointly build a regional and a global missile defense system.

However, it follows from the U.S. position that the United States is ready to include Russian missile defense elements in the system, but is

not ready to share control of it. Yet, there are signs of change in U.S. conduct. At any rate, the proposals made by Washington to Russia earlier this year, which would allow Moscow to closely monitor prospective missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic, show that Washington recognizes Russia's concerns as well-grounded.

In all likelihood, we are now at the very beginning of a path toward compromise options. A recent NATO summit in Bucharest approved plans to deploy elements of the U.S. missile defense system in Europe but, at the same time, pointed to the need for a European missile defense system. In a situation like this, either of two different compromise solutions are possible.

The first – and simplest – solution would be to deepen the U.S. proposal for Russian experts to monitor the elements of a missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic. The U.S. proposal has not yet been finalized, yet there are grounds to say that it would be acceptable only if it would make it possible to verify the fulfillment of the following technical conditions:

- ruling out possible employment of radars to be deployed in the Czech Republic to focus on Russia;
- ruling out a desire to convert antimissile missiles into combat ones;
- preventing the threat of employing antimissile missiles for defeating Russian ICBMs and rockets.

Obviously, such verification cannot be based on occasional on-site inspections. It requires a permanent on-site presence of Russian specialists.

The second solution – which is more rational from the point of view of the creation of an effective missile defense system that would not upset the balance of forces – would be to adopt the Russian proposal to jointly build a missile defense system and, most importantly, to jointly control it.

The choice of a solution will largely depend on the outcome of the presidential election in the United States; and it will most likely be an interim solution. In the future, one cannot rule out gradual movement toward the Russian proposals, which are not aimed at gaining unilateral advantages and which are highly rational if one wants to create an effective missile defense system.

Moratorium on the CFE Treaty and South Caucasian Security

A Regional Echo of the Global Policy

Sergei Minasyan

On July 14, 2007, the then Russian president Vladimir Putin issued a decree suspending Moscow's observance of its commitments under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). The formal reason for the suspension was the refusal by a majority of countries to ratify the Adapted CFE Treaty, which allegedly put Russia at a disadvantage with regard to its Western partners in the wake of NATO enlargement.

Moscow imposed a moratorium on implementing the CFE Treaty in December 2007 and gave the other participating countries 150 days (in accordance with Article XIX of the Treaty) – until July 1, 2008 – for the full-scale ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty. If this does not happen by that date, Russia reserves the right to fully withdraw from the treaty. In order to attach greater political and legal significance to the Russian president's initiative, the State Duma adopted a special bill on November 7, 2007.

THE CFE TREATY AND THE ADAPTED CFE TREATY

The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe was signed on November 19, 1990 in Paris by 22 participating countries in the Warsaw Treaty Organization and NATO, and came into force in November 1992. The document imposed quantitative limitations on the deployment of conventional arms and military equipment in Europe – from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains

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– in five major categories: battle tanks, armored combat vehicles, artillery (with a caliber of 100 millimeters and higher), combat aircraft and combat helicopters. In order to reduce the concentration of armaments and rule out surprise attacks by either military bloc, the parties limited the number of tanks, armored combat vehicles and artillery systems in four zones: the Central Zone, Extended Central Zone, Super-Extended Central Zone, and Flank Zones in the north and the south of the CFE area of application.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States' summit in Tashkent on May 15, 1992 divided the Soviet quota of armaments between the newly independent states. The disappearance of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, the elimination of the bloc confrontation in Europe, and the admission of Eastern European countries to NATO brought about the need to reconsider the basic provisions of the CFE Treaty. Former Warsaw Pact members joined NATO – together with their armament quotas, while the balanced bloc limitations, as stipulated by the Treaty, remained in force. In addition, Russia was particularly discontented with the flank limitations under the CFE Treaty and the appearance of “gray zones” in the territory of some countries that had joined NATO but had not acceded to the CFE Treaty.

The member states of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) signed an agreement on the adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (the Adapted CFE Treaty) at their Istanbul summit on November 19, 1999, which reflected the changes in geopolitical realities. The adapted treaty set national and territorial – instead of bloc-based – limits on conventional armed forces. National limits apply to all categories of armaments belonging to a given country and limited by the treaty, whereas territorial limits apply to domestic and foreign battle tanks, armored combat vehicles and artillery.

However, only Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine have so far ratified the Adapted CFE Treaty. Western countries have refrained from following suit under the pretext that Moscow has not met its political commitments made at the OSCE Istanbul summit

to withdraw its military bases from Georgia and Moldova. Moscow argues that in the case with Georgia it has met its commitments in full, while the withdrawal of Russian military equipment from Transdnistria is a bilateral issue and cannot be an obstacle to the ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty by other countries.

Meanwhile, many experts believe that the “virtual” quota ratio between NATO and Russia does not pose any real military threat to Russian security. Moscow’s moratorium can rather be viewed as a Kremlin resource for foreign-policy bargaining with the United States, NATO and the European Union on various regional issues. At the same time, it is the absence of real military threats that makes the achievement of an agreement to preserve the CFE regimes possible.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CFE TREATY IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

On May 15, 1992, Russia and the three South Caucasian states – Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia – agreed in Tashkent on the maximum-allowed levels for armaments and military equipment in the region, thus dividing the former Soviet Union’s quota for the region among themselves. At the OSCE Istanbul summit, the South Caucasian states signed the Adapted CFE Treaty, which provided for a revision of the flank limit quotas, but never ratified it.

Nevertheless, Armenia and Georgia did not violate the CFE provisions. Moreover, during hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh, for example, Armenia invited international CFE inspectors, who found no violations of Yerevan’s international commitments under the treaty.

Azerbaijani experts and sources claim that Armenia is keeping large amounts of its weapons and military equipment in Nagorno-Karabakh. In this case, however, we have a basically different situation which is in no way related to Yerevan fulfilling its commitments. The armaments and military equipment located on the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh do not belong to the Armenian Armed Forces, but to the army of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR), which is not recognized by the international

community. Nagorno-Karabakh seized a large part of these armaments from the Azerbaijani Army during the hostilities of 1991-1994. In addition, the NKR came into possession of armaments and military equipment of the 366th motorized rifle regiment of the former Soviet Army, deployed in Stepanakert [the administrative center of Nagorno-Karabakh – Ed.]. Thus, the legal non-recognition of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic by the international community creates problems with the extension of the CFE Treaty's provisions to its Armed Forces.

But in the case with Azerbaijan, we have seen obvious breaches of the CFE Treaty throughout its duration. In particular, after the hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh were over and until the mid-1990s, the number of battle tanks, armored combat vehicles and artillery systems declared by Baku by far exceeded its quotas (apparently, Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry officials presented real figures about the armaments and military equipment that were in service with Azerbaijan's Armed Forces "due to ignorance"). Later, Baku declared its armaments in amounts that it was allowed to have under the Protocol on National Ceilings for Conventional Armaments and Equipment Limited by the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, although Azerbaijan did not cut its armaments during that period.

So, there are reasons to say that Azerbaijan considerably exceeded the amount of armaments and equipment allowed by the CFE Treaty. Also, active purchases by Baku of large amounts of armaments and military equipment (see Tables 1 and 2) did not affect its official figures either.

Moreover, for several years Azerbaijan tried, albeit unsuccessfully, to increase its quotas for armaments in circumvention of CFE provisions. It argued that its population and size by far exceed the figures of other small participating states to the CFE Treaty, and these figures were important in determining the ceilings for armaments and military equipment. Arif Yunus, a prominent Azerbaijani expert, admits: "As this treaty imposes strict limitations on the maximum number of troops, armaments and military equipment for Azerbaijan, it has to hide the real figures."

Table 1. Azerbaijani Arms Imports in 2004-2006 According to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms

Category	Exporter Country	Armament Type	Amount
Battle tanks	Belarus	T-72	60
	Ukraine	T-72	45
Total			105
Armored combat vehicles	Ukraine	BTR-3Y/12.7	3
		BMP-1	2
Total			5
Artillery systems	Ukraine	9A52 Smerch multiple rocket launcher	12
		120mm PM-38 mortar	85
Total			97
Combat aircraft	Ukraine	MiG-29	5
		L-39	12
	Georgia	Su-25	7
Total			24

Table 2. Azerbaijan's Armaments and Military Equipment Officially Declared Under the CFE Treaty (in parentheses – CFE-allowed levels), units

Year	Battle tanks (220)	Armored combat vehicles (220)	Artillery systems (285)	Combat aircraft (100)	Attack helicopters (50)
2004	220	210	285	54	15
2005	214	185	285	54	15
2006	217	183	260	62	15
2007	261	183	343	64	15

One has to admit, though, that neither the “basic” nor the Adapted CFE Treaty offer real and effective arms control mechanisms for the South Caucasus. This factor provides ample opportunities for Azerbaijan to bypass the CFE provisions (even by removing combat equipment from areas where it is permanently deployed and hiding it in the mountains several hours before the arrival of international military inspectors).

The legal relic of the Cold War has proved to be untenable with regard to regional and sub-regional security systems in Europe, as well as in areas of “frozen conflicts” and in unrecognized states in the territory of the former Soviet Union. The South Caucasus is a peculiar region as there are three separatist enclaves there, which have no real contacts in the field of security with their former parent states. This factor creates serious problems for projecting CFE mechanisms into the zones of the Nagorno-Karabakh or Georgian-Abkhazian conflicts, for example.

On the other hand, political problems that cause disagreements between major Western countries and Russia have also made the CFE Treaty hostage to global political processes. However imperfect the CFE mechanisms may be, they helped to contain militarization in the South Caucasus and to build confidence in the military sphere there.

THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF RUSSIA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CFE TREATY

After Russia withdraws from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the treaty will naturally no longer apply to it, but theoretically one can assume that other European countries will continue to observe it for a while “by inertia.” However, without Russia's participation, new initiatives for limiting conventional armaments in Europe will be ineffective and irrational and will not have a long-term future.

However, for two South Caucasian states — Armenia and Georgia — keeping the CFE Treaty in effect would be advantageous in any event due to their political interests and security priorities.

In particular, Tbilisi is interested in the treaty, as it indirectly helps it reason its position on the issue of the withdrawal of Russian military bases according to the 1999 Istanbul accords. Also, Georgia uses the treaty as a propagandistic and legal resource against the Russian military presence in Abkhazia — the problem of a military base in Gudauta.

On the other hand, it is very important for NATO-oriented Georgia to fully observe the CFE Treaty as it seeks to take the position of a respectable security partner in the eyes of Western countries. This factor makes Tbilisi be particularly accurate and detail-minded in providing data to the UN Register of Conventional Arms in keeping with CFE procedures.

Finally, the flank limits to some extent restrict Russia's military presence in the North-Caucasian Military District, which is adjacent to the Georgian border.

Armenia is skeptical about the real effectiveness and efficiency of the CFE Treaty for containing militarization in the South Caucasus; yet it advocates the treaty's preservation as it is still a mechanism that curbs the regional arms race. Russia's withdrawal from the CFE Treaty does not meet Armenia's interests, and Yerevan, despite its allied relations with Moscow, will likely try to keep its membership in the treaty, if Western countries find a possibility to modernize or extend it. But all these efforts will make sense for Yerevan only if Baku complies with the treaty, which is very doubtful.

The only country in the region that is not at all interested in preserving the CFE Treaty is Azerbaijan, which has been actively arming itself. Moreover, Baku has declared its wish to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh problem militarily. Observers agree that Baku will take avail of Russia's withdrawal from the treaty to launch uncontrolled militarization. Azerbaijani expert Dzhansur Mamedov admits: "It is a good move for Azerbaijan: as we are going to build up armaments, Russia's withdrawal only unties our hands. Now it is necessary that our authorities not make compromises with forces that will try to make us observe the CFE limits." According to preliminary data for 2007, Baku purchased from Ukraine alone an additional 60 122-mm D-30A howitzers with 13,000 shells; 20 BTR-70 armored combat vehicles; 145 300-mm rockets for the 9A52 Smerch multiple rocket launcher; 50 anti-tank guided missiles; and about 11,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles.

However, some experts believe that Russia's withdrawal from the CFE Treaty may result in a heavier Russian military presence in the South Caucasus, specifically in Armenia, due to a build-up

of armaments and military equipment at Russia's 102nd military base stationed there. The Russian military presence in Armenia was legalized within the CFE framework at the Istanbul summit in the form of the so-called "temporary deployment." The Adapted CFE Treaty allows each participating state to host on its territory temporary deployments in excess of its territorial ceiling by no more than 153 battle tanks, 243 armored combat vehicles and 140 pieces of artillery. The amount of CFE-limited armaments and military equipment now deployed at the 102nd base does not exceed the "temporary deployment" level, while the number of Russian battle tanks in the area – even if counted together with battle tanks in service with the Armenian Armed Forces – does not exceed Armenia's territorial ceiling.

At the same time, experts say that the relatively limited "potential" theater of operation does not require more heavy materiel at the Russian military base in Armenia. Therefore, an increase in the number of armaments at the 102nd military base is unlikely while the CFE Treaty remains in force. Russia may only replace outdated types of armaments and equipment, modernize some of the equipment, and partially replenish the base's military assets.

But if NATO countries decide that continuing to comply with the CFE Treaty is senseless now that Russia has withdrawn from it, or if they start creating an alternative mechanism for arms control in Europe without Russia's participation, all the prerequisites will emerge in the South Caucasus for a full-scale arms race. In this case, the prospects for a build-up (or conservation) of the Russian military presence in Armenia must be considered on the assumption of other political conditions.

PROSPECTS FOR THE CONTAINMENT POLICY IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

The suspension by Russia of its observance of the CFE Treaty and related agreements and protocols creates a new situation in arms control in Europe. In this light, the South Caucasian participating states to the CFE Treaty have different views on the ways to ensure their national security.

Georgia will undoubtedly harshly criticize Russia for its withdrawal from the CFE Treaty, which will let Tbilisi again link its security interests with those of NATO countries and even try to use this factor to achieve a desirable development of the situation involving Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Azerbaijan will take advantage of the possible collapse of the CFE Treaty to make uncontrolled purchases of armaments and military equipment from other countries, thus launching an arms race, and will use the build-up of its military arsenal to exert pressure or even blackmail in the Nagorno-Karabakh issue.

Armenia may show more insistence in advocating the need for retaining Nagorno-Karabakh's control over the territory of lowland Karabakh as an essential condition for keeping the military-political balance in the zone of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and as a guarantee of the non-resumption of hostilities.

In case the CFE Treaty collapses, the chances are very good that an arms race will begin in the South Caucasus. However, its possible consequences for security in the region are not clear.

First, it is difficult to say how a build-up of Azerbaijan's military arsenal will affect its combat capabilities if hostilities resume in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone.

Second, despite increasing purchases by Baku of expensive armaments, the Armenians may make up for this military build-up with cheaper "countersystems" or defensive weapons that will be effective enough to maintain the current frontline and thus not yield to the armaments and military equipment purchased by Azerbaijan.

Third, Armenia can compensate for its lower financial capabilities, compared to Azerbaijan, by using its preferential status offered by the allied relations with Russia and its membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization, which groups seven post-Soviet countries. For example, when Azerbaijan purchased expensive MiG-29 fighter aircraft from Ukraine in late 2006, it was announced that a joint Armenian-Russian air defense group, equipped with advanced surface-to-air missile systems, was beginning its duty in Armenia.

In addition, the overt militarization of Azerbaijan creates political preferences for Armenia. Baku's bellicose statements provide Yerevan and Stepanakert with additional arguments for substantiating their rights to the territory of lowland Karabakh and for the need to keep it under Armenian control, as it is an important factor in maintaining stability and overall military balance in the Armenian-Azerbaijani confrontation. The more Azerbaijan talks about an early beginning to military actions aimed at liberating Karabakh, the more confidently the Armenian party can say that any territorial concessions are inadmissible. Relinquishing the territory may change the military balance and tempt Azerbaijan to really start hostilities. Therefore, it is in the interests of the international community to keep this territory under Armenian control – this will be the most effective guarantee of non-resumption of war by Azerbaijan; it will preserve regional stability and strengthen security.

The new spiral in the arms race in the Armenian-Azerbaijani confrontation zone creates a situation that has been well known since the Cold War era, when mutual deterrence reduces the likelihood of the outbreak of hostilities. The present military potentials of the parties are a far cry from those during the period of hostilities in the mid-1990s. The killing capability of some of the weapon systems, for example, the 9A52 Smerch multiple rocket launcher in the Azerbaijani Army or the WM-80 Typhoon multiple rocket launcher in the Armenian Army, makes them comparable to tactical nuclear weapons.

A mutual build-up of armaments in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone at this stage reduces the probability of hostilities. Stability in the conflict zone will be maintained due to a new “balance of threats,” which will force the parties to keep the fragile peace for a long time to come. But, of course, this cannot make up for serious measures to strengthen security and build confidence in the region, which must pave the way toward a full-scale settlement of the conflict.

Without Friends and Foes

Azerbaijan Is Gaining Influence

Sergei Markedonov

It has become common practice for Russia's expert community to categorize countries as either "pro-Western" or "pro-Russian." However, this duality cannot be applied in the case of Azerbaijan. Moscow and Baku have basically different views on the "Big Game" in the South Caucasus; at the same time, Azerbaijan demonstrates its commitment to building solid neighborly relations with Russia. Baku needs Russia's actual (as opposed to simply formal) presence in the North Caucasus.

Likewise, Moscow is interested in maintaining close ties with Azerbaijan and assisting it with stable development. Baku's significance for Moscow was confirmed by Vladimir Putin when he proposed to George W. Bush that Russia and the U.S. jointly operate the Gabala radar, leased by Russia from Azerbaijan, for solving missile defense tasks. One of the first visits made by incumbent Russian President Dmitry Medvedev was to Baku.

Azerbaijan has received greater international interest due to its hydrocarbon resources and the increased importance of the Caspian region at large as an alternative source of energy for the European market. Located at an intersection of interests of various countries, Azerbaijan has to conduct an accurate and flexible foreign policy.

THE "PENDULUM" POLICY

Unlike Armenia, which withdrew from the Soviet Union on the basis of Soviet legislation, Azerbaijan did not create its statehood

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from scratch but rather restored it. The first Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR) was proclaimed on May 28, 1918. At the Paris Peace Conference in early 1920, the Allied Supreme Council extended *de facto* recognition to Azerbaijan. However, the ADR was not admitted to the League of Nations because, as a memorandum of the League of Nations Secretary-General explained, the territory of Azerbaijan had been part of the Russian Empire, which brought up the question as to whether a declaration of independence and recognition by the Allied Powers was enough to regard Azerbaijan as *de jure* a “full self-governing State.” The problem was “solved” very soon: in April 1920, Soviet power was established in Azerbaijan.

Nevertheless, the Supreme Soviet (parliament) of Azerbaijan, in a declaration adopted at its extraordinary session on August 30, 1991, said that the republic was restoring its national independence. The newly independent Azerbaijan proclaimed its political and legal succession from the “old” republic.

The “restored” Azerbaijani statehood has existed for 16 years now, demonstrating its viability and effectiveness. In the first quarter of 2007, for example, the national economy grew by 40 percent.

Azerbaijan is a Moslem country, and in October 1991 there was established the Islamic Party of Progress of Azerbaijan, followed some time later by the creation of the Islamic Party of Azerbaijan (IPA), which declared the achievement of “social and economic independence of Azerbaijan through the establishment of Islamic laws in the country” as its main goals. Azerbaijan also has its share of extremist organizations, among them Jeishullah (“Army of God”) and Hezbollah (“Party of God”).

At the same time, Azerbaijan is a secular state that declares its commitment to democratic ideals. It also strongly rejects Islamic fundamentalism. In 1995, for example, the IPA was denied re-registration. In May 1996, its leaders were arrested, and in 1997 they were convicted of collaboration with Iranian special services.

Post-Soviet Azerbaijan, which plays a key role in the South Caucasus and the Middle East, has proved that it is not a weak

and dependent geopolitical player. Moreover, it is the only country in the Commonwealth of Independent States with a successfully diversified foreign policy.

Following the principle, “We have no friends, nor enemies, but only interests,” Baku has caused the most powerful nations to seek friendship with this small state. Despite a host of difficulties, Azerbaijan has found the key to maintaining relations with important international players. Unlike Tbilisi, Baku has become “one of us” in various capitals of the global powers.

In the first republic, Azeris first played the role of a younger brother to Turkey; later, it served as an “oil rig” to Britain. The “second Azerbaijan” acts in a much more scrupulous manner, not wanting to put all of its eggs into one basket. On the one hand, it participates in the pro-Western GUAM [an intergovernmental organization established by Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova – Ed.]; on the other, it speaks of its strategic interest in a partnership with the Russian Federation.

Even during his visit to Washington in April 2006, Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev, in his address to the influential U.S. Council on Foreign Relations, emphasized his devotion to cooperation with Russia. Incidentally, Russian diplomats usually refer to Baku as Russia’s “strategic partner” (with regard to Armenia, they use the term “strategic ally”).

Due to its good relations with America (which in the 1990s was pro-Armenian), Azerbaijan has not been included in a blacklist of “undemocratic” states – despite the authoritarianism of its leadership. Azerbaijani-U.S. friendship has helped Baku solve the delicate task of transferring power in the country from father to son. The U.S. sympathizes with the anti-Aliyev opposition, yet it does not overestimate the extent of the latter’s influence. In November 2005, on the eve of Azerbaijan’s parliamentary elections to the Milli Mejlis (parliament), influential U.S. Senator Richard Lugar remarked that no “orange revolutions” were expected in Azerbaijan. Other American officials, including George Soros and Glen Howard, the president of the Jamestown Foundation, made similar statements. Howard, an expert on the

Caucasus and Central Asia, noted that Azerbaijan's significant oil resources caused Washington to ignore some points of Azerbaijan's domestic politics.

The European Union is a much less reliable partner for Azerbaijan. European organizations have criticized political processes in the country, pointing to numerous violations of legislation and abuses of power by officials of all levels. Yet, Azerbaijan, just as Georgia and Armenia, which are considered to be more democratic states, was also included in the European Neighborhood Policy. Azerbaijani leaders stressed the need for close integration with the EU in all areas. In 1999, Azerbaijan's Defense Minister Safar Abiyev said that his country viewed itself as "a component part of the new Europe."

Azerbaijan has achieved much more progress in economic cooperation with individual European countries. The more reliable allies of the United States, above all Poland, advocate Baku's active involvement. The director of Azerbaijan's Oil Research Center, Ilham Shabanov, commented in April 2007: "Today, Poland is building a new concept of its oil and gas security. It would like to see Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine among its main partners. Or, to be more exact, Warsaw needs Caspian oil, which should be transported to Poland via Georgia and Ukraine."

Baku has demonstrated its ability to balance not only the American-Russian seesaw. In 1991, post-Soviet Azerbaijan, just as the ADR, chose Turkey as its strategic partner. However, relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey today are no longer constructed upon the 'vassal and lord' model, as they were in 1918-1920.

During the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh (1991-1994), Ankara helped Baku and closed the Armenian-Turkish border in 1993. However, there was no full-scale Turkish military intervention in Armenia. In the early 2000s, Turkey lobbied Azerbaijan's interests in NATO, and supported Baku in its disputes with Teheran over the Caspian Sea.

Azerbaijan has also reversed negative trends in its bilateral relations with Iran, a traditional rival of Turkey in the Caucasus

and the Middle East. Rapprochement between the two countries began in 2004-2006, when Teheran, worried about the possibility of Azerbaijan becoming an outpost for a military operation against Iran, began to pursue a more balanced policy toward Baku. For its part, Azerbaijan understood that, if a war broke out in the Middle East, it could spill over into the Caucasus and spark an ecological disaster in the Caspian region. Therefore, it became much more tolerant toward its southern neighbor. In 2004, Azerbaijan opened a consulate general office in the city of Tabriz, which is situated in northern Iran and populated largely by ethnic Azerbaijanis. President Ilham Aliyev paid a visit to Iran in 2005; one year later, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad visited Azerbaijan.

The warming of relations with Tehran does not prevent Baku from being friends with Israel, a state with which it has found common values. In the autumn of 2006, the Head of the Department of Propaganda, Information and Analysis of Azerbaijan's State Committee for Work with Azerbaijanis Living Abroad, Javanshir Veliyev, said that Holocaust museums around the world would include special sections about "genocide of Azerbaijanis" in Khojaly in February 1992 [a military operation by ethnic Armenian troops in that town on the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh that resulted in numerous casualties among civilians. – Author]. Veliyev said that the exhibits would "meet the interests of not only Azerbaijani but also Jewish organizations, as they themselves have repeatedly stated." In addition, Baku capitalizes on the strenuous relations between Armenian and Jewish lobbies in the United States and Europe.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND TACTICAL DIFFERENCES

Azerbaijan, which serves as an important Caspian link between the South Caucasus and Central Asia, occupies a major place in Russia's foreign policy.

American political analyst Zbigniew Brzezinski has described Azerbaijan as the "cork in the bottle containing the riches of the

Caspian Sea basin and Central Asia.” An independent, Turkic-speaking Azerbaijan, with pipelines running from it to the ethnically related and politically supportive Turkey, would prevent Russia from exercising a monopoly on access to the region. It would thus deprive Russia of decisive political leverage over the policies of the new Central Asian states.

Now that Russia is involved in the struggle against international Islamic terrorism, relations with its politically stable secular neighbor, which holds an uncompromising position toward religious extremists, are highly important.

The Azerbaijan factor also plays a role in Russia’s domestic policy. Official statistics estimate the number of ethnic Azerbaijanis that migrated to Russia from 1989 to 1999 at 62,800. According to Russia’s 2002 national census, 621,500 ethnic Azerbaijanis live in 55 administrative entities of the Russian Federation, which makes them the 13th largest ethnic minority in the country. Russian law enforcement bodies and the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Moscow believe that the actual number of ethnic Azerbaijanis in Russia is much higher. In 2000, Heydar Aliyev, addressing a constituent assembly of the Russian Congress of Azerbaijanis, estimated the number of his fellow countrymen living in Russia at about one million. According to estimates of the director of the Institute of Economics of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Ruslan Grinberg, private remittances sent from Russia to Azerbaijan are somewhere between 1.8 billion to 2.4 billion dollars a year.

Enlisting Russia’s major partners in an interview to *Novaya Gazeta* (August 7, 2006), the head of the Russian Presidential Administration’s Department for Inter-Regional and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, Modest Kolerov, said: “Our strategic ally Germany, France, Italy, Kazakhstan, the wonderful country of Azerbaijan, and Belarus.” Interestingly, the list of Russia’s “best friends” did not include Armenia, which until then had been considered to be the main pro-Russian force in the South Caucasus.

Russia’s high estimation of Azerbaijan was largely due to the fact that in November 2005 the former prevented a wave of “colored” revolutions in the CIS. The then CIS Executive Secretary,

Vladimir Rushailo of Russia, proclaimed the November 2005 parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan valid even before the Azerbaijani Central Election Commission did. For an entire year after those events, Moscow repeatedly described its relations with Baku as a foreign-policy priority.

At the same time, the independent Republic of Azerbaijan, unlike Armenia, has never reached a high level of cooperation with Russia, particularly in the military and political spheres. Unlike Armenia, Azerbaijan is not a member of the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) or the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Azerbaijan is a member of the GUAM, which is sometimes described as an “anti-CIS” organization and a counterweight to Russian influence in the former Soviet republics. Today, the role of Azerbaijan is essentially increasing; this is a real change from when Georgia and Ukraine played the lead roles in the “renewed GUAM.” In fact, the latest GUAM summit (June 18-19, 2007) was held in Baku. There, for the first time, the Azerbaijani leadership received public support from Ukraine for its efforts to “gather lands.” Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko described Armenia’s policy in Nagorno-Karabakh as “occupational” and expressed readiness to send Ukrainian “blue helmets” to the area of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict (Formerly, Yushchenko spoke of the need to deploy Ukrainian peacekeepers in South Ossetia and Abkhazia). The Baku summit included two dialogues between GUAM and Japan, and between GUAM and Poland.

Moscow continues to keep a close watch over the development of U.S.-Azerbaijani relations. On the eve of Ilham Aliyev’s visit to the United States (April 2006), Washington described Azerbaijan as its “Islamic ally.” Earlier, the same title was awarded to Turkey.

Meanwhile, Baku is a point in the South Caucasus where the positions of Moscow and Washington coincide most closely. Both the U.S. and Russia are interested in a stable and modernizing secular Azerbaijan. For the White House, just as for the Kremlin, democratization of the political life in Azerbaijan is much less important than the predictability of its regime.

The Kremlin is obviously displeased with the “special relations” (energy partnership, and joint transport projects) between Azerbaijan and Georgia, which is pursuing a strategic course toward Euro-Atlantic integration, together with a policy of escaping from its Russian “imperial legacy.” The Georgia factor was the main reason for the chill in Moscow-Baku relations in late 2006-early 2007.

However, Russian-Azerbaijani relations have avoided the Russia-Georgia scenario, and the emerging differences have not reversed their development. Unlike Mikhail Saakashvili, Ilham Aliyev has not made the anti-Russian card the main weapon in foreign and domestic policy. Moreover, in March 2007, the Azerbaijani leader made an unofficial visit to Moscow; at a meeting with Vladimir Putin he emphasized that he cherished neighborly relations with the Russian Federation. Baku criticized Russia for the “politicization” of the gas price problem for only a month. On the other hand, Azerbaijan is far less dependent than Georgia on Russia’s energy resources and, therefore, can afford to conduct a more flexible policy toward Moscow.

Moscow and Baku have conflicting positions over Russia’s strategic alliance with Armenia, and this alliance has largely predetermined Azerbaijan’s decision to join GUAM instead of CSTO. Baku views Russia’s military presence in Armenia (especially after the deployment of Russian troops to Armenia that had been withdrawn from Georgia) as a reason for a possible escalation of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

Yet, despite the complexity of their mutual relations, Russia and Azerbaijan have great potential for developing their partnership. Baku does not consider Russia’s military presence in the country (for instance, at the Gabala radar, or the plan proposed by the then Russian Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov for establishing an international naval task force, named CASFOR, which would unite Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan) as causing damage to Azerbaijan’s national sovereignty. Many Azerbaijani officials, starting from President Ilham Aliyev, have repeatedly praised Russia’s peacemaking

potential in the Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. The fact that the idea of possibly deploying Russian peacekeepers in the area of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict was voiced in Baku on two separate occasions in 2006 (by then-Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov) speaks volumes.

The large Azerbaijani diaspora in Russia is another important factor in the development of relations between the two countries. On the other hand, members of some ethnic groups of Dagestan (Russia's North Caucasus), among them Lezgins, Avars and Tsakhurs, live on the territory of Azerbaijan and play a marked role in North Caucasian ethno-political processes.

LEARNING LESSONS OF THE PAST

One bright spot in Russian-Azerbaijani relations is that Baku and Moscow are learning to correct their mistakes of the early 1990s. Russia's mistakes included its overly pro-Armenian policy and non-diversified policy in the South Caucasus. It must be emphasized, however, that normalized Russian-Azerbaijani contacts should not mean a disregard of Armenia, Russia's centuries-old geopolitical ally that supports a Russian presence in Transcaucasia. Russia should simply pursue a balanced and diversified policy.

Azerbaijan's most serious mistake was its political contacts with Chechen separatists. The goals and slogans of the National Congress of the Chechen People were very much in tune with the political ideology of the Azerbaijan Popular Front Party. Azerbaijani nationalists viewed the National Congress of the Chechen People as a possible ally in the "anti-colonial struggle." Azerbaijan's second president, Abulfaz Elchibei, held pro-Chechen positions, while in 1992 Interior Minister Isgandar Hamidov, who was the leader of the Grey Wolves ("Bozqurt") Party, called himself a personal friend of the leader of Chechen separatists, Dzhokhar Dudayev. It was even discovered that a small group of Chechen militants fought in Nagorno-Karabakh on the side of Azerbaijan.

Furthermore, in 1994, when the Russian-Chechen conflict broke out into military hostilities, Chechen separatist troops

included a small group of Azerbaijanis, mostly supporters of the Bozqurt party (in an interview with British BBC Radio, Hamidov spoke of 270 volunteers). In the summer of 1999, the president of the self-proclaimed Chechen Republic (Ichkeria), Aslan Maskhadov, appointed Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev as his ambassador to Moslem countries. The head office was situated in Baku. It is no secret that Chechen separatists and Azerbaijani criminals established many contacts in various underground businesses.

According to the head of Ichkeria's "foreign intelligence," Khozh-Akhmed Nukhayev, Azerbaijan provided "invaluable support in accommodating [Chechen] refugees." After 1994, 4,700 Chechens were registered in Azerbaijan (the 1989 national census in the Soviet Union put the number of Chechens living there at a mere 456). Indigenous Azerbaijanis generally sympathized with Chechnya, and in January 1995, a Cultural Center of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria was opened in Baku.

The then president of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev, said that Chechnya was "Russia's internal affair" and viewed the "Chechen issue" primarily as a humanitarian problem. Indeed, by 2000, there were about 10,000 refugees from Chechnya in Azerbaijan, thus making Chechnya a key problem in relations between Azerbaijan and Russia. But circumstances caused Baku to revise its Chechen policy.

First, the Azerbaijani leadership has always viewed the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as struggle against Armenian separatism. However, this point of view cannot be realistically defended at the international level if one supports separatism in another area, namely Chechnya.

Second, an escalation of tensions in Russian-Azerbaijani relations may prompt Moscow to introduce, among other measures, tight visa restrictions. Such a response would hit Azerbaijan hard, considering the large Azerbaijani diaspora in Russia and its socio-economic significance for Baku.

In July 2000, the Ichkerian office in Baku was closed. Inter-ethnic clashes between immigrants from Chechnya and Azerbaijanis in 2000-2001 reduced the scale of support for the

“Chechen cause.” In 2001, Russian and Azerbaijani special services conducted a joint operation to detain three separatist field commanders.

These measures prompted a strong negative reaction from the Chechens. In March 2001, a group of Chechen refugees published an open letter to President Heydar Aliyev. In May of the same year, Maskhadov announced that Azerbaijan “has ceased to be a friendly country for Ichkeria.” The September 11, 2001 events played a role, too. In October 2002, Baku condemned a hostage taking in a Moscow theater, and in September 2004 it denounced the terrorist attack in Beslan. Azerbaijani state-owned media have changed their tone when covering stories related to Chechen refugees in the country. These developments attest to significant improvements in Russian-Azerbaijani relations on the “Chechen issue.”

Safeguarding the Arctic

Economic Rivalry Advancing to the Far North

Yuri Golotyuk

The Arctic has become the focus of everyone's attention ever since a Russian deepwater expedition led by members of the State Duma installed the Russian tricolor on the floor of the Arctic Ocean in August 2007. Discussions have sprung up everywhere about the prospects for strong competition for resources in that region and even the topic of climate change has acquired a geopolitical flavor – “the Arctic ice is thinning, it is now easier to take out what's down there.”

A general stir among journalists and politicians plays into the hands of experts. The expert community – in Russia and beyond – has long complained about the lack of government interest in that crucial part of the world. Meanwhile, the situation has brought forth new challenges and one of them confronts the Russian military, which has become accustomed to viewing the Arctic as its own personal fiefdom. A hunt for mineral resources locked under a shield of permafrost necessitates a reshaping of approaches that were typical of the era of ideological standoffs so as to make them more like economic competition.

A STRONGHOLD ON THE FRONTLINE

Beginning at least in the 1930s, the Soviet and then Russian military were the overlords of the Arctic, although the role that was attached to the region in the country's strategic security would

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fluctuate depending on the foreign policy context. The authorities looked at the Arctic from different angles:

- Communication lines linking the Soviet Union with its allies in the anti-Nazi coalition;
- Mining of strategic resources (apatite, titanium, nickel, copper, cobalt) for the defense industry;
- Testing grounds (Novaya Zemlya, Plesetsk, Nenoksa) where the Soviet Union, as a nuclear superpower, tested its most novel armaments;
- The frontline in an imaginary all-embracing nuclear war with the U.S., as it was in the Arctic that Soviet strategists expected the approach of strategic bombers or ballistic missiles from across the North Pole.

Naturally, this situation could not but affect the maps of Russia's northern littoral areas where the location of cities, sea-ports, energy resource transportation lines, and, to some extent, even the routes of seasonal migrations of the indigenous peoples were tied up with considerations of strategic defense. Even now, after more than fifteen years of persistent demilitarization, Moscow continues to view this territory primarily from the defense angle.

"All types of activity in the Arctic are tied to the interests of defense and security to the maximum degree," says *The Basics of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic Region*, Russia's main national Arctic document which the Russian government endorsed in 2001. The text says: "Russia's special national interests in the Arctic embrace, first and foremost, the economy, ecology, defense, research and geopolitics."

The list of priorities features the "reliable functioning of the Russian Navy's group of strategic sea-based nuclear forces deployed there for deterring the threats of aggression against the Russian Federation and its allies" as item number one. Item number two is "reliable control over the state border of the Russian Federation and Arctic maritime areas in order to defend the Russian Federation's national interests in the region."

The nuclear truncheon has doubled its importance for Russia. Since the country's Armed Forces have been unable to recover

completely after the serial shocks produced by the botched-up reforms in the 1990s, a provision admitting a nuclear strike in retaliation to any large-scale aggression against Russia has emerged in the doctrinal documents. Arctic waters get a unique role in this respect. The bilateral disarmament agreements with the U.S. and the ensuing shrinkage of national nuclear arsenals have led to a situation that turns sea-based nuclear forces into Russia's main instrument of deterrence over the short term. While Soviet-era Moscow put the main emphasis on land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine missile cruisers should now form the backbone of its security. Furthermore, the task of making Russian submarines invulnerable has been vested in the so-called 'Strategic Northern Bastion.'

The concept of the bastion budded in the Russian Defense Ministry in 1992. Its authors believed that a sharp drop in Russia's defense capability simultaneously on all theaters of naval operations and scarce finances allocated for defense programs made it necessary to concentrate the main group of nuclear forces in the Northern Fleet, which operates in the Arctic. It suggested the concealment of submarine missile cruisers from a potential enemy under the meters-thick Arctic ice, as nuclear submarines would become the enemy's natural targets in case of an armed conflict. The Arctic looked like an ideal region for erecting this bastion for another reason: Russia had obvious advantages over other countries in that it had many years of experience in scientific research in sub-polar waters. The Russian Navy established a system of "notification on the sub-surface situation" based on data about the condition of ice, hydrology, hydrography, weather conditions, etc., that Russian experts had started accumulating in the course of northern expeditions back in the Tsarist era.

The information concerning the Strategic Northern Bastion concept has been strictly classified and any discussion of its practical implementation is not really possible.

There was a brief period in the history of the 'Bastion,' though, when you could mention it aloud. Russian President Boris Yeltsin

quite unexpectedly revealed its existence in the summer of 1998 during war games of the Northern Fleet. For the next year and a half or so, the Main Staff of the Navy recognized the existence of the program officially and the expert community held open discussions of whether the ‘Bastion’ could be efficient. But, frankly speaking, the discussion was lax, as few people in Russia displayed interest in the Northern Fleet until the Kursk submarine tragedy in August 2000. The Kursk disaster made any discussions even more complicated than before; all discussions vanished completely after Igor Sutyagin, a leading Russian defense expert from the Institute of U.S. and Canada Studies (he was the person who warned about a possible inefficiency of combat control over strategic forces in the Arctic due to severe ionospheric storms), was sentenced on charges of espionage.

It should be noted that the Russian North teems with secrets even without the ‘Strategic Bastion.’ Secrecy – especially what concerns military issues – lurks all around you there. What kind of secrecy can one expect in the mining of coal on Svalbard? Still, the Concept of Russia’s Policy on the Norwegian Archipelago of Svalbard that Yeltsin signed in December 1997 remains classified even now, and the amendments to that concept authorized by Vladimir Putin in January 2001 are classified as well. The document will be fully rewritten by a special governmental commission – chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Naryshkin – set up in April 2007 to ensure Russia’s presence on Svalbard.

The commission faces the major task of working out a consolidated strategy to keep a Russian presence on that archipelago. The situation is really complicated, as the struggle for control over the Arctic, which all Northern countries have engaged in, may call into question Svalbard’s current status that allows Russia to carry out economic activity there. This means that the new concept will definitely be classified.

Moscow ventured to declassify its Arctic aces on one occasion only and it did so just because the stakes in that game were extremely high.

RUSSIA IS GROWING THROUGH A SHELF
According to *The Basics of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic Region*, the explored reserves of commercial category gas in the Arctic make up 80 percent of Russia's total. "The Arctic accounts for 90 percent of the recoverable hydrocarbon reserves found on the entire Russian continental shelf, including the 70 percent of reserves that are located in the Barents and Kara Seas," the document says. "Forecasts indicate the presence of 15 billion to 20 billion tons of hydrocarbon fuel equivalent in the deepwater sectors of the Arctic Ocean. The Arctic areas are home to facilities producing natural gas, apatite concentrate, and many strategically significant non-ferrous and precious metals (nickel, copper, cobalt, etc.). The region's industrial output ensures 11 percent of Russia's national income (while it accounts for only one percent of the country's total population) and 22 percent of Russian exported commodities."

Moscow filed a claim with the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) in December 2001 with the hope of getting the rights to areas lying beyond its 200-mile zone. The matter at stake involves a territory exceeding 1.2 million square kilometers — in the Barents Sea, the Sea of Okhotsk, the Bering Strait, and the ice-free waters of the Arctic Ocean — which Russia views as its sovereign possessions. This claim rests on "Russian research of the earth's crust structure at the Mendeleev Elevation in the Arctic Ocean that has proven the continental nature of many sections of the oceanic floor, which were previously attributed to the sub-oceanic type."

Formally, the claim does not contradict the norms of international maritime law. The Convention on the Law of the Sea passed by the UN in 1982 does envision an opportunity for littoral countries to expand their sovereign rights beyond the 200-mile exclusive economic zone — not infinitely, though, but only over those sections of the seabed, of which the continental origins have been proved conclusively.

Russia was the first country ever to lodge a claim with the CLCS; there is no mechanism for passing decisions of this kind.

The UN regulations suggest that if a country lodging a claim agrees with the commission's recommendations, the latter are made public, after which the revised borders become final and mandatory.

The first attempt did not bring the desired result, as the CLCS required more convincing geologic and geophysical evidence that the Mendelejev and Lomonosov submerged ridges are extensions of Russia's continental shelf. Russia's intensive Arctic research carried out in 2005-2007 and the symbolic culmination of this activity – the installation of the Russian tricolor on the sea floor – were called upon to add more weight to the official claim. The second claim will be filed in 2009 at the latest.

The very fact that Moscow furnished the CLSC with cartographical materials gathered by the Navy in the Arctic is unique: the research was conducted precisely for deploying the Strategic Northern Bastion. The naval commanders were interested in measuring depths, sea currents and ice thickness for prospective new routes where strategic nuclear submarines could conduct combat patrolling. Starting from Soviet times, the Navy has been searching for Arctic areas suitable for launching missiles – “putting the missiles to Uncle Sam's head,” as a colorful expression of the Navy's top brass says. Russian Naval experts completed a detailed map of underwater areas of the Arctic only at the end of the 1990s, and no other country could boast of anything like that.

Nonetheless, Moscow ventured to declassify the maps and submit them to the UN and, quite remarkably, the military raised no objections to this. Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov, the Navy's former commander-in-chief, loved to quote the famous Russian Admiral Stepan Makarov (1849-1904), who described Russia as “a building with the façade turned toward the Arctic Ocean.” Admiral Kuroyedov added on his part: “Our zone in the Arctic and the adjoining shelf areas contain no less than 30 percent of the global reserves of oil and gas. That's why we can't miss the real opportunity to stretch the outer border of the continental shelf to the North Pole and thus increase this country's oil and gas production capacity by another 15 to 20 billion tons.”

Russian military and political leaders have said more than once at conferences in recent years that the Northern Fleet faces the task of maintaining the status quo in the Arctic established there back in the Soviet era. Political maps of the Soviet Union showed the “red sector” of the Arctic that reached the North Pole and scarcely anyone would have been audacious enough to challenge this. As it would be impossible to prove Russia’s rights to it through the use of force now, the military’s job *de facto* is to support the current state of affairs until the moment the CLCS affirms Russia’s rights *de jure*. The oil and gas resources found under the floor of the Arctic Ocean have been included in the “Shelf” section of the *World Ocean* special-purpose federal program. More than that, operations are underway concerning the implementation of the federal sub-program *Creation of High-Tech Drilling Units, Machinery and Equipment for the Deepwater Production of Oil and Gas and the Development of Hydrocarbon Resources on the Arctic Continental Shelf from 2003-2012*. Under this program, Russian industry is engaged in large-scale production of everything that is necessary to develop the Arctic hydrocarbon wealth.

A NORTH WITHOUT BORDERS

Changes related to the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the establishment of partnership relations with the U.S. were far more noticeable on the northern outskirts of the former empire than anywhere else in Russia. As the Armed Forces started abandoning the shores of the Arctic, their sweeping retreat to the south drove whole regions to the verge of extinction. After the closure of a nearby military base, local residents would become aware that army aircraft had been their only means of transportation; that the base had given them jobs; that they had got most of their goods from the Army’s logistics shop; and that doctors from the base’s medical unit had been the only medics within reach.

The situation exposed one more very unpleasant truth. In spite of all the secrecy of the Soviet North, typical border defenses were practically absent there, and this had nothing to do with government negligence. The region simply used to have so many military

outposts that additional control over it on the part of border services seemed unnecessary. That is why the Russian Army's withdrawal from the North put the country, which has the world's longest Arctic border stretching for over 17,500 kilometers (one-third of the entire length of Russia's national borders), in danger of losing control of the area.

Once the mid-1990s arrived, it became clear that Russia might lose the entire Arctic itself and not just control over it.

For one thing, the northern seas had turned into a very reliable route for a massive outbound smuggling of precious, non-ferrous and rare-earth metals (nickel, cobalt, palladium, etc.) produced at northern deposits, as well as timber, oil products, furs, etc. More than that, the uncontrolled Northern Sea Route, which Moscow officially opened for international sea traffic in 1991, offered unsurpassed opportunities for organizing all kinds of smuggling channels that linked Europe with the sparsely populated shores of the Arctic and which spread much farther to most of Siberia, the Far East and even Kazakhstan. The major Lena, Yenisei and Ob rivers and smaller rivers flowing into the Arctic Ocean allowed the river-to-sea-going ships to get thousands of kilometers inside Russia's continental territory (the Ob River even gave access to northern Kazakhstan).

For another thing, its neighbors immediately sensed Russia's weakness and started ousting it from the Arctic. They ignored the frontier of the Soviet Union's Arctic possessions, the upper corner of which reached out to the North Pole, and foreign research ships began to frequent Russia's Arctic waters without notifying the Russian maritime authorities of such visits.

Some of these incidents looked pretty anecdotal. Imagine that an unidentified research ship is spotted in the Kara Sea. Its onboard inscription says it is the *Sverdrup II*, from Norway. However, it answers to all attempts by Russian fishing and cargo ships to send traditional salutes to it that it is a naval ship on a reconnaissance mission and close approaches to it are strictly prohibited. No one ventured to check this at their own peril and risk, while border guards — upon receiving complaints from Russian

captains – scratched their heads and wondered how the Norwegians could get to the Kara Sea. They concluded eventually that the Sverdrup II must have passed by the Novaya Zemlya archipelago and then left the area by the same route.

The radar stations that the border guards have on Franz Josef Land and at the northern extremity of Novaya Zemlya in theory should cover all the space between them by the radar field, but this is true in theory only.

Arctic “blindness” poses one more cumbersome problem. The absence of proper radar control makes life in the North quite comfortable for apparent illegal strangers, but even they do not always profit from that ease. When a towboat belonging to a Black Sea company was wrecked in the central part of the Laptev Sea in September 1996, its crew obviously found little satisfaction with having covered a large part of the Northern Sea Route unnoticed – the border guards learned about the ship’s presence there from the last SOS signal it managed to send. Imagine now the scale of problems facing legal carriers, airlines in the first place. Any flight over the Arctic – where aviation has traditionally been the only means of transport – turns into a risky adventure. Search and rescue support maps of Russia’s northern areas indicate the entire coastline, water areas and islands of the Arctic seas as “territories dangerous for flights of all kinds of aircraft.” They indicate that the possibility of rescue in case of an accident there does not exceed 30 percent. Experts challenge this figure, though, calling it overly optimistic.

The situation is not much better for marine transportation companies. Although the Northern Sea Route was officially opened for international transportation in the early 1990s, foreign shipping lines have declined to use it as the risks are too high and insurance companies refuse to offer coverage for operations there. The upkeep of secure navigation along the Northern Sea Route has necessitated special amendments to Russian legislation. For instance, a bill relegating responsibility for ‘navigational and hydrographic provisioning’ in the Arctic seas from the Defense Ministry to the Transport Ministry was urgently pushed through the government, the parliament and the Kremlin administration in 2001.

And yet, even this extraordinary decision did not change anything, as the Transport Ministry had to publicly admit that the situation in its subsidiary responsible for the Northern Sea Route – the State Unitary Hydrographic Enterprise – was disastrous due to chronic under-financing. At the government level, Moscow recognizes its responsibility for safe navigation. It has stressed on a number of occasions in the past few years that in line with the 1974 International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, signatory countries bear full responsibility for safe navigation in their territorial waters, and Russia naturally is the responsible party in the case of the Northern Sea Route. But navigational equipment servicing this route is getting out of date year after year, while the federal program *The Modernization of Russia's Transport System (2002-2010)* does not offer much promise for Arctic navigation.

A DIFFICULT ROUTE

The revival of the Northern Sea Route loomed for quite some time as one of Vladimir Putin's most favorite brainchildren. A noisy campaign advertising the would-be glamorous prospects for Arctic navigation was one of the first electoral ploys when he was acting president. In April 2000, addressing a special conference on the Northern Sea Route and Russian shipbuilding, which was convened on board the *Arktika* nuclear icebreaker in Murmansk, Putin gave assurances that the volume of cargo shipments in the Arctic might reach more than 10 million tons a year in the not-so-distant future, while the actual volume barely exceeded a million tons at the time.

Putin named several factors that called attention to the Northern Sea Route.

First, he said Russia needed “a state navigation policy, and the Arctic transport system offers a perfect testing range for that.”

Second, “the North has the riches that may soon be needed not only by Russia, but by all of humankind as well,” Putin said. That is why “Northern territories are our strategic reserve for the future.”

This led him to the logic conclusion that, **third**, “the Northern Sea Route is an important factor for ensuring the state's security.”

Putin's ideas are hard to contest, but their practical steps are flawed. The Northern Sea Route still remains Russia's internal navigation passage that is used – at the very best – for transporting export resources, metal ores and hydrocarbons in the first place. Hopes for using this route for transit cargo shipments between Europe and Asia were short-lived; and the discussions of the prospects for the Northern Sea Route have been mitigated of late even in Russia itself.

Vyacheslav Ruksha, the former director of the Federal Marine and River Transport Agency, admitted in public that cargo shipments along the Northern Sea Route cannot be profitable at the moment as this passage includes sections like the Sannikov Strait and Vilkitsky Strait, which are a mere 17 meters or so deep. This limits the tonnage of cargo ships and makes the southern route between Europe and Asia – although it is longer – much less expensive due to a greater tonnage of ships. Ruksha said, however, that fair prospects still existed – in case of shipping in the Central Arctic rather than along the Northern Sea Route. This has a hitch, too, as “completely new powerful transport ships and icebreakers,” will be needed as “the ice there is completely different.”

As for the new ships, the situation is bleak. Currently, the Russian fleet has seven rapidly-aging nuclear icebreakers that ensure navigation along the Northern Sea Route. Even considering all the imaginable extensions of service life, the *Arktika* has practically exhausted its service life; the *Rossiya* can remain in operation until 2010 at the most; the *Taimyr*, until 2013, the *Vaigach* and the *Sovietsky Soyuz*, until 2014; and the *Yamal*, until 2017. The *Fifty Years of Victory* icebreaker that the Murmansk shipping line commissioned in 2007 can just barely be considered a new one, since its construction at the Baltic Shipyards in St. Petersburg dragged on for almost twenty years. This means that it, too, belongs to the old family of icebreakers. New ships capable of negotiating the Central Arctic's ice are not even on the draft boards, while scientists' predictions that the Arctic Ocean could become much warmer and clear itself of ice in the first years of this millennium look rather far-fetched.

Energy Challenges



“ In the West, high energy prices have stimulated global innovation in the development of solar, fuel cell, tidal, geothermal, wind, biomass, and other technologies. Lacking similar economic incentives to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and with little funding for pilot projects or investments in renewables, the development of a robust renewable energy industry in Russia has been slow. ”

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Renewable Energy in Russia's Future

Moving Beyond Hydrocarbons

Toby T. Gati

President Dmitri Medvedev has begun to outline what could become a serious Russian initiative to address the environmental impact of profligate energy use and to encourage greater energy efficiency. In a decree signed by the President on June 4, the government was instructed to submit draft legislation to the Duma by October 1, 2008 which would provide incentives for introducing environmentally friendly and energy efficient technologies. The order also calls for allocating funds in the 2009-2011 federal budget for renewable energy and providing subsidies for specific projects. These steps may indicate that the elements of a broader domestic energy policy extending beyond the oil and gas sector are now being put in place. All this is occurring at the same time that Russia is making clear its intention to play a larger role in the international effort to address climate change and global warming.

Russia's new policy direction — and particularly its nascent interest in alternative energy — is important because Russia is such a large energy exporter (number one in natural gas and number two in oil), and is now the third largest emitter of CO₂ from fossil fuel (behind China and the United States). It is also significant

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because President Medvedev has coupled his complaints about the wastefulness of Russian industry and the lack of environmentally sound technologies with the need to improve Russia's international competitiveness and develop technologies key to the success of his "innovation strategy." Over time, a more diversified energy policy could also open up avenues for entrepreneurial businesses in Russia as well as partnerships with some of the fastest growing energy sectors in the United States and Europe.

Russia has abundant oil, gas and coal productive capacity backed up by enormous reserves, but it also has the potential to be a giant in the area of renewable energy. Existing renewable technologies for harnessing wind and solar power are available to augment current energy supplies and could serve isolated populations currently off the electricity grid, while biomass from numerous forests and croplands around the country, numerous watersheds in the eastern part of the country, tidal potential in the White Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk, and geothermal fields in the North Caucasus and in the Kamchatka Peninsula could be developed to supplement current energy sources.

Yet in Russia in 2005, renewable energy sources accounted for about 3.5 percent of the country's total primary energy supply (TPES), while globally renewable energy is the fastest growing energy source today — some 13.5 percent of global energy supply. (If hydro is excluded, renewable energy sources account today for only 1.2 percent of Russia's TPES, and by 2010 might account for about 1.9 percent.)

Russia's huge hydrocarbon (oil and gas) resources, low domestic energy prices, weak economic incentives, and the lack of a requisite legal structure to develop a renewable energy sector are some of the reasons Russia has lagged behind in the development of a renewable energy sector. At present, Russia does not fall within the top 25 countries making investment in renewable energy attractive and increasing the use of renewables — even though some others in the top 25 are also energy rich (i.e. Norway and Australia). Both in domestic debate and in international fora, Russia's potential is rarely discussed.

Why has interest in renewables lagged? The low level of state support, a focus on other priorities — such as the urgent need to upgrade

existing infrastructure — and an almost complete lack of public debate and understanding of the role renewables could play are all important factors. With an economy based on abundant reserves of oil and gas, not only is very little state budget money allocated for the development of renewables, but there are few incentives to invest in alternative sources of energy. The current focus of economic policy is on investment in the “national priority” projects, state corporations, and in major strategic sectors. Companies may be hesitant to risk millions of dollars in sectors or industries that the state appears to find less attractive and they will want to wait for a more favorable political and legal environment before undertaking costly projects. The well-trodden path of innovation in the West — small startups with innovative ideas that then become mainstream — is not easy to transfer to any sector of the Russian economy.

RUSSIAN INCENTIVES

TO DEVELOP RENEWABLE ENERGY

The incentives that could drive the development of renewable energy in Russia are not as clear as they are for the U.S. — which is trying to become less dependent on Middle Eastern oil — or for Europe — which is trying to reduce reliance on Russian gas amidst recent concerns about supply disruptions. Russia, as both a major energy producer and exporter, has few incentives to develop renewable energy sources. Given the difficulty of raising domestic energy prices in Russia and a possible shortfall in gas and oil production, expanded use of renewable energy sources at home could save some expensive hydrocarbons. Using renewables could over time free more oil and gas for export, but probably not enough to make much of a difference.

A stimulus for growth in this sector globally has been growing concerns over pollution levels and global warming. At present, public consciousness in Russia on this issue remains lower than in the West. However, given Russia’s close proximity to the glaciers melting at the North Pole, as well as the extensive permafrost covered regions of Siberia and the Far East, the impact of climate change is likely to be great. Recent articles have highlighted the threat from global warming to the environment, to small native populations and

to animal life in the Far East, as well as future dislocations caused by melting of the permafrost. But given the immediate social and economic problems facing the Russian government, encouraging the use of renewables and energy-efficient technologies to solve long-term problems does not rank high. Renewables may have economic and environmental benefits, but they are no panacea for tackling more acute problems, such as energy inefficiency.

POTENTIAL MARKET FOR RUSSIA'S RENEWABLE ENERGY PRODUCTION

In 2003, some 10 million people not connected to the Russian electricity grid relied on costly delivery of fossil fuels to remote areas. In Russia's largest entity, the Republic of Sakha, for example, fuel and transportation accounted for around 75 percent of the cost of all municipal services in 2006. The annual cost only of transporting fuel to the republic was estimated at 1.2 billion rubles (over \$50 million) in 2007. These costs give a rough indication of the potential market for renewable energy systems in Russian regions like Sakha if greater investments were made, for example, in off-grid electricity systems based on wind power.

The majority of the wind energy potential is found in Russia's far northern and eastern territories. Wind energy can be exploited in Russia's North West (i.e. Kaliningrad Region, Republic of Karelia, and Arkhangelsk Region), the North Caucasus (i.e. the Krasnodar Territory, the Rostov Region, Republic of Dagestan, Republic of Kalmykia, and the Astrakhan Region), Siberia (i.e. the Tyumen Region and the Novosibirsk Region,) and the Far East (i.e. the Magadan Region, the Khabarovsk Territory, and the Sakhalin Region). Some international cooperation on wind energy projects has already begun. For example, Denmark helped Russia with the construction of a wind power station in the Kaliningrad Region in 2002; Norway's Troms Kraft in 2005 announced plans to build a wind power station on the Solovetsky Island in the White Sea; the Czech Republic's Falcon Capital plans to build a wind farm in Kalmykia by 2010; Spain's Iberdrola Renovables is planning a wind farm in the Krasnodar Territory by 2011; and the Dutch company Windlife

Energy has plans to build a wind park in Murmansk Region. Russian HydroOGK is also engaged in several wind power projects. For example, the company plans to increase wind power capacity in Kalmykia from 1 megawatt in 2007 to 9 megawatts by 2010. The company has announced a pilot investment program running to 2010 and sees opportunities for domestic manufacturers of wind energy equipment.

Russia's biomass resources include waste from forest industry, agriculture, and other sources (municipal solid waste and sewage waste). These resources can be used for the production of biogas, butanol, ethanol, and other bio-fuel products. For example, driven by domestic demand and export opportunities, the number of producers of wood briquettes, pellets, and woodchips in Russia's North-West is estimated to have increased 10 times in the last five years. Finland's Wartsila Corporation has already delivered a number of bio-energy boiler units for heat production to wood processing companies in Russia, including a significant order for the Irkutsk Region.

Russia's agriculture industry has shown some interest in supporting bio-fuel projects, many of which are supported by regional authorities. In 2007, the Russian government announced plans to invest 4.6 billion rubles (about \$181 million) between 2008 and 2012 for increasing rapeseed production to boost bio-diesel supply. In March 2008, then Prime Minister Victor Zubkov announced that a new government program would provide financial support for the construction of 30 new bio-fuel plants, as well as for upgrading existing facilities. If implemented, this could eventually increase bio-ethanol production in Russia to 2 million tons per year. Construction plans for bio-ethanol production plants have been announced in various regions.

At present, these projects are often oriented toward export because Russia's current excise tax policy makes it more profitable to export bio-fuel products than to sell them domestically. According to estimates, the production cost of bio-ethanol in Russia for transportation purposes is in the range of 25-35 cents per liter, but an excise tax of 26 rubles (about \$1.10) per liter of bio-ethanol is added to the cost, making production of fuel ethanol cost prohibitive for domestic use. Thus, Russia's emerging bio-fuel sector is primarily

driven by the European Union's growing demand for bio-ethanol, rapeseed-based bio-diesel, and wood fuel, rather than by domestic market conditions. Moreover, the country does not yet have a unified standard for bio-diesel production. The Russian National Bio-fuel Association organized its second international forum on fuel bio-ethanol in April 2007 and a third one in April 2008.

Solar potential is greatest in Southwest Russia, near the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, and in Southern Siberia, i.e. in the Altai Republic. In 2006, former President Mikhail Gorbachev called upon the leaders of the G8 to create a \$50 billion Global Solar Fund over 10 years to promote solar energy projects. No action appears to have been taken to establish this fund. Nevertheless, private initiatives to promote solar energy projects are moving ahead. For example, the U.S.-based company Solar Night Industries, Inc. has recently established an office in Moscow to further promote solar energy research and technology commercialization. Nitol Solar, Russia's producer of silicon for solar panels, has recently announced plans to list on the London Stock Exchange and expressed interest in promoting the use of solar energy applications.

Russia's substantial geothermal resources are located in seismically active areas on the Kamchatka Peninsula, the Kuril Islands, and in Sakhalin. Two functioning Mutnovsky geothermal power stations in Kamchatka have already significantly increased local electric power supply. In 2006, Iceland's authorities expressed interest in cooperating with Russia to build more geothermal plants on Russian territory. In 2007, the top three countries generating electricity from geothermal energy were United States, Japan, and Iceland. Russia was not even in the top ten.

Russia is using about 20 percent of its economically viable hydropower resources, with the extent of use varying from 48 percent in the European part of Russia, to 25 percent in Siberia, to three percent in the Far East. (For comparison, the United States, Canada, several countries in Western Europe, and Japan are using from 50 to 90 percent of their resources.) Most of Russia's hydropower potential is in Central and Eastern Siberia and the Far East. Russia ranks second after Brazil in terms of the level of annual river runoff in the

world. HydroOGK has an ambitious plan to invest around \$65 billion for renewable energy projects and plans to double its installed capacity of electricity production by 2020. HydroOGK has plans to build up to 20 mini-hydro power plants in the North Caucasus by 2010.

Anticipating the adoption of renewable energy laws, Russian and foreign investors are now beginning to explore investment opportunities for hydropower. For example, Japan's Mitsui and Norway's Statkraft are considering proposals to build a number of hydropower plants in the North Caucasus. In addition, the federal government is ready to financially assist HydroOGK with construction of the Mezen Bay tidal power station on the White Sea, which would supplement the existing Tugurskaya tidal power station on the Sea of Okhotsk and the Kislogubskaya tidal power station on the Barents Sea.

Several Russian investment companies, including Mikhail Prokhorov's Onexim Group, are seeking to implement hydrogen-fuel projects. Interros and Norilsk Nickel have invested in the U.S.-based Plug Power Inc. in 2006 to further promote hydrogen and fuel cell technologies. The National Innovation Company "New Energy Projects," founded in 2005 and headed by Boris Kuzyk, promotes the development of hydrogen technologies in Russia, some of which can enhance solar or wind-powered generators. The company's programs emphasize the importance of developing a renewable energy sector in Russia. Looking further ahead, Russian Minister of Industry and Energy Victor Khristenko in the spring of 2007 announced plans to use hydrogen-fueled buses at the 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi. Holland's European Technology and Investment Research Center (ETIRC) is going to provide Sochi with conversion technologies for gasoline and diesel oil buses to be powered by hydrogen. ETIRC also has plans for hydrogen fuel projects in the Irkutsk Region, whose administration signed an investment agreement with the Dutch company in October 2007 to launch coal-to-fuel projects in the near future.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

A favorable environment for the renewable energy market would include four elements: a clear articulation of national goals by

Russia's political leadership; passage of new legislation providing a more solid legal framework, as well as subsidies and other incentives for investing in renewable energy; greater public interest and support at home; and partnerships between domestic industry and international companies to kick-start a viable market.

In general, growth in demand for renewable energy is highest in countries that have made renewable energy development one of the focal points of national energy policy. Including renewable energy in national energy policy is an important first step toward increasing the attractiveness of investment. So is establishing quantifiable renewable energy targets that set a minimum percentage of energy supply in a given country or region. Market players view such goals as encouraging signals that investment in renewable energy is welcome and will be rewarded. For example, Renova is interested in participating in Russian wind and solar projects, but is waiting for the introduction of state subsidies for electricity generation from renewable sources.

In Russia, political signals matter greatly, but, increasingly, so do economic ones. If the focus of political leadership continues to be on gas and oil production and if the state budget continues to rely heavily on tax revenues from these industries, there will be few incentives to innovate and develop new resources on a significant scale. In the future, however, as domestic gas prices increase and the cost of renewable energy technologies falls, the percentage share of renewables should grow. In addition, as international companies began investing in renewables, it is likely that more innovative Russian companies will follow. Some Russian companies are now taking the first steps of investing in Western technology firms. In 2006, Interros and Norilsk Nickel acquired a 35- percent stake in New York-based Plug Power Inc. In 2007, Renova announced plans for wind, solar, and bio-energy projects in the Italian market and this year increased its stake to 39 percent in the Swiss technology company Oerlikon, a producer of equipment for manufacturing solar cells. In early 2008, a subsidiary of the Russian independent gas producer ITERA announced plans to invest in construction of two bio-fuel plants in the U.S., as well as in similar projects in Russia and the CIS.

Russian companies may now also attract foreign investment for joint renewable energy projects in order to generate emission reduction credits for subsequent sale on international markets. A government commission under the auspices of the Economic Development and Trade Ministry began accepting applications and reviewing Joint Implementation (JI) projects in March 2008. In all likelihood, Russian companies will not take full advantage of the JI mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol to raise additional funding for domestic energy efficiency projects if the approval and issuance processes are too complicated and administratively burdensome. So, too, the pace of technology transfers depends in part on the emergence of favorable market conditions in Russia.

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

A number of attempts to pass legislation aimed at developing Russia's renewable energy sector have already been made. A draft bill on "State Policy for the Use of Non-Traditional, Renewable Energy Sources," introduced to the State Duma in April 1998 and passed by the parliament in November 1999, was vetoed by President Boris Yeltsin. The Putin Administration, preoccupied with other issues, did not reintroduce the bill and it was removed from further consideration in October 2003.

In January 2005, another draft bill, On Alternative Motor Fuels, was introduced in the Duma, but in September 2007, it was put on hold by the government, which said that the bill lacked clarity and needed additional work. The bill included the provision of federal subsidies for alternative fuels projects in Russia's regions, and called for the establishment of public-private partnerships for undertaking large-scale investments in bio-fuels for transportation.

Last spring, the Federation Council, supported by the Agriculture Ministry, announced that a draft bill concerning Bases of the Development of Bio-Energy in the Russian Federation would be submitted to the State Duma in the near future. The draft bill would lower the excise tax on fuel ethanol and offer tax breaks for oil refineries to blend gasoline and diesel with ethanol.

In late November 2007, former President Vladimir Putin instructed Agriculture Minister Alexei Gordeyev to create “conditions for business to produce bio-fuel.” Some business leaders have gone further, suggesting that the use of bio-ethanol and bio-diesel as additives to motor fuels be mandated and Russia’s tax and customs legislation changed. However, despite the country’s 20 million hectares of unused arable land, critics have cited concerns about the impact of grain-based bio-fuel production on Russian grain market prices, as well as growing competition in the West among producers of bio-fuel, as reasons to go slow.

The Industry and Energy Ministry has repeatedly spoken of the need to expand the use of renewable energy sources. Working with RAO UES, the ministry prepared a draft law, On Supporting Renewable Energy Use, in early 2006. Late last year, a new federal law on reforming RAO UES was passed, which could pave the way for federal subsidies to utilities that use renewable energy sources to generate electricity.

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In the West, high energy prices have stimulated global innovation in the development of solar, fuel cell, tidal, geothermal, wind, biomass, and other technologies. Lacking similar economic incentives to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and with little funding for pilot projects or investments in renewables, the development of a robust renewable energy industry in Russia has been slow.

It now appears that more attention is being given to the potential for renewables and clean energy technologies. Former President Vladimir Putin said at a January 2008 meeting of the Security Council that “Russia now has the financial and economic opportunities to promote the use of clean technology.” This speech on Russia’s ecological security was followed by then First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev’s call for Russia “to move quickly to gain a foothold” in the market for clean and renewable energy technologies.

Whether this happens will depend on creation of the conditions – political, economic and legal – for the development of the country’s renewable energy potential and then applying Russia’s considerable scientific and technological resources to accomplishing the task.

The Energy Exception

The Challenge of Establishing International Energy Trading Norms

Angel de la Vega Navarro

Energy is of fundamental importance to national and international economies. Yet it is often neglected at the level of international institutions, and international trading norms do not apply to the energy sector. The international community, at least economically, has suffered from a lack of cooperation between energy consuming and energy producing countries. As such, the establishment of international energy trading norms is of fundamental importance. However, unlike other commodities, fossil fuels and energy are unique. Geopolitical, environmental and strategic factors all contribute to the difficulty of applying free market trading norms to the energy sector. As energy crises from the 1970s onwards demonstrate, however, dangers also lie in persisting with approaches heavily dependent on state and inter-governmental intervention. International energy trading norms must therefore try to balance these two positions, and develop a nuanced structure that is not rigidly embedded within a single dogma.

FREE TRADE AND THE RE-EMERGENCE OF PROTECTIONISM

According to many specialists, international energy trading norms should be centered on the construction of a competitive global energy market. Government intervention should be confined to limited forms of regulation to ensure transparency in the trading system. This market would determine prices, direct investment to the renewable energy sector, reduce expensive strategic reserves,

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maintain commercial stocks at adequate levels and reduce politically-motivated price volatility.

In principle, free-trade norms already apply to the energy sector; for example, energy products are not exempt from WTO rules. However, the WTO's efforts are mainly focused on import barriers, whereas trade restrictions in the energy sector are most often export barriers. Energy has therefore always represented a de-facto exception to the proliferation of free-trade multilateralism that has increasingly characterized international trade, particularly since the 1980s.

Worldwide, various countries and regions treat energy in a similar, heavily-regulated manner. For example, in the European Union, despite directives in favor of the liberalization of electricity (in 1996) and gas (in 1998), no consensus has yet emerged on yielding full responsibility for energy supply to market dynamics. Publicly administered markets, dominated by large national enterprises and regulated prices, prevail. New players are often obstructed from joining these markets. The only exception, perhaps, is Great Britain.

In North America, the U.S. has consistently pushed for a “continental energy policy” that would include the free movement of energy goods and services, and unrestricted access to resources. Rhetoric aside, the U.S. consistently demands and pressures its energy partners, enforcing restrictions such as import barriers on alternative fossil fuels such as oil sands. If energy trade between the U.S. and Canada is driven by market and private enterprise strategies, there are also interconnected infrastructures that have created an energy symbiosis, both in economic and physical terms between these two countries. A former Canadian ambassador in Mexico summarized recent difficulties with the Canadian energy sector as follows: “to integrate free trade in the energy sector is a very delicate question.”

Even in South America, which became a laboratory for free-market fundamentalism in the 1990s, recent financial and economic trends have shifted toward state intervention and economic nationalism, including within the energy sector. This has taken multiple dimensions, including price controls, revision of fiscal regimes and contracts, and the possibility of canceling current international dispute settlement mechanisms such as the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes. New terms, such as “resource nationalism” and “full oil sovereignty,”

are increasingly prevalent in discussions on energy. The increasing usage of these terms reflects the new reality of heavy regulation and state ownership of fossil fuel resources.

WHY IS ENERGY AN EXCEPTION?

A number of factors contribute to the unique nature of energy as a commodity. Currently, fossil fuels provide an overwhelming majority of the world's energy. But it is widely understood that they are a finite resource. Recent alarmist newspaper headlines mention "peak oil" and "resource depletion." Given the importance of energy to modern economies, the fear engendered by increasing resource scarcity leads important actors to take measures to ensure access to energy supplies. These actions can often aggravate international relations. Energy is already a cause of diplomatic friction in places such as the East China Sea and the Arctic. Further exacerbation of geopolitical conflict is likely, especially since many experts posit a 50-percent rise in energy demand by 2035, with fossil fuels having to meet more than 80 percent of this increase.

The continued importance of fossil fuels to satiate the rising demand of consumer countries is mirrored by the significance of these resources to energy exporting countries. These states consider energy an important tool for development. Consequently, they often take measures contrary to free market and WTO principles. OPEC actions consist of quantitative export restrictions and ensure income from natural resources by leading to higher prices. This often results in the adoption of dual-pricing practices through which rich countries pay the "real" price of oil while poorer ones utilize subsidies.

The exceptional nature of energy is also increasing as a result of rising environmental concerns. Governments, faced with obligations to reduce emissions, are currently taking actions such as subsidization and green energy taxation that are contrary to international trading norms and the WTO process. Other measures to reduce the harmful environmental impact of conventional sources of energy have also emerged. These have led to the creation of new global markets, such as the carbon trading (emissions trading and trading in project-based credits) market.

For these reasons and more, free trade has never taken root in the energy sector. Instead, energy has consistently been subject to

heavy regulation and persistent state intervention. However, these norms are not a suitable framework around which international energy trade should be conducted, as is demonstrated by the politicized use of energy exports by certain countries.

FORGING A NEW PATH

During the 1990s, explicit policies modified the “mix between authority and market” (Susan Strange) by proposing a universal adoption of the market as a mechanism of coordination with precedence even over states. In today’s world economy, markets prevail. This evolution implies a radical change for the role of the state and international institutions. The U.S. position has been to favor market action, and advocate removing most regulatory prerogatives from states and international organizations.

But energy remains unique. With political, environmental and geopolitical implications, the energy sector cannot merely be seen as a field for economic transactions. For this reason, free market norms have not characterized international energy trade. Although some market liberalization would be beneficial, trade in energy must be tempered by norms of regulation at various governance levels.

Rather than adhering to either extreme, international energy trading norms should be based on a middle way, avoiding the impossibility of total free trade, but also steering clear of the dangers of unilateral state or regional intervention. The Kyoto carbon trading market offers a tentative example of just such a middle way. The Kyoto approach administers public environmental goods through market mechanisms and through the emergence of new forms of property rights. Interestingly, this method first began in the U.S., where governments, academics, environmentalists, UN agencies and corporations worked together to develop a market approach to climate change mitigation. A lesson from this experience is that, where needed, the organization of a market requires the intervention of states and multiple actors, combined with complementary measures at various governance levels. The EU Emissions Trading Scheme (2005) is a good example of this: it has emerged, in part, as a result of broad support from non-governmental organizations. The scheme represents a possible transcen-

dence of the ongoing debate between regulatory and control measures as opposed to market-oriented instruments.

A global energy market would require exactly this sort of complex mixture of intervention and regulation by various actors and at various governance levels. The creation of new organizations such as the International Energy Forum, which is in charge of promoting a global dialogue on energy, is therefore particularly promising.

One possible means through which such a system could be developed consists of establishing an interface between OPEC and the WTO. The former operates on grounds contrary to the principles of free trade, and a free market in energy would necessarily entail its dissolution. Despite the inherent contradictions between the WTO and OPEC, however, both organizations are indispensable. OPEC has a pivotal role in the regulation of petroleum supplies and prices and the WTO is an organization that remains the center of gravity of the multilateral trade regime.

The issue of whether energy can be integrated into the multilateral trading system by building a connection between OPEC and the WTO has never seriously been considered, but there is some interesting literature and research that reflects on this pertinent question. Areas of tension include OPEC's concern with high internal taxes on petroleum products, the development of renewable sources of energy by consumer countries, market access of downstream products, and the access to the energy service markets of WTO members. Meanwhile, the WTO is concerned with OPEC's quantitative export restrictions, procurement in the energy sector, and export taxes.

However, there exist a number of convergence points between the two organizations, including agreement on the importance of investments to build energy transportation networks and to expand production capacities. In particular, OPEC approves "a fair agreement" that recognizes owners' rights to a just price for their renewable resources and reassurance of their sovereign right to control their natural resources and also consumer rights to a guaranteed energy supply at reasonable prices. Likewise, leading powers in the multilateral trading system, including the U.S. and the EU, use similar terminology in calling for a strengthening of trade alliances and the establishment of dialogue with major energy exporters. The WTO has the potential to address both groups of concerns.

Despite this potential, two important issues would first need to be addressed. The first relates to the status of the WTO as a member-driven organization. Its negotiation agenda and its scope are controlled by member countries. As such, there is no guarantee that there will be a consensus in favor of incorporating energy in the multilateral norm. It would first be important to develop such a consensus. Second, three important OPEC members, Iraq, Iran and Libya, which are among the largest producers and exporters of energy, are not WTO members. Indeed, the U.S. has blocked Iran and Libya's applications to the WTO. Political tensions would need to be diminished before the WTO and OPEC could effectively negotiate to form a new framework.

Due to the exceptional nature of energy, certain states and even international organizations are likely to desire margins of maneuver, for instance to define the rules on which market activities should take place. At the international level, however, some states are — whether in the relational or structural sense — more powerful than others. Markets are not purely economic constructs, they are predominantly social structures; they therefore reflect the distribution of power in the international system. Powerful states can therefore intervene or impose rules to make those markets work for their own benefit. For these countries, namely the U.S., energy is often perceived as essential for their national security thereby hindering new energy-trading initiatives. Recent claims that international economic power is shifting toward resource-rich developing countries is also an exaggeration. However, energy exporting countries must accept the fact that new issues, like climate change, will influence energy trade and actors' strategies. The international energy scene is changing. Rather than resist or be left aside in the process, resource-rich energy exporting countries have to become active and constructive partners. They need to join the debate on new challenges such as climate change mitigation and try to influence the formulation and implementation of policies worldwide.

This material was prepared for a discussion at the symposium "Foresight: Russia in the 21st Century," organized by the international forum of Deutsche Bank, the Alfred Herrhausen Society, in partnership with the Russian Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, and Policy Network, a British think tank.

Energy Animosity – Reality or Construct?

Russia and the EU in Need of Common Ground

Nodari Simonia

As oil and gas prices skyrocket and the dangers of climate change become more apparent, energy security has become an increasingly important item on international agendas. This article, divided into two sections, focuses on two distinct but inter-related energy issues. The first section analyzes the relationship between Russia and key Russian energy importers. The second section examines the capacity of the Russian economy to withstand a possible drop in oil and gas prices.

RUSSIA'S RELATIONS WITH ITS KEY ENERGY IMPORTERS

International commentators often suggest that there is an enormous divergence between the views of Russia and the views of key importers of energy from Russia. However, when examining this position, it appears that much of it is constructed on rhetoric and media-hype, rather than the reality of relations between Russia and the importers of its energy.

In order to analyze these relations, one must first clarify what is meant by “key Russian energy importers.” These are large and small European corporations, as well as several European national governments. Neither the former nor the latter are opposed to Russian energy strategies. Russia actually maintains good business

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relations with the buyers of its energy. These relations do not suffer from major conflicts or antagonism; the only pressures they face are those resulting from competition and the market environment. Therefore, at the commercial level, we see that sales of long-term energy contracts are on the rise, joint efforts to build new pipelines are increasing, and access to Europe's downstream assets is continuously broadening.

Indeed, the divergence between Russia and its energy importers exists only at the political level. Opposition to Russian energy strategies comes from U.S. and EU political leaders who try to manipulate the views of actual buyers of Russian energy. Russia in general and Gazprom in particular are the victims of a number of myths. These myths are aimed at creating a powerful negative image and turning Western public opinion against Gazprom. They include the view that Russia's energy monopoly results in the EU's political dependence on Russia. They also include unfounded accusations that Russia is utilizing energy as a weapon against its neighbors. This rhetoric has led many to overlook the fact that it was the U.S. that "advanced" its negative economic arsenal in relations with Russia when it openly pushed for the construction of oil and gas pipelines that deliberately avoided Russian territory. It was the U.S. that sent angry signals and condemned every important energy deal between Russia and individual European states. Such behavior demonstrates a much greater politicization of energy issues than any of the oft-cited examples referring to Russia's actions.

However, the politicization of energy is not a new phenomenon. Oil and gas have always been closely connected with politics. The entire history of the formation and rise of Western oil and gas industries demonstrates the connections between energy resources and politics. In fact, a troubling phenomenon recently has been the contradictory stances adopted by the European Commission. It supports U.S. rhetoric regarding the threats posed by Gazprom to the EU, and calls for uniting around an anti-Russian stance to counter Russian "schemes." Yet, on the other hand, the European Commission accuses Russian gas corporations

of not being active enough in exploring and developing new fields to satisfy growing demand for gas in European countries. These two opposing positions seem difficult to reconcile. To illustrate the Western media's anti-Russian bias, I quote a letter to the *Financial Times* by Jonathan Stern, a leading British natural gas expert: "FT readers do not expect the daily's headlines to reflect anything positive about Russia. However, despite their opinions, your journalists at least should try to present facts correctly." Stern was referring to an editorial which stated, incorrectly, that during its 15 years of existence, Gazprom had not explored a single new significant field.

Such unfounded criticism is problematic. In this context, it is also worth highlighting the European Commission's recent paper on energy, submitted to the European Parliament, in which it suggested that the further liberalization of the "unified EU energy market" would serve as a universal panacea. This paper has received ambiguous responses from several EU member states, and is also viewed skeptically by a number of European companies that fear their competitiveness will be affected. While these concerns are internal EU matters, the notion of a "unified gas market" is in itself highly problematic. For Russians who lived through the Soviet planned economy, the document seems to reflect a new form of administrative and bureaucratic economic system. Gosplan (the State Planning Committee) of the Soviet Union also artificially established a "unified national economic complex" in a country where capitalism had not yet completely unified the Russian domestic market. It was therefore not surprising that, following the collapse of the political system in the Soviet Union, its patchwork economy split into parts that were not linked by a market.

So far, the EU is made up primarily of an aggregate of different national economies. For a unified energy market to take shape, it is first necessary to build a network of all-European gas pipelines. To start by pursuing a unified gas policy to counter its chief gas supplier – as the EU is trying to do – is not an effective strategy. It is an over-politicized bureaucratic method that has no future and risks undermining established relationships. Again, according to the

above-cited energy paper, the European Commission plans to “identify” – and not build – “the most significant missing infrastructure by 2013.” It suggests that only four “of the most important priority projects” should be started. Only one of these four projects is related to natural gas; i.e. the Nabucco gas pipeline, for which reliable natural gas supply sources have still not been identified. One cannot accuse the European Commission of working too hard to supply Europeans with their needed energy.

On the other hand, Gazprom – through projects such as Nordstream, South Stream, and the development of southern Russian gas fields and Shtockman offshore fields – is actively working to provide more and better gas supplies. Of course, Gazprom is a profit-based corporation and is pursuing its own business interests. These business interests often, but not always, match Russia’s national interests. This is much discussed, but what is not acknowledged is that they often also serve Europe’s interests. All of Gazprom’s activities in the EU have been fully in line with the key interests of its member states, and most are being implemented in coordination with European oil and gas companies on the basis of inter-governmental agreements. The further implementation of Gazprom’s projects would benefit the EU by:

- Helping to meet the rising demand for natural gas in Europe;
- Minimizing transit risks;
- Strengthening cooperation between the Russian Federation and the EU as well as deepening interdependence – rather than unilateral dependence – between the two parties based on mutual benefits of oil and gas cooperation within the framework of joint ventures;
- Expanding the scope for competition in consumer gas markets;
- Supporting and expediting the process of forming a unified gas market in the EU.

If, as it is claimed, Gazprom were trying to pose a threat to the EU, then it is certainly pursuing a very unusual strategy. It spends billions of euros on joint pipelines and gas holders in European countries, exchanges assets with other European energy companies, and places European partners on the executive boards of its offshoot companies. In examining Gazprom’s activities, one can

hardly say that they pose a threat to the EU. In fact, Paolo Scaroni, chief executive of Italian oil and gas company Eni, described Gazprom as “the pillar of European energy security.” Much of the perception of a threat is the result of U.S. statements. When U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice speaks of the threat from Russia’s energy policy, one needs to remember that it is coming from a U.S. official. The U.S., as the EU’s main economic competitor, is not interested in an EU that becomes stronger through its cooperation with Russia.

It is much more difficult to understand why the European Commission, which is responsible for ensuring European energy security, has consistently been trying to place more barriers in the way of successful cooperation with its main gas supplier. Vladimir Putin as president ironically commented that he had the impression that it was Gazprom, and not the European Commission, that showed more concern for Europe’s energy security. European analysts are also critical of the European Commission’s strategies. Wolf Bernotat, head of E.ON, even went as far as to say, “They are all speculating about Russia, but the real threat comes from the European Commission.”

It is time for the European Commission to make up its mind about what it really wants. Does it want to ensure Europe’s energy security based on a mutually beneficial partnership with Russia or to pursue an openly politicized anti-Russian energy policy? Given their geographical proximity and at a time of increasing energy scarcity, it seems that it would be in the interests of both Russia and Europe to pursue cooperation on equal terms. Commercially, such cooperation is already being pursued. It is the political grandstanding that needs to change.

TO WITHSTAND CHANGE IN ENERGY MARKETS

Western political grandstanding discussed above is often accompanied by the idea that the Russian economy is not strong enough to withstand an unforeseen drop in energy prices. The Russian economic recovery is dismissed as being solely the result of the rise

in oil and gas prices. Although Russia's economic recovery was certainly aided by a rise in oil and gas prices, the economy is now diversifying. In any case, a scenario contemplating the fall of prices in energy markets is highly unlikely.

First, there will not be a sharp fall in oil prices and, as a result, gas prices will also remain high. The era of cheap oil is over. Many factors indicate that prices will remain high, if not rise further. These are: a) speculative trading on commodity exchanges; b) natural disasters that might temporarily disable machinery and equipment in fields, transport and refineries; c) political instability and conflicts in energy-producing countries; d) economic growth and rising demand for hydrocarbons in emerging economies. Political instability may be particularly important since more than 62 percent of all global oil reserves are found in the Middle East. In this region, many countries are experiencing a historical transition from a feudal and tribal order to a capitalist one in a rapidly globalizing economy. This process inevitably has the potential for instability. However, the potential for instability has increased even more as a result of a U.S. policy that aims to "bring democracy to the greater Middle East." The destabilizing consequences of such a policy are demonstrated by the unending conflict in Iraq. Such instability is likely to impact markets and lead to higher prices.

On the other hand, a substantial fall in prices seems highly unlikely. There are two scenarios that may lead to such a fall. The first would be the development of new production facilities in unexplored and difficult environments, such as remote areas of the Arctic and deepwater offshore fields. This would require expensive and innovative technologies and is not likely to be profitable any time soon. As for the development of alternative energy sources, most Western experts believe it usually takes 16 to 20 years to convert a promising idea into a commercially viable enterprise. There is also no guarantee that alternatives will be efficient and will not lead to unforeseen problems, as has been the case with biofuels. Efforts to "feed" Western cars with biofuels have led to a food crisis in Africa, Asia and Latin America. As a result, governments are changing their positions and demanding that rainforests and areas

for cultivation should not be used to produce biofuels. Hydrocarbons cannot suddenly be abandoned and will continue to play an important role as energy sources.

Meanwhile, economic growth in Russia is diversifying and its dependence on the energy sector is rapidly falling. National and cluster projects have been identified and are being implemented within public-private partnerships with the aim of diversifying the structure of the Russian economy. The last few years have witnessed steady growth in foreign direct investment in Russia. FDI doubled three years in a row from 2005-2007. This demonstrates that the Russian economy is strong and attractive for investors. Investments are now taking place not only in the oil and gas sectors, but also in other production industries. The petrodollars accumulated through the Stabilization Fund and other types of saving funds are being utilized for investment in other sectors of the economy, and this will stimulate further growth. The picture of the Russian economy is no longer one of dependence on oil and gas exports. It has been significantly transformed, and is now a robust, vibrant and diverse economy.

Energy security is increasingly important for both consumer and producer countries. For Europe, Russia is the most important supplier of energy. Equally, Europe is Russia's most important market for its energy products. It is ironic that the energy security of both states rests with each other, particularly when Europe's political leaders have fostered the idea of divergence between their respective interests. It is therefore in Europe's economic interests to move beyond political myths and constructed antagonism, and to develop a better, mutually beneficial working relationship with Russia in the energy sector.

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In Search of Identity



Europeanization Russian-style:
Boyars being made to cut their beards.
An illustration of the early 18th century

“ Since attempts to build a united Europe from Vancouver to Vladivostok have so far failed, it is important that we develop a mutual recognition of the right to have our own understanding of modern threats and challenges. We must learn to coexist while accepting differences as a norm. ”

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Europe: Self-Alignment in Time and Space

High Moral Standards as European Identity

Vyacheslav Morozov

Relations between Russia and the European Union have worsened in recent years and this has provided the Russian community of foreign policy experts with plenty to discuss. Much attention in the discussion is paid to specific factors, the negative impact of which is restricted to bilateral relations between Moscow and Brussels. More often than not experts debate the accession of former Socialist countries to the EU or interdependence in the energy sector and the apprehensions that both sides derive from it. Far less attention is given to EU identity and its radical transformation after the end of the Cold War. Meanwhile, it was precisely this change that brought up an overhaul of the security practices determining relations between the EU and its neighboring states. Also, the change predestined to a large extent the current crisis in relations with Russia and resulted in a re-interpreting of 20th century history and a redefining of Europe's place in the past and present.

“NEVER AGAIN!”

The self-identification of any political community — whether a nation-state or a supranational association like the EU — has time and space dimensions as a rule. Any political ‘WE’ needs a common history and a set of notions about the outside world. The pro-

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cess necessarily has a third – ethical – dimension, as unification of people around political objectives is always underpinned by the idea of common wellbeing and a correlation of the collective past, present and future with a certain system of values, which lays the foundation for political unity.

In the first decades of its development as a political association, the European Community was unique in that the considerations of space played a subsidiary role in its self-identification. Naturally, it had a formal institution of membership and, consequently, a certain territory. More than that, the very phrase the ‘European Community’ is indicative of claims for a slice of a common historical and cultural heritage. But the Community could in no way make claims for forming the core of European civilization, i.e. for being the only or the main herald of the European idea. It represented just one of the numerous elements of the political space – the one belonging entirely to the Western part of divided Europe.

The time aspect was the key issue in the discourse on the European Union’s identity. The Community saw its mission in the overcoming of the past; its rise and enlargement proceeded under the slogan “Never Again!” – referring first and foremost to the two World Wars and the Holocaust. Economic arguments in favor of the Common Market never sounded totally convincing, especially for countries like Britain or Sweden which were more oriented at the global economy than the economy of Continental Europe. The economic success of integration was important as an instrument for reaching the political objective – preventing dictators from coming to power who would kill their own citizens and threaten the rest of the world with death and devastation.

Such an orientation of European identity encompassed an important ethical element – it was built on self-critical reflections of Europe’s past, including the historic significance of the European idea. The very fact that the European civilization had produced two world wars, concentration camps and totalitarian dictatorships called for a critical reassessment and necessitated a permanent revisiting of the lessons of the past.

Theoretically, European history can be interpreted in two ways, and the ethical consequences of these interpretations differ greatly. First, Europe's past can be interpreted from the point of an archaic understanding of corruption that presupposes that wars and dictatorships — however catastrophic — are not at all inevitable deviations from a predestined path; they are distortions of the genuine essence of the European idea. In this case reconciliation through integration is a rectification of accidental errors and a reversion to Europe's genuine essence.

Second, there is a more radical revision of history in the spirit of the Judeo-Christian tradition, and its ethics rest on absolute notions. From this angle, the disasters of the first half of the 20th century are seen as something that underlay the project of European modernity and are a consequence of prevalence — albeit provisional — of Evil over Good in the European consciousness. Ardent supporters of this theory include Zygmunt Bauman, who gleans the root causes of the Holocaust out of the monologic rationalism of the Enlightenment. If Nazism is a no less organic offspring of the European thought than, say, humanistic science, then the welfare gained after the defeat of Nazism appears to be dangerously fragile. In this case, the “Never Again!” slogan suggests the need for everyday vigilance and incessant work to prevent a return to an ever-looming totalitarianism and not just a one-time recognition of the dangers of totalitarian ideologies, which will smoothly advance Europe toward a bright democratic future.

Both of these interpretations could be found in the discourse on the European Community's identity during the Cold War, and scarcely any of them prevailed over the other. Yet most importantly, in building Europe's identity through opposition to its own past, there was no need to draw up the image of an external enemy (which, in Karl Schmidt's philosophy, is the starting point for setting up a political community). In other words, European integration did not have to erect an impenetrable frontier between the Community's internal sphere and the outside world. It did not need radical differences of space, since the line of antagonism that set into motion the entire mechanism of building a united Europe

was drawn between the present and the past of a political entity which was brought into existence this way. Europe re-created itself, as it did not want to repeat its own fatal errors.

SURROUNDED BY ITS OWN PAST

Many researchers – i.e. Thomas Diets and Pertti Joeniemi – have pointed out that there has been a radical transformation in the discourse of European identity after the end of the Cold War. The new identity relies on an idea – often implicit and sometimes clearly articulate – that the Europeans have succeeded in overcoming their past, that it is impossible to repeat it, and that the main task is to ensure security by shaping an adequate policy for rebuffing external threats. Take, for instance, the European Security Strategy endorsed by the Council of Europe in December 2003. It is based exclusively on outside threats while the possibility of a conflict between states inside the EU – formerly the centerpiece of attention – has simply vanished. This form of structuring political reality, according to Thomas Christiansen, makes the EU a *finalite politique*; i.e. an already accomplished project and a materialized utopia.

Thus the time and space dimensions of identity change places: the political community is now being construed in precise conformity to Karl Schmidt's theory, i.e. through opposition to an external enemy, while the reassessment of history is receding backstage. If previously the past stayed inside the EU's political space, setting the benchmarks for evaluating current events and forecasting the future, today it is forced outside the boundaries of the "community of European democracies." Europe, a continent that regained itself through critical assessment of its own history, now sees its past beyond its borders. This viewpoint suggests that unlike the Europeans, who have gotten through to "the end of history," the EU's neighbors are still far away from implementing the democratic ideal. If earlier the ethical dimension of the European project was pegged to the time factor, now it is pegged to the factor of space. The EU's critical reflections about its own moral essence have evolved into a feeling of superiority over its neighbors.

One of the consequences of this transformation is that the emergence of a European superstate may turn out to be a far less distant prospect than many think. A transition from self-critical reflections to moralizing means that the EU has lost the uniqueness it had in comparison with the standardized political subjects of the New Time, i.e. with sovereign nation-states. This creates prerequisites for forming the idea of common wellbeing, which in essence forms the basis of modern states. It is precisely the conviction that “our” political order – albeit far from always being perfect – is still better than “their” customs and habits that provides the grounds for unification and for forming the very same demos, the absence of which is always pointed out by the critics of European integration. But the key role in it is not played by the feeling of community among members of a political organism. It is played by the presence of a clear and unproblematic borderline separating the inner world where the political ideal has been generally accomplished and the outside world that is still a long way from this ideal.

While previously Europe regarded itself as an entity needing protection from its internal forces, now it perceives the unpredictable external world as a menace to the EU’s well-regulated and comfortable internal space. If this understanding of security continues to grease the construction of a border between Europe and non-Europe – and the situation of a “global war on terror” leaves us no chance to think otherwise – the pan-European political identity will continue drifting closer and closer toward the standard nation-state model.

EXPANSION WITHOUT ENLARGEMENT

One more crucial issue pertaining to the transformation of the EU’s identity concerns the time frame of this process. Why did it fall precisely in a period after the end of the Cold War and, in all appearance, become a *fait accompli* by the time that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe joined the EU? No doubt, “the syndrome of victory in the Cold War,” which Russian diplomats and politicians regularly make references to, did have a role in it.

The fact that after the collapse of the Soviet Union practically all of its former allies streamed to the EU and NATO put an end to the debates on comparative advantages of the capitalist and socialist integration. One cannot help admitting, however, that these debates were never taken seriously on the western side of the Iron Curtain. They were mostly conducted by Soviet social scientists, who did not always discuss them sincerely.

Unlike the U.S. that could make claims in earnest to being the victor in defeating “the evil empire,” the European Community never stood at the forefront of the fight with Communism. On the contrary, the Soviet Union’s supplies of oil and gas to Western Europe (contrary to Washington’s objections) gave an additional lease of life to the Soviet system and laid the groundwork for today’s energy sector interdependence between Moscow and Brussels. It is well known that from the very start the U.S. built its relations with the outside world from the position of a “city upon a hill” predestined to bring happiness to the world. As for the Europeans, their mission was introvert, and the collapse of the Soviet system could hardly set the scene for a total revision of the EU’s part in history.

The EU became convinced of its infallibility as a result of the enlargement. Prior to 1995 – that is, before the accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden – the admission of new members was effectuated on the basis of more or less equitable agreements, but during the process of eastwards expansion Brussels had the domineering position toward the candidate countries. It is not accidental that the problem of criteria for selecting “worthy candidates” from those who were yet to make improvements at home arose in the 1990s. The EU worked out these criteria at the 1993 summit in Copenhagen. The very existence of postulations working one way bestowed on the EU the role of a model to be copied from and reoriented the ethical dimension of the European identity from the temporal to the spatial plane.

Furthermore, the 1990s furnished the EU with an opportunity to monopolize the European idea and to engross the role of its main promulgator. Apart from the sentiments of the accomplished

utopia (*finalite politique*), the Europeans also felt that Europe had reached a limit in terms of geographic enlargement (*finalite geographique*). From 1958-1992, the European Community represented only a part of the continent – albeit a significant one – in the geographic and cultural sense, but as the new decade began, many Europeans developed a conviction that practically the whole of the European cultural and historical space, except for the marginal cases like Norway, Russia, Croatia and Switzerland, was now within the sphere of the same political and legal *modus operandi*, in the formation of which Brussels played a decisive role. More than that, this outlook suggested that countries in the periphery of Europe were either striving to get into the EU (like Croatia and the rest of the Balkans; Serbia is an exception but it, too, will stop being an outsider in time) or simply did not deserve the status of complete European countries (it is becoming increasingly more obvious that the Europeans have assigned precisely this role to Russia and, very likely, to Ukraine). Europe became integrated – that is, according to the Latin origin of the word, the Old Continent regained its previous wholeness. This, too, fortifies the Europeans’ feeling of “the end of history.”

It should be noted that the postulated coincidence of cultural, historical, political and legislative borders created prerequisites for fixing the meaning of this notion. Throughout the 20th century, Europe was a discursive arena of some kind where different interpretations of European legacy clashed with one another. Any national identity – or, broadly speaking, political identity – could project itself onto Europe then, as the Europeans traced their own roots in European heritage. As a result, the integration project as such turned out to be open both for participation of different countries in it and for multiple interpretations of its primary objectives.

The arrival of the Copenhagen criteria and a hegemonic structure (which they represent) eventually put an equation mark between the European idea and a real political order – existing “right here and right now” and not as an imaginary ideology projected onto the future. The finalization of the European idea –

and not the EU's inability to absorb new members – actually caused the decision to stop EU enlargement and build relations with neighbors proceeding from the impossibility of their accession to the EU in the foreseeable future. It was not the ostensible “inedibility” of new Europeans that caused the “indigestion.” The reason lay in the order of things that took shape in the 1990s – it demanded that the new states be “swallowed” and “digested” instead of being accepted as new and equal partners.

Last but not least, as we have said above, a new understanding of security arose in Europe at the revolutionary moment when the Cold War ended. The new list of threats does not name the internal menace of totalitarianism (as the initial version of the European project did) or actors of international politics that would be equal in terms of status and power (like in the classical realism of the Cold War era). Instead, it centers on the instability caused by the collapse of the Communist system. Coupled with the September 11 syndrome, this understanding of threats has brought up a security policy based on a simplified version of democratic world theory, which considers the political systems to be different from Western democracy as threats per se. This vision of the world underlies the European ‘neighborhood policy,’ which de facto uses Copenhagen criteria to the countries surrounding the EU, whether or not they have any prospects for becoming EU members.

The politically correct parlance used in the European strategic documents barely hides the fact that the EU perceives the countries along its perimeter as a source of threats. The only way to remove those threats is to spread the Western-European model of liberal market democracy to neighboring countries. Thus, according to a remarkable definition made by German economic expert Georg Vobruba, the main content of the EU's current policy is “expansion without enlargement.”

What has been said above leads to the conclusion that the EU's relations with the outside world are now marked – more explicitly than ever before – by an imperialistic tint. A United Europe is now far less concerned with making its internal space homogeneous (as witnessed in the restrictions imposed on migrant work-

ers from recently absorbed countries) than with projecting its own power on the outside world. This policy merges perfectly with a consolidation of the borderline between the internal and external spheres. It is hardly possible to deny the usefulness of drawing a line of contrast between the empire and the Westphalian-type nation-state as ideal models, and yet we should stress the following. The rise of the European empire coincided with the EU's loss of uniqueness as a political entity and the obvious transition to building its own identity and political system along the model of a sovereign territorial state of the New Time. This once again confirms the thesis that scholars have put forward many a time; namely, that empire and Westphalian-type statehood do not deny, but rather augment each other.

RUSSIA AND THE EU: AN AWKWARD NEIGHBORHOOD

Russia has no choice but to deal with a new European Union — new not only in the sense that it has engulfed a large number of countries whose historical experience is vastly different from Old Europe. Of paramount importance is the specificity of the historic situation in which the latest enlargements took place, as well as the consequent radical change in United Europe's self-identification. The objective truth is that, irrespective of anyone's ill will, in the most crucial aspects the EU's new identity stands in opposition to Russia's identity.

In the first place, this has a bearing on the security policy aimed at eliminating threats by making neighbors democratic, and Russia's position in this sense is far from unique. Abounding research in parts of the world as different as the southern Mediterranean, the Middle East, and Equatorial Africa shows that the extremely formal approach by the U.S. and the EU to the "export of democracy," their efforts to apply the same institutional solutions everywhere and mistrust for local political processes breed mass dissatisfaction and problems even for those activists who sincerely accept Western values. But Russia, a country with a sizable defense potential and a growing economy —

regardless of the driving forces of that growth and the prospects it has – acts as the most outspoken critic of the liberal world order today. Once again, this role also pertains much more to the policy of self-identification rather than to the “objective” balance of forces. Today’s Russia sees itself as a successor to the state with a 1,000-year history and as a great European power – with the “Golden Era” of the Soviet Union under Leonid Brezhnev serving as the benchmark for redefining the standards of a great power. That is why Western chatting about the demise of sovereignty sparks Russian protests, all the more so that – as has been justly noted by Russian leaders – the West has no plans to become dissolved as a political subject in the unified space of the global world. By speaking out from the positions of “common human values,” the West (the U.S., the EU, individual Western countries and international organizations) actually cloaks its sovereign actions using the logic of “common sense.” Indeed, if democratic values meet the interests of all and sundry, the choice of democracy loses its political pith and turns into a purely technical issue.

However, this depoliticizing is false, since in a situation where democracy is made equal to human rights all opponents to democracy immediately turn into the foes of humanity. To use the terminology of Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek, this “ultra-political” moment is especially typical of the global war on terror.

Russia offers its own version of universal “common sense,” in which the central role is given to state sovereignty as the most obvious self-organizational principle of the international system. It is not surprising therefore that the European policy of expansion without enlargement triggers strong protests from Moscow. Russia rejected the European ‘neighborhood policy’ right from the start, was greatly suspicious of the ‘color revolutions’ in Eastern Europe and did its best to defend its internal political space from EU and Western influences in general.

One of the reasons for the EU’s uneasy feeling about Moscow’s conduct is that Russia vehemently rejects the European logic of conditionality. Although the EU has decided against further enlargement for now, it continues to peg its neighborhood policy

to the old model: it continues to set requirements that the partners should comply with in order to get financial aid, access to European commodity markets and other benefits in return.

However, unlike Turkey, Russia is not seeking EU membership even in the remotest future; it does not need financial aid today; and limiting the access of Russia's major export item – energy resources – to the European market is a hard thing to do due to the absence of alternatives there. This does not mean, of course, that Moscow does not need anything from the EU. The two sides are interdependent in the energy sector, but contrary to the dogmas of neo-liberal theories, the latter factor does not generate stimuli for cooperation. The reason is that the projected benefits of cooperation fade away in the minds of each side against the background of threats that it perceives by adopting the terms specified by the other side. Russia is ready to cooperate only if the EU recognizes its status as a sovereign European power and refrains from interfering in its home affairs. Brussels fears that cooperation with Moscow in such conditions will undermine its own sovereignty, since it will fuel authoritarian tendencies in Russia's political development. Add to this a poor understanding of the logic of each other's actions. Each of the sides has a sincere conviction that its notions about security are universal, and hence it suspects the other side of hypocrisy, double standards and even the purported willingness to achieve its objectives to the detriment of the partner's interests.

Differences in the interpretation of past history make up one more stumbling block in Russian-EU relations. Naturally, this problem is greatly influenced by the position of the former Soviet Baltic republics and Poland – countries that forged their self-determination and reunification with Europe by fighting Moscow's imperialism. Other European countries are more inclined to see nuances in their relationships with Russia, and it is their position that constitutes the pan-European consensus. Still, this consensus differs radically from Russia's officially adopted version of its own and European history on a number of points. While Russia views the victory over Nazism as a paramount source of national pride,

the pan-European version of the history of World War II sets it aside as a topic for critical reflections on the Europeans' own past. Russia has an extremely painful reaction to attempts to draw parallels between Nazism and Stalinism, while most Europeans believe that the interpretation of 1945 as an inconspicuous, perfect moral triumph is totally unacceptable. As we have said above, this is linked to the understanding of Nazism (fascism, Francoism, etc.) as an offspring of European civilization as such. It cannot be otherwise, since the ancestors of many of today's Europeans "fought on the wrong side" and they cannot throw these memories to the trash heap of history. Also, many Europeans are unwilling to forget Stalin's labor camps, Soviet military domination in Central and Eastern Europe, and the events of 1956 in Hungary and of 1968 in Czechoslovakia. The Europeans talk about all these events not only in terms of the Soviet Union's "sins," but also as a general moral responsibility for what happened.

The assessment of the end of the Cold War and the transformations of the 1990s offer an almost mirror-like reflection of the debates on World War II. The EU views them as moments of triumph, as they form the foundation for European pride and a feeling of moral self-sufficiency. On the contrary, for Russians, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the painful reforms of the 1990s are grounds for critical self-reflections about their past and previous illusions, errors and miscalculations.

Vladimir Putin has said on many occasions that the credit for the end to the standoff of military/political blocs in Europe should go to the Soviet Union and that the decisive steps of the Soviet leadership, which got the people's support, put an end to the Cold War and opened the doors to today's united world. This vision suggests that the events of the late 1980s and early 1990s could in no way be a capitulation. However, Russians are equally unready to regard these events as a triumphant march of democracy and an untroubled "return to the realm of European civilization." They have had too many hopes that have blown up and have too many grievances against those with whom they began to build a common European home two decades ago.

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The conflict between Russia and the European Union is much more profound than a mere collision of pragmatic, rationally formulated interests. The disagreement relates to the self-identification of both political subjects in time and space, which in turn has an inseparable link to ethic problems, to the understanding of good and evil, and to the perception of threats to security. Even if the political leaders on both sides prove able to realize the logic of each other's actions and show readiness to meet each other halfway, they will have to explain to their parliaments, media, experts and voters the importance of concessions.

Our vision of ourselves and the world around us appears to be a very inert system, if one views it as a social phenomenon. And if either side perceives the conflict through the prism of security, it looks far more difficult to change the existing set of priorities. Still, there is no other way to go: we are destined to cohabit in a new Europe, which means we must learn to adjust to each other. Since attempts to build a united Europe from Vancouver to Vladivostok have so far failed, it is important that we develop a mutual recognition of the right to have our own understanding of modern threats and challenges. We must learn to coexist while accepting differences as a norm. We must first recognize the right of the other side to have its own opinion and only then make attempts to convince the opposite party that its truth is not absolute.

The Undying Echo of the Past

The History of Empires and the Historical Memory Policy

Alexei Miller

The break-up of the Soviet Union took place amidst ranting about the slide of the last empire into history. It would seem perfectly clear some twenty years ago that the empire, as an outdated and backward form of political organization, was giving way to the nation-state. Explanations suggested that empires collapsed because of an inability to change, adjust themselves to modern requirements and withstand pressures from national liberation movements, which ostensibly embodied progress and justice.

Today, the historical role of empires is undergoing a profound revision involving both positive and derogatory assessments, and – more importantly – appreciation of their place in the historical process.

EMPIRES AS INCUBATORS OF MODERN STATES

Let us start by saying that there is no commonly accepted definition of ‘empire.’ Researchers who try to describe this phenomenon stress the heterogeneity of empires, the inequitable relations between the center and the periphery, specific structuring of the empires’ territory that resembles a wheel without a rim, which implies a connection of all the provinces with the center and weak – if any – connections among the provinces themselves.

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Extensive attention is typically paid to the correlation between direct and indirect rule over the periphery, with scholars stressing that empires more frequently employ indirect rule with a reliance on local leaders. Also, they underline the role of empires as major actors in international – or more correctly, inter-imperial – relations, and their ability to mobilize resources for involvement in such games, as these features constitute the key objective for them and the criterion of their efficiency.

The commonly used approach of regarding the Roman Empire as the model and assessing all other empires through a comparison with it and thereby revealing their deficiencies is now fading into the past. Historians are discarding the view of empire as a pre-modern form of political organization that is giving place to the nation-state.

Putting the modern state in opposition to the traditional empire has some rationale of course. The state was not conceived as a universal structure but, rather, as something separate from society. At the same time, the state – or, more precisely, a regular police state – would most typically be based on direct rule and control, unlike the empires that would operate indirect forms of rule and control. It is a common belief that the current system of taxation, monopoly over military mobilization, stable bureaucracy, gradual replacement of the elites by virtue of birth with elites by virtue of education, and the modern understanding of the rule of law – all of these things were not typical of empires and constitute the features of the modern state.

Paradoxically, the modern state was born out of the heart of the empire and is – in many ways – a reaction to the problems emerging in the context of imperial contentions, above all military ones. Far from all pre-modern empires coped with the task of state-building, but some of them – Britain, France and Prussia-Germany – succeeded in it and did not stop being empires because of it. This trio and their competitors seeking to catch up with them – Russia, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and Spain – each tried in its own way to tap an acceptable combination of traditional imperial mechanisms with the forms and methods of rule of the modern state.

Historians have considerably readjusted their ideas about modernization as a process repeating the stages and forms of develop-

ment of leading Western nations and have shown that the paths leading to modernity could be very different. Unsuccessful modernization could mean a collapse, like the one that absorbed Rzeczpospolita (Poland) as a result of the partitions in the 18th century. The Ottoman Empire was too late to restructure itself and was already doomed in the 19th century. It outlived Rzeczpospolita for so long only due to a lucrative geopolitical situation. Practically all empires in the 19th century differed from the classical type of empires. They saw the essence of their existence in “progress” rather than in self-maintenance or self-reproduction. And they all went through a crisis of adjustment to new methods of administration and forms of political organization. This was a genuine crisis – a story with a yet unknown finale.

At the beginning of the 21st century, we are evidencing a dynamic situation in historiography. The post-colonial discourse, in which the ‘empire’ was an abusive notion, is still wielding a strong impact, including in Eastern Europe, but its one-sidedness has become quite obvious. Let us not forget, though, that the one-sided approach was in many ways a reaction on the part of the post-colonial school to the apologetics of the empires and the hiding of the dark sides of their history.

In their efforts to legitimize themselves, empires experienced as much falsity and hypocrisy as the nation-state. They, too, claimed of being the carriers of freedom and progress. They, too, positioned themselves as the guarantors of peace. As it often happens, those claims were partly true and partly not. History provides abundant grounds for defending imperialist and nationalist ideas. And transition periods, when empires or nation-states would assert themselves, would usually hit the common man the hardest.

A statement by Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler that unlike the empire, the nation-state has occupied too much place in the concepts of European history since the end of the 18th century would sound quite justified fewer than ten years ago. Today, however, claims about the key role of empires in history and the view of them as a complex and ambiguous phenomenon having both a deplorable and beneficial legacy, look quite respectable.

Relations between the empire and the nation-state constitute one of the paradoxes as the project of building nation-states that seek cultural and language homogeneity was born out of the empire. France, a hallmark for the nation-state, used to be the core of an empire. More than that, it had its own record of suppressing local languages and cultures within its continental hexagon in favor of the dominating language and culture of Ile-de-France. This project was formulated by Napoleon I who considered the hexagon inherited from previous monarchs as a foundation for the future pan-European empire.

Similar projects to build nation-states in the heart of an empire can be also seen in the British Isles and in Spain, although they had specific aspects. Most continental empires, too, unveil a number of similar traits, although the formation of the core inside them around which a nation could be built was a somewhat knottier task.

In the Romanov Dynasty's Russian Empire, the project of building a nation comprising the Velikoruss (Great Russians, or ethnic Russians), the Maloruss (Ukrainians), the Beloruss (Belarusians) and the Finno-Ugric peoples of the Volga area took shape in the 1830s through the 1860s.

The Habsburg Empire had no Austrian-nation project for a number of reasons, but the 1867 agreement to set up a Dual Monarchy gave an impulse to the intense implementation of the plan to build a Hungarian national state in the Hungarian part of Austria-Hungary.

The achievements scored by empires facilitated the formation of nations. In other words, it was not the nation-states that created empires — it was the empires that created nation-states. It is not accidental that the Spanish project witnessed a deep crisis in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries — the situation arose from the loss of Spain's imperial status. The same reasons lie behind the failure of the British and the French projects in the second half of the last century. The formation of the Russian nation also went through severe crises as the result of World War I, the 1917 revolution, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Thus, one can talk about two different paradigms for the formation of nation-states. The initial Western European project was

implemented in the center of empires and was not aimed at their destruction. France and Britain set up models for building modern nation-states. Construction of nations in the core of empires largely suppressed the peripheral projects of nation-building, which re-emerged with redoubled strength in the 20th century – in Scotland, Catalonia, the Basque Country, and other regions (the Brittany and Provence projects in France never “fired” again).

In Eastern Europe, the projects relying on empires saw fewer achievements at the beginning of the 20th century since the regional countries had lost World War I. Instead, peripheral national construction projects that tore apart the empire structure were implemented there. Unlike projects conceived in the imperial center, these suggested a stronger accent on ethnic motives. In many ways, they not only rejected the empires but were the fruits of imperial policies. For instance, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia got independence before the Great War through a compromise achieved among the Christian empires concerning control over the outskirts of the shrinking Ottoman Empire. As for Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine, they surfaced (for shorter or longer periods of time) as a result of contentions between the empires during World War I and support for peripheral nationalism in the opposite camp. These contentions washed away former restrictions on playing the trump card of nationalism in fighting with each other that the empires, which had partitioned Poland, had adhered to. Thus the empires were not only the backgrounds for or obstacles to building nations and nation-states; they actually took part in it.

The evolution of empires and assimilation of new methods of rule and control over the population had many other aspects as well. The empires transformed and stopped resembling their traditional models. The direction of their evolution changed dramatically after World War II.

During the previous two centuries, empires sought to replace the indirect forms of rule, which the U.S. political scientist Charles Tilly has classified as their generic feature, with direct rule and control methods being the characteristic of a modern state. In the 20th century, indirect control over the periphery moved to the foreground again. The

“people’s democracies” of Eastern Europe were not parts of the Soviet Union – they were definitely parts of the “Kremlin’s empire.”

This form of government was far from new. Michael Doyle, the author of an important theoretic work on empires, believes that Athens played the role of an imperial center in the union of Greek poleis. While the latter were formally independent, Athens could control their external and, to a certain degree, internal policies quite efficiently. The cases where ancient Athens, Communist-era Moscow, or today’s Washington have had to resort to direct military interventions for keeping their control signaled the failure of regular policies of indirect control rather than the manifestation of their might. In this sense, the Soviet Union was really an anachronism and its disintegration as an empire employing the direct rule over its periphery was quite logical.

In recent years, historians have given increasingly more attention to the notion of ‘imperial power.’ It is broader and more flexible than the notion of ‘empire,’ and embraces various instances of inequitable relations between the center and periphery regions – either formally included in the empire or retaining formal independence. Incidentally, the word ‘imperium’ initially had the meaning of sovereign power over a territory. It is quite fruitful in this light to compare the problems of Russia’s post-imperial development with countries that have a tradition of an imperial metropolitan nation and the relevant interpretations of sovereignty.

The very fact that Russia was an empire in the past does not explain the complexities it has been going through in the course of modernization and democratization. Simultaneously, parting with the imperial past, which creates new opportunities for the solution to these tasks, does not provide a guarantee of success. Nor does Russia’s imperial role fix its image of either a guilty party or a benefactor in relations with its neighbors.

THE SOVIET UNION AS AN EMPIRE

The Soviet Union ceased to exist more than a decade and a half ago, but serious attempts to revisit the experience of Soviet ethnic policy have been few in number so far. Quite possibly, the distance

we have covered since then is still too small, and too great a portion of the Soviet legacy still remains part of everyday life.

One of the major achievements of historiography in the analysis of the first decades of the 20th century was overcoming the hypnogenic image of the year 1917 as a pivot that ushered in a “different history.” The fruitfulness of this approach was demonstrated by Peter Holquist in an article discussing the mechanisms of control over public moods by the Bolshevik regime. Holquist showed the irrelevance of comparing 1920 to 1913; as this comparison presupposes that the cardinal breakup of 1917 is the only landmark event lying between the two years. A rise of attention toward public moods and the swelling of the agencies set up to monitor them were not at all the specific products of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, they took place in all the participant countries of World War I immediately after its outbreak.

Holquist’s approach can be applied to many other aspects of Russian history at the beginning of the 20th century, and it also enables one to see the degree to which modern tendencies of the latest imperial period were embodied in Soviet policy, albeit in different forms.

Paradoxically enough, foreign — and especially émigré — historiographies tend to draw no basic differences between the Romanov empire and the Soviet Union in what concerns the interpretations of imperial problems and national issue. Historians have mostly come to a consensus suggesting that World War I gave a powerful push to the ethnic factor in Central and Eastern Europe and the Bolsheviks naturally had to deal with that legacy, as well as with the results of national liberation movement activity on the outskirts of the empire during the final phase of the war and in the first years of peace.

Nor should there be any doubt that many experts, whom the Soviets invited to design their ethnic policy, had matured as professionals before the revolution of 1917. The role of these experts on ethnography was recently highlighted by Francine Hirsch in the book called *Empire of Nations. Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca-London, Cornell University Press, 2005). Although this book contains some really valuable information,

it has a conceptual weakness that vividly illustrates the current tendency to overstate the role of the Romanov legacy in Soviet policy.

In discussing the “evolutional” understanding of a nation by the “imperial ethnographers” and their political patrons, the Soviet Union’s likeness with other modernizing empires, and the absence of elements of “positive discrimination” of formally subordinate nationalities in Soviet policy of the 1920s, Hirsch argues with Terry Martin, who describes the Soviet Union as a new type of empire and underlines a radical breakup of Soviet-era ethnic policy with that of the Romanov empire.

Martin’s position looks much more convincing since he shows more than anyone else the marked difference in the Bolsheviks’ ethnic policy with the Romanov policy. In his book *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca, L.: Cornell UP, 2001), Martin traces the evolution of the Soviet government’s policy from the early 1920s through the early 1930s, relying on a variety of sources. This decade included the rise of the Soviet Union and the period of the so-called *korenizatsiya* (nativization) policy [a gradual removal of the Russian language from state and public life through its replacement with native languages and through a resettlement of ethnic Russians from the newly formed national republics – Ed.].

Martin offers a scrupulous analysis of “how it was done” combined with the theoretic discussion of “what it was like.” He singles out four major ideological prerequisites that underlay the Soviet ethnic policy. By the time the Bolsheviks seized power, they had reached a consensus on the dangers of nationalism as an ideology having a huge mobilizing power, one that could form a supra-class society in a struggle for national ideas. The experience of the Civil War further convinced them that nationalism was a major competitor to their own ideology addressed to social classes.

Hence there came a simple conclusion – formulated by Georgy Pyatakov – that nationalism must be declared an enemy and resolutely fought against. Yet Lenin and Stalin proposed a completely different tactic. They surmised that if the Soviet government provides for some ethnic forms of state and public life; i.e. partly meets the

requirements of nationalism, it would be able to split the supra-class unity of national movements, neutralize the attractiveness of nationalistic slogans, and thereby create better conditions for manifestations of class contentions and acceptance of the Bolshevik ideology. Importantly, this policy format highlighted the basically new, non-imperialist nature of the political entity that arose out of the ruins of the Tsarist Empire. The Bolsheviks believed – quite foresightedly – that the very label of ‘empire’ might have highly deplorable consequences for Soviet power at the beginning of the 20th century.

Furthermore, Martin analyzes the Bolsheviks’ modernization concept. They believed that nations emerge in the course of capitalist development and are transitory historical phenomena. Also, they looked at national consciousness as an inescapable phase of human society’s development, which all people must overcome as they move along the path to internationalism. A future merger of nations is possible only through the total liberation of suppressed peoples.

The Austrian-Hungarian experience and the intensity of nationalistic movements after the collapse of the Russian empire convinced the Bolsheviks that national consolidation is inevitable under socialism, too. In his attempts to prove the unavoidable Ukrainization and Belarusization of cities with a predominantly Russian population in those two Soviet republics, Stalin pointed to Hungary, where the German-speaking population dominated the cities in the 19th century, but eventually gave way to the Hungarians. On the eastern outskirts of Russia, where nationalism was much weaker, “national construction” was declared to be a part of socialist modernization and was widely seen as a positive part of the program rather than a concession.

The third prerequisite of the Bolshevik approach was the conviction that the nationalism of non-Russian peoples was a reaction to their suppression by the tsarist regime and a result of the mistrust toward ethnic Russians. Lenin insisted on the importance of differentiating between nationalism of the oppressors and nationalism of the oppressed. This presumption led to a conclusion – quite natural for the anti-colonial discourse – that the “chauvinism of the Great Russians” was far more dangerous than the nationalism of the oppressed peoples. Stalin made an adjust-

ment to this principle, saying that the nationalism of the Georgians and some other nations also suppressed and exploited smaller peoples. He always combined his attacks against the chauvinism of the Great Russians with a mention of the dangers, albeit smaller ones, that came from smaller local nationalisms.

The fourth factor of Soviet ethnic policy was that it is closely related to foreign policy. Following Nikolai Skrypnik, a Ukrainian Bolshevik, Martin speaks of the ‘Piedmont principle’ of the Soviet ethnic policy, which manifests itself in a patronizing attitude toward people who had become separated by the western state border of the Soviet Union at that time – Ukrainians, Belarusians, Poles, Jews and Finns. Such a policy was meant to win over the hearts of their compatriots on the other side of the border and secure opportunities for Moscow to influence its western neighbors. Similarly, calls for rebellions among the suppressed peoples of the East were accompanied by references to the positive Soviet policy toward the nationalities of the Soviet East.

As the Soviet government set up territorial entities according to the ethnic principle, it denied the Austrian-Marxist principle of an individual cultural autonomy – and simultaneously put up obstacles against the assimilation of dispersed ethnic groups. Instead, a vertical ethnic-territorial system was built to the level of ethnic districts, rural municipalities and even collective farms. As a result, a huge pyramid of ethnic Soviets (councils) on thousands of ethnic territories emerged already in the mid-1920s.

Martin indicates that this policy did not envision a genuine federalization. Although the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and the USSR were federations in form, real power was always concentrated in the center. Soviet federalism did not imply devolution, i.e. the delegating of political and economic power to federation constituents.

Another important factor of this policy was the closure of the eastern peripheral territories for agricultural colonization by ethnic Russians, which had been actively developed before 1917. In the Caucasus, Kazakhstan and Central Asia as well, ethnic Russians were in many cases forced to leave under the slogans of “decolonization.”

On the whole, Martin proposes branding Soviet ethnic policy as the “internationalist nationalism” or “affirmative action;” i.e. positive discrimination that was applied to the formerly oppressed sections of the population. In essence, the Bolsheviks took the lead in solving ethnic issues that are typical of all stages of the development of national movements. They fostered the ethnic elites where they had never existed before or where they had been too weak. They disseminated and supported in masses of people the various forms of ethnic culture and identity where the problem was high on the agenda. They helped territorialize ethnicities and created ethnic territorial entities of various levels. Finally, they solved the tasks inside those entities that would be typical of the arising or already existing nation-states; they promoted new ethnic elites and imposed new official languages. Neutrality toward ethnic issues, the hallmark of Bolshevik policies before the revolution, was rejected, as emphasis was placed on “affirmative action” up to an overt hostility even to a voluntary assimilation.

The policy of affirmative action or positive discrimination of non-Russians would inevitably mean infringements on the rights of ethnic Russians and their readiness to make sacrifices for the interests of other ethnic groups. This showed up during the delimitation of territories; that is, the drawing of borders between the Soviet republics (of which the eastern border of Belarus is glaring evidence). It is also reflected in the denial of the right of Russians to have autonomies in the parts of other Union republics where they lived in compact communities (ethnic Russians received it in a few republics only in 1926). Nor could they have proportional representation in the agencies of power of autonomous republics. Moreover, Russian culture was castigated as that of capitalists and landlords; the imperial culture of the oppressors.

The proposal to define the Soviet Union as an “affirmative action empire” is an attempt to find a new term for denoting a specific and hitherto unknown type of political organization. This highly centralized state that sought to interfere with all spheres of life and that made use of extreme forms of violence was formally structured as a federation of sovereign nations. It came into being as a successor to the Russian Empire and seized back the bulk of

the peripheral provinces of the former empire, but then it embarked on strengthening non-Russian ethnic groups and creating them in places where they had barely ever existed.

According to Martin, the notion of the “affirmative action empire” is meant to stress the novelty of Soviet ethnic policy as compared to colonialism and imperialism of the past, on the one hand, and the difference that the Soviet Union had with the empires of the New Time, including the Romanov empire.

The pan-Russian nation project, which was the pillar of Russian nationalism in the Romanov empire, was simply cast away; many of its achievements were conscientiously dismantled, and the Ukrainian and Belarusian ethnic groups got the institutional status of separate nations with their own territories.

In Russia itself, the research of Soviet ethnic policy is just making its first steps, and it appears that only one of its pages – the tragic deportations – has been studied in detail. The role of the ethnic factor in the repressions requires special scrutiny. That the factor played an important role is not in any doubt, and in some cases the Stalinist terror took the form of genocide. For instance, more than 110,000 Poles out of a total number of 130,000 who were arrested in Leningrad in 1937 (and they were arrested just because they were Poles) were shot within several months after their incarceration. Incidentally, Polish champions of “historical policy” who insist on listing the execution of Polish officers in Katyn, Mednoye and other places in 1940 as an act of genocide – which is an extremely questionable qualification of that crime – pay far less attention to the unquestionable genocide of the Poles in 1937.

The ethnic factor played a substantial role in the history of collectivization and the famines of 1932 and 1933, which is intensively discussed these days. Historians are having a serious debate on its significance in high-rank decision-making in Moscow in those years. Unfortunately, the works of some Russian authors trying to join in the discussion are typical “paid services” and fall short of standing up to professional criticism.

Meanwhile, a scrupulous analysis and profound public recognition of the repressiveness of the Russian Empire and, in an

incomparably greater measure, of the Soviet Empire, including as concerns their ethnic policies, is extremely important for Russia and for relations with its neighbors.

THE POLICY OF THE PAST

Today's mindset and the historical memory of ethnic Russians has (or had until recently) a peculiarity that makes it drastically different from the mentality and historical memory of neighboring nations, both those living in independent states and inside Russia. Hungarian philosopher Istvan Bibo wrote in *The Distress of the East European Small States* that Eastern Europeans have a collective existential fear of the real or imaginary death of an entire ethnos through the loss of state sovereignty, assimilation, deportation, or genocide.

Initially, that fear was caused by the Turks, then by the Germans, and in some cases by the Poles, and later by Russia. The perception of Germany as an immediate threat vanished after World War II, while apprehensions about Turkey had dispelled much earlier. This existential fear, which had been born out of hundreds of years of unpredictable and often catastrophic development, concentrated around the Soviet Union for the past half a century and shifted over to Russia after 1991.

As for the Russians, the motive of ethnic victimization was not typical of them until fairly recently. They have always had the feeling that they were victims of repressions on the part of the state machinery, which they did not consider as something ethnically alien to them. The phenomenon described by Bibo is not psychologically close to the Russians and therefore they do not understand it. Collective existential fears can hardly be named among the properties of a healthy psyche. It is not worthwhile for us to breed the mentality of a besieged fortress or the atmosphere of fear for the very existence of the Russian nation — and this is what some of our publicists have been doing so actively in recent years.

There are forces in many neighboring states that quite purposefully seek to turn history into a weapon for political struggle (in Poland these forces invented the term 'historical policy' to denote the tendency). They try to glue the "guilty" labels to certain coun-

tries – Russia in the first place – in international relations and to position themselves as innocent “victims” in a bid to gain certain moral advantages. They call for Russia’s repentance and reparations for real and fictitious sins and they describe Russia as an incurably vicious imperial nation and paint it in the grim colors of an institutionalized and hostile alien. The proponents of “historical policy” still eye our country as a handy instrument to shape their national identity. They also find this instrument efficient in fighting their political opponents and marginalizing some other groups of the population, especially ethnic Russian minorities wherever they exist.

We will never make agreements with those who employ “historical policies” for self-serving ends, but contrary to what many of our publicists and politicians claim, this does not mean that the recognition of our own historical sins and their public denunciation “will play into the hands of Russia’s enemies.” The thing is that a multitude of people in those countries do not have any intention to turn history into an instrument of political strife. They remember the traumas of the past but they are ready for reconciliation. Nothing is more offensive for them in contacts with the Russians than a lack of knowledge and understanding of the dark pages of the past on the part of Russians.

The inability to discern the fears of neighbors and to understand how serious their reasons are cannot be called a virtue, especially if a nation dramatically needs a critical reassessment of its own history and relations with other nations. This explains to a large degree the crisis of understanding and trust, characteristic of the relations between today’s Russia and its neighbors. Each side will have to go along its part of the road toward untangling the knot. The Russians will have to look more profoundly at the repressiveness of empires, to which they are successors in both the positive and negative sense. Our neighbors will have to realize that the Russians, too, were victimized by empires that had been built with reliance on their strength, tolerance and talent and, second, that besides traumas and tragedies the empires had other sides as well.

In Russia itself, an acute struggle is going on around the interpretation of history, and the topics heard in public discussions include the existence of ostensibly perpetual Russian properties. For

instance, the long imperial tradition is described as a property of the Russian government that recurs along with despotism. Russia's history is then featured as an absolutely unique and practically irremovable chain of reincarnations of this despotic power. The country revolves along a vicious circle and the possibility of breaking it either looks impossible or inseparable from radical fighting with the state and a revolution that erases the old system from the face of the Earth. This tradition can be traced to the Bolshevik outlook on history and its version is still alive in the milieu identifying themselves as liberals. The only difference is that the Bolshevik version of history portrayed the October 1917 revolution as a rupturing of the vicious circle, while the liberal one portrays it as its continuation and expansion. On the contrary, the proponents of the empire treat the same features as a prerequisite for reverting to the "correct path." "Russia can only exist as an empire, or it cannot exist at all," or: "the Russian nation is tormented by the senselessness of its existence in the absence of an imperial mission," they claim.

Other typical motives of this debate – the binary opposition between the bad state and the good intelligentsia (or vice versa), the bad nationalists and the good central government (or vice versa) and so on – are also closely linked to it.

Another frequent issue is the willingness to "straighten out" Russian history. Maria Todorova, who mentions the traditional and continuing tendency to "normalize" history and the desire to consider it as a unique one which rejects the application of Western-European categories, makes a keen observation that the polemic has a political content, apart from the scientific one.

The current tendency to "normalize" Russian history deserves attention in as much as it implies dismantling of the tendentious and degenerating "uniqueness" theory. At the same time, methodologically well-conceived research that accentuates the specificity of Russian history in one way or another makes up an absolutely legitimate part of historiography regardless of whether it is authored by Russian or foreign historians.

Todorova draws a comparison between the current debates on Russian history and the recent debates on a special German path

(*Sonderweg*). The approach that treated the country's history as a deviation from the European model of development remained quite topical until Germany embedded itself in pan-European organizations. Now the same special features are viewed as a version of European history. The accent is made on the common traits and Germany's historical development is thus "normalized." The same mechanism applies to Russia – the problem of its historical uniqueness will remain topical (or rather, politically topical) until it gets a place in European and international organizations.

This is a correct and exceptionally timely observation, as we are seeing a change in the political context and the influence of the factor on the scientific discourse of Russia's history. There is a great risk of getting mired in counterproductive discussions about the frontiers of the European model of historical development. References to the history of one region or another or one nation or another as "European" or "non-European" are unscrupulously used today inside the EU itself and along its periphery when it comes to discussing whether the region or nation deserves to be a member of a united Europe. A discussion that aims to broaden our perspective on the European model of history (or actually multiple and very different models) is quite useful, yet it brings forth a new conflict between history and politics. The rise of a historical myth about the unity of Europe, which serves the European Community today, seems quite apparent.

There are other and more dangerous traps on the way to "normalizing" Russian history.

Like it was in the case of Germany, normalization can be achieved by the biased highlighting of some aspects and scripts of history and blurring out others, which means that "normalization" becomes as much a victim in the name of politics as the "uniqueness" theory. The normalization of Germany history – in the normal German discourse at least – does not imply a rejection of the recognition of the exceptionality of Nazi crimes. It regards the Nazi period as a breakdown and not as a logical result of the centuries-long German history – in contrast to what German liberals would say in the 1950s and the 1960s. In Russia, there is a tendency today to interpret the terror of the 1920s-1950s as a norm; an unavoidable

byproduct of a speedy modernization in a backward agrarian country, not as a deviation. This logic eliminates the necessity for any moral assessments of the horrible events of the past.

Professional history arose in the early 19th century as part of nation-building ventures and it remains the same in many aspects today. That is why the Russian authorities, which are apparently concerned with the problems of national consolidation, give so much attention to history textbooks and, generally, to society's historical memory. Yet a question arises: How is it actually done? There is an obvious tendency toward construing "a glorious past" — an inalienable part of any national historical narrative, no doubt. Yet the problem is whom are we trying to bring up — a soldier or a citizen? As a civil community, a nation is formed not only by the memory of glorious deeds, but also by the recognition of the mistakes and crimes of the past.

Building an awareness of Russia's tragedies of the 20th century may be fruitful and help recognize the value of individual rights and freedoms, as well as the value of the national community and of an individual's life. It remains unclear in this context whether the visit that Vladimir Putin made last year to the Bitsa testing range on the outskirts of Moscow, where thousands of innocent people were executed in the 1930s, marked the start of a tradition where the president would participate in the commemoration of the victims of Bolshevik terror or whether it was a single episode in the election campaign. State policy in the field of society's historical consciousness is still unclear.

Generally speaking, history does not provide clear answers to the problems of modern life; nor does it predestine the future development. Yet it sets before us many important questions worth thinking about. How can one learn to respect the state without falling into servility or piousness? Or how can one master social and civic activity and overcome carnivorous individualism bred by Soviet Communism and the post-Communist era of wild capitalism? Or how does one combine tolerance and activity in a country where the tolerant are often inactive and the active are intolerant? There are no simple answers to these questions, but even considering them through the prism of history could be very useful.

The Paradox and Dangers of “Historical Policy”

The Past as a Political Instrument

Anatoly Torkunov

An unbiased analysis of foreign policy events and tendencies often prompts the more or less well-versed observer to make paradoxical conclusions. What happened on the eve of the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of World War I – that horrendous war that claimed millions of human lives, destroyed empires and created bloody revolutions at its end?

Nothing special happened at all in 1984, except that some elderly veterans laid wreaths on Trafalgar Square in London and there was a slightly more pompous than usual military parade on the Champs Elysees in Paris. As for the Soviet Union, the start of the “first imperialist” war was not marked at all, as that war had sunk deep into history.

And now let us look around and see what is happening in social and public life in Russia and its European neighboring countries now that the 70th anniversary of the start of World War II is drawing nearer. The picture is completely different this time, with the ghosts of the past emerging as full-fledged actors in current political discussions and which have an invisible presence in parliamentary hearings and even in daily diplomatic practices, at least in some countries. But if your partner wants to discuss the wounds inflicted by history, you simply cannot say no to him. Otherwise

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he will not discuss with you the things that you are interested in. Thus, the historical agenda draws ever more new people.

It is not accidental that Russian President Dmitry Medvedev devoted part of his speech at a conference of Russian ambassadors at the Foreign Ministry to historical issues in politics. "We simply can't accept the attempts seen in some countries — especially if they receive governmental support — to bring into the light claims about the 'civilizing and liberating mission' of the Nazis and their accomplices," he said.

AN ASYMMETRIC RESPONSE

Indeed, the debates about the war often contain inadmissible and even blasphemous elements. Yet the topic of the war also draws out issues of a more conceptual nature, including the problem of the role that totalitarian and authoritarian regimes played in the fate of the 20th century.

It is true that many of those who raise such issues do so not because of some scientific interest, but rather because they pursue practical propagandist foreign policy aims — including with regard to Russia. "Fighters on the ideology front" rely on a tough algorithm, which implies that Soviet totalitarianism should be denounced through a comparison with German Nazism as the first step. As a second step, responsibility, including material responsibility, should be apportioned to today's Russia. Worse still, those propaganda tricksters do not stop at that and try to wrap the year 1945 in mourning banners and pass it off as the onset of the Soviet yoke in Europe.

Frankly speaking, Russian society, and even the most politically advanced part of it, has proven to be simply unprepared for such a turn. It produces irritation and bitterness. The torrents of accusations poured on our heads mostly by former friends from the former "Socialist camp" and, more importantly, from former fellow-countrymen living in the newly independent states do not facilitate mutual understanding and good-neighborliness as a minimum.

The people who blame the past — and many of them shared it with us — are reluctant to see the shades of colors or to admit that the Soviet system had evolutionary elements. I personally object to factoring out totalitarianism from the history of democratic

countries, since it is neither an exception nor a misfortunate accident in historical development. It is rather a logical result and a manifestation of concrete social and historical circumstances.

After all, how could the leaders of, say, new Baltic countries mature into full-fledged high-quality democrats in an absolutely totalitarian Soviet society? How did it happen that former functionaries of the Young Communists League and the Communist Party, who used to collaborate closely with secret services, eventually brought their countries into the lairs of liberalism – NATO and the European Union? Could it be that history, including Soviet history, and totalitarianism are more complex elements than what the simplistic and biased interpreters present?

Discussions of authoritarianism and totalitarianism were widespread in Russia at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. As representatives of Russia's intellectual milieu, we would think then that we had rounded up the process of conceptualization and that the shadows of the past had been "buried in a coffin" as Stalin would say. Alas, our conclusions were premature.

Many people – including whole societies – must have found themselves outside the context of such discussions, as at that time they pursued entirely different goals. For instance, the winning of independence by the countries of the Baltic region and, partly, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Perhaps this is why we have to return to the problem now.

There exists another and highly disconcerting tendency – the obliviousness of Russians themselves to the lessons of totalitarianism that seemed to have been learned by heart. The generation of Russians that grew up in the 1990s must have missed movies like Tengiz Abuladze's *Repentance* or Alexander Beck's novel *A New Appointment* or Varlam Shalamov's prison camp stories. As for *The Gulag Archipelago*, those people just skimmed it – just the same way they read *War and Peace*. Far from all of this generation can discern the allusions that landmark Soviet-era bards such as Vladimir Vysotsky and Bulat Okudzhava made in their songs. Remarkably, a young Russian will typically assign the same ranking of popularity to Soviet-era bards and dictators.

The mentality of the generation of Putin’s “stability era” and the generation that matured in the “frenzied 1990s” does not draw a distinct line between the historical good and bad or between the country’s grandeur and the crimes of a regime. This factor is aggravated by the swelling primitive chauvinistic patriotism and the popularity of radical ideologies among the youth. Nor should one discard the fact that we often make use of extremely simplified and blunt arguments in our debates with those who refashion history and move Soviet monuments to other places. Mass consciousness accepts these arguments as false ideological hallmarks. In the meantime, this is not the case when an enemy should be crushed with his own weapons. The response should be asymmetric, whatever the banality of this statement.

That is why a willingness to attain absolute ideological uniformity, which rules out differences in interpretations of the country’s history, may become the cornerstone of a new totalitarian ideology, even if we place motivations like “rebuffing the libelers” behind this over-simplified uniformity.

Many people today perceive discussions on the issues of history as a pain in the neck. The debating simply grates against their teeth. Yet it does go on, and even on a pan-European scale, and we cannot afford to stand aside. Otherwise the Europeans – or the ‘new Europeans’ – will draw Russia’s portrait without us.

One cannot help becoming unpleasantly puzzled by the overblown weight of “historical policy” in the context of European and Euro-Asian international relations. The factor adds more ballast to positive communications between countries and peoples, breeds and replicates negative images of neighbors, and shapes a hostile perception of other nations.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOBRIETY

The discussion today has a multifaceted genesis varying from a genuine, but over-stimulated willingness to settle accounts with the heinous past to a trivial and often anti-Russian propaganda. But we can gain consolation from not being the only “bad guys.” Foreign policy propaganda based on history or, rather, the “historical foreign policy” has an anti-Polish, anti-German and anti-Ukrainian

dimension as well. Everything depends on what notes you can pick out of the general cacophony and what strings you pluck.

Making historical issues a matter of politics is a dangerous thing and any historian can cite a dozen examples where the “shadows of history” did their erosive work.

Look for instance at how the “historically-grounded foreign policy” proclaimed by some members of the former Polish cabinet added stamina to Erika Steinbach and her very controversial Bund der Vertriebenen (Federation of German Expellees), or how it complicated relations between Moscow and Warsaw for a period of time. Today, such obstructions of the past are being cleared out by a special Russian-Polish working group which deals with complicated problems stemming from the history of bilateral relations. In this case, both sides managed to depart from the past and turn their eyes to a search for concord in the name of the future.

As I said above, it is counterproductive to ignore such tendencies. So, Russian thinkers and public quarters should take part in this discussion and fend off the things we find unjustified, biased or false.

However, our participation in it should still be based on an adequate perception of our own selves.

George Orwell’s classical maxim suggesting that “he who controls the past controls the future and he who controls the present controls the past” can be applied only if society controls itself, its public debates and its mass consciousness in a worthy manner.

The majority of society and experts in Russia recognize that the Russians were among the largest victims of authoritarianism and totalitarianism in the 20th century — of the homemade brand (Stalinism) and of the exported one (Hitler’s Nazism). This extremely bitter experience prompts many of them to think soberly.

However paradoxically this might sound, Soviet authoritarianism bred a number of foreign policy problems, around which swords are crossed — and sometimes shots are fired — to this very day. Suffice it to recall the arbitrarily drawn borders between ethnic republics in the Caucasus or the handover of a whole peninsula from one Soviet republic to another without account of the wishes of its population. Did anyone heed the will of people amid

all of these geopolitical exercises? No one did. And who is suffering from it? Today's Russia and its closest neighbors.

Sober assessments of totalitarianism and its legacy are not synonymous with self-flogging. Everyone who joins historical discussions about or with this country must understand that today's modern Russia condemned the crimes committed by the totalitarian regime of the past in the last years of its Soviet-era incarnation.

Russia today has conscientiously chosen a different path of development, which has nothing to do with Stalinism or post-Stalinist authoritarianism. Today's Russia does not bear responsibility for the crimes of the past and does not in any way act as an ideological successor to the Soviet Union. For proof of this one only needs to look at the preamble to the Russian Constitution.

* * *

It is clear to any person who thinks realistically that any nation state will seek to produce its own version of history. Even the Socialist camp failed to produce a common version for everyone. This history — or rather, its interpretation, will be slightly different from that of one's neighbors. Yet the writing of "national histories" should not proceed from adversely directed historical materials, from the philosophy of hatred or from historical claims. Divergences of interpretation should not exceed a certain percentage. We will not be able to build a future without this kind of self-control.

What I have said above does not mean that politicians should not remember history or that historians should not interpret policies. They can and should do this, but with a positive result of some kind. It appears that the postwar generation has showed special wisdom in this sense, as many modern European institutions came about as a result of a rethinking of the continent's tragic history and simultaneously as a recipe for stopping tragedies from repeating themselves.

The drama of 20th-century European history is our common European heritage, and we Europeans should manage it in a way that will not generate new "hotbeds of historical tensions." We should build relations of good-neighborliness on the basis of lessons that have been learned.

The Russian People and National Identity

Ways to Form a Civic Nation

Valery Tishkov

Mechanisms for affirming national identity as a foundation of Russia's statehood have long been the source of much controversy among Russian policymakers and experts, while debates on this issue are superficial and overly emotional. Juggling with such fundamental notions as 'people' and 'nation' involves serious risks for society and the state. In the Russian political vocabulary, the word 'nationalism' is attributed a negative meaning. Meanwhile, nationalism played a key role in the formation of modern states and largely remains a major political ideology of the modern age.

In Russia, these debates have contributed to the development of three main characterizations of Russian society and the state:

First, Russia is a multination state, which makes it totally different from other countries;

Second, Russia is a state of ethnic Russians (*Russkii*) with a host of other ethnic minorities whose members can either identify themselves as Russians or acknowledge that the ethnic Russian majority rightfully enjoys the state-building status;

Third, Russia (Rossiya) is a national state featuring a multi-ethnic "Rossiyan" nation (*Rossiyan*) underpinned by the Russian language and culture, and embracing members of other ethnic communities (usually defined as peoples, nationalities, ethnic groups or nations).

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The Russian authorities, including the current and former presidents, Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin, have embraced this final characterization, which advances the notion of the *Rossiyan* people as a historical entity or civic nation. While it has its opponents, particularly among champions of ethnic nationalism who have proclaimed “a failure of the construction of a civic nation,” this interpretation of Russia’s current identity has been accepted and supported by a large number of intellectuals and policymakers as the only feasible option for Russia. Indeed, the formula is in line with the state (civic) national identity that has been adopted and proven successful in other major multi-ethnic countries around the world.

GLOBAL CONTEXT

Throughout the world, public policy discourses have come to embrace the perception of nations as territorial and political entities featuring complex – although integrated – social and cultural systems. No matter how ethnically or religiously heterogeneous some countries might be, they invariably define themselves as ‘nations’ and consider their states ‘national’ or ‘nation states.’ ‘People’ and ‘nation’ are synonyms here, and it is these two categories that impart primordial legitimacy to a modern state.

The perception of a united people/nation is a key factor in ensuring stability and accord in society, and is as strong a guarantee of the state’s strength as the Constitution, the Army and the guarded borders. The ideology of a ‘civic nation’ embraces the following attributes: the ethos of a responsible citizen; a unified education system; a commonly shared vision of the country’s past – both good and bad; a calendar and symbols; feelings of attachment to the country; loyalty to the state; and the upholding of national interests. All these factors form what is called ‘state (civic) nationalism.’

Civic nationalism exists in contrast to the ideology of ethnic nationalism, which embodies exclusively one or another ethnic community, often either a majority or minority of the given country’s population. That community considers only its immediate members, rather than all fellow countrymen, to be part of the nation, and, in instances of ethnic nationalism, seeks its own

statehood or some form of preferential status. Clearly, there are important disparities between the two types of nationalism, especially given that ethnic nationalism stems from an ideology of exclusion and a rejection of diversity, while civic nationalism is based on an ideology of solidarity and readily integrated plurality.

Extreme nationalism among ethnic minorities presents a risk to the state – and to civic nationalism – particularly if they seek to secede from the country through the use of force. Admittedly, ethnic nationalism on behalf of a dominant group can likewise carry some serious risks. If such a community attempts to claim exclusive ownership of the state, it in turn risks engendering opponents of this state among the various subordinated ethnic communities.

For example, in India, Hindu nationalism on behalf of the Hindi-speaking majority sparked a string of domestic civil-war-like confrontations. Therefore, the Indian authorities now want to bolster the notion of an Indian nation that can encompass the country's multitude of ethnic, religious and racial communities, both large and small. Since the times of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, local elites and the state have been working to shore up civic Indian nationalism as a counterweight to Hindu nationalism or any other nationalism on behalf of ethnic or religious minorities. Thanks to a focused endeavor to sustain that ideology, India continues to enjoy its national integrity.

In China too, the dominant ethnic group (*Han*) and the concept of the Chinese nation (*Minzu*) largely correspond in terms of demography and core culture. Nonetheless, the Han have been unable to promote themselves as the dominant state-making ethnic nation due to the 55 other non-Han ethnic groups (or nationalities) that exist in China, which account for over 100 million people. Han chauvinism, criticized since the times of Mao Zedong, poses a threat to Chinese statehood for the very reason that it risks provoking discontent and separatism by non-Han communities, leading to the eventual disintegration of China. The concept of a civic Chinese nation made up of all the country's citizens was developed a few decades ago, and it appears to be working well toward establishing and sustaining a unified Chinese national identity.

These two national identities, both civic and ethnic, similarly coexist in many other countries (Spain, the United Kingdom, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Mexico, Canada, etc.), including Russia. Understandably, such nations feature a complex ethnic, religious and racial mix of communities, yet the dominant culture, language and religion nearly always provide the national cultural framework: English for the British nation, Castilian for the Spanish, Han for the Chinese, and Russian for the *Rossiyan* nation.

Therefore, while there are certain unique features of Russia's nation-building ideology and its practice of using the 'nation' category, modern-day Russia is generally not exceptional in terms of its construction as a nation.

NATIONALISM IN PRE-REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA

A state is considered legitimate if its population views itself as a united nation loyal to its state. In Russia, this is the Russian (*Rossiyan*) people (*Rossiyan*). This notion emerged in the times of Emperor Peter the Great and scientist and writer Mikhail Lomonosov and was further developed by outstanding public figures, starting from Nikolai Karamzin.

Russia developed a notion of Russian (*Rossiyan*) or "pan-Russian" (Pyotr Struve) nation at the same time (in the 18th and 19th centuries) as Europe and America formed the idea of modern nations based on civic nationalism. The words '*Russkii*' and '*Rossiyan*' were largely synonyms. The word '*Russkii*' referred more to local customs and culture, while the word '*Rossiyan*' referred to the whole nation.

For example, according to Karamzin, being a *Rossiyan* primarily amounted to having the capacity to feel a profound bond with the homeland (not the Tsar alone) and the desire to be a "perfect citizen." This understanding of the notion of *Rossiyan-ness* was built on the basis of Russian culture and Orthodox Christianity (as well as on Catholic cultures in western Russia and Islamic ones in the Volga region). It imposed itself as the dominant school of thought, marginalizing the potential for ethnic

nationalism not only in the country's center, but also across its far-flung provinces (except for Poland and Finland).

Following on from this notion of a civic *Rossiyan* national identity, manifested in its various liberal-imperial and federalist forms, Struve quite rightly concluded that "Russia is a nation state" and that "while seeking to expand its core geographically, Russia has turned into a state featuring both national unity and multi-ethnic diversity."

However, in Russia there were also supporters of an ethnographic Great Russian (*Velikoruss*) identity, according to whom the territory and the dominant culture of the empire was the sole preserve of the ethnic Russian majority. In fact, the long-standing endeavor to re-conceptualize the empire as a nation state of the *Rossiyan* "multi-peopled nation" (as defined by Ivan Ilyin) had still not been fully completed by 1917. While this was understandable given the enormity of the task in such a geographically vast and ethnically diverse country, it was primarily the result of a narrow-minded and ideologically disoriented ruling autocracy and political elite. Nevertheless, *it would be a mistake to think that, since pre-revolutionary Russia was an empire, it therefore was not a nation state.*

Pre-revolutionary Russia already invoked, in the minds of its many different countrymen, a clear understanding of national territory, national economy and national interests. Furthermore, there existed a relatively large and both ethnically and religiously diverse stratum of educated professionals and civil servants who perceived themselves as members of the single *Rossiyan* people and regarded Russia as their homeland. It was not accidental that during the revolution and the Civil War opponents of Bolsheviks were united by the slogan of "defending a single and indivisible Russia."

The perception of pre-revolutionary Russia as a "patchwork empire" and a "prison of peoples" was invented in Soviet times due to the revolutionary rejection of the past. Recent studies of nationalism suggest that *pre-1917 Russia, far from being a historical anomaly, was in fact some form of emerging nation state, with its national core being built around the Russian language and culture.*

REVIEWING THE SOVIET ERA

Under the Soviet regime, the nation-building project placed greater emphasis on recognizing the rights and separate identities of Russia's ethnic groups. Ethno-territorial autonomies acquired "ethnic statehood" in the form of Union and autonomous republics. Finally, ethnic communities and regional/religious/tribal identities were engineered into "socialist nations."

Starting in 1926, Soviet population censuses featured a mandatory nationality question that forced all citizens to identify with the ethnic background of one parent. The country's population was thus broken down into "nations" and "nationalities" (ethnic groups), whose overall number depended on counting procedures and political-ideological guidelines. The content of the notion '*Russkii*' changed and began to denote only former "Great Russians," while the latter term disappeared first from public usage and then from people's self-consciousness. People living in "Little Russia" (now known as Ukraine) began to call themselves Ukrainians; Belarusians remained Belarusians; but both groups ceased to consider themselves Russians at the same time.

Nonetheless, the Soviet model – while entrenching new ethnic and cultural divisions – also sought to provide a unifying ideology that would bind all the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics together. In this way, through narratives of internationalism and friendship among peoples, bolstered and enforced by iron-rule authoritarianism, the Soviet Union fostered an ideology of Soviet patriotism. In fact, while such a reality was never admitted or acknowledged by the leadership, *the Soviet people actually constituted a civic nation, with the Soviet Union being a kind of nation state*. While its specific ideological framework was unique, the Soviet Union was in many ways no different than other large and ethnically heterogeneous states that have been and are known as nation states, such as the United Kingdom, Spain, China, India, Indonesia, the U.S., Canada, Brazil, Mexico, and others.

The granting of statehood to ethnic territories was one of the factors in the Soviet Union's breakup in the name of "national" –

that is, ethnic – self-determination. After the breakup, the Soviet nation as a community was declared to be a chimera, and the Soviet Union was the “last empire.” However, despite the radical upheaval of the 1917 revolution and the watershed shift that took place, a series of studies have convincingly argued that the Soviet Union was an extension – in terms of its civic project – of the pre-revolutionary Russian state. At the same time, the word ‘*Rossiya*’ disappeared from the country’s name, as did the notions ‘*Rossiyan* people’ and ‘*Rossiyan*s’ from the language.

The Soviet modernization and cultural policy, for all their distortions, helped small cultures to survive and develop, while common historical trials and accomplishments contributed to the consolidation of a civic nation in terms of entrenching similar social, cultural and behavioral patterns among the Soviet peoples.

A NEW RUSSIAN PROJECT

Due to the inertia of political and legal thinking, the Russian Constitution continues to feature the concept of multi-nationality, but this would be best substituted by the concept of a ‘multi-peopled nation.’ ***It is necessary to consistently affirm the notions ‘nation’ and ‘national’ in the official civic sense,*** without rejecting the established practice of using these notions in an ethno-cultural capacity.

The coexistence of two different meanings for such a politically and emotionally loaded notion as ‘nation’ is possible within the framework of one country. At the same time, the primacy of the civic national identity is indisputable for its citizens, however hard ethnic nationalists may dispute this fact. The political leadership must explain that these two forms of identity are not mutually exclusive and that the notions ‘*Rossiyan* people,’ ‘*Rossiyan* nation’ and ‘*Rossiyan*s’ do not deny the existence of ethnic Russian identity, Ossetian identity, Tatar identity, or that of any other people living in the country.

The overall effort to sustain and develop the languages and cultures of the peoples of Russia should proceed hand in hand with acknowledging the *Rossiyan* nation and *Rossiyan* identity as a fundamental characteristic of its citizens. This innovation is long

overdue and is already recognized at the level of common sense and practiced in everyday life. Public opinion polls and everyday practices of Russian citizens show that their civic and state affiliation and the recognition of their *Rossiyan*-ness is more important to them than their ethnic affiliation.

Some current proposals are unfeasible to affirm in Russia the notion of not a '*Rossiyan*' but a '*Russian*' nation and to reanimate the pre-revolutionary notion of "Russians" as all those who consider themselves to be so. Ukrainians and Belarusians living in Russia will never agree to be called Russians again, while Tatars or Chechens have never identified themselves as Russians. Yet, all these and other ethnic groups in this country view themselves as *Rossiyan*s. The prestige of Russian-ness and the status of Russians can and must be enhanced not by rejecting *Rossiyan*-ness but by affirming the double (Russian and *Rossiyan*) identity; by improving living conditions in regions largely populated by ethnic Russians; and finally, by promoting their social and political representation in the Russian state.

Modern states have come to acknowledge multiple and non-exclusive identities at the community and individual level. This weakens ethno-cultural borderlines within co-citizenship and promotes national consolidation. In addition, it more adequately reflects the self-consciousness of people born of mixed marriages. In Russia, where one-third of its people come from mixed couples, there still persists the practice of mandatory registration of a single ethnic affiliation. This practice results in personal violence and in heated debates about ethnic affiliation. In order to promote national consolidation and better reflect the ethno-religious diversity of Russia's citizens, the forthcoming population census should allow for the registration of multiple ethnic affiliations.

In the light of the new doctrine, there should be no strict limitations on the use of the word 'nation.' At the same time, the state should refer to national priorities and strategic national interests as "national policy," while the policy of sustaining and managing the country's ethno-cultural diversity should be termed as ethnic or ethno-cultural policy.

Today, all states in the world consider themselves nation states, and Russia has no grounds to be an exception. A ubiquitous effort is underway across the globe to establish the concept of a nation as free from racial, ethnic or religious dimensions. A nation is forged as the result of a sustained effort on the part of any given country's political and intellectual elites, articulating and disseminating their self-perception as a unified nation with a common set of values, symbols and aspirations, rather than striving to achieve ethno-cultural uniformity.

Such general views exist in countries with a more disunited population than that of Russia, whereas Russia features a real community of *Rossiyan* nationals (*Rossiyanе*) sharing a single set of historical and social values, patriotism, culture and language. However, a large part of the Russian elite seek to deny this community, so there is an urgent need to change the situation. National identity can be developed through a host of tools and strategies, with the primary objectives being to assure civic equity, pursue education and awareness programs, cultivate the state language, develop the symbols and calendar, and sustain cultural and mass-media activities. Following the completion of crucial political and economic reforms, Russia now needs to review its ideological and doctrinal documents underpinning the ongoing effort to achieve civic solidarity and national identity.

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Incomplete Centralization

The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Federative Structure

Olga Tynyanova

Russia's political and administrative structure and its relationship with the rise of a nation-state identity have been discussed more than once in articles in *Russia in Global Affairs*. These problems continue to be very relevant today, as the country is going through a complicated period of consolidation into a new type of state power. On the other hand, like all other countries, Russia has found itself subject to an increasing influence of multifarious external factors in the age of globalization.

Swiss geographer Claude Raffestin wrote fifteen years ago that borders are social analogs of biological membranes regulating a metabolic substance exchange between a territory — ethnic or sovereign — and the world around it. It is obvious that the efficiency of this “metabolism;” i.e. the involvement of a state in global, political, economic and civilizational processes and its simultaneous protection from undesirable impacts, depends to a large extent on the condition of the membrane — the state border — and of the adjoining territories. History proves that the bigger the unification of the political and administrative structure of the border periphery is, the greater its efficiency.

Moreover, Russia's border periphery has never been homogeneous. In the Russian Empire, state unification embraced only those border provinces that had formed as products of a spontaneous popular colonization — first during the reign of Peter the

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Great and then during the reign of Catherine II. As for ethnic provinces, beginning with the annexation of the Kazan khanate, the degree of their integration into the country's political space and, correspondingly, their status in the administrative system has varied considerably.

As a result, by the beginning of the 20th century, the Russian Empire emerged as an agglomeration of administrative entities. It had a mixed, unsystematic and rather loose organization on the political, administrative and legal plane. The regional and ethnic separatism was somewhat counterbalanced by the idea of a united and indivisible centralized state; and the military and civilian administrations in the provinces relied on that. This idea would often take the form of talk about "a common destiny" of peoples living in Russia, as a reflection of their awareness of a common external threat and economic space.

The combination of these concepts became an important factor behind the formation of the Soviet Union and the political mobilization of its people, especially in the 1930s and the 1940s. However, external threats, common economic space and Marxist-Leninist ideology could not secure the political and administrative unification of the border periphery. Nationalistic and separatist moods among Communists in the former ethnic provinces forced the Soviet leaders to make concessions; Leninist and Stalinist nationalities policy only worked toward a conservation of regionalism and ethnic separatism. The policy of the self-determination of nations also fostered them.

To understand the logical antecedence of the Soviet Union's law *On the Resolution of Issues Pertaining to the Secession of a Union Republic from the USSR*, which was passed on April 3, 1990 and which guaranteed unconditional self-determination of the autonomies of all levels, it is sufficient to open Volume 14 of Joseph Stalin's Collected Works.

The text of Stalin's report on the draft constitution passed in 1936 says the following on promoting the autonomous republics to the status of Union ones: "First, it is essential that a republic be a border province [...] because, if a Union republic retains the

right to secession, it should have a logical and practical opportunity to raise the issue of its withdrawal from the USSR. And that right can be enjoyed only by the republics that have, say, a border with some foreign countries and are not surrounded by the territories of the USSR [...] So, if a Union republic has the right to secede, we should create conditions that would prevent this right from turning into a senseless scrap of paper [...] Second, it is necessary that ethnic people, who give their name to the title of the republic, represent a more or less compact majority on its territory [...] Third, this republic [...] should have a population, say, of no less than a million people. Why? Because it would be wrong to suppose that a small Soviet republic with a minimal population and a minimal army could count on its existence as an independent state.” These provisions stayed in effect even after the dismantling of Stalin’s personality cult.

The inviolability of the Soviet borders was ensured by the Iron Curtain and the state’s integrity hinged on the principles of Communist Party construction in line with Article 6 of the Soviet Union’s Constitution. The abolition of this article meant not only a loosening of ideology at the Union center, but also a loss of the sole mechanism of internal political integration.

As for Boris Yeltsin’s proposal to “take as much sovereignty as you can swallow,” it would be strange if the constituent territories of the Federation located along the border (and elsewhere) decided not to use it in such a situation. The result was that – although Russia maintained formal unity – it turned into a conglomerate of territorial entities that ignored the supremacy of federal law and the common economic space *de facto* and *de jure*. “We have a decentralized state,” President Vladimir Putin had to admit in his state-of-the-nation address to both houses of parliament on July 8, 2000.

In spite of the course toward centralization that the Russian leaders embarked on at the beginning of this decade, today’s Russian Federation still preserves the legislative base of regional and ethno-political disintegration in the border areas. This has the following backbone elements: the 1993 Constitution of the

Russian Federation; the major laws and regulations of Russia's constituent regions located along the state border; Presidential Decree No. 773 of July 2, 2005, *On Interaction Between and Coordination of Activity by the Agencies of Executive Power in Constituent Regions of the Russian Federation and Regional Branches of the Federal Agencies of Executive Power*; federal laws *On Amendments to Separate Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation in Connection with Improvements in the Distribution of Powers* (No. 199, signed December 31, 2005) and *On Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation* (No. 165-FZ, signed December 11, 2002).

It may look at first glance that the effective Constitution lays the foundations for a centralized model of federalism: it declares Russia's sovereignty over its entire territory; the supremacy of federal law; unity of the legal and economic space, as well as of the system of state power.

Still, Vladimir Putin said at a session of the Council of Legislators in March 2006 that work on aligning territorial legislative acts with federal ones had been completed in only ten constituent territories of the Russian Federation. Also, Clause 2 of Article 5 of the constitution treats the constituent republics as *statehoods*, while Article 73 affirms their right to enjoy the full scope of *state* power. These provisions, in turn, are fixed in the basic laws of all the constituent republics, with Kalmykia and the Republic of Altai being the only exceptions.

Buryatia, Ingushetia, Karelia, North Ossetia, Tyva, Sakha-Yakutia and the Chukotka Autonomous District are the only constituent territories that mention the federal constitution as a document determining their state and legal status along with their regional constitutions. However, the latest edition of Sakha-Yakutia's constitution lists the issues pertaining to the state structure, status and territory as the prerogatives of the republic. Along with it, "the people of the Republic of Sakha-Yakutia *retain the right to self-determination* (hereinafter italicized by the author – Ed.) on the basis of the expression of the will by its citizens." A number of Russia's constituent regions –

the Volgograd, Omsk and Sakhalin – define themselves as “*state territorial entities*.”

Only three of all the national constituents – Karachai-Cherkessia, Republic of Altai and Kalmykia – recognize in their constitutions that their territories are inalienable parts of the Russian Federation, and only the Chukotka Autonomous District has a provision in its regulations that affirms Russia’s sovereignty over its territory. However, Article 1 of the regulations says that the area “enjoys the *social, economic and political autonomy* inherent in a constituent of the federation.”

It is noteworthy that most of the constituent territories located along the borders have the right to maintain international and foreign economic relations, although neither they themselves nor the agencies of local self-government are subjects of international law. Constitutional changes over the past few years have mostly embraced ethnic territorial entities – and only formally.

Kabardino-Balkaria and Sakha-Yakutia continue to position themselves as *de facto* independent subjects of international relations with a status standing on a par with the Russian Federation, since they *coordinate* their foreign relations and trade with it. Karachai-Cherkessia, North Ossetia and Kalmykia fully manage international relations on their own without any constrictive provisions in their laws. The same can be said of the Astrakhan, Belgorod, Kurgan, Omsk, Samara, and Smolensk regions. The regulations of the Pskov Region mention a single provision concerning international relations: “The Governor of the Pskov Region acts as the Region’s representative in international and foreign economic relations.”

Russia’s constitution does not envision any forms of the federal government’s legal interference in the affairs of constituent regions. More than that, Paragraph 6 of Article 76 says: “Should a contradiction emerge between a federal law and a legal act of a constituent territory [...], the legal act of the constituent territory shall prevail.” This provision has been carried over to the most recent editions of constitutions and regulations of absolutely all the constituent territories.

Generally speaking, the constitutional acts of the constituents place the main accent on their own territorial integrity, and not the Russian Federation's territorial integrity. Only Karachai-Cherkessia says in its constitution that its border with a foreign state is also Russia's state border and that its status is stipulated by federal law.

Meanwhile, some of the political and administrative powers of constituent border regions bear an overt threat to Russia's territorial integrity. For instance, they make decisions on their administrative and territorial composition. Karelia and Sakha-Yakutia have reserved for themselves the right to set up ethnic municipal entities (and Yakutia can even decide on their status). More than that, the Sakha constitution gives the head of the republic the power to introduce and lift a state of emergency.

All of this means that courtesies toward the supremacy of the federal laws and the unity of the system of state power are nothing more than camouflage. Any weakening of the federal center will prompt the constituents to ignore the principles if they find it useful.

One more document that reduces to nothing the supremacy of federal laws and the unity of the system of state power is Presidential Decree No. 773 issued on July 2, 2005. It empowered the constituents to control the performance of top officials of regional branches of federal agencies who are appointed by the federal center. The decree embraces the heads of regional departments of the Interior Ministry, Emergency Situations and Civil Defense Ministry and Justice Ministry. The Federal Security Service and the Defense Ministry are the only two agencies it leaves out. This document expanded the opportunities for regional leaders to have a say in the appointment of territorial Interior ministers and heads of major departments at the Interior Ministry as compared with provisions of the 2001 federal law *On the Police*. It is worth remembering that an effort to replace Kalmykia's Interior Minister in the fall of 2003 barely stopped short of turning into a large-scale army operation.

Federal law No. 199 handed still more power from the center to the constituents in sectors like land tenure, ecology, protection of historical and cultural monuments, education, science, and

housing laws. It has thus provided the infrastructure capability to further build up sovereignty of the border regions.

The federal law *On Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation* also has provisions fraught with a deplorable aftermath. One of them says: “The state shall facilitate the development of languages, bilingualism and multilingualism on the entire territory of the Russian Federation.” As a result, we have a broad use of ethnonyms, or a name applied to a given ethnic group, in the official political vocabulary (El Kurultai, Il Tumen, the People’s – or Great – Khural) and in the official titles of constituent republics, like the Republic of Sakha instead of Yakutia or Tyva instead of Tuva. Linguistic separatism of this kind once served as a springboard for the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Another provision of the same law says that “the [constituent] republics have the power to adopt their own state languages in line with the Constitution of the Russian Federation.” It is not surprising therefore that Karelia’s constitution stipulates the right “to establish other state languages on the basis of a direct expression of the will of the people of the Republic of Karelia through a referendum.” Quite emblematic is the fact that the basic laws of the border constituents where small ethnic groups reside also guarantee development of ethnic languages and culture. Patriotism and nurturing an all-Russia consciousness are mentioned only in the regulations of the Krasnodar Territory, the Omsk, Novosibirsk and Orenburg Regions.

These legal provisions and practices pose threats to Russia’s common information and cultural space and lay the cultural and ideological basis for its collapse. It is language that shapes cultural paradigms; in the meantime, this law guarantees “the right to obtain general education in the native language and to choose the language of education within the scope of opportunities offered by the educational system.” This is how the law permits the destruction of the common space in education, to say nothing of the fact that, not infrequently, education in ethnic languages is defective, as they do not have the stock of terminology for a whole number of disciplines. Add to this that the ethnic constituent republics actively build up and promulgate myths about their own political history.

The above-said highlights the importance of looking closely at international experience in that sphere.

First, the majority of multi-ethnic states are not federations, while the majority of federations were not built along the ethnic principle.

Second, poly-ethnic federations have smaller chances for survival. Will Kymlicka, a classic figure of contemporary political philosophy, pointed out that territorial autonomy is simultaneously an insufficient and excessively representative method of defending the interests of ethnic minorities. So one should seek some non-territorial mechanisms. It is also true, though, that the same author was skeptical about the outcome of this search. In reality, ritual invocations of a non-territorial autonomy seldom produce a clear idea of how this should be done in practice and instances of a successful implementation of such autonomy are but few, he wrote.

This reveals two ways for political consolidation.

Number one suggests consolidation of ethnic Russians in the face of the “ever-present external foe” and the “fifth column” that this foe has allegedly set up inside Russia. The most frequently named foes are Western civilization, the “Golden Billion,” the “global government,” the “global backstage milieu,” and the “global shadow organizations.”

However, this strategy actually aims to form priorities of ethnic and – quite often – religious identity, but not political ones. In this sense, national identity of ethnic Russians can only be viewed in terms of identity with the Russian state in the context of gathering lands and peoples around them. In all other cases the consolidation of the ethnic core would pose a serious threat to the unity of the state. Consolidation of this kind more often than not comes as a response to national humiliation. It has always followed the formula of the “ladder” specified by Russian philosopher Vladimir Solovyov – “from national self-consciousness to national complacency to national self-admiration to national self-destruction.”

Path **number two**, which is gaining popularity among political scientists in Russia, suggests the development of unitarianist

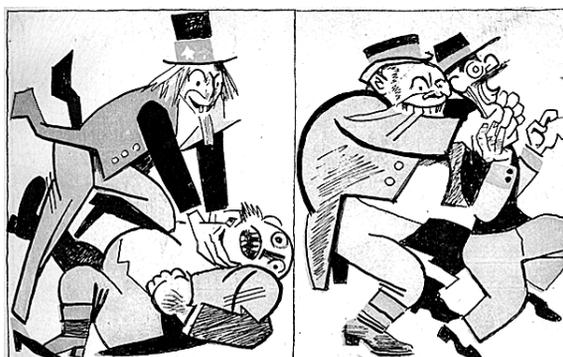
concepts based on the belief that genuine federalism is inorganic to Russia and that it is necessary to abolish the constituent territories' unbounded rights and freedoms along with this country's simultaneous transformation into a "federated empire" or "an imperial federation."

But whatever the lures of these models, they remain the abodes of researchers while the interests of the political elite, which continues to take steps toward "pulling the state pegs" out of the political, economic, social, and cultural life, stay far away from the tasks of imperial construction.

The above-said leads us to the following conclusion. The federal authorities have certainly done much in recent years to strengthen the unity and territorial stability of the Russian Federation. This was achieved largely through the centralization of Russia's political space and an unprecedented ideological and political consolidation around a popular national leader. However, the institutional and legislative guarantees for the country's territorial integrity are quite unreliable. If an unforeseen political weakening of the federal center occurs, there is a high likelihood that the country's federative structure will be shattered.

Controversy

The foreign policy of the world powers.
Smekhach magazine, 1924



America is strangling England.

England is strangling France.



France is strangling Germany.

Germany... Well, it is not strangling anyone. And this is why it has no foreign policy. But it has a domestic policy – that of an empty stomach.

“ Washington had a unique historical opportunity to tie international policy to the supremacy of legal norms; to leading legitimate international institutions – first of all the UN and the OSCE; and to legitimacy of the use of force for self-defense or for ensuring peace and security. It is quite obvious that the U.S. blatantly missed its chance to take the helm in the process of creating a new multilateral world order based on a balance of interests. ”

Don't Throw Stones in a Glass House

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Russia in Global Affairs has for a number of years kept internationally high standards in the systemic approach to and topicality of the issues selected for publication, and it has been a high benchmark of professionalism and style of the materials. That is why many of the articles appearing in this journal sometimes provoke a desire to express one's own ideas on the problems discussed. One such thought-provoking article, *A Time to Cast Stones*, was written by Timofei Bordachev and Fyodor Lukyanov and published in the April/June issue.

Its main theme is cited as an epigraph to an entire section of this journal:

“A transition from the Cold War model to a new status quo of some kind — the character of which is yet to become clear — continues, and in this situation it would be risky for the Russian state to begin ‘to gather stones together’ in an attempt to build a new system of relations with its outside partners. There is a great risk of being peppered with stones thrown by those who continue to toss them.” (p. 82)

The authors substantiate their idea by the claim that the world has grown out of control, as the previous world order gave way to chaos rather than a new world order. U.S. pursuits to spread its

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hegemony worldwide and NATO endeavors to create a system of security in the Euro-Atlantic zone and beyond are beginning to collapse. Global financial, economic and energy systems are getting out of control, while the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and international institutions of the past era have failed to adapt to the new realities and it looks like their time is coming to an end. The system of treaties aimed at restricting the proliferation of armaments is falling apart.

These developments have led Bordachev and Lukyanov to the conclusion that those who play by the old rules or try to restore them will certainly lose. Russia is correct in not feeling remorse anymore over acting in discrepancy with international agencies, norms and treaties once it changed over to a “powerful and rigid promotion of its fundamental interests” in the early years of this decade. This line is revealed in Moscow’s tough criticism of the OSCE, the intractability toward the IMF, and a diminishing interest toward the World Trade Organization and toward a new general agreement with the European Union. It can also be seen in Russia’s resolve to veto Kosovo independence at the UN Security Council, suspend the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), and possibly abandon the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF). The authors recommend keeping the same line in the future as well.

Frankly speaking, such a “machismo” – completely down-to-earth, highly anti-idealistic and rigidly pragmatic – position by Russia cannot but evoke a strong response from the majority of the national elites and the general public. This hard stance looks especially appealing if one recalls the naïve idealism of the late 1980s and the political tossing about and humiliations of the 1990s. Still, let us clarify the essence of some basic assumptions and conclusions.

IS THE 21st CENTURY REALLY UNGOVERNABLE?

For a start, let us plainly state that the governability of the world in the 20th century as compared to the 21st-century world is

grossly overstated. Even if one leaves out the two World Wars and focuses entirely on the period from 1945 to the end of the Cold War, the current impressions about the past reveal a sense of nostalgia rather than an unbiased historical analysis. This is easy to explain psychologically: bipolarity is naturally associated with stability, all the more so that present-day Russia's predecessor – the Soviet military superpower and global empire – was one of the poles.

However, governability and predictability were by far much more an illusion rather than a reality after 1945. For almost forty years the world lived in fear of a total thermonuclear war that might erupt in the wake of a sudden aggression, a sudden escalation of a crisis or a technology failure. The great powers inadvertently drove themselves to the brink of a nuclear war on at least four occasions – in 1957, 1961, 1962 and 1973 – and they almost stepped over the critical line during the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962. At that time humanity was saved more by a stroke of luck rather than by cautiousness on the part of the Kremlin or the White House.

The superpowers did not co-govern the world; they just split Europe and the Far East into spheres of influence silently, while the terror of a nuclear catastrophe forced them to avoid direct confrontation in the course of geopolitical contentions elsewhere. Nonetheless, the period was marked by dozens of large regional and local conflicts that claimed more than 20 million lives. More often than not, these conflicts would erupt all of a sudden, progress uncontrollably, have undeterminable ends, and result in defeats for the great powers. Suffice it to recall the war in Korea, two wars in Indo-China, four wars in the Middle East, the wars in Algeria, Hindustan, the Horn of Africa, Angola, Rhodesia and Afghanistan, to say nothing of incalculable internal coups and bloody civil cataclysms.

Dividing the world into “friends” and “foes” would regularly put the superpowers in the face of unpleasant surprises. China, for instance, was the Soviet Union's “great Eastern friend” at first, but eventually turned into a major military, political and ideolog-

ical adversary. Egypt, Moscow's main Middle Eastern client under Nasser, veered off to the U.S. under Sadat.

Take France – when it pulled out of NATO, thus dealing a heavy blow to the alliance's rearward infrastructure. Also, there was Iran – the pillar of American influence in the Persian Gulf that purchased huge amounts of weapons from the U.S. under the Shah, but then became its bitterest foe with the arrival of the ayatollahs. Iraq, which attacked Iran, was a U.S. ally at first; but then it invaded Kuwait and turned into America's number-one enemy. This list could run on and on, yet one can already see clearly how fictitious governability was during the Cold War.

There is no arguing that after the onset of variegated globalization the world has become far more complicated to understand and, consequently, to govern by concerted efforts of the leading powers. Nor is there any doubt that the post-Cold War euphoria and hope for a general harmony has proven to be naïve. But in spite of all the contradictions and competition between the great powers, there are not any antagonistic contradictions between them now. There is no threat of a major war and no one is willing to destroy anyone. Whatever the degree of displeasure, the leading countries have with one another, not a single one of them (except for the marginal political lunatics that one can find everywhere) wants to see a collapse or disintegration of the U.S., Russia, the European Union, China, India, Japan, Brazil, South Africa, Ukraine or Kazakhstan. All of them realize that the unpredictable aftermaths of black holes formed by the elimination of rivals will bring far greater damage than benefits.

The fundamental community of interests of the multipolar world and its economic and social interdependence dictate a greater necessity of “corporate solidarity,” restraint and a much more careful selection of instruments for attaining objectives than the fear of a nuclear catastrophe did in the past century. There are no conflicts between the leading powers and their allies that would compare in scale and number of victims with the regional wars of the 20th century. The only exceptions are

the wars in Yugoslavia and Tajikistan, spontaneous violence in the failed states of Africa, and the terrorist campaign going on in Iraq under the U.S.-led occupation. Still, these are neither direct nor mediate conflicts between the great powers.

In other words, there are many more favorable prerequisites now for resolving current international problems – the financial crisis, the shortage of energy resources and global warming – however complex they may be, and the world has gained more security in general than it had during the Cold War. There is a certain reservation about the spread of nuclear missile armaments and international terrorism, which opens up the possibility that nuclear weapons might be used by third countries or terrorist groups, but reacting to that threat, as well as the solution of other problems, depends on the subjective policy of the ruling order in leading countries, and it is in that very policy where the biggest problems lie.

U.S. POLICY IN THE PAST 15 YEARS

After the era of bipolarity drew to an end, Washington had a unique historical opportunity to tie international policy to the supremacy of legal norms; to leading legitimate international institutions – first of all the UN and the OSCE; to a selective nature and legitimacy of the use of force for self-defense or for ensuring peace and security as stipulated by Articles 51 and 42 of the UN Charter. It is quite obvious that the U.S. blatantly missed its chance to take the helm in the process of creating a new multilateral world order based on a balance of interests.

The U.S. unexpectedly found that it was the world's only remaining superpower and its political elite plunged into euphoria, narcissism and smugness. It would increasingly often substitute international law for the use of force; legitimate UN Security Council decisions for the directives of the U.S. National Security Council; and OSCE prerogatives for NATO actions. The military operation against the former Yugoslavia in 1999 offered the boldest instance of this. After the Bush Administration gained power in 2001 and after the jolting shock

of the attacks of September 11, 2001, this line of conduct became absolutely prevalent. Following a justified, legitimate and successful operation in Afghanistan, the U.S. invaded Iraq (under a contrived pretext and without UN sanctions) with the hope of further reformatting the entire Greater Middle East in order to suit its own economic, military and political interests.

As a result, the U.S. became mired in a hopeless war of occupation in Iraq that could have a more telling defeat than the Vietnam War; undermined the peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan; and split the antiterrorist coalition. Washington's policies triggered an unprecedented surge of anti-American sentiments around the world, generated a new wave of terrorist activity, and spurred the proliferation of nuclear and missile armaments.

NATO's ungrounded eastward enlargement is behind a new standoff between Russia and the West, for which neither side has either the motives or the resources and which runs counter to their economic and political interests. By overfocusing on geopolitical expansionism for the past fifteen years, NATO has proven to be unable – and reluctant – to reform itself (quite like the Russian Armed Forces in the absence of a genuine civilian leadership). NATO – the world's most powerful military alliance – maintains a 1.8 million-strong army in Europe for God knows what purpose, but is unable to find several supplementary helicopters and battalions for the peacekeeping operation in Afghanistan.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND TREATIES

NATO was an offspring of the Cold War and the difficulties it has run into at present are quite explicable, although they do not evoke any sympathy. The problems faced by the EU arise from its hasty and irrational enlargement, but they will most probably be solved over time. The UN is a different story, though. Bordachev and Lukyanov surmise in this connection: “The UN was founded in conditions of tough confrontation between two poles of power [...]”.

Now it cannot be readjusted to meet the demands of either an imperial or a multipolar world” (p. 83).

The latter thesis is a questionable assertion. The UN was established in 1945 when the anti-Nazi coalition was still alive and it envisioned formalization of the executive ‘concert of nations’ consisting of victorious powers in the capacity of permanent members of the Security Council – that is, multipolarity – plus an international lawmaking parliament in the form of the General Assembly. But the UN dived into an almost forty-year-long paralysis and turned into a forum for propagandist polemics exactly because the coalition split and the Cold War set in.

The UN experienced a short-lived Golden Age after the end of the Cold War, and for the first time in history it got down to performing its primordial functions as a legitimate institution in charge of ensuring international security. Remember that 36 out of the 49 peacekeeping operations ever held under UN auspices were organized after 1988. And although not all of them were successful – due to local conditions – they were much less expensive and much more fruitful than unilateral actions by the U.S. or NATO to coerce anyone to peace.

It was not multipolarity or the new sophisticated problems at all that dealt a blow to the UN’s efficiency in this decade. That blow came from the unilateral policy of the U.S. from the position of force. No one will argue that the world has changed beyond recognition since 1945 and the UN needs a profound and well thought-out reform. But contrary to what Bordachev and Lukyanov say, it is not the genetic inadequacy of the UN that should be blamed. The root cause of the problem lies in the deteriorating discords among the Security Council’s permanent members and Washington’s resolve to act beyond the format of international law when the Security Council counterparts appear to disagree with it.

The U.S. administration has already paid dearly for such policies in Iraq. In all probability, the administration likely wishes it could reverse the march of time and that it had listened to the arguments that Russia, France, Germany and China offered

against the ill-grounded military operation in 2003. Similarly, the West has yet to pay a huge price for its methods of resolving the Kosovo problem. The U.S. got bogged down in Iraq and it does not have enough vigor to attack Iran unilaterally. The U.S. itself undermined the UN Security Council's authority, thus furnishing Tehran with a pretext for ignoring four consecutive resolutions on the Iranian nuclear program.

The system of international treaties on disarmament has not become an anachronism after the end of the Cold War either. As evidenced from the events of the past twenty years or so, the nuclear nonproliferation regime will be unviable if it does not rest on a solid platform of disarmament systems and processes.

There is a myth suggesting that the end of the Cold War whipped up the spread of nuclear armaments, but this is not true either. As many as seven countries – the Big Five, Israel and South Africa – became nuclear during the four decades of the Cold War, and three more countries – India, Pakistan and, with some reservations, North Korea – did so after its end. The biggest breakthroughs in disarmament came from 1987-1999: the INF and CFE treaties; the Chemical Weapons Convention; the Protocol of Control over the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention; the START-1 Treaty; simultaneous reductions of tactical nuclear weapons in the U.S. and Russia; the START-2 Treaty; the framework agreement on START-3 and on theater defense missiles; the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; and the Adapted CFE Treaty.

This period was certainly the most productive in terms of nonproliferation, and this was not accidental, as 40 countries, including nuclear powers like France and China, signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which was prolonged indefinitely. The world community put into effect an Additional Protocol designed to strengthen the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and seven countries – South Africa, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Brazil, Argentina and Iraq – gave up their nuclear weapons voluntarily or were compelled to do so.

However, Washington's reckless policies brought forth a dismantling of the disarmament system in this decade, beginning with the Nonproliferation Treaty and ending with the bulk of the aforesaid agreements. The U.S. did all that it could to get a free hand in promoting national defense programs, but in effect it untied the hands of countries seeking to obtain nuclear weapons and missile technology and thus undermined cooperation between the great powers.

At present, the nonproliferation system and regimes are creaking at all the seams. North Korea has pulled out of the treaty and has held a nuclear test. Iran is moving steadily toward the same objective through dual nuclear technologies, and a dozen more countries have made public their plans to follow this example. The market for contraband fissionable materials and technologies is broadening, and terrorists may get access to a nuclear fuse through it.

Russia, on its part, imposed a moratorium on the CFE Treaty recently and hinted at a possible withdrawal from the INF. After START-1 expires in 2009, the Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT) signed in 2002 will lose any significance as well. The latter document is effective through 2012 and stipulates that the U.S. and Russia must reduce their nuclear warhead arsenals to 1,700 to 2,200 items, but it does not have a control system of its own and is unrelated to START-1 regulations.

Nuclear disarmament will be slashed then to the Partial Nuclear Test Ban treaties of 1963 and 1976 and several symbolic documents. If so, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty will also become practically defunct.

This cannot but incite a feeling of alarm, but what does it have to do with "multipolarity arising amid a dilapidation of global institutions" (p. 92) that Bordachev and Lukyanov write about? What we are witnessing is a deliberate and irresponsible pulling down of those institutions and norms, which is largely orchestrated by the U.S. administration and supported by some of their allies. Alas, Russia has joined them too by now.

WHAT POLICY DOES RUSSIA NEED?

It is unlikely that anyone will object to the policy of “a build-up of its [Russia’s] own relative strength” (p. 81) and “a powerful and rigid promotion of Russia’s fundamental interests” (p. 85). The only problem is with the way one interprets these interests. Some ex-liberal TV commentators in Russia have been tossing around a theory suggesting: “Grab anything that’s not in the right place and then wait and see.” Another option presupposes determining one’s own foreign policy priorities and real capabilities and projecting the results of what one will do several steps ahead.

What benefits would Russia get from pulling out of the INF Treaty? A deployment of several divisions of longer-range SS-26 Stone missiles? But this would furnish the U.S. with a powerful argument for a further ramification of the missile defense structure in Europe and with a legitimate opportunity to rehabilitate the Pershing II missiles. Or to deploy newer missile systems with shorter flight times – in the Baltic countries this time, not in West Germany.

A formal recognition of the independence of Abkhazia, South Ossetia or the Dniester Republic would change nothing in their material status above the broadening of economic and humanitarian ties with them, started by Moscow. On the contrary, it will play into the hands of those who advocate NATO’s encompassing Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova and will motivate these countries toward a military untangling of secession problems, all the more so that none of the CIS countries except Russia – and possibly Armenia – will recognize the breakaway territories. China, India and many other partners of Russia that currently criticize NATO for its stance on Kosovo will also dissociate themselves from that recognition. In the future, armed separatism may again raise its head in Russia itself and get direct support from abroad, especially in the face of growing demographic problems.

Moscow had enough grounds for changing the “rules of the game” that took shape in relations with the West in the 1990s. The paradigm of this relationship dates back to the time when

Moscow had to meekly take its policy cues from the U.S. and to put up with the arrogant treatment of its own interests and opinions, but this is totally unacceptable today. Russia has gained much more economic and political strength now, while the positions of the U.S., EU and Japan have weakened — largely due to their own fault. The problem of Russia's foreign policy is not in its growing activeness or independence. It is the thesis about the importance of a continued “throwing of stones” that invites the biggest objection.

It is not enough to simply say ‘No’ to something. It is vital to construct a fruitful and well-specified alternative to the main issues. For instance, it would make a lot of sense for Russia to clearly formulate a long-term vision of relations with NATO and former Soviet republics while it protests the engulfing of Georgia and Ukraine by the alliance. Military organizations and forces as strong and ramified that both NATO and Russia have cannot peacefully coexist without paying attention to each other and engaging solely in their own business. They will either start a closer cooperation and integration, or they will become suspicious of each other over hostile designs and preparations for an armed conflict.

The campaign fanning fears about a renewed “threat from the East” that started in the West recently — citing reports on the flights of Russia's strategic aviation, long-distance exercise cruises of ships and firing exercises of naval detachments — provides a vivid example. The same suspicions are aroused by Russia's new vogueish defense doctrine of a “threat from space” and the development of a potential for rebuffing it, which in practical terms implies a major war with NATO.

Russia needs to decide for itself whether it should count on a military confrontation or on deepening cooperation with the U.S.; setting up a joint rapid deployment corps for peacekeeping operations in Europe and beyond; for fighting terrorism and for checking the illegal trade in nuclear materials. All of this suggests a new type of a defense union and a profound reform of NATO's and Russia's military organizations. The present sit-

uation leaves little hope for an initiative from the West in that sphere, and it is Russia that could put forth a long-term project while it continues to re-emerge as a great power. In this context, any objections to the alliance's enlargement would look quite convincing, while sabotage by NATO's new members would be much easier to overcome.

Proposals aimed at resolving the problems of neighboring countries and guarantees to their sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as plans for economic and humanitarian cooperation on the condition that those countries maintain neutrality would be very instrumental in this sense. On the other hand, all the talk about the secession of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, the Dniester region, the Crimea and the Donetsk coalfields consolidates the public and the political leadership in the respective countries on strictly anti-Russian sentiments and prompts them to turn to NATO as the only guarantor of their territorial integrity.

The U.S. plan for building a defense missile system in Central Europe offers a different case. Moscow was right to reject this plan since a missile threat from Iran has not materialized so far and the missile defense base will have a marginal capability for intercepting several Russian antiballistic missiles. Russia offered to cooperate in that sphere in the form of jointly running a radar station in Azerbaijan and establishing a Joint Data Exchange Center for the exchange of information on missile launches. However, by recognizing in this way the presence of a missile threat from the south, Russia cannot cite the radar and the center as an alternative to the missile defense system anymore, as they would need supplementary radars and interceptor missiles. The situation requires either the presence of a broad Russian national missile defense system or the construction of a joint missile defense with the U.S. and NATO, and this in itself implies a new type of military union.

Russian policies in both spheres have been sending encouraging signals of late. After the April 2008 summit in Bucharest, Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin made clear statements suggesting that it would be reasonable for NATO to focus on

developing better relations and cooperation with Russia instead of a hasty eastward enlargement, as many conflict issues would be seen in a different light then. Also, concerning the problem of missile defenses, Putin said that he could see a future solution to the problem in a joint missile defense system embracing Russia, the U.S. and Europe.

However, these ideas need a well-conceived defense/political and defense/technological content so as to look as something more than just a political declaration. This is where a whole host of work opens up, but neither government departments nor expert communities in Russia are in a hurry to offer their proposals. Many do not take the national leadership's statements seriously; others are unwilling to assume any responsibility or to burden themselves with extra work; still others purposefully sabotage any such initiative in the hope that their positions inside the country will consolidate amid a growing confrontation with the West, even though this line of conduct inflicts huge damage on Russia's national interests and security.

Bordachev and Lukyanov recommend throwing stones as long as "a transition from the Cold War model to a new status quo of some kind" continues (p. 82), but this wait-and-see period may never end. In contrast with a unipolar or bipolar international system, the multipolar system is dynamic and changes by virtue of its very nature and it will never get any permanent status quo. Naturally, the current international system is immeasurably more complicated and globalized than the 19th-century European "concert of nations," yet it, too, puts into a more lucrative position the nation or the coalition that builds better relations with other centers of power than the relations these centers have between themselves.

The construction of fruitful relations with other countries and international amalgamations presupposes agreement on crucial issues, greater efficiency of existing institutions and the setting up of new structures. A great power must not destroy a new system of international relations but, rather, should build it until others organize it without account of the great power's interests. One

should not follow the U.S. example and succumb to the lure of razing shattered international institutions and treaties to zero so as to grab quickly everything that comes into one's hands. This policy has led the U.S. to disaster and undermined its world leadership despite America's economic and military supremacy and huge influence on international organizations and institutions.

As Russia launches a new phase of its economic and democratic reforms, it is able to simultaneously wield a large productive influence on the formation of an entirely new system of international relations. But naturally, this is possible only if Moscow develops an awareness of what it really wants and if it begins to abide by strong principles and to display a coherent and predictable line of conduct – something that a great power should do. It must have an adequate picture of the world around it and measure its wishes against its capabilities.

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