

World in Their Hands:

Ideas From the Next Generation



Edited by Natalia Bubnova

CARNEGIE MOSCOW CENTER

CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

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Carnegie Moscow Center's young visiting scholars and interns share their ideas about politics, economics, social issues, migration and ethnic conflict, religion, and education in search of solutions for a better world. The authors represent different countries: Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, India, Norway, Poland, Russia, the United States, and Yemen. They cover diverse issues ranging from EU relations with its eastern neighbors to historical reconciliation between Russia and Poland; from the case study of Chinese foreign policy as an ideal machine to the potential for coordinated BMD efforts between NATO and Russia; from the benefits and shortcomings of quotas for minorities in India to women's role in the Arab revolutions; from the rise in radical right views in Europe and Russia to the influence of Wikileaks on political and diplomatic communications; and from the challenges of the energy dialogue to stimulating innovation through building research-oriented centers like Silicon Valley and Skolkovo.

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Foreword

The idea for this book came two years ago when we were preparing “20 Years After the Berlin Wall,” a volume that included contributions from all of the Carnegie Moscow Center’s scholars-in-residence. We saw that anniversary not just as a cause of retrospective analysis, but also as an important moment for forecasting future world developments. It occurred to me then that it would be good to put out something similar with contributions from the Center’s interns and young visiting scholars, looking into the future. The project was also intended to provide young visiting members of our team the opportunity to get involved more closely with the Center’s research activities.

The Center hosts interns from around the world. Undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate students and young professionals from Russia and other countries come to the Center, where they gain first-hand experience at the region’s leading think tank and benefit from a multicultural environment. They participate fully in the Center’s life, attend seminars and conferences hosted by the Center, and are in daily contact with the Center’s experts.

Our task for this volume initially seemed straightforward: to let the Carnegie Moscow Center’s young visiting scholars and interns share ideas they had developed through their many years of studies and academic experience and long had been willing to share with “the rest of the world.” The only requirement was that these ideas were to be uniquely theirs according to their best judgment and that they be relevant to more than one country, ideally to the international community at large.

Yet it proved not as easy as it had seemed initially. One intern after another, first from France, then the United States, then Britain, and then Russia, followed by other countries, would tell me that they had not been taught to formulate and express their ideas. The personal discovery for me was that in the present post-modern environment, young people tend to think that everything has already been said, or, as one young visiting scholar

explained, they are taught to study and analyze existing schools or trends of thought and then join one of them. Particularly disappointing to me, as editor of the book and a Russian, was that we have managed to get so few contributions by our Russian interns – although they usually make up from a third to a half of the interns at the Carnegie Moscow Center. Maybe Lord George Gordon Byron was right when he wrote in his “Prisoner of Chillon”: “Eternal spirit of the chainless mind brightest in dungeons,” and burning with ideas and passionate discussions are a thing of the Soviet past, when the idealistic, anti-regime youth behind the Iron Curtain would spend their lives formulating and sharing opinions in the privacy of their kitchens. Getting knowledge often loaded with too much ideology from their teachers, they got used to, in the good traditions of Greek philosophy, treating everything with doubt and developing their own judgments. They would penetrate into “professors only” libraries to read “special storage” political scientists, invite expelled professors to lecture in their dorms, and yearn to put the hard-won knowledge into practice.

What I discovered so to say empirically is reflected in contemporary sociological literature and is called “the loss of subjectness,” a problem that affects students through the present system of education, in Russia as well as in other countries. “A professor who insists that students formulate their own judgment usually is confronted with a bewildered reaction: ‘My thoughts? But what can I say on this matter, if experts have been studying this issue for probably a decade?’” – writes a sociologist of the Higher School of Economics, Grigory Yudin. “In the course materials produced by students there is no trace of him or herself – any professor who expects to see before him an equal partner is stricken by the lack of the subjectness of these writings.”* Another, more benevolent, explanation, however, might also be that with the abundance of printed and electronic outlets, young people nowadays have many venues to express their opinions when they want to.

Whatever the case, it makes even more valuable the contributions by the Carnegie Moscow Center’s young visiting scholars and interns who did participate in the project. They represent different countries: Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, India, Norway, Poland, Russia, the United States, and Yemen. They write about politics, economics, social issues, migration and ethnic conflict, religion, and education. They cover diverse issues: from EU relations with its eastern neighbors to historical reconciliation between Russia and Poland; from the case study of Chinese foreign policy as an ideal machine to the potential for coordinated BMD efforts between NATO and Russia; from the benefits

* Grigory Yudin, “Struggle for Subjectness,” *Kultivatov*, № 3 (2011): pp. 43-45.

and shortcomings of quotas for minorities in India to women's role in the Arab revolutions; from the rise in radical right views in Europe and Russia to the influence of Wikileaks on political and diplomatic communications; and from the challenges of the energy dialogue to stimulating innovation through building research-oriented centers like Silicon Valley and Skolkovo.

The geography of the materials also spans many continents, though it is unfortunate that Latin America and Africa have not been included in the scope of research. This in a way reflects the "zone of interest" covered by the Carnegie Moscow Center and the pool of interns and young visiting scholars that we attract as a result. The Carnegie Moscow Center focuses on Russia, the neighboring countries (the former Soviet republics), and the broader region – the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. We are also especially interested in the developments in and Russia's cooperation with the countries of South and East Asia, in particular Russia's historical partners such as China and India. Other regions of the world are covered out of Carnegie Endowment's other centers, with new offices being added to the existing ones we have in Beijing, Beirut, Brussels, and Almaty, all staffed by local experts, speaking local languages, working together on joint projects. However, as the person responsible for the Center's internships program, I hope to also host interns from Africa, Australia, and Latin America (we have had so far just one wonderful intern from Colombia), and to further broaden our horizons by adding their perspectives to how we view the international agenda and Russia's relations with other countries.

When discussing the outlines for these materials, we disagreed on many of the ideas that fed them. This is normal and is in line with what Carnegie stands for: to encourage diverse opinions and open discussion. I found it very encouraging that several authors promoted the notion that the EU project for integrating its eastern neighbors into larger Europe should include Russia, and yet thought that more attention could have been paid to identifying how involving Russia could be possible. For, as Tomislava Penkova has written: "Russia and the EU are two interconnected centers of power active in the post-Soviet space. The growing influence of one of them usually occurs at the disadvantage of the other, but this does not need to be so. If Russia is excluded from the regional architecture, the countries in between will remain in limbo, trying to balance, whenever possible, between these two poles."

Acknowledging Russia's 20th century's guilt before Poland, I argued with Andrzej Turkowski's assumption that most of Russia's neighbors view it as an expansionist country seeking to recover its lost territories. I disagreed with Ionna Zyga's assumption the Russia's concerns over European BMD are rooted in Russian worst-case scenarios, but fully supported the notion that NATO-U.S.-Russia coordination in BMD would be indeed beneficial. Agree-

ing on the statement about the growing Chinese role in world politics, I had reservations about the attempts to judge the Chinese foreign policy based on the Chinese politicians' official statements. Seeing Wikileaks as an important influence on world politics, I doubted that diplomacy would become more open and honest as a result. Perceiving India as a possible role model for other emerging multiethnic and multireligious democracies, I questioned the negative assessment of the role that positive discrimination, the compensatory allocation of quotas for elections and appointments to positions in government agencies for religious and ethnic minorities, plays in this process. And I strongly argued against any solutions of the immigration issues other than through giving immigrants social protection on a par with the indigenous population. Most important, however, is that all of the young authors were able to formulate their ideas freely on topics within their area of expertise that they considered key to world politics. Furthermore, while the ideas expressed in the book are different, all contributors have sought solutions to build bridges and promote better international relations. When so many share common aspirations, they, as the classics used to say, acquire material force, and this gives hope for a better world.

In 2007, when the Carnegie Endowment announced its New Vision as the world's first global think tank, the slogan selected for its transition was Mahatma Gandhi's famous "Be the change you wish to see in the world." We hope that this project has been a venue for providing the volume's young authors with precisely this possibility – to try to make an impact through their writings on how the future world is shaped.

Natalia Bubnova

Re-evaluating EU Eastern Neighborhood Policy: the Cases of Belarus and Ukraine

The aim of this paper is to investigate the present and prospective role that the European Union (EU) should play in Ukraine and Belarus (and in general in the EU eastern neighborhood). Despite the common Soviet past, after the collapse of the Soviet Union these two countries have taken different paths and currently have dissimilar relations with the EU. On the one hand, Ukraine is considered the most advanced country in terms of its declared willingness to move forward democratically and consequently to integrate into the EU, while on the other hand, Belarus is seen as the least progressive country in the area. However, they are both examples of an unsuccessful European policy of integration and are indicative of the failures of EU regional engagement. I will make some policy recommendations regarding how Brussels should more effectively shape its approach towards its eastern neighbors.

Failures of the EU Eastern Neighborhood Policies

Although the two countries are included in the 2004 European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and since May 2009 have been part of the Eastern Partnership (EaP), the EU's leverage has been very weak and unsatisfactory for both parties – the EU and Ukraine/Belarus. A number of reasons may help explain this EU deficiency.

Too much emphasis on political and institutional components to the detriment of the economic one

A look at the content and timing of both the ENP and EaP indicates that these are integration projects aimed at the fragile states (and democracies) located in the eastern EU neighborhood that mainly focus on the political/normative/value factor of rapprochement. However, both policies exclude the prospect of membership, as they are conceived as its alternative. The approach of rejecting membership, while prescribing democratic values and stan-

dards to countries where the EU evidently lacks a nuanced understanding of the specific national post-Soviet development features of the political, economic, and social system and poorly differentiates among EaP partners, their self-perception and capacities, led to a limited EU influence on the politics of the two countries. Thus, the principle of conditionality (i.e., reforms on which EaP countries have no say in exchange for full-fledged EU integration) was misinterpreted by Brussels and caused disenchantment in EaP target countries. The idea was that a transformation in the sense of democratization of these countries will stabilize them and the region, and hence will secure a stable framework for EU economic interests by smoothing their expansion to eastern adjacent markets, their local resources, and cheap labor force. It should be noted that often EU economic interests did not coincide with the interests of local economic actors. Giving priority to the political/institutional component of EU policies over more economy-driven cooperation (the arena where both parties may find common understanding and benefits) in national environments that were not ready to accept it in full diminished EU legitimacy and its overall impact. This indicates not only a lack of flexibility on the part of the EU towards its neighbors but also its weakness in adjusting its approach whenever it does not reach the desired goals. It is not a matter of compensation or rewards but a matter of common interests and responsibilities for a stable neighborhood.

Mechanical transposition of EU democratic principles not leading to political maturity and an automatic change of mentality

Although not denying the intrinsic value per se of democratic principles, their mechanical transposition in the two EaP countries resulted in a complex and difficult process of assimilation, which rarely ended in a real breakthrough. This approach may be misleading, given the dissimilar configuration of the distribution of political power and decision-making,¹ as well as the reluctance of national political elites to implement reforms (political reforms often clash with the economic interests of leading local actors, who feel more comfortable with the status quo and thus block any political advancement.) So far, democracy (or “deep democracy,” as the EaP September 2011 summit declaration reads) does not appear as the guiding factor for ruling elites. Additionally, a simple transposition of new norms does not mean an automatic change of political mindset, so old problems persist, and even if a reform has been officially launched and implemented, everyday practices hardly change (the most blatant example is corruption.)

These two factors are evident in the case of Ukraine. Since 1991, the EU has mainly approached the country through the framework of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which expired in 2008. The PCA established the first normative design of bilateral relations in a number of sectors, but it fell short of providing “a tool for modernization of Ukraine’s economy

(or facilitating its) democratic transformation. A membership perspective was excluded, while the major carrot, a free trade area, was foreseen only upon full implementation of the agreement.”² The ENP (launched in 2004 and in force until April 2009) and its Action Plan (a working instrument on the economic and political progress of the ENP) had two purposes: to guide the transition process in Ukraine towards Western-style standards (democracy and market economy) and to expand the EU zone of stability beyond its borders without incurring excessive costs and commitments³ (such as membership). The lack of membership prospects gave rise to a sense of dissatisfaction among Ukrainians, who believed that Ukraine “belongs to Europe and not to its neighborhood (and therefore) the ENP was perceived as a fall-back option” to exclude its full integration.⁴ It is worth noting that at that time, Ukraine was seeking to obtain EU membership, and the Orange Revolution was, among others, meant as sufficient political evidence of the country’s Europeanness (reforms required by Brussels were regarded as a less strong proof of its Europeanness.) The quest for EU membership was dictated to a large extent by the economic interests of Ukrainian regional industrial groups, which supported the Orange Revolution’s leaders in power after 2004. Indeed, until the 2008 crisis, for Ukraine’s oligarchs the EU constituted an important market for their deals, and EU membership was seen as the instrument to achieve that access and related benefits. However, while Ukraine approached its EU integration process mainly from the perspective of possible economic advantages simulating reform-minded governance, the EU was stressing first and foremost the reformist agenda as a pre-condition to deep economic integration (an appropriate normative framework was needed to reassure EU investors in their dealings with their counterparts in Ukraine.) The situation changed radically after the economic crisis severely hit the EU. Seeking new opportunities for Ukraine’s business growth within the EU was no longer possible, and hence it was replaced by a strategy attempting to safeguard existing revenues/resources.

Concurrently with the crisis and in opposition to the ENP holistic (both eastern and southern) understanding of the EU neighborhood, in 2009 Poland and Sweden inaugurated the EaP focusing solely on the eastern EU rim – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. It should be acknowledged that the EaP itself had the implicit effect of balancing Russia’s integration of the post-Soviet space. It appeared at a very tense point of relations between Brussels (and the West in general) and Moscow, and the Polish role as its initiator was not accidental. Shaping the EU eastern dimension has always been a priority for Polish foreign policy. Even after the reset between Poland and Russia (following the 2010 plane crash near Smolensk) and between the EU and Russia (with the Partnership for Modernization), Poland did not relinquish its leading position.

Similarly to the ENP, the EaP was constrained in its impact by the absence of membership prospects. Although to a lesser extent, the EaP also set up an asymmetric bilateral relationship, within which the EU unilaterally determines the normative agenda with which neighboring countries should comply in order to join the Union one day. Notably, this refers to the so-called bilateral track of engagement between the two parties. It foresees that political and economic integration tools (the PCA and a free trade area) are to be replaced, once conditions have been met, with an Association agreement, a deep and comprehensive free trade area, visa liberalization, and strengthened people-to-people contacts. The abovementioned track creates conditions for multi-speed integration in accordance with the particular country's progress. The more advanced EaP countries, like Ukraine, should then serve as a model to be emulated by those lagging behind (the issue of EU image and of emulation of success stories among EaP countries is an important component of the neighborhood policy, taking into account the EU's insufficient impact on democratization of local regimes.) Unlike the bilateral track, the multilateral one aims at involving and empowering non-state actors vis-à-vis their national governments, with the purpose of making them equal partners with the EU at both national and regional levels.

In May 2011, Catherine Ashton, the EU high representative for Foreign Affairs, and Štefan Füle, the EU commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy, upgraded the ENP, backed by more than €1.2 billion in new funding, bringing the total financial support to almost €7 billion. The revitalized ENP strategy seeks to strengthen deep democracy, mutual accountability, conditionality, and differentiation, i.e. a more funds for more reform approach, where the EU will make funding available to its neighbors in accordance with the speed and scope of political reforms they are able to carry out. The central benchmarks against which the EU will be assessing progress and will decide accordingly on the depth of support are: free and fair elections; freedom of association, expression, and assembly and a free press and media; the rule of law administered by an independent judiciary and right to a fair trial; the fight against corruption; security and law enforcement sector reform; and the establishment of democratic control over armed and security forces. Additionally, two new instruments will channel EU support to civil society: a Civil society facility and a European Endowment for democracy.

Concurrently with the new approach, the EU Commission disclosed the report covering progress made by Ukraine on the implementation of the ENP Action Plan (AP) between January 1 and December 31, 2010.⁵ The document welcomes President Viktor Yanukovich's declared commitment to build on steps taken under the ENP AP, which was replaced in late 2009 by an Association agenda, but it finds that some fundamental freedoms (media and assembly) and democratic standards have deteriorated. The report stresses that the gov-

ernment should speed up reforms on the constitution, judiciary, electoral law, and public administration. However, it also lists a number of success stories of sectoral cooperation, in such sectors as transport, energy,⁶ environment,⁷ education, health, and research. As for the financial part, the report indicates that during the 2008-2010 period, Ukraine has benefitted from €22 million from the Neighborhood Investment Facility, devoted mainly to the energy sector, and additionally from €42 million utilized for regional projects. For the 2011-2013 period, the new National Indicative Program, adopted in March 2010, grants Ukraine a budget of €470.1 million (including €43.37 million earmarked for the Comprehensive Institution Building Program and €30.79 million for Eastern Partnership pilot regional development programs). The program is geared towards supporting the achievement of key policy objectives, as outlined in the EU-Ukraine Association agenda, and pursues three priorities: good governance and rule of law; entry into force of the EU-Ukraine Association agreement (including a deep and comprehensive free trade area); and sustainable development.⁸ In addition, the EU-Ukraine Protocol, approved by the European Parliament as a way to let Ukraine participate in EU programs, paves the way for closer EU-Ukraine cooperation under a number of specific EU programs, including Customs 2013, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Program, Single European Sky Air Traffic Management Research, and the Health Program.

It should be noted that lately the EU is also developing other projects in Ukraine in various sectors. A €1.5 million grant, called Further Development of the National Accreditation Agency of Ukraine according to European Practices, aims to enhance the ability of Ukrainian manufacturers and businesses to inspect and certify their own goods and services meant for export to EU member states. The European Commission has adopted a €105 million financial package to support reform of Ukraine's administrative legal framework, civil service and administrative justice systems, regional development, energy efficiency, and environmental programs. The package consists of three components and is part of the Annual Action Program for 2011. The European Investment Bank (EIB) is providing the largest loan to date in the Eastern neighborhood: €450 million for the rehabilitation and quality improvement of roads in Ukraine (road corridors interconnecting Dresden-Katowice-Lviv-Kiev and Moscow-Kiev-Odessa, as well as key national corridors in Ukraine). Apart from road infrastructure, the EIB has financed projects in the energy sector, the upgrade of the water-supply infrastructure, and, through commercial banks, projects supporting small and medium-sized enterprises.

Although the abovementioned projects and related funding are definitely a positive sign of cooperation, as they have contributed to the significant advancement of bilateral relations and the finalization of the bilateral Association agreement (see below), they remain somewhat disjointed. Moreover, their

impact and importance have been overshadowed by a political development, namely the trial of former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

Together with former President Viktor Yushchenko, the other leader of the Orange Revolution, Tymoshenko strongly advocated deep integration into the EU (and NATO). But the lack of EU membership prospects, the 2008 Russo-Georgian war, and a constant domestic legislative impasse, as well as the economic crisis, led to the dissolution of the Orange Coalition in September 2008 and to the overall failure of its promises. It also weakened the whole process of “Westernization.” For the first time in post-Soviet Ukrainian history, analysts spoke of the “end of Euro-romanticism.”⁹ The social and political disenchantment contributed to the election in early 2010 of Viktor Yanukovich as president – that same candidate who was defeated in 2004 by the Orange Revolution, but who in 2010 trumped his rival and leader of the Orange Revolution, Yulia Tymoshenko.

In October 2011, the former premier was sentenced to seven years in prison for exceeding her powers in signing a gas agreement in 2009 with Russia and was also banned from holding political office for three years. Taking into consideration the fierce enmity between Tymoshenko and Yanukovich, her arrest should be seen in the context of the ruling elite’s preparation for parliamentary elections in October 2012. “The Tymoshenko trial is a domestic political issue for Yanukovich. He is personally interested in eliminating his former rival from the political scene, both as an act of revenge and due to his fear of a strong and active political opposition. He does not want to appear weak to his political cronies, who could interpret his actions as giving in to Western pressure.”¹⁰ The upcoming polls are crucial for Yanukovich’s re-election in 2015. By decapitating the main opposition party, the government aspires to compete safely against communists and ultranationalists. However, “Western officials reportedly have been very direct in cautioning the Ukrainian President that democratic backsliding will have consequences for his foreign relations.”¹¹ Indeed, the EU¹² is openly siding with the jailed Tymoshenko using her as an opportunity to stress the problematic state of the rule of law in Ukraine and to intervene in national political processes and stimulate greater democratic progress.

Solving Tymoshenko’s case is now a pre-condition for the EU to signing the Association agreement, and it explicitly points to the importance of the political/normative element to the EU. Thus, the trial turned out to be a critical political issue both inside Ukraine and in terms of EU-Ukraine/EU-Russia relations, and it determined the negative outcome of the EU-Ukraine summit of December 19, 2011. It seems that both Brussels and Kiev have excessively politicized the overall framework of their relations, and this has stalled the process of dialogue and convergence, while also exacerbating divisions

within the country. It is likely that in the short-run such an approach will lead the bilateral relationship nowhere, as none of the parties is willing to compromise on its positions. Despite this fact, it is worth noting that Ukraine became the first EaP country to finalize the lengthy set of negotiations on the political Association agreement with the EU. Taking into account the country's slow progress in democratization, some have claimed that this agreement is actually a reaction to Russia's pressure on Ukraine in 2011 to join the Customs Union with Belarus and Kazakhstan.

In advance of the December EU-Ukraine summit, Commissioner Füle stressed that the EU was concerned about the lack of progress on a number of critical reforms in Ukraine. He singled out reforms in the constitutional and judicial spheres, adding that cases of "selective justice" in Ukraine, including those relating to former Prime Minister Tymoshenko and others, were of serious concern to the EU, due to their political motivation. Hence, even though the text of the Association agreement was agreed upon, the parties failed to sign it, and Brussels made it clear that unless improvements are made to the quality of democracy and rule of law in Ukraine and opposition representatives are freed and allowed to run in the October 2012 parliamentary elections, the document would not be initialed. This pre-condition is associated with the approval by the Ukrainian parliament in December 2011 of a new electoral law that re-established a mixed electoral system with a representation threshold set at 5 percent of votes (the current threshold is 3 percent) and banned blocs of political parties from participating in elections – all amendments that limit the opposition's participation. "The parliamentary elections will be a litmus test with the Union scrutinizing them to ensure a level playing field for all candidates and that they can exercise their rights."¹³ This stance was also reinforced by the reintroduction of the presidential republic in Ukraine (reversing the 2004 reform that had curbed presidential powers in favor of parliament); by the fact that Ukraine's president can now determine the candidacy of the prime minister, regardless of parliament's position, appoint and dismiss Cabinet ministers, and dismiss the government without parliament's consent; by the worsening situation with freedom of the press; and by alleged violations during the 2010 local elections in Ukraine. Similar decisions and tendencies further strain relations with the EU and prove the failure of the latter to spur a real transformation of political culture.

The case of Belarus is even more indicative of the inadequacy of EU political integration. Unlike Ukraine, Belarus has never affirmed its aspiration to join the EU or to adhere to a Western development model. It has chosen not to reform the system of public administration, not to establish a rule of law, and not to take any politically unpopular steps, while maintaining the Soviet-style top-down chain-of-command and regularly neutralizing opposition. Until the current economic crisis unfolded, the country had a rather stable

economy, which was the main factor behind the country's stability. It is not by chance that President Alexander Lukashenko's rule has been defined as an autocracy and he himself "Europe's latest dictator." Indeed, following a referendum in 1996, Lukashenko replaced the first post-Soviet legislature with a national Assembly that he appointed himself and has progressively created a personalistic authoritarian regime, where electoral competition is de facto eliminated by harassment, banning opposition parties, and pressure on the media and judiciary. In addition, a constitutional amendment in 2004 lifted the restriction on the number of terms the president can serve, opening the way for Lukashenko to stay in power indefinitely.¹⁴ This autocratic attitude could be explained by the different stages of self-determination and political maturity that the collapse of the Soviet Union left in the former Soviet republics. Belarusians still have to go through the process of forming their national identity, nation-building, and ultimately finding their manner of coexistence with Russia, which will shape them as a separate state with distinct political structures.¹⁵ Belarus is indeed politically and economically still very intimate with Russia. Generous economic support and subsidies from Moscow are essential to President Lukashenko's maintenance of the political status quo. Continuous conflicts with the Kremlin, however, are dictated by a strong interdependence with Russia. On the one hand, Lukashenko is interested in gaining access to Russia's market and resources, the Belarusian people support their neighbor, and the country is tied to Russia through the Union State and the benefits it derives from this Union, but on the other hand, Lukashenko has to defend national sovereignty and power from external influences. It is clear that under such conditions, the EU approach and political tools (conditionality, harmonization of national legislation with EU normative standards, steady integration) are largely inadequate and ineffective, as they do not take into account the country's unique features.

Ukraine's Orange Revolution, taking place a few weeks after the Belarusian constitutional referendum proclaimed that Lukashenko could stay in office for an indefinite time, raised the regime's concerns that a similar protest could occur in Minsk as well. Hence, in 2005 Lukashenko boosted the law enforcement agencies and purged their ranks of potential dissenters. The March 2006 presidential elections, when Lukashenko won a third term, were neither free nor fair, and the OSCE declared that the voting did not meet democratic standards. The government took harsh repressive measures against the opposition, detaining and beating many campaign workers. According to the OSCE, despite some minor improvements (slightly greater access of opposition representatives to election commissions and permission to rally in authorized locations without interference), the September 2008 parliamentary election, when none of the 78 opposition candidates won a seat in the parliament, also did not fulfill the criteria for democratic elections. Finally, the 2010 presidential election, when Lukashenko once again won with

a landslide victory (80 percent of votes cast), was marred by widespread allegations of fraud, opposition protests, and a violent government crackdown. In its electoral assessment, OSCE stated that “there was a lack of independence and impartiality of the election administration, an uneven playing field and a restrictive media environment, as well as a continuous lack of transparency at key stages of the electoral process.”¹⁶

Despite mounting discontent, spreading mostly among educated young and urban people, Lukashenko still enjoys great popular support, especially among state employees and pensioners, who have benefitted from substantial increases of their salaries/pensions (on the eve of 2010 presidential election, wages in the public sector were raised by 25 percent.) Unlike the case of Ukraine, where popular dissatisfaction also has an ideological/political component, in Belarus social unrest still builds on being in favor or against Lukashenko, without referring to any alternative political platform or vision. Opposition remains poorly organized, fragmented, lacking a charismatic leader, and focused on selfish interests, which do not challenge the status quo but rather perpetuate it. Moreover, unlike the often painful processes of comprehensive political and economic transformation that the former communist countries of central Europe went through, social guarantees and benefits provided to the Belarusian people made them less politically active. This attitude, coupled with the brutal repression of opposition, explains the weakness of their desire to form political alternatives.

Two interdependent factors are able to undermine Lukashenko's regime: economic decline and social divisions. The latter is unlikely to occur on a wide scale, given the regime's tight control. It is also unlikely that social unrest would take place when there is no aspiration to get closer to the EU and its standards (also due to inadequate information about European matters). Belarusians are mainly divided into two more or less equal groups: around 41.5 percent supports integration with Russia, while EU membership, which is not an available option, is attractive to 42 percent of the people.¹⁷ Hence, EU (democratic) value-driven policy is not appropriate in a country where autocracy dominates and the presence of its authoritarian leader is supported by a large part of society.

An economic decline is possible if both the EU and Russia considerably diminish their commercial and economic deals with Belarus. While Russia is not interested in such moves, the EU has often made use of economic sanctions (or other types of punishments) as a reaction to the deterioration of democracy (negative conditionality). In September 1997, the EU suspended contractual agreements with Belarus and its assistance in support of civil society. Due to a lack of progress on human rights issues and democratization (especially after the re-election of Lukashenko in 2010), the European Council

decided to extend the duration of the restrictions until October 2012 (travel bans and a freeze of personal assets) against 192 Belarusian officials responsible for the violations of international electoral standards in the presidential elections in 2006 and 2010, as well as for the crackdown on civil society and democratic opposition. In addition, the assets of three companies linked to the regime were frozen, while exports to Belarus of arms and materials that might be used for internal repression were prohibited.¹⁸ However, the EU's pressure has not had much effect on the course of the country's domestic politics. Even more, the EU's punishments seem to be counterproductive, since while affecting the regime they may also alienate those people who support the EU and depict the latter in a negative light rather than as a positive factor. For them those sanctions are undue interference in domestic affairs and an attack on national sovereignty that their President is called upon to offset. Furthermore, the strong economic dependency of Belarus on Russia compensates for the effects of the EU's restrictive measures.

So far, Lukashenko's overtures towards the EU seem to be more form than substance, aimed at improving the image of his country abroad and somehow reinforcing his legitimacy. For example, Lukashenko signed a Memorandum in 2008, establishing a permanent mission of the European Commission in Minsk; in November 2009, the European Council welcomed an increased high-level EU-Belarus political dialogue, the establishment of an EU-Belarus Human Rights Dialogue, intensified technical cooperation, and the active participation of Belarus in the EaP.

A collaborative approach vis-à-vis civil society and the opposition (the EaP multilateral track) has progressively accompanied the EU "punitive" policy towards the political elite. The EU made clear that it would consider the possibility of negotiating a visa facilitation agreement with Belarus in parallel with negotiations on a readmission agreement. The European Council invited the Commission to make a proposal for a joint interim plan to set priorities for reforms, inspired by the Action Plans developed in the framework of the ENP. More recent trends, like the alleged harassment of the Polish minority in Belarus, have seriously concerned the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton, who also urged the country to abolish the death penalty.

All in all, the EU policy of isolation and sanctions brought more negative than positive outcomes, resulting in long-standing internal contradictions within Belarusian society. Years of complete isolation, with no official contacts between Minsk and Brussels and limited contacts with people and business actors, played their unconstructive role in diminishing the sense that Belarus shares a European identity and have led to a long-standing distrust by Belarusians towards Brussels. A positive but still feeble change is shown by recent EU programs targeting primarily Belarusian NGOs, the independent media,

and students who are subject to the regime's repression, with the purpose of sustaining the Belarusian population and thus avoiding its isolation.¹⁹

Absence of identity stimulus of “return to Europe”

A third reason casting some light on the impasse of the EU eastern neighborhood policy is that the EU erroneously assumed that the integration of the post-Soviet space might follow the path of central-eastern Europe, where the metaphor of “return to Europe” provided a strong identity stimulus for those states to embark on a comprehensive reform program. Unlike the latter case, neither Belarus nor Ukraine adhere to this logic, and their integration into Europe proved to be an arduous process in the absence of such a psychological framework of discovering historical and cultural roots. Instead, both of them are situated in a “contact zone” between the EU and Russia, which complicates their self-determination and requires a much more nuanced EU approach. That geographical location implies a necessary strategy of maneuvering between the two poles (Brussels and Moscow). In the case of Ukraine, the contact zone meant a difficult path of trying to maintain independence/equal distance from both of its neighbors. Since the 2004 Orange Revolution, Kiev's political elite has constantly exploited the country's geography and its historical origins in order to claim Ukraine's Europeanness and consequently to justify a Euro-Atlantic integrationist course. However, a deep internal division strains Ukraine's advancement towards Western structures. The population in eastern and southern Ukraine aspires to staying closer to Russia; the western part, instead, strives for integration with the EU and NATO. This situation is also reflected in domestic politics and often transforms Ukraine into a battlefield of influence between Russia and the West. For Belarus, the contact zone has a minor impact due to its special and structured relationship with Russia (the Union State between Belarus and Russia), as well as historical ties, whereas the EU presence is seen as more of an intrusion than a benefit.

Last, the contact zone compelled the EU to deal not only with the two countries, but also with Russia, thus forging a triangular relationship within which the EU and Russian poles could either cooperate or clash. None of these problems characterized the central-eastern European countries' integration into the EU. Thus, for example, since 1991 Ukraine has been constantly reiterating its European roots, but its Europeanness has often been defined in terms of opposition to and the search for independence from Russia, and not so much in terms of its own unique self-understanding. The notion of Europeanness is absent in Belarus, where the political elite, headed by President Lukashenko, holds a completely different ideology and political attitude, much closer to Russia than to the EU. Therefore, in such cases imposing values and norms (the principle of conditionality) appears to be a short-sighted approach.

Inadequacy of reward/compensation approach

Fourth, given the above explanations, it is clear that the approach of neither the ENP nor the EaP (and its latest version, “more funds for more reforms”), based on the logic of reward or compensation, can achieve the desired results, especially in light of the fact that costly reforms do not lead to membership. In this way, the EU destroyed the feasibility of its own policy. The EU assumed that the prospect of integration into Europe (the EU monopolized the discourse and image of Europe on its geographical and political frontiers as well) could be a powerful and self-sufficient factor for transforming post-Soviet societies. On the contrary, local political elites and populations concluded that the Europeanization process will guarantee them a constant financial flow, even without carrying out reforms. To signal their interest in receiving European funds, these post-Soviet societies often adopted European integration rhetoric (this is very much the case of Ukraine.) Hence, expectations were dashed for both sides, as they were rather superficial and not embedded in strong ideals. The enlargement fatigue, EU absorption capacity, and the euro crisis mean not only that a membership should be ruled out in the mid-term but also that the European integration should be understood by EaP countries as a genuine and resolute commitment to political and economic reforms. So far, however, the only trend observable in the two countries of our analysis (as well as in other EaP partners) is inertia, surviving the global economic hardship and maintaining the status quo. Yanukovich’s and Lukashenko’s governance are indeed a telling example. Yanukovich’s resistance to the EU request related to Tymoshenko’s case seems similar to Lukashenko’s attempt to become a symbol of the strong national leader able to guide the country despite external adversities and economic turbulence. Democratization, as the EU conceives it, does not seem to necessarily correspond to the stage of development of society following the Soviet regime experience. There could be other intermediate stages of transition, and their peculiarities need to be addressed, not ignored or skipped (the failure of the color revolutions is a telling example.) The EU should have a more nuanced and flexible approach for assisting in domestic dynamics, instead of simply enforcing its own rules and norms. Such a process is equally challenging for EaP partners and the EU.

The Russian factor

Finally, the fifth reason has to do with Russia. The unsolved issue of EU-Russia relations weakens EU influence in these countries. Its significance is heightened by the fact that in the post-Soviet space, different actors’ regional interests and influences are intertwined, and the EU approach is not able to advance a viable synthesis of them. Bilateral (EU-EaP countries), triangular (EU-EaP partners-Russia), and extra-regional (EU-EaP partners-Russia-China/Turkey/the United States) relations pose legitimate questions on the contours of the broader regional framework in the medium to long-term

(the Euro-Atlantic community coexisting and balancing China's rise; Eurasia; EU-United States versus China with Russia being a grey area, and so on). These different levels of interaction point to the need for a decision on Russia's role in the region. In other words, it is time for the EU to reconceptualize its policies towards this area and to include Russia in them.

In fact, both countries, as well as other EaP partners, are dependent on Russia for a number of reasons, among which energy deserves a special place. Oil and gas give Moscow a sort of blackmailing power over regional states. A significant share of the gas exported from Russia to the EU (about 25 percent of the gas consumed in the EU) runs through Ukrainian and Belarusian territory, giving them strategic value to Moscow.²⁰ Furthermore, Russia has strengthened its soft power by promoting a gradual institutionalization of the post-Soviet space through the creation of frameworks of cooperation that differ in intensity and nature (i.e. The Customs Union, Eurasian Economic Community, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and Collective Security Treaty Organization). Although all these projects (except for the Customs Union) have been largely ineffective, it is important to note that none of them anticipates that states renounce part of their sovereignty in favor of a supranational body, as is the case with the EU. This is a sensitive issue for these countries, and the EU should fine-tune the type of regional institutionalization it is promoting to account for it (especially because the EU's image is not associated with any regional imperialistic drive).

The EU should revise its approach, and it should include Russia, because it represents an important factor for the two countries and for regional stabilization. Russia's presence and interests should not be ignored by the EU in its efforts to reshape the post-Soviet area if Brussels wants to become a true transformative regional power. If Brussels chooses to develop a broader, not simply bilateral, framework of cooperation (short of full integration) excluding Russia, the countries in between will always be considered bargaining chips between the EU and Russia and not as subjects with their own policies and goals. Such a situation stimulates these countries either to adopt a multivector foreign policy, using a triangular configuration to take advantage of the weaknesses and offers of each party – a strategy that is not viable in the long term (Ukraine), or to opt for a kind of “isolation” from one party, while strengthening bilateral relations with the other (Belarus).

In the case of Ukraine, a constant oscillation between the EU and Russia's poles has been observed during the past twenty years. Yanukovich brought an end to the exclusively Western-oriented foreign policy promoted by his predecessor, President Yushchenko, with the Orange Revolution. In the beginning of his presidential term, many supposed that his overt anti-Yushchenko course would bring Ukraine back to Russia's political orbit (he

extended the stay of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea and ruled out Ukraine's membership in NATO), but this assumption soon turned out to be ill-founded. Yanukovich is instead pursuing a seemingly multivector foreign policy. He declared that Ukraine would be a "bridge" between its two neighbors, the EU and Russia, and will pursue an economic/political integration into the EU (though not at any cost), while not ignoring Moscow's courting. This stance is the logical consequence of Yushchenko's politics. It faithfully reflects post-1991 Ukraine's cyclical swinging between the West and Russia in an attempt to build national identity, unity, strength, and political strategy. But while a bridge position recalls the image of conciliation, what we are witnessing is rather an either/or scenario meant to reinforce Ukraine's leverage when dealing with Brussels or Moscow on problematic issues. Such an approach, however, reveals its deceitful nature, as generally Ukraine is not the subject of bi- and trilateral dealings but an object of difficult bargaining between the EU and Russia. Furthermore, considering the EU's weakness due to the euro crisis, Ukraine's options are even more limited than those entailed in a "bridge" role. In fact, recent developments reveal that the multivector nature of this policy camouflages an inability to develop a clear-cut strategy on how to deal with these neighbors, while apparently claiming a reconciliation of the pro-Western and pro-Russian parts of the country.

The EU increasingly fears losing Ukraine to Russia. This concern was aggravated by the 2010 Kharkiv accord and by the calls repeated in 2011 to Ukraine to join the Russia-led Customs Union. Similar Russian overtures to Ukraine are not a novelty. Moscow had already tried to attract Ukraine to various regional economic projects envisioning not just a free trade area but a deeper cooperation, but Kiev preferred the status of an associate member. Aware of Ukraine's most sensitive issue – gas pricing (the main element in Tymoshenko's trial ²¹), in 2011 Moscow offered discounted gas supplies if either Kiev allowed it to acquire a controlling stake in the Ukrainian state energy company, Naftogaz, or if Kiev joined the Customs Union. However, Yanukovich rejected both options, suggesting instead joining the Customs Union in the format of 3+1. His proposal corresponds to the economic and financial interests of the oligarchs sustaining his power, as the formula guarantees them free access to economic opportunities offered either by the EU or by Russia in both the short and long term. As Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Serhiy Tihipko was quoted as saying in the *Financial Times*, if the EU sends a clear signal of no integration, a reorientation towards the Russia-led Customs Union project is very likely. Currently, however, Kiev finds itself in limbo, and whatever decision it makes, it will have to reach compromises if it wants to stabilize the internal basis of the regime. In the absence of a long-term strategy, Kiev's approach of temporarily benefitting from the deterioration of bilateral relations within the EU-Ukraine-Russia triangle appears a risky choice.

The EU's incapacity to address and solve the Belarus puzzle is related to Russia's growing economic penetration into that country, as witnessed during and after the quickly reconciled gas and oil crises that have taken place since 2006. In addition, after the post-election violence against opposition demonstrators, Belarus has been increasingly isolated from Brussels, reinforcing in this way Moscow's leverage. Russia's influence and attitude had gradually resulted in a weakening of the Minsk statist economic model, since the stability of Lukashenko's regime was guaranteed by huge profits ensured by oil and gas from Russia. In the past, Minsk saved about \$6,5 billion annually thanks to cheap energy supplies and the re-export of oil products. The restructuring of the energy sector could reduce the influence of the highly corrupt elite, which is a serious obstacle to the country's modernization. In Belarus, energy consumption is high due to very low energy efficiency in buildings and key economic sectors such as the metallurgical and chemical industries; therefore, energy prices are of fundamental importance for the country. The government has indeed started shifting away from its populist policies, acknowledging the need to start privatizing some industries, reforming the country's collective farming system, and reducing subsidies to producers and consumers. In this way, greater economic freedom may one day lead to greater political freedom and a more democratic regime.

Before the economic crisis, Minsk-Moscow relations had become increasingly ambiguous. Serious challenges to the power of President Lukashenko began to mount in 2007, when Russia significantly increased previously highly subsidized energy prices that had underpinned President Lukashenko's political control. As a result, Lukashenko distanced himself from Moscow by not recognizing Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while Moscow boycotted Belarusian dairy products on the grounds that they had not been properly certified in Russia. In retaliation for the boycott, President Lukashenko refused to participate in the special rapid reaction forces of the Organization of Collective Security Treaty, a Russia-centered military bloc. Eventually Lukashenko signed a treaty that gives him the right to commit national troops, but on a case-by-case basis. Russia also started a media campaign discrediting the Belarusian President as a response (as Russian President Medvedev explained in his blog) to Lukashenko's anti-Russian rhetoric.²²

President Lukashenko reacted to his deteriorating relationship with Moscow by engaging in a dialogue with the EU. As part of a maneuver to ensure his political survival, he purged his inner circle of pro-Russian officials and brought a younger cohort of pragmatists into his entourage. The EU temporarily lifted visa sanctions after President Lukashenko refused to support the Kremlin in the August 2008 war and released a number of political prisoners. Moscow became frustrated with Lukashenko's flirtations with the EU and in the second half of 2009 stepped up efforts to bring Belarus firmly back into its sphere

of influence. However, the economic and euro crisis significantly weakened the EU's presence in Belarus and consequently reinforced Russia's position and influence, curtailing Belarus's chances for an independent trajectory. Russia remains Minsk's most important trade partner, accounting for 35 percent of Belarus's export revenue and 52 percent of its import costs. The 2010 gas crisis helped Russia persuade the country to join the Customs Union with Russia and Kazakhstan. In June 2011, Belarus secured a \$3 billion loan from the Eurasian Economic Community, in which Russia is a dominant member. Nevertheless, Russia put tough conditions on the disbursement of the loan, including privatization of some important Belarusian assets. In December 2011, Belarus received \$2.5 billion from the acquisition by Russia's gas monopoly, Gazprom, of the remaining 50 percent stake of the Belarusian national gas pipeline operator, Beltransgaz.

Conclusions and policy recommendations

This paper shows that despite the modifications that the EU neighborhood policy has undergone since its launch in 2004, its leverage with Ukraine and Belarus has remained weak and ineffective in relation to its goal of democratization of the two countries. This is especially the case when the EU is facing the growing influence of the pragmatic and not value-based Russia-led Customs Union project. The latter includes Belarus but not Ukraine, although Russia aspires to attract Ukraine so as to ensure the completeness of the union. Ukraine's turbulent domestic political situation renders its foreign policy even more complicated and unstable. Instead of striking a balance, Ukraine seems trapped into its own inability to deal with the EU and Russia and to create a straightforward strategy of regional stance and development. An either/or integrationist scenario for Ukraine's future makes it a mere object of EU-Russia bargaining and its foreign policy even more vulnerable to external pressures. The most urgent task that Kiev has to carry out is to solve its internal problems, which will consequently determine a more consistent foreign policy orientation.

As for Belarus, which does not aspire to become an EU member, the only way for Brussels to make it as an open market and a transitional democracy is to cooperate with Moscow. When dealing with Russia, the EU is confronting two alternatives: either competing or cooperating. The first option is inappropriate for the EU's current potential. Additionally, the EU is largely dependent on Russia's energy supplies. The second option is more realistic and suitable. Only Russia has the capacity to destabilize the centralized Belarusian economy and its political regime. Moreover, Lukashenko's sporadic overtures to the West have not been the outcome of a successful Western strategy

but rather the consequence of the shifting dynamics of his relationship with Russia. The EU still hardly represents an alternative to the current Belarusian political stagnation or an incentive for change. The recent EU decision of splitting its policy (political elites/people) towards the country is aimed at strengthening the role of civil society, ending a risky national isolation. In the long term, this may contribute to the emergence of a groundbreaking political project to replace Lukashenko's undemocratic populist regime.

The cases of Ukraine and Belarus cast doubts on the effectiveness of the ENP/EaP and the overall Western strategy of democratizing contiguous areas (regardless of the missing prospect of EU membership). However, lately even the prospect of membership seems unable to reverse the situation on the promotion of reform. Both of these two countries have made it clear that they seek to maintain the domestic political status quo. Undermining their political elite will only lead to greater upheavals that the EU is not able to handle in this critical moment of its existence. So far, too much institutionalism has confined the EU's impact and influence in the area. Political and normative convergence has demonstrated its inadequacy to the region, at least at this stage of its development; the EU seems unable to become a transformative power in the east. Its goal to make its eastern neighborhood as similar as possible to itself has proved unfeasible. Therefore, it might be better to replace it with a more concrete, pragmatic, and streamlined approach, based on the needs and capabilities of the countries, instead of imposing a unilateral agenda for progress.

Such an approach should combine three elements, some of which have been used in the past or present, but not in a coherent fashion, weakening their joint impact. A primary need of the EaP countries after the collapse of the Soviet economic system is to undergo a comprehensive modernization process, which entails mainly economic, industrial, and technological advancement. Cooperating on modernization is a process that interests all former Soviet republics and that will bring positive effects to all subnational, national, and supranational parties, while creating conditions for synergies and stable, viable partnerships. Joining forces with wealthier and more advanced countries is economically convenient for all partners in the post-Soviet space. Such integration should increase investment inflows, encourage competition, optimize the tax system, and reduce the likelihood of political friction. Instead of perpetuating a vague and generic eastern partnership framework, it will be more opportune to focus on a specific issue on which cooperation and consequently integration between the EU and Ukraine/Belarus (and other EaP countries) is achievable. Closer economic ties may stimulate growth and develop a framework of best practices to be adopted in different parts of the eastern neighborhood. By cooperation, I mean a working scheme under which both parties jointly establish their objectives and the means to obtain results (its rationale

differs significantly from the current EU approach and conditionality, where EaP countries have to comply with rules that have already been established by Brussels and where these countries have no say or possibility to object.) Such a scheme for dialogue corresponds to the current impossibility of securing a membership and implies integration through cooperation between two equal parties on a specific area of shared interests and responsibilities. Creating occasions for reciprocal growth will bring a harmonization of practices and create synergies and interdependence that will stabilize the entire region without dividing it into parts like the EU, its eastern neighborhood, and Russia (or into EU and non-EU members). There is a need to lower expectations on both sides, to inject more pragmatism into regional cooperation in order to achieve concrete results, and only after that, to consider an upgrade to full-fledged integration if conditions allow it.

This Partnership for Modernization should be strengthened by the second component, namely people-to-people contacts. While the former component will support a harmonized stable economic space beyond the EU's current borders, the latter will bring different societies closer and may act as a stimulus both to promote a new political mentality/maturity and to foster the establishment of a new political elite. Stimulating socialization and increasing people's active role in national progress should contribute to a bottom-up approach to democratization, not top-down, which has proved inefficient. This is especially true in the case of Belarus, where a change in social mentality is needed to implement any reform. It is time to upgrade both the ENP and EaP to a level corresponding to real potential, commitment and needs, not leaving them to an old and empty formula involving rewards and growing dissatisfaction.

Third, Russia should not be left outside of this project, since the EU has already inaugurated a Partnership for Modernization with Moscow. A broader modernization agenda may only smooth triangular relations. Russia and the EU are two interconnected centers of power active in the post-Soviet space. The growing influence of one of them usually occurs at the disadvantage of the other, but this does not need to be so. If Russia is excluded from the regional architecture, the countries in between will remain in limbo, trying to balance, whenever possible, between these two poles. The weak and unattractive ENP as well as the EaP only create disenchantment among the beneficiary countries and exacerbate Russia's aggressive tone and search for room to maneuver. Brussels should try to create regional conditions for a win-win situation and advance them. Such a collaboration will inaugurate a functioning relationship among all regional actors without imposing a choice of exclusive alliances (so far a functioning relationship is not in place due to the "exchange/blackmailing" political logic of both the EU and Russia.) This way, Russia will not be integrated into the EU as a member, but it will develop a suitable means of coexistence and cooperation in the enlarged eastern neighborhood (Putin has already recently

unveiled an analogous project.) A more flexible, concrete, and realistic integration project will restore EU credibility, alleviate certain tensions within the EU-EaP countries-Russia triangle, and be commensurate with the EU's current capacity to address foreign policy commitments. Ukraine is already benefiting from some important specific projects, but they are rather fragmented and still responding to the approach of compensation/more for more. They need to be strengthened and broadened further. On the contrary, Belarus, still has a long way to go in that regard.

However, it should not be ruled out that deeper economic cooperation and social contacts may lead in the future to a political and value-based breakthrough. Concrete areas of mutual interests and responsibilities may gradually create the necessary familiarity, interdependence, and necessity to proceed to a normative advance and political democratization. However, this goal should be achieved by reversing the current EU perspective: broader economic cooperation and social contacts and more flexibility and pragmatism for moving toward more social activism and political maturity.

NOTES

- 1 In Ukraine the political elite (president, government) and its agenda depend mostly on the financial support and interests of its business backers and big industrial groups (oligarchs). In Belarus, on the contrary, it is the president himself who dictates the main guidelines of national politics.
- 2 Olga Shumylo, *The debate on the EU membership prospects of Ukraine* (Polish Institute of Public Affairs Policy Brief, January 2007).
- 3 Katarzyna Wolczuk, "Ukraine and its relations with the EU in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy," *Chaillot Paper* 108, "Ukraine: Quo Vadis?" (February 2008): pp. 99-100.
- 4 Rob Boudewijn, Evelyn Van Kampen, and Jan Rood, *Overview paper of EU policy seminar: "Exploring the scope of the European Neighbourhood Policy towards new forms of partnership?"* (April 11, 2008), p. 7.
- 5 See ENP country report on Ukraine at: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ukraine/press_corner/all_news/news/2011/2011_05_26_01_en.htm.
- 6 Here are some noteworthy examples pertaining to the energy sector: on February 1, 2011, Ukraine became a member of the Energy Community; the EU agreed to support a feasibility study and environmental and social impact study on the modernization of gas networks and underground gas storage; in March 2010 Ukraine adopted an energy efficiency program for the period 2010-2015; the EU-Ukraine-International Atomic Energy Agency evaluation of the safety of Ukraine's nuclear power plants concluded that they are fully compliant with most of the IAEA's standards.
- 7 In 2010 Ukraine adopted the national environmental strategy up to 2020 and started preparing for a national environmental action plan.
- 8 For more information see: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/ukraine/index_en.htm.

- 9 Volodymyr Kulyk, "The end of 'Euro-romanticism' in Ukraine," *SWP Comments* 28 (December 2009).
- 10 Susan Stewart, "Ukraine and the EU. Needed: Less Tymoshenko, More Values," *SWP Comments* 32 (October 2011): p. 1.
- 11 Steven Pifer, "Can Ukraine join Europe as Yanukovich moves away from EU values?" (The Brookings Institution, July 28, 2011), http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0728_ukraine_pifer.aspx.
- 12 European Parliament chief Jerzy Buzek defined the trial as a politically motivated process. The chief of the European People's Party (EPP), the family of center-right political parties in the EU with which Tymoshenko's party is affiliated, Wilfried Martens, called on Yanukovich to put an immediate end to that sham. A European Parliament resolution urged the Ukrainian authorities to let opposition representatives, including Tymoshenko, participate in Ukraine's political life. MEPs also called on the European Commission to consider the creation of a High-Level EU Advisory Group to Ukraine to assist in its efforts to conform to EU legislation, including that concerning the independence of the judiciary. Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt also reacted by saying that the trial is an embarrassing spectacle and does great damage to a great country. The French Foreign Ministry expressed its strong concern about Ukraine. The United States went further, urging the government to consider Tymoshenko's immediate release.
- 13 "EU-Ukraine ties stumble over politically motivated justice," *EurActiv*, December 20, 2011.
- 14 The Belarusian constitution concentrates power in the hands of the president. As a result, Lukashenko has total control over the executive branch, local administrations and the security apparatus.
- 15 Grigorij Ioffe, "Authoritarianism Without Oligarchy" ["Avtoritarizm bez oligarkhii"], *Pro et Contra* (Carnegie Moscow Center: May-August 2011).
- 16 See *OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report on Belarus Presidential Election of 19 December 2001* (Warsaw, February 22, 2011), <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/75713>.
- 17 See *Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies (IISEPS), public opinion polls of September 2011*, <http://www.iiseps.org/press15.html>.
- 18 Council of the European Union (Luxembourg, October 10, 2011), http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/126979.pdf.
- 19 In his speech at the International Donor's Conference on Belarus in Warsaw, European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle affirmed that "As a clear demonstration of our unequivocal support to civil society in these difficult times, we will increase our funding from the currently available €4 million to €15.6 million. With these measures, we are seeking to avoid isolating the Belarusian population. I believe we have an important responsibility in this regard." European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy, "Solidarity with Belarus," (International Donors' Conference, Warsaw, February 2, 2011), <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/11/63&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&quiLanguage=en>.
- 20 This situation may change with the Nord Stream and South Stream gas pipelines.
- 21 On the one hand, Russia fears that the 2009 gas accord may be reviewed and even annulled, harming Gazprom's interests, while on the other hand it realizes that any slowdown in the advancement of EU-Ukraine relations will bring it benefits.
- 22 Medvedev affirmed that "The inclination to create an image of an external enemy in the public consciousness has always distinguished the Belarusian leadership. In the past, this role was assigned to the United States, Europe and the West in general. Now Russia has been declared one of the main enemies," October 3, 2010, <http://enq.kremlin.ru/news/1052>. Before the 2010 Belarusian presidential election, Russian state-controlled NTV television aired a four-part documentary entitled "*Krestny Batka*" [The Belarusian Godfather], damaging Lukashenko's reputation and domestic image.

The Energy Diatribe – the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue Today

From the grandiose rhetoric about forming a new European Coal and Steel Community between Russia and the EU more than eleven years ago, the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue has degenerated into a forum for technical shop talk between semi-empowered, semi-interested technocrats. The twelfth progress report, issued by the interlocutors of the Energy Dialogue last December, is low on actual progress. Instead it appears more as a lowest common denominator, papering over profound divisions in a dialogue struggling to deliver tangible results. The failure of the Energy Dialogue is at once historical, institutional, and political, as this essay will show.

The European Coal and Steel Community 2.0

The EU-Russia Energy Dialogue was launched on October 30, 2000, at the sixth EU-Russia Summit in Paris, France. The dialogue arose from the notion that the European continent constitutes a broad geopolitical area linked culturally, historically, and economically, and that the complementary nature in terms of energy between the eastern and western parts of the continent should be developed in a sustainable way for the future. Then, as now, Russia and the EU were highly interdependent trading partners. As of the end of 2011, energy goods represented 74 percent of total EU imports from Russia. Conversely, Russia provided the EU with 34 percent of its net gas imports, and 33 percent of crude oil imports.¹

The primary goal of the Energy Dialogue was no less than to resolve “all the questions of common interest relevant to [the energy sector].”² Both wanted energy security, albeit one as an importer and the other as an exporter. The Russians wanted investment and secure markets, whereas the EU wanted a stable legal regime for the Russo-European energy trade.

But the ambitions extended further than mere energy security. As the EU Commission made clear in a communiqué from 2001, “[c]ommitments achieved through this dialogue in the energy sector could then serve as a model for other sectors.”³ In its earliest stages, the Energy Dialogue was purported to become a blueprint for further and deeper cooperation in other economic sectors and perhaps also political integration. For the Commission, the inspiration for the dialogue was the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) of 1952, the progenitor of the European Community and later the European Union.⁴ Just like the ECSC, the dialogue was established as a forum between erstwhile antagonists. And just like the ECSC, an energy partnership (coal was the “oil” of the time) would lead to wider economic and political integration.

But unlike the ECSC, which was confined to a handful of geographically contiguous, relatively homogeneous Western European states, the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue was between two highly different actors. Russia had no intention of repeating the ECSC, let alone building an extended EU.⁵ This would become all the more apparent during the course of the 2000s. Russia under Putin, with its top-heavy political and economic system, was – and indeed still is – a very different political animal than the polycentric EU. Vertical Russia was a poor match for the horizontal EU, which expanded twice, first to 25 and then to 27 members, in 2004 and 2007, respectively. The expansions made the EU more heterogeneous. They also severely politicized the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, by including nine states from the former Eastern Bloc and Soviet Union, including Poland and the Baltic States. Moscow was wary of the new additions to the EU. It preferred to interact bilaterally with individual (“old”) member states, and above all Germany, Italy, France, and the UK, which in Russian official circles are known as “the West-European Big Four.”⁶ What is more, Russia wanted to focus on sections of the economy rather than using a broad patterned form of integration, which was the Commission’s goal.⁷ In this respect, the interlocutors spoke different languages, as it were; hence their consistent failure to communicate in an energy dialogue which has since strived to retain its relevance.

Progress without progress

At the end of each calendar year, the two interlocutors produce progress reports to summarize and assess the development of the Energy Dialogue in the past twelve months. But rather than strong affirmations of progress, the reports appear as lowest common denominators, papering over profound divisions in a dialogue struggling to deliver tangible results. The most recent twelfth progress report, published by the Energy Dialogue last December,

shows little in way of actual progress.⁸ Its introductory pages are devoted to reaffirming the *a priori* interdependency of Russia and the EU with respect to energy. One entire page is allotted to summarizing gas, oil, and coal exports and imports, if for no other purpose than to re-emphasize a point that has been obvious since long before the inception of the Energy Dialogue, namely that Russia and the EU are mutually dependent. Subsequent space is allocated to listing the somewhat limited meeting activity of the Energy Dialogue.

As such, the 2011 progress report, like its predecessors, fails to live up to its name. “Progress,” as it were, is mostly confined to discussing the discussion, i.e. widening the framework of the dialogue itself. Most noticeable in this respect is the inception of an EU-Russia energy “roadmap” set for 2050, whose main purpose is to “identify ...and thereby facilitate mutually beneficial synergies.”⁹ This is not the first time such an initiative has been launched. Indeed, the interlocutors of the Energy Dialogue have been very successful at coming up with new ways of discussing old grievances, hence the proliferation of such “roadmaps,” “common spaces,” and “partnerships.”¹⁰ But according to Russian officials I have spoken to, the new energy roadmap has met with little enthusiasm on the Russian side and a corresponding indifference within the EU. The Russians claim that their input has been mostly ignored by the EU Commission, which has also launched its own 2050 energy roadmap, and is thus more interested in going it alone.¹¹ Another new initiative is the Gas Advisory Council (GAC), which was established to provide regular input from the academic community and energy companies to the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, which until recently was provided on an ad hoc basis only. The establishment of the GAC is the first step in yet another restructuring of the Energy Dialogue. This is all well and good, but the Energy Dialogue has to do more than cosmetic restructuring if it is to resolve the many issues facing the Russo-EU energy trade. Tellingly, the final paragraph, with the subheading “Legal Framework” (p. 6), is also the shortest, with only two sentences confirming the on-going negotiations over a “New Agreement,” without really going into any detail. That the two parties have finally, after twelve years, managed to provide links to each other’s respective webpages (p. 2) does not cover up the fact these legal negotiations have been on-going for well over a decade, without bringing the two parties any closer to resolution.

In want of its own achievements, then, the report has had to look elsewhere. It seemingly takes some credit for the successful completion of the Nord Stream gas pipeline (p. 1), which was officially opened in November last year. Although the pipeline has been co-opted as a “Project of Common Interest,” it was never an Energy Dialogue-led project. Rather, it is a joint-venture between Russia’s Gazprom and German, Dutch, and French companies. Ever since its inception in 2005, Nord Stream has been mired in controversy. To this day, skepticism towards Nord Stream is high among several EU

member states. Most belligerent among these have been the Baltic States and Poland, whose Foreign Minister Radoslav Sikorski once compared it with a modern-day Molotov-Ribbentrop treaty between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany.¹² This was because the pipeline would completely bypass Poland and the Baltics, by way of the Baltic seabed between Vyborg in Russia and Greifswald in Germany. Other business-led projects mentioned are the moribund Shtokman field, which six years after the initial agreement between Gazprom, Norwegian Statoil, and French Total has yet to reach an investment decision. Additional projects mentioned are the eastern Siberian gas fields Sakhalin-2 and Kharayaginskoye, both developed under so-called Production Sharing Agreements (PSA) with European companies. What is not mentioned, however, is the turbulent history of joint projects such as Sakhalin-2. Vladimir Putin, who is set to assume his third term as President of Russia, once described the PSA over Sakhalin as a “colonial agreement” between Western companies and Russia, in which the latter was not getting enough in return.¹³ The result was a tug of war between the project’s European stakeholders and Gazprom, in which the latter emerged victorious with a newly won majority share in the field. Indeed, Putin and the Kremlin have completely dismissed the entire PSA regime, which they argue is for “developing countries,” and not for sovereign states like Russia. Even so, the inclusion of business ventures like Nord Stream, Shtokman and Sakhalin II is symptomatic of how the Energy Dialogue has worked or, rather, failed to work. Substantial agreements, however tenuous, have been made through bilateral negotiations between Russia and individual member states and companies, not through the Energy Dialogue, as Stanislav Zhiznin, a senior Russian energy official and one of the Russian founders of the Energy Dialogue, has pointed out to the author.

This inertia, or traveling without moving, has indeed been a problem since the beginning. As former Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov dismissively noted in 2006, “regularly published ‘progress reports’ on energy dialogue refer now to quite a narrow circle of specific activities, like TACIS-sponsored energy efficiency projects in certain Russian cities. These ‘tactical’ projects are indeed important, but much less productive in absence of mutual understanding of political strategy of the ‘bigger’ dialogue ... which is simply not discussed today.”¹⁴ In more recent years the interlocutors have even struggled to come up with a common wording for the progress reports, as one Commission official confided to this author. Russian officials I have spoken with claim that the reports are only for show. They are published merely to keep the paper mill running at the Russian Ministry of Energy. It is the Ministry that coordinates the Energy Dialogue on behalf of the Russian government. But the real decisions affecting the Russo-EU energy trade are made wholly outside the confines of the Ministry and the Energy Dialogue, the officials say. In Russia they are made in the Kremlin, by way of government

representatives in Russian energy companies such as Gazprom. Conversely, EU energy policy is largely defined by national governments in the 27 – going on 28 – member states, and not by Brussels-based “eurocrats.” On top of this are the myriad of private actors, who conduct business at their own discretion, without paying much heed to the grey suits in Moscow and Brussels. What remains is a largely impotent Energy Dialogue which, eleven years on, stands without a clear mandate or any real achievements to its name.

Historical factors

There are three main reasons for this failure: historical, institutional, and political, all of which are interrelated. Historically, the failure of the Energy Dialogue needs to be understood in light of the context in which it was established. In October 2000, at the foundation of the Energy Dialogue, the relationship between Russia and the EU was complacent, yet far from amicable. The botched privatization and democratization campaigns of the Yeltsin-years fragmented Russian political and economic life. Russian GDP was reduced by nearly two-thirds; civil war broke out in Chechnya. The ensuing chaos infused a cohort of future Russian decision-makers such as Vladimir Putin with a deep-rooted suspicion towards Western-style governance “imports.”¹⁵ Moreover, there were geopolitical incidents, such as the NATO-led intervention in Kosovo, which combined with a second outbreak of war in Chechnya put further strain on the EU-Russia relationship, which by then had become tenuous. Indeed, the roots of this animosity are deep. Russia – stretched between the Asian and European landmasses, with its Orthodox Christianity and long tradition of authoritarian rule – has always been both a part of and apart from Europe, halfway in and halfway out.¹⁶ This schism has displayed itself in Tsarist and Soviet times, as well as in the post-Soviet era. But by the turn of the millennium, relations were nonetheless warming up, if for nothing but structural reasons. The political and economic interdependence between Russia and the EU was growing. And if there was one area where Russia and the EU needed each other, and where the possibilities of successful cooperation were the greatest, it was energy.¹⁷

Institutional factors

The Energy Dialogue was far from the first attempt at institutionalizing the Russo-EU energy trade. Rather, it was a revamped effort at doing so, after previous attempts had failed. In 1997, three years before the inception of the Energy Dialogue, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

(PCA) between Russia and the EU came into force.¹⁸ The PCA was originally signed in 1994, but was delayed because of the Chechen war, which Brussels strongly condemned, due to documented Russian human rights abuses.²⁰ The PCA included a section on energy, which was almost exclusively drawn from the international Energy Charter Treaty (ECT).²¹ The ECT, signed in December 1994, set the legal framework for the transit of, and trade and investment in, energy. The EU member states, and the EU as a collective, were all subject to the ECT. The problem, however, was that Russia had signed but not ratified the ECT. Russia, therefore, did not consider itself to be legally bound by the charter. It followed the ECT only on a provisional basis, which means that there was no real legal basis for the Russo-EU energy trade. Russia had all along objected to the provisions of the ECT regarding third-party access to its vast pipeline system, which it inherited from the Soviet Union. Whereas the ECT demanded full third-party access to the grid, the Russian state wants to retain its state-controlled pipeline monopoly, so as to decide who can gain access and who cannot. Numerous efforts were made to resolve this issue, but Russia consistently refused to yield. One of the primary purposes of the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, therefore, at least for the EU, was to resolve the issue of Russian ratification of the ECT. And it would do so quickly: a “substantial breakthrough” was expected in the medium term, according to the Commission.²² But simply calling it an energy dialogue would not in and of itself resolve the profound differences over the ECT, or anything else, as would soon become apparent.

The organizational structure of the Energy Dialogue has remained largely unchanged since its formalization in early 2001, mere months after the Paris summit. Today, the Energy Dialogue is led by two main interlocutors. These are EU Commissioner for Energy Günther Öttinger, a German, and Russian Minister for Energy Sergei Shmatko. Overall political direction is provided through the Permanent Partnership Council (PPC) on energy, which besides Shmatko and Öttinger also includes the incumbent and incoming EU Presidents. On a more regular basis the Energy Dialogue has been conducted through three Thematic Groups, which in turn were coordinated by the director general of the Directorate-General for Energy (DG Energy) and the deputy minister of the Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation. Previously, these groups were named the Market Developments Group, the Energy Efficiency Group, and the Energy Strategies, Forecasts and Scenarios Group, including respective subgroups. But as mentioned already, these groups have now been revised.²³ Also, a handful of intermediary structures have operated in parallel with the thematic groups, and most recently the GAC. The GAC was established last year as a forum between representatives of leading Russian and EU gas companies and experts from Russian and European academic research organizations, who are to convene to discuss the gas market and assess its development. The purpose of the GAC is to increase contact between

the two parties, so as to allow for more continuity in the proceedings of the Energy Dialogue. Before the GAC was established, officials often complained that thematic group meetings were too infrequent, making it difficult for deliberations to gain any real momentum.²⁴ Meeting activity at higher, political (e.g. PPC) levels has been even more limited.

The ultimate level, however, is the biannual EU-Russia summits, attended by the president and foreign minister of Russia. Representing the EU are the Commission president, president of the European Council and the high representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The summits are not an official part of the Energy Dialogue as such, but the progress reports are presented for discussion at the summits as the main decision-making forum between the EU and Russia. However, despite the overall importance of energy for EU-Russia relations, the Energy Dialogue in and of itself is not a prominent element at the summits. Indeed, one senior EU official close to the Commission president admitted to me never having heard about the Energy Dialogue at all.

The underlying institutional problem, then, is that the horizontal EU-system is a poor match for the Russian power-vertical, which was consolidated during the early Putin years. Whereas technocratic Brussels prefers to keep decision making at the lowest levels possible, in Putin's Russia it is the other way around.²⁵ Despite a large bureaucracy consigned to the Russian energy sector, only a handful of actors are vested with powers to make any real decisions.²⁶ As mentioned before, the Russian Ministry of Energy does not have much influence over energy policy, foreign or domestic. Whereas its powers are indeed largely within the realm of external energy policy, its functions are mostly confined to public diplomacy, not as an autonomous actor itself.²⁷ Indeed, there is similar impotence on the EU side. Even though Brussels reinforced its decision-making powers in the external energy sphere through the Lisbon treaty, energy policy remains a predominantly national prerogative.²⁸ Consequently, there is a mismatch between actors and institutions, and institutions and capabilities.

Political factors

Politically, therefore, securing a Russian ratification of the ECT was never going to be easy. Still, there was an undeniable air of optimism when the Energy Dialogue was announced: "Both historically in the cultural sense and increasingly in the economic sense, too, Russia is very much part of Europe, the greater Europe," said Vladimir Putin during the joint press conference with French President Jacques Chirac and Commission President Romano

Prodi.²⁹ Troubles quickly emerged, however, as the Russians did not really have a proper long-term agenda for the Energy Dialogue. As opposed to the EU's more long-term, comprehensive vision, Russia's goals were short-term and sector-specific. Russia wanted investment, but apart from that, it was not so clear on what it was after. Moscow's short-term, rather unfocused vision made it easy for Brussels to dominate the agenda of the Energy Dialogue in its early years.³⁰ The EU's short-term goal for the Energy Dialogue was to establish an energy partnership under the auspices of the PCA, which to begin with would include Russian ratification of the ECT. The Russians were unenthusiastic, but had agreed to resume negotiations on the ECT, including a new transit protocol, so as to resolve the issue over third-party access to the Russian pipeline network. However, these discussions were quickly shot down after the EU invoked the charter's "Regional Economic Integration Organisation (REIO) Clause" in late 2001. Invoking the REIO clause meant that the entire union was to be perceived as a single economic block. This rendered the whole concept of transit within the EU a moot point. Instead, the EU's progressively stricter internal market rules would apply. This had profoundly negative consequences for Russia's attitudes vis-à-vis the ECT. As Vladimir Milov, Russia's former deputy minister of energy, noted a few years later, "with the EU's lobbying of the 'regional integration clause,' hardly a single Russian politician would defend the idea of Russian ratification of the ECT."³¹ It also dealt a severe blow to the still-embryonic Energy Dialogue. According to yet another former deputy energy minister, Leonid Grigoriev, the invocation of the REIO clause rendered the Energy Dialogue "blocked forever."³²

Political contingencies played a role, as well. In 2003, what seemed like a cold wind from the Soviet past blew in over the continent, after the arrest of Mikhail Khodorkovsky and the subsequent break-up and state takeover of private oil giant YUKOS. A few months after the EU expansion in 2004, the communist legacy was felt in another way, with the Orange Revolution in Ukraine. The deteriorated political relationship between Kiev and Moscow paved the way for the 2006 and 2009 gas crises. Russia was no longer keen on subsidizing gas for a government that openly denounced Moscow, and instead sought to strengthen its ties with the EU. In late 2009, the comparatively pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovich, who was ousted after the 2004 events, was again elected President of Ukraine. While this soothed tensions between Ukraine and Russia, the crisis of confidence suffered by the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue after 2006 and 2009 proved difficult to repair. Tensions were further aggravated by the August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia, which put additional strain on the relationship between Moscow and Brussels. All of these incidents strengthened the EU's resolve that it had to decrease its dependency on energy imports from Russia, which was no longer perceived as a reliable trading partner.³³ Russia, on its part, also sought new markets, but measures have so far been limited to finding new export routes for the EU-market. Disputes

with Beijing over the price of gas, combined with the underdeveloped infrastructure in the Far East, make Russia's oft-voiced threats of an "eastern turn" sound like saber-rattling at best.³⁴

But if Russia and the EU remained tethered together, politically they were drifting apart. The Energy Dialogue was at a standstill. Rather than a dialogue it became a dual monologue. Russia remained vehemently opposed to ratifying the ECT. The Russians felt betrayed by the EU for discriminating against Russia by not applying the ECT dispute settlement provisions in equal terms against Ukraine after the 2009 crisis.³⁵ A few months later President Dmitry Medvedev presented his own alternative to the ECT, the "Conceptual Approach to the New Legal Framework for Energy Cooperation," which demanded "[u]nconditional state sovereignty over national energy resources."³⁶ But the plea fell on deaf ears, and Medvedev's concept was swiftly rejected by the EU. Shortly thereafter Russia withdrew its signature from the ECT. The official reason was the ECT's alleged mishandling of the Ukrainian crisis earlier that year, but according to the former deputy secretary general of the ECT, Andrei Konoplyanik, the reasons were more ominous. The Ukraine incident was just a convenient cover-up. The real reason for opposing the ECT, he argues, was fear of international arbitration under the terms of the charter over the expropriation of YUKOS from Mikhail Khodorkovsky.³⁷ The decision to withdraw came after intense pressure from Prime Minister Putin and his Vice Premier for Energy Igor Sechin.³⁸ Sechin is the former chairman of state-owned oil company Rosneft, which in late 2003 swallowed most of YUKOS, after Khodorkovsky's arrest and trial. Sechin and Putin – nicknamed "Mr. Oil" and "Mr. Gas," respectively, for being the two *de facto* most powerful chieftains of Russia's energy sector – have all along been staunch opponents of the accords.³⁹ Whatever the actual reason, the consequences were plain for all to see: Russia was no longer a signatory party to the ECT.

However, Russia is not alone in having left the ECT out in the cold. On the other hand, the EU, too, has increasingly distanced itself from the ECT as its preferred legal document to regulate the energy trade. Although it remained a party to the accords, the Commission pushed for further liberalization of the internal energy market. This was done through the Commission's Second and Third Energy Packages, which introduced a number of new energy directives. These directives placed stricter demands on energy companies than the first energy package, adopted in the late 90s, which was more on a par with the ECT. Especially the Third Energy Package (TEP) has caused great resentment within Russia, due to its "unbundling" requirements, which makes it illegal for a single energy company, such as Gazprom, to control the production, transport, and retail segments of a single energy chain. To be sure, these provisions were watered down considerably, after firm resistance by powerful energy producers within the EU, such as Germany and Italy.⁴⁰ But

even these diluted requirements posed a challenge to the state-owned Russian energy “champions.” Moreover, the TEP prevented companies outside the EU from purchasing strategic distribution networks without approval by national governments, which in turn now had to consult with the EU Commission. In Moscow this territorial clause was perceived as a thinly veiled effort at protectionism against the Russians, who even renamed it the “Gazprom clause.”⁴¹ The result was a stand-off, with neither party willing to yield. The EU staunchly refused to renege on the Third Energy Package, nonchalantly noting that “it’s the law,” as one EU energy official pointed out to this author. However, Moscow was just as adamant in its refusal to go along with the demands of Brussels. Russia, one Russian official said, is very protective of anything that can be perceived as impinging on its powers and will reject any proposals for it to cede *even a single percent* of its sovereignty.⁴²

Thus, in recent years, the ECT and the Third Energy Package, the two main legal documents currently regulating the Russo-EU energy trade, haven’t even been mentioned in the progress reports. Nor have the two sides managed to come up with any alternatives. The TEP remains in force, whereas outgoing President Dmitry Medvedev’s moribund energy concept is still alive, but widely derided to be a weak duplicate of the ECT.⁴³ Therefore, a legalization of the Russo-European energy trade through the ECT, the EU’s *acquis communautaire*, or otherwise, is now mostly an academic exercise, without near-term chances of materializing.

History, institutions, and politics: interlocutors in transition

In this respect, the Energy Dialogue is a story of inertia. But it is also a story of change, albeit not in a way that has benefited the dialogue itself. Rather, these changes have been to the detriment of the dialogue, making it more, not less, difficult for the two interlocutors to come to agreement. One key reason for the difficulties encountered by the Energy Dialogue in its roughly decade-long history is that the interlocutors themselves have transformed. The EU today is very different from the EU of 2000, not least because of its dual expansions in 2004 and 2007, which nearly doubled the number of members, from 15 in 2004 to 27 in 2007. In January this year Croatia voted to become what would be the EU’s 28th member state, with other candidates in the pipeline. The inclusion of nine former Communist and Soviet states – some of which depended on Russia for 100 percent of their natural gas, and whose energy infrastructure is closely integrated with Russia’s – severely politicized the Energy Dialogue.⁴⁴ On the one hand were the “old” member states such as Germany, Italy and France, all of which maintained sound bilateral energy

relations with Russia, often to the disadvantage of Brussels. On the other hand, however, were the new members, including Poland and the Baltic states, who pushed for closer ties to the EU (and with the United States) so as to gain a counterweight to the influence of Moscow. Ironically, the inclusion of these relatively pro-EU member states made agreement vis-à-vis Russia increasingly difficult, if not impossible. Poland, for instance, did its best to block negotiations over a successor treaty to the PCA, which expired in 2007 and has since been automatically extended on an annual basis.⁴⁵ Although relations between Warsaw and Moscow have since improved, and negotiations over a new PCA have resumed – to a large extent because of the less belligerent foreign policy pursued by the government of Prime Minister Donald Tusk – suspicions nonetheless prevail. Among the Baltic States, moreover, bilateral relations with their erstwhile eastern ruler have scarcely improved. And at the crux of this dispute is energy. Rather than a source of further cooperation, as originally assumed back in 2000, energy has become a source of discord.

But whereas Moscow is frequently chastised for using energy as a “weapon” to coerce its smaller neighbors, invoking memories of Russia’s imperial and Soviet past, Russia today is a far cry from where it was at the turn of the millennium. Indeed, Russia, too, has changed. After the troubling first decade of post-communism under former President Boris Yeltsin, Russia under Vladimir Putin re-emerged as a strong presence in European and world politics. This strengthening was largely due to world oil prices skyrocketing from 1999 onwards. In concert with this happenstance were profound political reforms. The Russian “power vertical” imposed under Putin, who ruthlessly consolidated political and economic power into the hands of the government, including a state takeover of many of Russia’s largest energy companies, made it seemingly easy for the Russians to “divide and rule” an increasingly heterogeneous EU. Russia resurgent fancied itself a new “energy super-power,” and became ever more reluctant to subject itself to the dictate of Brussels, which wanted Russia to implement the labyrinthine legal provisions of the EU’s internal market.

Even so, it would be erroneous to assume that this enabled Russia to act as a unitary actor in the Energy Dialogue. Indeed, factional disputes, corruption, and – as witnessed just recently – increasing popular discontent with the “sovereign democracy” built under Putin have all impaired the Russian government’s ability to act unilaterally. Not least is Russia’s “humiliating” dependency (to quote President Dmitry Medvedev)⁴⁶ on natural resources, both a source of strength, and as a source of weakness. Indeed, Russia in the 2000s displayed symptoms of excessive dependency on natural resources, or what is known as “Dutch Disease.”⁴⁷ Russia’s vulnerability became apparent in 2008-2009 after the Lehman Brothers collapse, when the EU’s consumption of natural gas suddenly plummeted by 7.5 percent, and Russia’s GDP fell by

8 percent.⁴⁸ Although economic conditions have since improved – for Russia if not for the Eurozone, which at the time of this writing is seemingly buried in economic malaise – Moscow has not succeeded in replicating the monumental growth of the first seven years of the millennium. With the 7 percent average growth rates of the first decade of the 2000s nearly halved to around 4 percent in 2011, the Russian economy was dependent on an energy price of above 115 dollars per barrel just to break even.⁴⁹ This number is expected to rise to 120 this year, if not more, which is striking when considering the fact that oil prices hovered at around 16 dollars per barrel as recently as 1998.⁵⁰ The constant threats to “reroute” Russian energy exports to new markets such as China, if the EU does not comply with the dictates of the Kremlin, ring hollow, as the infrastructure in Eastern Siberia is still underdeveloped compared with the western part of the country. While this might change over time, it is at best a long-term prospect. Therefore, one could argue that Russia’s dependency on EU energy exports and lack of alternative sources of income and influence represent a “Dutch Disease” of Russian foreign policy.⁵¹ Rather than create leverage, Russia’s severe dependency on energy circumscribes it in the Energy Dialogue, not to mention in its wider relations with Brussels. Russian “Dutch Disease” has also created an immensely powerful group of self-interested private and government actors, with vested interest in maintaining the weak legal environment in Russia, so as to perpetuate their astronomical wealth in a country where socio-economic differences remain enormous, and male life expectancy averages around sixty years.⁵² The opaqueness of the Russian energy sector and the rampant corruption that continues to plague it make it difficult to really know who calls the shots.⁵³ While Vladimir Putin remains the most powerful actor in the field, he is nonetheless reliant on a cadre of power brokers, many of whom have no formal ties with the Kremlin, and whose names are unknown to the general public.⁵⁴ As Henry Kissinger once asked for Europe’s telephone number, so might the Commission soon be looking for the phone number of the Kremlin.

From “Europeanization” to diversification

The politics of time – past, present and future – has put the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue under considerable strain. While the political climate has slightly improved since the nadir of 2009, EU-Russia relations remain far removed from where they were during the Indian summer of October 2000. Today, rather than integration, or “Europeanization,” the interlocutors want dual diversification. Although Nord Stream is now online, to much fanfare on both sides, Brussels and Moscow appear more as competitors than collaborators. They remain bogged down in a “new great game”⁵⁵ over the southern gas corridor, by way of the Southern Caucasus and Turkey, through rival gas pipeline

projects Nabucco (EU) and South Stream (Russia). Although the economic prospects of both pipelines remain tenuous, the political implications are plain for all to see. The EU has also increased its efforts to go green, so as to become less dependent on hydrocarbon imports, as well as diversify its imports from suppliers of alternative hydrocarbon sources such as shale gas. Although the EU will remain dependent on gas and oil imports for the foreseeable future, and Russia remains Brussels' single most important supplier of hydrocarbons, it is nevertheless difficult to predict how the Energy Dialogue can gain momentum from here.

Adding further exasperation are political contingencies of a more recent nature. In 2011 the EU was mired in the misery of the Eurozone crisis. Since then, Brussels has become more concerned with getting its house in order than with pursuing any grand foreign policy objectives, which further robs momentum from the moribund Energy Dialogue. Moreover, 2012 marks the year of the comeback of Vladimir Putin as Russian President. Putin has made a new Eurasian union with Russia's former Soviet client states the main point on his next term agenda. Whether or not this is yet another pipe dream remains to be seen, but neither it, nor the Euro-crisis, nor the state of the moribund ECT, nor the stand-off over the Third Energy Package, bode well for the new "Coal and Steel Community" once envisaged by Moscow and Brussels.

Conclusions

In these concluding remarks, there is admittedly one question we have not properly addressed: Is it really fair to call the Energy Dialogue a failure? Several people I have spoken with have asked me this question (full disclosure: Most of them are involved in the Energy Dialogue in one way or another.) One senior Commission official I spoke with called the Energy Dialogue "an unconditional success." There are indeed many ways to assess its achievements. There are those who point to the inherent value of dialogue. Where there was no forum, now there is communication. Without a doubt, using such minimalist criteria, the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue has been successful. Moreover, the Energy Dialogue does have a few achievements to its name. The Dialogue temporarily secured the importance of long-term contracts for the gas trade, although the Commission is pushing for an increased share of short-term, "spot"-market contracts (Gazprom, on its side, argues that long-term contracts are essential for it to embark on high-cost new gas field developments, so as to ensure future gas exports to Europe, as the output of its predominantly Soviet-era gas fields is slowly declining.)⁵⁶ The Energy Dialogue has also secured the partial abrogation of so-called destination clauses, which barred importing countries from re-exporting Russian gas. However, the Commission still suspects the Russians

of including such clauses in its supply contracts, as became apparent when Gazprom's European offices were raided by European antitrust authorities late last year.⁵⁷ Moreover, a handful of pilot projects regarding energy conservation within Russia have been completed. But anyone who has been to Russia recently will testify that there is still a long, long way to go before Russia becomes energy efficient. Russia is two and a half times less energy efficient than any other industrialized country, including all of the BRICS.⁵⁸ In 2008, Russia wasted enough energy to power all of Britain for a year.⁵⁹ Gazprom has slowly increased the prices of natural gas sold on Russia's heavily subsidized domestic market. Higher domestic prices would encourage energy savings and would enable more gas to be freed up for export. However, it would also mean more expensive electricity prices for Russian industry and consumers alike, an unpopular decision in times of political turmoil. Russian domestic prices are still far away from reaching parity with European market prices. Further, although Gazprom's monopoly on the domestic market has been breached, and its share is slowly declining, it retains its legal export monopoly.⁶⁰

Other achievements of the Energy Dialogue include the phasing out of single-hull oil tankers to ensure maritime safety, and a feasibility study of a possible interconnection between the Russian and EU electricity markets – even if the once-vaunted vision of an integrated electricity market “from Lisbon to Vladivostok” remains elusive. Furthermore, in 2009, after the second Ukrainian gas crisis, an “Early Warning Mechanism” was established.⁶¹ This “Red Line,” as it were, was meant to act as a safeguard against future shut-offs. Never mind the caustic comparisons with the Moscow-Washington “Hotline,” which came online after the Cuban Missile Crisis, when the Soviet Union and the United States nearly fumbled into a nuclear holocaust.

However, if we look at the initial objectives of securing a binding multilateral energy partnership between Moscow and Brussels, and perhaps even a political partnership, the Energy Dialogue has been an abject failure. The once-ambitious Energy Dialogue has today been reduced to a talk-shop to discuss “partnerships,” “roadmaps,” “common spaces,” energy conservation in remote Russian cities, and various other technical issues. As such, it has degenerated into a meta-discussion, or discussion of the discussion, rather than a forum where substantial issues are identified and dealt with. In recent years the interlocutors have consistently avoided even mentioning anything that might be construed as contentious, as confirmed in the 2011 report, where neither the Third Energy Package, nor the ECT, nor Medvedev's moribund “Conceptual Approach” are even mentioned. This failure – for it is indeed a failure – is at once historical, institutional, and political, as we have seen. From the grandiose rhetoric about forming a new European Coal and Steel Union between Russia and the EU, 2012's Energy Dialogue has degenerated into a technical talk-shop between semi-empowered, semi-interested techno-

crats. Indeed, as Russia's main interlocutor in the Energy Dialogue between 2000 and 2006, Viktor Khristenko, once noted, "[a]n energy dialogue can be considered efficient only if it yields tangible results in the form of concrete projects."⁶² More than eleven years after its inception, the Dialogue has still not succeeded in achieving its primary goal. Therefore, rather than being a *festschrift* over an EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, the 2011 progress report reads like a postscript of what is now an EU-Russia Energy Diatribe.

So how can the Energy Dialogue move forward? Ironically, it might already be doing just that, albeit slowly and incrementally. The first step may have been taken through the recent restructuring of the dialogue. Most important here was the recent establishment of the Gas Advisory Council (GAC). Gas remains the most contentious topic of the dialogue. The inclusion of a wide array of experts from both sides should make for a more informed exchange of opinions. More crucially, it will allow for more continuity in the dialogue. Many participants have previously complained that the activity of the dialogue was too intermittent, too infrequent. It should also allow for more trust building. The GAC is supported by the Thematic Group on Energy Strategies, Forecasts and Scenarios. After numerous complaints by the Russian delegation that the EU is pursuing unrealistic, "politically motivated" scenarios whose sole purpose is to reduce the Union's reliance on Gazprom gas – leading the Russians to question whether the EU wants Russian gas at all – the two parties now finally seem to have reaffirmed their interdependence.⁶³ How this will translate into actual policy remains to be seen, and it will be interesting to see how well their "Roadmap 2050" fares in the end, or whether it, too, will become yet another failed initiative. But transparency is preferable, if the alternative is a return to the opaqueness of the 1990s. Moreover, transparency builds trust. This is important, since for the foreseeable future, Russia will remain one of the EU's principal sources of oil and gas, even though Russia's share of the latter has declined.⁶⁴

Having failed its initial task of defining a legal framework for the EU-Russia energy trade, let alone a new Coal and Steel Community, the Energy Dialogue has been re-established and its ambitions lowered. The Energy Dialogue will not lead to a binding legal agreement between Russia and the EU covering all the questions of common interest relevant to the energy sector, as stated back in October 2000. The power to do so remains in the hands of the EU member states and the Russian government led by President-elect Vladimir Putin, whose third-term agenda is still pure speculation. But this is perhaps just as well. Defining what you cannot do is just as important as defining what you can. This omission was one of the principal mistakes made by the interlocutors when they established the Energy Dialogue over a decade ago. It wanted to do too much. But as such, the Energy Dialogue lacked a clearly defined purpose. Now, perhaps, it has found one.

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Polish-Russian Progressive Rapprochement as an Example of Building Constructive Relations Between Quarreling Neighbors

Introduction

Poland and Russia share centuries of common history as neighbors with similar cultures. Unfortunately, it is not easy to find bright periods of constructive partnership or even peaceful coexistence. Still, I believe it is our duty, especially as a young scholars, not to give in to crude historical determinism. The cooperation between countries is without a doubt beneficial, not only for states, but also, or maybe especially, for societies. Moreover, in today's globalized and regionalized world, it is often necessary to deal with upcoming crises in a cooperative and inclusive manner.

In order to make this feasible, one should start with developing the ability to imagine a desirable order of things. Obviously, there is a significant distance between these two stages, with the evolution of the internal socio-political situation in Russia as a matter of particular importance.

However, there is also no reason to give up; after all, Rome wasn't built in a day. Moreover, the current situation in Russia, with all its shortcomings with regard to democratic standards, does not look all that bad when seen from a historical perspective. There are also historical examples, noticeably the Franco-German or Polish-German reconciliations, that may serve as a guidepost.

The importance of Polish-Russian rapprochement is even more crucial, given the similar problems (in reference to strained relations between neighbors) around the world. Some of them are much more serious, like the Indian-Pakistani dispute, while some involve the frequent use of force and resemble a Gordian Knot, like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but they share a common element – deep mistrust and the absence of the ability to understand their counterpart. Obviously, one can also cite political or economical interests driving the conflicts, but then again, political interests do not last forever, and economies always favor stability and cooperation.

Interstate rapprochement factors

Political will and domestic political systems

A lot of potential incentives for interstate rapprochement may be listed at once, from mutual benefits concerning economic or political issues to strengthening regional security levels. However, without strong and continuous political will, which can favor long-term interests over short-term perspectives, none can become reality.

The importance of political leadership in a reconciliation process between two countries is also illustrated by the Franco-German case and the role that Robert Schuman played. In the aftermath of the war, Paris implemented a harsh policy aimed at dismantling German military and economic institutions.¹ However, Schuman realized this was unsustainable in the long-term and decided to make a deep shift towards close cooperation with the former adversary, opening up the possibility of rapprochement.

A rapprochement process is often blocked by domestic opponents in the countries advancing towards stability of mutual relations or closer cooperation. One of the main obstacles may be a nationalist movement, which can easily label engagement as appeasement.² It is the determination of the ruling elites that can assure that hurdles are overcome.

In Poland this strong political will has existed since 2007, when Civic Platform came to power, with Prime Minister Donald Tusk declaring his resolve to engage in dialogue with Russia “as it is,” in contrast to his predecessors, who almost refused to deal with Russian authorities.³ Tusk withdrew Poland’s veto on Russia’s negotiations on OECD accession – a move meant to demonstrate Warsaw’s good will, and he kept the government from reacting emotionally to Russian-Belarusian military exercises simulating a nuclear attack on Poland in 2009.⁴

Still, the real breakthrough came only when, in 2008, Moscow responded to Polish readiness to engage in intensive dialogue. The subsequent visit of President Putin, who personally decided to attend the World War II commemoration ceremony in Gdańsk, further contributed to the change of climate in mutual relations.⁵ The conclusion that may be drawn from these events is that with strong asymmetry between two countries, it is the larger one that has a decisive influence on how these relations will look.

However, the Korean-Japanese case proves that the political leader’s role may not guarantee the success of reconciliation if his actions stand in stark contrast to public opinion or that of the political elites or are not understandable to them.⁶ As in Japanese society, since there was no sense of guilt about

the country's activity in the first half of the 20th century, implementation of a coherent and ambitious policy of reconciliation towards South Korea was hampered and lacked credibility.

As the cases mentioned show, the role of political leadership, though very important in order to launch the process, doesn't guarantee long-term success. To clarify, a political leader may take a "half-step" ahead of society, but if the distance is too great, the leader may not be able to gain public support.

There is also the question of the influence of a political regime on interstate rapprochement. Charles A. Kupchan points out that the most favorable condition for interstate rapprochement is "institutionalized restraint,"⁷ which "is most pronounced among liberal democracies; the rule of law, electoral accountability, and the distribution of authority among separate institutions of governance serve as potent power-checking devices."⁸ However, as the author argues, an authoritative regime is also capable of "practicing strategic restraint" – which is the actual condition necessary for rapprochement. Consequently, regime type is not a determining factor in the possibility of rapprochement.

However, Kupchan underlines the importance of the compatibility of social orders and cultural commonality for a deepened rapprochement. He writes that among states with different social orders, i.e. economically open versus protectionist, or aristocratic versus egalitarian, "the social integration that follows from political reconciliation threatens privileged social sectors, causing them to block further movement towards peace."⁹ As for cultural commonality, "states that enjoy a preexisting ethnic or religious commonality will find it easier to construct a shared identity than those that do not."¹⁰

Settling history-based disputes

Despite the fact that the international relations agenda is mostly filled with economic or security issues, the importance of historical issues in interstate relations should not be underestimated. In fact, "all political communities are in one way or another formed around questions of memory, most notably around how past traumas are used to construct a sense of shared purpose and identity."¹¹

As a result, historical issues are likely to cause emotional reactions and high tensions and thus have strong "political potential." Their destructive influence on bilateral relations may take several forms. The ruling elite may be "forced" by society to defend (or preserve) a country's self-identity and thus in relations with their counterparts present "their" interpretation of historical events, or they may use controversies to mobilize the electorate. They may also refrain from facing the country's tragic past because of the fear of disturbing a fragile social calm.

Whatever the causes are, unresolved historical issues can deeply affect current relations. The Japan-South Korea example shows that even common liberal and democratic political systems or developed economies and close economic ties are not sufficient to diminish the influence of historical disputes concerning Tokyo's activity in the first half of 20th century.¹²

Indisputably, in order to establish long term rapprochement, painful and often complicated historical issues must be addressed. On the other hand, as the co-chairman of The Polish-Russian Group For Difficult Issues, Adam Daniel Rotfeld, said, there is no universal model of reconciliation and using ready-made solutions does not guarantee success.¹³

However, there are certain institutional solutions that are commonly used in resolving historical disputes. One of them is a joint historical commission to investigate controversial issues. "These commissions share an engagement with controversial past, conduct investigation and frequently issue a report the substance of which reframes critical aspects of the national history."¹⁴

The main task for such a commission is to balance the dissonance between a popular acceptance of national historiography as "truth" and a professional attitude towards history as a "construction," and to produce politically useful material.¹⁵ They also provide basic institutionalization of historical dialogue, making it more systematic and invulnerable to political fluctuation.

The next step in resolving historical disputes concerns education – the "most central societal mechanisms through which histories and political identities are produced, reproduced, and entrenched."¹⁶ Consequently, to secure achieved rapprochement on shared history, it should be reflected in history textbooks. To put it metaphorically, the outcome of a successful historical commission is a seedling, which can bear impressive fruit if planted in the proper place. For the same reason, joint consultations on history textbooks or the application of agreed findings or interpretations are even more vulnerable and demand more good will and determination than history commissions.

The application of a regional approach

Regardless of whether tensions exist between two or several states, they influence a whole region. For that reason, the rapprochement should be seen as a regional process. A limited rapprochement may cause anxiety in other countries excluded from the process, which is counterproductive for regional stability. A regional approach also provides the process with breadth, depth, and inertia, which make it irreversible.¹⁷

What is more, bilateral issues get diluted when placed within a multilateral framework.¹⁸ As a result they produce fewer tensions and are more likely

to advance through constructive dialogue. This is especially significant in situations when tensions exist between a regional hegemonic state and several smaller states.

The benefits of a regional approach in a rapprochement process are reflected in the Southeast Asia region and are related to China's so-called "New Diplomacy," which among other things involved Beijing's efforts to gain trust and engage in multilateral cooperation. This policy was also applied towards ASEAN members, which "always have had to deal with the issue of living adjacent to a great power. Historically, there was the tributary system, and continental Southeast Asia (Vietnam in particular) lived under the constant shadow of the Chinese empires."¹⁹

China and ASEAN developed numerous ties "from high-level visits by military and defense officials to port calls, small-scale joint military exercises, defense equipment transfers, military educational exchange programs, and multilateral dialogues by senior defense and military officers."²⁰ Moreover, in 2002 the framework agreement on the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area was signed, and the FTA came into effect in 2010.

Consequently the level of trust towards Beijing among the smaller countries has increased, and the Southeast Asia states were able to overcome tendencies to conduct a policy of confrontation and containment towards China and chose pragmatic solutions for gradually integrating Beijing into a regional web of interdependence.²¹

Conditions required for Polish-Russian rapprochement

Building mutual trust

One of the key factors impeding the Polish-Russian rapprochement for the last twenty years has been mutual distrust. The reason for such a state of affairs deserves a separate work, but one may try to briefly outline its roots (with inevitable simplifications).

As for the Polish side, it is mainly due to painful historical experiences, which date back to the 18th century. For 173 years out of the 194 that have passed from 1795 to 1989, Poland experienced diverse forms of subordination from Moscow. Moreover, when during this period, especially in the 19th century, Polish modern national identity was being built, it was to a large degree in opposition to "Russia" on political, religious, and cultural grounds, the effects of which can still be tracked today.

As the communist regime settled into Poland after World War II, viewed as a symbol of subordination to Moscow, the political opposition in Poland aimed both at internal changes and independence from the “big brother” – as the Soviet Union used to be called. Consequently, after the changes in 1989, Poland’s major aim was to reinforce independence, and Russia, along with united Germany, was seen as the biggest threat.

Of course, there were also episodes in the two countries’ common history that can be seen as a source of a mistrust towards Poland. However, one may risk stating that history has considerably less influence on Russia’s attitude towards Warsaw. Instead, it has been events after the fall of the Soviet Union, with NATO’s expansion having primary importance, that contributed to the present situation.

Existing mistrust has been highlighted many times in the first decade of 21st century. Such issues as the North Stream pipeline or Orange Revolution in Ukraine, particularly the different motives that drove them, attracted attention in both capitals. For instance, while the Russians saw the North Stream mainly as a chance to reduce its dependence on transit countries, in Warsaw it was treated as an economic expansion in Europe, providing a tool to increase Moscow’s influence in the Eastern European region.

As for the Orange Revolution, for Poland it was mainly a matter of Ukrainian integration with the EU, which is perceived as strengthening the long-term stability of the Polish eastern neighborhood. Viktor Yushchenko was seen as a guarantor of Ukraine’s democratization and pro-Western foreign policy. In Russia, Polish activity was interpreted not as driven by national interests but as an implementation of an American plan to weaken Russia’s influence on the post-Soviet area.

The long-term actions focused on building mutual trust could include regular political consultations on different levels and forums and improvement of cooperation on an academic level, i.e. joint research teams, cooperation between universities, and conferences or seminars. Moreover, a youth exchange program should be established. The Polish-German joint letter to EU Foreign Policy Chief Catherine Ashton and representatives of other member states calls upon the EU to “enable a larger number of Russian students to study in EU member states.”²²

In addition, the creation of Centers for Dialogue and Cooperation in Moscow and Warsaw, the legal framework of which is aimed at securing independence for them from political fluctuation, could be a step in the right direction. According to the status of the Polish and Russian Centers, they are to be subordinate to the ministers of culture, not foreign affairs, and to operate with

a budget guaranteed by law. Their operational aims include the above-mentioned issues, i.e. joint research, youth exchange programs, conferences, etc.

Change in thinking among ruling elites

The short- and mid-term actions involve a change of attitude among decision-making elites in both countries. This brings up the “Russian imperial threat” issue – for some representing a phantasmal fear on behalf of former satellites, for others seen as a kind of historically-based lodestar, which “calls for” caution and skepticism towards Russia. For sure it is a fruit of mistrust and a real obstacle to building up pragmatic cooperation. Assuming that both sides intend to overcome this situation, they should take appropriate steps.

Poland, for its part, should acknowledge that Russia is at least a regional power with aspirations to become one of the modern centers of power²³ and with strong political, economic, and cultural ties with most of the countries in the region. Consequently, not every action aimed at the realization of national interests is a sign of Moscow’s imperialistic zeal. Warsaw, to a high degree dependent on energy resources from Russia,²⁴ should aim at maintaining the best possible mutual relations, keeping in mind that this doesn’t mean recognizing a Russian “sphere of influence” or accepting every initiative from Moscow. But a “no-step-back” policy or attempts to build regional coalitions based on an anti-Russian agenda will not clear the air in mutual relations, nor will it provide success for Polish interests.

To make this feasible, Russia should understand the importance of partner relations with smaller countries in Eastern Europe and engage in intense dialogue with them, thus soothing their fears and satisfying their ambitions (to a reasonable degree). The latter factor is especially important in the case of Poland, which sees itself as a leader of Eastern-Central Europe. Efforts to base its “European policy” on bilateral relations with major Western European countries (over “Poland’s head”), which Moscow undertook in 2004-2009, caused fear mixed with fury in Poland. Consequently Warsaw proved it would do literally everything it could to change this situation. True, Jarosław Kaczyński’s party, then in power, was particularly trigger-happy, but virtually no Polish government could afford to treat this lightly.

Russia should also make an effort to change its negative “imperial” image that exists in most of the countries of Eastern-Central Europe and the Baltic states.²⁵ This image is the result not only of the mix of the high sensitivity of these countries and some “controversial” actions taken by Moscow (for many countries in the region, the 2008 war with Georgia was seen as a game changer “providing a clear demonstration of Russia’s ability and willingness to use force to secure its cross borders interest;”²⁶ the “gas wars” with Ukraine and Belarus are seen as Moscow’s “means of economic warfare”²⁷),

but also of the reluctance of at least part of the Russian elite to say farewell to the imperial past.

While in some CIS countries the image of the Soviet Union may be positive,²⁸ in Eastern-Central Europe the case looks different. Thus, to project its soft power in this region, Moscow could underline the fact that Russia was among the political forces that played a major role in dismantling the Soviet Empire, and “popular fronts in the Baltic states or Ukrainian nationalists would have never achieved their goals if the Russian democrats had not backed them.”²⁹

The issue of the Soviet Union’s collapse is related to Russia’s internal problems. The above-mentioned reluctance to break with the Soviet Union’s legacy (and to some degree with the imperial past, as well) is to a high degree caused by what followed communism, which despite its countless shortcomings and many crimes provided reasonable stability for citizens. The alternative was “wild capitalism,” along with overwhelming corruption, oligarchy, and the de facto failure of the state’s institutions, which caused wide-spread disappointment in society.

One can argue that sentiments towards the Soviet Union are hardly compatible with tendencies to recall the imperial past and are mainly connected to economic or “personal” matters. However, this phenomenon also hampers efforts to appraise the Soviet Empire and also pushes some politicians to refer to this period as a tool to gain popular support.

However, some scholars believe that the fact that Russia’s society “did not succeed in obtaining a guilty verdict against the Communist Party during a court case in the first half of the 1990s”³⁰ does not present an obstacle for the country’s democratization.³¹

Still, it wouldn’t be too much of an exaggeration to say that in Poland such tendencies are viewed either as an anxious sign of the undemocratic direction Moscow is heading under its current leadership, or as proof of “genetically-based Russian imperialism.” Statements such as Putin’s about the Soviet Union’s collapse being the biggest geopolitical tragedy of 20th century cause a turmoil in the Polish media.

Closing the Katyń massacre case and setting a new future-orientated agenda

Last but not least, there is the problem of Katyń. According to polls conducted in 2010, a huge number of Poles – 81 percent³² – believe that this issue has a negative influence on mutual relations. It is promising that much effort has recently been made to overcome this controversy and separate historical issues from the current political agenda. Nevertheless, since there still remain

undisclosed facts and documents (i.e. some acts from the 1994-2004 investigation or the copy of the decision to discontinue the investigation) and victims have not been legally rehabilitated, the case is likely to be a serious obstacle to building trust in Poland towards Russia and moving mutual (and regional) relations forward.

The declassification of all documents related to the Katyń massacre promised by President Medvedev³³ would gain deeper meaning and significance if it were followed by an appraisal of the communist regime's crimes against Soviet citizens. This would, without doubt, provide Russia with a dose of trust and credibility in Poland and other countries in the Eastern-Central region.

So far, Polish public opinion has received contradictory messages from Russia. At the end of November, the radio station Echo Moskvy announced that the political decision to rehabilitate the victims had already been made, and the necessary changes in the law were being worked out.³⁴ Just few weeks later, however, the head of archives at The Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation said that due to the lack of the victims' personal files, rehabilitation is not possible.³⁵ Also, Russia's positions in Strasburg Court, which is to look into complaints and demands for rehabilitation, are seen in Poland as unacceptable. Russian Deputy Justice Minister Grigori Matushkin stated that Russia is not obliged to investigate the fate of Polish victims, who, as he said, were missing as the result of "incidents in Katyń."³⁶

This kind of behavior from Russian officials is at least unclear³⁷ and presents a serious threat to the rapprochement. If Moscow continues to drift in that direction, Tusk's government will face serious domestic opposition. Moreover, opinions that "Russia is toying with Poland: having hooked it into a relationship where failure would be politically damaging and some sign of success is essential, it is now showing a mean and manipulative approach,"³⁸ will sound more and more convincing.

Still, even if the final settlement of historical disputes has a high value as a strong foundation of mutual relations, it is the future-oriented agenda that needs to be developed, too. Recent growth of interest in Moscow concerning Poland was mostly due to the rather destructive (even if largely justified) role Warsaw played in EU-Russia relations. To keep its high place on the foreign affairs agenda of Moscow and some EU members, Poland should "find" for itself a useful and mutually advantageous role in these relations. Promoting a visa-free regime for Kaliningrad, in which Poland has been engaged lately, seems to be a step in the right direction. The next step should be to support visa-free travel for Russian students, scholars, and businessmen.

Poland's support for the free movement of Russian and European citizens would earn it valuable gratitude from Russian society, as well as trust from the government. This looks even more appealing, as it generally lies in line with Polish interests. Poland is a strong supporter of Russia's comprehensive modernization (including socio-political reforms), as well as the EU's openness to its Eastern neighbors. Thus, the increased movement of people, especially of youth, scholars, and businessmen, should facilitate desired changes in Russia.

So far Poland holds the position that the visa-free regime in EaP countries should be introduced no later than the one with Russia. This attitude is somehow understandable, given the "special relations" Warsaw wishes to sustain with EaP members. However, taking into account the long-term perspective, Poland should not be dogmatic if its position delays visa-free travels for Russians. In other words Warsaw should support the transparency of this process, in which the country that makes progress is "rewarded," encouraging other governments to make the necessary efforts.

Existing obstacles to Polish-Russian rapprochement

Internal development problem

Even if the necessary short- and medium-term steps are taken, several obstacles will have to be overcome to strengthen rapprochement. These are mainly political but also cultural in nature. Political barriers include: the development of Russia's political system, different interests, and deep asymmetry, as well as the influences of third parties (intentional or not). The cultural barrier may be well-rooted mistrust, especially on the Polish side.

In depicting the relationship between Russia's internal political system and foreign policy, Lilia Shevtsova notes that currently Russia finds itself in a political "morass," which affects its ability to determine its real national interests.³⁹ She writes that the ruling elite place their own interest above the interests of society. Moreover, foreign policy is used as an effective tool to support Russia's personalistic model of power.

Dmitri Trenin argues that the Polish-Russian reconciliation process is limited by the Russian domestic political system. He remarks that the current process has a mostly inter-governmental character, but the real reconciliation needs actions taken on the society level, as the core of the Polish-Russian conflict concerns the principles on which society is organized and values shared by the members of these societies.⁴⁰

Adam Daniel Rotfeld notes that the prospect of Polish-Russian relations depends more on the development of the internal situation in both countries than on bilateral discussions.⁴¹ He argues that in both Warsaw and Moscow mutual relations are part of domestic politics.

To a high degree this is related to the so-called historical policy, which in Poland gained the greatest attention during the period of Jarosław Kaczyński's government in the years from 2005 until 2007. Historical policy was adopted as a part of official governmental doctrine and developed into a history-backed foreign policy.⁴² In order to mobilize internal support, the government often referred to painful historical events and accused the former foreign affairs minister of conducting Polish foreign policy "on his knees," promising to provide a staunch defense of Polish national interests.

In Russia historical policy was related to the creation of a new post-Soviet identity.⁴³ It involved emphasizing the positive aspects of the Soviet Union (i.e., the victory in World War II) and neglecting facts that were not in line with the image of a great power.

The clash of these two historical narratives (in the form of historical policy), together with political problems (described below), caused an escalation of hostile acts of a symbolic nature, provoked a propaganda war of a sort, and resulted in the deterioration of mutual relations.⁴⁴

After 2007, however, this situation changed significantly, largely thanks to the Polish-Russian Group On Difficult Issues, the existence of which helped to separate historical issues from current politics. Still, since historical problems are not fully settled, and there are politicians and social forces in both countries that are at least mistrustful with regard to rapprochement, future internal development may prove to be an obstacle to reconciliation.

Moreover, the development of Russia's internal situation in the field of democratic standards and freedoms will largely affect its foreign policy and thus influence Moscow's relations with the Eastern-Central Europe region. It will also determine these countries' attitude towards Russia – growing authoritarian tendencies will certainly not help to overcome the mistrust.

Differences of interests

As for the differences of interests, they include the question of the geopolitical future of "New" Eastern Europe, in particular Ukraine, Belarus, and Georgia (in Asia), the nature of EU-Russia relations, and different views on the U.S. role in the European security system.

At first glance, the geopolitical choice of Ukraine or Georgia seems to imply a zero-sum game of interests. Poland strongly supports integration of Ukraine and Georgia into the EU and NATO, as it perceives the expansion of Western institutions in the “eastern direction” as advantageous for these security institutions. Poland also wants to have its eastern neighborhood secured, with Belarus (which currently is far from any integration with EU or NATO) and Ukraine being stable, democratic states.

For Russia further expansion of NATO in an eastern direction is out of the question. How important this “red line” is for Moscow was demonstrated in the summer of 2008. As to the EU, the matter is more complicated. Moscow’s rhetoric is far less harsh, with officials speaking publicly about the lack of opposition towards Ukraine’s EU membership.⁴⁵ However, it is obvious that there is a competition between Moscow and Brussels over Kiev’s economic and geopolitical future.⁴⁶ It is surely not limited to Ukraine, but potentially could also include Georgia, Moldova, and Belarus. The Ukrainian case is so important because of the country’s size and its European integration process being relatively advanced.

In security thinking in Poland, America plays one of the major roles. In 2005, Foreign Affairs Minister Adam D. Rotfeld said in his report that “only the US is able to provide Poland with security guarantees.” Moreover, the *National Security Strategy of The Republic of Poland of 2007*⁴⁷ states that Poland will act towards strengthening the U.S. presence in Europe. Also Warsaw’s willingness to host Ballistic Missile Defense installations was mainly driven by hopes of strengthening national security on the basis of the U.S. military presence and its financial support for the Polish army’s modernization. Even if the current Donald Tusk government is more EU-focused, Washington will keep its special place as a security guarantee.

In the Russian perception, the American presence in Europe is at least not welcomed, and the closer it comes to Russia’s border, the more it becomes a threat. As Russia’s 2010 military doctrine reads, Moscow sees as a threat both the deployment of foreign troops in the vicinity of its borders or its allies’ borders and the enlargement of military alliances, as well as “the creation and deployment of strategic missile defense systems undermining global stability and violating the established correlation of forces in the nuclear-missile sphere, and also the militarization of outer space and the deployment of strategic non-nuclear precision weapon systems.”⁴⁸

As to EU-Russia relations, Poland would like to see Moscow adopt the EU’s political and economic standards as it itself has done. Warsaw, which has gained real experience in system transformation, sees its chance to play an important role in Russia’s modernization process. However, Russia seems

to reject its role as a “diligent student” and prefers mutual relations on the basis of partnership. Moscow would like to adopt only those European models and standards that suit its current interests.⁴⁹ Thus, the modernization process preferred by the Kremlin is not how Poland would like to see it, but rather it aims at “obtaining resources – financial, technical, and managerial – to increase the efficiency of the current, top-down system of political and economic administration.”⁵⁰

Another threat to ongoing reconciliation between Warsaw and Moscow is the deep asymmetry in every element of state power (critical mass = territory + population, economic and military power, natural resources). There’s also asymmetry in the importance of mutual relations for Warsaw and Moscow: “our perception of Russia and its political impact on our security is incomparably greater than the place of Poland in Russia’s thinking about the world and its strategic political decisions. The time is ripe to reassess our attitude to Russia and to redefine our long-term expectations,” writes Adam D. Rotfeld.⁵¹ “...Our thinking should be rooted in the realization that change in Russian policy towards Poland is part of a much broader strategy towards the external world. Moscow perceives Poland in the context of Russian policy addressed towards the entire West, particularly the United States and Europe.”

Here is the problem of the influence of the “outer world” on Polish-Russian mutual relations. Moscow’s policy towards Poland and thus the prospect of rapprochement will certainly, to a high degree, depend on Russia’s relations with the West, with United States in first place.

The main potential hurdle concerns the BMD program. Unless an agreement on BMD is reached between NATO and Russia, this issue will certainly become a real obstacle. The Polish government has already signed an agreement to host the land-based SM-3 system. Even if Warsaw withdrew from it on the basis of bilateral Polish-Russian negotiations, or pressure from Moscow, which is virtually unimaginable, the overall deterioration of Russia-West relations would diminish the possibilities of cooperation in Europe.

There is also the issue of growing tensions over Iran’s alleged nuclear weapon program. While the West in unison pushes for new sanctions, Moscow firmly stands in opposition. Some say that while Russia is actually not interested in Tehran developing its nuclear program, its position is “muscle flexing” or an attempt to try to “boost its presence in the world after largely standing on the sidelines while Arab Spring revolutions toppled regimes it had supported.”⁵² If Moscow continues to block reasonable efforts to stop Iran from acquiring the full capability to construct a nuclear weapon, it may have a highly negative effect on mutual relations.

The prospect of relations between Brussels and Moscow is hard to predict, as the EU is currently mostly occupied with the eurozone crisis. While the outcomes of the crisis are hard to predict, the positive scenario – overcoming the troubles – will probably bring a more deeply integrated EU, which should also include the way it conducts external relations.

In recent years the Polish view on what EU-Russia relations should look like has come closer to the “European mainstream,” particularly the German position. Radosław Sikorski’s foreign policy is driven by the paradigm that Poland alone, given its limited resources, is not capable of pursuing effective action towards its eastern neighbors. Thus, Warsaw should seek support within the EU, especially in Berlin and Brussels (the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton), even if it means Poland would have to adjust its ambitious aims concerning rapid integration with the EaP countries.

The results came relatively quickly. Sikorski developed particularly good relations with German Ministers of Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeir and later with Guido Westerwelle. Steinmeir and Sikorski went to Kiev, where they tried to soothe the crippling conflict between President Yushchenko and Prime Minister Tymoshenko and save the “Orange camp” from forthcoming political disaster. With Westerwelle, Sikorski went to Belarus with an offer of closer cooperation between Brussels and Minsk, should President Lukashenko guarantee free elections. The two also met with their Russian counterpart in Kaliningrad to conduct unprecedented trilateral talks. Finally, they issued a joint letter to EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton and representatives of other member states, calling for a revamped EU policy towards Russia – a sign that the EU’s Eastern policy has become more coherent.

If the so-called Polish-German tandem proves to be lasting and well balanced, it will certainly reshape politics inside the EU, as well as its foreign policy towards Russia. Given Warsaw’s influence on the tandem, the EU policy will be more coherent and more effective. Thus it would make Moscow less inclined to base its “European policy” on bilateral relationships. Furthermore, such a policy – reflecting the Central European states’ sensitivities – would be more focused on internal problems in the Russian political system and Moscow’s policy toward its neighbors.

Cultural barriers

In his book “National Identity and Foreign Policy. Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia and Ukraine,” Ilya Prizel writes that the reciprocal links between national identity and foreign policy are the key element in both well-rooted states and the newly independent ones.⁵³ That’s why it’s inter-

esting to have a brief look at the role of each country in creating the national identity of the other.

The place that Russia occupies in the Polish national identity has been probably best described by Czesław Miłosz in his book “Rodzinna Europa” (English title: “Native Realm”): “there is no point in pretending that it is an exception and hiding the obsession common to all Poles. (...) Poles and Russians do not like each other, or, rather, they nurse all negative feelings, from disdain, aversion, to hatred. However, that fact does not rule out the existence of an unclear and mutual attraction, with an inseparable dose of suspicion.”⁵⁴

Another Polish scholar, Andrzej Kepiński, argues that the origins of the negative image of Russians in Poland date back to the 16th and 17th centuries. During the wars the two countries waged at that time, Poles attributed all the worst characteristics to Russians: savagery, barbarism, cruelty, ignorance, unfaithfulness, and drunkenness, with a despotic sovereign and “slave soul” as key features.⁵⁵

For his part, Andrzej de Lazari points out the cultural dissimilarity between Poles and Russians. Lazari uses Geert Hofstede’s definition of culture as collective software for the human brain that programs the identity of a certain group of people⁵⁶ to note that there is nothing like universality, either in the form of a “common European home,” a universal church, universal morality, or universal values. De Lazari argues that this dissimilarity of values recognized by Poles and Russians causes a lack of understanding and mutual rejection.

A very interesting approach towards the problem of Russia’s image in Poland is presented by Maria Janion, who analyzes the issue using Edward W. Said’s Orientalism Theory.⁵⁷ Orientalism describes the system of ideological fictions built on binary oppositions, which are aimed at separating “us” from “them” and strengthening the identity of the party *creating* the image.

In the case of Poland, Janion argues, the subject of “orientalization” has been Russia. Poles, who for a long period in their history fought with Russians or were subjected to a policy of Russification, built their national self-identity by creating the image of Russia as a “not fully valuable, but still dangerous ‘other.’”⁵⁸ The fully-fledged image of a Russian was created during the Polish-Bolshevik war, when according to propaganda “A Pole – a European – had to struggle with an Asiatic – Moskal (Muscovite) – a barbarian from the wild East.”⁵⁹

The vital nature of this tendency is shown by Maxim Waldstein, who on the grounds of Orientalism Theory analyzes “Imperium” – a book by the famous

Polish non-fiction writer Ryszard Kapuściński. Waldstein, who ironically calls Kapuściński “the new Marquis de Custine,” notices that the orientalizing of Russia aims at the “de-orientalization” of Central Europe, which for its part has been orientalized by Western Europe.⁶⁰

According to some scholars, “Poland forms a key element in the historical creation and continuing reconstruction of Russian identity.”⁶¹ The negative or at least suspicious attitude towards Poles was caused by a fear that “Western culture in its accessible Polish expression,” as well as “the power of Roman Catholicism, a more activist, aggressive, and proselytizing faith than Eastern Orthodoxy,” may bring “the dilution of Russian identity and the corruption of Russian values that lay at the foundation of that identity.”⁶²

The strength of the anxiety about Roman Catholicism penetrating into the Russian Orthodox Church was proved during Pope John Paul II’s visit to Ukraine in June 2001, which “provoked indignation and outrage from the Moscow patriarch.”⁶³

Poland also played a pivotal role in the evolution of Slavophilism from “a romantic, utopian vision of truly Christian society (...), [into a direction of ethno-nationalism] postulating the transformation of the empire into a national state of ethnic Russians.”⁶⁴ The so called “Polish question” concerning the Polish independence movements inside the Russian empire was interpreted by some Slavophiles as “a salient part of the long contest between Western and Russian principles.”⁶⁵

After the fall of the Soviet Union, some of the historical memory related to Polish-Russian relations from the 17th to the 18th century has become present in public discussion.⁶⁶ Events from that period, with Polish invasions during the *smuta* period, or the anti-Russian insurgencies of 1794, 1830-31, and 1863-64, have some anti-Polish potential.

However, National Unity Day, established to commemorate the anti-Polish popular insurgency, has not caused many anti-Polish sentiments.⁶⁷ In 2011 less than half of Russians could name the exact name of the holiday and 16 percent declared they were going to celebrate it.⁶⁸

Russian society has generally positive attitudes towards Poland. In 2010, 49 percent declared Poland to be a partner or ally compared with 19 percent of people saying Poland was an opponent or adversary (only 2 percent of answers). The more problematic matter concerns the fact that Poland is often seen as a “squire”⁶⁹ of America – considered by Russians as the greatest adversary.⁷⁰

Benefits for both countries

If the progressive rapprochement overcomes these obstacles, both countries and Europe as a whole may gain some benefits. For Moscow, the key advantage would be removal of a serious obstacle, though obviously not the only one, to the rapprochement with the EU and amelioration of its image not only among former satellites but also in Western European countries and in the United States.

Recent years proved that without at least neutral relations with Eastern-Central Europe's countries Moscow will not be able to consolidate its ties with Brussels. Therefore, to be accepted as a European country (i.e., included in the security community in Europe), not just a power in Europe, Russia has to fully normalize relations with these countries.⁷¹ Without mutual trust between the EU and Russia, the modernization of the latter, in any form, as well as attainment of a visa-free regime, would be much more difficult.

A less direct, but still quite logical conclusion concerns Russia's relations with the CIS states. It is hard to believe that the elites of these states can actually feel comfortable watching Eastern-Central European countries being at constant loggerheads with the Russian Federation. It works the other way, too. If there were mutual trust and cooperation between Moscow and the Eastern-Central Europe countries, Vladimir Putin's assurance that Moscow is not interested in recreating the Soviet Union in any form (meaning domination over the CIS countries) would gain credibility, thus making the integration proposals far more attractive.

Advantages for Russia may also apply to its relations with China. Currently Moscow tries to use the prospect of energy cooperation with Beijing as a tool to strengthen its position in deteriorating relations with Brussels; in other words "Russia's 'Asian leg' starts to get stronger at the moment when its European leg starts noticeably 'to limp.'" ⁷² However, taking into account several factors, such as a growing asymmetry in economic power; the Russian Far East's sparsely inhabited territory bordering the Chinese provinces with a population density several times higher; and finally a threat that Russia may become a natural resources appendage for China, Moscow does have reasons to see relations with Beijing as a serious challenge.

Russia having its western flank "secured" with favorable relations with the whole EU would strengthen its position *vis-à-vis* China. The importance of this issue is likely to become even greater as Beijing "gains a foothold in Eastern Europe"⁷³ and strengthens its influence among the CIS states.⁷⁴

In the period of ten years from 2000 to 2010, China's trade with Central and Eastern European countries has grown from 3 billion U.S. dollars to 40 bil-

lion, which represents an average annual growth of 32 percent.⁷⁵ China's exports to CIS countries (excluding Russia) have grown from 1 billion dollars in 2000 to 31.5 billion in 2008 (which represents an increase of over 30 times).⁷⁶ Russia's exports are still over two times higher – 71.148 billion dollars,⁷⁷ but during the same period they have increased “only” five times. In 2010, China's overall trade with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan totaled 23 billion euros, which represents a higher volume than that of the EU or Russia.⁷⁸

Chinese FDI in the region has grown from 44 million dollars in 2003 to 2.29 billion in 2009 (an increase of over 50 times),⁷⁹ while Russian FDI has grown from 1.5 billion in 2001 to 13 billion in 2009⁸⁰ (an increase of over eight times). Obviously, such a dramatic gap in the dynamics of growth is, to a high degree, due to the much lower level of Chinese exports and FDI back in 2000. Nevertheless, it also indicates a strong trend.

For Poland improved relations with Russia may bring the long-desired role of one of the architects of EU policy towards its Eastern neighborhood. Without broad cooperation and a constructive attitude towards Moscow, this is impossible. By bringing Russia to Europe by making the necessary efforts to push towards rapprochement (also on a regional level), Poland would contribute to the solution of one of the major problems in Europe, thus gaining gratitude and respect for its role as the “EU's expert on the East” and contributing towards a more cohesive EU Eastern policy.

Poland can also strengthen its position as the Eastern-Central European leader. It is a leader's job to be an example and set a direction the group could follow. Such an approach requires a big dose of self-confidence,⁸¹ but along with the reinforcement of Warsaw's position in the EU,⁸² Poland seems to have gained quite enough of this self-confidence. If the rapprochement works out, Warsaw may claim the decisive influence on the region's future.

Influence on Europe

It has already been said that the Polish-Russian rapprochement may influence the perception of Russia's integration proposal among the CIS countries. However, it may also have great influence on the foreign policy of Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and Belarus. Currently, since their geopolitical status is not determined, to a certain degree they are subjects of the EU – Russia's competition.

Strengthening cooperation between Poland and Russia and between Eastern-Central Europe should bring Russia closer to the EU and thus ease tensions

in “New” Eastern Europe and Georgia. It was this competition that, along with other factors, contributed to the Georgia – Russia war. Poland, which gained a lot of trust in Georgia during Lech Kaczyński’s presidency, may play an important role in the post-conflict reconciliation, bringing together Georgia, Russia, and the EU, possibly in line with the so-called Meseberg Process.⁸³ When emotions decrease, Poland could push the EU to engage in talks with the other two parties.

Although it was the United States that played a major role in the post-war period, its direct participation in talks is not indispensable, nor is Washington willing to engage in them. On the contrary, its absence may induce Moscow to make the necessary concessions. However, as the Meseberg Memorandum reads, the possibility of EU-Russia cooperation on security problems is to be tested by the resolution of the Transnistria conflict.⁸⁴ Thus, further cooperation depends on the progress of talks on the Transnistria issue, the future resolution of which is uncertain, taking into account Russia’s recent actions.⁸⁵

As for Ukraine, it seems that Kiev’s geopolitical future may be decided when the Ukrainian-Russian gas price negotiations are finished. Thus, the prospective Polish-Russian rapprochement is not likely to have a decisive effect on that. Instead it can be an important factor to soothe the disappointment that one of the parties (Russia or the EU) is going to feel. If Ukraine chooses not to sell its gas pipelines and not to enter the Customs Union with Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia, Poland should support proper relations between Kiev and Moscow, as an abrupt break-off may provoke internal tension in Ukraine (possibly supported by Russia). If Janukovych chooses the Customs Union, Warsaw should swallow the bitterness as quickly as possible and not turn away from Ukraine, but be ready to help when Kiev is ready to truly engage with the EU. After all, it is Poland that claims to be a self-pronounced supporter of Ukraine’s rights to make independent decisions. No matter what decision Viktor Janukovych makes, it is in Poland’s interest not to contribute to growing tension in its neighborhood.

Conclusions

The three main factors for interstate rapprochement are political will and the domestic political system, settling history-based disputes, and taking into consideration the regional dimension of rapprochement.

Political will is necessary to initiate the process. It provides preference for long-term interests and ensures overcoming possible hurdles created by

internal opposition to the rapprochement. The case of the internal political system's influence is disputable; while some researchers believe that it does not have much influence on initial rapprochement, others argue that undemocratic countries' foreign policies pursue the interests of the ruling elite rather than that of the societies.

Unresolved historical issues are likely to cause emotional reactions and high tensions between countries. The Japan-South Korea example shows that even shared liberal and democratic political systems or developed economies and close economic ties are not sufficient to diminish the influence of historical disputes such as the one concerning Tokyo's actions at the beginning of the 20th century.

Despite the fact that there is no universal model for historical reconciliation, there are certain institutional solutions that are commonly used in resolving historical disputes: historical commissions. Their aim is to balance the dissonance between the popular acceptance of history as "truth" and the professional attitude towards history as a "construction," thus producing politically useful material for politicians. They also provide basic institutionalization of the historical dialogue, making it more systematic and invulnerable to political fluctuation. It is important to apply commission findings to school textbooks in order to secure the progress that has been achieved.

The regional approach towards rapprochement provides the process with necessary breadth, depth, and inertia, making it irreversible. Moreover, issues that from a bilateral perspective are seen as threats to the national security of small states become less acute if addressed within a regional framework. Consequently, they produce fewer tensions and are more likely to be advanced through constructive dialogue. In a situation when disputes exist between more than just two countries, lack of a regional approach may cause anxiety in other countries excluded from the process and thus be counterproductive for regional stability.

The building of trust between Poland and Russia should include actions like political consultations on different levels and cooperation on an academic level: joint research teams, cooperation between universities, conferences, and seminars. It is also very important to establish a youth exchange program. The creation of Centers for Dialogue and Cooperation based in Warsaw and Moscow seems to be a step in the right direction.

The progressive rapprochement also requires a change in thinking and attitude towards counterparts. Poland needs to acknowledge that Russia is at least a regional power with aspirations to become one of the modern world's centers of power. Consequently, it has vast regional interests backed by cul-

tural and historical experience. Acknowledging this is more a matter of acknowledging reality than Russia's so-called sphere of influence.

Russia should recognize the importance of partnership relations with smaller countries in Eastern Europe and engage in intense dialogue with them. No Polish government could afford to treat Moscow's efforts lightly to base its "European policy" on bilateral relations with major Western European countries (over "Poland's head").

Russia should also make an effort to change its negative "imperial" image that exists in most of the countries of Eastern-Central Europe. It is not only caused by the mix of the high sensitivity of these countries and some "controversial" actions taken by Moscow, but also by the reluctance of at least part of the Russian elite to say farewell to the imperial past.

According to polls conducted in 2010, a huge number of Poles – 81 percent – believe that this issue has a negative influence on mutual relations. Thus, as long as still undisclosed issues (i.e. some acts from the 1994-2004 investigation or the copy of the decision to discontinue the investigation) are not revealed, and the victims are not legally rehabilitated, the case is likely to be a serious obstacle to building trust in Poland towards Russia and moving forward in mutual (and regional) relations.

The future-oriented agenda should include steps towards the free movement of Russian and European citizens. Poland's support in this case would gain valuable gratitude from Russian society, as well as trust from the Russian government. This looks even more appealing as it generally lies in line with Polish interests.

Still, even if necessary short- and medium-term steps are taken, the progressive rapprochement will probably face several obstacles. These are mainly of a political, but also cultural nature. Political ones include: the development of Russia's political system, the difference of interests, and the deep asymmetry of economic, political, and military potential, as well as third parties' influence. The cultural barrier may consist of well-rooted mistrust, especially on the Polish side.

For Moscow, the key benefit would be the removal of a serious obstacle, though obviously not the only one, to the rapprochement with the EU and the improvement of its image not only among former satellites but also in Western European countries and in the United States. Recent years proved that without at least neutral relations with Eastern-Central Europe's countries Moscow will not be able to further its ties with Brussels.

For Poland, improved relations with Russia may bring the long-desired role of one of the architects of EU policy towards its Eastern neighborhood. Helping to bring Russia closer to Europe, Poland would contribute to the solution of one of the major problems in Europe, thus gaining gratitude and respect for its role as the “EU’s expert on the East.” Poland can also strengthen its position as the Eastern-Central European leader, providing an example of a constructive and daring foreign policy. The progressive rapprochement is also likely to ease tensions in countries such as Georgia, Moldova, or Ukraine, as well as to facilitate resolutions of frozen conflicts (i.e. Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria).

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NATO-Russia Relations and Missile Defense: “Sticking Point” or “Game Changer”?*

Introduction

At the November 2010 Summit in Lisbon, the leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s (NATO’s) 28 member countries agreed that missile defense constitutes a core element of the alliance’s collective defense and decided to develop a missile defense capability with the aim of protecting its “populations, territories and forces against the growing threat of ballistic missile attack.”¹ To this end, NATO’s Active Layered Theater Ballistic Missile Defense (ALTBMD) – designed to protect NATO’s deployed forces – will be expanded and integrated with the U.S. European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), which was endorsed by the alliance heads of state as a “valuable national contribution” to NATO’s missile defense plans. Equally important is that during the meeting of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) on November 21, NATO leaders invited Russia to cooperate with NATO in the area of missile defense. At the NRC meeting, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev pledged his support for cooperation with NATO on missile defense. The NRC Joint Statement reads as follows:

*We agreed to discuss pursuing missile defense cooperation. We agreed on a joint ballistic missile threat assessment and to continue dialogue in this area. The NRC will also resume Theater Missile Defense Cooperation. We have tasked the NRC to develop a comprehensive Joint Analysis of the future framework for missile defense cooperation.*²

More than a year and a half after the Lisbon summit, however, the NATO-Russia negotiations for cooperation on missile defense have yet to produce a serious breakthrough. Initially, President Medvedev proposed that NATO

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and Russia should build a “sectoral” missile defense shield; according to the sectoral approach, the two sides would jointly develop a system with full-scale interoperability that would protect both NATO’s European territories and Russian territories against ballistic missile threats posed by Iran and other states. A sectoral missile defense system would purportedly give Russia “red button” rights, thus allowing Russia and NATO to assume responsibility to defend against incoming missiles over a specific sector of Europe. Medvedev’s sectoral approach was a nonstarter for the Alliance, which supports a fundamentally different approach: the development of two independent missile defense systems that will coordinate with each other.

Subsequently, missile defense became a source of acute tension between Russia on the one hand and NATO and the United States on the other. Ultimately, NATO officially rejected Medvedev’s plans in June 2010. “Our territorial missile defense system will be part of our collective defense framework. We cannot outsource our collective defense obligations to non-NATO members,” NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen stated during a speech on missile defense at the Royal United Services Institute.³ NATO’s vision entails the deployment of “two separate systems with the same goal, which could be made visible in practice by establishing two joint missile defense centers, one for sharing data and the other to support planning.”⁴

For their part, Russian political and military leaders have waged a fierce campaign against NATO missile defense plans. The nucleus of the problem is that despite assurances by both NATO and U.S. officials that the system aims to protect against a growing ballistic missile threat, especially against an Iranian missile threat, Russia claims that the planned system is targeted against it and will negate its nuclear deterrent. Russia’s syllogism is as follows: Iran does not pose a threat to the United States and its European allies; therefore, the only reason to deploy the system is to target Russia. In particular, Moscow has not stopped its demands for a legally binding pledge that the missile defense will not negate its strategic deterrent. After Spain reached an agreement with the United States to host elements of the planned missile defense system on its territory, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued an announcement urging Washington to provide legal guarantees that the planned missile defense system will not be directed against Russia’s strategic nuclear forces.⁵ Moscow issued a similar statement following Bucharest’s agreement to deploy a missile interceptor base.⁶

Senior Russian government officials also voiced their opposition to the European missile defense plans. “Any attempts by those in NATO who dream of neutralizing our strategic potential will be futile,”⁷ said Russia’s former Envoy to NATO and current Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin. Then-

President Medvedev even went as far as to say that failure to reach agreement on missile defense might provoke a new arms race: “In the next 10 years, the following alternatives await us – either we reach agreement on missile defense and create a full joint cooperation mechanism, or, if we don't go into a constructive agreement, a new phase of the arms race might begin.”⁸ In a more recent statement, labeled by many analysts as “Cold War rhetoric,” Medvedev stated: “If the situation continues to develop not to Russia's favor, we reserve the right to discontinue further disarmament and arms control measures.”⁹ The Russian Chief of the General Staff Nikolay Makarov argued that “the unilateral measures taken by NATO do not promote security and stability in the region.”¹⁰

Currently, talks on missile defense are progressing, but very slowly, mainly because Russia remains unconvinced that its deterrent will not be undermined – a position consistently and repeatedly stated by top-level Russian officials.

At present, the development of a NATO-Russia joint missile defense system is not a viable option, mainly due to political, not technical, constraints. In short, the level of trust between the two sides prohibits such an undertaking. The aim of a joint missile defense shield would be to protect against a common threat, and Russia's and NATO's threat perceptions differ significantly. What is more, the joint deployment of a missile defense would imply that NATO and Russia have a genuine security partnership, like the one enshrined by the Alliance's Article 5. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

However, one need not conclude that NATO and Russia cannot cooperate on missile defense. So far the two sides have managed to cooperate successfully on a series of issues of mutual concern: Russia is a valuable partner supporting the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF); it cooperates with NATO in the fight against terrorism; it works together with NATO allies to train Afghan and Central Asian forces in counter-narcotics operations; it cooperates with NATO in counter-piracy initiatives; and finally, NATO and Russia have a history of cooperation in the field of theater missile defense (TMD).

In the sphere of missile defense, the best way to move forward would be to implement confidence-building measures (CBM) that will allow for greater transparency regarding the system's capabilities and contribute to strengthening mutual relations. It is important to note that even legally binding agreements can be scrapped. Given that Russia is particularly worried about the system's latest phases – the deployment of which will take place in the 2018 timeframe – the two sides should proceed with the implementation of confidence-building measures in the interim and then reassess the missile threat as well as the potential for coordination between Russia's newly created

Air-Space Defense (*Vozdushno-Kosmicheskaya Oborona – VKO*) and the European missile defense system.

This paper seeks to analyze the factors behind Russia's concerns and claims. In doing so, it will address the following questions:

- What accounts for Russia's continued emphasis on strategic stability in the post-Cold War security landscape, and why does Russia emphasize strategic stability as the dominant theme in its opposition to the deployment of a ballistic missile defense system?
- Can the planned NATO missile defense architecture adversely affect Russia's strategic capabilities?
- Which factors serve as impediments to NATO-Russia cooperation on missile defense?
- What are the prospects for cooperation between Russia and NATO/the United States in the sphere of missile defense?

For the purposes of this analysis, a timeframe up to the year 2020 is adopted for the following reasons: first, the New START treaty will expire in 2020, which subsequently means that both Russia and the United States will not be constrained by the Treaty and will be able to build up their nuclear potential; second, the timeframe for the completion of the EPAA's fourth and last phase is 2020; third, completion of Russia's military modernization under the latest State Armaments Program is scheduled for 2020.

Strategic stability and its importance for Russia

The doctrine of strategic stability was formulated during the Cold War, and in particular, during talks on limiting the strategic weapons of the Soviet Union and the United States. As David Holloway observed: "In the United States strategic stability came to prominence in the 1960s in the context of growing interest in arms control. It has usually been understood to consist of two elements: crisis stability and arms race stability. These elements are related because fears about present or future crisis stability could help to fuel an arms race, while an arms race could arouse fears about crisis stability in the future."¹¹

Crisis stability is a situation where an all-out war is not likely. Neither side is inclined to launch the first strike because they know that after the attack, their opponent will have sufficient surviving forces to allow for a retaliatory strike

that would cause unacceptable damage to the aggressor. Arms race stability describes a situation where neither side aims to bolster its nuclear potential. The Soviet planners developed both broad and narrow definitions of the strategic stability approach: “In its broad sense, strategic stability was viewed as a state in which a series of political, economic, military and other steps taken by opposing parties (coalitions) resulted in neither being able to commit military aggression. In its narrow sense, strategic stability was understood as a state of nations’ strategic armed forces relations, and of relations between the states (coalitions) themselves that featured a fairly equal balance of military capabilities. This state further implied that neither party would attempt to alter its military balance of forces or try (by military means) to establish supremacy over the other for a fairly long period of time.”¹²

Although strategic stability served as the intellectual foundation of both U.S. and Soviet national security policies, American and Soviet strategic thinkers used different terminologies to describe the concept. Prior to accepting strategic stability as the keystone of their national security policy, the principle of “equal security” – according to which the parties were to take into consideration all the factors that defined their security¹³ – was used by Soviet strategic thinkers. The term “strategic stability” was used for the first time in a joint document in the U.S.-Soviet Treaty on the Elimination of their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF), adopted in 1987. The document states that the two parties are “guided by the objective of strengthening strategic stability.”¹⁴ The term was explicitly defined in the U.S.-Soviet Joint Statement on the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms of 1990, according to which “strategic stability was understood as such balance of strategic forces of the Soviet Union and the United States (or such state of the two powers’ strategic relations) where there were no incentives for a first strike.”¹⁵ In other words, strategic stability posited that the two adversaries were deterred from initiating a strategic war vis-à-vis the other because they were vulnerable to a retaliatory strike that would inflict “unacceptable damage,” thus preserving crisis stability. Since then, the term has been codified, both in a series of arms control treaties signed by the two parties, and in key national security documents.

Despite the end of the Cold War, the nuclear war-fighting posture of strategic stability and nuclear deterrence persists and dictates strategic thinking in both the United States and Russia. For the reasons analyzed below, the strategic stability doctrine has had a more potent effect on Russia’s strategic planning.

To begin with, Russia ascribes more importance to its nuclear arsenal than the United States does. The reason is twofold. First, in military terms, the tumultuous political and economic changes that Russia experienced after the dissolution of the Soviet Union adversely affected the Russian defense

industry and armed forces; this turmoil resulted in a significant deterioration of Russia's conventional military capabilities. Subsequently, the country can only rely on its nuclear arsenal to serve as the main pillar of its national security; to put it in the words of the chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, General Nikolay Makarov, "the nuclear weapons constitute the basic deterrent of the Russian army."¹⁶ This reliance on nuclear weapons is demonstrated in the latest military doctrine, wherein the Russian Federation reserves the right to use nuclear weapons to respond to the use of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction against it and/or its allies, as well as in the case of aggression against the Russian Federation involving the use of conventional weapons when the very existence of the state is under threat.¹⁷ Second, in political terms, Russia's nuclear arsenal serves as a symbol of great power status.¹⁸

Russia is greatly concerned about the overwhelming U.S. military superiority. A source of growing concern among Moscow's strategic planners is the conventional long-range precision guided weapons that the United States possesses, allowing it to destroy installations in Russia while using conventional means of warfare. These weapons are "believed to present a threat almost equal to that from strategic nuclear weapons."¹⁹ As Evgeni Miasnikov observes, "even modern ICBM silos may be vulnerable to precision guided weapons."²⁰ Vladimir Putin also noted that in the future these weapons will be used as "weapons to achieve decisive victory over the enemy, including in a global conflict."²¹

Third, although the strategic stability doctrine was crafted within the United States of the East-West conflict and today the chance that a nuclear war between Russia and the United States will occur has been significantly reduced, the possibility cannot be completely dismissed. In Dmitri Trenin's words, "in today's world, America and Russia are no longer adversaries, but they have not become allies, or even full partners."²²

At a time when the Russo-American partnership is fragile, a series of U.S. actions further worried the Russian political and military elites. Given that "the dominant view in the Soviet government and military saw instability as deriving fundamentally from political factors rather than force structures" (as was the case in the United States),²³ Russian political and military elites were alarmed by a series of "destabilizing" U.S. actions: Russia condemned unilateral actions such as the U.S.-led NATO military intervention in Yugoslavia in 1999, as well as the U.S. invasion of Iraq. The perceived "degradation of the system of agreements and negotiations on disarmament on the part of the United States (including the ABM Treaty, the START I and START II treaties, agreements on theater missile defense-TMD of 1997, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty – CTBT, the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty – FMCT,

and others) during the years of Republican administration, as well as the persistent policy of denouncing disarmament as a security-building means”²⁴ should also be added to the list of Russia’s concerns. The aforementioned rendered credibility to skeptics in Russia, who argued that contingencies, that is, future U.S. “destabilizing” actions, should be taken into account.

To summarize, Russia was engaging in arms control negotiations while, simultaneously, the role of its nuclear weapons in its strategic calculations was increasing both in military and political terms. Russia’s leadership had to make sure that it would only agree to proceed with reductions in its strategic potential vis-à-vis the United States that would not undermine the ability of its forces to deter a potential aggression either against Russia or against its allies and that would still allow it to maintain its importance in the international arena. In brief, strategic stability became the theology that would allow Russia to optimize its strategic position in relation to the United States.

The debate over missile defense is couched in terms of deterrence. Russian strategic thinkers adamantly argue that the two parties should only build limited defenses, otherwise they will upset strategic stability. The reasoning behind it is that if one party builds strategic missile defenses, it would gain strategic advantage, and thus would be more inclined to launch a first strike. It is for this reason that Russia viewed the Anti-Ballistic Missile Defense Treaty (ABM) as the cornerstone of “strategic stability.” The treaty enshrines the nuclear doctrine by providing for “effective measures to limit antiballistic missile systems” with the aim of decreasing “the risk of outbreak of war involving nuclear weapons.”²⁵

The missile defense debate between the two sides dates back to the 1960s, when the Soviets deployed a missile defense system around Moscow. Alarmed by Moscow’s decision to build such a system, then-Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara proposed to Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin in 1967 that the two sides agree on limits to their respective missile defense shields. The latter’s response was that “defensive systems that prevent an offensive are not the cause of the arms race, but are rather a factor that prevents human deaths.”²⁶ Washington’s response was the deployment of its own missile defense system to protect U.S. territory – Sentinel under President Johnson and Safeguard under President Nixon. Five years after the Glassboro Summit between McNamara and Kosygin, the two sides signed the ABM Treaty. Missile defense became an irritant in Soviet-American relations yet again in the early 1980s, when Reagan decided to pursue his notorious Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), a defensive shield to protect against nuclear missiles deployed from the Soviet Union. The Soviets decried the administration’s plans and actively promulgated that SDI would diminish their nuclear deterrent. This position was clearly articulated in General Secretary Andropov’s re-

sponse to Reagan's Star Wars Speech: "The United States intends to sever this interconnection [between strategic offensive and defensive weapons]. Should this conception be translated into reality, it would in fact open the floodgates to a runaway."²⁷ Reagan believed that nuclear deterrence is akin to "having two westerners standing in a saloon aiming their guns at each other's head – permanently. There had to be a better way,"²⁸ he argued. In line with his beliefs, Reagan abhorred the Mutual Assured Destruction doctrine, which his administration inherited. A missile defense shield was therefore needed to render nuclear weapons "impotent and obsolete." Eventually, concerns over the system's technical feasibility as well as a series of economic and political reasons led to the program's termination.

When momentum resurfaced in the United States in the late 1990s for the deployment of a nationwide ballistic missile defense shield, or the so-called National Missile Defense (NMD) system, Russia again raised its concerns. During the U.S.-Russia Summit held in 2000, the Russian minister of defense underscored that the planned limited NMD programs "would mean pulling out of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty" and said that "the U.S. proposal would mean restarting the arms race."²⁹ The Clinton administration did recognize that if deployed, the system would violate the terms of the ABM Treaty and didn't want the United States to go beyond the limits set by the Treaty. In line with this view, the administration actually sought a "Russian agreement to modify the ABM Treaty to allow 'limited national defenses.'"³⁰ Despite the administration's efforts to address Russian concerns, Moscow opposed the proposed amendments to the ABM Treaty. The Clinton administration's plans eventually faded away due to perceived doubts about the program's technical feasibility.

Shortly after George W. Bush assumed office, the administration announced its plans to deploy a robust missile defense system. During a speech at the National Defense University on May 1, 2001, Bush revealed his plans to build a missile defense system and announced his decision to abrogate the ABM Treaty. To Bush, the United States needed "a new framework that allows us to build missile defenses to counter the different threats of today's world." To do so, Bush argued, "we must move beyond the constraints of the 30-year-old ABM Treaty [which] ...does not recognize the present or point us to the future [but] ...enshrines the past."³¹ Reportedly, prior to the U.S. announcement of the abrogation of the ABM Treaty, Bush and Putin held "3 days of talks," but ultimately "failed to reach an agreement that would permit the United States to move forward with its missile defense plans."³² Putin labeled the U.S. withdrawal a "mistake," while also emphasizing the significance of "strengthening strategic stability and international security."³³ From Russia's perspective, the abrogation of the ABM Treaty served to bring the United States one step closer toward obtaining first strike capability. From the very first moment, Moscow vigorously opposed Washington's plans to station a missile defense

system, the so-called “Third Site,” in Poland and the Czech Republic, claiming it was designed to counter Russian missiles.

The Obama administration’s decision to shelve the Bush administration’s plans initially toned down Russia’s rhetoric. The Obama administration came to office seeking to improve relations with Russia, and indeed, the signing of the New START Treaty was among the “reset” policy’s major achievements. Precisely because the text of the Treaty only notes that an interrelation between offense and defense exists and imposes no limits on missile defense deployment by the parties, the Russian Duma adopted a resolution upon ratification with the aim of underscoring the importance of missile defenses for preserving strategic stability. In this resolution, the interrelationship between offensive and defensive weapons was reinstated, and it was noted that “this interrelationship will become more important as strategic nuclear arms are reduced.” It also bears noting that Russia maintains the right to withdraw from the New START Treaty as such in case of extraordinary events that jeopardize its supreme interests and lists the “deployment by the United States of America, another state, or a group of states of a missile defense system capable of significantly reducing the effectiveness of the Russian Federation’s strategic nuclear forces.” It also emphasizes that “the Russian Federation shall be on alert about deployment by other states of missile defense systems and their effect on the capacity of the Russian Federation’s strategic nuclear forces.”³⁴

Initially, Russia welcomed Obama’s announcement of his European Phased Adaptive Approach and called for further dialogue. Nevertheless, following NATO’s rejection of Medvedev’s sectoral approach, which would entail the development of a joint missile defense system, Russia hardened its position and started railing against the revamped missile defense plan. Currently, Russian officials question the argument NATO and the United States make that the missile defense architecture will be deployed against the potential threat that emanates from Iran. They claim that Iran won’t have the capability to attack the United States or Europe for some time; therefore, the system must be aimed against Russia. Moscow is worried that the deployment of such a system will signal the convergence of American offensive and defensive systems in a first-strike capability, thus eroding Russia’s strategic deterrent.

The European Phased Adaptive Approach

In September 2009, the Obama administration announced it would scrap the Bush administration’s plan to which Russia strenuously objected in favor of a phased, adaptive approach. The administration’s European Phased Adaptive Approach consists of four phases:³⁵

- In Phase One (in the 2011 timeframe), current and proven missile defense systems available in the following two years, including the sea-based Aegis Weapon Systems, the SM-3 interceptors (Block IA), and sensors such as the forward-based Army Navy/Transportable Radar Surveillance systems (AN/TPY-2), will be deployed to address regional ballistic missile threats to Europe and to deployed personnel and their families;
- In Phase Two (in the 2015 timeframe), after appropriate testing, a more capable version of the SM-3 interceptor (Block IB) in both sea- and land-based configurations, and more advanced sensors will be deployed to expand the defended area against short- and medium-range missile threats;
- In Phase Three (in the 2018 timeframe), after development and testing are complete, the more advanced SM-3 Block IIA variant currently under development will be deployed to counter short-, medium-, and intermediate-range missile threats; and
- In Phase Four (in the 2020 timeframe), after development and testing are complete, the SM-3 Block IIB will be deployed to help better cope with medium- and intermediate-range missiles and a potential future ICBM threat to the United States.

All four phases will include upgrades to the missile defense command and control system.

So far, significant progress has been made. The United States is deploying a missile defense-capable ship to the Mediterranean, Turkey agreed to host an early warning (AN/TPY-2) radar, which was launched on January 1, 2012,³⁶ and by the end of the fiscal year 2011, the regional missile defense capabilities would consist of 26 THAAD interceptors and 107 SM-3 interceptors.³⁷ The next important step in NATO's missile defense progress would come at the Chicago Summit in May 2012, during which NATO would announce "that it has achieved an 'interim capability,'" which means that the "Allies will start operating under the same 'playbook.'" ³⁸

For Russia, the issue is not Phase I or II, but Phases III and IV, during which more capable versions of the SM-3 interceptors will be deployed. Russia is particularly concerned about Phase IV, when SM-3 IIB is scheduled to be deployed in order to defend against Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). Russian concerns are reflected in President Medvedev's statements. Following his bilateral meeting with President Obama in Deauville, during a press conference Medvedev said: "This issue [missile defense] will be finally solved

in the future, like, for example, in the year 2020, but we, at present, might lay the foundation for other politicians' activities."³⁹ In another statement, Medvedev also stated, clearly referring to Phases III and IV of the EPAA, that Russia "will not agree to take part in a program that in a short while, in some 6 to 8 years' time, could weaken our nuclear deterrent capability."⁴⁰

Russia's strategic nuclear deterrent is based on the rapid-launch capability of its intercontinental ballistic missiles, which constitute "the key component of the strategic triad."⁴¹ Moscow is worried that the NATO missile defense shield would be able to negate Russia's deterrent because the interceptors could develop speed that would allow them to "kill" Russian ICBM warheads on their flight path to the United States.

The SM-3 interceptors will be located at land-based sites and on ships at sea. The two land-based BMD systems in Europe will be deployed in Romania and Poland by 2015 and 2018, respectively. Initially, "each of these Aegis Ashore sites, as they are called, would include, among other things, a land-based Aegis SPY-1 radar and 24 SM-3 missiles."⁴² By fiscal year 2018, around 500 SM-3 Block II interceptors will be deployed on 32 BMD-capable Aegis ships not all of which will be stationed in Europe and the two missile defense interceptor sites.⁴³

The SM Block I interceptors "have a 21-inch-diameter booster stage at the bottom but are 13.5 inches in diameter along the remainder of their lengths." The Block IIA version is to have a 21-inch diameter along its entire length, and this increase in diameter "to a uniform 21 inches provides more room for rocket fuel, permitting the Block IIA version to have a burnout velocity of 3.0 to 3.5 kilometers per second ...that is 45% to 60% greater than that of the Block IA and IB versions, as well as a larger-diameter kinetic warhead."⁴⁴

Compared to SM-3 IIA, the more advanced SM-3 Block IIB will have "a higher burnout velocity and greater divert capability," which will make it possible for the SM-3 Block II to have limited early-intercept capability against ICBMs. Given that "the SM-3 Block I versions have a reported burnout velocity of 3.0 to 3.5 km/sec," the SM-3 Block II missiles are expected to have a burnout speed that "could reach ~5.5 km/sec."⁴⁵

Indeed, as Yousaf Butt and Theodore Postol, two prominent experts in the missile defense field and critics of the proposed missile defense system, demonstrate in their recent study,⁴⁶ the system will have some inherent capability to reach or engage Russian ICBMs on their flight path to the United States only under certain circumstances. Yet, the SM-3 missiles could only intercept missiles launched from Russian bases closer to Russia's borders with Europe. To put it in the words of Lieutenant General Patrick O'Reilly, who serves as

the director of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA), the planned Standard Missile-3 interceptors “would be ineffective as anti-missile interceptors against a country like Russia, whose strategic deterrent missiles are launched from deep inside its territory.”⁴⁷ As leading Russian security expert Alexei Arbatov notes, regarding the debate over the proximity of the EPAA to Russian borders, “EPAA would theoretically affect a relatively small part of the strategic resources deployed in three Western bases of the Russian Strategic Forces, which are located on European territory, but would not affect the main missile forces deep inside the country’s territory, and beyond the Urals.”⁴⁸

Even more importantly, the fact that these missiles (which do not account for more than 10-15 percent of Russia’s strategic forces) could be engaged doesn’t mean that the interceptors would actually destroy the ICBMs. The SM-3 interceptors are capable of intercepting incoming warheads during the mid-course phase of their flight, in the near vacuum of space before re-entry through the atmosphere. Yet, as Theodore Postol observes: “However, because the trajectories of lightweight decoys as well as heavy warheads are the same in the vacuum of space, it is straightforward for a missile to release dozens of simple, lightweight decoys that will be indistinguishable to infrared sensors on the interceptor or to radars on the ground. Making matters yet more problematic, it would be quite easy to inflate a balloon around the warhead, or hang material from the warhead, that would make it look different from its expected appearance to these sensors. Since the decoys and warheads would all look different from the expected appearance of the warhead, there would fundamentally be no way for the defense to identify warheads from decoys.”⁴⁹

In a nutshell, the system would be vulnerable to countermeasures, and as prominent technical expert Vladimir Dvorkin notes, “highly-effective BMD penetration aids ...are installed on Russia’s missiles for use during all vulnerable stages of the trajectory.”⁵⁰

What is more, Russia’s State Armaments Program to 2020 (SAP-2020) calls for the development of a new heavy ICBM. Viktor Esin, former head of Russian strategic forces, was quoted as saying that “the government aims the missile to enter service in 2012.”⁵¹ The new heavy missile is expected to have a “heavy throw-weight between five and nine metric tons and a length of over 35 meters, capable of delivering a large number of warheads in a single MIRV missile.”⁵² According to First Deputy Defense Minister Vladimir Popovkin, the new missile will “replace the existing heavy, liquid Voevoda-class missile.”⁵³ Pavel Podvig emphasizes that it “would be more effective in penetrating missile defenses than the currently deployed Topol-M, since it could carry a large number of decoys and other penetration aids.”⁵⁴

That said, it is clear that the EPAA would be incapable of defending against a Russian missile threat, let alone weaken Russia's nuclear deterrent. Indeed, Russia's retaliatory capabilities in terms of size and technical sophistication are such that they could overwhelm the system.

Moscow is also worried about the future configuration of the system, voicing concerns that there are no guarantees the United States will stop fielding improved and expanded missile defenses after 2020. Russian officials claim that the prospective configuration of the U.S. missile defense system will be such that the United States will not have to worry about a retaliatory strike on Russia's part in case of an attack. Strategic planners in Moscow have a specific scenario in mind: if, in the future, the U.S. Attacks Russia using its high-precision conventional weapons, then Russia would not be capable of retaliating because the United States would have developed a global missile defense system – the Russians' nemesis. As Dmitri Trenin states, "to demonstrate how seriously the Kremlin views that issue of U.S. missile defense capabilities, look at Russia's national security strategy, released in May 2009. The document calls a U.S. first-strike capability, which is attainable once the United States builds a seamless global missile defense system, the most serious external military threat to Russia."⁵⁵

This reliance on Russia's part on predicting the worst future outcomes prohibits cooperation today. Moscow must take into consideration the limitations of ballistic missile defenses. In particular, Moscow will have to take into account the fact that the SM-3 Block II missiles are not yet at the stage of development. As former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen said, "the missile you're talking about I know doesn't exist yet."⁵⁶ Furthermore, critics of the system point out that the system is tested under orchestrated scenarios. For example, a "successful" intercept test of the Phased Adaptive Approach system, in line with the Obama administration's policy to test the missiles before they are deployed, did not include countermeasures.⁵⁷ "In combat, the vast majority of 'successful' SM-3 experiments would have failed to destroy attacking warheads."⁵⁸ The completion of the system is also dependent upon budget constraints, and most importantly, on whether or not the next administration will continue the program or shelve it. Even if Obama wins a second term, he will leave office in 2017, that is, before the development of Phase III is scheduled to commence. In summary, "the time-scale and technological challenges of developing and deploying missile defenses are such that there will be ample time for Russia to assess the actual character of U.S. actions."⁵⁹

Factors that influence Russia's attitude vis-à-vis NATO's missile defense

To understand the reasons behind Russia's opposition to the plans for deploying a missile defense system in Europe, a series of factors that determine Russia's aggressive rhetoric must be taken into consideration:

The “perceptions” factor. The deployment of a missile defense system in Europe is primarily a political issue, which is directly linked to Russia's perceptions about NATO and “the West” in general. Although the Cold War ended more than two decades ago, lingering Cold War stereotypes still influence Russia's assessment of NATO. This is best illustrated in the Russian Federation's latest National Security Concept, which was adopted in 2010. It suggests that “NATO's global functions, which are carried out in violation of the norms of international law, and the development of its member-countries' military infrastructure closer to the borders of the Russian Federation, including via the Bloc's expansion,”⁶⁰ constitute the main external military threat to the security of the Russian Federation. This is worrisome, for the document's prioritization of threats reflects “the perceptions of the majority of the Russian political elite and strategic community” and “treats the policies, actions, and military programs of the United States and NATO as the biggest threats to Russia.”⁶¹ At the same time, for historical and political reasons, Russia is fiercely opposed to the deployment of NATO defense infrastructure close to its borders; Russia perceives this to be part of NATO's policy to encircle Russia. Russians categorically claim that during the negotiations for German reunification, they were assured that NATO would not expand even “one inch to the east.” Moscow, hence argues that it was deceived, even up to this day. Vladimir Putin's aggressive speech during the Munich Security Conference in 2007 demonstrates this belief: “It turns out that NATO has put its frontline forces on our borders, and we ...do not react to these actions at all. I think it is obvious that NATO expansion ...represents a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust. And we have the right to ask: against whom is this expansion intended? And what happened to the assurances our western partners made after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact? Where are those declarations today? No one even remembers them. But I will allow myself to remind this audience what was said. I would like to quote the speech of NATO General Secretary Mr. Woerner in Brussels on May 17, 1990. He said at the time that: ‘The fact that we are ready not to place a NATO army outside of German territory gives the Soviet Union a firm security guarantee.’ Where are these guarantees? The stones and concrete blocks of the Berlin Wall have long been distributed as souvenirs. But we should not forget that the fall of the Berlin Wall was possible thanks to a historic choice – one that was also made by our people, the people of Russia – a choice

in favor of democracy, freedom, openness and a sincere partnership with all the members of the big European family.”⁶²

Indeed, there is a deep-rooted belief among Russia’s political elite that Russia should have been treated better by the Western powers. The country’s elites maintain that, although Russia played a crucial role in dismantling the Communist regime, not only was it unwelcomed by “the West,” but also the Western powers exploited Russia’s weakness during the 1990s. The political memory of what Russia considers an “abject humiliation” in that tumultuous decade combined with distrust toward NATO significantly influence Russia’s perception of missile defense. Moscow maintains that, if the system is successful, it will be used as a means to exert political pressure.

Foreign policy goals. The process of establishing a common European security space from Vancouver to Vladivostok started more than two decades ago. Russia supports the idea of this indivisible security space and aims to play a decisive role in European security decision making as exemplified by Medvedev’s proposed pan-European Security Treaty. Moscow perceives NATO’s idea of having two independent yet coordinated systems as unwillingness on NATO’s behalf to allow Russia’s participation in the European security process. Furthermore, Moscow argues that its non-participation in such a system’s deployment will result in the establishment of divisive lines in Europe at a time when Russia feels increasingly disaffiliated from the West, amid the U.S.-Russia clash over the conflict in Syria, the conflict over the NATO-led campaign in Libya, and the missile defense deadlock.

In this context, Russia is ratcheting up pressure, for example, by flexing its muscles and activating a missile early warning radar system in Kaliningrad in an effort to make its voice heard by its NATO partners. President Medvedev warned that “I expect that this step will be seen by our partners as the first signal of our country’s readiness to make an adequate response to the threats that the missile shield poses for our strategic nuclear forces.”⁶³

Electoral politics. To an extent, electoral politics in Russia might also have influenced Moscow’s position regarding the European missile defense architecture. For example, Fedor Lukyanov has written: “The Russian public at large and a big part of its political class are instinctively seeking proof that the 1991 disintegration didn’t mean Russia’s disappearance from the world stage as an important actor. NATO has been seen as a successful rival and a symbol of Russia’s strategic defeat, and this vision underlies the general perception.”⁶⁴

It should be remembered that the country’s leadership intensified pressure in regard to the missile defense debate in advance of the Russian legislative

elections in December 2011, with the aim of appealing to the Russian electorate. Medvedev's special statement on missile defense came a couple of weeks before the elections.

Former allies turned foes? Russia is genuinely upset over the fact that countries that it perceives as "friendly states," and with which Russia shares historical and cultural ties, are going to participate in a system that, as Moscow claims, is targeted against Russia.

The role of the military establishment and Russia's Air-Space Defense.

In order to upgrade its armed forces, Russia adopted its State Armament Program to 2020 (SAP-2020). In total, 19 trillion rubles (about \$650 billion) will be allocated to SAP-2020, while about 10 percent of this money – about \$70 billion – will go to the strategic triad.⁶⁵ That said, one could argue that it is in the interest of Russia's military establishment to oppose cooperation with NATO on missile defense: the Russian military establishment can use the planned European missile defense shield as a means to justify such exuberant military spending. Recently, First Deputy Defense Minister Alexander Sukhorukov stated that "about 15-20 percent of the SAP-2020 funding (\$97.5- \$130 billion) will be directed toward the development of the VKO (Air-Space Defense) forces."⁶⁶ As long as NATO's missile defense is portrayed as a threat to Russia's strategic deterrent, the country's military establishment can strongly advocate the need to develop Air-Space Defense to protect Russia against NATO and the United States and subsequently justify the project's costs. For reasons of comparison, it should be noted that NATO's territorial missile defense system is estimated to cost less than 200 million euros over 10 years and the cost will be spread among 28 allies.⁶⁷ Additionally, individual member states are responsible for funding national capabilities, "such as sensors and interceptor missiles, expected to be 'plugged in' to the NATO command and control system."⁶⁸ This is an additional investment for expanding the Alliance's Active Layered Theater Ballistic Missile Defense (ALTBMD), which aims to protect deployed NATO troops. The cost of the ALTBMD program is estimated at €800 million (approximately \$1 billion) spread over fourteen years, and shared by all of the allies.⁶⁹

At this point, it is useful to discuss Russia's missile defense program, which "is no less impressive than the U.S. missile defense program,"⁷⁰ but has not received as much attention (at least in the public debates) in Europe and the United States.

Russia's Air-Space Defense was recently instituted by the Russian president. VKO is operated by the Air-Space Defense Operational-Strategic Command, a new branch of the Russian military, which "brings together the country's air defense and missile defense systems, as well as the early missile warn-

ing and space control systems, under a unified command. It is also responsible for launches of spacecraft from the Plesetsk space center in northern Russia.”⁷¹

S-400 surface-to-air missile systems and their planned follow-up systems, the S-500, will constitute the basis for Russia’s missile defense. Reportedly, the development of “28 anti-aircraft missile regiments equipped with S-400 ‘Triumph’ (1800 anti-aircraft missiles), and ten battalions (around 400 anti-aircraft missile systems) S-500 is planned for Air-Space Defense.”⁷² It must be noted that the development of S-500 missiles is scheduled for completion by 2015-2016.⁷³ Russia’s chief of the General Staff, General Nikolai Makarov, was quoted as saying that within two years, Almaz-Antey will build two plants that will manufacture new S-500 air defense missile systems in the future.⁷⁴ Regarding its missile capabilities, “the S-500 travels through space at altitudes higher than 200 km. It is equipped with a radar that detects targets at ranges up to 800 km, and its new interceptor missile hits targets flying at speeds about 7 km/sec. If compared to the S-400, the S-500 is more compact and easier to maneuver, and thus can be quickly deployed in any sphere of operations.”⁷⁵

Moscow’s upgraded BMD system (A-135) will also be included in the new command. According to Aleksandr Stukalin, “on January 31, 1991, the Russian Government signed Contract No. 406/1591 for the *Samolet M* (Aircraft-M) R&D project” with the aim of modernizing and upgrading Moscow’s missile defense system A-135 (ABM-4).⁷⁶ In 2011, 1.5 billion rubles (approximately \$51 million) were allocated for the project.⁷⁷ Stukalin provides a detailed description of the system: “The A-135 consists of two subsystems: the Don 2N multi-role radar in Sofrino, and the interceptor launch sites. A smaller and simpler version of the system has been deployed at the Sary-Shagan weapons range in Kazakhstan to test the key elements of the A-135. It consists of the Amur P (5Zh60P) multi-channel firing complex and the field version of the radar, the Don-2NP (5N20P). The Voronezh-DM class radar has a range of 6,000 kilometers (3,700 miles) and can simultaneously track about 500 targets with high accuracy.”⁷⁸

Russia is also in the process of modernizing its early warning system. The SAP-2020 “aims at completing deployment of the network of new early-warning radars, which would provide full coverage of the periphery of the country. Construction of radars in Lekhtusi, Armavir, Irkutsk, and Kaliningrad are clearly part of this effort.”⁷⁹ The new Voronezh type radars, which are currently under construction, will replace the Dnepr and Daryal class radars of the Soviet early warning system “and close all gaps in radar coverage on Russia’s borders.”⁸⁰

In any case, it should be stated that many analysts characterize the military modernization plan as ambitious and point out the rather weak prospects for successfully completing the VKO; Russia, they emphasize, must overcome a series of problems that plague the Russian defense industry, including inefficient management, lack of research and development, reliance on Soviet era engineers, and insufficient funding.

China's significance for Russia's calculations. Moscow was joined by Beijing in opposing the plans for the deployment of the European missile defense architecture. Then-President Medvedev and his Chinese counterpart, Hu Jintao, issued a joint statement, proclaiming that "China and Russia believe that threats and challenges posed by missiles should first be handled through political and diplomatic means." Concerning missile defense, "global strategic balance needs to be maintained,"⁸¹ the statement continues. In addition, the Sino-Russian led Shanghai Cooperation Organization issued a statement condemning missile defenses, which reads as follows: "The member states believe that a unilateral and unlimited build-up of anti-missile defense by a particular country or a narrow group of countries can damage the strategic stability and international security."⁸²

Referring to U.S. missile defense systems, an expert on Chinese foreign and defense policy writes that "even if such systems are currently unsuccessful or limited in scope, China must plan for the day when these systems will work at full capacity and threaten China's nuclear deterrent" and underscores that "China's countermeasures will not wait for BMD to deliver its potential."⁸³ On this basis, there is concern that the U.S. missile defense system will spur China to accelerate the buildup of its nuclear potential and offensive capabilities. If this scenario were to be realized, significant problems would arise for Russia; in particular, given that sparsely populated "Eastern Siberia relies on nuclear weapons, not on any soldiers that Russia could possibly mobilize; if China could negate the threat of Russian nuclear retaliation, the strategic results for Russia could be very severe."⁸⁴ In this context, in order to avoid infuriating Chinese strategic planners, Russia could not cooperate in the sphere of missile defense. Concurrently, Russia is more than happy to use China as a balance against the United States and its plans to build strategic defenses.

Prospects for cooperation and recommendations

As this paper has already discussed, Russia is worried that following completion of the EPAA in 2020, the United States will continue developing its missile defense capabilities, with the aim of deploying a global strategic missile defense system, thus acquiring a first-strike capability. Right now Russia is

relying on worst-case hypotheses and is not taking into consideration the actual capabilities and limitations of the system: the SM-3 Block IIB missiles do not exist yet; BMD is a costly endeavor and, therefore, financial constraints should also be taken into account; finally, assuming that Obama wins a second term, he will leave office in 2018, when the development of Phase III is scheduled to start, and there are no guarantees that the next administration will not decide to scrap the plans. Unfortunately, this reliance on worst-case scenarios accounts for Russia's heated rhetoric and serves as an impediment to cooperation with NATO and the U.S. in the field of missile defense.

This paper argues that, despite the current deadlock in negotiations between the two sides, there is potential for cooperation in the field of missile defense. In particular, the paper suggests that a pragmatic, step-by-step approach should be implemented. If the two sides are to cooperate on missile defense in the future, incremental steps laying the foundations for deeper coordination of the two systems, VKO and EPAA, are needed. It bears remembering, for example, that during the Soviet years, the Soviet Union and the United States jointly participated in a space mission, Apollo-Soyuz; this joint undertaking of the two former adversaries in a field of critical importance laid the foundations for future cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States, which eventually produced the International Space Station.

In order to move forward with cooperation in the field of missile defense, the following steps should be taken:

- First, Russia and NATO allies should discuss the potential for cooperation between Russia's Air-Space Defense and the European Phased Adaptive Approach. Russia's VKO is designed to "repel air and space attacks,"⁸⁵ and although it is not explicitly stated in official documents, VKO aims to protect against an attack from NATO, given that, at present, only NATO countries have the capabilities to launch such an attack against Russia. Needless to say, Russia cannot cooperate with NATO on missile defense, while simultaneously building its own defenses, which are targeting NATO. That said, the two sides need to address the topic of the two systems' compatibility and discuss whether in technical terms cooperation can take place if a decision toward this direction is made in the future.
- Second, it should be noted that although Moscow claims that Washington's blueprint for missile defense in Europe will have a negative impact on strategic stability, it doesn't think that its own Air-Space Defense will undermine strategic stability. Russia should clearly articulate on which criteria it bases its argument about the European missile shield, as well as why its system is not expected to affect strategic stability. The

two parties should reach an agreement on the criteria that determine when a missile defense system is stabilizing or destabilizing to strategic stability. What is more, it is crucial for both sides to understand that the doctrine of strategic stability will start being slowly transformed as the balance between offensive and defensive weapons will be altered; even small steps of cooperation in the field of missile defense will signal the moving away from the principle of Mutual Assured Destruction.

- Third, the missile defense debate should include discussion of a series of interwoven issues, including reductions of tactical nuclear weapons and future discussions in pursuit of the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE Treaty).

Definitely, a joint missile threat assessment is a stumbling block in cooperation on missile defense. During the Lisbon NATO-Russia Council, Russia and NATO agreed to conduct a joint ballistic missile threat assessment. It is expected that the two parties will not come to full agreement regarding the threats, yet this a crucial first step for strengthening cooperation in the field. In his statements, Medvedev mentioned a window of “six to eight years,” a clear reference to phases III and IV of EPAA, which are of particular concern to Russia, and the deployment of which will not start until 2018. The two parties should capitalize on this “interim period” and decide on measures to develop and strengthen mutual confidence.

In the context of confidence building measures, the two sides should revive the Joint Data Exchange Center (JDEC), the creation of which was agreed upon in 1998 between then-Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin. Already, in 2009, Presidents Medvedev and Obama announced that they will start to “cooperate on monitoring the development of missile programs around the world,” and additionally, intensify dialogue on establishing the JDEC,⁸⁶ which is to become the basis for a multilateral missile-launch notification regime. Russia’s radars in Azerbaijan and Armavir are well positioned to detect launches from Iran and could thus be used to monitor the Iranian missile threat. A jointly manned data exchange center is of crucial importance in that it will contribute to alleviating what Russian analysts refer to as “language deficit” or insufficient communication between the two sides. At the same time, the two sides should start joint exercises in the sphere of missile defense to intensify military-to-military cooperation and cooperation between the technical experts of both sides. Russia should also accept the U.S. invitation to observe a U.S. missile interceptor test.⁸⁷ A similar proposal was made in October 2011, but Russia decided to dismiss it.⁸⁸ The aforementioned measures will advance mutual understanding and will provide for greater transparency regarding the system’s capabilities, thus easing suspicions voiced by Moscow.

What is more, “in 2004, under the Bush administration, the United States began seeking a Defense Technical Cooperation Agreement (DTCA) with Russia.”⁸⁹ Discussions on concluding the DTCA should resume, since such an agreement should serve as a starting point for strengthening technology exchange. Yet, at this point, given that the two parties have not managed to build the necessary level of trust, sensitive information should remain classified. It is worth remembering that within the framework of the Russian-American Observation Satellite (RAMOS) program, the United States and Russia were jointly working on missile defense-related technologies. In this regard, partnerships between the industries of the two countries should be promoted; the constituencies that would then be created would serve as strong proponents of cooperation on missile defense and would counterbalance political pressure that impedes cooperation.

Finally, Russia should reconcile itself to accepting political rather than legal guarantees. At present, it is highly unlikely that the Obama administration will agree to give legal guarantees to Russia amid criticism by the Republican Party over missile defense cooperation with Russia and during the election campaign period. Regarding NATO, it is by definition really difficult to get all member states to ratify such an agreement in their national parliaments. More importantly, what Russia needs to understand is that even legal agreements can be canceled. This happened in the past with the ABM Treaty, and Medvedev himself threatened that Russia might abrogate the new START Treaty.

Conclusions

In 2011, NATO and Russia agreed in principle to cooperate on missile defense. More than a year after the NATO-Russia Lisbon summit took place, the two sides have reached a critical impasse over missile defense. The paper’s starting point is that a joint missile defense system is a nonstarter, given the low level of trust between the two parties. The paper’s thesis contends that the future of missile defense cooperation between Russia and the United States-NATO is not totally bleak; it argued in favor of a step-by-step approach – measures that will lay the groundwork for deeper cooperation in the future provided that political will exists on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

The main reason that missile defense is a “sticking point” between Russia on the one hand, and NATO and the United States on the other, is that missile defense is a highly politicized issue. Unfortunately, political considerations influence the debate in Russia to the detriment of rational decision making. Politics contributes to viewing the planned missile defense shield as more threatening to strategic stability and Russia’s deterrent than it really is. Mos-

cow remains tremulous at the prospect of future upgrades to the planned missile defense architecture and argues that the ultimate goal of the United States is to construct global missile defense architecture, which is complete anathema for Russia. The country's leadership should take into consideration the political, technological, and technical constraints of such a system and tone down its rhetoric. Working side-by-side with NATO and U.S. experts and learning more about the system's capabilities could assuage Russia's fears.

Failure to reach an agreement or to cooperate will result in nuclear arsenals on high alert status, poisons the bilateral relations between Russia and NATO and the United States, and serve as an impediment to the future agenda of U.S.-Russia arms control negotiations. Conversely, if agreement is reached, missile defense will serve as a "game changer," that is, as a means to move away from the outdated doctrines of strategic stability and Mutual Assured Destruction. Ultimately, an agreement could be the first step toward genuine strategic cooperation, a much needed approach in the present security landscape.

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Foreign Policy Without Ideology: The Case for Present-day China

Defining the “ideal machine”

According to “The Theory of Machines and Mechanisms,” the ideal machine is a mechanical system in which energy and power are not lost or dissipated through friction, deformation, wear, or other inefficiencies.¹ The energy that goes into an ideal machine comes out in equal quantity. Energy is transformed but not lost, and the process is transparent. While the idea of an ideal machine has existed in the physical sciences for centuries, it has yet to be discussed in terms of the political sciences, and in foreign policy specifically.

There is a great deal to be gained from a feasible model of an ideal foreign policy “machine,” however. Theoretically, an ideal foreign policy “machine” would not encounter friction, i.e. come into conflict with the foreign policies of other nations, and would not be deformed, i.e. stray from its intended goal. Furthermore, there would be no need to constantly “power” this machine because it would remain self-sufficient on the energy already in the system. With that last point, we run into a term that needs better defining. What is the “power” that runs foreign policy?

If we define a nation’s foreign policy “machine” as the actions it undertakes to promote its intended goal, then the power that drives this machine is its ideology. Why choose ideology over military power or money, more obvious choices for many realists? The answer is that military power and money function more as the *mass* of a machine, making up its bulk and giving momentum to the course it chooses to take. In physics, momentum is considered a “vector quantity,” the product of force and mass in a given direction. This holds in foreign policy as well.

A “foreign policy machine” cannot operate like a bulldozer on auto drive, with one pre-programmed, one-size-fits-all agenda. Instead, it needs some set of intelligent, adaptable principles that can put a philosophy behind the face

of diplomacy and join in the common, humanistic language that makes interaction between different states and differing ideologies possible. Simply put, ideology is the power that drives the mass of the foreign policy machine and gives this “momentum” a particular direction.

In “The German Ideology,” Marx defines ideology as “the production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness ...interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men.”² Marx’s original contribution to our conception of ideology was the idea that an ideology could be created to fit a society and not the other way around. In other words, Marx’s ideology is not some untouchable moral foundation upon which a society is built but rather a moral stilt that is put in place to support a pre-existing structure. By Marxian definitions, a nation’s ideology is its justification, its psychological fuel or “power” for carrying out a certain foreign policy.

For our perfect foreign policy “machine” then, we need an ideology that “is not lost or dissipated through friction, deformation, wear, or other inefficiencies” but still provides an intelligent moral backbone to justify policy decisions. Such an ideology remains an ideal, however. It has never been observed on the world stage. All nations currently in existence have some sort of conflict or ideological disagreement with other nations. They carry out actions that are based on qualitative beliefs, such as the benefit of a certain style of government, in addition to quantitative goals, such as maintaining a healthy economic growth rate.

What has been observed however is a nation that operates with the intention of reducing ideology to a minimum – “seek[ing] opportunities to exclude the interference of ideology in its foreign policy or external relations.”³ Others have framed it as “a realist power, concerned with regime survival, territorial integrity, and protecting access to resources and markets.”⁴ The nation referred to in the preceding quotes is, of course, China.

Much has already been said about China’s rapid economic rise and acquisition of global might, including the comparison between China’s relatively non-ideological foreign policy and the foreign policy of previous world powers. While the statement that China’s foreign policy is non-ideological is a crude generalization of a complicated reality, it has itself become a “truism,”⁵ widely accepted and used.

This much is certain: China is a world power quickly growing in economic might and political influence. In contrast to the world powers that defined the twentieth century – Nazi Germany, the Democratic United States, the Marxist-Leninist Soviet Union – 21st century China indeed lacks a visible ideological impetus. The foreign policy principles that China has identified

for itself – global stability through economic inter-connectedness, a stalwart stance against foreign interference in a nation’s domestic politics, promotion of its national interest and identity, and the uncontested right of a government to asserts its power over its citizens – lack the active dogmatic ideology that we have become accustomed to. Chinese foreign policy appears entirely pragmatic and *realpolitik*.

The question is: what remains in place of an ideology for China? Is this a newer and better model for guiding foreign policy decisions or simply a cover for what is still a fundamentally ideology-driven policy? What do we have to learn from real world cases of Chinese foreign relations and do they fit with the ideal “foreign policy machine” model?

China’s ideology: tradition and its translation

“To rule a country of a thousand chariots,” a saying from the analects of Confucius begins, “there must be reverent attention to business, and sincerity; economy in expenditure, and love for men; and the employment of the people at the proper seasons.”⁶ China has a multi-millennial history of strong statehood, Confucian values, and cultural unity. In contrast to liberal Western ideology, Confucian ideology reveres authority, respect, and selflessness above individual rights. These values are illustrated in China’s domestic policy, which, despite its embrace of free market economics, remains a single-party regime, criticized by most Western nations for its authoritarian rule.⁷

The foreign policy principles that China has identified for itself reflect its domestic policy. According to Renmin University Professor Fang Lexian, China has used the model of the Five Principles for Peaceful Coexistence – “respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity; mutual non-aggression; non-interference of each other’s internal affairs; equality and mutual benefits; and peaceful coexistence” – since the 1950s.⁸ China’s official foreign policy has not changed in its values. At the 17th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, President Hu Jintao stated that China would continue to “follow the path of peaceful development” in its foreign affairs. The “path” outlined by Hu Jintao included a promise to “never interfere in the internal affairs of other countries,” to implement a “defensive” national defense policy, and to “increase market access,” particularly to developing countries.⁹

Of course, China’s record of keeping to the principles for peaceful coexistence has not been perfect. In 2010, China declared “indisputable sovereignty” over the South Sea, leading to major disagreements with Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines, all of which claim some part of the territory.¹⁰ The por-

tion to which China has made economic claims consists of an area extending 1,000 miles from its land borders, far greater than the internationally accepted 200-nautical mile standard listed in Article 57 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Similarly, Beijing's "One-China" policy is considered hypocritical by all those who recognize Taiwan and Tibet as sovereign nations. Beijing, of course, considers both to be a part of its territory, views these conflicts as entirely in the realm of internal affairs, and, therefore, finds no discrepancy with the Five Principles. A realistic perspective on China's international affairs is given by Avery Goldstein, who describes the country as "a nationalist rising power whose interests sometimes conflict with others', but one that lacks any obvious ambition or reason to indulge a thirst for international expansion."¹¹

The relationship between China's people and China's state is an important factor in explaining China's pragmatic, non-expansionist foreign policy agenda. In his book "When China Rules the World," Martin Jacques notes, "the legitimacy of the Chinese state, profound and deeply rooted, does not depend on an electoral mandate."¹² The tremendous influence and lack of accountability that the Chinese government holds with the Chinese public is perhaps the most important factor shaping Chinese foreign policy. In a series of *The National Interest* articles published in 2011, three prominent Chinese scholars discussed the potential of a democratic China and the effect it would have on Chinese foreign policy. All agreed that a democratic China would be inclined towards greater nationalism.¹³

There was a similar sense of agreement regarding the influence of China's history of authoritarian leadership. Martin Jacques notes, "Popular accountability in a recognizable Western form has remained absent." Jacques traces China's traditionally weak and taciturn civil society back to the absence of organized religion and professional organizations, i.e. guilds and other interest groups, in the Confucian era.¹⁴ Imperial bureaucracy filled the void left by China's civil society and has remained an essential part of Chinese statehood ever since. In the 50s, Maoism used this tradition to great effect in establishing its own ideology and system of government and, Jacques says, "little has changed with Communist rule since 1949."¹⁵ Aaron Friedberg makes a similar observation in a recent *Foreign Policy* article: "China's present leaders may no longer be Marxists, but they are most certainly Leninists; they believe that the one party authoritarian regime they lead should continue in power and they are determined to crush any opposition or dissent. Preserving CCP rule is the ultimate aim of all elements of Chinese policy, foreign as well as domestic."¹⁶

This suggests that the standout point between China's foreign policy and that of other nations is the historical absence of popular or mass ambitions. As a result of having lived under strong governments for the majority of their history, the Chinese people have never had the expectation of a participatory

role in their nation's foreign policy. The culture of unity and bureaucracy over individualism and hegemony has led to a foreign policy conducted by specialists and guided by party rule. The stated purpose of this bureaucracy is social stability and political longevity, though reality differs greatly from its claims.

Fuelling the “ideal machine”

Nothing that we've revealed about China thus far has marked the nation as unique or exceptional. There are nations that are more peaceful than China, e.g. the Scandinavian countries, more successful in terms of development, e.g. South Korea, and, so far, more economically prosperous, e.g. The United States, though it seems unlikely it will continue to hold this title. The sheer size of reform in China is incredible, but India is expected to outpace China in terms of population by 2030.¹⁷ In terms of foreign policy, what *does* make China unique is the combination of an aggressive trade policy and the state's substantial involvement in the country's finance sector.

In China's banking sector, the government is influential at every level and in every region. China's “big four” banks and many of its smaller regional banks are state-owned. The regional banks that are not state-owned have stakeholders with close ties to the government, for example, the Minsheng Bank, whose director also serves as the chairman of the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce. Even in the “genuinely private” Urban Cooperative Banks, the government has held a majority stake since 1997.¹⁸ In 2004, banks accounted for 72 percent of total Chinese financial assets. By comparison, banks hold just 43 percent of India's total assets in its financial system, also considered to be bank-dominated.¹⁹ As Wendy Dobson, the director of the Institute for International Business, notes in a 2007 working paper: “Banks...are under-lending to the agents of economic change and job creation: small, entrepreneurial entities that lack political connections, government ownership, or government contracts and guarantees... This in turn suggests that governments believe growth to be adequate to support the ‘cost’ of using banks to pursue political objectives. The implication is that both countries could have grown even faster if they had more efficient financial sectors.”²⁰

The Chinese financial system is bank-dominated and, by association, state-dominated. The integration between the Chinese state and its financial system ensures that the government has the final say in virtually every major economic decision. From the perspective of China's spectacular productivity growth since the 1970s²¹ and the more than 200 million people brought out of poverty as a result of this success,²² the organizational capacity of the Chinese government appears to be a great asset.

China exports commodities, not ideologies, but its domestic ideology is contained within the commodity it sells abroad. Just as Marx argued that “commodities are only definite masses of congealed labour-time”²³ and believed that the middle-man role that money played in the exchange between labour-time and commodity acquisition created a destructive “commodity fetishism,” one could make a neo-Marxist argument that China’s middleman role as a financier first commodifies the state’s ideological agenda, and then exports this ideological agenda abroad. The fact that virtually all the profit that is made from China’s exports abroad makes its way through a financial system that is government-owned and operated means that the government is the one who ultimately “votes” with the money. These decisions, in turn, are incredibly influential in shaping China’s role in international trade and ensuring that investors and business people continue to view China in a favorable light. The aggressive pricing of Chinese products and services is the substitute for a non-aggressive foreign ideology. Here the driving power is not force, but profit margin.

Returning to the question of what an ideal “foreign policy machine” looks like, it makes sense to examine several real-world cases of Chinese foreign relations. A brief study of Chinese and South Korean relations can give us a look into China’s relations with its East Asian neighbors. China and Zimbabwe, on the other hand, can shed some perspective on China’s policy to development in Africa and abroad. Looking into China’s relationship with Russia will be helpful in determining how the nation can balance overlapping interests with another quickly growing world power. Finally, examining China’s involvement in Belarus can lend essential insight into the nation’s foreign policy ideology – what motivation remains when economic profitability and natural resources clearly are not driving factors. China’s foreign policy ideology is not immediately apparent in all these cases but becomes evident when they are examined all together.

Case study I: China and South Korea

Among the Asian nations, there is little doubt of China’s expected ascendancy, or indeed current ascendancy. When China succeeded Japan as the world’s second largest economy, Japan’s *Kyodo News* wrote that the new position “underlines its rise as a major global economic power and potentially a confident, more assertive political power.”²⁴ An article in South Korea’s most widely circulated newspaper, *The Chosunilbo*, stated, “Korea has already fallen behind China in the race toward the future.”²⁵

The influence that China has in nearby countries is an important evaluation of its foreign policy intentions elsewhere. Historically, the first place a rising

power makes its might felt is in its own neighborhood. China's relations with its neighboring countries hint at where its diplomatic priorities lie, while its status as the largest regional power helps us predict what kind of role China could fulfill as the largest global power in the future.

In 2010, South Korea ranked fourth among China's top trade partners with a trade volume worth \$207.2 billion. It was also the fourth ranked export destination in 2010, importing \$68.8 billion of Chinese goods, and the second ranked import supplier, exporting \$138.4 billion of South Korean goods.²⁶ In addition, China is the most popular destination for South Korean foreign direct investments.²⁷ Robust economic growth has been a constant in the relationship between these two East Asian nations in recent years and a source of mutual benefit that has led to "increasingly warm relations."²⁸

China's trade deficit is not typical of its foreign policy agenda, however. According to a 2006 Report for Congress, China ran sizeable deficits with just a handful of its trade partners in 2005: Taiwan (\$57.9 billion), South Korea (\$41.7 billion), Japan (\$16.3 billion), Malaysia (\$9.5 billion), Saudi Arabia (\$8.4 billion), the Philippines (\$8 billion), Thailand (\$6 billion), Australia (\$5 billion), Brazil (\$5 billion), and Iran (\$3.5 billion).²⁹ As the trend shows, most of these countries either fall into the category of natural resource exporters or East Asian manufacturing powers. The phrase, "A rising tide raises all boats," comes to mind. China's willingness to invest in neighboring countries has been of huge economic benefit to the countries it invests in but has also raised East Asia's political clout and thus China's own status on the world stage.

North Korea, historically a point of conflict between China and South Korea, has more or less become a point of agreement between the two countries, if an uneasy one. Both countries are in favor of helping the nation find a "Chinese" way to develop, namely becoming more economically open while still retaining political power. Under President Kim Dae-Jung, South Korea adopted the "Sunshine Policy," or Policy of Reconciliation and Cooperation toward North Korea, which had a more diplomatic and humanitarian focus than past policies towards North Korea and won President Kim Dae-Jung the Nobel Peace Prize in 2000.³⁰ Up until a series of nuclear tests in 2009 and the sinking of the Cheonan warship in March 2010, relations between North and South Korea had appeared to be improving. In 2006, South Korea was North Korea's second largest trade partner, with a bilateral trade of \$1.349 billion.³¹ Furthermore, in the early and mid-2000s, China proved a reliable and invaluable ally in mediating the Six-Party Talks with North Korea. It committed a tremendous amount of human resources towards the task of passing the Joint Statement of Principles in 2005 and achieved "significant success" in enhancing contacts between North Korea, South Korea, and the United States.³² On China's motive for serving as a mediator between these two nations, Samuel Kim

writes: “While China’s key objective for mediation is preventing the nuclear conflict between the United States and North Korea from escalating to military violence, its concern over regional destabilization is further motivated by an underlying cause: the combination of economic and political gains that it made in the past decade and the clear and continuing threat to them.”³³

If Kim’s observation is correct, it would seem that China has no interest in promoting a particular side in the conflict of the two Koreas and would choose to maintain regional stability even at the cost of losing its progress in liberalizing North Korea. Following the nuclear tests of 2009 and the Cheonan conflict in 2010, this is exactly what happened. After these incidents, South Korea once more saw its allegiance shift towards the United States and away from China, beginning joint naval exercises with the United States soon after the Cheonan incident.³⁴ In November 2010, when North Korea fired artillery shells at a South Korean island, the United States promised to defend its South Korean ally, while China urged peaceful mediation and refused to take sides.³⁵

By all accounts, it appears China is stepping into the role of the good neighbor and is finding it to its liking, even though there are limits to how far it is willing to go to prove itself in this role. China’s relations with South Korea demonstrate four important principles in China’s foreign policy:

- *a willingness to forgive the past*, as evidenced by its close economic relationship with South Korea and Japan, two traditional century-old adversaries;
- *a demonstrated interest in supporting growth and maintaining stability in the East Asian region*, as evidenced by its extensive trade and diplomatic ties in the region;
- *strong support for the free market economy* and the belief that society is improved by its success, as evidenced by its support for opening the North Korean economy; and
- *an unwillingness to endanger its economic success and make use of its military force* in the event of a foreign conflict, even if it violates any of its preceding interests.

Case study II: China and Zimbabwe

Over the past decade, China has developed a reputation as a patron of the politically questionable. From Kim’s North Korea to Chavez’s Venezuela, China’s

financial support of authoritarian regimes has tested their policy of “oppos[ing] interference in other countries’ internal affairs under the pretext of democracy and human rights.”³⁶ Zimbabwe, an oil-producing country that has been under the rule of the authoritarian Mugabe regime for decades, aptly fits this description. In his article “Africa and China: Building a Strategic Partnership,” Piet Konings notes that Chinese support for Mugabe’s original liberation movement in the 70s and 80s “laid the foundations for the close relationship that still exists between China and Zimbabwe today.”³⁷ In 1980, as one of the first acts of the independent Zimbabwean government, Foreign Minister Simon Muzenda visited Beijing to thank them for supporting Mugabe’s Zanu Party.³⁸

What is at the basis of current Sino-Zimbabwean relations and Sino-African relations in general? In a 2007 *New York Times* editorial, former *Foreign Policy* editor Moisés Naím discussed the phenomenon of Chinese investment and the influence it has on developing economies. Naím cited “money, international politics, and access to raw materials” as the primary motivation behind China’s newfound generosity.³⁹ Naím’s observation is not far off from China’s own stated policy, particularly regarding the influence of money. In 1982, Chinese Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang identified four principles that would be used to guide Chinese economic policy in the future – equality and mutual benefit, stress on practical results, diversity in form, and common progress. With this intention, Konings notes, China “signaled a shift in objective” and began to place a greater emphasis on economic gain.⁴⁰

The role of international politics is perhaps the least apparent of the three factors Naím identifies. It is generally acknowledged that the original intention behind China’s investment in Africa was to provide an alternative to the West. During the Bandung Conference in 1955, a meeting of 29 Asian and African states, China stated that the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence would apply to its relations with Africa.⁴¹ China continued to develop diplomatic relations with Africa and indirectly support the nations in their struggle for independence from Western imperialism. A 1983 *Beijing Review* article stated, “Third World countries... should have no leader/follower relations among them... Any country which attempts to pose as a leader and control others will be spurned.”⁴²

For many African nations, peaceful, non-militaristic China was a welcome change from the martial powers of the Western world. In the late 70s and 80s, Chinese policy in Africa moved from an emphasis on developing world solidarity to an emphasis on trade and profit. Since then Chinese trade has grown exponentially in this region of the world, with expectations to exceed \$110 billion in 2011, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit.⁴³ With this “shift in objective,” however, there has also been a shift in the benefits that each side attains from this relationship. “China’s aid to Africa was never unconditional,” Judith van de Looy points out in her article “Africa and China: A Strategic

Partnership.” She goes on to explain, “Over the years, interest-free government loans became discount loans offered through Chinese banks and aid grants were replaced by joint ventures.”⁴⁴

In Zimbabwe alone, Reuters reports that bilateral trade was worth approximately \$717 million in the first nine months of 2011.⁴⁵ Much of this trade undoubtedly consists of Zimbabwe’s natural resources – the sizable oil reserves the country contains, along with platinum reserves valued at \$500 billion and significant diamond, copper, and gold deposits.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, total bilateral trade seems disproportionately dominated by Zimbabwe’s weapons buying sprees, with the country spending an estimated \$240 million in 2004⁴⁷ and buying an estimated one-third of all weaponry acquired between 1980 and 2009 from China.⁴⁸ Additionally, neither of these figures includes a recent \$98 million loan from China’s Export-Import Bank to build a defense college.⁴⁹ Investment in Zimbabwe, in terms of Naím’s reasoning, benefits China in the form of economic profit, and “access to raw materials,”⁵⁰ and benefits Zimbabwe in the form of unconditional investment and arms trade.

In his article “The Paradox of China’s Policy in Africa,” Seifudein Adem describes academic trends in evaluating Sino-African relations and the paradoxes that arise within them. Among the more interesting ones he observes is China’s tendency to invest in economically unprofitable, resource-poor regions just as heavily as in more wealthy and seemingly more relevant regions. Adem uses the example of Ethiopia, a resource-poor country that has ranked among the top four countries in terms of large Chinese infrastructure projects in recent years.⁵¹ Two possible explanations exist for China’s involvement in financially unpromising regions. The first is solidarity with the developing world and a genuine interest in improving the lives of the people living in these regions, at the expense of risky investments. The second is an interest in attaining geopolitical power in a particular region – in the case of Ethiopia, most likely the Middle East and North Africa. It is still too early to tell where China’s intentions lie, but the issue of motivation in such cases is an important point to keep in mind.

The central paradox in Adem’s article, of course, is whether Chinese investment produces more harm in Africa despite its seemingly important contributions. While Africa undoubtedly still benefits from Chinese investment and infrastructure projects, recent reports suggest that certain Chinese business policies, such as importing Chinese workers rather than hiring from the significant unemployed populations found in many African nations⁵² or paying bribes to secure contracts, have actually undermined efforts to improve the welfare of those who live there. In the previously mentioned editorial, Moisés Naím calls out China and other “rogue aid providers” in their attempts to “price responsible aid programs out of the market exactly where

they are needed most” and to “underwrite a world that is more corrupt, chaotic and authoritarian.”⁵³

Examining Zimbabwe in the context of this complaint, we can see that the lines are just as gray. As one of the world’s poorest countries, with a \$500 per capita GDP, Zimbabwe has a great deal to gain from China’s investment in infrastructure and industry.⁵⁴ As one of the most repressed nations in the world, Zimbabwe has a great deal to lose from China’s efforts to undermine attempts to pressure Mugabe into stepping down. Significant evidence exists to suggest that this is precisely what China has done. In addition to being Zimbabwe’s top weapons provider, China, along with Russia, vetoed a UN Security Council vote to adopt trade sanctions on Zimbabwe in 2008.⁵⁵ While China’s stands opposed to all trade sanctions on the premise that it hurts civilians more than it harms the state, China justified its actions by stating that the sanction would undermine current negotiations.

The picture is anything but black and white. While much of the recent research on Sino-African relations portrays China in a negative light, a great deal of good has obviously also come out of the infrastructure, education, and medical projects that China has underwritten. China’s involvement in Zimbabwe and its political implications present a scenario in a shade of darker gray, considering its alliance with the Mugabe regime. In general, China’s relations with Zimbabwe and Africa in general demonstrate four important principles in China’s foreign policy:

- *preference for mutually beneficial investment over Western-style aid*, as evidenced by its extension of credit for African business ventures and significant spending on infrastructure projects, many of which employ Chinese workers;
- *strong belief in “non-interference” in a country’s domestic affairs and its use of this principle to justify support for authoritarian regimes*, as evidenced by its continued financial support and arms sales to Zimbabwe’s Mugabe;
- *a desire to increase geopolitical power*, as evidenced by its increasing involvement in African affairs and investment in resource- and industry-poor nations, e.g. Ethiopia; and
- *an unwillingness to use direct military force, but a more accepting attitude of indirectly supporting a country’s domestic military*, as evidenced by China’s military-free history in Africa comparative to Western imperialist nations, but heavy involvement in arms trade and unconditional financing of authoritarian governments.

Case study III: China and Russia

In a November 2011 *Foreign Policy* article, Carnegie Moscow Center Director Dmitri Trenin writes, “there is no ideology involved [in Sino-Russian relations]...It is true that both countries are authoritarian, even if one is of a milder, and the other of a harsher variety. However, there is no such thing as an ‘authoritarian internationale’ to inspire solidarity between the ruling autocracies.”⁵⁶ Trenin instead points to a more practical reason for Sino-Russian cooperation on the Syria issue – concern over crucial oil supplies (in China’s case – exports, in Russia’s case – imports into the Caucasus) in a region primed for conflict.

Pragmatism is nothing new in international affairs – matters like trade and security have always been crucial factors in foreign policy. What has changed, however, is the dominance of pragmatism as the one and only ideology countries follow. In the 21st century, there are fewer countries willing to stand behind a decision made purely on principle. In addition, many countries, Russia included, see a benefit to adopting China’s policy on non-interference in the domestic affairs of other nations. Over the past decade, Russia has seen a great deal of benefit in cooperating with China, from increasing economic relations to supporting one another on the world stage.

China and Russia’s recent joint vetoes on the UN Security Council illustrate this principle quite well. In 2007, Russia and China came together to back their first joint UN Security Council veto since 1972 on a draft resolution condemning human rights abuses in Myanmar. Russia’s representative, Vitaly Churkin, stated that the country vetoed the resolution because of its “attempts at using the Security Council to discuss issues outside the purview.”⁵⁷ In 2008, Russia and China again joined forces, but this time to veto a resolution that would have frozen assets and imposed an international arms embargo on Zimbabwe.⁵⁸ Most recently, China and Russia vetoed a resolution on Syria condemning the government’s forceful crackdown on opposition protests. According to the Chinese UN ambassador, China vetoed the resolution because of its “interference in (Syria’s) internal affairs.”⁵⁹

On Russia’s refusal to impose an arms embargo on Syria, Sergei Lavrov, Russia’s foreign minister, publicly stated that he opposed the embargo on the precedent that was set by the earlier arms embargo on Libya, where the embargo applied only to the Libyan government and not the opposition fighters.⁶⁰ He instead proposed a political solution to end Syria’s violent conflict.⁶¹ Russia has been critical of NATO’s operation in Libya because it says the organization strayed from its stated purpose of protecting civilians and instead worked to topple the Gaddafi regime. Russia’s criticism of NATO operations reflects a philosophy quite similar to China’s – recognition for authoritarian

governments that maintain legitimacy through the use of force and political suppression and a staunch opposition to international efforts to interfere in these situations.

As Jonathan Marcus, BBC defense and diplomatic correspondent, noted in his analysis of the veto, “‘traditional’ Russian and Chinese concerns about resolutions that seek to intervene in the internal affairs of a country” are brought into question here. However, he also notes that the two countries “are staunch defenders of old-fashioned national sovereignty – perhaps fearful of resolutions one day being directed against them.”⁶² Interestingly, Lavrov did not discuss Russia’s arms trade with Syria, worth an estimated \$1.1 billion from 2001 to 2004 and an estimated \$4.7 billion from 2005 to 2008.⁶³ According to the Russian defense think tank CAST, arms sales to Syria made up 7 percent of Russia’s total \$10 billion of arms sales in 2010.⁶⁴

In China and Russia’s “pragmatic” foreign relations, strong economic ties and trade in strategic sectors like energy and security form the foundation for much of the cooperation that takes place between the two nations. President Putin’s recent trip to China in November marked a turning point in Sino-Russian economic ties, as China became Russia’s largest trading partner, beating out Germany⁶⁵ with an annual turnover of \$200 billion.⁶⁶ In addition, bilateral trade between Russia and China reached \$42.2 billion in 2010 and is estimated to exceed \$70 billion for 2011.⁶⁷ A \$1 trillion gas deal was the primary reason for Putin’s trip to Beijing.

There is no question that economic ties between the two countries will continue to grow stronger, though a recent report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute suggests that this relationship will grow more in China’s favor than Russia’s. According to the report, Russia will continue to grow more and more dependent on trade with China, while China will continue to diversify and expand its investments, thus cutting back its dependence on Russia. To illustrate the point, while China is Russia’s largest trade partner, Russia ranks in 10th place on China’s list of top trade partners.⁶⁸ In addition, arms trade between the two countries has decreased sharply over the years, a trend attributed partially to China’s own developing arms industry and its desire to decrease its dependence on Russian arms.⁶⁹ Oil imports have also decreased, with a mere 6 percent of Chinese oil imports coming from Russia.⁷⁰

The complicated nature of Sino-Russian trade aptly reflects the complicated nature of Sino-Russian politics. While ties are strengthening on the one hand, they are also coming under increasing strain from an uneven distribution in power. Despite their 4000-kilometer border – the world’s longest – and the fact that over forty years have passed since the last military conflict between the two countries, there remains a tremendous need for pro-active

positive reinforcement of joint interests. Much of the consensus that currently exists in Sino-Russian relations is the result of agreed-upon opposition rather than common values.

The SIPRI report identifies five key areas in Chinese foreign policy related to Russia: (1) stability in mutual areas of interest; (2) the development of China as a regional power in Central and Northeast Asia; (3) securing reliable energy resources; (4) further developing the military; and (5) accelerating economic growth in China's northern provinces.⁷¹

China and Russia's common interests and fears are the seed that developed into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), originally created for the purpose of demilitarizing the China-Russia border. The SCO officially refers to itself as a "permanent intergovernmental international organization" created with the intention of "strengthening mutual confidence and good-neighbourly relations among the member countries; promoting effective cooperation in politics, trade, and economy...making joint efforts to maintain and ensure peace, security, and stability in the region."⁷² While there have been numerous comparisons of SCO to NATO, former Russian President Vladimir Putin has insisted that such claims are unfounded. Instead, he has referred to the SCO as an "antiterrorist organization" and has cited increased attention to political and economic rather than military matters.⁷³ In addition to Russia and China, the SCO includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan as member states. Several academics have pointed out that the SCO's most important role for both countries is as a forum for exerting influence and stabilizing Central Asia.^{74/75}

China's relations with Russia in general demonstrate four important principles in China's foreign policy:

- *a strong belief in "non-interference" in a country's domestic affairs and its use of this principle to justify support for authoritarian regimes, as evidenced by joint Sino-Russian vetoes of UN Security Council resolutions that would have been targeted at weakening authoritarian regimes;*
- *an attempt to gain influence through economic ties with potential rival powers, as evidenced by China's growing trade with Russia and its simultaneous attempts to decrease dependence on strategic Russian goods, such as oil and arms;*
- *a desire to increase geopolitical power, as evidenced by the creation of the SCO, an organization believed by many to be a forum for negotiation between Russia and China over the Central Asian space, and increased investment and trade in the area; and*

- *limited use of the military in its relations and emphasis on negotiation*, as evidenced by the past four decades, which have seen no military conflict between the two powers.

Case study IV: China and Belarus

Amidst China's increasingly wide circle of influence, one relationship that has been little explored is that with Lukashenko's Belarus. Aleksandr Lukashenko has been Belarus's president since 1994, serving as the head of an authoritarian government with a substantive history of human rights abuse and the distinct honor of being "Europe's last dictator."⁷⁶ In two decades, bilateral trade between China and Belarus has grown from \$34 million in 1992 to over \$2.5 billion in 2010, an increase of over seventy-fold.⁷⁷

In addition to strengthening economic ties, however, China has also strengthened political ties with Belarus. China and Belarus have continued to support one another on controversial issues, including the One-China Policy and Lukashenko's contested election to a fourth presidential term. In 2009, under China's aegis, Belarus was granted partner status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), becoming the only geographically European power significantly involved with the Asia-dominated mutual-security group.⁷⁸ Lukashenko has visited Beijing on four separate occasions, in 1995, 2001, 2005, and 2010.⁷⁹

From Minsk to Beijing, growing economic and diplomatic links suggest a mutually beneficial partnership that will continue to develop in coming years, leaving us to question the possible impact of such a partnership on the Lukashenko regime. By providing financial resources and trade to a country that has attained pariah status in the West, China is indirectly supporting an authoritarian outpost. Belarus, much like the case of Ethiopia in Africa, is a country that has garnered an inexplicably large outpouring of resources from China for no seemingly good reason. The resource-poor and industrially outdated nation is not a classic case of Chinese investment, particularly because it was considered an unofficial extension of the Russian Federation ever since its independence in 1991. In 1999, former Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a deal with President Lukashenko, creating a supranational Union State between the two countries.⁸⁰ Though little progress was made towards realizing this confederation in the first decade of the 21st century, both countries have since re-stated their interest.⁸¹ In July 2010, Russia officially created a Tax Union with Belarus and Kazakhstan, lifting all customs duties between the three nations.⁸²

The Sino-Belarusian connection is important because it sheds light on the principles that underlie China's foreign policy – beyond free market economics and domestic non-interference – and the ends it hopes to achieve through these means. Money certainly has a role to play in this relationship. In the past decade, China has upped its stake in the country, increasing total investment to \$15.7 billion in 2010.⁸³ According to the Belarusian National Statistical Committee, per annum foreign investment in Belarus in 2010 was a mere \$9 billion.⁸⁴ While Russia overwhelmingly remains Belarus's largest trading partner, accounting for almost half of all foreign trade,⁸⁵ China ranks as Belarus's largest non-European trade partner.⁸⁶

While money is a simple explanation, it is not a compelling one. With its inefficient and outdated industrial economy⁸⁷ and poor credit rating⁸⁸ (S&P gave it a "B"), Belarus does not fit the profile of an attractive business partner. From 1990 to 2008, the profitability of ten Belarusian industrial sub-sectors decreased substantially. Only three industries reported an increase in profitability – the ferrous metals industry (by 6.3 percent), the chemical industry (by 25.7 percent), and the construction materials industry (by 2.4 percent). Ten other sub-sectors noted substantial decline, from -4.7 percent to -21 percent.⁸⁹ On the whole, Belarusian industry has become less efficient in the last few decades, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and product competition from international firms. While Belarus does have the benefit of a well-educated labor force and a well-developed infrastructure, these have not been major draws for Chinese investment in other nations and logically, should not be for Belarus.

It is equally unlikely that the answer lies in Belarus's natural resources. Simply put, the country has little to offer. Belarus lacks the natural gas and oil supplies of neighboring Russia and Ukraine and contains only one-fifth of Russian oil pipelines to Europe.⁹⁰ Access to cheap energy drove China to develop relations with Venezuela and Nigeria, but the same cannot be said of Belarus. Stronger ties with Minsk will not result in cheaper energy bills for Beijing.

Trade with Belarus has bought China greater influence in the region, however. Russian-Belarusian relations have improved dramatically in the last few months, largely the result of a \$3.5 billion bailout by the Eurasian Economic Community, but were unusually strained in the time before that.⁹¹ Unpaid debts,⁹² Belarus's recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia,⁹³ and generally less-than-ideal relations between Lukashenko and Russian President Medvedev⁹⁴ all contributed to the negative feelings. China, eager to support its good friend, provided its own \$1 billion bailout, conducted on more favorable terms than the Eurasian Community's bailout.⁹⁵ Belarus has publicly voiced its appreciation for Chinese trade and support for China's politics, including the controversial One-China policy.⁹⁶

A January 2009 paper by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development identifies five motives for Chinese investment in the transition countries of the former Soviet Union: (1) to seek foreign markets; (2) to seek efficiency, in terms of both production and lower labor cost; (3) to seek resources; (4) to seek strategic assets; and (5) to diversify. Of these five motives, only numbers 1 and 5 make sense in the case of Belarus. As we have already seen, Belarusian industries are not particularly efficient, and China can find cheaper labor within its own borders than in wealthier per capita Belarus. As for resources and strategic assets, they are few and fairly replaceable – ferrous metals, tractor production, chemical production, etc. For economic reasons then, there exists little reason for China to invest large sums of money other than diversification and taking advantage of a foreign market that has, thus far, been dominated by Russian imports.

A more compelling reason for China's interest in Belarus is the political influence and leverage it gains over Russia. While China and Russia are capable of cooperation, most recently in vetoing a UN resolution condemning Syria, there is undoubtedly an element of rivalry in their partnership as well.⁹⁷ Much of this rivalry is centered on Central Asia, an area that is considered a sphere of influence by both countries and houses a significant percentage of the world's oil and natural gas.

As Jacob Koch-Wesser writes in *The Belarus Digest*, Belarus can serve as a “geostrategic node for China in Eastern Europe,” a stance that would “trump the EU's efforts to isolate Belarus, as well as challenge Russia's attempts to control its smaller neighbor.”⁹⁸ While China was able to secure a foothold in Central Asia during a contraction of Russian investment during the 2008 economic crisis, it has thus far been unable to secure a similar foothold in Eastern Europe. Authoritarian and isolated Belarus is the ideal candidate in many ways, eager to decrease its dependence on Russia and the EU and uncritical of China's oppressive party regime.

The appeal of aiding an “ailing autocracy” and a “post-socialist country ruled by a strong state” is certainly another compelling factor for Chinese investment.⁹⁹ The most frustrating aspect of China's non-interference policy is the guilt-free cover it provides for the financial support of authoritarian governments. In most cases, it is impossible to separate China's policy on non-interference from its policy of strategic support for countries with similarly oppressive political systems. The rare exception occurs in countries like Belarus which, when examined in close detail, show little compelling reason for extensive investment and point to China's hidden ideology – one which favors authoritarian government and harbors ambitions for greater geopolitical power.

China's relationship with Belarus demonstrates three important principles in China's foreign policy:

- *strong support for economic liberalization and the belief that society is improved by its success*, as evidenced by its investment in and efforts to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of the Belarusian economy;
- *strong belief in “non-interference” in a country's domestic affairs and its use of this principle to justify support for authoritarian regimes*, as evidenced by its continued financial support of the Lukashenko regime, despite little historical, economic, and political relevance;
- *a desire to increase geopolitical power*, as evidenced by its growing involvement in Belarusian affairs, continued expansion in Central Asia, and growing risk of rivalry with Russia.

Conclusion

In 2015, China's total FDI is expected to be worth \$360 billion.¹⁰⁰ For 2020, China has set a total trade target of \$5.3 trillion for itself, approximately half of its current 2010 GDP.¹⁰¹ Current predictions by Goldman Sachs have China overtaking the United States in terms of total GDP by 2027.¹⁰² This much is certain – China's stake in the world's economy will continue to grow in the coming years, as will its influence in international affairs. There is great relevance in understanding China's role in this brave new world and being able to effectively communicate with it. The concept of an ideology is invaluable here, providing a common, recognizable structure that explains motivation and outlines action.

The ideology that we have isolated from the four Chinese foreign policy case studies includes four different principles:

- *A strong belief in free market economics, the principle of mutual benefit, and the ability of trade to improve overall quality of life*. This is evidenced by (Case I: South Korea) China's support for opening the North Korean market and its willingness to build strong trade ties with its neighbors; (Case II: Zimbabwe) China's preference for mutually beneficial investment versus Western-style aid; (Case III: Russia) China's attempt to gain influence through economic ties with potential rival powers; and (Case IV: Belarus) China's support for the Belarusian economy, in terms of investment and increased efficiency.

- *A policy of political non-interference and a preference for the alternative – indirect economic support, significant in the case of funding for oppressive authoritarian governments.* This is evidenced by (Case I: South Korea) China's approval for Korea's "Sunshine Policy," which places an emphasis on the economic liberalization of North Korea at the expense of political reform, and its unwillingness to become involved in the 2010 Cheonan conflict, but continued trade with North Korea post-conflict; (Case II: Zimbabwe) China's multi-decade support for the Mugabe regime and its unconditional criteria for trade within the African continent; and (Case IV: Belarus) China's sizeable investment in Belarus, a country that offers little to China in the way of natural resources and profitable industry but has the unique status of being Europe's last openly authoritarian regime. In this principle of China's ideology, non-discrimination does not mean non-favoritism.
- *Geo-political ambitions carried out through a combination of the first two principles – far-reaching and non-discriminating trade.* This is evidenced by (Case I: South Korea) heavy trade and growing clout with neighboring countries, including South Korea; (Case II: Zimbabwe) China's significant investment in Ethiopia, a country that offers little to China in the way of natural resources and profitable industry but is able to offer an important geopolitical space for influence; (Case III: Russia) the creation of the SCO, an organization believed by many to be a forum for negotiation between Russian and China over the Central Asian space; and (Case IV: Belarus) China's sizeable investment in Belarus – like Ethiopia, a country that is irrelevant to China's economic motives but that appeals greatly in terms of the geopolitical space it offers for influence.
- *Reluctance to resort to military force and an emphasis on maintaining stability and uninterrupted trade.* This is evidenced by (Case I: South Korea) China's unwillingness to become involved in the 2010 Cheonan conflict and continued trade with both Koreas post-conflict; (Case II: Zimbabwe) China's limited use of the military on the African continent but long history of selling weaponry and financing regimes; and (Case III: Russia) China's limited use of the military in its relations with Russia but long history of buying arms.

Returning to our original Marxian idea of ideology – “the production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness ... interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men” – the principles above would seem to fill that vague and materialistic definition. These principles do indeed interweave China's “material activity” and, in Marx-approved fashion, the ideology explains the activity rather than the other way around. However, if the results

of this paper are to be widely applicable, it would be helpful to test these principles against a more liberal definition of ideology as well.

The “Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy” defines a “liberal concept of ideology” as one that suggests “that ideology is action-oriented indicates its role is not to render reality transparent, but to motivate people to do or not do certain things.”¹⁰³ The after-the-fact emphasis in this definition is perhaps the most notable exception between it and the Marxian definition. The motivation behind each of the four principles seems clear upon reading:

- *A strong belief in free market economics, the principle of mutual benefit, and the ability of trade to improve overall quality of life.* Motivation for increasing international trade and opposing sanctions and other barriers to trade, evidence of which exists in China’s opposition to imposing sanctions on the governments of Zimbabwe and Syria (among others) in the Security Council.
- *A policy of political non-interference and a preference for the alternative – indirect economic support, significant in the case of funding for oppressive authoritarian governments.* Motivation for continuing trade with questionable and controversial regimes on the basis of the first principle and for indirectly supporting governments whose political views – emphasis on a strong government and stability at the expense of liberal ideals – are in line with China’s own.
- *Geopolitical ambitions carried out through a combination of the first two principles – extensive and non-discriminating trade.* Motivation for focusing on trade and diplomacy with countries that have a void of influence and are located in a geopolitically important location, where China wishes to increase its own influence or combat the influence of another power. Evidence of this exists in China’s original intentions for trade in Africa and its post-Maoist motive for continuing this trade, specifically present-day investment in Ethiopia.
- *Reluctance to resort to military force and an emphasis on maintaining stability and uninterrupted trade.* Motivation for serving as a mediator and withstanding entry into conflict, evidence of which exists in China’s limited use of the military in the past few decades.

These principles point to one obvious conclusion – China does have a distinct foreign policy ideology. Claims of an ideology-less foreign policy exaggerate China’s pragmatism and tend to expect a proactive 20th-century version of ideology in a 21st century world. The signs may be more subtle than we are used to, but they are undoubtedly there.

However, while we have identified the principles behind China's foreign policy, we still have to examine the system in use and see whether, in practice, ideology is "lost or dissipated through friction, deformation, wear, or other inefficiencies." 20th century ideologies saw constant friction between one another, as conflicting ideologies like liberal democracy and communism fought a battle to spread their sphere of influence. There was an attempt to "export" ideologies, the remnants of which remain in the United States State Department's mission statement to "shape and sustain a peaceful, prosperous, just and democratic world."¹⁰⁴

Does 21st century China export an ideology? The answer is it does, though in a manner unique to itself. To demonstrate this in practice, we can return to the discussion in the beginning of the paper regarding the "commodity fetishism," to use the phrase loosely, of China's domestic ideology. This occurs due to the middleman relationship of the state-owned banking and financial system to export-driven Chinese business and its import market. The stake and oversight that the Chinese government has in Chinese international trade means the exported product represents the authority of the Chinese state, and its profit represents support for the Chinese state and, by association, its ideology. Simply put, exporting a Chinese product means exporting its state ideology, and buying a Chinese product means buying into its ideology.

Of course, to some extent this occurs with all foreign exports, not just China's. Despite the fact that the U.S. government has far less oversight over American foreign trade, they are still very much linked, in the form of the taxes that these businesses pay and any money they funnel into political parties. In fact, without the representative value of an export, the use of trade sanctions could not be practically justified. The Western world, in its embrace of trade sanctions, has also embraced exactly this principle – that by refusing to buy exports from a certain country, it is indicating its disapproval of that state's ideology. Despite the fact that Western countries are much more open about their ideological foundations and their desire to promote these ideologies abroad, both the West and China are comparable in their "export" of these ideologies. While extracting the ideology from China's foreign policy requires a nuanced approach, the end result is clear.

In conclusion, we have determined that China is not an ideal "foreign policy machine" and, indeed, that we have yet to find a state that perfectly fulfills all the necessary obligations. China has an ideology and does experience friction, in other words, conflict, with states that have conflicting ideologies. However, considering China's tremendous scale and size, it has perhaps come the closest to any nation in reducing friction and conserving ideological power, a significant achievement that holds important lessons for other world powers.

The ultimate question remains unanswered. Can a perfect “foreign policy machine” exist? Perhaps, but it certainly is not made in China.

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Wikileaks: Why States Need to Close the Gap Between Public and Possible Foreign Policy

Diplomacy as usual

In November 2010, Wikileaks published the first U.S. cables, shocking the diplomacy world. One year later, the Wikileaks news is more about the Julian Assange trial than the cable contents. Diplomacy is back to business as usual; apparently, the fear of future Wikileaks has been ignored. While fashion bloggers, cyber warfare hackers and political Facebook groups all adapt to the intensification of uncontrollable information sharing, diplomats still treat information as their private property.

Whether diplomats like it or not, Wikileaks and its like-minded groups are here to stay; new leaks cannot be prevented and the effects cannot be ignored without consequences. To limit the effects of future Wikileaks, states must narrow the gap between what is said in public and what is done in reality. In this article, two ways of narrowing the gap are presented, together with their respective determinants of choice and their foreign policy costs. Finally, Julian Assange's argument that Wikileaks is a promoter of democracy is rejected – in some cases, states prefer to keep democracy promotion secret rather than brag about it publicly.

Is this really a new thing?

The theft of diplomatic cables is not a new thing. When the *New York Times* published the *Pentagon Papers* in 1971, revealing the gap between U.S. public statements and the situation in Vietnam, public discontent grew to new levels. Voluntarily publishing secret diplomacy cables is not a new thing either. In 1918 the Bolsheviks revealed the Tsar's relations with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Foreign policy experts and journalists work every day to reveal gaps between what politicians say in public and what they do

in secret. Despite the constant pursuit of information, diplomacy has been quite unaffected so far.

What is new then about Wikileaks? Why is Wikileaks supposed to have a bigger impact on foreign policy than good old espionage and critical journalism?

Wikileaks is the fact list of foreign policy. The public does not need to wait thirty years for the government to publish classified documents or wait for some bright journalist or expert to dig up the “truth.” Information is now more available and less disputable; stories are less bound to the official government version than before.

Wikileaks is digital. Diplomatic files, as well as domestic files, are all digital. To go back to paper mail correspondences – much easier to keep track of – is not an option. Intended, as well as unintended information sharing is here to stay. For the purpose of this article, all unauthorized information sharing groups are put under the label “Wikileaks.” Even if the groups differ in other respects, they all promote the publishing of powerful actors’ secret information.

Wikileaks distributes information to the public. Governments need to protect themselves from their own citizens. The whistleblower could be anyone – the threat is not limited to foreign spies or critical journalists. The state thus needs to improve security in general. Accessing government documents in the United States is to become more difficult than it was before. Just as the post-9/11 terror threat increased security controls for all flight passengers, Wikileaks might increase security controls for all citizens in search of government documents.

Two effects

I divide the Wikileaks effect into two parts: the content effect and the information security effect.

The content effect: some illustrations

The United States had its embarrassments with Wikileaks. The revelation that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s ordered UN Secretary General surveillance probably sparked some serious damage control on the part of U.S. officials.¹ Hillary Clinton even went on a self-proclaimed “apology tour,” visiting Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.² However, the Wikileaks effect most damaging to the United States was the mere fact that information sharing was proven insecure.

The cable content effect hit oppressive regimes instead. Many point to its contribution to public discontent leading to the resignation of Tunisian President Ben Ali on January 14, 2011. The timing of a leak on the presidential family's extravagant lifestyle on December 14, 2010, and on the now famous Mohamed Bouazizi setting himself on fire on December 17, 2011 – is emphasized by many.³

Even in Tunisia, however, the cable content effect is hard to pin down. The revelations hit rather randomly, shedding light on specific events or people. It is likely though, that oppressive regimes have less firm seats than before. Governments can never be sure what exactly the next Wikileaks will contain— wars, oil deals, or gossip about state leaders. Whether or not the content published affects politics is up to factors other than the content itself: Wikileaks needs a “vehicle” or a catalyst – that is, a person or a group of persons channeling the information into criticism against its government.

The content leaked is random – the vehicle dependant on context – making predicting the effect of the content difficult. The very content and its “vehicles” are thus not for governments to pick and chose (damage control being their only option). This is no less the case for Julian Assange, still waiting for the American people to protest what he considers an “unethical” U.S. Foreign policy. Amazingly, the state most hurt by the Wikileaks content is not the United States, the country the leaks are supposed to be all about.

Establishing a Wikileaks analysis unit estimating the effects of future Wikileaks would be a reasonable idea. Determining the strength of a country's “Wiki-vehicle” – the degree to which a given leak is likely to ignite public dissatisfaction – might come in handy. So far, however, existing analysis units and think tanks have not been able to predict events like the Arab Spring. Predictions by a Wikileaks analysis unit of where and how future Wikileaks might hit would still be too unreliable to lay down guidelines for diplomatic behavior.

The information security effect

If it can happen here, it can happen everywhere. The fact that a U.S. official could simply insert a Lady Gaga CD, download confidential information, and forward it all to julianassange@wikileaks.com sounds too easy to be a crime. It resembles more a “stealing candy from a baby” story than one about “stealing confidential cables from the world's most powerful state.”

Either the leaks reveal no national security secrets at all when close to 2.5 million U.S. officials had access to these cables already, or the leak points to a severe security problem in the world's most security-obsessed state.⁴ If it can happen in the United States, the next Wikileaks can happen anywhere. While the content effect hits randomly, the security information effect hits everyone.

When negotiating or retrieving information in foreign relations, the one thing diplomats rely on is the informal convention that you “don’t kiss and tell,” or rather, do kiss but tell only the intended people. Sure, public statements are a big part of signaling intentions to allies, adversaries, and the public. Like an iceberg, however, some percentage of diplomacy is hidden for the public eye. In order to keep information between allies, adversaries, or sources flowing, diplomats need a reputation of trustworthiness, which is only to gossip to the intended people. When secrets become public, trust is lost. A number of U.S. Ambassadors have had to leave office because of this.

The effect on information sharing cannot be limited to a few ambassadors, however. Diplomats today resemble the bankers in the Summer 2008 crisis. Trust is gone and money lending has dried up, or, in the case of diplomacy, the exchange of information has dried up. The money market crisis of 2008 did – and apparently still does – cause problems for the real economy. Does a possible “freeze of diplomatic information exchange” have an impact on “real” foreign policies as well?

“If your primary goal is to keep a secret, don’t write at all. Use the phone, or don’t say anything. When it really comes down to it, not all information needs to be shared,” U.S. ambassador to Croatia (1993-1998) Peter W. Galbraith writes.⁵

A graph picturing the number of cables sent to home capitals before and after the Wikileaks incident and another graph picturing the amount of information sharing between states would be quite interesting. In the short run, information sharing probably soared due to an overload of counterparty reactions and damage control. The security information effects will be seen in the long run.

Information needs to be shared – in some cases, irrespective of the risks. Conducting foreign policy without information might just pose a bigger threat to national security than providing Julian Assange full access to your information database. If information still needs to be shared and a future Wikileaks is certain, how are diplomats to maneuver?

A Wikileaks strategy

The public and the possible wish list

Imagine states having two foreign policy wish lists. One is public and one is kept secret. The prioritized order of the wishes might differ between the two lists. When foreign secretaries say one thing in public and do the opposite

in reality, the gap between the two lists is the widest. When public statements match demands in secret negotiations, the gap is closed and Wikileaks has nothing to reveal.

With the public wish list foreign secretaries can get off more easily; they have more room to maneuver than with their secret wish list. On the other hand, foreign secretaries need to keep within certain limits of appropriateness when it comes to public statements – typically the secretary makes tougher demands in public than in secret. Whether calling for democratic reform in oppressive regimes, demanding an EU member fee discount, or making claims of territorial rights, the state has a public reputation to uphold. That is my assumption: public statements are less bound to reality than secret statements. In secret negotiations, the state is faced with realities. If the state's influence or autonomy in a certain case is simply not sufficient, the state automatically adapts its demands in secret negotiations. In public, however, the state can still uphold its tougher demands, bluffing the public and its third party adversaries.

Getting away with a gap between public and possible wish lists requires that no one reveals the gap, or catches you bluffing. When the gap grows too obvious, experts or journalists usually point it out. The more obvious the facts, the harder it is for the government to maintain the gap. This is where Wikileaks comes in. The time lag between the emergence of a gap and its revelation is now shortened. Instead of waiting for commentators to discover gaps, Wikileaks delivers the “possible wish list” on a silver platter.

To reveal a gap, you need to analyze the public statements first and then the state's secret demands. Naturally, the latter analysis is more difficult than the first. Analyzing secret demands requires an examination of a state's influence and autonomy in the specific case. This is not at all an impossible task without Wikileaks, but it is a great deal easier when you literally have the “correct list of answers” at hand. The diplomats' monopoly on the “possible wish list” is broken. A new supplier of information has entered the market.

If foreign policies have become a great deal easier to analyze for experts and journalists, maintaining the gap between public and secret statements has correspondingly become a much harder job for foreign offices. The risk of a new Wikileaks incident complicates the work of foreign offices.

Three risk profiles

There are three main variants of diplomatic maneuvering in the risk continuum between no information sharing and full information sharing. Depending on a state's Wikileaks risk profile, diplomats can choose to either keep silent and stop sharing information, simply ignore the risks of another Wikileaks, or start narrowing the gap between public and secret demands.

Keep silent

Do not report anything back to your home capital. Do not share information with counterparts or sources. As a result, the next Wikileaks would have nothing to report. However, as said, information will always remain a key component of foreign policy, leaving this option only as an “ideal type” of the maximum Wikileaks effect. As when bankers stopped lending money to each other in 2008, causing a global financial crisis, a freeze of diplomatic information sharing would leave diplomacy in a crisis as well.

Ignore it

Continue as if Wikileaks never happened and won't happen again. Exchange information as usual with your home capital, counterparts, and sources. Improvement of information security is required. Another Wikileaks should simply be made impossible.

This is the stance the United States seems to have taken. In response to “the unlawful and irresponsible disclosure of classified information by Wikileaks,” the U.S. National Security Staff “has been coordinating an interagency effort to examine the policies and practices surrounding the handling of classified information and putting safeguards in place to prevent such a compromise from happening again.” Only an absolutely Wiki-proof information security policy will allow U.S. diplomats to conduct business-as-usual information sharing. “You can never stop this stuff completely,” Rich Mogull, founder of a security advisory firm, says. “People need access to information to do their jobs. There's a lot of ways for them to get that information out. If someone is really determined to get that stuff out the door, they will.”⁷

Paradoxically, even an absolutely Wiki-proof policy for U.S. cables cannot eliminate Wikileaks from exposing U.S. diplomacy. When a U.S. diplomat discusses issues with his or her French colleague, the conversation will be reported back to both Washington and Paris. The U.S. diplomat must hope that information security in France is as secure as it is in the United States. Otherwise, the French may fall victim to the next Wikileaks and reveal U.S. diplomacy as well. To repeat a cliché, the chain is no stronger than its weakest link.

In principle, State “A” cannot have diplomatic relations with State “B” if State “B” cannot assure State “A” of having an absolutely Wiki-proof information security policy. Imagine the risks when U.S. diplomats talk with their colleagues in Afghanistan, Iraq, Mexico, or any state where insufficient resources or a less reliable bureaucracy make absolute information security hard to obtain. An international set of information security rules is necessary if governments are to maintain the gap between public and secret diplomacy. The negotiation, implementation, and monitoring of such an agreement pose the classic

difficulties of international organizations. Until such an agreement is in place, each state must hedge its own Wikileaks risk by itself.

Say only in secret what you cannot bear having revealed in public

There is simple advice for governments wishing to hedge the Wikileaks risk and strike a balance between not sharing information at all and continuing with business as usual: narrow the gap between public statements and secret statements. When the difference is diminished, states are less sensitive to future Wikileaks. When things eventually do come out in the open, as is the assumption here, less damage is done.

Instead, diplomats can simply choose to rely on their luck, hoping to avoid more exposures. Keeping a wide gap between public and secret diplomacy is, of course, the most convenient approach. The privilege of timing is hard to give up. However, even if the risk of exposure has only increased by a small percentage, diplomats have to take this percentage into account. Placing a bet on not being exposed, thus keeping the gap wide, is increasingly more risky. The risk-averse diplomat needs to narrow the gap between public and secret diplomacy.

Judging from the degree of surprise in reaction to the cable content, narrowing the gap might very well be a viable strategy. Among experts, it is a commonly held view that Wikileaks did not reveal anything that was not already known from the start.⁸ It was no surprise that Saudi Arabia urged the U.S. to launch a first strike on Iran or that Eastern European countries opposed the U.S.-Russia reset. U.S. foreign policy in general caught no one by surprise. It is possible that the gap between what is said and what is done in U.S. foreign policy is quite narrow already. If Wikileaks only reveals information already known to the public, Wikileaks does no harm to foreign policy.

Taking precautions to avoid future Wikileaks embarrassments does not imply that states need to change their foreign policies into a full blown campaign to promote democracy or reveal all of their secret strategic, military, or economic demands. The reason for the lack of surprise in reaction to the U.S. foreign policy that was revealed is partly due to the United States abstaining from the temptation of publicly promoting democracy in, for instance, Bahrain, while not demanding human rights and democratic reforms in practice. Consequently, the public will not be surprised when U.S. cables from Bahrain show no signs of demands for democracy.⁹

However, some states, such as the oppressive regimes in the Middle East, did get hit by the cable contents. Perhaps it is not a big surprise that the governments having the most to hide were affected the most. However, the remarkable thing is that the very state where all 250,000 cables originated was

barely hit by their contents. U.S. foreign policy proved quite resilient towards Wikileaks. On the contrary, foreign policies with a wide gap between their public and secret statements were proven to be unsustainable.

How can states close the gap between public and secret diplomacy? There are two ways: “the secret step-up” or “the public retreat.”

The secret step up

Step up demands in secret negotiations to match public statements. If a state possesses sufficient influence and autonomy to step up its secret demands, it will automatically do so; no Wikileaks factor is needed for pushing this through. (However, sometimes a state prefers to save its influence for later use.) These are the “winner” cases, where the odds are in the state’s favor.

However, Wikileaks has an independent effect in limiting “unpopular” foreign policies. If a government is particularly afraid of being revealed as a “dictatorship oil dealer” when trying to keep up a public reputation as a “promoter of democracy and human rights,” the fear of future Wikileaks can discipline governments into stepping up demands for democracy at the expense of economic demands.

For France, standing “on the right side of history” in Libya after less heroic performances in Tunisia and Egypt was a priority. Sitting back and watching half a million inhabitants of Misrata getting killed by Gaddafi’s army a thousand kilometers from the Riviera was simply not something the French could afford. In the dilemma between stepping up actual policy and stepping down public statements, France chose the first.

In the UN Security Council, France stepped up its calls for a UN resolution, which was agreed upon on March 17. To Gaddafi, however, only the military option, indeed the most publicly visible foreign policy action, was left, if Misrata was to be saved. French fighter jets entered Libyan airspace on March 19.

The French foreign policy towards Libya is an example of stepping up behavior to match public statements. In this case, France did have sufficient influence to follow up on its public demands. In Egypt and Tunisia, however, France also had the opportunity of stepping up its demands for democratic reform but had been hesitant to do so. The fear of yet again losing face publicly – an exposure of a gap comparable to a Wikileaks – prompted France to act in Libya.

The public retreat

Step down public demands to match your secret demands. In case of a Wikileaks or unpleasant facts becoming too obvious, governments narrow the gap by retreating. Replacing overly ambitious public demands with a set

of realistic ones to match the state's actual influence and autonomy is a strategy for the obvious "loser" cases. When a state no longer possesses the influence and autonomy needed to fulfill public statements, it can passively await the next Wikileaks, expert, or journalist to reveal the gap, or the state can proactively retreat from its previous public statements.

An example of a "public retreat" is U.S. President Barack Obama's Afghanistan strategy.

One year after taking office, Obama presented his Afghanistan strategy: sending a surge of 30,000 troops to the country and, at the same time, promising a troop drawback in Summer 2011. Obama stepped up his actual efforts in order to keep up his publicly stated goals: "to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan ... We must deny Al-Qaeda a safe haven. We must reverse the Taliban's momentum and deny it the ability to overthrow the government. And we must strengthen the capacity of Afghanistan's Security Forces and government, so that they can take lead responsibility for Afghanistan's future."¹⁰

At present, with the first troops on their way home, the security situation has hardly improved. The United States and NATO train the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army with less regard to the local or Kabul government, widespread corruption, or its effectiveness, instead judging success solely in terms of the number of officers graduating. The gap is increasing. Obama went with the only option left to him, the public retreat. Today, his public goals are still to prevent a "safe haven from which al Qaeda or its affiliates can launch attacks against our homeland or our allies." However, Obama also emphasizes that " We won't try to make Afghanistan a perfect place. We will not police its streets or patrol its mountains indefinitely. That is the responsibility of the Afghan government..."¹¹

The same war having different goals is, in fact, not a problem. The important thing is for Obama's public statements to match his troops' actions on the ground. If facts on the ground change, Obama needs to change his public statements. When the security situation in Afghanistan worsened, the probability of Obama's strategy succeeding decreased, and so his public statements needed to be adjusted. However, this adjustment of public statements did not come voluntarily. Experts and journalists helped to expose the gap.

The costs of closing the gap

Financial hedging is costly, as is narrowing a foreign policy gap. While the “secret step up” comes at the expense of other foreign policy goals, a “public retreat” might hurt a state’s foreign policy reputation. Depending on the state’s influence and autonomy, the state will choose the appropriate Wikileaks strategy.

The costs of a secret step up

Like any other choice in foreign policy, stepping up secret demands on one matter comes at the expense of other matters. If fear of gap exposure on the matter is sufficiently great, however, state autonomy diminishes. The state has no choice other than to step up its secret demands in order to not let the embarrassment happen again. In order to do this, the state needs to be a relatively influential player on the given subject.

Before the gap exposure became a fact, however, the state apparently was not willing to sacrifice other foreign policy goals in order to promote the specific demand it now needs to step up. If a state left a big gap between what it said and what it did in practice, there might have been a good reason behind it. In this way, “inappropriate” policies may suffer when a state is pressured to “clean up” its past embarrassments or hedge its future embarrassments.

A state cannot perform a “universal step up” of its secret demands across all policies towards all countries. The state has a limited amount of influence. If the influence is not there, the state has to give up its demands in the long run anyway. Though a person can live beyond his means for a while, he will have to pay his bills eventually. At some point, as we have learned, even the United States hits its debt ceiling.

While France wages a war in Libya, other French priorities may be hurt by this, such as regional stability, relations to regimes still standing, economic gains, and its possibilities in Syria. Because France spent its influence persuading permanent members of the UN Security Council China and Russia to abstain from blocking Resolution 1353 on Libya, not much influence was left for even imposing economic sanctions on Syria. The French “overspending” of foreign policy influence on Libya is currently facing its payback in Syria. France had to compensate in Libya for its Tunisian and Egyptian embarrassments. However, a universal step up – in this case, promoting democracy – is not possible.

The costs of a public retreat

If a state is losing a war, a diplomatic dispute, or an economic negotiation, the state cannot do much about it other than step down public statements

on the subject. The fear of gap exposure pushes the government into a “public retreat.” If the state lacks the necessary influence to “win,” it will do better to limit losses. However, giving up on public statements damages the state’s public reputation. The diplomacy double game of losing to one adversary while keeping up a brave face to other adversaries is simply harder to pull off today. Even if Wikileaks did reveal many losers, some experts were already on the trail of the politicians leaving the cables, only to confirm what were already “public secrets.” The question is whether a state’s reputation is going to suffer much from a public retreat when it has already had such a hard time bluffing experts and adversaries even before the introduction of the Wikileaks fact list.

Maintaining a gap is not a policy for the long term. For short-term foreign policy, however, timing is everything, the cliché asserts. The short-term credibility loss of a “public retreat” in one policy can spill over to other policies.

Obama’s retreat on public demands on Afghanistan can cause a credibility loss spilling over to the U.S. policy on Pakistan, the perceived U.S. military counterinsurgency capabilities, and NATO’s status as a reliable alliance. The United States and NATO, of course, have no interest in leaving the impression of too little progress, let alone an outright defeat. Obama steps down public statements while trying to keep up the reputation of the United States and NATO.

Thus, the United States has been careful about the possible long-term reputation costs of its short-term public retreat in Afghanistan. However, Wikileaks or some bright expert will point out the “truth” about the United States in Afghanistan, exposing the U.S. gap eventually. The United States has, thus far, succeeded in “postponing” the gap exposure. Whatever the Wikileaks risks, Obama is likely to ignore it, hoping to postpone the gap exposure until some point after the presidential elections. Certainly much in politics is about postponing unpleasant things – this might be why gaps still prevail, even if risks of their exposures become alarming.

The good gap

To Julian Assange, Wikileaks is a problem solver for democracy: “Free speech is what regulates government and regulates law...Every constitution, every bit of legislation is derived from the flow of information. Similarly every government is elected as a result of people understanding things.”¹² If speech is not free, if criticism is banned, government can more easily go about implementing unpopular policies. Election of a new government is more difficult when

free speech is limited. Is Wikileaks a question of free speech and democracy? Is secret diplomacy to be on a need-to-know basis for the public?

The Wikileaks effect on democracy can be divided into two parts: the effect caused by the content of the leaks and the effect caused by the lower level of information security.

The content effect

The content effect of the leaks, dependent on the random content and the contextual dependant vehicle, has so far hurt the most oppressive, undemocratic regimes first. Generalizing the content effect into a universal force for democracy, however, is difficult. As we have learned, the Arab Spring democracy results are highly context-dependent. Whether or not the Wikileaks content played a role in boosting public discontent is highly uncertain – poor living standards and democratic sentiments would be reasons enough to protest. So far, however, we cannot rule out a positive Wikileaks content effect on democracy, either. Julian Assange might be right about Wikileaks as a promoter of democracy in this respect.

The information security effect

The security effect of the leaks pushing governments to narrow the gap between public and secret diplomacy disciplines governments into promoting democracy instead of signing economic deals with dictatorships, for example. According to Julian Assange, Wikileaks reveals the “broad activities of the U.S. State Department, which acts not, of course, in the interest of the U.S. people but in the interest of the State Department.”¹³ Assange thus assumes that by default governments do such things as finalize economic deals with dictatorships in secret, while bragging about promoting democracy, or that governments publicly demand more territorial, economic, or strategic benefits than are obtainable in secret negotiations. Thus governments tend to overplay their hands. What if the Wikileaks founder is wrong and the case is the opposite? If governments do promote democracy in secret but abstain from bragging about it publicly?

Foreign policy negotiations can take roughly two forms. “The game of chicken” is a classic in game theory between adversaries with mutually destructive goals. For instance, if both parties pursue an overthrow of each other’s regimes by promoting democracy, for example, this belongs to the “game of chicken” category. Negotiations can also take the form of a “prisoners’ dilemma” between allies with a common beneficial goal. Assuming that Wikileaks can be either symmetrical (revealing intentions of both states on a common subject) or asymmetrical (revealing intentions of one party only), it has different impacts on outcome.

In the “Prisoners’ Dilemma,” symmetrical Wikileaks would be conducive to an outcome leaving both states better off. When EU members negotiate over the Schengen agreement or the Single Market – both mutually beneficial – symmetrical Wikileaks would not hurt, only providing an understanding of each other’s more or less coinciding preferences.

However, in a game of chicken there is no such thing as a beneficial symmetrical leak. If a leak reveals the United States supporting the Iranian opposition – that is, seeking an overthrow of the Iranian government – another similar leak about Iran supporting an overthrow of the U.S. government does not improve things much for either party. The United States’ and Iran’s goals are mutually exclusive; their revelation would not change this fact but would only make their implementation more difficult.

Julian Assange might assume that all games of chicken are “not in the public’s interest,” since they all are “oil deals with dictators.” However, some games of chicken might have democratic purposes. It is likely for the United States to support the Iranian opposition secretly while not admitting it publicly. Likewise, European states’ financial support of the Belarusian opposition cannot be carried out openly for obvious reasons. Sometimes states have no interest in bragging about their “heroic” actions, choosing to keep up their secret policy while continuing normal relations with a regime. If revealed, the state would not be “embarrassed” in front of its allies and voters – rather the opposite – but would face retaliation from its adversary. In cases of a “good gap,” Wikileaks has a negative effect on the promotion of democracy by foreign policy.

Conclusion

History is full of gaps between what governments say in public and what they do in practice. Exposure usually happens when states open their historical archives, when states spy on each other, or when journalists and experts do their job. With Wikileaks, the fact list has arrived. The public no longer needs to wait thirty years or await a more or less correct expert analysis. For governments, the job of maintaining the gap between “public” and “possible” wish lists has become even more difficult.

Depending on a government’s risk profile, it can choose to either close down all information sharing, ignore the Wikileaks risks, or narrow the gap between public and secret diplomacy. Since information is the key component of foreign policies – and the level of allies’ and adversaries’ information security is unknown – states need to start narrowing the gap themselves. Depending

on states' autonomy and influence, states hedge their Wikileaks risk by "stepping up secret demands" or making the "public retreat."

A state cannot universally step up secret demands on all matters – its influence is limited, and this might hurt other foreign policy priorities. "The public retreat" diminishes the privilege of timing and has the potential to spill over to affect the state's reputation on adjacent matters.

Contrary to the Julian Assange argument that Wikileaks is a democracy promoter, which assumes that all foreign policies are "non-democracy-promoting dictatorship deals," Wikileaks can be a democracy blocker in cases where a state's democracy promotion would face retaliation if it went public.

If Wikileaks only reveals what the public already knows, it poses no threat to foreign policy. The states having to make the biggest Wiki adaptation are the oppressive regimes. Paradoxically, the United States was perhaps the state least affected by Wikileaks, since it was already in the process of narrowing the gap between public and possible foreign policies.

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The Curious Case of Indian Secularism

Introduction

Ian Copland, director of Monash University's Centre of South Asian Studies, begins his paper, *What's in a name? India's tryst with secularism*, with a poignant assertion. He says, "It has always been the claim of India's politicians that their country is a 'secular' state. However, although the preamble to the constitution of 1950 proclaims India to be 'democratic', it makes no mention of secularism."¹

Does that make Indian secularism a lie? Indian leaders have often claimed that the country has its own unique version of secularism: how does it match up to the universally accepted definition of secularism? What are the consequences of this Indian breed of secularism on the social fabric of the country? Can India become a model for multicultural societies? These are the questions I hope to raise and explore in this paper.

I begin this piece with a brief historical background tracing the concept back to its origins in British India. Next, I analyze post-independence scenarios: not only what came about but also other paths the Indian state could have taken when dealing with the complex issue of religion. I then look at the implications of Indian secularism on India's domestic political situation. In the last section, I analyze the viability of the Indian model and attempt to draw lessons for other multicultural societies.

Defining secularism

Before presenting the case of Indian secularism, it is essential to define secularism, so as to have a benchmark against which to compare the Indian variant. Quite simply, secularism is the separation of state and religion, or more

broadly zero interference of the state in the matters of religion, and vice-versa. What this implies is that the state treats all citizens equally, regardless of religious beliefs (among other things). Secularism implies that all are considered equal in the eyes of the law.

Indian secularism, on the other hand, believes in treating all religions equally, but nowhere does the word secular imply non-interference. On deeper inspection, Indian secularism is modeled more on the lines of peaceful co-existence. The Indian state certainly does not treat all citizens equally. Religious (and caste) divides are visible, if not rampant. I will elaborate these points in later sections.

Historical background

The roots of Indian secularism lie in the 1920s. Britain played by its infamous “divide and rule” tactics, and British India with its many religions, castes, princely states, and other competing stakeholders served as the perfect playground for such a ploy. Naturally, the Indian National Congress (INC), which was leading the Indian struggle for independence against British colonialism, yearned to represent the broad consensus of the public. Achieving this in a society that not only was divided, but also in which these divisions were played up for political gains, was not going to be easy. Therefore, the INC wanted to represent “the secular forces of modern citizenship.”² There was no concept of separation of state and religion because India as a state did not exist back then. Secularism in its embryonic form was seen as a force to bring all religions together and to create the momentum for Indian liberation. Thus, what could have better been described as “inclusivism” retained the western tag of secularism.

The biggest blow to the concept of Indian secularism came from Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founding father of Pakistan. Although Jinnah started his political career with the INC, he joined the All India Muslim League (AIML) in 1913 and later propagated the two-nation theory, stating that Hindus and Muslims, British India’s majority and significant minority communities respectively, “are two distinct [nations]...[that] cannot live together.”³ This culminated into the demand for the separate Muslim state of Pakistan, which came about with the partition of British India on August 14 and 15, 1947.

There is no confusion that Islam is the centerpiece of Pakistan’s birth, and hence Pakistan will always remain Islamic, or risk having its validity questioned. In fact, on August 13, 1947, Jinnah called Pakistan a “secular state” and immediately came under attack because any deviation from the Islamic ideal undermines the very foundation of the Pakistani state.⁴

But what about India? Was there a reason behind Indian leaders portraying secularism as Copland notes? Perhaps, newly independent India was eager to emulate all traits of western democracies with the intention of modernizing itself. Secularism was the “natural” *modus operandi*. Another argument that Hindu leaders often cite is that Hinduism is inherently secular and the presence of a Hindu majority is a major factor behind Indian secularism’s success. In other words, Hinduism *is* the secular *modus vivendi*. Copland himself highlights this using an editorial quote published in 1996 in the *Organiser*: “Hinduism is secularism par excellence.”

Given the aforementioned assertion, it should hardly come as a surprise that India invented its own version of secularism, which for all its semantic sins, has overcome the Hindu-Muslim divide and the two-nation theory and survived the negative effects of the partition. However, I would like to contest the widely-held view that Hinduism is behind India’s secular nature. Instead, I believe it is worth questioning if Indian secularism has survived not *in spite of* the partition, but precisely *because of* the partition. Is it possible that just as Islam is the key to the Pakistani state’s validity, secularism – even in a mutated form – is the key to the Indian state’s validity – one that it feels compelled to portray and comply with?

Post-independence scenarios

Before discussing Indian secularism in its current form, it is important to track its evolution after independence, or more importantly since partition, as arguably the partition played a more decisive role in the development of post-independence India’s attitude toward religious tolerance than did independence. More specifically, I would like to explore the other possible paths India could have taken after the partition, which was a defining event with the potential to change the Indian trajectory. I do this not to meander in the realm of the hypothetical, but because a strategy is as much about choosing what to be, as it is about choosing what not to be. Any path India did not adopt is somewhat illustrative of Indian thinking, if not also a product of the circumstances in which India found itself.

The Yugoslavia scenario

I have personally always been intrigued by the case of Yugoslavia. It is hard to find two countries in the Cold War era as diverse as India and Yugoslavia. Each represented a multinational state harboring different peoples, religions, languages, and most importantly different identities and imagined communities. Moreover, in the days of the Cold War, India’s first prime minister, Jawahar Lal Nehru, and Yugoslav President Jose Broz Tito (along with the leaders

of Egypt, Ghana, and Indonesia) launched the Non-Alignment Movement. Nehru and Tito clearly shared a vision and had deepened their political ties during that time.

Let me now introduce the elephant in the room: India survives, but Yugoslavia disintegrated. Ethnic and religious tensions engulfed the country, and the 1990s saw bitter conflict, genocide, and rape in the former Yugoslavia. What had Yugoslavia gotten wrong to disintegrate so spectacularly? Was there a formula that was working in India and could be emulated in other states? The questions seem obvious; the answers do not.

Sekulić, Massey, and Hodson present a demographic analysis of Yugoslavia and note that “dramatic change in ethnic composition is the result of the war.”⁵ Using survey data and statistical analysis methods, they show that in the case of Yugoslavia “religiosity has by far the greatest negative influence on [ethnic] tolerance.”⁶ In addition to religiosity, the authors draw attention to elite manipulation’s indirect role in flaring tensions in the Yugoslav state.

Assessing India under the same lens, and using partition as the moment of dramatic change in the demographic composition of independent India, one can say that tensions increased because of partition and were not necessarily a cause thereof. Ayesha Jalal beautifully makes the elite manipulation point in her “Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia” and describes partition as the result of an unsuccessful power-sharing compromise between Nehru and Jinnah.⁷ What followed in independent India was predictable: once the Islamic state of Pakistan had been created, hyphenated communities – most notably Indian Muslims – lived “under the sign of a question mark.”⁸ The idea of partition itself had not been palatable, and the poor logistical management by Britain that (according to unofficial sources) left 1 million dead during partition made matters even worse. Indian Muslims’ allegiance to India was immediately questioned and many were treated as spies of the new Pakistani state. These fears, however understandable, created a vicious circle fuelling anxiety. India was on the verge of a “Yugoslavia” and could have plunged into a civil war, with the country first breaking into religious, and perhaps subsequently along cultural and linguistic lines.

India owes this survival to two factors. First, Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, was assassinated by a Hindu nationalist, not a Muslim fanatic. The 1984 anti-Sikh riots following the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards are testimony to how unstable the situation could have become had a member of one of India’s many non-Hindu minorities pulled the trigger. Unwittingly, her assassination by a Hindu immediately put Hindu nationalism in check. No political leader – however religious

he or she may have been – was willing to side with the ideology that killed the Mahatma. The creation of a separate Hindu state was out of the question, as was the idea that all of the Muslims should be sent to Pakistan. Second, as discussed earlier, secularism, in whatever form, was the centerpiece of the Indian state. It was not possible to refute Jinnah's two-nation theory without proving that Hindus and Muslims could indeed coexist. This curbing of Hindu nationalism and the simultaneous urge to prove to the world the foundations of India prevented it from succumbing to a civil war.

The Soviet Union scenario

Adopting a Soviet model would have meant that India would not only have had to distance itself from religion, but, in fact, even persecute the expression of religions, applying the same degree of state-led hatred toward each.

It is interesting to note that, much like the Russian people in 1917, the Indian people in 1947 were deeply devout. Despite the secular semblance of the Indian freedom struggle's rhetoric, the liberation was littered with countless examples of the gods being used to summon Indian nationalism against British colonial rule. Copland cites these cases: Lord Ganesh's festival was politicized in the state of Maharashtra, Goddess Durga became the symbol of the struggle in Bengal, and the Muslim Khilafat movement was encouraged.⁹ After all, Gandhi himself "donned the attire of a Hindu ascetic."¹⁰ In fact, he was not addressed by his name Mohandas, but as the Mahatma, which in Hindi and Sanskrit literally means "Great Soul" and has religious connotations.

Doing away with the religious overtones of the Indian freedom struggle as well as the contradictions it presented to the concept of western secularism would not have been easy. The "elimination of religion"¹¹ and its replacement with atheism would not have been acceptable to the people, and its implementation would have required a Soviet-style dictatorship and persecution model of confiscating religious properties, freezing funds and assets, and making it "illegal to pray." These were not to be the ways of a newly independent country striving to be a democracy.

Moreover, the devoutness of the people meant that religion could be used differently to consolidate political gains. As Copland points out: "even the agnostic Nehru bowed to public religious sentiment by including an instruction in his will that some of his cremated remains should be interred at the confluence of the Ganqa and Jumna rivers at Allahabad, a site sacred to Hinduism. Knowing the voters as they did, all Indian politicians of that era felt obliged, regardless of their personal preferences, to at least *present themselves* to the public as believers."¹²

The Israel scenario

Israel is another good example to consider. Even though post-partition demographic trends in India differed from the post-creation demographic trends in Israel (because of the mass influx of Jews into the Zionist state), today's Israel shares one important trait with India. Both states have a dominant (Hindu or Jewish) majority and a significant Muslim minority. The latest Israeli census reveals that the state is 75 percent Jewish and 17 percent Muslim, with other minorities making up the rest. Similarly, the 2011 Indian census reveals that India is 80 percent Hindu and 13 percent Muslim, with other minorities making up the remaining 7 percent of the population.

Israel's is a peculiar case because it does not have a formal constitution. The Israeli state, while clearly Jewish, guarantees all citizens freedom of religion by law, which it derives from its declaration of independence.

Since taking the Israeli path would involve the Indian state identifying itself with one religion (quite likely, Hinduism), it would once again negate the foundations of the Indian state. Therefore, the Israeli scenario, though possibly appealing in its operational sense, would not have worked for the Indian state in its nominative sense.

The American scenario

As mentioned, pure secularism is the separation of state and religion. In that sense, as Ahmet Kuru argues in "Politics and Religion in Secular States," America embodies "passive secularism" as the state displays neutrality toward all religions.

Kuru mentions another type of secularism: assertive secularism – such as the one practiced in Turkey – where the state more proactively holds a secular worldview and confines religion to the private sphere.¹³

This is a model that India indeed could have adopted. It did not involve Hindu nationalism, from which Indian leaders wanted to distance themselves, and it also adhered to the values of true secularism, whether in a passive or assertive form. However, it seems that in adopting much of the language from British colonial administrative and governance documents, such finer thinking got lost.

India and secularism

Having examined the post-independence scenarios of what could have been, let me now talk about what actually came about, and why. Once again, I will use pure secularism as a benchmark to measure Indian secularism.

Izhak England in “Law and Religion in Israel” points out that the Israeli legal system “is not a system of separation between state and religion as practiced in the U.S.A.”¹⁴ At the same time, Gary Jacobsohn argues that Israel has a “visionary secularism,” where despite its identification with one religion, the state gives “equal protection” to other religions.¹⁵ Clearly, the definitional problem that plagues Indian secularism appears to be a feature of all multicultural societies.

Let me begin examining the Indian constitution. The constitution guarantees freedom of religion as a fundamental right to all citizens. On the face of it, this appears to be as secular as, say, the American constitution. However, unlike the first amendment of the American constitution, which specifically argues for the separation of state and religion, the Indian constitution does not actually include the word “secular” in its text. It was introduced in the preamble to the Indian constitution only in 1976 under the 42nd amendment. So why does a state that prides itself in being secular – and indeed draws its foundation from that principle – not explicitly call itself “secular”?

Copland points out that the term “secular” was deliberately omitted by Nehru, who understood what true secularism was, and did not want it included in the constitution, because he recognized Indian secularism as a different breed. He cites one occasion when Nehru said, “May I beg with all humility those gentlemen who use this word [secularism] often to consult some dictionary before they use it?”¹⁶ Such words from one of the architects of the Indian nation and its constitution indicate the frustration over the lack of separation of state and religion that existed since the early days of independence.

I would like to now go into the origins of this discrepancy. Next, I would like to show ways in which the Indian constitution digresses from the principles of secularism, not only in ways of separating state and religion, but also in its equal treatment of citizens. Finally, I would like to offer an alternative vision for Indian secularism – another hypothetical exercise, but one with which I hope to extract lessons for India and other multicultural societies.

Origins of post-independence Indian secularism

The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) noted that “in India, the extreme Hinduizing of the national identity, denies the secular state constitution.”¹⁷ This puts the very process of constitution drafting in question.

Copland criticizes the drafting process by drawing attention to the fact that “over half of the final Indian document was lifted verbatim from the last colonial constitution of 1935.”¹⁸ Indian scholar K. M. Panikkar warned that India was “not writing on a clean state.”¹⁹ This raises the question: did the authors

of the Indian constitution not realize that they were willingly or otherwise importing the “divide and rule” tactics of the British crown? British law was characteristically unsecular. Here, I do not wish to infer that they were necessarily propagating unsecular practices, but for ease of governance they did continue some of the policies that prevailed in India even before and then during British rule: treating citizens differently in the eyes of the law. When a civil matter was presented to the British, they relied on a *pundit* to resolve issues concerning Hindus and a *maulavi* to settle issues concerning Muslims. Indeed, they had learned that decoding India’s religious complexities would be time-consuming and dangerous, and that it was best to continue a policy of treating the people of India on the basis of the religion they belonged to, so as not to rile them on delicate religious grounds that might spark unwanted unrest. Moreover, the British saw this intervention as essential, because it allowed them to reform some of the socially backward practices, especially among India’s Hindu majority. The Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Act (1927) and The Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929) were examples of this.²⁰

After independence, the spotlight shifted to those who drafted the Indian constitution. This was the chance to study various constitutions (as they did) and come up with a code of conduct that could erase divisive structures that had carried over by applying uniform laws and treating all citizens equally. Yet, using the same text as the colonial document seems counter-productive to that cause. Whether it was the lack of effort or imagination, one may never know. Let me illustrate the constitution’s divisive nature in two-ways: a. Incorporating different codes for different religions; b. mirroring the structure of the caste-based Hindu society in the country’s most important document.

First, in the spirit of retaining the metaphorical *pundit* and *maulavi*, India did not adopt a uniform civil code. The debate on whether this adoption is essential or not continues, and each side swears by its point of view. Experts like Werner Menski argue that the Indian constitution may contain “some important lessons for European lawyers specifically in terms of managing cultural diversity through plurality-conscious legal intervention, rather than the traditional insistence on state-centric legal uniformity.”²¹ This indeed is a powerful idea and sounds like one that could solve many problems of an increasingly globalizing and multicultural world. However, its effectiveness is yet to be proved in India.

While I am personally opposed to the idea of pluralistic laws – because they create social silos by preventing interactions between members of different religious groups – I do understand that Indian leaders back in 1947 may have needed this tool to show their commitment to a pluralistic society. But here the secularism logic begins to fall apart. If a uniform civil code is absent, the lawmakers representing one of the three branches of the govern-

ment (i.e., the state machinery) must essentially get involved in deciding the fate of a matter depending on Hindu, Islamic or other laws. I cannot think of a practice that is more unsecular. Moreover, this opens a can of worms. Does treating Hindus and Muslims differently by law not amount, at least to some degree, to accepting Jinnah's principle of the two-nation theory, that the two groups are fundamentally different? Furthermore, if each community has its own set of laws, doesn't the Indian constitution create a multi-nation theory of its own? Of course, as discussed earlier, India did not descend into civil war on religious grounds because of the curbing of Hindu nationalism and because of the fundamental nature of the birth of the Indian state. Still, as I see it, the Indian constitution writers (inadvertently?) left Indians divided along religious lines in the eyes of the law, which has repercussions to the present day. The argument that such an oversight was deliberate because it allowed politicians to contest elections along divisive lines may not be too far from the truth.

Second, state interference was considered essential because Indian leaders at the time believed that Hinduism needed to be reformed. But let me point out that the Sati Prevention Act, which aimed to abolish the practice of burning a Hindu widow on the pyre with her husband, came into effect only in 1987, i.e., forty years after independence. Clearly, reform was not the priority of those who drafted the Indian constitution and made the laws. More damagingly, reservations for poorly-defined "backward" classes were introduced to reform the Hindu society's outdated caste system. At first, these reservations in public office and educational institutions were to span ten years as affirmative action to allow these "backward" classes to catch up. However, reservations have only continued and in some states those elected through reservations comprise over 50 percent in legislative bodies. Some recommendations to increase reservation quotas, like the ones proposed by the Mandal Commission in 1989, "prompted self-immolation of Brahman [so called 'upper-caste'] students in Delhi."²² What is even more alarming is that reservations, as initially envisioned at the time of drafting the constitution, were put in place only for "backward" Hindus and did not apply to those "lower-caste" Hindus who had converted to the more equal religions of Islam and Christianity. Crowded out by reservations, "upper caste" Hindus regularly seek certificates proving that they belong to "lower castes" so as to redeem the privileges the constitution guarantees. Had the reservation system worked, India would have seen a gradual phasing out of this preferential treatment. The fact that these divisions have only deepened, and that other religious minorities who feel left out are now requesting quotas for their communities, is proof that politics have hijacked the idea of a secular India and the constitution blesses these divisions in the name of equality of citizens and neutrality of the state. Bringing the underprivileged sections of society into mainstream India should have been achieved in the form of economic assistance over a fixed

period of time. This would have sprung India toward social equality, not on the basis of divisive caste-based politics, but on the basis of need-based class assistance.

It is hardly a surprise that Copland describes the “story of secularism in India” as one that is “studded with contradictions which need resolving.”²³ Over the years, the lack of a uniform civil code and the absurd Hinduization of the constitution have let religious- and caste-based tensions simmer in India.

What could have been

This is another hypothetical exercise but one that I deem necessary, simply to avoid the trap of justifying history. Just because something happened does not mean that it was the most rational or most beneficial choice available at the time. Past decisions should be critically assessed and future alternatives ought to be explored.

As I have already mentioned, I am in favor of a uniform civil code in India. It would not only help establish a truly secular state. However, it is not for the sake of the “secular” tag that I propose this measure. I propose the uniform civil code because it would also iron out the divisive creases from India’s societal fabric and steer India in a progressive direction.

History has proven time and again that secular, democratic, and liberal societies have done better than those that have deliberately clung to religion. You may point out that China is an exception, because its modernity is not a result of its secularization, but China is a case where the state is involved with religion by way of attempting to suppress it. For the majority of nations, secularism has been an engine of modernization. According to Turkey’s Mustafa Kemal, secularism and modernization went hand in hand, and his policies – both domestic and foreign – reflected this ideology. There is no reason for India to shy away from true secularism, and adopting a uniform civil code will help India achieve the goal that its founding fathers set for it on the night India gained independence.

The uniform civil code will bring with it another type of equality: gender-based. As Raya Hazarika points out in “Should India Have a Uniform Civil Code?” religious laws – whether it is the Hindu practice of *sati*²⁴ or the Muslim practice of forcing a woman to marry her rapist – discriminate against women. It is hardly surprising that the uniform civil code has unanimous support from women’s rights groups.

A startling example of this is the controversial Shah Bano case. In 1978, Shah Bano, a 62 year old Muslim woman had just been divorced by her husband

and denied any alimony. Left with no financial support for herself or her five children, she turned to Indian law. The Supreme Court ruled in her favor and she was granted some maintenance monies. However, some Muslims protested as the Supreme Court ruling was viewed as an encroachment on Muslim Personal Law (each religion has a say in matters of family, divorce, inheritance, etc., in India.) In response to these protests, the Indian government passed a law that overruled the Supreme Court verdict and upheld Muslim Personal Law. The husband's responsibility in the matter was scrapped for all Muslims.

As long as different personal laws (based on one's religion) exist, it becomes easier for politicians to play on people's differences. On many an occasion it has taken just one Indian Supreme Court ruling to spark riots led by a community that sees the Court's decision as an infringement of its rights. But how long will we let these personal sentiments get in the way of building a progressive society? I submit that reversing age-old practices will not be an overnight affair, but neither was establishing secularism in present-day western democracies. At one time, the king represented the rule of the law, but we did not continue with that practice just because it was inconvenient to change. Witch hunts used to be normal at one point in time, but "normalcy" did not make the practice right. And the likes of Nelson Mandela and Mohandas Gandhi were jailed for breaking the law, but those laws were eventually questioned and changed for the better.

Lessons for multicultural societies

As discussed in an earlier section, India is not unique in wanting to be a secular society or in establishing a customized variant of secularism. Other multicultural societies from Indonesia to Israel to Lebanon try to accommodate individual liberties with religious practices. Competing versions of secularism – passive, assertive, positive, negative, and visionary, to name a few – exist because states recognize that secularism is an ideal to strive for. However, in essence secularism is the separation of state and religion. Non-interference is what defines it, and it needs a common law of the land that does not discriminate against its citizens.

The lure of having different personal laws to accommodate the pluralistic nature of modern societies seems to tempt certain leaders and lawmakers. But pluralism in the realm of personal law doesn't unite the citizenry; it divides it. It leads to "compartmentalization"²⁵ and discourages cultural exchange by blurring the lines of which law would reign supreme if there were a dispute. What multicultural societies need to preserve is the diversity of their cultures, not the divisiveness of their laws.

Indian secularism has survived not despite the divisiveness of the multiple

personal laws that govern the peoples of India, but because the creation of the Indian state was based on secular principles – at least in name. Not every society shares that history with India, and thus Indian secularism in its current form is a dangerous endeavor for multicultural societies that do not share India's brutal partition past.

Conclusion

Indian secularism is an unfulfilled endeavor. Its origins lie in a time when India's religious communities needed to unite behind the cause of independence from colonial rule. However, the concept of separation of state and religion has yet to take root.

India's partition at the time of independence could have led to deep religious divides, but this was avoided because: a. Hindu nationalism was curbed, and b. multi-religiosity (as Indian secularism came to be understood) was the centerpiece of the Indian state.

Various options of development lay in front of India. These included adopting the religious models of states like Israel, the Soviet Union, the United States, and Yugoslavia. However, for reasons unique to the birth of the post-colonial Indian state, these models would not have worked for India.

However, this does not mean that India can serve as a role-model for other multicultural states. The way Indian secularism is structured is a mockery of many secular and democratic principles. These issues are reflected in the Indian constitution, where the drafters of the constitution wittingly or unwittingly adopted policies that continue to divide the country to the present day. The lack of a uniform civil code, as well as rights granted on the basis of a caste-based social system, continue to heighten tensions in India.

A uniform civil code will help India develop into a truly modern state and create an environment where all citizens are treated equally. This will also promote social interaction, as well as eliminate some of the discriminatory practices against women. Moreover, a class-based approach, whereby underprivileged sections of society can have access to special economic aid packages, will prove to be more effective.

Finally, multicultural societies must realize that the success of Indian secularism may just be a result of partition and the Indian state's innate need to prove that various religions can indeed co-exist. Indian leaders have tried to achieve this not by creating an equal state but by honoring religious differences, often

because it makes for easier politics. However, a uniform civil code will be beneficial and will indeed avoid many of the socio-political tensions that continue even six decades after Indian independence, because the constitution in the name of neutrality and equality has been anything but that.

NOTES

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International Migration and the Rise in Radical Right Views in Europe and Russia

Introduction

The growing integration in today's rapidly globalizing world is affecting all areas of life. The economy, domestic and foreign policy, and the social sphere are all undergoing transformation that is changing them forever. Countries in Europe have delegated part of their sovereign powers to the European Union, and mass immigration from Asia and Africa has transformed Europe's cities and forced European governments to rethink their domestic policy. These changes, linked to European economic integration, are among the factors underlying the growing influence of right-wing and far-right parties on the continent. In various countries, even in traditionally democratic Scandinavia, people are unhappy with the arrival en-masse of immigrants alien to them in culture and mentality and not always ready to assimilate into their new home, and with the difficulties resulting from financial and legal disputes within the EU. The increasing popularity of right-wing ideas in Russia stems from similar factors, as well as from the ideological vacuum that arose in the country after the end of seventy years of communist rule, the glaring gaps between rich and poor, and the public activeness of new political forces unconnected to the 1990s and motivated to action by the authorities' rollback of democratic institutions and the discredited "systemic" opposition. Russian right-wing radicals offer populist slogans with wide mass appeal, but Russia has not seen a political upsurge of far-right parties similar to the developments in European countries, if only because Vladimir Zhirinovsky's LDPR party has traditionally taken its compensatory place at this end of the spectrum whenever elections come around, and the authorities make it difficult for new opposition groups to push their way onto the political stage.

Immigration to Europe and Russia in the late 20th–early 21st century

The increase in far-right ideas in both regions is closely linked to mass immigration from Asia and Africa, especially from Muslim countries.

The second half of the 20th century was Europe's golden age. Economic integration and the mass inflow of cheap labor from abroad helped to rebuild European economies after the ruin and destruction of World War II. Immigration followed unique patterns in each of the different countries. Post-war *West Germany* actively took in Turkish migrant workers and people from southern Europe – Greeks, Italians, Portuguese, Spanish, and Yugoslavs. By the 1970s, however, a trend had emerged that saw the southern European migrant workers tending to return to their homelands after a time, while the Turks preferred to settle down in their new country, taking up permanent residence and inviting their families to join them. At around 3.4 percent of the total population, the Turkish community is now one of the largest in Germany.¹ *Britain* also actively welcomed migrants over the second half of the century, with preference going to its former colonies – now members of the British Commonwealth. The country now has a huge Indo-Pakistani community of close to 2.5 million people² – around 4.3 percent of Britain's population,³ which has a big influence on British domestic and foreign policy. *France* is also home to many immigrants from its former colonies, with Algerians being the largest group. The French Algerian community is unique in that the roots of its migration are not economic but political: the first wave of Algerian Arabs, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, were loyalists who left Algeria in the early 1960s, after France's defeat in the war for Algerian independence. The Benelux and Nordic countries also attract immigrants from the Middle East and North Africa with their economic prosperity, political stability, and liberal laws. Finally, the southern European countries – Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, and Spain – attract many immigrants, too, especially illegal immigrants, as the closest destinations for thousands of people fleeing Africa.

Modern Europe has undergone migration flows not only from Asian and African countries. The Iron Curtain's fall in the early 1990s sent thousands of people streaming west from Eastern Europe, not only to the traditional destinations listed above, but also to less developed European countries. Ireland, for example, has become home to a large Polish-Lithuanian community.⁴ But it is the en-masse arrival of people from Asia and Africa, so different in identity and mentality from Europe, that fuelled the rising tide of right-wing ideas at the turn of the century in what were traditionally tolerant and democratic societies.

Mass immigration has also been one of the big factors underlying the rise in right-wing ideas in Russia. Millions of people left the former Soviet republics for Russia over the 1990s-2000s. These people were all once citizens of a common country, the Soviet Union, but the economic and political instability that followed the Soviet collapse, nationalist ideas that provoked the collapse in the first place, and the cultural differences between people from Central Asia, the Trans-Caucasus, and Russia created a previously seemingly unthinkable climate, in which Russia experienced the emergence of chauvinism – in everyday life, in the streets, and in politics – directed against people who were born, or whose parents were born, in what had been a single country. This chauvinism and the crisis it has created are worsened by the economic difficulties in Russia itself and the even greater difficulties in the former Soviet republics; a high level of everyday aggression in society; rampant corruption in the law enforcement agencies, customs, and migration services; and the large number of ethnic-based criminal groups. The consolidation of a political system that gives the executive branch's leaders a monopoly hold on power also acts in large part as a catalyst for far-right ideas. It seems to me that the upsurge in public aggression against migrants in Russia in the mid-2000s is not a coincidence: it was precisely at this time that Russia's government became super-presidential in the full sense of the concept, reinforced by a newly built vertical power hierarchy and the marginalization of political opposition.

The rise in radical right ideas in Europe and Russia

The next logical question is, what is the relationship between migration and the spread of right-wing radicalism? The answers are the same as in the past. Immigrants are accused of taking jobs that would have gone to Russians and Europeans, exhibiting an unwillingness to integrate into their new environment, and having links to crime. The first of these accusations does not hold water. Migrants in Europe traditionally do the heavy or dirty work that local people do not want to do. In Russia, the local government authorities are involved too, finding it more advantageous to hire cheap foreign labor and pay them only a part of their wages, pocketing the rest themselves. The reproaches about many migrants' unwillingness to accept the culture and customs of their host country and their possible links to crime are a different matter, however, and reflect real problems and issues facing society today.

When illegal immigrants arrive in too great a number and all end up in a vulnerable and shaky legal situation, they tend to start grouping together in ethnic communities in order to help each other out in getting their papers sorted out, finding work, and arranging for food, housing, and so on. In such an environment, their native language, religion, and customs continue to dominate

and their contacts with the surrounding world are limited, thus keeping them from reaching any real level of integration into the host country's culture and public life. The big problem here is that with time and under the influence of chauvinism, poverty, and the general environment in which they live, this isolation within their own community grows into a persistent ideological current based on a conscious refusal to integrate and even a desire to seek confrontation with what becomes an increasingly alien outside environment. The outcry over the publication of cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in 2005 sparked riots in Denmark, the Netherlands and other countries. Even more noteworthy was the murder by a Muslim fanatic of Dutch film director Theo Van Gogh, who made a film about violence against women among Muslims. The result is that ethnic communities withdraw into themselves, close off, and become intolerant to the society around them.

Links between immigrants and the criminal world have been the subject of much attention. Immigrants are often forced to solve some of their problems by resorting to illegal means (it is enough to recall the Italian Mafia in New York and Chicago in the early 20th century, during the period of mass Italian emigration to the United States, or the Irish Mafia in Boston, which emerged under similar circumstances fifty years earlier.) Gradually this grows into an organized criminal system. According to the Moscow City Police, migrants commit up to 70 percent of crimes in the city⁵ (the Russian media claims that the police cover up the problem of crime among immigrants by using the broader term "people from other towns" in its statistics.)

I believe that the rise in radical right mindsets in Europe and Russia is very dangerous and could have serious consequences for our peoples' and countries' future. Only recently has this issue started to become the subject of wide discussion. Nationalists entered the European Parliament for the first time following the 2009 elections.⁶ Hungary's extremist right-wing Fides party won an election in the crisis year of 2010 and formed a government headed by moderate nationalist Victor Orban. This was followed by more tragic events – the nationalist riots in central Moscow at the end of 2010, and the terrorist shooting rampage committed by right-wing radical Anders Breivik in Norway in July 2011. It is not by chance that I list these events together. The increase in far-right ideas and activity in Russia and Europe is not rooted in identical causes in each case, but it is identical in its temporal and political nature, happening as it does during financial crisis years and as a protest vote or expression of protest by people fed up with the existing order.

The future of the right-wing movement in Russia and Europe

If one sees the success of far-right forces as a temporary symptom of crisis years and protest moods, the situation in Europe does not look as critical. The crisis, whether financial or linked to integrating immigrant communities, will be resolved, democratic law will prevail over the customary law of ethnic communities, and so on. But if existing problems keep growing – and the pace of migration suggests this will be the case – the possibility that far-right ideas will start to dominate seems not so far-fetched and looks all the more like a dauntingly real prospect.

Political parties have customarily been built on a democratic foundation in Europe. The emergence of new agendas brings with it the development of new groups and forces. The hippies and cultural revolutionaries of the 1960s have thus become today's perfectly respectable "greens," sitting in parliament and passing much needed environmental laws and regulations. Society's interests in technological development have led recently to the emergence of "pirate" parties. Following this pattern, if far-right parties pop up everywhere and attract voters throughout Europe, it means that there is an agenda for their ideas there, and that they offer something for which there is a demand among the population. Thus, closer attention needs to be paid to the issues that fuel the increasing popularity of their ideas. This is nothing new. Speaking on October 18, 2010,⁷ Angela Merkel talked of the failure of multiculturalism in Germany, and similar words soon came from her colleagues in Britain and France. So, what options is Europe considering today in its bid to solve the immigration issue – the largest catalyst of far-right tendencies?

Multiculturalism was a concept that emerged in Canada, where the American "melting pot" style of immigration did not work because of the large French-speaking Canadian community, which did not want – and does not want today – to merge with the English-speaking majority. In the mid-20th century, the Canadian model began to spread to Europe, and I see political reasons for this: in particular, the Europeans proclaimed the idea of universal equality in order to put the horrors of World War II and the intolerance it spread across the continent swiftly behind them. But if the multicultural concept has failed, a replacement must be found. What are the options: tougher laws regarding immigrants, their descendants, and immigrant communities; an American-style melting pot model with voluntarily-enforced assimilation; or the emergence of ghetto-towns for migrants such as those built for Indian workers in Bahrain, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates (although ghettos have already emerged spontaneously in big European cities)? Time will tell.

In Russia's case, the enormous corruption throughout the entire state system makes none of the above immigration models viable.

Concrete examples of attempts to implement migration policy in Russia reveal a number of contradictory circumstances:

- As far as internal migration is concerned, the constitutionally enshrined right for Russian citizens to move freely within the country⁸ is contradicted by the Soviet-era place of residence registration rules that still remain in place;
- As far as emigration from Russia goes, the brain drain continues,⁹ with the best educated people leaving the country for Western Europe and the United States;
- As far as immigration to Russia goes, aside from the obvious problem of corruption in the law enforcement agencies, customs, and immigration services, it is also noteworthy that experts^{10/11} and politicians¹² consider that the CIS was established to resolve citizenship issues, humanitarian problems in the future independent states, and immigration processes. In other words, it was established as a means for organizing a “civilized divorce” of the Soviet republics and their citizens. However, CIS citizens who immigrate to Russia often end up caught up in political conflicts between Russia and its neighbors,^{13/14} and neither the spirit nor the letter of the various existing agreements and laws guarantee their legal position in Russia.

The government and president do not pursue any clear policy towards the growing migration issue and rise in far-right ideas, going no further than acknowledging the existence of these problems¹⁵ and preferring, as before, to channel any protest movements in society, including right-wing protest, into “systemic” opposition parties under the de-facto control of the authorities. As was already noted, voters with right-wing sympathies traditionally support the LDPR party, which was accused of fomenting interethnic hatred after its leader, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, expressed open support for the nationalist riots on Manezh Square in Moscow on December 11, 2010.¹⁶ Trying to artificially suppress the existing problems is a dead-end road that will only see them grow instead. Russia has an obvious need for a new agenda on these pressing issues and must come up with new approaches and solutions.

Conclusion

Looking overall at the reasons for the rise in far-right ideas in Europe and Russia, there are often common causes, but different consequences: tougher enforcement of the laws and a policy of allowing legal far-right parties in Eu-

rope, and letting the problems build up amidst a climate of political stagnation in Russia. The common thing on both sides is the time factor that has brought these political issues to the fore and a certain similarity of the agendas to be tackled. Resolving these issues is crucially important for the future of the countries and peoples concerned, and the future of their values, too.

NOTES

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Skolkovo: a Start, but not a Silver Bullet

The need for modernization

“The global economic crisis has shown that our affairs are far from being in the best state,” noted Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. In his October 2009 manifesto, *Go, Russia!*, he mentioned a slew of economic, political, and societal challenges facing Russia and bluntly asked, “Twenty years of tumultuous change has not spared our country from its humiliating dependence on raw materials ...Should a primitive economy based on raw materials and endemic corruption accompany us into the future?”¹ The crisis presented a sharp contrast to a relatively rosy economic picture that had existed for much of the preceding decade, when the Russian economy had expanded at a strong pace and GDP grew at an annual rate of roughly 7 percent. While steady growth in oil prices formed the basis of strong economic growth in Russia throughout the 2000s, the boom times came to a sudden halt with the advent of the global financial crisis and the resulting drop in oil prices in 2008; in the following year, Russian GDP contracted by almost 8 percent.² Other factors, such as the fallout of the Russian-Georgian conflict and the overall weak state of the global economy, were also to blame, but an overreliance on oil and gas exports was a main culprit.

The fact that “petrorubles” account for such a large share of the Russian economy could be considered as both an asset and a liability. A spike in oil prices quickly pumps cash into the government’s coffers, and this money can be used to replenish the Reserve Fund and the National Wealth Fund – the “rainy day” supplies used to balance the federal budget and to finance pensions, respectively. But while it is logical to make the most of such an opportunity, the oil and gas money flowing in can obstruct the development and implementation of needed macroeconomic reforms. The boom times do not last forever, and when they come to an end, the landing is usually a hard one. As Medvedev noted in 2009, “We have a duty to heed the lessons of recent events. So long as oil prices were growing, many – almost all of us,

to be honest – fell for the illusion that structural reforms could wait and that what was important now was to make maximum use of the high prices.”³ Furthermore, if the current economic growth rate, tax levels, and government spending commitments are maintained, even a 2 percent annual rise (in real terms) of oil prices would mean that the federal budget deficit could reach 10 percent of GDP by 2020.⁴ Medvedev said that Russia could afford to “delay no longer”: “We must begin the modernization and technological upgrading of our entire industrial sector. I see this as a question of our country’s survival in the modern world.”

It was against the rather gloomy backdrop portrayed earlier that he announced the federal government’s intention to play an active role in this economic transformation. During his annual presidential address to the Federal Assembly in November 2009, he called for the creation of a research and development center “[along] the lines of Silicon Valley” that “would offer attractive working conditions for leading researchers, engineers, designers, software programmers, managers, and financial specialists,” to “produce new technology able to compete on the global market.”⁵ A working group, responsible for finding a suitable location for this development, was formed by presidential decree at the end of the year, and by March 2010, Medvedev announced that a location had been chosen: the village of Skolkovo.

Skolkovo develops

Skolkovo lies a few miles to the west of the MKAD, the circular highway around Moscow that denotes the city’s borders. In Soviet times, the village was host to a government dacha frequented by Politburo members, just a stone’s throw away from the summer residence of Leonid Brezhnev. More recently, the area became home to the Skolkovo School of Management, an MBA-granting business school. However, the community gained even greater prominence following the announcement that it would host Russia’s most ambitious “innovation center” project to date. When construction is completed in a few years’ time, Skolkovo – often referred to as an *innograd*, a portmanteau of the Russian words for innovation and city – is expected to house and employ 25,000 to 30,000 residents on a 1.5 square mile footprint.⁶ In typical technopark style, gleaming glass and metal buildings rise over fields, trees, and ponds, and the entire complex will be connected to Moscow with dedicated rail links and a brand new subway line.

From a physical standpoint, Skolkovo is hardly unique. Akademgorodok, a famous Soviet science research center, was home to tens of thousands of residents at its peak and sprawled across several square miles of forest near

the Siberian city of Novosibirsk. Dozens of other science cities, established during Soviet times, still function as active research centers serving both the military and civilian sectors.⁷ In Soviet times, however, profits and economic viability in these science cities took a backseat to purely scientific research, often with the state and military in mind.⁸ Among the characteristics that set Skolkovo apart from its predecessors is its focus on the commercialization of certain types of technology. The efforts of the project will be focused around five “clusters” – areas of focus deemed important to state interests and spheres in which Russia possesses some form of inherent advantage: energy, IT and software, space and telecommunications, biomedical technology, and nuclear technology. The expected budget for the first few years of the project is estimated at around 180 to 200 billion rubles (roughly \$7 billion), with the federal budget and the private sector each contributing half.⁹

The aims of the project are numerous and come across as staggeringly ambitious; according to a conceptual document, it will kick-start the Russian innovative process, help usher in a knowledge-based economy, promote an entrepreneurial mindset, encourage high technology research and development, and attract world-class scientific talent.¹⁰ Beyond the physical confines of the *innograd*, Skolkovo is charged with the task of diversifying and modernizing Russia’s economy, weaning it from a dependence on natural resources as the main driving force of economic growth, and making it more competitive on a global level. Medvedev has promised that Skolkovo won’t create “toys for eggheads,”¹¹ but proclaimed it to be a “prototype city of the future, which should become a major testing ground for a new economic policy.”¹² “Skolkovo – an instrument of the future!” excitedly announces a narrator on a promotional video.

Companies seem to have taken the message to heart; Siemens, GE, Nokia, IBM, and EADS will open corporate R&D centers at Skolkovo, giving the project strong international credibility. Microsoft and Intel are among those providing seed money and technical assistance to Skolkovo startups, and Johnson & Johnson has earmarked \$30 million for medical startups through the formation of a venture fund. In addition, the *innograd* has promoted a bundle of tax incentives aimed squarely at startups. Significant accomplishments so far – but is it possible to utilize a project like Skolkovo as a means to successfully transform a national economy? In seeking to answer this question, I will look at the complicating factors affecting Russian prospects for modernization and innovation. Russia is certainly not the only country facing these challenges, and while I will focus on it within the confines of this essay, I believe that many of the arguments made here are also applicable to other states as well. Finally, I aim to offer some conclusions regarding the achievability of such a goal, paying particular mind to Skolkovo and Russia.

California dreaming

Comparisons, especially in the foreign press, between Skolkovo and California's Silicon Valley abound, and many have already dubbed the project "Russia's Silicon Valley." Despite the moniker, Skolkovo's organizers have stressed that the project will not be a Russian facsimile of Silicon Valley, with Medvedev going so far as to say that producing a clone would be an "impossible" task.¹³ For starters, statements made to downplay any inherent similarities between the two help serve to temper any heady expectations that Skolkovo will be able to fully emulate the success of its Californian counterpart. Furthermore, the comparison of Skolkovo to Silicon Valley is fundamentally erroneous, since the two are vastly different in backgrounds: the former is a deliberate project formed under government auspices, while the latter is a looser assemblage that directly benefited from government funding but was not a premeditated project.

However, it is quite evident that Skolkovo derives much inspiration from Silicon Valley. Dmitry Medvedev, the project's main cheerleader, visited the area in June 2010, stopping by the offices of companies such as Cisco, Apple, Yahoo, and Twitter, and discussed the fledgling Skolkovo project with then-Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger and local Russian expatriates. He also came seeking inspiration: "I wanted to see with my own eyes the origin of success," he announced during a speech at Stanford University.¹⁴

Although sporting a smile as bright as the summer California sunshine while hobnobbing with technology titans, he saved his most eager words for a special, if intangible, Valley component. "Interesting, most of all, is the atmosphere" in Silicon Valley; "how it breathes, how it looks – it's great," he noted.¹⁵ In remarks made in October of that year to venture capitalists, Medvedev once again highlighted the Valley's "atmosphere," which made "the biggest impression" on him for being "something unique, creative, and at the same time calm and cozy."¹⁶

The "atmosphere" that Medvedev lavished so much praise upon is the product of a unique blend of technology, education, business, and government. In a sense, the resulting synergies comprise the "secret ingredient" behind Silicon Valley's success, and it is the main reason why the Valley has been often imitated, yet never quite duplicated. Scientists, researchers, academics, bankers, venture capitalists, and businesspeople are able to work together in a setting that promotes the free and safe exchange of capital, both human and financial, as well as ideas and scientific innovations. Enterprising researchers feel comfortable sharing and monetizing the results of their work, and investors feel comfortable bankrolling them, due to a respected, effective legal system. The tolerance for risk, moreover, is comfortably high; as Condo-

leezza Rice mentioned to Medvedev during his visit, “It’s really about having an environment in which people feel free to explore ideas ...Some succeed, but many fail. You have to feel free to fail.”¹⁷

Another important aspect of Silicon Valley’s success is the so-called “pollination effect” – much as bees are able to pollinate many flowers in close proximity to each other, employees can feel free to move from start-up to start-up, bringing their experience and knowledge with them to new ventures. Informal networks also play an important role in creating and maintaining innovative output. The famous Homebrew Computer Club, for example, started in the mid-1970s as a way for computer enthusiasts and hobbyists to socialize and share information, and among its ranks were Apple founders Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak, who noted the instrumental role that the club had in the formation of his company: “Without computer clubs there would probably be no Apple computers.”¹⁸ The bonds created through such networks persist, even when employees move from company to company, and they assist in the sharing of innovative ideas, as well as with capital procurement (for example, groups of angel investors). The beneficial characteristics of the Valley, then, extend beyond the confines of any single company or project.

The value of education

Other innovative regions have been able to succeed, in part, because of strong linkages with one or more well-funded universities; Stanford in Silicon Valley, Harvard and MIT in the Boston area, and Duke and UNC-Chapel Hill in North Carolina’s Research Triangle region come to mind. Skolkovo’s planners have recognized the crucial role that high-quality research universities play in the development of a knowledge-based economy and have already moved to supplement the business “output” side of the project with a university that can provide vital “input,” both in terms of a highly educated potential workforce and scientific innovations. In April 2011, it launched the Skolkovo Open University, a “virtual” university that provides courses, workshops, and lectures from outside talent in fields such as management and more academic pursuits, related to the Skolkovo clusters. An even larger step was announced in October of that year, when the Skolkovo Foundation and MIT partnered up to develop the Skolkovo Institute of Science and Technology (SKTech), with the aim of “integrating teaching, research, innovation and entrepreneurship” while developing a world-class research university.¹⁹

Establishing a firm educational foundation will help ensure that Skolkovo becomes and remains successful. Ideally, a steady stream of talented students, from Russia and abroad, will conduct cutting-edge research at SK-

Tech, and many will continue their affiliation with Skolkovo after graduation, whether in academia or the *innograd's* private sector. Russia enjoys many fundamental strengths in higher education, but in the Soviet Union, research and development did not revolve around entrepreneurship. Skolkovo just might be able to change this – commercialization is a key priority at Skolkovo, and SKTech's academic work should be carried out with an eye towards the market, which will help Skolkovo towards its goal of transforming the Russian economy. To aid in this process, MIT is helping to develop a Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, which will act as a type of conduit organization that facilitates interaction between researchers, entrepreneurs, and investors.²⁰ Whether or not these efforts will pay off handsomely remains to be seen, but at the very least, the fact that Skolkovo's founders recognize the need for strong links between research and commercialization is an encouraging sign. After all, no present-day country can pursue a dynamic, knowledge-based economy without a system of higher education that is able to translate successes in the classroom and laboratory into successes in the marketplace.

The *innograd's* promotional value

Especially at the beginning stages, Skolkovo will appear to many as an island of economic and legal freedom, surrounded by a sea of corruption and red tape. The result, then, is rather lopsided: an attractive oasis might exist on the outskirts of Moscow, but the rest of the country would see little benefit. On the one hand, such a state of affairs casts doubt on the realization of the project's goals, since its effects could hardly be seen as extensive and far-reaching. But even if, as its detractors claim, Skolkovo is intrinsically little more than a flashy showpiece of the country's innovation efforts, then why not use it as a giant advertisement for those efforts? It has significant promotional value as a high-profile project that enjoys its fair share of media coverage, and the government should use this as a means of publicizing innovation throughout the country. In the United States, Silicon Valley is synonymous with cutting-edge technology and innovation, but much of the brand's success is derived from that of its residents – recently, Google, Facebook, and others – and its longevity as a magnet for such companies. Famous brands that Skolkovo has attracted, such as Microsoft, GE, IBM, and other household names, will help to raise the *innograd's* credibility and acclaim, but this will likely have the largest effect among scientists and investors, not the general public. As a new entity, Skolkovo cannot benefit from a longstanding reputation, and the startups that it has already garnered are not yet widely known. Therefore, it must turn to a coordinated, effective marketing approach that, if successfully implemented, will raise the profile of not just Skolkovo, but

of Russian innovation in general – and most important of all, in the domestic sphere.

In the case of Skolkovo, raising the *innograd's* brand awareness is particularly crucial given the relatively few inroads that the project has made into the consciousness of Russian society as a whole. A poll conducted in March 2011 by VTsIOM (the All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion) revealed that only a third of Russians surveyed actually knew what the venture was about, while 12 percent were “more or less” familiar with it.²¹ More than half were still unfamiliar with the project, and while it is reasonable to assume that this number has declined in subsequent months, the figures suggest that the promotional potential of Skolkovo is not being exploited to its full potential.

Yet despite its nascent status, there is little preventing Skolkovo and other similar projects from eventually attaining the same level of influence as Silicon Valley on a national, if not necessarily global, scale. Governments seeking to spur innovation and economic modernization should promote Skolkovo-like projects as a tangible symbol of their efforts in that regard (provided, of course, that there is actual progress made, and not just empty political rhetoric). It is much easier to inspire future inventors and scientists with a tangible measure of progress, rather than just a host of government policies. Silicon Valley, along with the technology superstars and successful companies it hosts, inspires the next generation of students; scores of teenagers, writing code in their bedrooms, harbor ambitions of becoming the next Steve Jobs or Mark Zuckerberg. During a time of widespread hand wringing among educators concerning the lack of interest from American students regarding math and science, the magnetism of Silicon Valley acts as a solid counterbalance in favor of promoting innovation. In the case of Russia, a country with a very proud and accomplished scientific heritage, this is particularly relevant. Today, positions in the state bureaucracy, which often come with money, influence, and other trappings of office, are highly coveted by the best and brightest university graduates. Showcasing Skolkovo might help increase science's appeal to the next generation once again.

The role of the elites

At first glance, there's little to not like about the role that Skolkovo should play inside the framework of Medvedev's proposal. Regardless of its attainability (or lack thereof), having the goal of an economic overhaul through modernization and diversification should be a positive development. Officially, Skolkovo enjoys the strong personal backing of Medvedev, as well as the support of the federal government and its relevant ministries and commissions. But

the country's main political actor, current Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, has been publicly lukewarm on the issue, and the lack of real progress outside of the physical confines of the *innograd* suggests that it is not a high state priority – a riddle, it would seem, given the sense of urgency imparted by Medvedev. So why haven't the country's elites been more supportive of these processes?

It is a simple question with a complex answer. We must first recognize that elite attitudes towards economic modernization generally depend on the level of competition that they face.²² In countries with high political turnover and strong, open competition, elites not only embrace innovation but brandish it as a political weapon; it would be hard to imagine a presidential election in the United States, for example, where the incumbent candidate doesn't tout the innovative progress made by the economy under his administration while his opponent lambastes him for not doing enough. On the other end of the spectrum, states led by entrenched elites with a firm grip on power have nothing to fear from pushing through innovating reforms. Somewhere in the middle of these diametrically opposed extremes falls Russia, a state with strongly established but, as recent protests following allegedly falsified federal elections showed, not entirely invulnerable elites. While they have yet to be displaced from power, they are not secure enough to reform an inefficient system that provides them with significant wealth and economic rents without losing their power and the benefits that it brings. Furthermore, certain changes that should be implemented in order to promote innovation and long-term investment, such as a greater emphasis on the rule of law, constitute a threat to the elites' power. Medvedev himself noted this: "Influential groups of corrupt officials ...have everything and are satisfied," he wrote in his *Go, Russia!* proclamation. The elite "do not want development, and fear it."²³

Elites, therefore, have a vested interest in ensuring that Skolkovo succeeds, but only to a certain point. On the one hand, Skolkovo needs to do well in order to show that some progress is being made towards modernizing the economy, and that rhetoric on the matter isn't entirely empty; on the other hand, allowing the project to accomplish its stated objective of transforming the Russian economy would mean ushering in reforms that are highly unpalatable to the risk-averse elites. Under the current political and economic arrangement, it is likely that, despite the inspiring rhetoric and impassioned vision that Skolkovo brings to the modernization question, the project will remain relatively limited in scope. Regardless of who actually rules the roost in the Kremlin, it serves as another way to co-opt the reform-minded segment of the spectrum. By allowing liberals to channel their energies towards Skolkovo and other flashy projects, elites can consent to the development of a relatively harmless side-show, and they can try to keep the conversation from moving towards talk of genuine reforms, which would pose a threat to their power.

Complicating factors

From an international standpoint, Russia is not very competitive in attracting new businesses and retaining existing ones. The World Bank's 2012 "Doing Business" report, which measures the ease of conducting business activities (starting a business, obtaining credit, protecting investments, etc.), puts Russia in 120th place out of 183 countries.²⁴ This obviously has an adverse effect on the country's efforts to attract foreign business and encourage domestic startups, and the country's outdated legal code is not helping things. The Russian chief executive of a Swiss technology company with research centers in Moscow and Novosibirsk noted that in Russia, "instead of being focused on developing the fastest search engine or something, you would be focused on making sure that you have air conditioning in the office, or on paying taxes." He continued: "In the UK you can get a new CPU from the U.S., and you simply receive it and start using it. Here, you have to go through customs, and that can take a while. Things are not straightforward."²⁵

While the most recent Doing Business report notes that Russia has improved its ranking four places compared to its position last year, with improvements made in bureaucracy reduction, much work still remains to be done. Medvedev, himself a lawyer by training, pointed out in November 2010 that he was unaware of a Soviet-era law still on the books that mandates that foreign specialists working inside Russia are allowed to spend no more than ten days a year on domestic business trips.²⁶ This law may certainly have been subsequently scrapped, but it is likely that many more cumbersome pieces of legislation are still in effect.

Another issue that Skolkovo will not be able to directly tackle is pervasive corruption, a problem that plagues virtually every sector of the Russian economy. According to PricewaterhouseCooper's "2011 Russian Economic Crime Survey," 40 percent of respondents complained about corruption, while 13 percent said that it caused them to turn down new business opportunities or forego entering a new market.²⁷ The Ministry of Internal Affairs reported that in 2011, the average size of a commercial bribe ballooned more than three and a half times to 236,000 rubles (around 7,800 USD).²⁸ Even if progress is being made on the corruption problem, and even if it is not as severe as is commonly perceived, the data nonetheless suggests that corruption is a major detriment to commerce.

All of these factors have conspired to result in an outflow of talent – a so-called "brain drain," a phenomenon that is not new, but that has worsened in recent decades. 22 percent of Russians want to leave Russia permanently, according to a VTsIOM poll conducted in June 2011.²⁹ Worryingly, this desire is expressed most strongly among those aged 18 to 24 (39 percent) and those

with a high level of education (29 percent) – precisely the groups that will play a crucial role in shaping the Russian economy of tomorrow. The co-winners of the 2010 Nobel Prize in physics, Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov, were born and educated in the Soviet Union, but now work in the United Kingdom – and neither wants to return to Russia. Novoselov described his Soviet education as “one of the best in the world,” but noted that in Russia, he “wouldn’t be able to attract the best students and scientists” to work with. Geim believes that Russia has “neither the facilities nor the conditions” for his work, and criticized excessive corruption and bureaucracy.³⁰

Skolkovo attempts to remedy many of these obstacles at the technopark level. Many of the red tape functions usually assumed by the federal and local authorities are dealt with by the Skolkovo Foundation, which should result in a much more agile, responsive bureaucracy. Arduous bookkeeping policies³¹ and visa regimes³² have been specially relaxed for technopark residents. But corruption – not something tangible, like a piece of legislation that can be repealed – may prove to be a more formidable opponent (despite Skolkovo Foundation President Viktor Vekselberg’s brash and somewhat bizarre assurance that corruptionists in Skolkovo would be “lynched”).³³ As for the so-called “brain drain,” it is possible that state-of-the-art facilities and generous funding at the *innograd* might convince scientists and entrepreneurs to stay in the country. However, this will not be sufficient to deal with these problems on a national level.

Can Skolkovo succeed?

Considering the structure of the project and the goals that its founders have envisioned for it, this question should be analyzed on two different levels – that of the project itself and of the project’s ability to make a lasting impact on the country’s economic structure. As noted by Presidential Aide Arkady Dvorkovich, Skolkovo’s objectives are twofold. “The first is to create an innovation center, and the second – this center will act as a structure, an engine, an umbrella, a window for innovative development of Russia as a whole.”³⁴

I am certainly much more optimistic on the first front. Regardless of Medvedev’s political rhetoric, the creation of a top-tier technology and innovation hub constitutes Skolkovo’s immediate task. Considering the prominent political backing that the project enjoys (at the time of writing, none other than the President of Russia himself), the appreciable sums of resources devoted to it, and the notable companies and individuals who have jumped on board, it is very likely that Skolkovo will become a successful amalgamation of companies – startup and established, Russian and foreign – that should eventually form a well-known innovation center.

Skolkovo, like other technopark projects, serves a valuable purpose. Exhortations to change the economy must be followed up with concrete action, since a national economy is obviously not capable of changing spontaneously of its own accord. A start is needed somewhere – even the longest journeys begin with a single step, as the saying goes – and Skolkovo is definitely a strong step in the right direction. If Skolkovo functions as a sort of “guinea pig” for a broader innovation economy as a whole, then the (presumably successful) results can be touted nationwide: policies that are “tried and true” in Skolkovo can be promoted towards an end result of implementation on a national scale. All the better, too, if that very same “guinea pig” enjoys a solid reputation and can inspire innovation – not just among academic and business circles, but also in the general public. As Dominique Fache, one of the founders of Sophia-Antipolis, the first French technology park, observed, “Ten years ago, nobody in Russia listened to those who spoke about innovation. Today, there’s a will at the highest level to make things happen. But in order to create a new culture of innovation, building a Potemkin village is not enough. We must awaken creativity, a sense of risk, lateral thinking, and networking.”³⁵ Innovation and entrepreneurship are not traits inherent to a particular country; they are learned attributes, and there is no reason why this culture, heavily promoted by Skolkovo, cannot someday become prevalent throughout Russia. An *innograd*-style project can bring efforts to modernize into the public spotlight and can help inspire an innovative and entrepreneurial mentality in places where it is lacking.

That said, Skolkovo by itself will not (and cannot) be a silver bullet solution to Russia’s structural economic woes. “Even if we are wildly successful,” at the brick-and-mortar aspect of the project, said its chief operating officer, Steven Geiger, Skolkovo is “realistically going to make a modest impact on a country of a size of Russia.”³⁶ Efforts to integrate its policies into the rest of the country have already been formed; the “Virtual Skolkovo” initiative seeks to apply the “best practices” applied at Skolkovo to 20 or 30 existing technoparks and universities throughout Russia.³⁷ But Skolkovo will largely remain an extraterritorial project, existing in physical and legal contrast to the rest of the country, and its second objective – becoming the Russian locomotive of economic modernization and innovation – will be much harder to attain. To be sure, the full outcome of even the most viable scenario would probably take many years to become apparent, so to cast a final verdict on the project’s success at the moment would be quite premature. However, serious roadblocks continue to stand between the current state of the Russian economy and its future as envisioned by Medvedev.

Russia has the best chance of overcoming these barriers if it embarks on a wide-ranging, sweeping set of reforms. This means moving beyond Skolkovo and its related projects, so that it is not the exception to the rule but becomes

representative of a new norm. Why not take those special rules at Skolkovo and make them federal law? Some argue that this process should not be completed too hastily, and indeed, perhaps it might be beneficial to wait a year or two and see how they play out in the *innograd* first. But should they be successful, these unique policies should be quickly adopted on a national scale. If all goes well, all that is currently unique and novel about Skolkovo (apart from the shiny campus itself, perhaps) should cease to be so after it is applied nationwide. Additionally, modernization should not start and end with the economy; a comprehensive modernization platform should include a reform of the rather sclerotic political sphere, too. An independent, strong judiciary (the rule of law, not the law of rulers) and genuine political competition are vital. Increased levels of competition, after all, should help make government more transparent and accountable – something that scientists, investors, and entrepreneurs, both inside Russia and from abroad, will appreciate.

Conclusions

What role should the state play in developing a Silicon Valley-style milieu? If money and political determination alone were the only required ingredients, then it is likely that there would be many successful clones across the world. But the very lack of Valley copies points to the fact that it is very difficult for governments to get involved at what I like to call the “Goldilocks level” – not too much, not too little, but just the right amount. They must act forcefully enough to establish a legal and mercantile environment that encourages and promotes the free movement and exchange of ideas and resources, and they should develop and nurture a solid foundation of higher education that will provide the scientific talent and inventions that will “feed” the system. In Russia, this might mean a tenacious fight against a stubborn bureaucracy and arrogant political elites. But once a suitable ecosystem has been established, the state must avoid the temptation to get further involved. A supportive role is obligatory, but unnecessary interference – choosing “favorite” companies, for example – should be frowned upon. Beyond establishing certain broad goals, such as those that exist at Skolkovo, the state’s agenda should not impede the innovative ecosystem.

A famous quote, attributed to New York University economist Paul Romer, reminds us that “a crisis is a terrible thing to waste.” The very same global financial crisis that so bluntly exposed Russia’s overreliance on resource exports and generally outdated economy also provided the government with a valuable opportunity to take a hard look at its economic state of affairs, and to hopefully effect meaningful change. Both the Russian and English words for “crisis” are derived from the Greek word for “decision,” and indeed,

difficult decisions will have to be made regarding the extent of state action when it comes to sowing the seeds of a new type of economy. Kremlin policy-makers will have to take a hard look at the risks and rewards that will accompany such a transformation and make a decision: should they accept the threat to their power that would likely accompany modernizing reforms, or should they continue along the path of further stagnation? More and more time has elapsed since Medvedev's prescient warning in 2009, and yet the Russian government has subsequently done very little in the way of real reform. The Skolkovo project is a positive development and will no doubt result in a substantial amount of long-term good for Russia. But Skolkovo-like projects, while serving as springboards for economic transformation, can only go so far. Only with genuine, effective political and economic reform can these ventures have a fair shot at transforming a national economy.

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Maria Y. Saleh / Russia, Yemen

Spiral Into the Arab Spring: The Surprising Rise of Yemeni Women*

Introduction

In 2011, Yemeni human rights activist Tawakkul Karman became the first Arab woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Thereafter, she became the face of the Yemeni democratic revolution and drew public attention to female activism in both her country and the Middle East. During the Arab Spring, Yemeni women were more vocal and prominent than their female counterparts in other Arab countries. This is surprising, given that Yemen ranks at the bottom of almost all development incidences regarding women's rights in the Middle East. This paper will attempt to explore the roots of female activism and explain the phenomenon of women's involvement in the Yemeni Arab Spring.

Yemen's modern history

Until 1990, present-day Yemen was actually two separate states – North Yemen and South Yemen. A discussion of the “North” and the “South” is necessary to understand the political ideologies and tensions that shaped Yemen's policy toward women's rights. Key events include the establishment of the Yemen Arab Republic in the north of Yemen in 1962 and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in the south of Yemen in 1967, the unification of these two governments in 1990, and the ensuing 1994 civil war that tore them apart. These events shaped the Yemeni regime's view of women's rights.

* This work was submitted as a final thesis for a Master's degree in International Affairs at Washington University in St. Louis.

North Yemen prior to unification

North Yemen first gained sovereignty when the country won independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1918. Between 1918 and 1962, North Yemen was ruled by the Hamidaddin imamate. During the imamate, the region was virtually isolated from the rest of the world. Isolation was a deliberate strategy by the Imam, as he feared that outside interference would loosen his grip over the country.

The Imam was dethroned in 1962, and the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) was established. Subsequently, from 1962 to 1970, the Yemen Arab Republic endured civil war between Yemeni republicans (supported by Egypt and the Soviet Union) and Yemeni royalists (supported by Jordan and Saudi Arabia). Nasser's Egypt was weak and was no longer able to provide financial and military support to republicans in Yemen after it lost the 1967 Six-Day War. This loss of foreign aid significantly weakened the Yemeni republicans, and the royalists eventually prevailed.

During the civil war, the royalists had recruited Yemeni tribesmen as mercenaries. Recruitment had been successful, and so the new government wanted to reward tribesmen for their service and secure an electoral base. In 1970 the royalist government created a Supreme Council for Defense, which was composed exclusively of tribal sheikhs. This council was charged with maintaining security in rural regions of the country. Additionally, the government founded a Consultative Council composed primarily of tribal leaders, which acted as an advisory body to the government.¹

As a result, royalists and their Yemeni tribes shared political power. This arrangement was relatively smooth, since both royalists and the tribes had very conservative visions for Yemen. This was particularly evident with respect to the treatment of women and women's rights and influenced Yemen's policies toward women even after unification.

South Yemen prior to unification

South Yemen initially had been a part of British India dating back to 1839. In 1937, its main port city, Aden, became a British Crown Colony. The global wave of decolonization eventually reached South Yemen in 1963 when a nationalist movement in Aden started an armed struggle against the British. As a result, in 1967, Britain withdrew and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) was established. In 1970, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen embraced Marxism and established close ties with the Soviet Union. The leading party in South Yemen was later coined the Yemen Socialist Party, and the party sought to live up to its name: "The new socialist state embarked on the most progressive social program in the entire Arab world."² As Molyneux observed, the "legal and constitutional legitimacy of the state

was not based on religion, but on ‘the people.’”³ Unlike its neighbors in the Yemen Arab Republic to the north, the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen’s definition of “people” even included women: “The PDRY Constitution of 1978 made it a state responsibility to deliver rights to women within a framework of equality.”⁴

In 1986, a civil war erupted in the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen because of a power struggle within the Yemen Socialist Party. The clashes lasted for more than a month and resulted in severe human, political, and economic losses for the South. These losses set the grounds for unification talks between the Yemen Arab Republic and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen.

Unification of the North and the South

Negotiations for unification began in 1989. Both North Yemen and South Yemen had reasons to seek unification, although the South more urgently needed to merge with its neighbor to the north.

The South had emerged out of its civil war seriously weakened and fractured. It viewed unification with the North as a remedy to its economic and political crises. Additionally, the Soviet Union had reduced economic support to the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen and the South’s ruling party toward the end of the Cold War: financial aid to the South was reduced from \$400 million in 1988 to \$50 million in 1989.⁵ The cutback had a devastating impact on the South’s economy. Moreover, the South had a much smaller population than the North. At the time of unification, South Yemen’s population was approximately two million people, while the North boasted about twelve million citizens.⁶

The South needed unification to survive, and the North in turn had negotiating leverage. As Elham Manea put it, “the southern leadership was the weaker partner in the new political setting for the simple reason that it needed the unification more.”⁷

However, the North had interest in unification as well. Its main motivation was a discovery of oil reserves on the North’s and South’s shared border.⁸ The North anticipated that it could avoid hotly contested land ownership disputes via unification. The North also recognized that even when divided into North and South, there had always been a sense of a single Yemeni people and nationhood.⁹

Thus, after a series of talks, the unified Republic of Yemen (ROY) was created on May 20, 1990, by mutual consent of the North and South. Ali Abdullah Saleh, the former leader of the Yemen Arab Republic (North), became president, and Ali Salim al-Beidh, the former general secretary of the People’s

Democratic Republic of Yemen (South), was appointed vice president. The institutional amalgamation of the North and South occurred within a transitional period of 30 months. During this transitional period, the new government created a unified Parliament, agreed upon a Constitution, and held Parliamentary elections in 1993.¹⁰

The civil war of 1994

Despite all the incentives and efforts to build a unified state, tensions between the North and South remained. The ruling elites of the unified state had two very different visions for Yemen's future. Because of their very different pasts, the North was markedly conservative, while the South was more liberal.

These deep-rooted institutional and ideological differences tore the country apart. Following the pattern of a classic "security dilemma," each side sought to build up its own military capabilities and solicit aid from foreign donors.¹¹ Additionally, Northern elites sought to consolidate their power by maintaining and reinforcing the economic and demographic imbalances between the North and the South. The hostilities reached their peak when a large number of political assassinations of socialist leaders from the South were perpetrated by opponents in the North.¹²

The tensions created by this security dilemma made the war between the two parties inevitable.¹³ Fuelled by fear, distrust, and an internal power struggle, the North and the South entered into civil war in May of 1994. The Southern leaders declared secession from unified Yemen and established the Democratic Republic of Yemen on May 21, 1994. However, the international community did not recognize the break-off as a state. After a series of clashes, the North prevailed and President Saleh restored control over Yemen. The secession had failed.

Following the civil war, political leaders from the South lost a great deal of influence in the government. This left some political power up for grabs. President Saleh decided to grant the tribal and Islamist leaders key political positions in the new government, since their support during the 1994 civil war had been crucial to his victory. This new influence allowed the tribes and Islamists to shape domestic politics and impose their conservative agenda on the political decision-making processes in Yemen for years to come. The conservative bent of the Yemeni government was especially evident regarding women's rights.

Women's rights in Yemen's modern history

The shifts in the balance of power among the elites shaped Yemeni women's political rights prior to unification, after unification, and after the civil war. Yemeni political elites relied on the country's conservative social base of power to wield influence. With time, Yemen's conservative ideology was sharpened by a coalition between the dominant political party, local tribes, and Yemeni Islamists. This coalition ultimately resulted in the severe repression of women in Yemen.

Women's rights prior to unification

Women's political rights in the North prior to unification. Even before the establishment of the Yemen Arab Republic, women in North Yemen did not enjoy substantial rights. After the establishment of the Yemen Arab Republic, the tribes and Islamists that had assumed control used religion to codify the existing patterns of marginalizing women. Article 34 of the 1970 Constitution introduced Sharia law: "Women are sisters of men. They have rights and duties, which are guaranteed and required by Sharia and stipulated by law."¹⁴ Manea posits, "Adding the Sharia here indicated the victory of the conservative camp within the Yemeni leadership."¹⁵

The new Constitution stipulated that although women in the Yemen Arab Republic were allowed to vote in local council elections, they could not be nominated as candidates for office.¹⁶ However, by the time the first local elections took place in 1983, the Yemen Arab Republic's government softened its position and allowed women both to vote and run for office.¹⁷ This was a clear concession to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in the run up to unification.¹⁸ "South Yemen championed gender emancipation and attacked the [North's] record on gender, disparaging its backwardness."¹⁹

Although the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen made it clear that allowing women in the Yemen Arab Republic more freedom was a necessary condition for the future unification of both countries, the Yemen Arab Republic's government attempted to restrict women's political rights on the national level five years later. In its 1988 Parliamentary elections, females were allowed to vote, but were not allowed to run for office in the elections.²⁰ By this time, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen did not have enough political leverage to change the Yemen Arab Republic's discriminatory policy. The 1986 civil war weakened the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and women's issues were simply no longer at the top of its agenda.

Women's political rights in the South prior to unification. The South took a much different stance toward women. A women's movement in South Yemen

started under British rule. The movement gained momentum when the South achieved independence in 1967 and again when it embraced Marxism in 1970.²¹ Observers remarked that the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen's Constitution adopted in the 1970s was "arguably the most egalitarian in the Arab world."²² The state's commitment to socialist modernization was reflected in its determination to reform women's role in society.²³ Article 35 of the Constitution held that:

*All citizens are equal in their rights and duties irrespective of their sex, origin, religion, language, standard of education or social status. All persons are equal before the law. The state shall do whatever to realize this equality by means of providing equal political, economical, social, and cultural opportunities.*²⁴

Article 36 addressed gender equality:

*The state shall ensure equal rights for men and women in all fields of life, the political, economical, and social, and shall provide the necessary conditions for the realization of that equality. The state shall also work for the creation of the circumstances that will enable the women to combine... participation in the productive and social work [with their] role within the family sphere. It shall render special care to the vocational qualifying of the working women. The state shall, further, ensure special protection for the working women and the children and shall establish kindergartens and nurseries for the children and all other such means of care as to be specified by the law.*²⁵

The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen encouraged the participation of women in political organizations, state administration, and a newly established Women's Union.²⁶ In 1977, women ran in the local elections for the first time in the country's history.²⁷ Ten women ran in the elections, and eight of those were elected.²⁸

Women's political representation in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen improved in the late 1980s. Socialist reforms had succeeded in allowing more women to participate politically, and especially so in urban areas. Immediately before the 1990 unification, women comprised 10 percent of the members of Parliament.²⁹

In sum, the ideological differences between the Yemen Arab Republic (North) and People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South) prior to unification were exemplified in the political rights granted to women. In the Yemen Arab Republic, the Islah coalition restricted women's political rights. "The state never made gender equality part of a vocal discourse."³⁰ The Northern women

endured a chauvinistic culture and a strict patriarchal society.³¹ In contrast to the Yemen Arab Republic, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen made women's political rights a priority. Southern women were the "beneficiaries of gender gains within the project of the socialist state."³²

Women's political rights after unification: 1990-1993

After the 1990 unification, the Republic of Yemen adopted a Constitution that took a progressive approach toward women's political rights. This progressive shift was due to the South's influence. The 1990 Constitution granted all Yemeni women a right to full participation in politics. Article 27 of the Constitution guaranteed "Equal treatment in the eyes of the law... for all citizens who are equal in rights and duties, and no discrimination shall be practiced due to sex, color, racial origin, language, occupation, social status, or religious beliefs."³³ Article 42 held that "the right to vote and candidacy are guaranteed to all citizens."³⁴ In 1992, Article 2 in General Election Law No. 41 defined citizens as "all Yemeni nationals, males and females, entitled to vote according to the provision of this law."³⁵ Both men and women were guaranteed the right to vote and the right to run for political office.

Women's rights after the civil war of 1994

The marginalization of women's rights resurfaced after the Northern victory in the 1994 civil war. This marginalization was due to the weakening of the South and the rise of the North's tribes and Islamists following the war. Having provided critical support to President Saleh during the conflict, tribes and Islamists were awarded more power in the government after the victory. This conservative tribal-Islamist coalition embarked on amending the Constitution in order to comply with Sharia Law. Although women's rights to vote and candidacy were not entirely taken away, major amendments codified "the most authoritative religious provisions"³⁶ of Islamic jurisprudence.

Article 3 of the 1990 Constitution, which had held that "Islamic Sharia is the principle source of legislation,"³⁷ was revised to declare "Islamic Sharia [as] the source of *all* legislation."³⁸ Article 27 of the 1990 Constitution had held that "equal treatment in the eyes of the law is guaranteed for all citizens who are equal in rights and duties, and no discrimination shall be practiced due to sex, color, racial origin, language, occupation, social status, or religious beliefs."³⁹ This article was repealed. In its place, Article 40 of the 1994 Constitution avoided any reference to gender equality: "Citizens are all equal in rights and duties."⁴⁰ Article 31 was introduced to the 1994 Constitution and addressed women's status: "Women are the sisters of men. They have rights and duties, which are guaranteed and assigned by Sharia and stipulated by law."⁴¹ In essence, the new 1994 Constitution was a mirror image of the North's old, conservative 1970 Constitution of the Yemen Arab Republic.⁴²

The amendments “acknowledged the strength of the tribal-Islamist base of power of the Yemeni state that emerged after war.”⁴³ The former Yemeni minister for Unification Affairs said in an interview: “These amendments were regrettable consequences of the 1994 war; usually whoever contributed to the victory over the other side wants a share of the outcome.”⁴⁴

In sum, the internal struggle for power in Yemen shaped the fate of Yemeni women’s rights. The ultimate rise of the conservative tribal-Islamist coalition set the trend toward the country’s Islamization. As a result, although women were officially granted full political rights, in practice they faced strong social and cultural obstacles.

Women as political candidates and voters

Women officially had the right to participate in Yemen’s political sphere. However, the 1993, 1997, and 2003 elections demonstrated that women actually faced staunch resistance to equal participation in the country’s politics.

The political scene and the effect on women’s right to participate in politics

Yemeni law ostensibly made way for fair elections in which women could fully participate. Article 42 of the 1990 Constitution established that “the right to vote and candidacy are guaranteed to all citizens.”⁴⁵ Article 2 of 1992 General Election Law No. 41 defined citizens as “all Yemeni nationals, males and females.”⁴⁶ However, the next step for women was not only to have the right to candidacy, but also to win elections. Winning proved extremely difficult because of opposition from two of the three major political parties in Yemen.

In the 1990s, the formal political sphere was dominated by three parties – the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), the General People’s Conference (GPC), and Islah. Each party had its own vision for women’s rights, but only the latter two were powerful enough to make their agenda a reality.

The YSP, which had been the ruling party in the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen, opposed the conservative ruling regime and promoted women’s rights. However, the YSP failed to counter the trend toward women’s political marginalization because conservative opponents outnumbered it.

The GPC became the ruling party of Yemen after unification. Its stand on women’s rights was based on the party’s strategic interests, and therefore fluctuated over time. In the early 1990s, the GPC developed strategic ties with the conservative and religious Islah party in order to squash the YSP. Thus, the GPC’s policies toward women changed accordingly.

The Islah party was (and to this day, is) a highly conservative, religious party in Yemen. Established in 1990, Islah united three political players under one umbrella – the Muslim Brotherhood, the Salafi movement, and a group of the major tribal leaders. These groups shared a Northern political base, a conservative outlook, and ideological hostility toward the YSP's promotion of women's rights.⁴⁷

Thus, cooperation with the YSP was not an option for Islah. Islah also formally opposed the GPC, but was able to cooperate with the latter, since the GPC was the dominant party in Yemen. This was because Islah and the GPC shared the YSP as a common enemy. The two parties allied in order to counterbalance the YSP.⁴⁸ This GPC-Islah partnership marked a drastic change of the Yemeni government's attitude toward women's rights.

Women in the parliamentary elections of 1993

In 1993, Yemen held its first Parliamentary elections after unification. Out of 3,600 candidates, only 42 were women, and 25 of those 42 ran as independents without the support of the formal political parties.⁴⁹ These women ran in only 27 out of Yemen's 301 constituencies, focusing mainly on Yemen's major cities – Aden, with sixteen candidates, and Sana'a, with fourteen candidates.⁵⁰ In the end, only two women representing the Southern constituencies of Aden and Hadramawt won seats.⁵¹ The main reason for women's poor performance in the elections was the lack of formal party support. As mentioned above, the GPC and Islah had formed an alliance that was partially based on the repression of women. Thus, in 1993, the GPC nominated only two women, and Islah nominated no women at all.⁵²

The conservative GPC and Islah parties opposed female political activism on ideological grounds. The Islah party leaders argued that women (by nature) could not hold positions superior to those of men.⁵³ Islah even campaigned against all female candidates through sermons in mosques. In addition, Islah also sought to influence women's decision to vote. While officially supporting women's right to vote, Islah issued a *fatwa*, or Islamic ruling, that stressed women's duty to obey their husbands in their voting decision.⁵⁴

It should be noted however, that the main political parties did not avoid female candidates for ideological reasons alone.⁵⁵ From a pragmatic point of view, nominating female candidates was risky. Even the YSP offered only four female candidates in the 1993 elections.

Additionally, female candidates and their supporters were subjected to threats and abuse. Women faced slanderous attacks and intimidation from conservative opponents unless they dropped their candidacies. As Yadav stated, the 1993 Parliamentary elections experience for women was “expensive, ex-

hausting, painful, and uphill.”⁵⁶ According to a 1996 survey, when asked if they would run again in the 1997 elections, only 15 percent of the female candidates of 1993 were willing, 48 percent were unsure, and 26 percent said “no.”⁵⁷

Women in the parliamentary elections of 1997

Because of the frustrating experiences in the 1993 Parliamentary elections, the number of women candidates in the 1997 Parliamentary elections was considerably lower. Out of 3,851 candidates, only 23 were women, and only seventeen of those 23 remained in the race until the end of the elections.⁵⁸

Just like in the 1993 elections, formal parties did not nominate female candidates in significant numbers. The GPC nominated two women. Islah again did not nominate any female candidates, issuing a statement that women by nature are not suited to serve in positions of authority.⁵⁹ The YSP nominated none because of its boycott of the 1997 elections. Ultimately, only nine other female candidates ran and were essentially forced to run as independents.⁶⁰ The two female candidates who won seats in the Parliament were the ones backed by the GPC.

The 1997 elections revealed that the trend toward social conservatism that started in the early 1990s had gained strength. The GPC and Islah increasingly advocated for women to play traditional roles in society, such as child bearing and home making.⁶¹

Women in the parliamentary elections of 2003

In the 2003 Parliamentary elections, the total number of female candidates fell even lower than in the previous two elections. Out of the 1,396 candidates, only eleven were women. The GPC supported only one woman, and Islah unsurprisingly did not nominate any female candidates. The YSP nominated four female candidates.⁶² Other marginal parties nominated three women respectively. An additional five women ran independently. The elections produced only one female candidate who was victorious in winning a Parliament seat.

Women as voters

While the parties' support for female candidates declined in the 1990s and early 2000s, the number of female registered voters and turnout increased. From the 1993 elections to the 1997 elections, the registration of women voters rose from 478,790 (18 percent of the electorate) in 1993 to 1,272,073 (27 percent of the electorate) in 1997.⁶³

Women actively participated in the 2003 elections as voters, as well, continuing the upswing of voter registration: the number of female registered voters climbed from 1,272,073 (27 percent of the electorate) in 1997 to 3.4 million (42 percent of the electorate) in 2003.⁶⁴

In sum, women's access to formal politics steadily shrank throughout the 1990s and early 2000s.⁶⁶ There were fewer women in the Parliament in 2003 than in 1993. Paradoxically, however, the attempt to restrict female political participation, while somewhat successful in terms of candidacy, appears to have had the opposite effect in terms of women's voter turnout. Within a decade (1993-2003), female registered voters jumped from 18 to 42 percent of the electorate.

TABLE 1: FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE 1993, 1997, AND 2003 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS⁶⁵

Elections	Candidates			Winners			Voters		
	Women	Men	Percentage of Women (%)	Women	Men	Percentage of Women (%)	Women	Men	Percentage of Women (%)
Parliamentary election, 1993	42	3,140	1.3	2	299	0.7	478,790	2,209,944	18
Parliamentary election, 1997	19	2,096	1.3	2	299	0.7	1,272,073	3,364,786	27
Parliamentary election, 2003	11	1,644	0.6	1	300	0.3	3,415,114	4,682,048	42

The women's movement and the 2011 Yemeni revolution: an application of the "spiral model"

The "spiral model"

Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink introduced the "spiral model" in their 1999 book "The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change." The "spiral model" accurately described the uprisings in Chile, Guatemala, Morocco, South Africa, the former Soviet Union, Tunisia, and Uganda.⁶⁷ Today, the growing power of the global human rights networks and technological progress makes the "spiral model" as relevant as ever. "The spiral model specifies and details the causal mechanisms through which international norms are transmitted into the domestic arena and ultimately lead

to domestic institutional change.”⁶⁸ The domestic institutional change occurs over several phases.

The first phase is state *repression*, which is reflected in a regime’s violation of international human rights norms.⁶⁹ Consequently, human rights violations draw criticism from transnational human rights networks. The human rights networks are “composed of international regimes, organizations, and supportive advocacy coalitions”⁷⁰ that share common values. The networks constitute “the single most important group of actors to put norm-violating government on the international agenda through a process of moral consciousness-raising.”⁷¹

Repressive regimes typically respond to these criticisms by *denying* the allegations – which is the second stage of the “spiral model.” However, Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink’s empirical findings demonstrate that by the 1980s governments increasingly skipped the denial stage, and by the 1990s, this stage had disappeared.⁷² This skip has been thought to reflect a worldwide acceptance of the validity of human rights norms among countries and the growing authority of transnational human rights networks.

Therefore, after being criticized by the international community, repressive regimes skip the second phase and tend to make *tactical concessions* – the third and most critical phase of the “spiral model” with regard to achieving sustainable human rights improvements.⁷³ In order to silence the critics and restore their reputations, norm-violating governments carry out token reforms to appease international human rights networks. For example, governments sign international agreements, make commitments, or simply “‘talk the talk’ of human rights in [the] international fora.”⁷⁴

These concessions, however, are usually rather superficial in nature and do not indicate deep structural reforms of human rights. Of course, the motives that drive governments to make tactical concessions largely depend on a “regime’s vulnerability.”⁷⁵ For example, many regimes are vulnerable because they heavily depend on foreign donors for financial aid.⁷⁶ This economic incentive to make concessions is particularly effective. Others are vulnerable to moral pressures and make instrumental concessions in order to restore their good name.⁷⁷

However, as Risse and Ropp pointed out, even talk is not cheap. Norm-violating governments often become entangled in their public promises and commitments. Domestic opposition, in turn, uses these unfulfilled promises and commitments as a platform to mobilize against the regime. Domestic opposition also often expands and forms ties with transnational human rights networks.⁷⁸ Keck and Sikkink refer to this phenomenon as the “boomerang

effect,” which occurs when domestic opposition groups reach out to international allies to bring pressure on a repressive regime.⁷⁹ “International contacts can ‘amplify’ the demands of domestic groups... and then echo these demands back to the international arena.”⁸⁰ In response to these boomerang effects, some regimes embark on “controlled liberalization,” while others “continue to miscalculate the situation, as a result of which a regime change is likely to happen.”⁸¹

Whichever path the regime chooses to take – liberalization or regime change – international human rights norms inevitably gain *prescriptive status*,⁸² which is the fourth phase of the “spiral model.” During this phase, governments start to institutionalize international human rights norms, leading the state to the final phase – *rule-consistent behavior*.⁸³

Application to the women’s movement and the 2011 Yemeni revolution

Pursuant to the “spiral model,” the Yemeni regime under Saleh was strongly criticized by the growing global human rights network for repressing Yemeni women in the 2000s. Instead of denying the allegations, the Saleh regime instead chose to make tactical concessions. The regime, however, underestimated the possible consequences of the concessions and refused to embark on controlled liberalization. As a result, year-long protests ensued and a regime change transpired.

The Yemeni government’s tactical concessions in detail. Before the 21st century, international aid did little to promote democracy and women’s rights in Yemen. In her 1998 work “Civil Society in Yemen,” Sheila Carapico observed:

*Foreign influence has hardly promoted democratization: the British did not do so in Aden or the protectorates; the USSR and other donors did not do so during the cold war; regional donors are explicitly anti-republican and anti-democratic; and since the Gulf War Western donors have pressed for normalization of relations with repressive monarchies and rescheduling of debt more assiduously than they have clamored for elections or human rights.*⁸⁴

The situation has since changed. After 9/11, the West realized that military means were not sufficiently advancing democracy in the developing world. Promotion of democracy from the ground up was the new tactic of choice. Gender equality became increasingly recognized as one of the pillars of democracy and sustainable development.⁸⁵ Subsequently, international donors increased pressure in the 2000s, and Yemen in turn felt pressure to honor its commitments toward gender equality.

TABLE 2: YEMEN'S INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ⁸⁶

Agreement	Date of Ratification
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights	September 29, 1994
The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	February 9, 1987
The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	May 30, 1984
The Convention on the Political Rights of Women	February 9, 1987
The Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages	February 9, 1987
The Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others	April 6, 1989
Commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action	September 1995

Four high level forums on aid effectiveness commitments. In order to encourage Yemen to carry out reforms that would empower women, international donors started providing aid. Since the early 2000s, Yemen has participated in four High Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness, which were organized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The forums were held in Rome in 2003, Paris in 2005, Accra in 2008, and Busan in 2011. The Yemeni government, civil society organizations, and the international donor community met at these forums to discuss the most effective ways to manage foreign funds.⁸⁷ Women's empowerment was identified as one of the key prerequisites for aid effectiveness. For instance, the 2008 Accra Forum recognized that "gender equality... is one of the cornerstones for achieving enduring impacts on the lives and potential of poor women, men and children."⁸⁸ Additionally, the Forum identified specific actions that needed to be taken to achieve gender equality.⁸⁹

Para 3: “Gender equality, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability are cornerstones for achieving enduring impact on the lives and potential of poor women, men, and children. It is vital that all our policies address these issues in a more systematic and coherent way.”

Para 13c: “Developing countries and donors will ensure that their respective development policies and programs are designed and implemented in ways consistent with their agreed international commitments on gender equality, human rights, disability and environmental sustainability.”

Para 21b: “At country level, donors and developing countries will work and agree on a set of realistic peace- and state-building objectives that address the root causes of conflict and fragility and help ensure the protection and participation of women.”

Para 23a: “Developing countries will strengthen the quality of policy design, implementation and assessment by improving information systems, including, as appropriate, disaggregating data by sex, region and socioeconomic status.”

FIGURE 1: GENDER IN THE ACCRA AGENDA FOR ACTION, SEPTEMBER 2008 ⁹⁰

As a result of the forums, Yemen signed a number of international agreements and pledged to implement development programs consistent with its international commitments on gender equality and women’s rights. At the 2011 Busan Forum, Yemen pledged to “accelerate [its] efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women through development programs..., recognizing that gender equality and women’s empowerment are critical to achieving development results.”⁹¹

These forums created an institutional platform to approach gender inequalities in Yemen. They effectively pressured the Yemeni government to liberalize its policies toward women. In order to continue receiving foreign aid, the Yemeni government conceded to international pressure and made numerous commitments to carry out reforms to empower women.

Commitments to the Millennium Development Goals. Yemen also made important commitments to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were laid out by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000. One of the MDGs – *Promote gender equality and empower women* – directly aimed at promoting women’s rights. Other MDGs – *Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger*,

“Reducing gender inequality is both an end in its own right and a prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive growth. As we redouble our efforts to implement existing commitments we will:

a) Accelerate and deepen efforts to collect, disseminate, harmonize and make full use of data disaggregated by sex to inform policy decisions and guide investments, ensuring in turn that public expenditures are targeted appropriately to benefit both women and men.

b) Integrate targets for gender equality and women’s empowerment in accountability mechanisms, grounded in international and regional commitments.

c) Address gender equality and women’s empowerment in all aspects of our development efforts, including peacebuilding and statebuilding.”

FIGURE 2: GENDER IN THE BUSAN PARTNERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION, NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2011 ⁹²

Achieve universal primary education, Reduce child mortality and Improve maternal health – tackled women’s rights indirectly.

On its way to achieving these MDGs, the Yemeni government endorsed “a number of development plans and strategies at the macro and sector levels.”⁹³ These included the second Five Year Development Plan (2001-05), a Poverty Reduction Strategy, the third National Development Plan for Poverty Reduction (2006-2010), and the National Reforms Agenda. These plans and strategies were designed to achieve economic growth, human development, and poverty reduction – all goals that would ultimately benefit both Yemeni men and women.⁹⁴ One of the main obstacles in achieving these goals was the “failure [of the Yemeni government] to make use of half the available human potential and resources” – women.⁹⁵ Consequently, the Yemeni government pledged to carry out the following reforms: empower women, develop institutional capacity, and strengthen partnerships between the government, civil society, and foreign donors.⁹⁶

Foreign aid in exchange for commitments. In exchange for the numerous commitments made by the Yemeni government, international donors increased their financial support for development projects in the 2000s. The World Bank has been the main donor in Yemen.⁹⁷ It gave Yemen \$420 million for gender equality projects in the 2000s.⁹⁸ In 2007, the World Bank launched a new worldwide action plan, entitled Gender Equality as Smart Economics, that helped deepen

the integration of gender issues in World Bank operations in the Yemeni economic sectors.⁹⁹

Other international organizations and development agencies sponsored development projects that promote gender equality, both directly and indirectly. UNICEF focused on the areas of health and water, targeting the most vulnerable groups – women and children.¹⁰⁰ The UNDP provided support for democratic governance, human rights, justice, and poverty reduction through direct assistance to community-based initiatives.¹⁰¹ USAID concentrated \$30 million in the areas of reproductive and child health, basic education, income generating activities, food security, and democratic governance from 2003 to 2006.¹⁰²

Nations donated via development programs as well. To date, Germany and the Netherlands are the major EU donors to Yemen, with €33 million and €28.4 million donated respectively. Their development programs focus on women's empowerment, health, education, and governance.¹⁰³ Great Britain's financial support to Yemen reached €18 million in 2005 and 2006. These funds concentrated on women's rights, civil society, reproductive health, and good governance.¹⁰⁴ Denmark donated €5.6 million for development programs in women's empowerment, democratization, human rights, and the media from 2005 to 2007.¹⁰⁵ France donated €2 million for projects on girls' education, rural development, civil society, and governance in 2006-2010.¹⁰⁶ In recent years, Italy has also increased its aid to Yemen to €6.8 million for women's empowerment, reproductive health, food aid, and democratic governance.¹⁰⁷ Japan has been highly involved as a donor to Yemen, and it is increasingly engaged in the fields of democratization, human rights, and women's empowerment.¹⁰⁸

As World Bank Senior Advisor Jeehan Abdulghafar observed, "although many development projects do not indicate women's empowerment as the ultimate goal, donors expect that the Yemeni government will engage local women as leaders, participants, and beneficiaries of the development projects."¹⁰⁹

Regime change: the result of tactical concessions. By the end of the 1990s, the international community increased criticism of the Yemeni government's repression of women. In turn, gender became a crosscutting issue for all development programs by the 2000s. Facing growing pressure both domestically and internationally, the Yemeni regime chose to avoid a lengthy denial phase and instead made tactical concessions. Concessions were made for two reasons. First, the Yemeni regime wanted to protect incoming foreign aid.¹¹⁰ Because Yemen suffered from rampant corruption, as well as a lack of accountability and oversight over the distribution of government funds, foreign aid provided a safety net for the regime.¹¹¹ Second, the Yemeni regime feared

international isolation and subsequently signed a number of international agreements and pledged to carry out reforms that would empower women.

The regime miscalculated the risks involved with concessions, however. It did not expect that tactical concessions would unleash deeper structural changes in Yemeni society. The regime's rhetoric that it supported human rights began to "resonate with domestic audiences."¹¹² This momentum was captured by international and local media, and thus provided female opposition groups "with 'ammunition' in the internal 'argumentative wars.'"¹¹³ It empowered and validated the claims of domestic opposition groups.¹¹⁴ As a result, domestic opposition, viewing the relative efficacy of international criticism, gained the courage to escalate "its own campaign of criticism against the government."¹¹⁵

Domestic opposition expanded not only politically, but geographically as well. Yemeni opposition groups and civil society organizations increasingly connected with international organizations, international NGOs, and foreign donors to pressure the Yemeni government.¹¹⁶ The alliance between international entities (from above) and local entities (from below) played a crucial role in mobilizing women's organizations by providing them with the funds, information, and leverage to advocate for reforms.¹¹⁷

The cooperation between international and domestic opposition required a delicate balance in Yemen. As Yadav observed, women's organizations in Yemen have been much more open to aid from international or supranational bodies like the United Nations or the European Union than from a single donor. This allows these organizations to avoid accusations of foreign influence, which would be domestically unpopular in a highly xenophobic society like Yemen's. Additionally, international agencies (the UN in particular) "employ local Yemeni staff or foreign staff who themselves are from Muslim-majority countries in the developing world."¹¹⁸ This has allowed women's organizations to receive more foreign aid.

Promotion of democracy from the bottom up. International support and government concessions have led to the growth of civil society organizations in Yemen from the late 1990s to the present. However, as Yadav observes, in the late 1990s, few of these organizations actually promoted women's rights directly. The 1996 directory of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) listed 375 NGOs registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs, of which 271 were active.¹¹⁹ Only fourteen NGOs in this list fell under the category of "Women and Children's NGOs."¹²⁰ While the majority of these NGOs focused on education, poverty, and health care, only two NGOs listed political goals as their priority.¹²¹ Likewise, out of the two NGOs categorized as concentrating on human rights, neither indicated women's rights as their area of focus.¹²² Moreover,

even the organizations that promoted women's rights in more subtle ways could not reach most Yemeni women. The majority of active NGOs operated in the country's capital, Sana'a, and thus could not reach women living in rural areas.¹²³

In contrast, the 2006 directory of NGOs issued by the Human Rights Information and Training Center listed 209 NGOs, 41 of which fell under the category of "Female Organizations."¹²⁴ These included NGOs that concentrated exclusively on women's political and legal rights and provide services, such as training female activists and political leaders.¹²⁵ Moreover, in 2006, NGOs focusing on women's issues were spread far beyond the capital, with offices in the Yemeni governorates of Abyan, Dhala, Dhammar, Hadramawt, Hajja, Mahwit, and Mukalla.¹²⁶ Furthermore, the report indicated that other NGOs started recognizing the importance of women's rights and integrating the promotion of these rights into their agenda. Among the NGOs focusing on general human rights, eight listed the promotion of women's rights as their first priority.¹²⁷

The qualitative and quantitative shift in the focus on women's rights in the mid-2000s was partially a product of the boomerang effect, but also a product of the increasing exclusion of women from the sphere of formal politics in the 1990s,¹²⁸ as discussed in the previous section. Unable to transform politics from within formal political parties, women turned to the informal associational sector to protect their rights "as citizens."¹²⁹ As Yadav noted, this was the only avenue in which women could build equal alliances with their male counterparts and create a unified force against the regime.¹³⁰

What were these women promoting? Because of the long-lasting exclusion from formal parties, women protesters adopted an "anti-partisan" orientation.¹³¹ Instead of promoting partisan interests, women advocated for universal norms. Yadav remarked:

While the aims of gender-based organizations participating in the revolution unquestionably vary – and women like men may participate in protest activity for reasons unrelated to gender – women's groups are helping to advance demands for a rights-based system of political accountability and transparency.¹³²

In other words, the main unifying point for both male and female protesters has been their concerns about the future of Yemen. Women as mothers and child-bearers embodied the responsibility for the future of Yemen.¹³³ In turn, women utilized this symbolism to mobilize the protests. As Yadav pointed out, "this is why women brought their children to protests, decorated their children's faces, etc. The idea that women are the bearers of the nation is not new,

and it is not even politically progressive. But it was put to a progressive use in 2011.”¹³⁴

“World time” and the acceleration of the 2011 Yemeni revolution

The “world time” effect on the “spiral model”

In recent years, the pace with which states progress from repression to prescriptive status has increased, and the geographical range of the “spiral model” has spread.¹³⁵ Risse links these changes to a phenomenon called “‘world time,’ that is, the increasing strength and robustness of both the international human rights regime and the transnational advocacy networks.”¹³⁶ “World time” started in the 1990s when the global view of the importance of human rights began to change.¹³⁷ Human rights coalitions across the globe expanded, and norm-violating governments began to acknowledge the validity of human rights norms (at least in theory).¹³⁸

“World time” was made possible largely due to technological progress since the 1990s.¹³⁹ Technology has empowered international human rights networks and enabled them to build new alliances, exchange information, and generally hold regimes more accountable. The growing role of the media has pressured governments to give public support to human rights as a way to maintain the government’s legitimacy. Thus, the “spiral model” may be accelerated because of the “world time” effect.

Application to the women’s movement and the 2011 Yemeni revolution

The Yemeni government entered the tactical concessions phase at the very beginning of “world time,” not knowing the potential consequences of tactical concessions in a new world context.¹⁴⁰ The information age accelerated the downfall of the Saleh regime. Nevertheless, for “world time” to be effective, people had to be able to use the technology at hand.

Thus, the question arises: how was the media able to mobilize Yemeni women, since the majority of the country’s women are digitally illiterate? The 2010 BBC World Service Trust survey on media consumption patterns revealed that 86 percent of Yemeni respondents watch TV, 19 percent listen to the radio, and only 6 percent browse the Internet on a daily basis in Yemen.¹⁴¹

TV is regarded the most accessible and reliable source of information in Yemen – 100 percent of the respondents had one television set in their household,¹⁴² and 83 percent viewed television as the most credible source for news.¹⁴³ TV has become the most popular source of information, and particu-

larly so for Yemeni women.¹⁴⁴ 36 percent of female respondents watch more than five hours of television on a daily basis, compared to just 13 percent of male respondents.¹⁴⁵ This is due to the fact that women in Yemeni society are confined to their house for most of the day.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, female illiteracy rates are higher than male illiteracy rates in Yemen.

What kind of programs and channels do women watch? 57 percent of the respondents listed Arabic news and current affairs programs as the most watched programs.¹⁴⁷ They prefer to watch them on satellite TV channels – in fact, 95 percent of the respondents had access to international satellite television.¹⁴⁸ 65 percent preferred satellite TV to local, state-run TV, which only had an audience of 14 percent of those surveyed.¹⁴⁹

This preference had a large impact on the Yemeni Arab Spring in 2011. International satellite channels in Yemen blossomed in the 2000s and effectively eroded the state's monopoly over TV there.¹⁵⁰ Satellite TV channels operate from bases outside of the country – the Gulf, Great Britain, or Egypt. Popular channels include *Al Jazeera*, operating from Doha since 1996; *Al-Arabiya*, broadcasting from Dubai since 2003; *BBC Arabic*, operating from London since 2009; *Al-Sa'idah*, broadcasting from Cairo since 2007; and *Suhail TV*, operating from London since 2009. The channels' extraterritorial locations make it virtually impossible for the Yemeni government to censor them,¹⁵¹ thus allowing these stations to present viewpoints that are critical of the Saleh regime. For the first time ever, "world time" ensured that consistent critiques of the Saleh regime reached millions of Yemenis.

In addition to being located outside of Yemen, the strong impact of satellite Arabic language TV channels could also be attributed to their common broadcasting language. Broadcasting the revolutions across the Middle East in Arabic has enabled every Yemeni house that has a satellite dish to receive the same message. This has created a shared sense among the Yemeni people that they have strong international and regional support for the realization of a democratic Yemen.

International satellite channels indeed often supported Yemeni domestic opposition in 2011, providing extensive coverage of the anti-government movement in Yemen. Some of them were particularly active. *Al-Sa'idah* launched two pro-opposition programs that were aired during the 2011 protests.¹⁵² *Suhail TV* also launched an anti-regime campaign. Its 2011 sharp anti-government programs led it to be the most watched TV channel in Yemen – 84 percent of the respondents preferred this channel to all others.¹⁵³ Recognizing the threat coming from international satellite TV, the Saleh regime attempted to crack down on *Suhail TV*. The government ordered 50 cable operators in Aden to cease providing *Suhail TV* to cable subscribers.¹⁵⁴ The efforts

of the regime proved counterproductive, and *Suhail TV* gained more supporters. By the middle of 2011, only 3 percent of those surveyed continued to watch state-owned TV.¹⁵⁵

In sum, satellite TV channels' extensive coverage of the 2011 protests severely undermined the legitimacy of the Saleh regime and had a galvanizing effect on the public. "Exposure to what people perceive to be illegitimate repression... is likely to make them disillusioned with the established order and easily recruited for mass actions."¹⁵⁶ Yemeni women were particularly susceptible to this TV exposure, since they make up the largest TV-viewing demographic.

Another technology that drove the protests was SMS (texting). The use of mobile phones in Yemen is widespread; all major population centers are covered by the country's four mobile networks. According to government statistics, 46 percent of the population owned a mobile phone in 2010. More than 11 million mobile phones were in use in the country at the end of the same year.¹⁵⁷ Mobile phones and SMS technology played an important role in organizing the protests.¹⁵⁸

Additionally, social networks played a significant role in organizing the 2011 revolution, although it was different from the role they played in Egypt or Tunisia. Unlike its neighbors in the Middle East, Yemen's desire for change forced the Yemeni citizens to adapt to new technologies. Sheila Carapico explained, "whereas Facebook and Twitter drove people to participate in the Egyptian revolution, the Yemeni revolution drove people to participate in Facebook and Twitter."¹⁵⁹ Facebook and Twitter usage among Yemeni opposition activists skyrocketed during the revolution.¹⁶⁰ The majority of tents on Revolution Square in Sana'a had Wi-Fi access, and this enabled the protesters to use social networks. Yadav notes that Facebook and Twitter were used in different ways by different demographics:

*Facebook seems to be used by older activists, especially journalists, who engage in long, deliberative debates over articles that they post to each other for discussion... By contrast, Twitter seems to serve more of an organizational role, communicating information about the whereabouts of protests, their timing, and their movement.*¹⁶¹

In sum, the mobilization potential of the Yemeni people, and women in particular, was enormously increased by the recent advances in information technologies.¹⁶² The growing access to satellite TV, SMS, and social networks in Yemen reflected the emergence of "world time" in the last two decades. Technological progress provided illiterate Yemeni women access to information that previously was inaccessible. Additionally, all Yemeni women became more aware of their relative deprivation. Satellite TV exposed human rights

violations committed by the Saleh regime. This undermined the regime's legitimacy. SMS, Facebook, and Twitter were used to organize the movement.

Conclusion

In order to explain how traditionally disempowered women in Yemen transformed dissatisfaction with the Saleh regime into a large-scale protest movement in 2011, the “spiral model” theory and “world time” concept were applied. First, international human rights networks penetrate a country's domestic networks by transmitting international human rights norms. This leads to empowerment of domestic opposition. Ultimately, domestic opposition will become powerful enough to effect institutional change. The Yemeni Arab Spring seems to validate the “spiral model” theory. International human rights networks criticized the Yemeni regime under President Saleh for repressing women in the 2000s. International donors insisted upon reform of women's rights before administering foreign aid to Yemen. In order to secure foreign aid, the Yemeni regime made tactical concessions, such as publicly committing to empower women. The regime, however, underestimated the possible consequences of the concessions. Even though the government's commitments were largely nominal and toothless, domestic opposition groups felt encouraged and pushed for reform. Eventually, pressure from both international and domestic critics brought about the downfall of the Saleh regime.

Pursuant to the “spiral model,” the new Yemeni government today is in a transitional phase in which women's rights are gaining prescriptive status. This is likely to be a lengthy process. Yet more time will be needed to see if Yemen will enter the final stage of the “spiral model” – termed the rule-consistent behavior phase. The main risk on the path to equality is the revival of conservative coalitions, which have been consistently hostile toward women.

However, any conservative coalition that survived the 2011 Yemeni revolution should be more cognizant of the risks associated with both violations of women's rights and tactical concessions made to receive foreign aid. On the one hand, Yemen's international reputation will suffer if human rights violations persist. These violations will likely lead to strong international and domestic pressure. On the other hand, there is a risk that any acknowledgement of human rights violations and ensuing reform will start the spiral toward revolution. Therefore, the new regime, if aware of this spiral pattern, might have an incentive to clamp down and crush any opposition, however minor. Nevertheless, this incentive will not likely override Yemen's desire to appease international networks, since it depends on foreign aid that is contingent on the recognition of human rights norms.

In conclusion, even hollow tactical concessions can ignite domestic opposition from unlikely groups, such as long-suffering Yemeni women. In 2011, Yemeni women made clear that they expect concessions to yield deep structural reform.

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The Conclusion and Beyond

We are parting with the project, but the ideas have a life of their own. We shall continue to discuss the proposals expressed in the book and to look for new ones. One of my acquaintances, a German businessman, once said about Russia: "Such a wonderful country, so many things to do!" Taking a positive hands-on attitude, we can say about the world as well: "Such a wonderful world, so many things to be done!"

It is not always easy to believe in progress, in light of the challenges that the world faces: poverty and the gap between the rich and poor nations; the sovereign debt crisis; and interethnic and religious conflicts. In the last year we have seen bloodshed in the Arab countries, the disaster in Japan, terrorist attacks in Norway and France, and Greece in dire straits. Yet despite its difficulties, the world is moving forward. It is happening not only in European countries, but also in Asian and Latin American countries, where living standards and social conditions have been improving. In the last 10-15 years, the vast majority of African countries have shown steady development trends as well. There has also been a gradual expansion of the space of human freedom and dignity: of individuals and social groups - women, children, religious and ethnic minorities.

If the world is to survive, international relations will also become more humane. States will rely less on force and instead will consider the needs of all nations, large and small. Young people will have a longer time span to contribute to this improved environment. Their interest in the world's problems, active approach to events around them, readiness to express their ideas, and desire to implement them are key to bringing about the changes that we want to see happen in the world.

Natalia Bubnova

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